Selected aspects in the development of public education in Palestine 1920-1946

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SELECTED ASPECTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN PALESTINE 1920-1946

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Boston College

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Initially the British administration in Palestine assumed responsibility only for Arab public schools. A dual school system evolved when the government designated as public, Zionist schools hitherto considered private. This change brought increased government subvention and supervision, but on a more limited scale than that of Arab schools functioning completely under the government's authority. The Hebrew system was nearly autonomous.

This study uses the methodology of historical research to investigate the development of public education from 1920 to 1946 and seeks to gain an understanding of each school system rather than explicitly to probe for comparisons between the two.

Though the transplantation of western education predated the mandatory era, its course was uneven. Most sponsors of non-traditional schools were foreign. Religious, linguistic and cultural differences separated schools. The legacy of the Ottoman era had implications for the mandate.

Within the Jewish sector the nucleus of modern Hebrew schools was a concomittant of broad societal changes advanced by the Zionist movement. For a variety of reasons the Arab nationalist movement was not in a position to affect society's transition to modernity or educational development. The Arab community had less experience with western institutions and
greater dependency on government resources than had the Jewish community. The socio-economic, demographic, political and cultural characteristics of each sector as well as Palestine's status as a mandate under British authority were among the factors contributing to the development of the two public school systems.

Palestine in 1920 had the complex task of condensing into decades the centuries of gradual transition to public education experienced in the west. Both systems gave priority to elementary education, but from a fundamentally different vantage. This study suggests that the political context in which the systems evolved affected some, but not all of their characteristics. In such areas as per capita investment, the rate of expansion, provisions for popular authority, equalization of opportunity for urban and rural pupils, the standards of the common school and the degree of the nationalistic orientation of the curriculum, the systems differed. The political and ideological variations of the trends affected Hebrew education.

With the exception of the Labor Trend, schools were subject-oriented, slighted vocational instruction and had intensive, inflexible curricula. Each system relied on post-elementary institutions to prepare teachers.

The policy of relying on the private sector to complement secondary facilities had a practical, short term benefit, but it also had discriminatory consequences and structural disadvantages.
Problems such as shortened programs to train teachers, selected access to secondary schools and the imbalance of college preparatory and vocational studies tend to accompany the introduction of public educational systems in developing areas. They appear to be more a characteristic of a stage of educational history than of a particular form of government.

The mandatory era concluded a cycle in Palestine's educational history. It embraced Christian and Moslem pupils in one system, unified in a second one the majority of Hebrew schools, and concluded the transfer of the common school from a religious and traditional domain to the responsibility of the government.
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In 1517 the Ottoman Empire conquered Palestine and governed it for the next four hundred years. During this period Palestine had no separate political status. Its land with that of neighboring Syria and Lebanon formed imperial districts whose capitals were in Beirut, Jerusalem and Damascus. Palestine, like the rest of the empire, did not participate in the social, industrial and political changes which occurred in western Europe. Political repression, economic stagnation and cultural isolation stultified growth and a traditional, medieval-like society lost the vitality to support once vigorous centers of learning. The decline of the empire brought Palestinian civilization to its nadir.

At the end of the first world war, the British army invaded Palestine and in 1918 completed its occupation. Two years later Britain received Allied approval to continue its administration and in 1922 the League of Nations confirmed the legitimacy of British rule. Palestine had a new status as a mandate. Arabs and Jews were the country's two largest demographic groups. Their nationalistic objectives conflicted and the two populations never became integrated.

Palestine had three major religious communities, Christian, Moslem and Jewish. Christians and Moslems formed an Arab speaking population. Jews spoke Hebrew and a variety of other languages. During the Ottoman era each group maintained its own schools, and no community had a unified school
system.

The first stage of Palestinian educational history lasted until the mid-nineteenth century. During this period all schools were religious institutions imitative of those that had evolved during the Middle Ages. The study of sacred literature dominated the curriculum on all school levels and secular subjects, if taught, had ancillary importance. In contrast to the growing expansiveness of scholarship in the west, education in Palestine retained its single-purpose focus and, growing increasingly conservative, lost the latitudinarian character many schools once had. In this era, schools were open to all male members of the community and the schools functioned simultaneously as a socializing agency. They formally initiated the young into the duties and rituals required by a theocratic society in which religion permeated every aspect of life without distinctions being made between the secular and sacred. Little attention was given to the formal education of girls.

The second stage began in the mid-nineteenth century when missionary and philanthropic societies and the Ottoman government opened modern schools. These offered a broadened curriculum which prepared students for entry into western-type colleges and occupations. Both the first and second stages co-existed in the last century of the pre-mandatory period. The new schools were paradigms of foreign institutions and their curriculum was both contemporary and
westernized. For a variety of reasons, the transplantation of western education was more extensive within the Christian and Jewish communities than within Moslem society. This difference had implications for the mandatory era.

In the third stage of Palestinian educational development which coincided with the beginning of British administration, the government became actively involved in education. Traditional education no longer predominated. While state schools were theoretically open to all students, their student body was in fact, Arab, Christian and Moslem. In addition there were Christian, Jewish, and Moslem private schools sponsored by Palestinian and non-Palestinian religious and philanthropic groups. Providing education on both elementary and secondary levels, private schools were autonomous, administered by the sponsoring group with little or no interference by the British government. In Moslem private schools instruction was in Arabic; in Jewish private schools instruction was generally in Yiddish. There were also Jewish and Christian private schools where instruction was given in the national language of the sponsoring body. As the mandate progressed, private schools received some government financial aid; state schools were, of course, government financed.

Moslem, Christian, and Jewish private religious schools served almost completely children of a particular religion. As can be understood, Arab and Jewish children rarely attended the same private or public primary or secondary school.
Christian and Moslem Arab children attended usually only the same public schools. Later establishment by Israel of a dual school system, one for Arab children and one for Jewish children, had its roots in the educational system developed under the mandate.

From the inception of the British administration, the government assumed responsibility for a group of schools in which Arabic was made the language of instruction. These became the de facto Arab public school system. In 1927, the Zionist school system, hitherto considered private, received recognition as the Hebrew public school system. This change brought increased government subvention and supervision, but on a more limited scale than that which existed in the Arab public school system. Thus, during the mandate two public school systems evolved. One, for Arab students, functioned completely under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian government and the other, for Jewish pupils, developed largely as the responsibility of the Jewish community.

Both the government or Arab public school system and the Hebrew school system concentrated on elementary education. On the secondary level, private schools provided a significant complement to public institutions. During the mandatory era the number of schools increased, the education of girls received public support and secular studies became dominant. The priorities of the previous period were reversed. The process of selection, unknown in traditional schools, and its
consequences became increasingly important. Schooling now became a determinant of career choice, and a lack of education imposed socio-economic disadvantages.

At the beginning of the mandate, an educational imbalance existed amongst the three religious communities. By the conclusion of the British administration of Palestine, there had been a great increase in school attendance of Moslem children. Proportionally, however, fewer Moslem children attended school than either Christian Arab or Jewish children for whom at least a few years of elementary school was almost universal.

The Hebrew public schools were nearly autonomous while the Arab public schools were dependent on foreign direction. The contrast in the political foundation of the two systems appeared to have influenced their degree of nationalization or denationalization, the financial support they received, their pace of expansion and their respective standards for the years of schooling minimally acceptable. The Jewish community gave education a high fiscal priority, supported the rapid expansion of the system, promoted an eight-year period of schooling and related the curriculum to nationalistic aims. The government set a lower minimal standard for school attendance, moderated the pace of growth, had a conservative fiscal policy and designed a course of Arabic studies which concentrated on those aspects of culture which were apolitical.

This study investigates the development of public
education from 1920-1946 and seeks to gain an understanding of both systems as they evolved during the mandate rather than explicitly to probe for comparisons between the two. The first chapter considers the background of British educational policies. The differing educational heritages of the communities were also contributing factors to the course of mandatory educational history. Chapters II and III study the educational legacy of the Ottoman era and its implications for the mandate. Demography, the economy, experience with western institutions, social and political factors contribute to the relationship of schools and society. Chapters IV and VI discuss some of these characteristics in mandatory Palestine. The dimensions of the task of instituting public education were complex. How did the emerging systems meet qualitative and quantitative demands? To what extent were they selective? Did literary and vocational studies receive equivalent emphasis? What were the natures of urban and rural education? Chapters V and VII discuss these aspects of Arab and Hebrew public education.

Three points of view in this study may need clarification. The British adopted a policy of classifying the population by religion, Moslem, Christian, Jewish and others, mainly Druze. The public school systems followed a linguistic division, a criterion used in this research. The Hebrew public school enrollment was almost entirely Jewish. Of the pupils attending the Arab public schools at the end of the
mandate, approximately three quarters of the student population were Moslem, slightly less than one quarter were Christian and the remainder pupils of other faiths. In discussing the Arab community of Palestine, this study concentrates on the Moslem population, but points out, when appropriate, the Christian Arab tradition. While references are made to general attitudes and relations between the Arab and Jewish communities, and between each of those sectors and the government, an analysis of political tensions is not within the purview of this study. The British mandate for Palestine began in 1922 and ended in 1948. This study concludes in the year 1946 by which date the course of public educational development was clear. It does not consider the last two years of the British administration, a period of increasingly overt hostilities and chaos.

There was some difficulty in ensuring that statistical data were correct. Some sets of figures vary from book to book. Every effort was made to select those data which could be confirmed in more than one source or which seemed to come from the most accurate study.
CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF

BRITISH EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN PALESTINE

Before World War I Palestine formed part of the Ottoman Empire. In the nineteenth century in order to improve its military and administrative efficiency, the government began to establish public schools. The center of the educational program was in Turkey proper and the districts of the empire comprising Palestine did not have an extensive or well-established school system. During World War I Britain invaded and eventually occupied Palestine. The British government reopened the former Ottoman public schools and as the mandatory power for Palestine continued to maintain authority for that school system and to have titular responsibility for the country's education.

Britain had vast experience as an imperial power. Her empire in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries encompassed territories throughout the world. The government did not impose a uniform colonial educational policy; the decentralization and diversity of educational authorities in England were paralleled overseas. Those countries populated by large numbers of European settlers and their families had a history of educational progress which was
similar to England's. The situation was different in lands where European immigration was small. There, educational systems varied according to the reasons for colonization, the kind of local governments encouraged and the nature of the indigenous society. Generally, educational progress in tropical dependencies lagged behind that of the metropolitan country. This disparity increased with the establishment of national school systems in the west and the acceleration of the movement toward free, universal schooling in the twentieth century. Despite the diversity of educational activities in the empire, a brief consideration of patterns in the century preceding the mandatory era provides a useful background for the understanding of British policy in Palestine.

In redistributing the lands of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations altered the traditional concept of colonialism. It sought to differentiate between a colony and a mandate by setting forth a charter of rights granted to the dependent populace, by creating a new, temporary stage in the status of a dependency, one which was expected to be limited and was linked to an implied promise of independence, and by establishing an international forum to review the activities of the mandatory power. The idealism of the League was not, however supported by effective instruments to implement its objectives and its terms for the British were set forth in guidelines so broad and general as to provoke dispute.

The first section of this chapter considers the major themes of British colonial educational policies in the era

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preceding Great Britain's administration of Palestine. The second section of the chapter considers the Articles for Palestine and their implications for public educational development.

**British Colonial Educational Policy in the Era Preceding the Mandate**

In most colonies, the government initially adopted a laissez-faire policy toward education and permitted existing schools to follow a course of their own choosing.¹ In tropical dependencies missionaries were early agents of western educational transplantation and their schools coexisted with indigenous institutions. Most traditional schools offered the same basic course to pupils of a given religious community and education was closely interwoven with the fabric of society. Missionary schools had a different role. They were an extension of ecclesiastical work for church groups that were foreign to the area and the ideas introduced were those of western civilization. The schools, therefore, were a challenge to the equilibrium of the existing social and ethical order. In addition, missionaries tended to follow European educational precedents.³ Missionary societies

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³For a discussion of British policies and missionary activities see "British Imperial Policy and Mission Schools,"
usually sponsored two kinds of institutions, a terminal school in which the medium of instruction was usually the vernacular and a second Europeanized grammar school which prepared pupils for continuing studies. An element of separatism was, thus, a consequence of missionary efforts; in higher schools students were introduced to a new culture which differed from the indigenous one familiar to the population at large. The expansion of European commercial and colonial activities helped popularize the new education which promised the potential of economic and social advantage. A cleavage was introduced within traditional societies as new groups emerged differentiated on the basis of formal schooling from the rest of the population having little or no exposure to a European civilization. This pattern was also typical of Palestine in the century predating the mandatory era.

In the nineteenth century British colonial governments began to open public schools on a limited scale. It was an era in which there was neither a commitment to the concept of educational democratization nor a belief in the desirability of universal schooling. "There was a time when it was thought that education should only be given parsimoniously, and, as it were, with a dropper, to the colonized peoples" in the concern "that its diffusion would necessarily compromise

colonisation, and that the domination of the colonizing States could only be maintained by leaving the native masses in ignorance. In time this attitude became somewhat more liberal, but the course of educational development in dependencies continued to lag behind that of the metropole partially because of the dimensions of the task overseas and partially because of the constraints of official policy.

Britain historically had viewed private education as purposeful and legitimate; the government relied on private schools to supplement public facilities. There was no insistence on a uniform educational policy either directed from London or prescribed within a colony. Britain continued to follow this policy in Palestine. Private schools were an invaluable complement to public institutions throughout the mandatory era. In the early years of the mandate private school enrollments exceeded those of public schools and despite the growth of public schools, in the final years of British rule, private institutions enrolled more than one third of Palestinian students. Most enrolled children were of the same religion as the sponsoring school authority. As a consequence, Moslem children were at a disadvantage during the mandate as they had been in the premandatory era. They

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were the group most dependent on public facilities and with the least access to private schools.\textsuperscript{6}

When British colonial governments became actively involved with education abroad, a major problem requiring resolution was the cultural bias of the curriculum. The content of western education had evolved in a political, social, economic and cultural context which was far different from conditions in lands to which it was exported. Educational policy veered between anglicization and adaptation. Anglicization gave priority to English and western culture. It represented a theory of education succinctly put forth in Macaulay's dictum in his discussion of a course of action to be followed in India.

\begin{quote}
We must at present do our best to form...a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the...dialects...with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.\textsuperscript{7}
\end{quote}

The theory of anglicization served western interests and ultimately, it was believed, popular needs. In ripple-like fashion the masses of people would receive the benefits of enlightenment.

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid.

The British approach to education at home and abroad was elitist. Indigenous schools or public vernacular schools were adequate for the masses, but considered unsuitable for a leadership class. The colonies needed graduates of Europeanized schools as civil servants and to support commercial enterprises. In those schools educating potential leaders, the clash between Anglicists and Orientalists or adaptationists was initially resolved in India in favor of the former. The study of the English language, literature and history conducted in institutions which tried to replicate the spirit of the English public schools dominated Indian education. The nineteenth century introduced the age of anglicization and transplantation.

Few initially questioned the efficacy of indiscriminate anglicization and transplantation or gave much attention to the long-range consequences of Europeanized education. Schools stressed western linguistic and literary studies. The curriculum disregarded the indigenous civilization and environment. English civilization, according to the prevailing view, offered the same promise to non-western societies which centuries earlier a Greco-Roman culture had proferred. "What the Greek and Latin were to the contemporaries of Ascham, our tongue is to the people of India." Practicality, humanitarianism, paternalism and disdain for

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8 Ibid., p. 243.
non-European cultures combined with the interests of imperialism to shape education from the point of view of the colonial government. The attitude was not totally self-serving. The English had enormous faith in the power of the proper education to ameliorate social ills and combat evil.\(^9\)

It was believed that schools modelled after those in England would inspire an intellectual spirit able to combat superstition and immorality which appeared to govern life in the dependencies.\(^10\)

The dispute about the policies of anglicization and adaptation began to grow. There were two theories toward educational transplantation and indigenous resources. One supported westernized schools imitating metropolitan models with English as the major or only language of instruction. Another favored "nationalistic native schools following native lines and looking towards native ideals, giving equal place to new and old tongues."\(^11\) There were positive and negative aspects in each theory.

Anglicization had the encouragement of those viewing foreign schools as efficacious instruments to further European needs. Cultural imperialism was, in this school of thought, a


\(^10\) Ibid.

logical and acceptable extension of political and economic imperialism. There were also some westerners and non-westerners who viewed Europeanized education as a means of reducing the disparity between European and non-European nations.

The theory of adaptation or cultural synthesis modified or minimized a European cultural bias in the schools. It had the support of those who viewed anglicization as a threat to colonial authority because of its stimulation of nationalism and dissatisfaction with colonial rule, and because of the tensions brought about by a growing core of school graduates unable to find employment. However, the concept of adaptation also had the support of others who rejected an education that denationalized students, denigrated native cultures and prepared pupils for a limited range of occupations with slight relevancy to indigenous societies.¹²

India was the star of British tropical dependencies and educational activities there had set a precedent for other colonies. Because the theory of anglicization had reached its ascendancy in India, the Indian revolt against British rule, in which the educated elite had participated, jolted support for the concept of anglicization and encouraged its reexamination. Indian Unrest, essays first published in The Times pointed out that colonial education tended "to

¹²Ibid.
produce dangerous hybrids, more or less superficially imbued with Western ideas, and at the same time more or less completely divorced from the realities of Indian life."  

British schools were criticized for emphasizing an intellectualism which built a gulf between the classroom and world beyond. The British experience in India had parallels in other parts of the empire. Europeanized schooling had led to an alienation from the traditional order, but not brought equality to the individual in colonial society; it encouraged yearnings for independence and change that colonial governments were unprepared to grant.

Another testing ground of colonial educational policy was Egypt which the British began to administer as a quasi protectorate in 1882. Antedating British control, the Egyptian government in the earlier part of the century had as part of a program to improve military and administrative

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14 Ibid., pp. 207-208 and p. 16.
16 Ibid., p. 426.
efficiency begun to open modern schools.\textsuperscript{18} The country had a group of foreign modern schools and a larger number of religious schools. In the kuttab, the primary school and the madrasah, the higher religious school, the content of instruction dwelt almost entirely with theological subjects.

After 1882, British officials dominated the department of education and British policies gave direction to educational development. The government wanted to avoid the experience of India where western education had stimulated nationalism, to provide common vernacular schools for the majority and to limit European education to those needed for the civil service and professional areas. The basic aim was to eliminate the consequences of education which were dysfunctional from the government's viewpoint and, within that context to provide instruction which was useful to society.\textsuperscript{19} The government ended an Egyptian practice of providing free tuition and used some of the money to improve the quality of education. The British gave priority to the financial solvency of dependencies, but the decision was also important as an effective means of limiting enrollments and years of schooling.\textsuperscript{20} It therefore was indicative of an educational


\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., pp. 320-323.

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., pp. 324-325.
as well as administrative attitude. The government assumed an obligation to popularize schooling only to a limited extent. It approved of the purpose and principle of an elitist system of education having a highly selective, anglicized branch and a common vernacular school. With some modification, notably of the medium of instruction, these policies were similar to those adopted in Palestine.

In the twentieth century, the direction of colonial educational policy had shifted in favor of the policy of adaptation. A memorandum published in 1925, Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa, explained the policy. Though focusing on African dependencies, it set the tone of British colonial education in the post-World War I era.

The memorandum's major themes were its support for the vernacular as the medium of instruction, its encouragement of vocational training and its association of schooling with the environment.

Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations, and traditions of the various peoples, conserving as far as possible all sound and healthy elements on the fabric of their social life; adapting them where necessary to changed circumstances and progressive ideas, as an agent of natural growth and evolution.  

The memorandum reflected a general movement within the field of education which gave increased value to practical or

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vocational studies, had the benefit of scientific inquiry into child development and the psychology of learning and favored a more organic relationship between the school and society. The pillars of the policy were gradualism and practicality.

In practice, the difference between anglicization and adaptation was one of degree, and to some extent, necessarily so. The components of a modern school system were alien to the educational foundation of traditional societies. One had other-worldly objectives; the other secular goals. One prepared the pupil for an old, established order; the other for changing conditions. Secondly, vocational education, a key to the policy of adaptation, was more costly than bookish instruction and the least advanced branch of instruction in dependencies. With the exception of the medium of instruction and some courses in native literature and history, schooling continued to be tied to the mast of westernized education. The theory of adaptation was also circumscribed by the contradiction between its objectives and those of colonialism which made foreign interests a dominant factor in the course of educational development. As a consequence, the adaptation of instruction to local society was inevitably more restrictive in practice than in theory.

The principles underlying the effective implementation of adaptation did not apply only to the curriculum, but touched economic, social, political and ethical issues. The colonial and mandatory forms of government did not encourage in a fundamental sense the unfettered integration of school and society. A much closer relationship between school and society existed in the Jewish community whose
public schools were more nearly autonomous than in the Arab sector. The course of adaptation in the Hebrew school system directly linked education to popular interests. The synthesis of western and Hebrew studies had an intended national political and cultural bias. However, in a system headed and planned by British officials, such as the Arab public school system, the divergence between governmental and popular views and priorities constrained the application of adaptation so that its distinction from anglicization was muted.

**British Educational Policy and the Mandate**

At the time of the British occupation, Palestine was a poor country. An estimated five percent of its inhabitants were engaged in small-scale industries. Ottoman law had discouraged industrial growth. Agricultural methods were traditional, inadequate techniques of irrigation and fertilization, limited crop diversification and rotation, the poor condition of the soil in many parts of the land depressed the agricultural economy, the main source of livelihood for most of the population. The war had wasted villages, many of the groves and much of the livestock which were an important source of income. Health standards were primitive and disease rife; lawlessness was a threat to life. Palestine was predominantly rural. In 1922 Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa were its three largest cities. The other areas classified

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as urban had populations of less than 25,000 and many closely resembled expanded villages where agriculture was the chief source of employment.²⁴

Neither the Ottoman form of government nor the characteristics of the population encouraged a sense of unity. Turkish was the language of the government, but not of the people. In 1920, the country's population was approximately 673,000. According to statistics cited in the Esco study, "521,000 were Moslems, 78,000 Christians, 67,000 Jews and 7,000 others, mainly Druses."²⁵ Arabic was the major language of the Christian and Moslem communities; Yiddish, Ladino, Arabic and Hebrew of the Jewish community. The millet, a governmental religious subdivision of non-Moslem inhabitants, which was a basis of Ottoman administration, sustained national fragmentation. Each millet was self-contained and maintained its own social services including schools. The loyalties of the people tended to extend to the immediate circle of family, clan and religious community rather than to an impersonal, distant government. The rise of various nationalistic movements contributed to the spirit of disunity.

The country was a mosaic of religious and culturally diverse groups. The Arab community was composed of an


²⁵Ibid.
unsettled or nomadic and a settled population of fellahin or peasant farmers and urban groups. Moslem Arabs tended to have a lower standard of living and have a smaller proportional representation of merchants and professionals than did the predominantly urban, Christian Arab population. The missionary movement helped bring to Christian Arabs greater contact with western education and culture than the Moslem Arabs, except for a small upper class, tended to have. Though sharing a common religion, the Jewish community was similarly divided amongst groups with differing exposures to and interest in contemporary western, secular culture and education. The community with longer roots in Palestine was pietistic and traditional; many of its members were adamantly opposed to change and newer forms of education. The newer sector was composed of secular and non-secular Zionists who were interested in reviving Hebrew culture and in building a Jewish homeland in Palestine. A differing way of life and ideology separated these two Jewish groups.

Turkey's defeat in World War I led to the postwar dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the division of the fertile crescent. Control of the governments in this area passed to France and Britain under conditions defined by the League of Nations. Palestine became a mandate assigned to British

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26 Ibid.

27 Ibid., 1:465.
sovereignty. The League modified the historic concept of colonialism, based on the unrestricted authority of the colonial government, and framed the nature of territorial disbursement in idealistic terms. "Taking the existing colonial system as a model, it imposed certain standards ... on it and subjected the Mandatory Powers to a modest but unprecedented international supervision -- which they, no doubt, assumed would be exercised primarily within the family." Two international documents set forth Britain's obligations as a mandatory government. Article 22 of the League's Covenant, which applied to all mandated territories, explained the intent of the mandated state and the League's Articles for Palestine, twenty-eight in all, established the framework for the British administration.

The concept of the mandate theoretically provided a preparatory status before eventual self-government "for peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world" and created a period of trusteeship under the "tutelage of ... advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League."  

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28 Emerson, From Empire to Nation, p. 24.  
Palestine was a Class A Mandate, the highest of three classes used to indicate the level of advancement or development of the mandated peoples. Class A indicated that the indigenous people were almost ready for independence and proffered the promise of independence within a relatively brief, but undesignated period of time.\textsuperscript{30}

The mandatory system satisfied the political ambitions of England and France for a mideastern presence and only partially responded to the demand for independence of the Arab people. At the same time, it introduced formally, in international agreement the legitimacy of Jewish rights in the Articles for Palestine which expressed "in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine ..."\textsuperscript{31} The mandatory system assumed the possibility of controlled change, that new administrative, judicial and educational processes would advance socio-economic development and would be able to reconcile political rivalries.

The Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations was the body designated to supervise the administration of Palestine. Its importance stemmed from the force of its moral


position; the body could make recommendations, but not enforce them. The commission received annual reports from the mandatory power and popular petitions, questioned British officials and examined the government's policies. International politics, the personal limitations of commission members, the lack of machinery to obtain first-hand accounts and the growing weakness of the League curbed the commission's effectiveness. With respect to Palestine's educational development, the Permanent Mandates Commission had a beneficial though not decisive influence. In providing Arabs and Jews with a forum of independent review, the commission undoubtedly encouraged a more careful scrutiny of education policy than commonly occurred in dependencies, and it lent its support to that degree of flexibility which the government allowed.

However benevolent, the concept of trusteeship linked Palestine's future to a European government whose self-interests differed from those of the indigenous population. The Arab community did not acknowledge the legitimacy of the mandate and rejected the validity of a Jewish presence and of British rule. On the other hand, the Jewish community initially supported the mandate and then came to oppose the British administration. The aspirations of the two communities differed.

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conflicted and the vacillating policy of the government failed to ameliorate the tensions.

A highly centralized and departmentalized bureaucracy governed Palestine. The seat of power rested with the High Commissioner, appointed by the Crown, the Chief Secretary, or Chief Administrator whose office controlled other departments, the Attorney General, and the Treasurer. All were British, and members of the Executive Council, a cabinet which had both legislative and administrative functions. After its initial attempts to establish popular advisory boards failed because of popular disapproval; the government's concentration of authority minimized the impact of local councils.\(^3\) The government found it difficult to win support for any official legislative body composed of Jewish and Arab representatives. Most self-governing institutions were either Jewish or Arab.

The British administrator in Palestine believed his position to be difficult, if not impossible. His actions were constantly measured for favoritism to either Arabs or Jews, his power more circumscribed than that of his peers in other colonies, his task vastly burdened by the ambiguities of colonial and mandatory rulings.\(^4\) British senior officers


had, as a rule, little field experience or contact with the everyday realities of Palestinian life. A former member of the administration wrote of its members' "distaste for individual contacts and its naïve belief in the efficacy of paper transactions." Thus the mandate was characterized by a wide gulf between the government and inhabitants unanticipated by the concept of the mandate and complicated by the peculiar circumstances of Palestine.

Several articles of the mandate had direct or indirect implication for education. Articles one and two gave the mandatory legislative and administrative authority for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, ... and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion. Article three encouraged "local autonomy" and article four recognized the Zionist Organization as the official representative of Palestinian Jewry. In general terms, these articles set the basis for a public educational system or systems and left the door open to the possibility of self-governing

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37 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:5.
38 Ibid.
institutions. The Jewish community was better able to and did take advantage of the provision for self-government than was the Arab community. Its lack of self-governing institutions, and the absence of educational autonomy, with all that status implied, was a continuing grievance of the Arab community.\(^3^9\)

Article fifteen made specific reference to education.

> The right of each community to maintain its own schools for the education of its own members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the Administration may impose, shall not be denied or impaired.\(^4^0\)

Article twenty-two declared "English, Arabic and Hebrew . . . the official languages of Palestine."\(^4^1\) These two articles perpetuated the right granted by the Ottoman Empire for each community to maintain its own schools and languages. However, the articles left unclear the nature of the government's obligation, the status of community schools and the implication of three official languages for education.

In 1917 the British had occupied Jerusalem and the southern tier of Palestine. The war was still going on and the new military administration attempted to continue the services provided by the Ottoman authorities. The British re-opened the public schools, incorporated some kuttabs or

\(^3^9\)Great Britain, Palestine Royal Commission Report, p. 365.

\(^4^0\)Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:7.

\(^4^1\)Ibid., p. 10.
religious schools into the system and substituted Arabic for
Turkish as the language of instruction. Government public
schools evolved de facto as the Arab public system and the
Jewish population depended on non-government resources.42

With the creation of a civilian administration, the
Palestinian government had to decide whether to assume respon-
sibility for the education of all children irrespective of
religion and native language, to concentrate its effort on
behalf of one segment of the population, or to adopt a com-
promise dispersing public funds among the official government
schools and others. Did the terms of the mandate intend to
distinguish between the Hebrew schools of the Zionist organi-
zation, and other non-governmental schools, foreign or in-
digenous?

Humphrey Bowman, the first director of education, ex-
plained British policy.

As money was limited, it was clearly our duty to
spend what we had where it was most urgently needed. The Jews had considerable funds at their disposal, and their total budget for educational purposes was not far short of that of Government. The Arabs on the other hand had no funds with the exception of those derived from Moslem "waqfs" [religious founda-
tions]; ... and in any case were quite insufficient to support a national system of education.43

43Bowman, Middle East Window, pp. 254-255.
In 1923 the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations evaluated the quality of education in the premandatory period and concluded that the inadequacy of Muslim educational development required the British government to give priority to Muslim schools.\(^4\)

The origin of the Hebrew public school system dated to 1912 when a controversy erupted over the language of instruction in Jewish indigenous and foreign philanthropic schools. A few schools with an enrollment of a little more than one thousand adopted Hebrew as the medium of instruction and organized a fledgling educational system. World War I halted the system's development. As a help to the schools the Zionist organization, which was committed to establishing a Jewish homeland, created an educational department and allocated funds for education. The nucleus of schools in which Hebrew was the language of instruction came within its jurisdiction.

Under the terms of Article fifteen, the Jewish sector claimed and, in 1927, won the right to have the Zionist schools granted the status of a public school system. It was the only community to seek this right.\(^5\) The designation of


a school as public or private determined its allocation of public funds. Private schools which met standards set by the government received grants-in-aid; Arab public schools were fully funded and after 1927 the Hebrew schools received a percentage of public funds, though not a sum equivalent to public expenditures for Arab education.

The British made no attempt to establish a school system for Jewish pupils and it is doubtful whether the Jewish community would have been willing to sacrifice its autonomy in education, legitimized by the mandate, or accept the degree of government control exercised over the Arab public school system. Thus in the initial stages of British rule, somewhat routinely, two distinct systems of schools emerged from the proliferation of private, public and religious premandatory trends. The dual system allowed the Jewish community to manage its own schools at some financial sacrifice. The Arab community had the advantage of government resources, but forfeited control over schooling. Educational policies of the government therefore affected to different degrees each system.

The articles for Palestine helped maintain the fragmented educational pattern which was a legacy of the premandatory

era. After the fourth or fifth grade, all public school pupils began to learn English in addition to their study of their own language. A few Hebrew schools had courses in Arabic, but no Arabic public school provided a class in Hebrew. According to the first director of education, Humphrey Bowman, the teaching of Hebrew from a pedagogic viewpoint would have been unsound. The Arabic language was the natural priority of the school; from both the government's and the Arab community's position English was the second language meriting study. The antagonism in the country was such that in the director's opinion the Arab community would have fiercely opposed the teaching of Hebrew. The course of public education helped to weld the Arabs as a people and the Jews as a people, but it added to the prevailing tensions between the two groups.

Summary

British colonial educational experiences in the century preceding the mandate were a formative factor in setting British educational policy in Palestine. The concept of anglicization stressed the English language and western

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47 Bowman, *Middle East Window*, p. 258.

48 Ibid.
culture; the concept of adaptation attempted to synthesize elements of British and indigenous civilizations. The desire to minimize the disruptive consequences of uncritical transplantation and to make schooling more useful helped popularize the concept of adaptation. In practice the difference between the two policies was evident only in a limited area of instruction. In British colonial educational patterns the priorities of the government took precedent over the needs of the people.

A second formative factor in public educational development in Palestine was the League of Nation's charter to the mandatory government. In attempting to safeguard the rights of local communities, League documents perpetuated the variegated educational profile of premandatory Palestine. Private schools, an Arab public school system coexisted as separate, unrelated networks.

The educational heritage of the Arab and Jewish communities, the resources and characteristics of each community, the course of the mandate and conditions in Palestine contributed to the evolution of public education. Emerging from different circumstances and traditions, the history of the Hebrew and Arab school systems was by and large dissimilar. The mandatory government had complete and direct authority for the Arab school system; the Hebrew schools were under the proprietorship of the Zionist Organization.
A distinguishing characteristic of the pre-mandatory era was that each of the three religious communities maintained its own schools. Until approximately the middle of the nineteenth century, Palestine had three groups of schools, Christian, Jewish and Moslem. In all, the prevailing mode of instruction adhered to practices rooted in earlier centuries. All emphasized religious studies. Secular subjects, if taught, were ancillary to theological knowledge. In earlier centuries, Palestine had many higher schools of excellent quality. However, by the nineteenth century the level of scholarship and education in each of the communities had declined. The country had a high rate of illiteracy and many children at best had only a few years of formal instruction.

These traditional educational networks differed in structure and purpose, as well as content, from contemporary western schools. Pupils proceeded informally from one level of instruction to the next. Classes and studies were ungraded. They had no standardized measures of achievement. The objectives of education were defined by religion; values inculcated were immutable and eternal. Education encouraged a spirit of conformity in action and thought. Knowledge was viewed as finite. The qualifications of teachers were that they were devout and knowledgeable of sacred literature. Most schools consisted of a room in a house of worship or the
teacher's home.

These schools were closely related to the societies they served which were religious, immersed in the culture and values of past ages and removed from the impact of the changes of post-Renaissance western civilization. Children learned trades at home or through an apprenticeship system. Palestine was a poor country with a subsistence, agricultural economy.

After the mid-nineteenth century the supremacy of traditional, religious schools began to decline. Through the work of foreign Christian and Jewish religious and philanthropic societies, an alternative to traditional schooling became available. In addition, at a later date, the Ottoman government established public schools.

Thus, at the end of the Ottoman reign, 1917, there were two educational streams in Palestine. One was modern and had an intellectual affinity with contemporary western civilization. The other was traditional and had an intellectual affinity with distant, theocratic cultures. There were three religious divisions in each stream of education. Traditional Christian, Moslem and Jewish schools continued, and were relatively unchanged. There were four new types of institutions. The Arab sector had Christian missionary and Ottoman public schools; the Jewish sector had foreign philanthropic schools and a small number of indigenous Hebrew schools. Enrollments in all schools continued to follow religious divisions though a small percentage of children attended schools sponsored
by an authority of a different faith.

For almost four hundred years Palestine had developed in isolation from Europe. In this closed cultural atmosphere, Moslem, Christian and Jewish intellectualism had declined. While major cultural and academic centers of the Moslem world lay within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, Christianity and Judaism had flourished in Europe. Palestine's Christian and Jewish communities had a natural affinity with the West and that link brought them a sense of identity with transplanted western education.

The foreign missionary and philanthropic activities, and the Zionist Hebrew school movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shaped the vigorous Christian and Jewish school development of the pre-mandatory period. They transformed the prevailing mode of instruction and made available modern education of a standard in the best institutions comparable to the grammar school, the lycée or gymnasium. They introduced foreign languages, mathematics and the sciences. They became a more intrinsic element within Jewish and Christian communities than did the Ottoman public schools, which had scarcely begun to expand in Palestine when World War I began, within the Moslem sector. The uneven pattern of the three communities' educational development had consequences for the period of British rule in Palestine which succeeded the reign of the Ottoman Empire.

This chapter considers the Arab educational development in the pre-mandatory era. The first section focuses on the Ottoman Empire
and education, the second on the Islamic educational heritage and the third on Christian missionary schools which altered the nature of Christian education in Palestine.

The Ottoman Empire and Education

The word Arab embraces many people. In its narrowest definition, the word referred to the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula. There the Prophet Mohammed preached and assembled the earliest followers of Islam. Its holiest book, the Koran, is written in Arabic. The Koran remains the greatest ethical and literary masterpiece of the world embracing Islam.

The word of the prophet spread to peoples far beyond the peninsula and military conquests extended Arab authority in an earlier period of history to an empire stretching from western Europe to the Asian heartland. As George Antonius explains, "The two processes, islamisation and arabisation, ... although intimately interconnected, were by no means identical." In time, the term Arab connoted an Arabic speaking population and included, as it did in Palestine, non-Moslems.

While the majority of Palestinian Arabs shared the official faith of the empire, Ottoman rulers were not Arabs. The Arab people, who had once ruled Palestine, had little voice in the nineteenth century in a government whose seat of power was in Constantinople and whose leading officials were Turks, most of whom had no

knowledge of Arabic.\(^2\) For the conduct of affairs with the government, "the indispensable medium" was Turkish rather than Arabic.\(^3\) Reforms were periodically introduced, but they were short-lived and the empire suppressed local movements which appeared to threaten its power.

The Ottoman Empire controlled Palestine from 1517 to 1917, but so administered the country that Palestine as a defined territory was not a political entity. There were three administrative districts, one attaching the northern part of the country to the vilayet or province of Beirut, another consisting of the sanjak or county of Jerusalem, and a third belonging to the vilayet of Damascus. The leading officials were the district governors appointed by Constantinople, religious leaders and sheikhs or tribal heads who under the authority of the government could collect taxes and mount a force of soldiers.\(^4\) Each religious community was organized into a self-governing body or millet. Each was headed by the community's religious leader. The millets were responsible for such services as education.

The majority of Palestinian Arabs were Sunni Moslems;\(^5\) the minority were Christian and divided into several sects. Most of

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 87.  
\(^3\)Ibid.  
\(^5\) The Moslem people are divided into two main groups, Sunnites and Shiites. The groups differ in their understanding of who were the proper successors to the prophet. Each group has developed its own traditions.
the population was rural. In the 1880's, for example, the majority of towns had ten thousand or fewer inhabitants; Jerusalem, the largest town, had thirty thousand inhabitants.  

Conditions in the country were poor. Taxation was onerous; the government was corrupt; outbreaks of violence were frequent. Health conditions were poor and the population suffered from many diseases.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the empire had deteriorated. The dominance of conservative religious leaders robbed Islam of its latitudinarianism and repressive, reactionary sultans sought to isolate the empire from movements which had brought enlightenment to Europe. The process of erosion, which affected the economy, security and public services, extended to culture. Describing the area of Syria, which in his writing included Lebanon and Palestine, Antonius described the state of culture in the early nineteenth century,

The general intellectual level was very low. Such schools as existed were of an elementary type and, whether Moslem or Christian, were mainly dedicated to the narrower branches of religious studies; and, even in those studies, their standard was poor and their horizon close. 

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7 Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 15.

8 Ibid., p. 37.
An Arab intellectual and political awakening had begun during the century preceding the mandate. Mohammed Ali and his son Ibrahim governed the area for a short period and they encouraged a sense of Arab national identity. Missionaries established the first Arabic printing press in the area and introduced modern secondary schools, a few of which later grew into institutions of higher learning. In 1870 Butrus Bustani, a Lebanese Christian Arab, compiled an Arabic language dictionary and then a modified version of it for young people. In 1883 Bustani's six volume encyclopedia appeared and it included information assembled from both Arabic and European sources. He published the area's first political journal which called for harmony amongst the different faiths and stressed the value of education. Literary and scientific societies were formed and they began to encourage cultural and political nationalism, but the centers of intellectual activity were in Damascus and Beirut. Before the mandatory era, the new cultural and political movement was elitist and the numbers of Palestinians involved were small.

While the Ottoman Empire felt itself safe from Europe, and while that strength gave evidence of the superiority of Islam, the disposition and motive for adaptation were slight. The Napoleonic invasion of the Middle East indicated that the balance of power had

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9 Ibid., p. 39.
10 Ibid., pp. 47-50.
shifted dramatically and provoked an interest in France to whom Ottoman rulers turned for the prototype of their new schools.\textsuperscript{12}

Secularism as such has no great attraction for Muslims, but in a Western movement that was non-Christian, even anti-Christian, and whose divorce from Christianity was stressed by its leading exponents, the Muslim world might hope to find the elusive secret of Western power without compromising its own religious beliefs and traditions.\textsuperscript{13}

The nature of French intellectualism appeared to allow selective borrowing without the concomitant of rejecting Islam, but the concepts ultimately supported drastic change.

In the mid-nineteenth century the reforms of the Tanzimat era, a series of efforts to modernize the military and administrative bureaucracy, led the government to depart from its historic position of standing aloof from popular education. Pressed by the patent weakness of the empire and its inability to resist western encroachment, the government turned to education as a means of achieving technical parity with the West. As an alternative to religious schools, the new educational plan foresaw a secular public system under official sponsorship. In these, the western spirit of critical and scientific reasoning would replace the authority of the past and worldly subjects would become the focal point within the curriculum. The government anticipated graduates

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 56-57.

forming an elitist administrative and technical corps.^{14}

After centuries of neglect, mathematics and science became acceptable for their substantive value. The teaching of foreign languages and literature marked the end of intellectual parochialism. Turkish became the language of public schools throughout the empire. Education now had a secular and national emphasis. With deliberation the state shaped instruction to serve new objectives. In following western models of education, the government did not seek unlimited change. Innovation had limited acceptance within the configuration of autocracy and theocracy, and the new schools evolved primarily from economic, military and administrative incentives.

The Turkish education law of 1869 set the foundation for public schools, but for half a century the Ottoman government did little to implement the statute in the outlying province of Palestine.^{15} Theoretically, the program required compulsory elementary schooling, a graded school structure, with tuition-free instruction from the primary to the highest levels. Under the centralized control of a new department, the Ministry of Education in Constantinople, each province was to have its own educational office. In addition to primary schools in every village, towns of at least


five hundred families were to have higher elementary schools while in towns of more than one thousand families the government planned to establish pre-secondary preparatory schools. The law provided secondary schools, patterned after the lycée, to be located in every province. An ambitious scheme for the empire, the implementation of the plan failed.

In 1913 the government introduced a second plan of sweeping reform. Legislation concentrated on improving primary schools, compulsory and free for six years.

Primary schools shall teach the following: The Ku-ran (to Muslim students only); elements of religion (to non-Muslims, the elements of their own religion); reading and writing; Ottoman language; geography, especially Ottoman geography; arithmetic and geometry; history, especially Ottoman history; civics, science and hygiene; handiwork and drawing; religious and patriotic poetry; physical education and school games; for boys military training; for girls, housekeeping and sewing.

Though benefiting the northern area of Palestine incorporated into the vilayet of Beirut, the law scarcely affected the sanjek of Jerusalem and the southern tier of Palestine. Schooling remained the domain of religious authorities of each millet or of the increasing number of foreign missionary and philanthropic associations. During World War I the Ottoman government opened Salahiyya College, or secondary school, in Jerusalem where the courses combined traditional Islamic studies with secular studies and Arabic was

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16 Kazamias, Education in Turkey, p. 63.
17 Ibid., p. 83.
the language of instruction. Acre and Nablus also had secondary schools. Palestine had few public schools. In 1914-1915, according to figures cited by Porath, there were 98 government schools which enrolled 8,248 pupils of an estimated school age population, ages seven to eleven, which numbered 71,933.¹⁹

In 1923 the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations evaluated the quality of education in the pre-mandatory period and concluded that the Muslim educational development was less well developed than that of the Christian and Jewish sectors.

It may be noted, moreover, that in ... [Syria, Lebanon and Palestine] the Christian and Jewish elements of the native population have founded, and themselves maintained, with the assistance of a large number of foreign missions, public educational establishments which meet, at any rate to some extent, the needs of their populations, whereas the Moslems are still in this respect in a somewhat backward condition. As a result, Christian and Jewish schools will have to be satisfied [satisfied] with official subsidies and a sort of higher supervision exercised by the Administrator, and the latter will have to concentrate its main efforts on developing Moslem schools.²⁰

While the statistics are only approximate and refer to enrollments in 1922, the figures suggest the magnitude of the difference in the enrollment of school-age children of each religious community in the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the early years of British administration. The school age population, ages five to fourteen, numbered 85,778. Enrollments in the non public Moslem, Christian and Jewish public schools were 1,753, 8,297 and 15,549 respectively. An additional 17,946 pupils attended public school.

¹⁹Porath, Palestinian Arab Nationalism, p.21.
According to figures cited in the government's report for the year 1922, 4% of the Jewish school age population received no formal instruction, 19% of the Christian school age population did not attend school and 83% of the Moslem school age population did not go to school.\(^1\) The comparison indicates gross discrepancies among each community's access to schools. Less than a quarter of Muslim children received any education. The Arab Muslim community for whom public schools were alternative to religious schools lacked the facilities comparable to those which the foreign school movement provided Christians and Jews. The transition to modern education had begun in Palestine, but unevenly.

**Islamic Education Heritage**

The Islamic religion had a profound effect on Arab educational history; theology gave education its goals and meaning. The Islamic religion like traditional Judaism permeated every aspect of life. "Islam ... was not only a religion. It was also a system of society, State, law, art and thought, in short a new way of life which had religion as its unifying factor."\(^2\) Religious precepts determined social codes and values for the individual and the community. Islamic religion is essentially a moral and social code of conduct which embraces the totality of life. The individual is accountable for five types of action: deeds absolutely required, desirable but not mandatory, that conduct which


is permissible, and two forms of negative deeds -- those without approval, but not warranting punishment, and those absolutely forbidden. This code determines man's relationship with others and with God. The role of the community is to make possible the commission of noble actions and to make unacceptable the forbidden. Perfection according to orthodox Islamic thinking existed in the lifetime of the Prophet.

Muhammad's early followers were the best generation; their successors, the second best ... The living generation is not permitted to change the inherited ways -- for change must needs be for the worse. Innovation in religious matters (and religion covers everything relevant to the good life) is to be rejected, the innovator liable to punishment.²⁴

There are five major duties for every Moslem, "The Five Pillars."

The fulfillment of these obligations is essential for salvation. The 'Five Pillars' are: (1) ... the profession of faith ... 'there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah'. (2) ... the traditional canonical prayer of worship which the Muslim is supposed to perform five times a day at certain fixed hours ... (3) ... the fast during the month of Ramadan ... (4) payment of the tithe and (5) ... pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.²⁵

Islamic educational history before the twentieth century falls into two periods. In the first, the golden age of Islam, scholarship had an expansive creative quality and the educational

institutions, particularly on the higher levels, reflected the
cultural vitality of the age. The beginning of the second era
occurred as the vigor of culture began to diminish following the
Abbasid Dynasty (750-1258).\textsuperscript{26}

The first era received its inspiration from Mohammed and
his teaching. About 571, the prophet was born. His religious
message gave cohesion and a sense of purpose to the hitherto
splintered peoples of the semitic world. Arab civilization was
in a unique position to foster learning. Religion stressed and
respected learning; society was open to scholarship and scholars
from other lands. Arab scholars helped preserve the classical
corpus of learning, enriched knowledge by their own creativity and
their assimilation of other cultures, and with their scholarship
greatly enriched European intellectual life. Their work contrib-
uted to the fields of mathematics, medicine, science and philosophy.
Arab savants were skilled at the methods of scientific investiga-
tion. They established libraries to which scholars from other
nations had access and within their own empire maintained many
institutions of higher learning.

At the end of the Middle Ages, Palestine had more than thirty
madrasahs\textsuperscript{27} which were collegiate schools attached to mosques.
Palestine did not have institutions as famous as those in other

\textsuperscript{26} UNESCO, Compulsory Education in Arab States, with Special
Reference to the Cairo Conference, December 1954 (Paris: UNESCO,

\textit{Encyclopedia of Islam} (Leiden, Holland: E.J. Brill, 1936),
3:355.
parts of the Arab world or a school with the lasting reputation of Al Azhar in Egypt. However, the movement of students from one country to another was not uncommon. The relative absence of national distinctions or emphases and the religious character of Muslim instruction made Palestinian schooling an integrated component of Islamic educational development.

Despite support by the state and upper classes in particular eras, progressive scholarship was a branch rather than an integrated element of Islamic culture and had never dispelled the disquietude of conservative religious forces. However significant, intellectual development had no organic relationship with Islam and, as pointed out by von Grunebaum, "had no root in the fundamental needs and aspirations of their civilization." The superb accomplishments of the Golden Age reflected the work of a small elite, left the masses untouched, and did not deeply affect the sinews of society. As conservative theologians became dominant, education lost its vitality and scholarship its vigor. The creativity of earlier periods gave way to a spirit of conformity and reaction. A religion which had supported originality and critical thinking became a weapon of cultural suppression. In the era of Ottoman ascendancy, the enlightenment of the classical

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29 Ibid.
30 UNESCO, Technical Education in Arab States, p. 9.
period gave way to closed intellectual standards which censored innovation and independent thought.

In the second era, conservative theologians and reactionary governments constrained intellectualism and educational development.

The development of a static society and the predominance of a static formalist theology led to a decline in independent speculation and research. The passive dependence on authority in public life found its parallel in literature, which suffered a loss of vitality and independence. The most striking feature of the time is the increased stress on form for artists, on memory for scholars.  

The demand for conformity and resistance to change blocked intermittent attempts at reform by more liberal Arab thinkers. The end of the cultural decline began in the nineteenth century and gained strength in the twentieth.  

The second period of Islamic educational history witnessed the stultification of the schools. Without internal or external stimulus for growth, the quality of education had retreated from classical Islamic standards.  

Innovation became an anathema, forbidden in schools and condemned without. The spirit of critical thinking had disappeared except as narrowly and traditionally applied in religious philosophy. Muslim theology, like that of Christianity, had to struggle with questions of faith and reason. Classical Islamic philosophers had reconciled the two, but the

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mysticism and dogmatism of later periods made finite the definition of truth and viewed rationalism or empiricism as the enemy of faith. "Islamic philosophy was in so backward a state that it was almost a negation of philosophy."  

The locus of scholarship and instruction was in the past. The perception of truth and reality had no reference point in contemporary life, but turned instead to an earlier age as the epitome of perfection. Only to the extent of its emulation of the past, of its adoption of traditional configurations of thought and behavior did the present have value. Departures from traditional interpretation of truth and goodness whether in thought or action had no validity. Ideas had no autonomous value. The concept of progress, a willingness to move forward intellectually, to apply rational and scientific criteria, or to modify traditional standards of judgment were absent from intellectual currents.

Such an atmosphere marred scholarship. "The era of compilation, annotation, abridgement and imitation which had its beginning centuries before continued with fewer and poorer production. Throughout the Ottoman age no Syrian poet, philosopher, artist, scientist or essayist of first order made his appearance."  

Until the nineteenth century schools from the lowest to the highest

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35 Philip K. Hitti, History of Syria (New York: Macmillan Co., 1951), p. 674. Palestine had no separate political entity and Hitti includes the area of Palestine in his discussion of Syria.
educational level were religious schools or on a more advanced
plane, theological academies, which offered denominational instruc-
tion in which secular courses narrowly interpreted were only
acceptable as the handmaiden to the study of religion.

In contrast to the cross-cultural fertilization of the Middle
Ages, intended isolation separated the Middle East from the social,
political, economic and intellectual saltations which reshaped and
modernized western Europe. 36

Educational objectives in Islam were indistinguishable from
religious objectives because Islamic civilization did not divide
life into sacred and secular compartments. The concept of secular-
ism was a western concept.

The Koran was the foundation for all study.

The Koran is Muhammad's evidentiary miracle. Its inimi-
tability has been accepted dogma since the fourth/tenth
century. The uniqueness ... of the Book is seen variously
in its prophesying of future events, the information about
otherwise unknown incidents of the past, the fact that nobody
rivaled it despite the Prophet's challenge, and the unprece-
dentedness and surpassing excellence of its style. 37

The kuttab or primary school, similar throughout Muslim
countries, established the motif of all Muslim education. After
the death of the Prophet and the generation which knew him, the
need for an instrument to transmit his teaching became evident.
By the ninth century the kuttab had become a popular school. 38

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36 UNESCO, Technical Education in Arab States, pp. 9-10.
37 von Grunebaum, Islam, p. 86.
38 Bayard Dodge, Muslim Education in Medieval Times (Washington,
For centuries the kuttab had a singular educational task. The school's purpose was to initiate the young into the obligations of membership in the Muslim community. "Education, like everything else in the social order, was divinely ordained, and like the society it served education had the definite purpose of conducing to approved conduct and happiness in this world and eternal bliss in the next." Muslim society had no charity school or academy adjusting instruction to the social class of the pupil, though children of wealthy families probably attended the better kuttabs connected with schools of advanced study or had a private tutor. By custom girls usually did not attend school, but learned their household and social responsibilities at home. The kuttab was a religious school and simultaneously a socializing agency. Its course of instruction acknowledged the brotherhood of all Muslims, their dependence on Allah, individual and collective responsibilities.

The curriculum was unvaried. Beginning with the easiest passages, the youngster memorized the Koran, learned religious ritual and prayer. Great stress was given to accuracy. In content, the kuttab changed little from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. The kuttab offered no vocational training and

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reading, writing and arithmetic, when taught, were incidental subjects."

Arab theorists had developed progressive educational theories, but their insight into the nature of childhood, pedagogic methods and educational objectives scarcely affected teaching." Children who entered at six or seven were taught by the same methods used with older pupils. Discipline was harsh and no account was taken of individual differences. The authoritarian role of the teacher corresponded to the authoritarian position of the father. Obedience, conformity, acceptance of authority characterized the school atmosphere.

The elementary teacher usually had little education and little prestige. Two folk sayings suggest the low esteem elementary school teachers had. "Seek no advice from teachers, shepherds and those who sit much among women;" a foolish action might lead to the retort, "More foolish than a teacher of an elementary school." A typical lesson repeated without variety began with the teacher's oral presentation. In unison the children repeated what they had just heard. Continuous drills, the stress on memorization, the obligation of minutely accurate performance stultified instruction. On

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"3 Tibawi, Islamic Education, pp. 35-46.

the primary level, understanding lost place to the insistence on correct wording and inflection.\(^5\)

Effective transition from traditional to modern education which occurred during the Mandate involved questions beyond a replacement of the curriculum. Teachers had depended on oral pedagogic techniques and a uniform method. During the mandatory era, teachers institutes had to introduce not only new courses, but a different style of teaching. Concepts of childhood development and psychology represented a departure from customary attitudes towards children and these had to be introduced.

Ungraded classes, the scarcity of material, the poor education of the teacher made scholarship uneven. In the smaller villages the quality of instruction was exceptionally poor and many villagers were illiterate.\(^6\) The dimension of illiteracy in the Ottoman Era is suggested in a random sampling of village men tested by the Department of Education, Palestinian government, in 1932. Fifty-three percent of those who received their education before 1918 failed the Arabic written tests, an additional nineteen percent receiving the rating "weak."\(^7\) Since women customarily received no formal instruction, the number of literate adults was very small.

\(^{45}\) Radwan, Old and New Forces in Egyptian Education, p. 62.
\(^{46}\) Lutfiyya, Baytin a Jordanian Village, pp. 170-71.
It should be noted, however, that literate adults may have migrated from their villages. Education for the majority of Muslim pupils terminated with the kuttab but only a fraction of the school age population had access to schools.48

The madrasah or collegiate mosque was the higher school. Following a course set in the Middle Ages, advanced education had an informal structure without a fixed period of study, set procedure or single curriculum. Students became the disciple of one or more scholars who presented lectures in their homes or in mosques. Not uncommonly a man might devote a lifetime to continuous study.49 Its precise origin uncertain, the madrasah developed in the ninth to eleventh centuries.50 By the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, their growth had proliferated throughout the Moslem world.51 Custom encouraged students to continue their education beyond their own country. The madrasah offered a flexible program whose length varied with the interests and ability of each pupil. At the completion of a course the student received a certificate acknowledging his proficiency and permitting him to lecture on that subject. The quality of this higher education in Palestine by the end of the pre-mandatory period had declined. The madrasah had

48 Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 57. Tibawi estimates that in 1914 a total of 8,705 children attended Muslim private schools.
49 Dodge, Muslim Education in Medieval Times, pp. 7-9.
51 Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, 1:57.
the task of upholding authority and explaining its sources, the Koran, theological literature, laws and commentaries. Education had narrowed to the fields of linguistic sciences, law, theology and courses used instrumentally in their pursuit. The purpose of study was to acquire finite and absolute knowledge. Radwan points out the essential deficiency of the schools.

The educative process was conceived as a process of rote memorizing. It was too theoretical to realize any practical results, too authoritarian to develop any measure of critical thinking, too passive to help form active leaders, and too formal to perpetuate in useful form the knowledge which it was intended to preserve.

Looking to the past as the standard of a fixed framework of knowledge, neither teachers nor students had the impetus to do creative work or expand their understanding of the world.

Missionary Education

The foreign missionary school movement introduced a second stream of modern schools in the pre-mandatory period. Western missionaries had already established centers in other parts of the non-Christian world, but before the nineteenth century Ottoman regulations discouraged their entry into the Middle East. A revitalization and expansion of missionary organizations in the West, the success of their overseas activities, the historic religious appeal of the land and a more favorable political climate in the

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52 Radwan, Old and New Forces in Egyptian Education, pp. 59-64.
53 Ibid., p. 68.
empire encouraged a proliferation of missionary activities in Palestine.  

Though their primary objective was conversion, the establishment of schools was the natural corollary of missionary activities. Christianity historically depended on literate communicants and clergy. In foreign countries the missionaries wished to prepare some natives to become teachers and clerics and to reinforce the understanding of converts. Where proselytization aroused local resistance, the establishment of schools broadened the popular appeal of the movement. In addition to the practical necessity of starting schools to reinforce the tenets of faith, humanitarianism and a sense of responsibility to civilize animated the movement. Convictions of western moral and intellectual superiority, the belief in the potentially unlimited benefit bestowed by the Christian religion and education influenced their work. The missionaries viewed their task as bringing enlightenment through personal example, conversion and education.

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54 According to the census of 1922, 73,024 people or approximately ten percent of the population were Christian. Before the nineteenth century there were no Protestant settlements. The largest communities were Catholic, Orthodox and Uniate. Harry Luke and Edward Keith Roach, eds., The Handbook of Palestine and Trans-Jordan (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1930), p. 27 and pp. 44-54.


56 Ibid., p. 42.

The early missionaries were educational pioneers. Cultural isolation and obscurantism had weakened the quality of scholarship and intellectual accomplishments. Books in any language were scarce. The Middle East had only a few Arabic "hand presses." In the estimation of Antonius, the decline had begun to corrupt the purity of the formal and written language.  

The missionaries were charting a new educational course. The Ottoman government had not yet assumed any responsibility for public education and the indigenous, religious schools made no effort to introduce modern knowledge to their curricula. Many provided only the rudiments of writing, reading and arithmetic. There were no textbooks for children and no body of organized, graded and sequential studies. Teachers in the area had generally only modest knowledge. The missionaries had to devise such basic aspects of development as planning a curriculum, training teachers and preparing material. They also had to resolve the practical problems of finding suitable quarters, winning the confidence of the population and adjusting their goals to the regulations of the Ottoman government. In opening schools for girls, the missionaries were reaching a group whose formal education, hitherto, had been largely ignored.  

The policies of the missionaries varied. The ability and  

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59 Ibid., pp. 41-42.
60 Ibid., p. 39.
personal interests of mission leaders, the availability of funds, the attitudes of the home boards and local circumstances sometimes halted or reversed educational work. Some conservative missionaries believed that an emphasis on education interfered with the primary duty of conversion. According to this view, religious and intellectual enlightenment were not necessarily interrelated and, giving the natives too advanced an education would be counter-productive to the work of the church. Others worked diligently to introduce schools and higher studies.  

Ottoman law regulated to some extent school development. Missionaries were forbidden to convert Muslims and could only open schools in Christian settlements, usually located in towns. Penalties were imposed on Muslim parents sending children to foreign-sponsored schools. On the condition that Muslim children neither receive religious instruction nor attend religious classes, some exceptions to the rule were allowed, as in Nablus, where no other schools existed.  

By the end of the nineteenth century the limited number of conversions and the popularity of mission schools helped settle the debate over the relationship of education and the duty of missions. The missionaries at least would bring enlightenment to a local population even though proselytizing efforts failed. Their schools would leave no doubt as to their Christian sponsorship, but

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61 Lindsay, American Schools in the Levant, pp. 153-159.
the missionaries would not limit their work to religious activities. By the turn of the century Christian education had firmly entered a second phase.

Some suggestion of the scope of missionary efforts in nineteenth century Palestine is evident in the work of the Church Missionary Society, the major English group. In 1895-96, the society maintained 47 schools with an enrollment of 1418 boys and 689 girls. Germans, Italians, Russians, French and Americans, as well as British missionary societies, were engaged in educational work in Palestine.

Instruction in the early schools centered on religion and auxiliary subjects. In the elementary school, teachers commonly taught in Arabic and pupils studied reading, writing and arithmetic as well as the scriptures and prayers. Missionary textbooks usually had religious and moral themes. Pupils memorized large sections of the texts and scriptures. The more talented students received extra training to prepare them to be teaching and clerical assistants, but most schooling was on a simple level.

In the secondary schools, the language of instruction was European and corresponded to the native language of the sponsoring missionary body. The schools differed.

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63 Ibid., p. 229.

64 Lindsay, Nineteenth Century American Schools in the Levant, p. 108.
The French schools were most assiduous in cultivating the French language and culture often at the expense of Arabic and native culture. Their products tended to be more French Catholic than anything Syrian or Arab ... By contrast the Americans encouraged the teaching of Arabic ...; so did the Russians. In this matter British practice was more according to American and Russian than French practice.65

The missionary educational development did not divorce itself, perhaps could not, from an allegiance to and affinity with western civilization. The Palestinian student basically received the same education as his American, British, French, German or Italian peer and, as a result, straddled two cultures in a society which yet lacked the mechanism to define its own course of transplantation.

Most secondary schools had a literary bias and offered a preparatory liberal arts curriculum which tended to follow the model of education in the missionaries' home country. French and Italian schools did so to a greater degree than others. American, British and Russian schools gave greater attention to courses in Arabic literature, history and grammar. The education brought to Palestine was imitative and the schools in many respects, despite their appeal, were alien institutions.

The English schools tended to be similar to British public schools and several had facilities for boarders.66 Residential quarters permitted the schools to attract pupils from distant towns and also were a means of inculcating the special spirit of the school. The German schools were distinguished because their

65 Tibawi, Islamic Education, pp. 64-65.
66 Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 62.
curricula provided vocational studies. The Syrian Orphanage and
the Schmidt's Girls' College had, in addition to general elementary
and secondary courses, classes in needlework, electricity, "printing ... shoe-making and carpentry". A representative French
school was the Collège des Frères in Jerusalem, opened in 1875.
It included a lower and secondary section which prepared pupils to
sit for French examinations. A school for girls was similar, but
also offered classes in the domestic arts. The Opera Cardinal
Ferrari, maintained by an Italian missionary society, was a second-
dary institute providing education comparable to college prepara-
tory schools in Italy. There was also an Italian vocational school
in Palestine. American and British schools had a humanistic
curriculum; the French, Italian and German societies also provided
vocational courses as part of their educational program.

The missionary schools attracted few Moslem students for much
the same reason that Ottoman public schools did not appeal to
Jewish and Christian pupils. Religion was a barrier. In addition,
the schools appeared to the Moslem population as an extension of
foreign authority. "European political and military encroachment

67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., p. 63.  69 Ibid., p. 62.  70 Ibid., p. 64.
was associated by Muslim public opinion with European religious and cultural interference."\footnote{71}

Many of the schools opened in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries continued to exist during the mandate. Some evidence of the extensiveness of missionary education work appears in the educational statistics of 1921-22. The school enrollment in public and private Palestinian schools was 42,801; the enrollment in Christian private schools was 7,434.\footnote{72}

The missionary movement made many contributions to the Middle East. It introduced modern universities to the Levant; on an elementary and secondary level it increased the number of schools and appreciably enhanced the quality of education; it opened schools for girls. Many of these schools continued to function during the mandate and, particularly on the secondary level, increased the country's resources. These were the first schools to teach secular and foreign literature, foreign languages and contemporary sciences. The schools had courses of high quality which taught Arabic grammar and literature. In modifying the content of existing education, the movement both made available new areas of knowledge and contemporary modes of thought. The work of the missionaries helped to end the intellectual isolation which had

\footnote{71 Tibawi, British Interests in Palestine, p. 231. The view of missionaries as the representatives of European governments was also prevalent in other areas. See David Abernathy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 32.}

\footnote{72 Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables and Diagrams for the Scholastic Year 1945-46 (Jerusalem: The Government Printer, 1948), Table XXVI.}
engulfed Palestine for centuries. Missionary efforts encouraged an examination of existing values. "Perhaps more important than language training was the mental outlook to which the new education gave rise. Inevitably new ideas introduced new frames of reference." Many leaders of the cultural and nationalist revival of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries received their education in schools maintained by missionary societies. However, the movement also had disadvantages.

The educational movement inspired and led by missionaries had some negative consequences. In a country with an already fragmented population, missionary schools which emphasized foreign languages and cultures contributed to the widening of cultural divisions. Denominational rivalry was also divisive. George Antonius who describes and praises the contributions of the missionary movement, makes clear an essential failing.

Thus the progress of Western education was not an unmixed blessing ... It emphasised sectarian divisions and added to them, in a country where their existence was ... one of the main obstacles to national progress. It became an instrument of political penetration as well as a vehicle of culture; and, more reprehensibly still, it facilitated and sometimes deliberately encouraged the acquisition of political power by the clergy. In those two directions, it was nullifying the work of the Arab reformers ... who had made the first stand against sectarian dissension and its evil counsellor - the political ambition of the ecclesiastics. It was striking at the root of the Arab national movement.74

74 Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 93.
The missionary educational development did not divorce itself, perhaps could not, from an allegiance to and affinity with western civilization. The Palestinian student basically received the same education as his American, British, French, German or Italian peer and, as a result, straddled two cultures in a society which yet lacked the mechanism and power to define its own course of transplantation.

The influence of western education on Christians and Jews accelerated the differences amongst the three religious communities. Ottoman regulations restricted the attendance of Moslems in non-Moslem schools. As a result, their exposure to modern schools and western knowledge occurred, except for very small numbers, long after these schools had made inroads in the other two communities. In addition, western culture had a less radical impact on Christian and Jewish populations whose heritage had a western derivation. Their economy and axiology, their urban residence, the acceptance of secularism in Jewish and Christian communities abroad made western values less disruptive to their lives. "In the Christian perspective Europe appeared in a totally different light: It was not, as for the Muslim reformists, a threat to ward off, but a model to copy."75 As a result of the immigration of Zionists, the influence and authority of traditional Judaism was waning and,

75 Shirabi, Arab Intellectuals and the West, p. 57.
thus, the Jewish community in spite of its orthodox sector, was in a position comparable to that of the Christian rather than Moslem population. For the Moslem Arab, the nineteenth and twentieth century movements in education underscored the unresolved tensions between Islam and modernity and accentuated the implications of religious differences amongst Arabs.

Summary

In the period prior to British rule, modern and traditional schools prepared pupils for lives shaped by religious law and duty. These religious schools were the product of a theological, medieval culture and had roots deeply imbedded in the indigenous society. Foreign missionaries and the Ottoman government introduced an alternative form of schooling presenting secular courses which associated instruction with worldly objectives and with European languages and culture.

Because the country had a small number of Ottoman public schools and because the missionary movement was a Christian one, the Moslem community continued to depend primarily on the kuttab and madrasah, the traditional lower and higher religious schools.

Centuries earlier Moslem scholarship had been vigorous, expansive and creative. Intellectual achievements had, however, declined when cultural isolation and theological rigidity enveloped
society. Religious education lost the breadth characteristic of instruction in earlier centuries. The traditional course of study in the modern era discouraged innovation and the exploration of contemporary knowledge. The Moslem community of Palestine was therefore at an educational disadvantage in comparison to the Christian and Jewish sectors where modern schools were more extensive.
CHAPTER III

JEWSIH EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE

Until the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Jewish community of Ottoman Palestine, like other religious groups, maintained a network of traditional, religious schools linked by a common curriculum and sharing identical theological-educational objectives, but lacking a unified or formal organization and structure. The ethnic subdivisions within the Jewish community maintained their own schools whose language of instruction corresponded to that spoken in the country of origin of the sponsors. Hebrew was studied as the language of sacred literature, but its use for classroom communications was considered profane and was abjured. A veritable babel of tongues fractionalized schools. Education concentrated on theological studies narrowly interpreted and the pursuit of secular subjects acceptable in earlier periods was all but ignored. Instruction ignored those courses transmitting the largesse of secular literary humanism and, similarly, disregarded vocational training.

These traditional institutions were closely related to and reflective of a theocratic society. Acceptance of values derived from earlier civilizations, rejection of independent thought and innovation, and isolation from contemporary intellectual currents characterized both schools and society.

Until the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Palestinian Jewish society and its schools were a microcosm of Jewish communities
throughout the world similarly immersed in self-contained, religious societies with only peripheral contacts with the nations in which they lived. The Jew defined himself and was viewed by others on the basis of religion and that status overshadowed nationality. By choice and by imposition, Jewish society in every country maintained a high degree of separateness. While many had a greater degree of economic self-sufficiency and individual Jews might participate more fully in society at large, Jewish settlements in the Diaspora had more in common with Palestinian Jewry than with non-Jewish societies of the native lands. Not surprisingly Jewish educational institutions reflected this insularity and were remarkably homogeneous, their relative uniformity transcending geographic boundaries. As a consequence Palestinian Jews and Jewish immigrants to Palestine shared a common educational heritage and parallel institutions, an educational position comparable to that of medieval Europe.

With the elimination of restrictive codes and under the impetus of cultural ferment, Judaism in the west amended its exclusively religious character. Theology no longer dominated all Jewish schools, as it did in Palestine, and the challenges to orthodoxy created a diversity and openness not yet present in Middle Eastern Jewish ideology. For the first time in modern Jewish history significant ideological and national distinctions existed. The cultural process differed to some extent in Western and Eastern Europe, but the intellectual awakening affected the weltanschauung of European Jewry and its perceptions of Palestine. No longer was the land viewed only as a sacred center for religious devotions and study.
The rise of the philanthropic and Zionist movements established a new basis for cultural contact between Palestinian Jewry and the west and this contact affected educational development. Concern with the country's poor health standards and impoverishment inspired philanthropic efforts to restore the self sufficiency of Palestinian Jewry, to introduce new economic ventures, and to establish schools which added practical courses to the traditional curriculum. Imbued with the nationalism of the century, Zionists aspired to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine without waiting for the fulfillment of divine redemption. The Zionists began forging a new society in which innovative education had an essential role. Their schools became an instrument in the revitalization of Hebraic culture and the total restructuring of the community. To paraphrase George Counts, they dared to use the schools to build a new social order.

The quickened pulse within western Judaism occurred at a period of international change in the Middle East. The capitularies granted by the Ottoman government to European nations allowed a foreign presence hitherto discouraged. Western philanthropic societies, Jewish as well as Christian, began to work in the land. At the end of the nineteenth century, thousands of Jewish immigrants arrived whose impelling motives for settlement were nationalistic rather than religious. These two streams, one philanthropic and one Zionist, affected the fabric of Jewish society and profoundly modified educational development.

This chapter seeks to portray the Jewish educational heritage, its traditional foundation and the transformation from a religious
to a secular-religious movement. Pre-mandatory educational innovations animated a transition which accelerated the incorporation and popularization of modern educational patterns. The change incorporated the tenets of modern interpretations of Judaism and of Jewish Palestine. An expanding network of contemporary Hebrew schools in the early twentieth century reflected this non-traditional ideology. World War I diminished the educational role of philanthropic societies and led to the positing of the World Zionist Organization as a co-sponsor with Palestinian Jewry of a major cluster of non-traditional schools. During the mandate these institutions received recognition as the Hebrew public school system.

The Setting

In the centuries after the fall of the Jewish commonwealth, the size of the Jewish population of Palestine fluctuated. Physical hardship, natural disaster, political instability and repression impeded a stable and continuous growth. Pietistic Jews continuously migrated to the land, but the hope of "restoration" was viewed as awaiting divine "redemption."¹ Under Ottoman rule, economic and cultural conditions varied from one town to another, from one century to the next.² By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the welfare of Palestinian Jewry had radically declined and conditions in the Ottoman Empire had greatly deteriorated.

Approximately fifty-five hundred Jews lived in Palestine, in sequestered quarters of four sacred towns: Jerusalem, Tiberias, Safad and Hebron, and philanthropy largely sustained them. In 1839 British records give this picture of Jerusalem.

The Jews in Jerusalem are in general very poor, there are a few...independent of the contributions sent from Europe.

Some few are engaged in Trade...the extreme poverty of the Country, and their want of protection, added to the long continuance of the Plague, close every avenue to the extension of commerce among them.

The spirit of toleration towards the Jew, is not yet known here to the same extent it is in Europe....

...Still, the Jew in Jerusalem is not estimated in value, much above a dog - and scarcely a day passes that I do not hear of some act of Tyranny and oppression against a Jew - chiefly by the soldiers....

Poor sanitation and disease led to high mortality rates. In Jerusalem almost thirty percent of the children were orphans or had only one living parent.

The traditional Jews of Palestine considered themselves and were viewed by diaspora Jewry as an elite community, one dedicated to prayer and the study of the holy literature. They represented an unbroken physical and spiritual chain with ancient Judaism. The religious determinant of values and intellectual currents within the Jewish communities throughout

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the world gave special importance to the way of life of Palestinian Jewry and its institutions. By European standards, however, their educational level was appallingly low.\(^6\)

Palestinian Jewry still adhered to modes, ideas and institutions shaped in earlier eras and viewed life through a conservative religious prism, suspicious of change. They were disinterested in political and social reformation, lacked the means to stimulate change had they been receptive to it, and sought to preserve a specific religious culture.\(^7\) The fulfillment of religious obligations fixed the rationale of the community and its members. Adherence to the written and oral law applied to every aspect of life, personal and social. The rhythm of the community, its values and essential patterns, its intellectual and spiritual outlook stemmed from ancient traditions, the sacred literature, and proscribed duties. The Jewish community lived in the present so as to honor, and attach themselves to, the past. Their contemporary world found significance to the degree of observance of ideals, customs and laws laid down in a distant age. Conformity was expected and a dependent, inflexible milieu created. The isolation and self-containment of Jewry had diminished creative vitality and tolerance.

Until the nineteenth century, the ideological consensus of Palestinian Jewry had also typified world Jewry. Even when

\(^6\)Hyamson, British Consulate, 2:428.

\(^7\)Vital, Origins of Zionism, pp. 8-9.
flourishing Jewish centers developed in the diaspora, a cross fertilization of ideas, the movement of populations, and the continuous sharing of and allegiance to the experiences of the Biblical-talmudic ages had minimized the effect of geo-cultural differences of Jewish life. The immediate cultural environment was of less consequence than a common, universal heritage. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, political, social and cultural trends breached the traditionalism of Western European Jewry while Palestine remained a bastion of orthodoxy.\footnote{Dorothy Willner, Nation-Building and Community in Israel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 29.}

The Jewish population of Palestine was composed of multiple small groups separated by language, ethnic and cultural differences. Many of these sub-communities had their own rabbis, synagogues, schools, religious courts and associations. Musta'rabbin were Arabic speaking Jews who had maintained an unbroken lineage with the land.\footnote{Raphael Patai, Israel Between East and West (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1953), p. 85.} Oriental Jews, those from North Africa and Asia, spoke principally Arabic, Persian and Aramaic;\footnote{Ibid, p. 25.} they included "Yemenites..., Persians..., Kurdistanians..., Bokharians..., Syrians, Babylonians..., Moroccans...." Sephardic Jews, literally those with a Spanish heritage, spoke Ladino or a Jewish-Spanish vernacular written in Hebrew letters.\footnote{Lazar Grunhut, "The Jewish Population in Palestine," Zionist Work in Palestine, ed. Israel Cohen (New York: Judaean Publishing Co., 1912), p. 30.}
In the mid-nineteenth century these demographic groups comprised approximately seventy-five percent of the Jewish population and under the millet law of 1865 the Ottoman government recognized the chief Sephardic rabbi as head of the Jewish community. All of the Jewish community did not view him as their titular head. The religious practices of the Sephardim differed from those of a second major division, the Ashkenazim, literally Jews of German origin.

The Ashkenazim spoke Yiddish, a lingua franca similar to German, but written in a Hebrew script, and came originally from northern and eastern Europe where three quarters of world Jewry lived. By the end of the nineteenth century they had become the largest and most influential group in the traditional sector of society as well as the Zionist. To a greater degree than the Sephardim, Eastern European settlers were initially more isolated from the general environment. Few engaged in

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12Patai, Israel East and West, p. 80.
13Israel Kolatt, "The Organization of the Jewish Population of Palestine and the Development of its Political Consciousness Before World War I," Studies of Palestine During the Ottoman Period, p. 211.
14Arthur Ruppin. The Jews of Today (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1913), pp. 37-38. The Russian Empire contained the largest Jewish population or approximately 44.2 percent of world Jewry in 1913. The majority of immigration to Palestine in the decades preceding the mandate came from this area.
15Ibid., p. 283. In 1910 Jewish population of Palestine estimated to be 86,000 or 14.3% of the total. Jerusalem had the largest Jewish population, 50,000 people. 28,000 others lived in smaller towns and 8,000 in agricultural settlements. There were 32,000 Sephardim and Oriental Jews, 31,000 traditional Ashkenazim, and 23,000 new settlers, also mainly Ashkenazim.
trade or knew Arabic. Most were not Ottoman nationals and thus were dependent on the protection of foreign consuls; Ashkenazic Jewry did not have an equivalent statutory recognition as the Sephardic community.¹⁷

Ideologically they tended to be conservative and offered the strongest resistance to educational innovation of the mid-century. A system of small organizations called Kolelim, ethnic subdivisions corresponding to town or country of origin, fragmented the community. The strong allegiance to the Kolel and financial dependence on it, the separation between Hasidim or pietists and other traditionalists, institutional duplication and rivalry mitigated against the effective unification of the Ashkenazim or Palestinian Jewry as a whole.¹⁸

A series of events during the nineteenth century alleviated some of the stress on the Jewish community. The ban which prevented many Jews from settling in Jerusalem ended to allow a renewed cultural growth and the size of the Jewish community increased.¹⁹ Under new international regulations, foreign consulates were able to extend their protection to Jews and security increased.²⁰ Philanthropic assistance made possible the introduction of economically productive work. A small number of the traditional community moved out of their cloistered quarters

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 917-918.
²⁰Patai, Israel East and West, p. 80.
and started the first contemporary Jewish agricultural settlements.\textsuperscript{21} A few newly established philanthropic schools added practical courses to the traditional curriculum. Intense hostility forced the closing of some, but did not end the momentum of the philanthropic school movement. The authority of traditionalism remained paramount, but the orbit of orthodoxy had become somewhat more flexible. On the eve of Zionist immigration, a vast difference still existed in the lives of western and Palestinian Jewry, but its insularity had been breached.

Religious Zionism grew out of the experience of the Biblical Era viewed by Jews as the apex of their civilization. The \textit{Talmud} permitted the transference of Biblical values and culture to subsequent generations living in radically different conditions and environments. Thus, one finds that the ethos, laws, ideals and rhythm of post Biblical-talmudic communities were derived from the spiritual, legal and social concepts of an agrarian autonomous Jewish commonwealth in ancient Palestine or, as referred to by Jews, the Land of Israel. A dream of return or redemption, often associated with messianism, is a thread permeating Jewish history. Religious Zionism received a contemporary interpretation from the currents of emancipation and intellectual awakening of the nineteenth century which spawned a worldly nationalism whose realization depended upon political activities, practical efforts of settlement and nation building, and the cultural aim emphasizing universal Hebraic, though not necessarily religious, qualities of Judaism adjusted to modernity.

The Zionist movement, the modern political, practical and cultural expression of religious Zionism, emerged from a conflux of

events and ideas.

The French Revolution effected the political emancipation of Jews in the countries of Western Europe, and the Age of Enlightenment introduced new currents of thought, aspirations, and possibilities into the Jewish communities of these countries. With relative secularization and assimilation of the Jews into the cultures of their countries of residence, a Jewish identification ceased to be primary, and even ceased to be internally maintained by increasingly large numbers of people. However, anti-Semitism continued, even while secularization and assimilation created the new problem of the meaning of a Jewish identity.  

For centuries religion traditionally interpreted had given a singular meaning to Judaism and to being Jewish. An ideological consensus thus minimized the consequences of geographical, ethnic or socioeconomic distinctions among world Jewry. In the nineteenth century this consensus no longer existed. Disquietude at Europeanization, the influence of nationalism, the reality of continued intolerance and rejection, persecution in Eastern Europe, the search for a contemporary meaning to Judaism and to being Jewish without a blurring of Jewish identity were among the many themes contributing to the Zionist Movement. The desire to normalize Jewish life associated with a return to self labor and to farming, was considered possible in Palestine. Zionism embraces the late nineteenth and twentieth century cultural and political movement which sought the establishment of a Jewish state and the structuring of a whole or normal Jewish life without the barriers of persecution or assimilation.

In 1897 the assembly of the First Zionist Congress formulated the following aim: "Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish people

22 Willner, Nation-Building in Israel, p. 31.
23 Ibid.
a publicly recognised, legally secured home in Palestine...."24 To achieve this objective the Congress recommended these procedures:

1. The programmatic encouragement of the settlement of Palestine with Jewish agricultural workers, labourers and those pursuing other trades.
2. The unification and organisation of all Jewry into local and wider groups...
3. The strengthening of Jewish self-awareness and national consciousness....25

The evolution of the movement into an organization made more cohesive and purposeful the work of individuals and autonomous groups, provided an instrument representative of varied ideological and national associations, and affected educational development.

The post-1880 immigration waves were consequential not only for their numbers which multiplied the Jewish population in Palestine, estimated at 50,000 in 1900 and 85,000 in 1914,26 but also for their ideological, institutional and social contributions. Zionist settlers accelerated the momentum for change animated by philanthropic efforts of earlier decades and affected the prevailing organization, economy and priorities of Palestinian Jewry, and these alterations occurred within the orbit of internally derived Jewish responses to modernity. They were not imposed from without. Evoked by currents within European Jewish society and transplanted to Palestine by the new settlers, the nature of the transition from

25Ibid.
26Gertz, Statistical Handbook of Palestine, p. 37.
traditionalism drew on a language and heritage known to the orthodox community although interpreted by them from a religious perspective. The stress on the land and self labor, the practical efforts to establish a national Jewish homeland, the revitalization of the Hebrew language and culture evoked the allegiance of many observant Jews. Thus contemporary Zionism which set the ideological, political and socio-economic direction of the new settlements did not lead to irreparable cleavages with existing society and the acceptance of differing interpretations of Zionism made possible the participation in the movement of secular and religious Jews.

The development of a modern school whose language of instruction was Hebrew was a corollary of the practical and ideological aims of Zionism.

The language of instruction in the Jewish schools of Palestine must be only Hebrew. For our national aspirations in Palestine, this postulate is of course a sine qua non. The national regeneration of our people in the land of our history can only begin with the revivifying of our national language.27

Educational innovations were sustained by and also supported broader societal alterations, new economic activities, social institutions and agricultural communities.28 The schools were an essential part of the formation of a new way of life and society, two pillars on which Zionism rested. The symmetrical and broad

27 Jacob Thon, "Jewish Schools in Palestine," Zionist Work in Palestine, p. 89.

dimensions of change, the parallel growth and popularization of schooling in rural and urban areas prevented the evolution of a schism between rural and urban areas, social classes and national groups. The choice of the Hebrew language helped reduce ethnic factionalism. Despite the differences between the traditional and new education both evolved from a common heritage. The incorporation of traditional literature in the curriculum of new schools increased their acceptability and encouraged the later incorporation of religious institutions in a Hebrew school system.²⁹

Traditional Educational Heritage

No less than the spirit and structure of traditional Jewish society as a whole, the educational domain was quintessentially religious. The history of Jewish scholarship revealed great breadth in some periods, and a limited parochialism in others. The admissibility of secular subjects had fluctuated in various geographical areas and historical periods in both Palestine and the diaspora. To some extent this flux responded to external conditions, the level of the broader cultural environment or the degree of assimilation. In part the character of education represented self-imposed restrictions determining permissible spheres of study. Knowledge, however, was consistently viewed as the handmaiden of theology. Even in the most latitudinarian cultural milieu, religion determined the values and content of education. The centrifugal theme of study remained sacred literature and one dominating spirit shaped Jewish culture.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 20-21.
Neither science as the criterion of truth, rationalism as a challenge to divine revelation, nationalism as a competing authority, nor economic growth as an instrument of change had led to the secularization of education or the dislocation of religious centrism. From the later Middle Ages until the mid-nineteenth century a rigid parochialism dominated education and remained aloof from contemporary western civilization; the ambience of a traditional religious community encouraged this isolation. Nevertheless, as the pattern of education development reveals, the preeminence of religious scholarship did not preclude historically the admissibility of secular studies though as ancillary to theology. Thus the reinterpretation of Hebrew in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries could draw on classical precedents and while initially inimicable to observant Jews, ultimately won modified support from that segment of the community.

The study of sacred literature formed the content of the curriculum at every educational level. The Pentateuch or Torah shaped the sinews and spirit of learning. Described as a "Tree of Life" of the Jewish people, the Torah is more than a compendium of written law.\(^3^0\) The Torah is simultaneously a historical record, a living guide which inspires Judaism with its ideals and its sense of community. Long after the loss of a sovereign Jewish state and the exile of the majority of its population, the Torah extended to Jewish settlements

separated by national boundaries and the span of centuries the experiences of the Biblical age in Israel, the imperative of the covenant between God and man, and an ethical code simultaneously individual and social. The observant Jew believes the Torah contains divine, absolute and immutable truth. Since truth was indivisible, and one truth was necessarily compatible with another, no conflict could really exist between faith and reason or science. To the nineteenth century traditionalist the understanding of the Torah emerged not from new investigation, but from established commentaries and interpretation of scholars whose wisdom had withstood the test of time.

The preservation of the centrality of the Bible posed a dilemma. How could its wisdom and law be extended to successive generations? Its multiple levels of meaning and a reconciliation of seeming divergencies led to a body of oral commentaries, interpretation and law. The compilation of this wisdom is contained in the Talmud. The Talmud is a monumental storehouse of knowledge whose study involved the law, science, medicine and philosophy. Its first section called the Mishna sets forth laws concerning agriculture, festivals, the family, social legislation, sacrificial practices and services.31 Codified in the early Middle Ages, the Mishna adapted the immutable truths of the Scriptures to changing conditions. Other sections of the Talmud consist of commentaries, interpretation and homiletic wisdom. The redaction of the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem

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31 Benzion Dinur, "From Bar Kochba's Revolt to the Turkish Conquest 135 c.e-1517," The Jews in Their Land, p. 179.
Talmud permitted the Torah to remain the determinant of Judaism under varying circumstances and over the span of centuries. "It became the basis of all Jewish religious and civil law, and its meanings and applications were discussed endlessly in seminaries throughout Palestine and the Diaspora. It shaped every aspect of Jewish life and became the all-embracing textbook." 32 It became the focus of Jewish literature, philosophy and education.

Medieval scholarship reveals the breadth of learning possible under the aegis of a talmudic framework. Philosophical studies flourished and reflected the openness of Jewish intellectual currents to Hellenistic and Islamic influences. "Out of this philosophic interpretation of Judaism there grew a philosophic form of religion which, although admitting the unquestionable authority of divine revelation, nevertheless represented a considerable transformation of biblical and Talmudic Judaism, and in the course of time reached a broad circle of educated Jews." 33 The expansiveness of philosophical writing in the Middle Ages evidenced a vigorous liberalism in sharp contrast with the conservatism of succeeding centuries. Philosophy became considered the foremost secular sphere and the highest form of religious study. The work of the great philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204) determinedly reconciled faith and reason and appeared to establish an unimpeachable criterion for further philosophical investigation and for the continuation of scientific studies.

32 Ibid., p. 180.
However, tension existed between conservative and liberal intellectual currents. More conservative schools of thought criticized the emerging cosmopolitanism which appeared to challenge and endanger the primacy of faith. As a safeguard, the study of philosophy was a field forbidden the young and reserved for the most experienced scholars. Some schools labeled the magnificent corpus of Maimonides heretical. To its critics rationalism seemed severely to undermine the sanctity of theological literature and divine authority. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a controversy erupted about the validity of a philosophical approach to Judaism. The preeminence of philosophy amongst secular studies and its acceptability were far from secure.

A combination of circumstances contributed to a further retrenchment from liberalism in Palestine and abroad. The disruption of flourishing centers of learning and harsh disabilities imposed on Jewish communities animated an inward and insular focus. In the west, the expulsion of one Jewish community after another, the Spanish inquisition and the general exclusion of Jews from universities roughly displaced earlier intercultural contact. With the exception of a few European communities, Jewish studies became self contained at the very time western cultural frontiers were becoming

34 Ibid., p. 212.
more expansive.\textsuperscript{37} The interest in the non-legalistic aspects of
the Talmud and in secular knowledge dramatically waned.\textsuperscript{38}

The most monumental accomplishments of Palestinian Jewry were
its contributions to sacred literature in the Biblical and talmudic
periods. After the redaction of the Jerusalem or Palestinian Talmud
in the early Middle Ages scholarly pursuits continued, but on a less
monumental plane. Palestine's pride of place in Judaism which
attracted an exchange of scholars, students and ideas helped to
maintain cultural development there and gave it a relatively univer-
sal character which transcended geographic boundaries and overcame
periods of depression. The founding of new schools of higher learn-
ing, the proliferation of religious literature and poetry, scientific
writing, medical treatises, philosophical debates, philological
work and the publication of the Masoretic text of the Bible indicate
a continuing flow of scholarly achievements during the Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{39}
The creativity of the Biblical and talmudic ages had grown more
modest, but Palestinian Jewry shared in the intellectual fruitful-
ness of the Middle Ages and was nourished by immigration from abroad.

The rise of the Ottoman hegemony in the Mediterranean basin and
the destruction of European Jewish communities led to a change in

\textsuperscript{37}Cecil Roth, The Jews in the Renaissance (Philadelphia: The
Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), describes the scope of
Jewish scholarship in Italy which still remained open to new ideas.
pp. 33-37. Communities in Spain, Italy and southern France also had at
one time more general syllabi.

\textsuperscript{38}Emanuel Gamoran, Changing Concepts in Jewish Education, bk. 1:
Jewish Education in Russia and Poland; bk. 2: Principles of the
Jewish Curriculum in America; 2 bks. (New York: The Macmillan Co.,
1925), bk. 1, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{39}Dinur, "From Bar Kochba," p. 195, pp. 210-211 and p. 218.
the expansiveness of the Jewish intellectual world and a geographical shift of its intellectual center to Eastern Europe. The scholarship tended to become the re-investigation of the known and permissible; philosophy, a bellwether of cultural freedom, lost its daring. Rising Eastern European centers of learning were more conservative and self contained than those in southern areas so that the cultural horizons of Judaism grew more insular. Orthodoxy narrowly construed became the dominant motif of scholarship; the study of the law overshadowed that of philosophy. Palestinian scholarship, like studies within diaspora communities, became increasingly parochial.

The thrust of scholarly attention turned inward, principally to two aspects of religious thought, mysticism and legalism. Advocates of both fields were drawn to Palestine. Sixteenth century Safad, one of the four holy Palestinian towns, was renown throughout the Jewish world for its institutes of higher learning devoted to mystical studies. In 1567 the publication of Joseph Caro's book, the Shulhan Aruk, an interpretive compilation of the law, became a milestone in Jewish thought, "it eclipsed every previous compilation and became the most important religious influence in modern Jewish history." Its great authority bound observant Jews to its perceptions of the acceptable in practice and thought. It was a

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40 Gutmann, Philosophies of Judaism, p. 275.
42 Ibid., p. 237.
harbinger of a period when cultural contributions became less innovative, and its education became increasingly stultified.

**Traditional Schools**

Jewish schools shared with Islamic institutions a cultural conservatism and lack of concern with practical problems. Institutions of learning were well developed, but education had lost the latitudinarianism of earlier epochs, confined study to narrow parameters which turned away from intellectual boldness and enlightenment. Jewish and Islamic scholarship which had advanced western progress in the Middle Ages stood at a disadvantage with the west at the moment that international events brought Palestine once more into closer cultural contact with Europe.

The substance and purpose of traditional Jewish education became fixed in the Middle Ages. They [the Jewish People] had one specific aim in the education of their children: to turn them into good, true Jews, who would know the "Torah" ... who would scrupulously keep all the "Mitzvot", all the precepts of the Law, great and small, and learn to love God to such a degree that they would, if necessary, be ready to sacrifice their life for "Kiddush Hashem" (the sanctification of the name of the Lord). Religious instruction became a "means and...an end," a guardian of the quality of Jewish life and an instrument for its continuity.

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45 Ben Zion Dinaburg, "History of Israel's School System" (n.p., 1952), mimeographed, p. 2.
Schooling transmitted inherited principles, stressed character and habit formation, and prepared the child for community membership. Exact and complete obedience to the law in both personal and social relationships based on sufficient knowledge to participate properly in religious service were the obligations of all. These lessons were learned in home, school and synagogue; the school formally provided the pupil with the knowledge required by membership in a religious society, reinforced the cohesion of the community and stressed conformity to its modes of thought and values.⁴⁶

The boy entered the heder, literally the room, at about the age of four and remained until the age of thirteen. The education of girls was generally neglected except for what they learned at home. The school had no fixed admission or completion requirements so that some children began as young as three or three and a half, and some left school after a few years.⁴⁷ Children of many ages studied together under the supervision of a teacher generally more highly regarded for his piety than his scholarship.⁴⁸ The distinctions between these lower schools were slight except for the language of instruction which corresponded to the vernacular of the ethnic group or kollel. Since Hebrew was considered too sacred to be the language of instruction or communications, the main task of

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 20.
⁴⁸Ibid.
the children was the translation and memorization of sacred literature. No rule governed the preparatory level of the he\cker and they varied from those comparable to a dame or primary school, to those equivalent to complete elementary schools where the children remained until they were ready to proceed to the yeshiva or secondary school.49

The he\cker was a fee-charging school privately owned; the talmud torah was publicly supported, tuition free and under community supervision.50 The talmud torah tended to have a more orderly program than the he\cker or its equivalent, the Jewish kuttab, the lower school popular among Arab Jewish families.51

The lack of ordered studies and of graded classes, the complexity of the subject matter, the inexperience of young pupils, and the uncertain ability of the teacher made uneven the quality of instruction. Bentwich gives this description of traditional schools in the early twentieth century.

The old-fashioned Cheder and the Talmud Torah in the Palestinian towns are like the Cheder and Talmud Torah elsewhere, save only that here they provide the whole education of the pupils .... In the Cheder the teacher instructs in a little room a number of boys, ranging from ten to eighty, in couples or threes, while the rest con their lessons or repeat aloud what they have just learnt; his chief qualification is that he has none for any other vocation. In the Talmud Torah more approach is made to educational method. The pupils, who

50 Ibid.
51 Norman Bentwich, Jewish Schools in Palestine (New York: Federation of American Zionists, 1912), pp. 4-5.
are more numerous, are divided into classes; some syllabus of instruction is drawn up, and the Melammedin who teach have to satisfy the committee who control the institution of their Hebrew knowledge and religious orthodoxy. Other educational qualifications are not often demanded and are rarely supplied .... Modern subjects are altogether ignored, and the excellence aimed at is the knowledge of the Rabbinical literature. Finally, little provision is made for the teaching of girls ....

More limited than western schools, the heder and talmud torah reflected in embryonic form a traditional, religious and insular society.

If they had not mastered the subject at home, the children learned the Hebrew alphabet and then prayers, the Bible and Talmud. Physical education and general courses had no place in the curriculum with the exception of some arithmetic. The stress was on memorization and reading rather than understanding. The Prophets and the Hagriopha received scant attention and the study of the Bible became less thorough as the Talmud became the center of the syllabus.

The teaching process essentially depended on recitation, imitation, and mnemonics. The children memorized the lesson presented by the teacher; constant drill and repetition characterized the school day. Little attention was paid to the age of the student; the adult was the model for the child. Though Jewish writings give evidence of sound pedagogic understanding, practice generally

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52 Ibid.
54 Zafrani, Pedagogie Juive, p. 17.
did not reflect these theories of learning or insight into individual differences of pupils. The physical environment of many schools was poor, commonly a room in the home of the teacher; the school day was long and corporal punishment not uncommon. Teaching in the lower school stressed reading and recitation; understanding was incidental.

The Yeshiva, the next level of the educational ladder, provided the most promising students the opportunity to continue their studies in a more intensive fashion and on a more scholarly level. The academic program had no age limit or fixed curriculum. Community stipends supported the poor student and the adult scholar. Schools varied. Some functioned as preparatory schools for adolescents, others were centers of higher studies for older students and in the most advanced, scholars spent a lifetime in Biblical research. Not uncommonly a yeshiva stressed the special religious interest or school of interpretation of its founder or head.

Though an understanding of religious literature stressed in higher schools potentially opened study to many fields of knowledge, education in the yeshivot largely focused on religious law and its interpretation. Discouraging creativity and disallowing any rejection of tradition, instruction centered on the transmission of the pronouncements and commentaries of authorities of preceding eras. Disputations among the most advanced students permitted originality within fixed rules and honed the art of reasoning.

After the introduction of philanthropic schools in the last half of the nineteenth century, a few religious schools responded
with pedagogic improvements and a broadened syllabus. By and large, however, students in most Jewish religious schools, like their Islamic counterparts, received no practical studies or general courses. Schooling reinforced the parochialism of the community and its declining standards.

The structure of the educational institutions allowed for a great deal of corruption. The fact that adults studied in the yeshivas made it very difficult to maintain supervision over them. There was no fixed programme of study. Every student studied whatever he wished, whenever he wished. Some of the students were registered in a number of yeshivas and received allocations from each ... . The yeshivas did not examine their students for ability or suitability, but accepted all applicants.  

The disorganization and disorder of the schools reduced the quality of instruction. On higher levels of education, a narrowly designed program disregarded many aspects of Judaica other than the law. The criteria for scholarships were at times neglected or abused. The orientation of the schools made no allowances for changes occurring within Palestine and reflected the closure of ultra conservative orthodoxy.

In the twentieth century religious schools grew less uniform. Contemporary Zionism had supporters within the observant religious community to whom the practical work of philanthropic and Zionist

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associations, their efforts to broaden instruction, appeared reasonable and necessary. At first general courses were an addendum to religious studies. The growing prestige of secular gymnasia, the popularity of nontraditional schools, and the evident deficiencies of traditional education could not by the twentieth century be disregarded. At the same time the orthodox community could not countenance the secularization of sacred studies. "It is a well-known fact that the teachers, especially those of the Gymnasium, and in particular the teachers of Holy Writ, extract the soul of Judaism from their pupils' hearts by their strict adherence to the grotesque ideas of the more worthless of the Biblical critics." The orthodox community could most effectively countermand the influence of secular schools by establishing as an equivalent a modern religious school. The first such school was the Tachkemoni Gymnasium, founded in 1910 under rabbinic supervision. At the same time, the orthodox community began to improve education in several talmud torahs and give greater attention to the education of girls. Enough progress had been made for modern religious schools to become a division within the Hebrew school system during the mandate.

The Movement to Modern Education

In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European political and intellectual currents altered the warp and woof of

57 Ibid., pp. 249-258.
58 Ibid., p. 259.
59 Ibid., pp. 259-260.
Jewish society in the west and that change had consequences for Palestinian Jewish culture. The two primary movements were the equalization of citizenship and status of Jews and Christians by the progressive removal of political, legal and social barriers against Jews and, the Enlightenment which inspired within Jewish society a parallel intellectual drive called the haskalah.\textsuperscript{60} Emancipation transformed the position of Jews from onlookers and outsiders to full participants in the general society. This new identity had educational implications. Practicality made sensible some modification of traditional schooling so as to include the teaching of secular subjects, or necessitated a dual school attendance in which religious and general education were differentiated. The relative uniformity of world Jewish educational patterns founded on a philosophical consensus which sustained traditional instruction no longer sufficed to meet the opportunities now available in the west or the new view of Judaism there.

The haskalah examined Judaism's meaning as a contemporary force and the relationship between Jewish national cultures.\textsuperscript{61} The embrace of the liberal arts and the birth of secular Hebrew literature, paved the way for an examination of traditional culture and education.\textsuperscript{62}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{60}Willner, Nation Building in Israel, p. 31.
  \item \textsuperscript{61}Hillel Bavi, "The Modern Renaissance of Hebrew Literature," Jews: Religion and Culture, 2:228-229.
  \item \textsuperscript{62}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
The spirit of nationalism characteristic of later haskalah literature linked the movement with Palestine. To some, forging a secular literature and full participation in European life were insufficient. Only in a Jewish homeland and with the restoration of the Hebrew language as a dynamic and unifying force would a whole and creative Judaism emerge. A seminal Zionist thinker, Achad Haam explained the significant relationship between the past and present. "The roots of our national consciousness rest deep in our historic past from which it draws nourishment and life, and if it is freed from them, it will cease to exist." The idealization of the land and self labor, of the Hebrew language and the classical heritage gave a cultural and practical foundation to nationalism.

The effect of the haskalah on Jewish educational thought was similar to that of the Renaissance on medieval Christian patterns. "The humanistic preoccupation with the pleasures of full-orbed secular activity was more evocative of the Italian Renaissance than of the collectively formalistic eighteenth century and like the Renaissance the age of the Haskalah was memorable for what it foreshadowed rather than for what it created."

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64 Ibid., p. 121.
The movement stimulated an awareness of the potentiality and creativity of man in this world and it drew inspiration not from the exilic literature, but from the heritage of ancient Judea whose spirit would be recaptured in Palestine itself by integrating a humanistic Judaism with the modern, secular world.⁶⁷

Thus the writers of the haskalah brought forward alternatives to theological values and law and ontological visions. Assimilation or the compartmentalization of life into secular and religious categories, implicit in one view, reduced the role of Judaism as an all encompassing force. Concerned with the consequences of a blurred Jewish heritage, others rejected Europeanization and sought instead accommodation to the real world without sacrificing Jewish identity. This school of thought sought distinctly Jewish interpretations of universal values, a society which allowed that possibility, and encouraged a Hebraic cultural renaissance.⁶⁸

The philanthropic movement tended to represent western European ideas which found assimilation acceptable. The Zionist and Hebrew school movement stressed a nationalistic and cultural Hebraic renaissance. What each of these streams shared was a rejection of an other-worldly culture and education.⁶⁹ The study of the language, the sciences and vocational skills became acceptable.⁷⁰ The philanthropic and Zionist movements transplanted these ideas to Palestine.

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⁶⁷H. Sachar, History of Israel, pp. 8-9.
⁶⁸Ibid.
⁷⁰Ibid.
Traditional studies were not abandoned though ancient Hebrew literature was, in general, in the new Hebrew schools taught from a secular viewpoint.

The western oriented and secularized Hebrew schools confronted traditionalists with a challenge to education and a way of life. The first new schools were introduced to Palestinian Jewry by individual philanthropists who opened religious institutions which offered a few practical courses. Resistance was intense.

In 1856 a Viennese philanthropist wanted to establish a school for boys in Jerusalem offering both secular and religious courses. Despite recommendations from European rabbis, the sponsors of the Lamel school found themselves in conflict with the leadership of the Ashkenazic community, with a few exceptions, who threatened to excommunicate parents permitting children to attend the school.\(^1\)

We see in the house of Israel something terrible... there are in the city of God some men who want to build a school to teach the youth of Israel to write and speak the language of the land. The beginning may not seem as harmful as it really is. They assure us that the school will be under the direction of pious Jews, and that the principles of the Torah will be taught; but we well know through experience how bitter the end will be! Science will become the fundamental teaching and the Torah will be put in the background. It will be the cause of the desertion of the Torah and the impiety of Israel .... We have therefore decided to prohibit the inhabitants of Jerusalem, those present and those who are to come, to attend this institution.\(^2\)

To change the education of boys appeared to threaten an entire communal edifice. Ashkenazic rabbis forbade attendance at the school.\(^3\)

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\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 5-6.
Despite the ban of the Ashkenazic rabbis, the Lamel school survived with the support of the Sephardic community, which though conservative by European standards, was more flexible and less doctrinaire than the Ashkenazim.

In the two decades after the battle over the Lamel, further alterations occurred. In 1864 the Evelina de Rothschild School for Girls was started in Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{73} The neglect of female education made vital the establishment of schools for girls and female education was less controversial than the instruction of boys. In 1885 the school had 160 pupils and offered, in addition to religious studies, courses in "Hebrew, French, needlework, embroidery;"\textsuperscript{74} under the sponsorship of the Anglo-Jewish Association, English replaced French as the language of instruction. By 1914 the school enrollment had increased to 450 students and remained autonomous until 1953 when it became part of the Israeli state religious school network.\textsuperscript{75}

The work of individual philanthropists evolved into a more systematic and embrace structure as organizations took over the task of individual donors. Informally designed systems began to emerge and these provided sequential instruction from the elementary

\textsuperscript{73}In 1855 Sir Moses Montefiore provided classes for twenty-five girls whose parents received a stipend. A year or two later a representative of the Rothschild family started another small school. These two early centers may have been merged with the Evelina de Rothschild School, by far the most successful of the three ventures. Kurt Grunwald, "Jewish Schools under Foreign Flags in Ottoman Palestine." Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period, pp. 170-171

\textsuperscript{74}Hyamson, British Consulate in Jerusalem, 2:428.

\textsuperscript{75}Grunwald, "Jewish Schools under Foreign Flags," p. 171.
through secondary levels though fewer secondary than lower schools existed. Teachers had formal pedagogic training and courses were comparable to those offered in western schools.

Philanthropic societies had as their impelling objective the improvement of the standard of living of Palestinian Jewry. Schools would be one instrument of social and economic reform. This concept of education as an instrument of change reflected nineteenth century western theories which tended to disregard the values of non-European schooling and accept educational transplantation as a simple vehicle for bridging obvious cultural gaps. Thus religious studies, even if understood as intrinsic to the community, assumed a no more central position in the curriculum than secular courses. The language of instruction and cultural emphasis of all but one association were European. With the exception of vocational courses, the introduction of modern schooling occurred initially at the expense of ignoring the indigenous environment.

This schism, however, did not have consequences for the development of Jewish education parallel to those of Arab educational history. First, by the end of the century immigration was altering the Jewish community and European educated settlers found the change natural. Since modernization took place simultaneously in political and socio-economic spheres, a symmetry existed between schooling and other public processes. Also, an indigenous Hebrew school movement began in Palestine and grew more important than philanthropic systems. These schools were relatively independent of foreign cultural influences and the transition from traditionalism under native guidance.
A leader in the philanthropic field was the Alliance Israëlite Universelle, a French association, formed in 1860 to aid disadvantaged Jews, which continued to administer schools during the mandatory era. The Alliance opened Palestine's first agricultural institute, introduced trade schools, and vocational workshops, and provided education for boys and girls. Alliance policy wavered from an initial interest in encouraging the use of Hebrew as a language of instruction\textsuperscript{76} to a later emphasis on the French language and culture. While its vocational schools attempted to accommodate instruction to the Palestinian environment, the European ethos of the school drew Zionist criticism. Despite the opposition of the orthodox community, the Alliance cluster of schools developed throughout the country. In 1885 the Mikveh Israel agricultural school had fifty boarding students. Its syllabus included three languages, Hebrew, Arabic and French, trade and agricultural courses. Another Alliance institution had 150 pupils. Its curriculum included four languages, science, six craft and trade specialties, and general studies.\textsuperscript{77} In 1912, the Alliance maintained a school enrollment of 2,000 in the major towns and many agricultural colonies.\textsuperscript{78} "The Alliance teachers carry furthest the introduction


\textsuperscript{77}Hyamson, British Consulate, 2:428.

of the foreign outlook, and have the least regard for the traditions and feelings of the people for whom they provide; just as the French in their colonies strive to set up another little France, so the Alliance strives to set up a French primary or secondary school in Jaffa and Jerusalem." Another criticism noted that the organization "did not look upon Palestine as providing a plan for the future, a place for Jewish immigration, even if only for a small fragment of the Jewish people. The land simply presented a sphere of educational...activity, such as the Balkan States, Morocco, and many other countries." A similar disenchantment arose towards the German philanthropic agency.

In 1901 the newly formed German-Jewish philanthropic society, the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden or Ezta, began to turn its attention to education in Palestine. By 1913, the association supported 27 schools which included a teachers training seminary affiliated with the Lamel School, and kindergartens in which children learned Hebrew. To a greater extent than the French supported schools, the Hilfsverein system initially encouraged the teaching of Hebrew. In clearly expressed opposition to the Alliance Israélite Universelle, it [Hilfsverein] began work,...on the principle that it must adapt itself to the wishes and needs of the native population...its program for the Palestinian schools devoted

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79Bentwich, Jewish Schools in Palestine, pp. 6-7.
82Bentwich, Jewish Schools in Palestine, p. 7.
more and more attention to Hebrew." In 1907 the organization reported:

Hebrew, in fact, has developed into a living language. It is the language of instruction in the kindergartens and even to some extent in the schools, not only in the religious but also in the secular branches. Since a single language is a practical need in instruction and in the children's intercourse with one another, and since some of the children bring a fair amount of previous knowledge of Hebrew to school with them, it proves to be the most natural language of intercourse for children who are a conglomerate of Ashkenazim (home language Yiddish), Sephardim (home language Ladino), Yemenites (home language Arabic), Moroccans (home language an Arabic dialect), Persians, Caucasians, and immigrants from Bokhara. In this way the great difficulty of instructing such varied elements together was overcome. Beside this practical advantage, it possesses high moral value in the case of the Orient.

The Hilfsverein later modified its attitude towards Hebrew as the language of instruction and, in doing so, provoked a controversial storm.

A fourth philanthropic group, the Odessa Committee of the Hovevei Zion, gave new direction to philanthropic activities. The committee was a Zionist association with nationalistic objectives, rejected the indiscriminate transfer of European intellectualism and actively supported the revitalization of the Hebrew language as quintessential to the establishment of a Jewish homeland. It promoted migration to Palestine, the founding of agricultural colonies and community self government, steps supportive of eventual statehood. Its educational activities were a corollary of these interests.

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83 Zionist Organization, Struggle for the Hebrew Language, p. 11.
The Odessa Committee supported the organization of a Palestinian Hebrew Teachers' Association, an innovative concept. The association actively participated in the Hebrew School movement. Teachers functioned as planners as well as participants in pedagogic change and the union had significant influence in this period as well as during the mandate. The Committee funded Hebrew programs in schools and kindergartens, subvened a school for girls in Jaffa, the first institution to conduct all classes in Hebrew, helped to finance the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, the first modern Hebrew secondary school, and opened schools in the new agricultural colonies. In addition to these contributions, the Odessa Committee gave encouragement and coherence to the work of the individual Hebraists and set a precedent for both Zionists' assumption of responsibility for education and active community representation in policy planning. A sense of partnership rather than paternalism existed, a remarkably innovative phenomenon in the early developmental phase of modern schools in the area.

The task of creating modern Hebrew schools was formidable. Teachers lacked training and textbooks. In teaching Hebrew through Hebrew, students and instructors were using a vocabulary newly created, still missing many words. Parents had to be convinced of the soundness of the innovation. Pedagogic problems were constant.

86 Ibid., pp. 168-170.
In a heavy atmosphere, without books, expressions, words, verbs and hundreds of nouns we had to begin...teaching. It is impossible to describe...under what pressure the first seeds were planted...The Hebrew teaching materials for elementary education were limited...We were half-mute, stuttering, we spoke with our hands and eyes.  

The first schools offered primary classes in which teaching methods and courses were irregular. Despite these obstacles, progress continued. The years between 1888 and 1910 witnessed the establishment of Palestine's first Hebrew school, the formation of a Hebrew teachers' association, the introduction of Hebrew kindergartens, the acceptance of Hebrew as the language of instruction in the schools of the new agricultural communities, the creation of a contemporary heder with a secular-religious curriculum taught in Hebrew, and the establishment of a Hebrew elementary-secondary school in Jaffa and Jerusalem.  

Each of these steps established the practicality of the Hebrew language and the Hebrew school movement, stabilized its growth and popularized the trend. The kindergartens provided an opportunity to raise a generation of pupils for whom Hebrew was a natural classroom language. The teachers' association fashioned pedagogic methods and actively championed the embryonic schools. The farming settlements had been the first to accept Hebrew as the language of instruction in their schools, but the urban population also became receptive.

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87 Quoted in Fellman, Revival of a Classical Tongue, p. 99.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid, pp. 98-105.
The establishment of the gymnasia showed that successful secondary schools need not depend on a foreign language. Since the majority of the population was urban, the breakthrough in Jaffa and Jerusalem kept the change from being perceived as a limited rural school program. From an idea without an institutionalized form, the contemporary Hebrew school had become a reality. The transition from traditional to secular education was stabilizing and achieving popularity. Earlier educational struggles had pitted the pietists against the secularists. Now a new educational confrontation erupted amongst the supporters of modern schools over the role of Hebrew as the medium of instruction.

The apex of the controversy between Hebraists and Europeanists erupted in 1913 when the Hilfsverein had decided to build a technical institute in Haifa and a realschule or scientific secondary school. Plans for the Technion, to be the most advanced center of learning in the country, attracted support from Jews in many countries and a great deal of attention within Palestine. Protracted discussion centered on the language of instruction, Hebrew or German. Throughout its system the Hilfsverein appeared to be shifting its earlier emphasis on Hebrew to German. The language conflict became exceedingly divisive and assumed symbolic importance. Discontent with the Hilfsverein mounted and in the summer of 1913 a convention of teachers resolved: "The fundamentals of our national education demand that all subjects be taught in Hebrew. The convention, therefore, makes it obligatory upon the members of the Teachers Union to fight with all their power against instruction
of secular subjects in a foreign tongue."^{90}

At a meeting of the Kuratorium or administrative board in the fall of 1913, proposals to insure the importance of Hebrew failed.\(^{91}\) At the same time, the governing body decided against selecting "an official language of instruction," recommended that Hebrew be one of six languages taught, be thoroughly cultivated for religious, literary and conversational purposes, but "that the applied sciences be taught in German in order to connect the pupils, through the medium of one of the great languages of modern culture, with the scientific development of modern times."^{92}

The Hebraists rejected the pride of place given German in the curriculum. Protests occurred throughout Palestine. In a dramatic confrontation in December with the head of the Hilfsverein, teachers were fired, the police and the German consul were called in to support the firings. Resignations of teachers and pupils followed throughout the Hilfsverein system.\(^{93}\) From these ranks came more pupils and faculty for Hebrew schools.

The pressure forced the Hilfsverein in February 1914 to change its proposals. Within four years of employment each teacher pledged "to master Hebrew," Hebrew became the medium of instruction for mathematics and physics, and after the completion for the first four

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\(^{90}\)Zionist Organization, Struggle for the Hebrew Language, p. 16.  
\(^{91}\)Ibid., p. 27  
\(^{92}\)Ibid., pp. 23-24.  
\(^{93}\)Ibid., pp. 48-49.
year class, a review would consider using Hebrew for other advanced subjects.94

The resolution of the language conflict reversed the position of the Hebrew and philanthropic schools. The Hilfsverein never regained its stature. Several of its schools closed during the struggle reopened as Hebrew institutions; most of the teachers and more than half of the pupils left the Hilfsverein system to join the new schools.95 The Zionist Organization assumed a principal role in the maintenance of an expanding Hebrew school system. Comprising representatives from the Zionist Organization, the Teachers' Association, and the popular groups, a newly created board of education, Va'ad Ha Hinukh, supervised the Hebrew school cluster. In 1918 the board supervised a system of twenty-seven schools.96

The outbreak of World War I made even more important the new educational partnership and added momentum to its fledgling system. During the war, the German-sponsored Hilfsverein could no longer maintain its institutions. These schools, a few Alliance and independent academies joined the Hebrew school organization. The war halted most foreign contributions and educational services suffered enormously. Responding to much needed help, in 1918 the Palestine Zionist Executive formally established a department of education

94Ibid., p. 70.


96Bentwich, Education in Israel, p. 15.
which institutionalized its responsibilities and the coalition with the local community.

Summary

The success of the philanthropic schools in the last quarter of the century posed the initial contraposition to the entrenchment of traditionalism. As the acceptance of secular studies increased a cultural dilemma arose. Foreign schools offered a clear alternative to sacred studies, but they presented a European oriented curriculum which created a cultural dichotomy between education and the environment. Their objectives aimed at the improvement of social and economic welfare but in this program Jewish studies had a secondary role. They did not seek to create an identifiable Hebrew culture and their emphasis on English, French or German cultural paradigms added to communal divisiveness.

The Hebrew school movement sought to forge a national culture and, therefore, their educational goals differed from those of both traditional and philanthropic groups. The new system provided an alternative to the atomization of foreign and traditional schools, a single system tolerant of diversity, but stressing national unity. To do so they used a foundation which incorporated the familiar Biblical studies which for centuries had sustained Jewish communal life, and thus established a measure of relative commonality with religious schools. An irreparable schism had been avoided.

The significance of these events became clear during the Mandate which recognized Hebrew as one of the three official languages and Hebrew public schools as a second official system. Administrative
experience and educative initiative, supported locally and by the Zionist organization, enabled Palestinian Jewry to remain more independent of both the Palestinian government and philanthropic associations than Palestinian Arabs could be. The Jewish community did not face the dilemma of accepting a modern education planned for them by others, with all that dependency implies. To a greater degree than missionary and philanthropic societies, the Zionist organization shared the interests of the local population and encouraged its autonomy.

Educational innovation was one aspect of more general social change. This parallelism in which both schools and society made the transition to modernity helped to accelerate the tempo of educational expansion. The influx of European immigrants familiar with western institutions, processes and ideals minimized the likelihood of a growing educational elite whose culture differed from that of the majority of the population. A symmetrical educational-social-economic growth, the intrinsic relationship of education to popular aspirations, a relatively high rate of literacy and the means for its continuation were advantages which pre-mandatory developments allowed Palestinian Jewry and which Palestinian Arabs lacked.
CHAPTER IV
ARAB EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

The British administration of public schools using Arabic as the medium of instruction began under the auspices of the military government during World War I and became de facto the Arab public school system. The government school system functioned completely under the jurisdiction of the mandatory government. In the absence of popularly elected national governing bodies, the population had no legal mechanism or political institution to effect the development of the public school system. Nationalism broadly interpreted is inseparable from education.\(^1\) Isaac Kandel explains, "If the meaning of nationalism is most adequately defined in terms of culture and ideals, it becomes clear that there is scarcely any problem in education that is not in some way or another affected by it."\(^2\) In this context, educational development in Palestine was reflective of two streams of nationalism, that of the local population and that of the government in power.

The government did not view education as the political and social imperative implicit in the concept of the mandate as a temporary trusteeship period preparing the people for independence. While the more independent Jewish community closely integrated public education and nation building, clearly identifying Zionist and educational ideals, the government sought to neutralize Arabic nationalism. The


\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 11-12.
role of the mandatory power in determining the course of education was clearly a major one. The government directed qualitative and quantitative development. A second determiner came from within Arab society. Mandatory educational history was also reflective of the land and the people.

Until the mid-nineteenth century the Arab and Jewish communities followed a parallel pattern of traditional education. In the second half of that century and in the twentieth, the Jewish community of Palestine underwent rapid transformation in which the modernization of its public and social institutions occurred. Immigration from the West spurred these changes and yielded a growing population accepting of western political, social and economic mechanisms and technology and modes of thought. Thus in the pre-mandatory period, Palestinian Jewry were able to establish the foundations of a modern school system and, during the mandate, were in a position, largely independent of government control, to continue to shape education. Jewish society determined its own priorities. Financial assistance from abroad, the greater per capita wealth of the Jewish community and its educational heritage made possible the nearly autonomous state of the Hebrew school system. Without comparable resources and institutions, Arab Palestinians were far more dependent on the government.

The mandate for Palestine allowed the government broad discretion in designing public policy and interpreting its obligations to Palestinian nationals. The limitations on popular representation within the government imposed a political and cultural separation between schools and society, a cleavage inevitable in a system in
which non-Palestinians determined priorities, financial allocations, the curriculum, the administration and the pace of expansion. The conflicting aspirations and differing values of the government and the populace did not allow the development of a bona fide national system. The Arab sector desired, but did not have the educational autonomy of the Jewish sector and the management of schools had political implications. The government's interest in maintaining its authority in Palestine, its resistance to Arab nationalism and attempt to divorce it from instruction, its failure to achieve universal education, its special attention to English literature and history made the public school appear to its critics to be an extension of colonial imposition which overshadowed the benefits which public education introduced. The assertion that mandatory education was merely an extension of colonialism is a narrow one, however, and discounts the relationship between the school and the indigenous environment, influences independent of official policy, and the universal characteristics of a modern school system which necessarily drew on western precedents since the Arab world did not have a well established modern Arab school structure.

Notwithstanding its grievances against the government, the Arab community was responsive to the public educational system. Applications to public schools regularly exceeded admissions. In 1944, for example, town schools accepted 53 percent of the applicants and in the following year, 54 percent; figures for village schools were 70 percent and 72 percent respectively. ³ As officially reported

these statistics did not reflect "the large numbers who though eager for schooling do not apply, either because there is no Government school in their village or because whether in town or village they see no chance of being accepted." Thus the Annual Report of 1944-45 noted, "Generally speaking the zeal of parents and children for education prevents wastage,"a problem in the earlier years of the mandate,"and great difficulty is experienced in removing children from school after completion of a fixed period of schooling in order to make room for the next school generation." Acceptance of female education was initially difficult for the government to stimulate for Arab society gave priority to the education of its sons. The principle of educating girls gained acceptance more slowly.

In addition to rejecting the government's commitment to a cautious rate of expansion and urging a more rapid rate of growth, the major concerns of Arab critics were the paucity of the education budget and the government's fiscal policy, the failure to transfer responsibility from government officials to the Arab community and the denationalizing quality of the curriculum. As James Coleman points out, these were the basic criticisms of colonial education in general. In an analysis of educational development in colonial

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4Ibid.  
5Ibid.  
7Coleman, Education and Political Development, pp. 35-36.
areas Coleman notes, "Quantitatively, the charge is rather convincingly documented ... by statistical comparisons of figures showing school enrollment and governmental support for education in the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods." A comparison of the course of public educational development in Palestine under British rule with the post-mandatory era sustains Arab criticism and gives further evidence to support Coleman's assessment. School enrollments substantially increased in both Jordan and Israel in the decade following the mandate. In addition, Israel enacted legislation providing universal compulsory education almost immediately after the State achieved independence and Jordan did so a few years later.

The qualitative charges against the mandatory government relate to the nature of a system which made no provisions to encourage local autonomy. In essence, British officials made all primary educational decisions. In the estimation of one critic, "One of the great handicaps of Arab education - and this applies to Government and Mission schools alike - was that it was not indigenous, but was dependent on direction from above and from abroad,"

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8Ibid, p. 35.
both in its administration and its content.\(^1\) The near autonomy of the Hebrew school system permitted a close identification of schooling and Zionist aims. Hebrew studies had more prominence in the Hebrew school curriculum than did Arabic studies in government schools and the studies of western culture were less central in the Hebrew system than in the government's program.\(^1\) Schooling did support the development of the indigenous culture, but not to the degree acceptable to many Arab critics. The government tried to divorce education from Arab political interests and link it to its own. Despite the intention of the government, education stimulated nationalism, although schooling did not have the unfettered association with popular ideals possible in an independent state.\(^1\)

While acknowledging that the "policies of imperial powers... were mainly self-serving," Coleman concludes: "The actual patterns of educational development during the colonial period do not, however, seem to have resulted solely from calculated imperial self interest."\(^1\) In Palestine, although the government's educational policies were linked to British interests, some of those policies simultaneously advanced Arab interests. The government introduced teaching in the medium of the Arabic language, an innovation which advanced Arabic cultural objectives and had a transcendent nationalist value.

\(^1\)Bentwich, *Education in Israel*, p. 20.
\(^1\)Ibid., p. 21 and p. 26.
\(^1\)UNESCO, *Compulsory Education in the Arab States*, p. 52.
\(^1\)Coleman, *Education and Political Development*, p. 36.
The study of the Arabic language and literature in recent times revived awareness of the 'past glories' ... and the Arabs began to take pride in the role their ancestors had played in the establishment of the Islamic empire. This 'historical memory,' a blend of fact and vivid imagination, became an important ingredient in Arab nationalism, since it created, in the minds of young men, a sense of compelling duty to restore these glories to their people.\textsuperscript{14}

The government tried, but could not stem the impetus to nationalism which schooling encouraged, and by establishing a system acceptable to both Moslems and Christians, it promoted a sense of unity amongst the Arab-speaking population. Secondly, it must be noted that some of the problems of the mandatory era were characteristic of both Hebrew and Arab public schools and continued to be problems in the post-mandatory era. The shortage of teachers, the imbalance of facilities for literary-linguistic and vocational instruction, the competing demands between more extensive primary schools and the more selective secondary institutions, the race between the population explosion and school expansion are issues which typically burden educational growth in developing areas which seek to build public school systems in a relatively short time.\textsuperscript{15}

From the point of view of modern educational history, Palestine was suffering a historical disadvantage. Whereas public schools in western countries had evolved over a period of centuries, the Palestinian public school system was in its infancy and was the


\textsuperscript{15}UNESCO, Compulsory Education in the Arab States, pp. 27-33 and Braham, Israel's Modern Education System, pp. 156-158.
product of sudden transplantation not of an indigenous evolutionary pattern.

The Land and the People

The Arab population had religious and political agencies which at varying times during the mandate emerged as the chief representative of the community.\textsuperscript{16} However, Arabic society did not have the political institutions comparable to those in the Jewish community, the constituent assembly and national council, which were able to assume responsibility for a national system of education. Religious organizations served different Muslim and Christian constituencies, and their schools were denominational. The Arab Executive and its successor, the Arab Higher Committee, never assumed the myriad tasks of the Jewish Agency. Political parties did not have the same socio-economic functions as those of the Hebrew parties. While unifying Christians and Muslims, the Arab nationalistic movement faltered frequently under the antagonism of two prominent families who competed politically and the movement did not bring about a reform of the internal social apparatus of Arab society.\textsuperscript{17} In addition to these organizations, the Arab population had local councils which in a few areas established schools, but their level of work did not evolve into a coordinated independent network. The groups within Arab society which maintained schools were primarily religious and did not represent the total population. The structure of Arabic


\textsuperscript{17} Khadduri, \textit{Political Trends in the Arab World}, p. 22.
society, in which religious orders and the family continued to have broad social and quasi-political functions, contrasted with that of the Jewish community in which the synagogue and the family, except for the ultra orthodox, had less diversified roles while those of modern, western social and political institutions increased in scope.

The mandatory government impeded the development of a nationally representative Arabic organization by forcing the dissolution of the Arab Higher Committee and exiling its leaders. The Arabs in turn, as did the Jews, rejected several attempts by the government to establish an elected national governing body. Thus no national body existed with responsibility for the course of education, with the influence to increase public funding of schools, or with the authority to establish an educational code. The structure of society and the government, the high degree of personalism in governing affairs, and the dependence of the population on public services impeded the growth of an alternate school system.

The Supreme Muslim Council, the highest representative Muslim religious body, administered waqfs and waqf funds. Waqfs were land holdings used as endowments for public welfare; "the institution of waqfs was the main method...by Muslim society to meet the needs for public education, religious education, and social welfare activities." In an analysis of waqfs, H. Khayat concludes that

18Ibid, p. 29.
19Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, p. 52.
despite greater numbers suggested by some "actually no more than 24 schools received subsidies from the waqfs at any time and all in all represented a small amount of the waqf budget." These figures do not include the kuttab, the traditional primary religious school. In addition to these schools, the community had two other groups of non-public schools, those sponsored by Christian denominations in which the language of instruction usually corresponded to that of the European sponsor and a small number of schools maintained by local committees. In these, Arabic was the language of instruction and the curriculum gave more attention to national history and current events than did the syllabus of the government system.

One Arab educator described the symbolism of these schools though not many achieved the standards of the government system.

Humble as these elementary schools may be, they can boast of independence and self-respect. Their funds come from the soil, they are not foreign and their management is native. These, as well as the Christian national schools, are considered by the Arabs as 'national' institutions, and therefore the bulwark of Arab patriotism. One should like to see them more adequately financed and better administered, as they represent a healthy consciousness of independence and self-support.

Tibawi viewed these schools as "a new type of national school" with the potentiality of transcending religious differences and forging a sense of national unity. In 1945 to 1946 43,885 Arab pupils

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21 Ibid., p. 106.
22 Ibid., p. 107.
23 Tibawi, Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 65.
25 Tibawi, Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 65.
attended private schools; 29,236 were enrolled in Christian institutions and 14,649 attended Muslim schools. Private school enrollment was approximately one half of public school enrollment.

Arab society could best be described as "semi-feudal." At the apex of the social pyramid were a small number of wealthy men with administrative experience acquired under Turkish rule. The professional and middle class were few. A small group of wealthy notables ruled society. The majority of the population were fellahen or peasants who were either tenant farmers or owned small lots of land. "The Arab civilization of Palestine is based on the clan; leadership resides in a small group of influential families, and it is almost impossible for the son of an Arab fellah to rise to a position of wealth and political influence." In addition, there were nomadic Bedouin tribes who until the last ten years of the mandate, were largely unaffected by British rule. Three-quarters of Moslem Arabs were villagers. Most Christian Arabs lived in towns as contrasted with only one-fourth of the Moslem population. The urban population was divided among twenty-three towns of which Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa had populations of more than twenty-four


\[27\] Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 15-16.


\[29\] Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:665-666.
thousand and Gaza, Tel Aviv, Nablus and Hebron more than fifteen thousand.\(^3\) At the beginning of the mandate, life in rural areas was physically isolated, self-contained and remote from the movement for change within urban centers. The Arab population increased substantially during the mandate. Growth came primarily through natural increase, not, as in the Jewish community, because of immigration.\(^3\) The relative homogeneity of the population, the low per capita income, the high rate of illiteracy and unfamiliarity with western cultures helped to make the transition from traditionalism a gradual process within the Arab sector. In contrast the Jewish community had a more heterogeneous and western oriented cultural background, had a higher level of literacy and a greater per capita income. The Moslem Arab population was the largest in Palestine, had the highest birthrate and was most dependent on government schools. The increase in the school age population exceeded the capacity of the schools under the pattern of expansion determined by the government. Without a governmental commitment to universal education and legislation mandating compulsory attendance, Palestinians had to rely on private as well as public schools and the private sector was less extensive within the Moslem than within the Christian community.

The villages of Palestine were clusters of two or more extended families. "Unlike the North American pattern, practically no isolated farmsteads or rural neighborhoods exist between the villages. Farmers and animals live in the village, from which they go out daily to work

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 148.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 141.
in the surrounding fields and come back in the evening," Outside influences were few. The family life of the peasant followed traditional patterns; folk custom and superstition dictated child rearing practices. Childhood marriages were accepted practice. The ambience of rural life did not depend on education and few villagers were literate. Commenting on the attitudes towards education in the village of Baytin in 1966, Lutfiyya writes:

Although they have been willing to concede the idea of secular education for the boys, the traditionalists have resisted any efforts to extend similar educational opportunities to girls. Women, they feel, must continue in the traditional, religious-oriented roles played by their mothers. Secular education is apt to change the values of the girls to the point where they might rebel against the subservient position they occupy in the social structure.

The mandatory government accomplished much in popularizing education in rural areas, but unfortunately did not capitalize on the interest aroused by making the school system more extensive.

The fellaheen or peasant farmer led an unusually impoverished and harsh life. High lending rates and a marginal subsistence level entrapped the fellaheen and "it was virtually impossible for any farmer to repay more than a fraction of his debt on the due dates, with the result that a debt once incurred was never cancelled, but had to be renewed...at exorbitant rates of interest." While British tax

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33Lutfiyya, Baytin: a Jordanian Village, pp. 154-161.

34Ibid., p. 172.


36Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:364.
and credit reform and a rise in income during World War II helped
the farmer, most Palestinian villagers remained poor. Primitive
agricultural methods, inadequate irrigation, a rotating communal sys-
tem of land ownership, and lack of capital hampered agricultural pro-
ductivity and maintained indebtedness. Disease, inadequate hous-
ing, malnutrition and poor hygiene debilitated the population.
While these conditions existed in non-rural areas, towns had better
facilities for their treatment.

Mandatory Palestine had a unique economic situation. "Although
the total population ... is less than two million, its economic
life presents the complex phenomenon of two distinctive economies -
one Jewish and one Arab ... " The economic patterns, industry,
wage scales, agricultural development of each community varied. The
Arabs had a lower standard of living; they essentially continued to
depend on non-mechanized agricultural methods, and marginal farming.
"The occupational structure of the Jewish population is similar to
that of some...industrialized communities, while that of the Arabs
corresponds more nearly to a subsistence type of agricultural
society." Arab industrial development and capitalization was less
than that of the Jews and most industrial workers were Jewish.
"According to the 1942 census of industry, 75 to 80 per cent of all

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37Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and
38United Nations, General Assembly, "Palestine," Official
Records, Second Session, Supplement No. 11 (Lake Success, N.Y.,
39Ibid.
persons engaged in industry were employed in Jewish-owned enterprises and about 90 percent of the total number of workers in industry are Jewish. "^0 For the Arab sector, the economy provided few employment opportunities outside of the farm, small craft industries or government service. During the mandate the chief modification in the economic patterns was the gradual building up of a small middle class and an industrial force and the beginning of an Arab labor and cooperative movement. "^1 Within the Arab sector of Palestine the relationship of education and the economy remained comparable to that in the west in the early phase of public school development. Each was largely independent of the other. In contrast, within the Jewish community the relationship more closely approximated that of the contemporary west where education and the economy are more closely integrated.

Political Discontent and Education

Until the mid-nineteenth century the Arab world had a non-evolutionary orientation that found its apogee and glory in the classical heritage and, after the Middle Ages, cultural contact with the west frequently had been disdained. "^2 When the relationship between the east and west changed in the nineteenth

[^0]: Ibid., p. 16.
[^1]: Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1945, p. 33.
century, assimilation occurred at a time of imperial weakness and without the full realization of its consequences.\(^4\) One response to westernization occurred through the Nahda, a political and intellectual awakening which sought to synthesize foreign accomplishments within an orbit of a revived classical heritage.\(^4\) The search for reform and authenticity took a variety of forms. Historically, religion had provided the sole basis of communal identification and the primary divisions within the empire followed religious lines. The concept of reform under Pan-Islamism continued to derive solidarity from a supra-national religious foundation. Within this concept some advocated the rejection of obscurantism or those purported theological attitudes which disavowed the fruits of scientific thinking while more conservative groups sought a closer affinity with the past and a more observant restoration of Muslim ideological ideals.\(^4\) Pan Arabism, a second movement, sought to forge an allegiance on the basis of a common linguistic and environmental heritage. Its advocates were Christian Arab intellectuals and Muslim Arabs finding admissible some degree of secularization.\(^6\)

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\(^{5}\) Shirabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West*, pp. 6-7.

\(^{6}\) Ibid, pp. 10-11.
In Palestine this nationalistic and cultural renaissance continued to flower during the mandate. Translations of western literature, journalism, literary and scientific societies and contemporary Arabic writing, coupled with a rising literacy rate and an increased sense of nationalism, broadened the cultural movement from one involving the intellectual elite to that reaching wider audiences.

A latent thread articulated with increasing intensity in the early twentieth century and assuming major proportions after the First World War was nationalism. The earliest concept of nationalism directed its aims towards the reconstitution of the Arab position within the empire. In an analysis of political trends Khadduri notes:

The aims of Arab nationalism were never formulated in a set of principles at the time Arabs grew aware of themselves as a group separate from others in the Ottoman empire. Their aims began to take shape gradually after the nationalist movement got under way. In many instances the rationale and the principles of significant political movements developed after rather than before these movements had sprung into existence.

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9 Khadduri, Political Trends in the Arab World, p. 16.

The Arab nationalistic movement differed from Zionism many of whose aims were clearly defined and concretized before the mandatory period. In addition, Zionism included groups with varying ideologies while Arab nationalism developed more slowly and was not initially a unifying force. In Palestine the drive for independence during the mandate ultimately linked the Arab community together and muted the dilemma of arabisation versus islamisation.51

Concern with the cultural implications of foreign education was one aspect of nationalism. It was evident prior to the mandatory period and increased during it. Fear of western cultural encroachment found expression in the writing of al-Afghani, a great nineteenth century political reformer, a Moslem and exponent of Islam as a means of revitalizing and unifying the Arab people and of ending their victimization by their own weakened leadership and the west. Education was the key to the Arab strength al-Afghani sought. Indiscriminate embrace of a European language and culture would be disastrous because, as he wrote

...a people without literature is a people without language. A people without history is a people without glory, and a people will lack history if authorities do not rise among them, to protect and revivify the memory of their historical heroes so that they may follow and emulate. All this depends on a national ... education which begins with "the homeland" ... the environment of which is "the homeland", and the end of which is "the homeland".52

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51Zeine, Emergence of Arab Nationalism delineates the growth of nationalism in the pre-mandatory period.

52Quoted in Haim, Arab Nationalism, p. 14.
The political encroachment of the west in the twentieth century and disillusionment with a sensed betrayal of their interests sharpened distrust of western intellectualism. "The Arab-Muslim reformers while admitting the necessity of improving the internal conditions in Arab lands had no intention of introducing a western pattern of culture nor did they believe in its superiority. To an increasing extent Christian Arabs came to share a similar view. During the mandate, the Arab community had only a small number of non traditional indigenous schools and the dependency on the government network posed the issue of bi-culturalism or denationalization which al-Afghani and later critics raised. The government schools supported an Arabic linguistic and literary growth, but presented a vision of the world from an intellectual perspective shaped by foreigners for whom the west represented the apex of civilization. British authority for the public school system began in the chaos of World War I. However, the continuation of that authority throughout the mandate without modification was undoubtedly protective of the self interest of the mandatory government and antagonistic to Arab nationalistic movement.

Cultural and political differences made the government and Arab community adversaries, roles most obvious in periods of strife, but tension existed even in years of relative calm and western institutions were suspect.

53 Zeine, Emergence of Arab Nationalism, pp. 128-129.
Whatever good ... the Fertile Crescent (or any other part of the Arab world) may have reaped from British or French rule it was always a by-product of a process designed to serve British ... interests. Western imperialism, despite certain positive aspects, was not a benevolent force in the Arab world; on the contrary it was a force of social repression and economic manipulation. Even when Britain and France wished to contribute to the welfare of their colonial wards, their efforts were severely limited not only by manpower and financial considerations, but by the irreducible, inherent conflict between ruler and ruled. Thus the modern projects introduced by imperialism - highways, ... etc., - could only be motivated by colonial economic, political and strategic interests.  

Educational autonomy was important because of its political implications. The Arabs sought, but never gained the independent status enjoyed by the Hebrew school system. The issue had significance for Arab nationalism as Abdul Tibawi explains.

... Arab control of education was a national policy with two important objectives: raising the social level of the population and thus leading it on the highway of independence from foreign rule; preserving the national culture against an invasion of an alien people and culture. The first objective of shaking off foreign rule, ... was common to all Arab countries under British or French tutelage. The second, however, was meant to guard against Jewish settlement with all that it stood for ... The two objectives were quite frequently merged in one.  

Free of the restrictions imposed by the mandatory government, the Hebrew school system was able to integrate schooling with nation-building and thus enjoyed an advantage which the Arab community could not achieve.

Arab nationalists resented the government's censorship of textbooks, the deemed inadequacy of the curriculum's attention to Arab

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5^{4} Shirabi, Arab Intellectuals and the West, pp. 133-134.  
5^{5} Abdul Tibawi, "Educational Policy and Arab Nationalism in Mandatory Palestine," The World of Islam, N.S. 4, 1955-56, p. 16.
history, regulations proscribing teachers from joining specific organizations, and the monitoring of publications by teachers.\(^{56}\)

The population officially explained its grievances. Community representatives charged: "...the Department of Education which supervises the Arab schools is run by English officers who lay down the programmes and regulations;...the management of the schools adopts an intimidating attitude, prevents the teaching of national education, strictly watch [sic] the Moslem Arabs and demands from them to watch each other;...\(^{57}\) Explaining the Arab viewpoint to the Royal Commission of 1937, a Palestinian educator criticized the "second class" status of Arabs in Palestine and remarked,

> A national Government would look at the children differently, take more interest in them. Now they are just step-children....It would seem that Arab education is either designed to reconcile Arab people to this policy (the establishment of the National Home) or to make education so colourless as to make it harmless, and not endanger the carrying out of this policy of Government.\(^{58}\)

However, the government could not control the encouragement of nationalism in the schools.

Despite the regulations and intentions of official policy, education and politics could not be divorced. Teachers were able to write clandestinely and overcame regulations forbidding political discussions.\(^{59}\) Among distinguished Arab writers who contributed to

\(^{56}\)Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 90-91 and pp. 196-198.


the cultural and nationalistic movement were several Arab educators. Extracurricular activities, notably the literary societies of the secondary schools, made it possible for teachers to follow the letter of the law and yet make their sentiments known in an informal setting.\footnote{Ibid., p. 39 and pp. 125-126.} Petitions by teachers, informal political discussions, school strikes occurring regularly on November second, which was Balfour Day, were one manifestation of Arab nationalism.\footnote{Great Britain, Palestine Royal Commission Report 1937, p. 340.}

The government could not effectively monitor teachers and students in the classroom. A British royal commission described the link between education and nationalism.

The general tendency of schoolmasters to be politically-minded is nowhere more marked than in the Middle East: and it is not to be expected that Arab schoolmasters in Palestine, Government servants though they are, should be able to repress entirely their sympathy with the nationalist cause. It is significant, though the attitude of the parents must not be forgotten, that practically every Arab school throughout the country closed its doors during the 'strike' last year. The boys of the Government Arab College, the cornerstone of the system, were not prevented by their masters from breaking the windows of a private 'mixed' school at Jerusalem which continued at work. All the senior Arab schoolmasters and officials in the Education Department signed the manifesto of the 30th June, 1936. Two of the masters were interned ....

Arab education thus produces one of the most intractable difficulties in the situation. We cannot wish there should be less of it, merely because of its political results: ... under present conditions such drastic alterations in its curriculum or teaching-staff as might be devised with a view to neutralizing its political influence are so difficult as to be virtually impracticable. The fact, therefore, must be faced that every year some thousands of young Arabs emerge from a school-system which has inevitably fostered their nascent patriotism.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 133-134.}
As one Palestinian member of the Department of Education also acknowledged, the British could not effectively eliminate nationalism.

However, all restrictions placed on teachers proved in the end ineffective, and moreover produced the unfortunate effect of heightening the tension between the Arab population and the education service. In general, the teachers - even those with modest cultural attainments - were so fired by the claims of nationalism that they found no difficulty in circumventing the restrictions in the classroom.63

At the same time, it appears that the practice of restrictive access to secondary education, whether or not intentionally designed to do so, was a means of constraining nationalism. However, as participants in the mandatory era noted, in spite of a variety of government restrictions, educational development did not effectively mute nationalism and actually stimulated it.

The disturbances of 1936-1939 highlighted the tensions in Palestine and affected the schools. All of the senior members of the Department of Education signed a manifesto criticizing the government. Students went on strike, schools closed and some were used by the government to quarter troops for extended periods of time.64 Nevertheless, schooling except for the years 1936-1939 was generally uninterrupted. Despite the tensions of nationalism, and the criticism of the government's extensive authority, the public did not...
not boycott the schools for extended periods. By 1939, the overt strife had diminished and the annual educational report for that year noted that the public was supporting the rebuilding of the school program.\textsuperscript{65} The setback to education in the Arab public schools, the Hebrew schools were unaffected, had been serious. The government curtailed school building and closed some post elementary schools. Admissions for the first year of the disturbances decreased by 1100 to the level of 1932; of the applicants to the entering class, 62 percent of the children in towns and 48 percent in the villages were deferred.\textsuperscript{66} The disturbances halted an expansion plan started a few years earlier; not until the forties did elementary enrollments rise significantly. In its official reports, the government justified its retrenchment program and closings by pointing to the increased expenditures required for security.\textsuperscript{67} However, even in periods of relative calm, an inelastic, conservative budget constrained development.

Fiscal Constraint and School Expansion

Fiscal constraints were a major grievance of the Arab population.\textsuperscript{68} Funds for Arab public schools came from three sources:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{66}Idem, Annual Report for the School Year 1936-1937, p. 30.
  \item \textsuperscript{67}Idem, Annual Reports 1936-1937 to 1940-1941 and Great Britain, System of Education, pp. 40-41.
  \item \textsuperscript{68}Great Britain, \textit{Palestine Royal Commission Report 1937}, p. 365.
\end{itemize}
public revenue (the primary source), supplementary local educational taxes and tuition fees. Rural areas had the obligation of providing land, the school building and its furnishings. In times of poor harvest and in exceptional villages the government permitted the temporary use of existing buildings.\textsuperscript{69} Locally raised taxes were used for capital improvements and to supplement the number of teachers employed in schools. In 1945, local authorities paid the salaries of approximately 15 percent of the teaching staff.\textsuperscript{70} The educational budget received a modest supplement from the public works, agricultural and health departments which were responsible for some educational expenditures. Expenditures covered administrative costs, salaries, construction, furnishing of and maintenance of buildings, grants-in-aid to non-government schools, and a grant to the Hebrew public school system. The largest annual allocation came from the national budget however, "expenditure from general revenues is not determined by Arab educational needs but by the money available."\textsuperscript{71} Education was free in the lowest five grades. From grades six on there existed a tuition charge which increased with successive grades; scholarships were available to help poor but gifted students.\textsuperscript{72}

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{70}Palestine, \textit{Survey of Palestine}, 2:640.
\item\textsuperscript{71}Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{72}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
The level of funding constrained school expansion. Competing priorities for social services taxed the budget as did the requirements for public security. Both Arab and Jewish communities continuously requested an increase in educational funding which under the provisions of the 1926-27 agreement, and later modifications, linked the distribution of public funds to Hebrew schools to the total educational budget and the ratio of the Arab to the Jewish school age population. In the last years of the mandate when the funds provided by local Arab councils increased, the government was "unable...to meet the public demand for schooling or to support more extensively the efforts made by Arab local government authorities."  

Admittedly the political complexities and tensions of Palestine imposed special administrative and security costs, the latter repeatedly referred to by the government to justify the paucity of school funds. Balancing these expenditures was the imperial requirement that dependencies be economically self-sufficient. "Where the public finances are concerned, Palestine is dependent on its own resources; such assistance as has been given by His Majesty's Government has been by way of ad hoc grants for particular purposes." Internal tensions during the mandate could not be properly held accountable for the paucity of the educational budget because for several years, the government amassed a surplus of funds. "Between

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74 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:638.
the years 1932 and 1936, Palestine accumulated a substantial surplus balance. This was diminished by the deficits of 1936-37 and 1937-38 but had again passed the ₪ P 5 million mark in 1941-42, the last year in which there was a surplus in the financial working of the year. Since the population repeatedly demanded that additional funds be allocated to education, the responsibility for the failure to do so must rest with the government. The educational budget increased annually except for a one-year period; the percentage of total expenditures decreased in many years and exceeded 6 percent only in five years. In 1929 the government allocated a larger percentage of money to education than in the previous six years and nevertheless spent less money on the public with a larger enrollment than did the Jewish community on its system with a smaller student body.

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76Ibid., 1:125.
## THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE

From 1926-27 to 1944-45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Total Estimated Expenditure on all Heads (£ P)</th>
<th>Expenditures Education Department (£ P)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>2,070,479</td>
<td>78,000</td>
<td>5.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927 (1st April to 31st December)</td>
<td>1,944,397</td>
<td>100,039</td>
<td>5.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>3,381,993</td>
<td>137,115</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>2,140,032</td>
<td>139,789</td>
<td>6.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2,536,505</td>
<td>143,555</td>
<td>5.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2,374,866</td>
<td>146,988</td>
<td>6.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>2,516,394</td>
<td>159,520</td>
<td>6.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>2,704,856</td>
<td>179,635</td>
<td>6.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>3,230,010</td>
<td>201,498</td>
<td>6.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>4,236,202</td>
<td>221,087</td>
<td>5.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>6,073,502</td>
<td>243,243</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>5,692,671</td>
<td>286,065</td>
<td>5.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>6,004,739</td>
<td>285,272</td>
<td>4.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>7,450,355</td>
<td>302,079</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>7,463,602</td>
<td>385,204</td>
<td>5.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>10,253,283</td>
<td>458,322</td>
<td>4.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>14,819,250</td>
<td>652,157</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>18,196,695</td>
<td>711,916</td>
<td>3.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>20,572,522</td>
<td>1,037,208</td>
<td>5.04%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The Palestine pound equalled about $4.87 in 1930 according to William Orr, "Education in Palestine under the Mandate of Great Britain," School and Society, March 15, 1930, p. 352. As estimated by Matthews and Akrawi, in 1940, the budget was $1,208,316 and this sum increased in 1945-46 to $4,148,832. Matthews and Akrawi, Education in the Arab Countries of the Near East, p. 222.
Three independent British inquiries commented on educational funding in Palestine. The 1930 Simpson report stated:

The Budget.—No agricultural development is possible among the Arabs until steps are taken to remedy the present state of affairs. The educational budget for the year 1929 was £144,119, more than £18,000 below the budget of the Jewish organisation for the same year for the same purpose. Of this sum £139,789 were spent, and there was a saving of £4,330 -- a most unfortunate economy. It is clear that an expenditure very much more important than £140,000 is necessary if the Arabs are to be given a fair chance to improve their standard of life.78

In the same study, the Director of Education, Humphrey Bowman reported:

... with a rapidly increasing population, and a growing desire for more education, expansion in size and in the number of schools is not only desirable, but, in the interests of the people, absolutely necessary. The demand, however, has not been met, and the Arab population, not unnaturally, feel resentment against Government, the revenue of which is largely contributed by them, for not giving them what they desire, above all else, whereas the Jewish Agency, with the help of other organisations, has been able to provide almost universal education for Jewish children. The Arabs see in every Jewish colony a well-equipped school with a trained teacher, providing accommodation for every child of school age. They realise that without education they are precluded from social and economic progress.79

The 1937 Peel Commission Report, while finding security problems a reasonable cause of restraint, nevertheless expressed its reservation with the policies followed.

It seems to us unfortunate that the Administration has been unable to do more for education. Its share of the total expenditure is not only small, but the percentage has been perceptibly falling since 1933. Of course there are other expensive services, with Security at their head for which the Government has been compelled to make provision; but we cannot help thinking that, if the claims of education had been rated as high as they deserved, more money might somehow have been found for it....80

79Ibid., p. 80.
Still another evaluation of the government's fiscal policy appeared in the McNair Commission of 1945. Established to inquire into the Hebrew school system the commission gave this characterization of the government's fiscal policy. "Up to the year 1940 Government pursued an extremely cautious financial policy."\(^{81}\) Noting that the government had accumulated a surplus of funds, the report recorded "the fact that public education in Palestine has suffered gravely from the failure to take the opportunity of developing it at a time when the money was available and materials and labour were much cheaper than they have been since."\(^{82}\) The McNair report tempered its review of fiscal policy by attributing the government's failure to do more for the schools to security and wartime conditions, but questioned the government's caution. "The treatment being accorded to education in United Kingdom budgets to-day constitutes a striking refutation of such a hesitant attitude [in Palestine] and embodies a different conception of the return which a country gets from a generous and confident educational policy."\(^{83}\) The report quoted from a 1944 study of the Board of Education, "It is not customary to liken education to agriculture and industry as productive activities, but in fact it is one of the most productive of all human activities, and we are persuaded that the material wealth and the defensive capacity of a community depend in very high degree upon the


\(^{82}\) Ibid, p. 41.

\(^{83}\) Ibid, p. 42.
kind and quality of education which it gives to its children," and concluded, "We therefore urge most strongly that, either from central or from local sources or from both, more public money should be forthcoming for education both Arab and Jewish in Palestine." The mandate ended a few years after the publication of the McNair Report. The government's failure to modify its fiscal conservatism until the last years of the mandate undermined educational planning and constrained school development.

The government's policy towards school expansion was poorly conceived and implemented. Its initial goal was the establishment of universal or nearly universal schooling. That priority provided the rationale for the cautious pace of public secondary school growth although without a commensurate effort to prepare teachers the quality of elementary education would inevitably be handicapped. The crux of popular discontent with public policy was the inadequacy of institutional expansion on both lower and higher levels. The government's conception of school growth did not coordinate the development of teachers training institutes with that of lower schools, did not prepare for the growth in the school age population and did not exhibit flexibility in planning for secondary education. In England during parallel years the government in 1918 raised the school leaving age to fourteen, acknowledged in the Hadow Commission Report of 1926 the significance of expanded and diversified secondary schooling, reconfirmed those ideas in the Spens Committee of 1939, and in 1944 passed an act

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84 Ibid.
raising the school leaving age to fifteen, a measure which provided more universal access to secondary education.\textsuperscript{85} The pace of school expansion in Palestine fell short of a commitment to universal education on the elementary level, a principle axiomatic to the Jewish sector and in the west, and revealed an even more modest admission of the benefits of post-elementary schooling.

In 1945, the public school system had an enrollment of 80,911. Of these students, approximately 89 percent were in the primary grades, 9 percent in the higher elementary grades, and 2 percent in secondary sections.\textsuperscript{86} The course of school expansion made a minimal level of schooling available to increasing numbers of Arab children, but it did not redress the inherited educational gap between the sectors of the population. A comparison of secondary school enrollments in the Hebrew and government school system in 1945-1946 reveals a vast disparity between the systems on the secondary school level.


\textsuperscript{86}Palestine, Statistical Tables 1945-46, Table VI.
SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS 1945-1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Government Schools</th>
<th>Hebrew Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>7,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>3,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Matriculation</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,586</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,177</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables and Diagrams for the Scholastic Year 1945-46 (Jerusalem: The Government Printer, 1948), Table v and Table xii.

Within the Jewish community almost all children received some formal schooling. The following charts compare groups of Arab children on the basis of four to six years of schooling. They reveal the imbalance between the Arab and Hebrew sector, and within the Arab community.

PERCENTAGE OF ARAB PRIMARY PUPILS ACCORDING TO AREA AND SEX RECEIVING FOUR TO SIX YEARS OF EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In towns</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In villages</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The scope of the unequal distribution of educational facilities on a nation-wide basis becomes more dramatic when a nine-year criterion of education is used. A far greater percentage of Christian and Jewish school age children attended school than did Moslem children.
and their years of schooling were longer. The size of the Christian and Jewish school age population was less than that of Moslems, and the former were less dependent on government schools than the latter. The Survey of Palestine provides a comparison of the enrollments of Arab and Jewish children in 1944.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN AND SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS</th>
<th>IN ALL SCHOOLS, JULY 1944</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total school age population (10 age groups) on 1/7/44</td>
<td>No. of pupils (all ages) on 1/7/44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab (including other non-Jewish)</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>87,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


At the beginning of its administration, the mandatory government sought to provide a minimal education for all Arab children ages five to fourteen. Between 1920-1922, a vigorous policy of expansion occurred particularly in the countryside. From 1919 to 1922

87 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:638.
88 Ibid., 2:637-638.
the number of schools increased from 171 to 311, and the number of pupils almost doubled.\(^9\) From 1922-23 to 1927-28, enrollments increased at a slower rate, from 19,331 to 21,259.\(^1\) In 1932-33, 26,691 pupils attended the government school system.\(^2\) The policy for school expansion disregarded the pace of the population growth. In the same period that the school population had increased by slightly more than 7,000 pupils, the settled Arab population, largely through a natural increase rather than immigration, had grown by approximately 200,000.\(^3\)

Rural areas were at a particular disadvantage. Religious, financial and geographic reasons made the rural community more dependent on public than on private institutions.\(^4\) In 1930 the rural population, excluding the Bedouins, was 478,390. A commission sent to study rural conditions in Palestine estimated that the size of village school age population, children under 15, was greater than 95,000. Only 13.2 percent or 12,539 children attended school. The Simpson report concluded that the size of the school population was not a reflection of the level of public interest in education. "On the contrary, in every village complaints are made on the score of the inadequacy of educational facilities. Everywhere a demand for

\(^1\)Ibid.  
\(^2\)Ibid.  
\(^3\)Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:141 and 1:185.  
\(^4\)Palestine, Department of Education, Annual Report 1929-1930 (Jerusalem: Printing and Stationery Office, 1931), Table V and Table XIII.
instruction is found, and that not only on behalf of the boys, but on behalf of the girls also. Far more applications for admission to existing schools are made than can possibly be accepted."

In 1933 the government initiated a five-year school expansion program for towns and later extended it to rural areas. 1936 was a year of overt political strife and expansion was halted, resumed again for one year, and halted again. In 1936, more than fifteen years after the British administration of Palestine had begun, 60 percent of the boys and 99 percent of the girls in rural areas received no schooling; comparable figures for towns were 25 percent of the boys and 55 percent of the girls. Not until the 1940's did school enrollments significantly increase. In 1938-39 the Arab Public School system enrolled 50,020; in 1945-46, 82,775. In spite of the increase in enrollments, the capacity of the schools was too small for the numbers of applicants.

95Great Britain, Immigration, Land Settlement and Development, p. 79.
96Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:647.
98Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 236.
### SCHOOL APPLICATIONS AND REJECTIONS 1942–1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Applications for Admissions</th>
<th>Rejections</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>21,890</td>
<td>8,117</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>24,255</td>
<td>9,079</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>25,785</td>
<td>9,501</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>28,887</td>
<td>10,079</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Reporting these statistics the McNair Commission observed, "But these figures ... do not tell the whole story, and are no real index of the gulf between demand and supply, for in a village where there is no school many parents do not make application, and even in a village where a school exists many parents are deterred from making application by the knowledge that so few vacancies are available." ⁹⁹ The government's expansion scheme was haphazardly carried out on an ad hoc basis without adequate coordination of lower school and teachers' training institutes and without long range planning for the population growth. ¹⁰⁰

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¹⁰⁰ Ibid.
EXPANSION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Average No. of Pupils per Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1919-20</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>8,419</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>10,662</td>
<td>26.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>16,147</td>
<td>3,734</td>
<td>19,881</td>
<td>28.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>18,174</td>
<td>4,782</td>
<td>22,956</td>
<td>30.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1,055</td>
<td>27,737</td>
<td>8,268</td>
<td>36,005</td>
<td>34.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>42,219</td>
<td>12,148</td>
<td>54,367</td>
<td>40.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>42,661</td>
<td>11,984</td>
<td>54,645</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>44,244</td>
<td>12,314</td>
<td>56,558</td>
<td>38.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>45,603</td>
<td>12,722</td>
<td>58,325</td>
<td>40.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>1,729</td>
<td>50,450</td>
<td>14,340</td>
<td>64,790</td>
<td>37.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>56,359</td>
<td>15,303</td>
<td>71,662</td>
<td>38.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>2,156</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80,500</td>
<td>37.29 (est.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Summary

Palestine was in the process of transition from traditionalism to modernity. The Arab community's social structure was semi-feudal. The majority of the population were impoverished tenant farmers or small land owners who, for the most part, were illiterate. The middle and professional classes were small and at the apex of the social pyramid were a few wealthy, powerful families. Ascriptive characteristics determined status and the fellaheen had little opportunity to improve their life. The church and family were the dominant institutions responsible for many services provided in western countries by the
state or non familial and secular organizations. Cottage industries and agriculture were the main sources of employment. Poor communications, the stark poverty of the masses and the consequent dependency on child labor, folkways steeped in superstition and fatalism, disease and inadequate standards of hygiene accentuated the need for better schooling and at the same time constrained the process of change. Problems directly relating to the early stage of public school growth such as: the shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate equipment and buildings, the absence of an indigenous heritage compatible with modern schools and instruction vastly complicated the task of developing a public school system.

In addition to its relationship to indigenous conditions, the course of education depended upon the policies of the government which was a foreign, non representative one. Some areas of school management seem to highlight the separation of priorities of the government and people. The allocation of funds for education and the associated problem of growth were inadequate and frequently criticized. Though universal education was an initial goal, and in the early years of the mandate the government embarked on a planned program of expansion, a shortage of funds constrained the subsequent rate of growth. School applications continuously exceeded the enrollment capacity of the system. British commissions in the nineteen thirties and forties noted that the number of public schools was inadequate for the community's needs and urged the government to increase its financial commitment to education. Similarly, Arab and
Jewish leaders criticized the level of funding. The government's conservative approach to education, however, continued even in those years in which the maintenance of public security did not impose a special financial burden and its policy of cautious growth contrasted with that underlying the Hebrew school system.

A rapidly increasing school age population, the low level of the country's national income and competing demands on the national budget, and the government's fiscal conservatism led to a continuing gap between the demand for education and the rate of school expansion. The British expected Palestine to be self supporting and, secondly, explained the level of educational funding as a consequence of security costs. The evidence suggests that the government could have invested more money in educational development had it been willing to do so.

The government did not transplant western education uncritically nor did it ignore the indigenous culture. The language of instruction was Arabic and the curriculum included a core of Arabic studies. Undoubtedly the government construed cultural nationalism narrowly and from a perspective supporting its own interests. In the view of Arab critics, schooling did not prepare pupils for citizenship in an independent Arab state, but sought to popularize British presence in Palestine.

From its perspective, the government was in the position of having the responsibility to promote educational development whose stimulation of nationalism it could not control. Public educational
history in mandatory Palestine was not an extension of cultural imperialism, but it did have constraints which were the product of the country's dependent status.
CHAPTER V

ARAB PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The government developed a public school system to remedy, although slowly, the deficiencies of pre-mandatory educational patterns which were burdens particularly for the Moslem population since both Christian and Jewish communities had a more extensive, comprehensive network of schools. The Department of Education described this pre-mandatory legacy.

In general it may be said that the public schools in the Turkish provinces were ill organised and that the methods of instruction were unsatisfactory. The use of a foreign medium (Turkish) even in elementary classes, when added to these initial defects, made the schools...largely ineffective. The foreign missionary institutions, though they enjoyed a comparatively high reputation and performed a notable service by paying some attention to the vernacular language, also made the mistake of employing a foreign medium. Thus when Arabic became the official language of instruction after the war it was found that teachers with any knowledge of general subjects were weak in the vernacular, and that those Muslims who received the traditional religious education, even if adequate in Arabic, were ignorant in all other branches of knowledge.¹

The Ottoman public schools did not provide a basis for progress. The number of schools was grossly inadequate. According to figures cited by Tibawi, in 1914 the country had 98 public schools with an enrollment of 8,248 pupils.² Though theoretically open to all children, the schools were not national in appeal or distribution. Linked with the objectives of a distant imperial capital, the schools were Ottoman rather than Palestinian. Turkish was the medium of

²Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 20.
instruction, although during the war one higher school introduced the use of Arabic. Pupils and teachers thus worked with an alien medium and were not literate in their native language. Textbooks were not adapted to conditions in Palestine and were those used in the former Turkish schools. The country had very few women teachers or teachers prepared to teach in Arabic. Traditional pedagogy depended on oral methods and copy work, a style continued to be favored in the new schools. Though the Ottoman government had made plans for a comprehensive school structure, its work was incomplete and left its British successors with a herculean quantitative and qualitative educational obligation.

The Department of Education's objectives were to build a unified organization using one language as the medium of instruction, to provide a minimum level of basic instruction for the largest possible percentage of the Arab school-age population, to redress the neglect of girls' schooling, to formulate a curriculum inculcating high standards of mental discipline, to give attention to character formation, to encourage the growth of the individual and create a sense of community service, and, in general, to carry out a transitional educational process that was culturally, socially, or politically adaptive rather than dislocative.

The government did not appear to conceive of the educational system as an economic investment or as a means of strengthening Palestine's transfer to political independence. The development of public schools was viewed with a prism similar to that in more underdeveloped areas of the empire where "slow progress was accepted
as normal speed of development...." The Department of Education was committed to the theory that the soundness of the system depended on cautious expansion. This justification suffers in historical perspective because throughout the course of the mandate the government did not provide an adequate number of teachers' training institutes, and secondary preparatory and technical schools which were necessary components to a well designed school structure. In addition, the restraining caution which characterized British educational practice was non-supportive of Palestine's status as a mandate, and the concept of the presence of England as a temporary trustee.

The Arab public school system developed in a span of two and a half decades. In the twenties, the government concentrated on resolving the difficulties associated with the establishment of a new system. In the early thirties the major emphasis was on a consolidation of gains and the refinement of existing programs. Strife erupted at the end of the decade. In the turbulent years of 1936 to 1939 innovative vocational and agricultural post-elementary programs were interrupted or suspended. The era of greatest expansion occurred in the closing years of the mandate, the forties, when the number of secondary classes increased and enrollment figures in lower grades rose substantially. This chapter discusses the administration of the schools, boys' elementary and secondary education in towns, rural education, and the education of girls.

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The Department of Education had three functions.

In the first place, it supervises education in general, advises the Central and District Government authorities, inspects schools, Government and non-Government, distributes grants-in-aid, collects and collates statistical information, and conducts, controls and supervises examinations. Next, it administers and maintains out of public funds the schools of the Arab public system, known as Government schools, employing therefor a considerable staff of teachers. Lastly it controls, by inspection and otherwise, the Jewish public system to which a block grant-in-aid is assigned from public revenues.4

The Department of Education, a branch of the central government under the jurisdiction of the Director of Education, set policy, designed the structure of the school system, planned and administered its operations, maintained teachers' training schools, had charge of the recruitment, advancement and severance of teachers. In addition to its extensive authority over government schools, the department had more limited jurisdiction over the Hebrew school system and inspected private schools which received grants-in-aid. The Hebrew schools, even when inspected by the Department of Education and partially funded by the government, remained a separate system.

The public school system was highly centralized, an organizational structure typical of much of the Middle East with the exception of the Hebrew schools. The inexperience of faculty and staff, the need to establish standards of achievement, the necessity of establishing schools in areas which had none, the magnitude of the task of building a public school system made centralization practical.

and sensible. The country was divided into school districts headed by a district inspector who in turn reported to the central office in Jerusalem. District inspectors had some latitude in adjusting the school program to local conditions, but the system provided little encouragement to initiative. Its schools followed a uniform course set by the curricula published in the twenties. Though the Educational Ordinance of 1933 gave special rights to local community councils, this authority, subject to the approval of the government was limited to levying an additional educational tax, paying the salary of additional teachers, providing scholarships, renting or constructing and furnishing schools. The authority of the Department of Education remained essentially unchanged throughout the mandate. There is no evidence to suggest that the government was interested in sharing its educational authority and, in fact, tried to increase its control of Hebrew schools.

Throughout the mandatory era, the director of education, whose authority within the department paralleled that of the high commissioner within the government, and his deputies, except for two brief periods, were Englishmen. Below the highest ranking positions, Palestinians comprised almost the entire staff, but they were responsible for carrying out directives rather than initiating them. The

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5Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 215-216.
administrative department consisted of two branches, a field staff comprised of six district inspectors and their assistants, and a central headquarters in Jerusalem where each area specialist and the head of each school division worked. The senior Jerusalem staff, below the director and deputy director were: a senior education officer whose area of specialization was English, an assistant director of education who was also the head of the Government Arab College and supervisor of the Rashidiyyah school, a secondary preparatory school, a supervisor of technical education, an assistant director of girls' education who in many years was also the principal of the women's training college, an administrative director, an assistant director or senior inspector of the Hebrew schools. The system of command charged the field staff with practical responsibilities for the opening of schools, school inspection, assignment of teachers and liaison with other districts. The central office coordinated the system and was in charge of the broader aspects of planning. A highly centralized system had the advantage of offering support to an inexperienced staff and could establish a common standard for the entire country irrespective of local resources, level of development and interest. The Department of Education was less successful in establishing consultative procedures which might have encouraged individual initiative of its personnel or the adjustment of centrally issued directives to conditions in specific localities.  

Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, pp. 217-219. As the mandate progressed, the administrative staff was enlarged and there were minor modifications in positions.

Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 215-218.
The Department of Education did not depart from the government's posture characterized by the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine as exercising "as much authority as in a country where the mass of the inhabitants are in a primitive stage of civilization."¹⁰

Elementary Education in Boys' Schools in Towns

The course of public school history during the mandatory era had many features generally typical of the early stage of development. Teachers were poorly trained and the pressure of demand resulted in a lowering of standards of recruitment. Classrooms were often crowded and in rural areas consisted of many one-room school-houses. The length of schooling for the majority of pupils was minimal and the numbers who completed elementary school or entered secondary school were a fraction of the school age population. On the secondary level, private schools significantly complemented the restrictive number of public schools. Vocational education was less advanced than the academic course. School facilities were not equitably distributed and rural schools did not provide opportunity comparable to that of urban schools. There was a similar imbalance in facilities for girls and boys.

Palestine had a separate division for girls and boys and for urban and rural areas, but all students received a similar basic course which, theoretically at least, prepared them for post-primary grades although for the majority of the student body education ended with the fifth grade in towns and the fourth in the countryside.

¹⁰Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, Report, p. 29.
Corresponding to the point at which the process of selectivity began, the elementary program of seven years was continuous and sequential. Government reports noted, "The lower-elementary stage of five or four standards ... is regarded as quasi-compulsory, i.e. as providing that minimum period of schooling necessary for literacy during which attendance would be enforced if universal education were provided by statute. Admission to the higher-elementary stage is therefore selective."\textsuperscript{11} In setting the minimal number of years necessary for the attainment of literacy, the government took into account a literacy and arithmetic test given to a random sampling of adult males, the pattern of school attendance, and the department objective of providing some education for as many as possible. An increasing number of pupils entered higher elementary and secondary school as the mandate progressed, but, once set, the government's theory that the completion of four or five grades was sufficient to attain literacy remained unchanged. The government did not review its hypothesis which, in the absence of a compulsory education law, continued to be an informal goal.\textsuperscript{12}

In the decades preceding the mandatory era, colonial education had become increasingly criticized for its deficiencies vis a vis native peoples and its drawback to the colonial government in power. The world was recognized as too complex, its diversification too evident, to sustain the wholesale transfer of education from one country to another. The policy of cultural assimilation and the indiscriminate transplantation of western educational


\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Idem, Annual Reports,} 1935-36 to 1945-46.
paradigms appeared to provide a conflict between the forces of modern and traditional societies and to have become a destabilizing influence in the colonies. In addition, it had become evident that the concentration on a linguistic-literary curriculum and the filtration theory of education, in which the educated few were to enlighten the masses, had not brought widespread social or economic improvement. The majority of the colonized had no access to formal schooling and their lives were scarcely touched by the benefits of western education. To cope with such issues as political unrest, unemployment and inefficient utilization of manpower, an alternative was needed to assimilation and its concomitant of unmodified transplantation. All of this meant that the British educational model would no longer be treated as the key to educational planning overseas. Pedagogic insight and practical concerns called attention to indigenous cultures in dependencies, suggested a more flexible approach to education, and a more active concern with the popularization of schooling. Traditionally prepared graduates had been educated for jobs only in a limited sector of the economy or for careers as civil servants and, as their numbers increased, native economies could not absorb them. At the same time, societies in need of manpower with technical and agricultural skills could not turn for these talents to their own people. Adaptation appeared to be a practical and at the same time a benevolent educational solution.

By the mandatory era, the policy of assimilation as the bedrock of British colonial education had given way to the policy of adaptation, which envisioned the curriculum combining elements of English
and foreign cultures. The theory shifted schools from their intense identification with European culture, and their separation with everyday events in dependencies to a deeper involvement with community life. It promoted the diversification of instruction and gave vocational preparation equivalency with bookish learning.

Models of diversified instructional patterns and vernacular schools existed within the empire, but according to the seminal Phelps-Stokes study of Africa, adaptation had not yet penetrated the heart of colonial education nor was it sufficiently extensive. That study called for instruction meaningful to the individual and community, the integration of courses of particularized, localized importance with the general knowledge demanded by life in the twentieth century. It expanded the proper concern of education to include health and hygiene, vocational instruction and indigenous cultural studies.¹³

Discussing British colonial educational history and the Phelps-Stokes report, historian Eric Ashby noted: "... it was significant of the distance British policy had travelled since the early part of the nineteenth century that they should have preached it not as a doctrine still to win acceptance, but as a doctrine very imperfectly applied."¹⁴ The newly formed Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies and the colonial memoranda which it issued in the twenties and thirties, formally acknowledged the validity of the policy of

¹³Thomas Jesse Jones, Education in Africa (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1923), Chapter II.
adaptation and elevated it to an educational principle. The importance of the Committee's work "lay not in its originality but in the fact that it put the weight of official sanction behind a recently developed educational philosophy. Thenceforth, the principle of 'educational adaptation' was the accepted starting point for educational experiments at all levels." ¹⁵ Though the memoranda of the Committee focused on Africa, the policy of adaptation set the theoretical basis for educational development in Palestine. Its principles were reflected in the annual reports of the Department of Education, in the memoirs of Humphrey Bowman, the first director of education in Palestine, and in the proceedings of the Imperial Education Conference of 1927. ¹⁶ In practice, however, the application of the policy had modest dimensions in Palestine.

The clearest manifestation of adaptation was the awakened attention to the indigenous language and culture. The policy was evident in Palestinian schools in the use of Arabic as the medium of instruction, on all grade levels, and the study of Arabic literature and history. These were important innovative procedures. The Department of Education introduced an agricultural orientation in the curriculum of rural schools and in the thirties established technical secondary courses. However, this branch of instruction was much less adequately developed than the linguistic-literary side of the department's program. The curriculum admitted vocational

¹⁵Ibid., p. 191.
studies, but on an elementary level did not integrate them with other subjects. The new approach to education in the dependencies was also more than a statement supporting cultural synthesis. It implied an understanding of child development, of the psychology of learning, of the interrelatedness of the school with the home and of education with other social processes, an emphasis on the relationship of education to the environment which halted the long-standing acceptance of the separation of the school from society. These ideas permeated both educational studies of the colonies and the literature published by the English Board of Education.\(^\text{17}\)

Describing the aims of education essential in the modern world, the Handbook of Suggestions for teachers explained:

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We realise more and more the importance of broadening the aims of education and of placing greater emphasis on the social development of children; we appreciate more thoroughly the value of space and of activity in securing and maintaining their health and vitality, and we feel more deeply the need of relating what is taught in the schools to what is happening in the world outside.\(^\text{18}\)
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However, expectations exceeded the limitations of reality and resources. The general statement of aims in the colonial memoranda left unanswered the tactics needed to reach goals, did not admit the binding force of general policy on educational development or the consequences of the paucity of funds allotted to schools, and underestimated the resources required to overcome the handicaps in


\(^{18}\) Great Britain, Board of Education, Handbook of Suggestions, p. 7.
establishing a new educational foundation.

The theory of adaptation halted the uncritical transplantation of schools from one society to a dissimilar one, but inevitably remained western in form and orientation. The foreign university set the standard for Palestinian preparatory schools and these in turn set the criteria for elementary schools even though few students proceeded to higher grades. Vocational training, the extension of schooling to girls and a selective enrollment process were typical of the West not of the Middle East. The secularization of instruction had broad implications. It encouraged judgment based on rational and scientific criteria thus supplanting the traditional authority of religion and custom, prepared pupils to accept change and oriented thinking to the future in a society riveted to the past, promoted the ideal of man's ability to direct his own fate in a society characterized by an ethos of fatalism, introduced worldly, individualistic and material values amongst a people with another tradition.

The shortage of teachers was a major handicap in Palestine. The size of the educated population was small and many of those were unprepared to teach in Arabic. Abdul Tibawi, a member of the Department of Education, explained: "Recruitment of teachers who were suddenly called upon to teach in a language which though actually their mother tongue, was culturally almost foreign to them, proved to be a serious handicap to educational reconstruction. Those who studied Arabic privately or at Al-Azhar in Cairo, could hardly teach anything more than the Quran and that language. Those who were
educated in foreign schools were better equipped with general knowledge but badly defective in their knowledge of the vernacular."\textsuperscript{19} The responsibility for the continuing shortage of qualified personnel also rested with the government which maintained training colleges whose enrollment capacity was insufficient to satisfy the needs of the new system. As a result, the faculty consisted of trained and untrained teachers, whose educational background varied from a few university graduates assigned to secondary school positions, to secondary school graduates with and without professional preparation and to those recruited who were without a secondary school certificate.\textsuperscript{20} An official syllabus set the level of course work, but the standard of teaching depended, of course, on the background of the individual teachers.

There were other handicaps to classroom work and the learning environment. Some textbooks were Arabic translations of English books intended originally for pupils of another cultural background. Others, written in Arabic, were imported from Egypt. Graded readers in Arabic were scarce. A crowded curriculum, whose subject matter was not necessarily familiar to the teachers, gave weight to a mechanical process of teaching and learning. The syllabus presented a vast amount of material and did not differentiate between major and incidental information.\textsuperscript{21} Teachers had little freedom to deviate from the approved curriculum. The Department of Education hedged

\textsuperscript{19}Tibawi, \textit{Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine}, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{20}Matthews and Akrawi, \textit{Education in Arab Countries}, pp. 223-226 and \textit{Palestine, Department of Education, Annual Reports}, 1924 to 1945-46.

with caution the latitude for individuality. "The syllabus of certain subjects contains somewhat detailed advice to teachers. However, provided that the pupils in each class reach the required standard, it is not desired that the teacher's liberty to choose and develop his own methods should be restricted by too close an adherence to minute instructions." In practice, uniformity rather than flexibility characterized the schools.

The curriculum for town schools included fifteen subjects: Arabic language and penmanship, arithmetic, geography, history, nature, hygiene, science, drawing, manual training, geometry, English, English penmanship, religion and physical training. Every subject was not taught in each grade. The schedule allowed a fifteen minute recess in the morning and afternoon, and short rests between classes. Usually, the morning session consisted of four periods, the afternoon of three after the first grade. The school week was five days; to accommodate a Christian and Muslim student body, schools closed on Friday and Sunday. The teaching of Arabic in the first and second grades introduced the children to the Arabic script, and on an elementary level to the differences between colloquial and written Arabic. In the fourth grade the formal study of grammar began and in this class pupils memorized at least "forty verses of poetry and ninety lines of prose." The syllabus

\[\text{\textsuperscript{22}}\text{Ibid, p. 5.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{24}}\text{Palestine, Department of Education, Elementary School Syllabus, p. 15.}\]
stressed the art of accurate writing and speaking through practice and a study of literature.\textsuperscript{25}

Mathematics lessons stressed logic, "accuracy, and neatness."\textsuperscript{26} The work included mastery of the fundamental skills, fractions, percentages, the metric system and geometry.\textsuperscript{27} Science included such topics as health care, hygiene, nature study, and elementary physiology, biology, chemistry and physics.\textsuperscript{28} The teaching of English included reading, conversational lessons, syntax, writing, and dictation, with the stress in the syllabus on accurate speech and composition. The study of religion corresponded with the religion of the class and was given in school. Children of another religion attended a separate class conducted if possible within the school by a teacher of the same religion.\textsuperscript{29}

The history curriculum consisted of a unit of history, geography and civics. In the primary cycle the courses stressed regional geography and history, and in higher grades western history.\textsuperscript{30} The syllabus for the fourth and fifth grades suggests the extensiveness of the course and the span of topics included. In the fourth year the work focused on Arab history from its beginnings to the contemporary era and included: "The origin and early distribution of the Semites. The rise of Islam. The spread of Islam. The Decay of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid., p. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp. 17-27.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Ibid., pp. 50-56.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Matthews and Akrawi, \textit{Education in Arab Countries}, pp. 244-245.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Palestine, Department of Education, \textit{Elementary School Syllabus}, pp. 28-29.
\end{itemize}
Caliphate. The Ottoman Turks. Modern Times.\textsuperscript{31} The fifth class studied eras which extended from the fall of the Roman Empire to the present. The course covered these topics: the rise of the British, French and Spanish kingdoms, medieval life in Italy and the Netherlands, the Hundred Years War, the Renaissance and Reformation, European exploration of the Americas and the East, British, French and Spanish colonization, the rise of parliament, the American Revolution, the British victory in Canada, Peter the Great and Russia, the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the Industrial Revolution, South African and Australian history, Japan and World War I.\textsuperscript{32}

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<th>Subject</th>
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<th>3rd year</th>
<th>4th year</th>
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Note: This syllabus was used in succeeding years. See Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries of the Near East, p. 242.

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., pp. 40-41. \textsuperscript{32}Ibid., pp. 42-44.
Secondary Education for Boys

From 1919 until 1927 the Men's Training College in Jerusalem was the only public secondary school for boys and it combined a teachers' training program with a course of general studies. This association of post-elementary schooling with teacher training characterized early secondary school development in Palestine; in time secondary course work emerged as an integrated department preparing students for either post-secondary training as teachers or for university continuation outside Palestine. In 1927 the Men's Training College became the Government Arab College and was the first public school to offer a four-year course of matriculation standards and an additional post-matriculation year of teachers' training. The college was the star of the public school system, its courses modelled by English university requirements.

The quality of the secondary preparatory education was high; the growth of secondary schools, slow. Not until 1938-1939 did the Rashidiyah School, also located in Jerusalem, become the second boys' school to have a complete secondary course. In the same year the Department of Education added a second post-matriculation class to the Government Arab College and made the continuing of general studies a part of the teachers' training program. The strength of the system was the excellence of its university oriented program; the grave weakness its quantitative limitations. As the decade of the thirties

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drew to a close, the total public secondary school enrollment was 966.\textsuperscript{34} Palestine in 1939 had a settled Arab population of approximately 989,688.\textsuperscript{35}

The enrollment profile of Palestinian schools in 1944 reveals that private schools made a substantial contribution to the government's efforts to reduce illiteracy and significantly augmented the public system. In rural areas, public schools significantly outnumbered private schools. In towns, the public school enrollment was less than that of private schools. Private schools, many of them under foreign sponsorship, greatly extended the availability of both lower and higher secondary school divisions. Not until the post-mandatory era, did responsibility for education shift in a substantial degree from private to public auspices.

\textsuperscript{34} Idem, Annual Report 1938-1939, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{35} Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:141.
THE ENROLLMENT OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BOYS SCHOOLS
Arab Community - July 1944

<table>
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<th>Sponsoring Body</th>
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<th>Higher Elem. 6-7</th>
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<td>Villages</td>
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<td>Christian (b)</td>
<td>9,612</td>
<td>1,535</td>
<td>1,132</td>
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Note: The twenty towns were Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa, Bireh, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramleh, Lydda, Gaza, Beersheba, Nazareth, Acre, Safad, Tiberias, Beisan, Nablus, Tulkarm, Jenin, Majdal.

(a) The major sponsoring body of Moslem private schools was the Moslem Supreme Council sponsoring 15 schools.

(b) Greek and Syrian Orthodox maintained 7 schools. Latin, Greek and Armenian Catholic communities had 52 schools. Arab Protestant groups supported 2 schools.

Of a total public school enrollment of 80,911 pupils, 63 pupils attended post-matriculation classes, and 1,523 were in secondary grades. This secondary school enrollment was divided in 1945-1946 between a lower cycle with 1,234 pupils and a higher cycle with 289.36

In addition eight Christian and Moslem private schools had a complete secondary school course.37 Except for the school in Jaffa, secondary schools had boarding facilities and recruited pupils on a nationwide basis. Pupils paid a small tuition and boarding fee, or received a

36 Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables 1945-1946, Table V.
scholarship. Admission requirements depended on class rank and secondary education was stringently selective.  

Humphrey Bowman, director of education, reported that the Department of Education believed that the growth of secondary schools should await the establishment of a nation-wide elementary school system.

In spite of demands from many quarters for more secondary schools, the Government decided to pay attention first to the more pressing problem of elementary education. It was felt that it was useless to attempt to deal with the question of more advanced education until elementary schools had first been provided in those localities which lacked them. In short, it was believed that, contrary to what had held good in certain other countries of the Near East, in building the house it was wiser to lay the foundations and lay them well, before dealing with the upper storey or the roof.

The inherent inconsistency of the policy was its failure to recognize the dependency of common school expansion on the availability of trained teachers. Furthermore the government adhered to this stance long after it became evident that the goal of universal education would not be realized. The government's attitude appeared to be reflective of a policy which made no distinction between a colony and a mandate, a difference recognized in the official status of Palestine which envisioned the country as temporarily dependent. In contrast to the government public school system, the Hebrew public school system, which also made elementary education a priority, simultaneously gave encouragement to secondary school growth.

Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, pp. 246-247 and p. 250.


The Hebrew public school enrollment was 87,237 which included 7,284 pupils in the lower secondary classes; 3,637 in higher secondary classes; and 1,256 in post-matriculation courses. Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables 1945-46, Tables XII and XIV.
The limited growth of academically-oriented schools was not compensated for by an investment in technical schools. At the end of the mandate, the government school system included three boys' vocational schools with small enrollments, the Kadoorie School of Agriculture, the Jaffa Elementary-Secondary school which had "two commercial classes, parallel to academic secondary classes," and a trade school in Haifa consisting of a two-year vocational course, extended by 1945 to three years.¹ The technical schools had a more erratic history than the college preparatory institutes. Shortly after their opening in the mid-thirties, the schools were disrupted or closed for military use, materials were scarce and the full potential of their programs was not realized. The Jaffa school had a business curriculum. At the trade school, a boarding school, pupils could specialize in machinery, auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, and smithery.² In an assessment of these schools, a member of the administration, Abdul Tibawi wrote:

While it can be generally stated that the graduate of the agricultural school proved himself a resourceful and efficient teacher, the graduate of the trade school, perhaps because of the severe handicaps under which he was trained, cannot be said to have been equally successful. In both schools the number of graduates was so small that their total effect was...hard to notice, no matter how good their quality might have been. The same could be said of the two score students who during the last decade of the mandate completed annually the commercial classes in Jaffa.³

With technical instruction a weak and insufficient component, secondary education retained a one-sided university oriented cast.

¹Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, p. 52.
³Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 238-239.
The department criticized Hebrew schools for providing an education which was unduly bookish, but in its own system did not provide well established alternatives to traditional schooling, and the numbers of secondary schools were inadequate.

Post elementary schools in Palestine thus followed the prevailing Middle Eastern pattern of stressing college preparatory programs. In his analysis of comparative education written in 1933, Isaac Kandel noted, "Secondary education ... is today the victim of its own traditions, which, however fine and noble they may have been, have set up certain barriers to clear thinking on the subject and have increased the difficulties created by a new age and new demands." Secondary education in Palestine suffered similarly. Immersion in wisdom tested by age and the world of books, a heavily European oriented world, was viewed as the basis of scholarship. Secondary school graduates could sit for the secondary school certification or the more rigorous Palestine Matriculation Examination accepted for entry by English universities. Examinations were given in either Arabic, Hebrew or English in seven areas: language of

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45 Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 281 and pp. 286-290. The Hebrew school system, except for the religious schools, devoted more classroom hours to non-literary studies than did government schools and included more and better developed vocational schools though the Hebrew system also gave priority to literary-linguistic studies.
46 Ibid., p. 549.
47 Kandel, Comparative Education, p. 624.
examination, mathematics, history, physiology, and either a second language, classical or modern, or physics. The Department of Education repeatedly measured the quality of secondary education by percentage of candidates passing the Palestinian Matriculation Examination in which examination its students had the best record. The assimilationist character of secondary education was a logical consequence of an academic ladder whose apex was the foreign sponsored Middle Eastern or foreign university. The course of secondary education was not reducible to cultural imperialism, for it was reflective of a pattern of scholarship shaped by the universities of the west which, in the interwar period, had no indigenous equivalent in the Middle East, but it was only modestly responsive to local conditions.

The secondary curriculum consisted of a uniform four-year course in religion, Arabic, English, history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry with the concentration of classroom hours in Arabic, English and mathematics. In addition students studied for one year botany and zoology, and for two years, manual training. In a refinement of this program in the last years of the mandate, third and fourth class students specialized in either the literary division which included courses in Latin, Greek and geography; or

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Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries*, p. 231.


the scientific division with added hours in mathematics and chemistry.  

The Department of Education introduced a major innovation on the secondary level by using Arabic as the medium of instruction in course work on all grade levels. As the use of Hebrew became a factor in unifying Palestinian Jews, Arabic strengthened the cohesion of Palestinian Arabs. The linguistic innovation of the government school system contributed to the adaptation of Arabic to contemporary scholarship, reinforced the vigor of an ancient culture, and modified the tenor of cultural dualism common in colonial and missionary education. In much the same manner that the use of Hebrew had an importance which extended beyond the classroom, the use of Arabic for instruction had a transcendent value. The linguistic separation of the two-school public school systems, a heritage of the Ottoman Empire and a manifestation of contemporary nationalism, symbolized not only the cultural differences of the two major communities, but their continuing polarization. Though the Hebrew secondary curriculum of some schools included courses in Arabic, the government system offered no Hebrew studies. Humphrey Bowman acknowledged that some criticized the Government for excluding Hebrew from the curriculum. He explained:

51Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries*, p. 247.
On educational grounds it was judged that one foreign language was enough. Much time had to be devoted to Arabic, a difficult subject even for those whose mother-tongue it is; and as much as could be spared to the study of English, for which there was an insistent demand. But quite apart from the educational argument, on which we rightly took our stand, the introduction of Hebrew into Arab schools would have met with such fierce opposition that it would soon have become inoperative.  

At no point in the educational ladder did the two school systems converge, nor were they ever designed to foster the integration of the population. This separation continues below the university level in Israel.

**Rural Schools**

The development of a rural educational division was beset with logistical problems in addition to the general problems shared by all schools. The distance from one village to another, poor roads and prevailing social patterns called for many more small schools than larger, multi-village schools. The separation of lifestyles in towns and rural areas made it impractical to send to rural areas teachers unfamiliar with country life and few were willing to accept such assignments. The high rate of illiteracy in rural areas and the shortage of schools made evident the importance of some minimal standard of instruction which with limited resources could include as large a number of children as possible. The quality and quantity of these schools in turn depended on the availability of trained teachers.

Compromise characterized the government's approach to rural

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52 Bowman, Middle East Window, p. 258.
educational development. The Department of Education chose to give the common school priority and initially sought to establish a school in every village. Fiscal retrenchment cancelled this program, as it did later ones. In the twenties the government concentrated its attention on the problem of wastage and improving the quality of education. Many pupils remained in school for so few years that the value of their education was negligible.53

"The principal decision to be taken in this connection is how far the limited financial resources of the Department are to be devoted to the intensive improvement and development of the stronger village schools up to a fixed limit of curriculum and how far to the continuance of support and its extension in villages where the numbers and the period of attendance do not reach the economic and educational minimum."54

The government's actual response was limited and a negative one. It closed schools in areas which were unsupportive, but did not offer special assistance to cooperative villages. The establishment of four grades as the minimal standard of instruction necessary for the attainment of literacy became in practice the maximum number of grades in the majority of rural schools until the last years of the mandate.

The philosophy and objectives of the rural school trend differed from that of towns. The first director of education explained,

54Ibid.
The danger of giving too literary a bias to village education is one to which the authorities are keenly alive. The consequent ill effects seen of recent years in other countries of the Near and Middle East of tempting the village boy to the town where he may become unemployed and unemployable must if possible be prevented, and can best be prevented by providing him with an education alike attractive and suited to his own and his country's needs.55

In a pioneering study on Africa, the Phelps-Stokes Commission had pointed out that in concentrating on literary studies governments and mission schools had failed to meet the real needs of African communities. The schools had not prepared graduates with the technical skills to serve society and the limited European dominated business-government sectors could not absorb school graduates. Concern with raising the standard of living of impoverished agricultural populations meshed with the political self-interest of the British government forced to cope in the empire with social unrest, unemployment and an urban drift, conditions viewed as the consequence of colonial education.

The statement of the objectives of rural education in the Imperial Educational Conference of 1927 was reflective of practical experience within the empire and of contemporary educational ideas reflected in the Phelps-Stokes report.

It is vital that he [the educational administrator] should provide for the majority an education which shall be in a real sense a preparation for life and not one which shall produce in large numbers distaste for the life of the community to which they belong or unfit them for its service.... It is now generally recognised that in tropical countries the curriculum even of the Elementary School should aim at

55 Bowman, "Rural Districts," p. 27.
developing knowledge and interest by practical instruction in such things as arts and crafts, agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry.\textsuperscript{56}

The problem for the Department of Education was the implementation of these objectives in a country where most rural children had only four or five years of schooling.

The introduction of agricultural studies was an important innovation since the majority of the population were farmers. At the same time it must be noted that the development of a rural division disregarded realities within community life and within the educational system which diminished the significance of the concept of a village school. Education alone could not mitigate rural problems nor make the attraction of rural life comparable to that of towns. To many, the city was a magnet because of its greater employment opportunities and more interesting, if not easier, way of life. The debatable long range value of technical instruction available to most pupils only on the primary level, the lack of a parallel investment in post primary courses, the small percentage of teachers familiar with scientific agricultural methods, the deficiencies of agricultural extension services and classes in adult education curtailed the potential significance of the rural school division.

The curriculum introduced the study of practical and theoretical agriculture in grade three and continued in successive grades. Pupils learned how to prepare the land scientifically and other

contemporary agricultural methods. The choice of crops and farming methods varied with school districts. Bee and poultry farming, the cultivation of grain and vegetables, terrace farming and the care of trees were principal subjects.\(^5\) Some schools had nurseries and distributed trees to their neighborhoods and other schools. The crops and seedlings raised were given to pupils and sold to the public. Subject to the approval of the district inspector, the school could use the money raised to augment its budget.\(^6\)

These practices related the work in the school to life in the community, but the significance of the agricultural program was diminished because the qualitative and quantitative resources of the system were inadequate. Ambitious goals were set to meet ideal conditions; pupils and teachers labored in a harsh reality. In view of the historic neglect of vocational training, the introduction of agricultural studies even on a limited scale was an important innovation.

Health and hygiene received theoretical and practical attention in schools. The topics were part of the regular syllabus and, in addition, children received health care in school. To help eradicate malaria and trachoma teachers were taught to treat malaria and administer eye drops. A medical officer visited each school at least

\(^{5}\)Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries*, p. 245.

six times annually and medical records of each pupil were main-
tained.\textsuperscript{59}

English was not taught in most village schools. In other
respects the basic education in rural and town schools was similar.
School vacations coincided with harvest time, a season when the
assistance of children became particularly valuable.

The schools suffered, from what Hawes calls "'survival teaching'
handed down from one hard-pressed, under-trained teacher to another," a style supported by necessity which"...flourishes because it is easy,
popular and safe, because it preserves the teacher's dignity, and
also because it is the easiest type of teaching to operate in very
difficult physical conditions with overcrowded classes and a dearth
of necessary equipment."\textsuperscript{60} The style of teaching continued the tra-
ditional pedagogy of the area which by custom bound both teachers
and pupils to a fixed routine.

The task of the rural teacher was even more complex than that
of his urban counterpart and generally his training was not com-
mensurate with duties expected.\textsuperscript{61} Theoretically he was expected to
be knowledgeable of and sympathetic to the problems of rural life,
to serve as a medical aid and agricultural specialist, to teach
more than one grade and in some situations to manage the school.


\textsuperscript{60}UNESCO, International Institute for Education Planning,
Planning the Primary School Curriculum in Developing Countries, by
H.W.R. Hawes, Fundamentals of Educational Planning, No. 17 (Paris:

\textsuperscript{61}Great Britain, Imperial Education Conference 1927, Report of
Proceedings, p. 52 and pp. 72-74.
In the selection and preparation of the rural teacher, the Department's tactics were expedient and scarcely supportive of its educational objectives. Initially the least qualified teachers received rural assignments and many teachers in the rural schools had minimal schooling, a few years of instruction beyond the elementary level. Classes were large, grade levels were frequently combined, and the age span of children in one grade was commonly five or six years. The inexperience of the teacher and a syllabus stressing the transmission of information discouraged a reaching out beyond the accumulation of facts. Under these conditions, a continuation of the arid pedagogy of the kuttab was not unnatural. These shortcomings were not a characteristic of the mandatory era alone; they have been a continuing educational problem.

For the first decade, rural teachers received no agricultural training. Through the bequest of an Iraqi philanthropist, the department was able to open an agricultural school, the Kadoorie School at Tulkarm. It became the mainstay of the agricultural teacher training program. With the financial assistance of the Near East Foundation, the Department of Education set up a pilot program for rural teachers. For a five-year period, fifteen members of the teaching staff spent a year studying pedagogy and farming and then returned to their teaching position. The Tulkarm

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62 Tibawi, Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine, pp. 74-75.
63 H.B. Allen, Rural Reconstruction in Action, pp. 148-149. The Foundation also provided scholarships to enable a small number of teachers to enroll in a course sponsored by the American University of Beirut.
plan showed that in a relatively brief period rural teachers could be helped to become more effective, and equally important, the school encouraged a more positive view of vocational training.\(^6\)

A rural teacher's training institute had the potential of significantly advancing the quality of rural education. In its second phase, the Kadoorie school provided in addition to its two-year agricultural course an additional year of teachers' training to selected agricultural students. The syllabus had a wide range of theoretical and practical courses which encompassed languages, science, and agricultural studies. The agricultural syllabus included "agricultural mathematics, horticulture, vegetable-growing, ... poultry-raising, animal husbandry, agricultural economics" in the lowest class and "field and fodder products, farm management, cooperatives, animal husbandry, plant protection, soils and fertilizers, irrigation, drainage and terracing, botany, horticulture, vegetable-growing, chemistry, surveying, bookkeeping and poultry-raising" in the second class.\(^5\) Teaching candidates, third year students, received practical experience in the classroom, studied methodology and school administration.

The Kadoorie Institute was an imaginative means of using private and public funds to service rural needs. However, the government gave the school inconsistent support. Expansion plans failed to materialize and for several years the school was closed. Its

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\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 149-150.

\(^5\)Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 251.
capacity, a total enrollment of 65 in 1944-45, was insufficient for a country 80 percent of whose population were farmers. Inconsistency, the failure to integrate components of the rural educational structure, seriously marred the mandatory government's accomplishments. At the same time it must be pointed out that despite its limitation, rural education in Palestine compared favorably with that of other Middle Eastern countries and represented an advancement in the quality of schooling hitherto available.\textsuperscript{66}

The Department of Education had a supervisor of school gardens and assistant inspectors of gardens in each of the four school districts. In the last years of the mandate 238 schools had gardens with a total of 685 acres; approximately 105 schools had trained agricultural teachers on their staff.\textsuperscript{67} While to some extent responsibility for the disparity between rural Arab and Hebrew public schools must rest with the government, disparity between the schools was also reflective of broader demographic, economic and cultural differences. The Arabs had a larger rural school age population, no precedent for modern village schools, and agriculture did not have the ideological attraction or modern foundation which it had within the Jewish community.

\textsuperscript{66} Allen, \textit{Rural Reconstruction in Action}, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
ENROLLMENT IN VILLAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS 1944-1946

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<tr>
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<th>1944-1945</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>38,760</td>
<td>44,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>3,392</td>
<td>3,963</td>
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Note: 386 rural schools had at least four grades and 85 had seven grades.

Elementary and Secondary Education for Girls

Providing schools for girls posed problems of an extra dimension. Arab society clearly differentiated the role and mobility of each sex. In the patriarchal and hierarchical Arab society, the woman achieved status primarily as the mother of sons. Custom restricted the life of the woman to association with her family and other women; work outside the family orbit, if not forbidden, was viewed with disfavor. Custom disallowed coeducation and the education of Muslim girls was generally restricted to the lessons she learned from her mother. Mission schools had opened new pathways for Christian girls, but the weight of tradition tied the Moslem girl to practices centuries old, in which formal schooling had no purpose. These social conditions had educational consequences described by the British principal of the Women's Training College in Jerusalem.
When we began in 1919, we could obtain Christian girls in numbers, for they led freer lives, and the attendance at mission schools had accustomed them to leave the seclusion of the home. Moslem girls, however, were very difficult to secure, only the daughters of the poorest classes or destitute orphans could be persuaded to enter a boarding school, and trained to earn their own living by teaching. In such cases, the prospect of a salary was the deciding factor, and no call to a vocation.68

The Department of Education had the simultaneous tasks of reducing the prejudice against the education of girls, of developing an educational program meaningful for conditions within Palestine, and of preparing teachers for girls' schools. The bias against sending girls to school gradually waned, but few remained in school, particularly in villages, long enough to complete the lower elementary cycle. At the end of the twenties, the Annual Report of the Department of Education noted, "Most parents are inclined to remove their girls with a view to early marriage as soon as they can read, write and sew."69 Fifteen years later government statistics suggest that the problems of wastage had diminished in towns, but in the less westernized countryside enrollments showed a marked decrease after the first grade.70 Villages hard pressed to finance school construction gave priority to the education of boys.

As interest in educating girls grew, teacher placement and training brought problems. Urbanites did not easily fit into a

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70 Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables 1945-1946, Table IV.
rural environment and custom allowed girls only to live at home or with their relatives. Until the thirties the department had only one training school for girls. The development of a teachers' training program to serve the entire population was difficult.

Village school work is a very different matter. [from urban work]. Here we have some 50 girls of all ages in one room under one teacher and her task is a herculean one....

It is clear that the syllabus of work in a village school must differ widely from that of a town school. Ignorance, disease and dirt, the latter mainly due to the scarcity of water, have to be wrestled with, and the girls prepared to live contented and useful lives in such surroundings. How then in one small institution are we to train for these two different types of work?  

The preparing of women teachers was combined with a general secondary program. In the first, and for many years the only public secondary institute for girls, a boarding and day school was the Women's Training College in Jerusalem. The educational background of the early groups of students was rudimentary so that the lower secondary grades provided instruction of the level of the higher elementary school cycle. The two highest classes combined practical and theoretical lessons in teaching, crafts, hygiene, homemaking, geometry and arithmetic, Arabic, English, history and geography. The objective of the program was to coordinate a basic academic background with lessons appropriate for Palestinian girls. The training college was coordinated with lower girls' schools. Its principal

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71 Ridler, "Training of Women Teachers," p. 28.  
73 Ridler, "Training of Women Teachers," p. 29.
was also the inspector of girls' schools and the training college was affiliated with an elementary school which functioned as a teaching-learning center. In addition to public schools, private girls' schools provided a full range of classes and two had college preparatory secondary courses so that non-public schools provided significant complement to public education in Palestine.

By 1936, the standards of the Women's Training College in all classes had reached the secondary level. The training program was concentrated in the fourth and highest class. In the school week, fourth class students had eighteen hours of general courses: Arabic, English, history, geography, nature study, mathematics and drawing; two hours of religious study, two hours of domestic science, two hours of needlework, two hours of arts and crafts for kindergarten teaching candidates, and fifteen hours of practical and theoretical pedagogy. The academic standards of the Women's Training College did not yet equal those of the parallel school for boys with its college preparatory secondary program and teachers' training course in the fifth year. In the school year 1941-42, the Women's Training College was extended to a five-year school and no longer combined teachers' training in the high school. In the first four classes, students received secondary school instruction and the teachers'

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76 Ibid, p. 11.
training course was limited to the post-matriculation class. By the closing years of the mandate, graduates of the Women's Training College were able successfully to sit for the Palestine Matriculation Examination and the differences in the public secondary instruction available to both sexes were described as:"Minor variations."  

The Department of Education had gradually, but effectively strengthened the quality of the Women's Training College. Palestine, however, had only three academies preparing women to teach in urban schools, one public and two private. These three schools and a rural center developed at a much later date were the primary source of teachers for girls' schools in Palestine. The inability of the government to accommodate school applicants was a consequence of its failure of planning and of will which neither anticipated nor matched rising popular acceptance of the principle of educating girls.

The situation was most severe in rural areas. The Women's Rural Teachers' Training School, a boarding school opened in 1935, was designed to address the shortage of teachers for village schools. Its curriculum consisted of a three-year program of practical studies in hygiene, homemaking, child care, agriculture and education combined with "Arabic and English language and literature, mathematics, history, geography, science...." The school's enrollment in 1945-46 was 34, of whom 13 were in the graduating class.

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78Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 247.
79Ibid., p. 249.
The elementary curriculum for girls' schools posed some basic questions. Should it stress general education making available to girls the same potential to continue their studies that boys had, even though custom suggested that a majority of girls should remain in school for only a few years? What special courses, if any, should girls have? Arab society limited the career opportunities for women; their life and work centered on the home. Except for pupils in missionary schools, girls customarily received little or no formal schooling. The Department of Education related instruction to this specific social situation. Schools offered girls fundamental instruction in the three R's and added practical courses in homemaking. The syllabus in the country and in towns thus paralleled that in boys' schools, but provided additional classroom hours of practical training.

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<tr>
<th>TOWN SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS - WEEKLY DISTRIBUTION OF LESSONS</th>
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<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>Domestic Science - Housecraft</td>
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<td>Laundry</td>
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<td>Cookery</td>
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<td>English</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Drill and Singing</td>
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**TOTAL** 30 30 35 35 35 35 35

In 1945-46, 20 urban girls' schools had the full range of elementary classes and many had kindergartens. The rural school division was more erratic. 39 girls' rural schools had at least four grades and 2 had seven grades. In 1945-46, 33,307 Arab girls were enrolled in either a public or private school. Slightly more than half of this student population attended private schools. Though the numbers of public schools for girls increased, their numbers were inadequate. The dependency on private schools was disadvantageous to Moslem girls. While almost all Christian girls received an education, only 10% of Moslem girls in rural areas and 65% in towns attended any school.

The Department of Education had extended the progress in girls' education first introduced by the missionary movement and during the mandate made available for the first time girls' schools in many villages. In opening girls' schools, though at a more gradual rate and in fewer numbers than for boys, the Department of Education hoped to improve social welfare. It had become accepted as an educational truism that the inclusion of girls in the school system generated within the family an understanding which contributed to social progress. At the same time by making education available to girls, the government was introducing an enlightening attitude towards women which helped to bring about a gradual change in their status. From

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81 Ibid., pp. 7-8.
82 Idem, Statistical Tables 1945-1946, Table XXIII.
one perspective Palestinian educational development moved in decades to accomplish what the West had required centuries to do. At the close of the mandate, however, education for girls was still underdeveloped. The small numbers of graduates of teachers' training courses at the peak of growth was inadequate and perpetuated the cycle hampering the common school movement. Although foreign schools have been criticized for diminishing national cultural unity, they and private Palestinian schools made an outstanding contribution in expanding the educational resources for girls. Having kindled an educational vision and set up an innovative division of girls' schools, the Department did not pursue with vigor its own accomplishments.

Summary

Public education was introduced to Palestine prior to the mandatory era, but the system was poorly constructed. When they reopened the schools formerly maintained by the Ottoman government, British officials began to lay a new foundation for public education and substantially increased the number of schools.

The Ottoman and British systems differed in several respects. Ottoman schools had not attracted Christian pupils and used Turkish as the medium of instruction. The British used Arabic in the classroom, a progressive pedagogic principle which advanced popular interests and trained students to be literate in their own language. The new system drew pupils from the Arab speaking population at large and though not providing universal schooling, it enrolled more pupils and a greater percentage of the school age population than did its
predecessor. The mandatory government extended educational opportunities for girls and rural pupils, two groups neglected in the past. Both systems had a foreign cultural bias, one modified to some extent in the mandatory era by the choice of the language of instruction, the inclusion of courses in Arabic studies and the inclusion of vocational programs adapted to the local economy. The British established a centralized administrative structure which helped stimulate a rise in national standards and stabilized a system dependent on a largely inexperienced faculty and staff. The development of public education progressed substantially during British rule though not to the degree mandated by popular aspirations or national interests. The mandatory era did establish a solid basis for future growth.

The majority of schools established in the post World War I era were elementary institutions, typically composed of seven grades in urban areas and four in rural districts. Gradually some rural schools expanded to the seventh grade and a few urban schools added a post elementary section. In the government's estimation, the completion of the fourth or fifth grade, in urban and rural areas respectively, was the minimal length of schooling practical to provide and necessary for the majority. Admission to higher grades was selective.

In trying to adapt education to local society as well as to its own interests, the government sought to balance liberal studies. The core of a continuing educational program is preparing pupils for the university and professional careers, and vocational courses expected to give practical training to pupils who would have only a few years of formal schooling. In villages theoretically the schools
were to have an agricultural bias while urban schools had parallel classes in manual arts. In actuality, non literary studies were an addendum to the curriculum. Formal education which ended for most pupils at the primary level limited the effectiveness of the government's objective. The absence of coordinated growth of teachers' training colleges and elementary schools with the resulting dependency on minimally trained teachers, the shortage of vocational facilities and teachers, the restricted access to higher elementary and secondary classes were major weaknesses of the system.

The system had few post elementary schools; these initially functioned as combined secondary and teachers' training institutes. Gradually a post matriculation professional course developed in one school for boys and in one girls's school. In 1945 the country had two complete secondary public schools for boys and one for girls, a boys' agricultural and trade school and a school preparing girls to become rural teachers. The emphasis on educating as many pupils as possible was democratic and progressive. It broke precedent with earlier trends. A major criticism of administrative planning, however, was the failure to adjust all the components of the school system to that goal and its inelastic approach to the need for more fully developed public secondary facilities.
CHAPTER VI
HEBREW EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

The striking features of the Hebrew public school system were its multiple proprietors who consisted of local, national and international bodies, the vertical division of the system into three trends or categories each of which comprised a complete mini school system and was associated with a political party whose ideology the schools espoused, a complex administrative structure guaranteeing each trend a large measure of autonomy and in which the mandatory government had a minimal role, and a fiscal funding of individual schools which obliged secondary schools to depend almost entirely on school fees. The school system did not follow the government's division of grades. The elementary school had eight classes. Education was not compulsory and in most schools not free. The secondary program was more varied. The schools were college preparatory, vocational, or teachers' training institutes. Some secondary schools included an elementary division, a few were five or six or eight year schools either combining higher elementary with a secondary division or functioning as secondary schools with a year or two of postgraduate study added. Vocational schools varied both in their specialties and in the length of their programs; college preparatory and teacher training schools were more standardized.

The mandatory government initially adopted a laissez-faire attitude towards Jewish schools of which there were 3 types: philanthropic institutions; ultra orthodox, traditional talmud torahs and
yeshivot; and modern secular or religious-secular Hebrew schools. Operating under the aegis of the World Zionist Organization, this last group expanded and in 1927 gained the government's recognition as a second or Hebrew public school system. In 1929 the Jewish Agency succeeded the Zionist Organization as the representative of Palestinian Jewry and continued its responsibilities for educational development. For years there had been discussions of the transfer to the Vaad Leumi, the governing body of the registered Jewish community, whose self governing organization the government had recognized a few years earlier.

The development of a Hebrew school system depended on voluntary support. The desire to create a unified school system as part of the program of nation-building made essential a series of accommodations with diverse ideological groups, represented by the major political parties and with local councils of varying sizes and self sufficiency. In addition, development had to take into account a culturally diverse population expected to increase through a planned policy of encouraging immigration, and to a society in a state of flux.

Public educational development in Palestine began as a pioneering endeavor closely identified with the Zionist movement and its aim of creating a Jewish national homeland. The modern Hebrew schools of Palestine did not have centuries of tradition upon which to build. Hebrew education as it evolved was a synthesis of western and Jewish cultures.

This chapter considers Jewish life in Palestine, education and
nationalism, the trends and the administrative structure, the fiscal basis of schools and their pattern of growth.

**Jewish Life in Palestine**

Several policies adopted in the pre-mandatory era were helpful to the promotion of a public school system. The decision to rely on Hebrew as the language of instruction for all grade levels and subjects, in spite of the pedagogic risks involved, made the instructional system cohesive and avoided the fragmentation of earlier multiple language schools. The assumption of responsibility for the schools by the Zionist movement gave a struggling local community inestimable assistance, and set an organizational structure which the community later could easily embrace and from which they had never been excluded. The extension of equal opportunities to girls and boys, rural and urban children, gave the system a balance. The incorporation of pluralistic ideologies under the aegis of one school network permitted both the orthodox and secular communities to accept the Hebrew schools. In addition to enjoying the advantages of this foundation, the nature of communal organizations, the economy and the demography supported the development of public schools.

The Jews of Palestine at the beginning of the mandate consisted of traditional Jews committed to an ancient theocratic life far removed in thought and action from the twentieth century and a second community immersed in contemporary affairs. The two groups had distinct visions of a Jewish homeland. The former awaited divine redemption for the rebirth of ancient Israel; the latter sought actively
to shape a new nation. The forms of self government, services, 
agencies and schools which served most of the people were endorsed 
by the registered Jewish community which included almost all but 
the ultra orthodox community. The numbers participating in the 
organized community far exceeded those who did not. The Zionist 
Organization, the Jewish Agency and later the elected assembly of 
Palestinian Jewry were their spokesmen.

The Jewish population in Palestine grew rapidly primarily due 
to immigration. In 1922 the population was approximately 84,000, 
in 1926 it was about 150,000, and ten years later had more than 
doubled to 384,000.1 The British White Paper of 1939 restricted 
immigration and the population's growth became less rapid. In 
1940, it was approximately 464,000 and in 1945 about 529,000.2 
The Director of Education of the Hebrew schools noted in a report 
issued in 1933, "Although the system may be said to be a generation 
old, the majority of the Jewish population of Palestine are recent 
immigrants, and neither they nor their children have gone through 
Palestinian schools."3 Matras has estimated that "some twenty-six 
percent of the adult Jewish population (aged 15+) spoke Hebrew ex-
clusively as a first language in 1914, but by 1948 this had in-
creased to about seventy percent. "In the same period, the percentage 
of children aged two to fourteen speaking Hebrew as their only or

2Ibid. 
3Isaac B. Berkson, "Jewish Education in Palestine," Modern 
Palestine, ed. Jessie Sampter (New York: Hadassah, 1933), 
pp. 315-316.
first language rose from fifty-four...to ninety-three percent."  

The population data for the Jewish and Arab communities were not similar, and these differences had implications for schooling. The Arab community was larger and had a higher rate of natural increase. The "natural increase" of the Jewish population in the years 1919 to 1948 was 167,000. In the same period, 487,000 Jewish immigrants arrived. "Of these, eighty-seven percent came from Europe, ten percent from Asia (mostly from Middle Eastern countries), and three percent...from North and South America, Africa and Oceania." Most of the immigrants were fifteen years old or older. It is clear from these figures that the government schools and Hebrew schools encountered growth problems of different dimensions. Secondly, the majority of Jewish children lived in urban areas whose concentration allowed the construction of fewer and larger schools than did rural areas.

The World Zionist organization and Palestinian Jewry had a self governing system which has been described as a state within a state. In secular affairs Jewish self government operated through three forms of organization. Under the provisions of the mandatory government, separate Arab and Jewish local councils existed, but these had limited power and were much less critical to educational development than other bodies of the Jewish community. The World

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6Ibid.
Zionist Organization and later the Jewish Agency, the designated representatives of Palestinian Jewry under the terms of the mandate, were concerned with diplomatic negotiations, immigration, land and economic development and social services including education. The Zionist Organization functioned in many ways as a quasi-government. Since there were many shared parallels in the activities and membership groups of the local Palestinian community and the Zionist Organization, the two were able to operate successfully on a partnership basis without the sense of popular separation engendered by the mandatory government or, in a more limited way, philanthropic agencies.

The Elected Assembly, Asefat na-Nivdrarim, was the highest governing body of the registered Palestinian Jewish community. Membership in that community was open to all Jews on an elective basis and the majority of Palestinian Jewry were included. The assembly elected a national council, the Vaad Leumi and its coordinating body was its executive. In between the meetings of the assembly the Vaad Leumi governed the community. In the late twenties the mandatory government adopted two measures which gave impetus to the advancement of local and central self governing bodies of Palestinian Jewry. The government gave official recognition to these local governing bodies and permitted them to levy rates for education and other services. The Jewish community had a plethora of highly ideological parties with a broad range of concerns. They were involved with a host of areas such as health, employment, housing and education. So important were these activities that "it would
not be wrong to say that the Jewish parties in Palestine were first
and foremost colonization and pioneering associations." In terms
of their influence on education, the political parties had a singu-
lar role. There were three major parties, Labor, the Mizrahi or
religious party, and the General Zionists, the most eclectic group.
The attachment of the Labor and Mizrahi to the schools was direct.
The relationship of the General Zionists was more incidental and
in fact appears to have been established to balance the involvement
of the other two. There was little distinction between the policy
of the General Zionists and the Department of Education while the
other two trends adhered to the distinctive socialist-labor or
religious ideology of their party affiliates. The parties were
not monolithic and their diversity was reflected within the schools.

Palestinian and Arab Jews had separate economies. The Survey
of Palestine's economic analysis notes that the government employed
both Arabs and Jews, but that the private sector did not show a
similar tendency. Businesses tended to employ co-religionists.
Jewish-owned industries offered more employment than did Arab-owned
concerns; the former employed more than three-quarters of the indus-
trial force. Salaries were higher in the Jewish than Arab sector.

10 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:508 and 1:511.
11 Ibid, 2:735.
The economic pattern of the Jewish community was, on a relative level, comparable to that of an industrialized country. It was occupationally diverse, agriculture was not its major base, it included several economic cooperatives and trade unions, its industries and farms relied on modern technology.

In 1944, approximately 25 percent of the Jewish population had settled in rural areas. They had three forms of settlements, privately owned farms, where cooperative associations might be active in a limited form, cooperatives or moshav (pl. moshavim) which had cooperative purchases and marketing services and communal villages or kibbutz (pl. kibbutzim) which organized all of society on a collective basis. In 1944, there were 111 communal villages of varying sizes with a total population of 33,500.\(^2\)

Undoubtedly the most famous agricultural experiment was that of the kibbutz. In the latter part of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth centuries philanthropic associations had supported the establishment of new agricultural settlements. These encountered innumerable difficulties and many failed. In the first quarter of the twentieth century a new cooperative farming settlement began to flourish in their place. The kibbutz emerged from the ideological aspirations of the settlers and practical expediency. The new settlers were unhappy with the paternalistic oversight of existing agricultural developments, but their experience and the harsh conditions of life made sensible some form of cooperative endeavor. That need was compatible with the ideological goals of socialism and

\(^2\)Ibid, 1:372-373.
Zionism.

The Kibbutz is essentially the product of an idea and a movement: that of reclaiming the land of Palestine for the Jewish people and of returning the people to the land. After many trial and error experiments in colonization the collective settlements proved to be best adapted for this task. They provided the kind of rational economy which derived maximum use of available resources, gave social and psychological security to its members and established a discipline conducive to the fulfillment of the Zionist idea.\textsuperscript{13}

The kibbutz stressed the ideals of mutual help and self labor, of public rather than private ownership, of collective rather than individual interests. The kibbutz school was the most experimental and progressive of the Hebrew schools.

While the country was new to many, a western way of life was not. Between 1919 and 1948, the majority of immigrants were European.\textsuperscript{14} This familiarity with the west distinguished the Jewish and Arab populations so that to the former public school development did not represent the problems of contact between traditionalism and modernity or east and west faced by much of Arab society. As Hurd points out "any development which occurs in 'developing' societies" does not inevitably repeat the patterns of industrialized nations.\textsuperscript{15} The differences may give western education dysfunctional


qualities in its transplanted environment. In contrast to Arab society change for Jewish society no longer revolved about a shift from a traditional to a modern foundation. It occurred within a milieu which basically had already made that adaptation so that within the Jewish sector the environment beyond the schoolhouse and within were compatible. Within the Arab sector, the rural population was more disadvantaged than the urban population and the inequality in available educational opportunities in the two areas intensified existing disparities. Because its school-age population was smaller and more geographically concentrated, access to schooling could more easily be made available throughout the entire Jewish community. Finally the differences in each community's financial resources and forms of communal organization contributed to different patterns of public educational history. The extensive development of self-governing secular organizations which grew out of a western heritage and experience and the greater wealth of Palestinian Jewry supplemented by assistance from abroad supported the endeavor of building a public school system.

**Education and Nationalism**

The Hebrew schools were avowedly nationalistic. The course of development reflected the intimate bond between education and Zionism. The first proprietor of the schools was the World Zionist Organization and for several years it was the system's principal supporter. The administrative structure of the schools and the Zionist Organization were coordinated. The choice of Hebrew as the language of instruction, the emphasis given a Hebraic core in
a curriculum which bonded together ancient Jewish studies and Zionism, the system's willingness to embrace immigrants, the very desire to establish and expand as rapidly as possible a Hebrew national public school system were evidence of the role of education in the process of building a Jewish national home.

There were several compelling reasons which linked education and Zionism. A theme of Zionist literature dwelt with the necessity of permitting the Jew to live a whole and normal life. A desire existed to establish an authentic Hebrew education, one which would end the dualism between home and national culture which had emerged in Europe in the wake of emancipation. The receding role of philanthropic societies before and during World War I, the arrival of immigrants eager to build a new type of Jewish society, and the indifference of both the Ottoman and British government to the education of Jewish students helped to encourage self-sufficiency in education as in other areas. In the essay "On National Education" the Zionist historian Simon Dubnow explained, "The internal autonomy of the Jewish nationality rests on a three-fold basis: the community, the language, and the school. It is difficult to decide which of the three is the most important, since each of them is indispensable in its sphere and fulfills a definite function in the organization of the life of the people."16 The work of the settlers in the pre-mandatory era gave evidence of their understanding of education as a fundamental

element in the building of a national home. The Zionist Organization, Hebrew educators and a growing percentage of the population supported schools which embraced Zionist ideology.

The 1937 Royal Commission to Palestine noted the nationalistic orientation of the schools.

...the Jewish system of education is doing what it was meant to do. Practically every Jewish boy and girl attends a primary school. A substantial proportion of them go on to a secondary school. In more than two cases out of three, the school, whether primary or secondary, is a Jewish school, the instruction is in Hebrew, the course of work is planned to impregnate the pupil with the Hebrew tradition. A glance at the curriculum of a leading Jewish secondary school will illustrate this point. Twelve hours a week are devoted to the Hebrew language, the Bible, the Talmud, and Hebrew literature and history in general, as against four hours to English and three hours to Arabic - which last is a highly commendable provision as far as it goes. Considering, further, that Jewish schoolmasters and school mistresses are bound for the most part to be enthusiastic believers in the Zionist "mission," it is not surprising if from this educational "melting-pot" emerges a national self-consciousness of unusual intensity. We do not underrate this achievement. It is impossible, indeed, not to be impressed by the energy and self-sacrifice which have gone to build up this system of education. We are only concerned to point out that the process is intensive, and that the product of it loses in breadth what it has gained in depth. The civic sense of Jewish youth in Palestine is not Palestinian except in so far as in theory or in prospect Palestine is identified with the National Home.17

The British Commission of 1945 which thoroughly studied the Hebrew schools similarly acknowledged the influence of nationalism.

Before attempting to understand the system of public education which has been established by the Jewish Community it is necessary to realise at the outset that education means to the Zionist Jew something more than it does in England or in most other countries. It does not mean merely the process of forming the character, training the mind, and developing the aptitudes of a child so as to make him a complete personality and a useful member of society. It claims to affect nearly every aspect of the child's life, and is more teleological than English education,... tries to be. It has also an

emotional content and is regarded as one of the chief instruments in the building of the Jewish National Home in Palestine. Most Zionist parents - at any rate in their present frame of mind - would not be satisfied with what we in England regard as education, however efficient it might become, and would demand that it,...do something more than is expected of it in England. In most schools one of the principal aims is to inculcate in the children a deep love of the land and, in particular, an attachment to Palestine as the land of the National Home.\(^1^8\)

The emergence of Hebrew schools under Ottoman rule, the League Articles for Palestine, and the course of action of the mandatory government encouraged the separatist and nationalistic tendencies of education. The Ottoman Empire made no public provisions for the education of Jewish students and instead permitted the community to manage its own affairs. By the first decade of the twentieth century, there were two streams of modern schools, those supported by philanthropists with a European cultural orientation and Hebrew schools started by the settlers with the aid of Zionist societies. The philanthropic organizations viewed settlement in Palestine more narrowly than the Hebrew nationalists envisioning the creation of a total society. The language controversy on the eve of World War I became symbolic of two views towards Palestine, those of the Europeanists viewing settlement in Palestine narrowly and of the Hebrew nationalists envisioning the creation of a modern Hebrew culture and society. Thus the argument over the choice of language in a new scientific high school sponsored by Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden became symbolic of the struggle between the two groups and the occasion for an examination of education in Palestine. As the antagonism towards the German program grew, many teachers and pupils

\(^{1^8}\)Great Britain, Colonial Office, System of Education, p. 5.
withdrew from the German sponsored schools to join the fledgling Hebrew school movement. World War I ended the preeminence of the Hilfsverein. One English school for girls and the schools of the Alliance IsraëliteFrançaise continued to operate, but the Hebrew school movement had gained new stature and supporters.

The terms of the mandate also incorporated the Balfour Declaration with its commitment to reconstituting a "national home", gave each community the right to maintain its own schools and designated Hebrew as one of the country's three official languages.\(^\text{19}\)

The work of establishing a Hebrew national school system thus had a legitimate basis in international agreements and the effort received further impetus by the failure of the mandatory government to take steps to promote Hebrew education. The government schools which used Arabic as the language of instruction and included in its curriculum Arab studies became the de-facto Arab public school system. The Hebrew schools under Zionist supervision and with its fiscal support became the common Jewish school system. The Hebrew schools were geographically dispersed throughout the country, willing to enroll the Jewish school age population, and inclusive of all groups within Jewish society except for the ultra-orthodox; while Palestine had philanthropic schools and traditional religious schools, the Zionist-Hebrew schools expanded rapidly.

The Zionist Organization had helped to fund Hebrew education before the outbreak of World War I. During the war years its role

\(^{19}\) Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 1:4-10.
became preeminent. Palestine was in havoc. The curtailment of aid from abroad forced the closing of many schools and the suspension for long periods of teachers' salaries. When the British occupied Palestine, the Zionist Organization assumed responsibility for providing a community in disarray and distress multiple services including the maintenance of Hebrew schools. The organization established a Department of Education, set up in 1914 by Hebrew educators and community representatives, which worked with the local Board of Education.

Founded in 1897 the World Zionist Organization consisted of multivariated federations and unions, large and small, national and international. Some had an interest in specific aspects of development, some were characterized by a particularistic ideology and interpretation of Zionism. Under the terms of the mandate, the Zionist Organization achieved legal status as the official representative of Palestinian Jewry. It functioned as a Jewish government. In 1929 the Jewish Agency composed of Zionist and non-Zionist organizations succeeded the Zionist Organization and continued its work.

In 1926-1927 the government recognized the schools under the sponsorship of the Zionist Organization as a second or Hebrew public school system, set up an inspectorate for the schools and increased its appropriation for Hebrew education.

In addition to the general conditions governing grants-in-aid to non-Government schools the following special conditions [were]...imposed on the Zionist Executive in return for the block grant for the schools under their control:

(a) strengthening of the administration and the disciplinary powers of the Zionist Education Department;
(b) representation of the Government Department upon the Va'ad ha Hinnukh [Board of Education];
(c) formation of budget and permanent finance committees with Government representation thereon.

Government [reserved]...the right to make proportional deductions from the grant in respect of any budgetary expenditure on education which it does not approve.\(^{21}\)

Despite the leverage which the government now had, the Zionist Organization and its successors remained the real proprietors of the schools.\(^{22}\)

In 1933 the government enacted an Educational Ordinance which provided that "public schools shall be classified according to the principal language of instruction: Arab schools established by the Government and such Hebrew schools as are included in the Schedule to this Ordinance."\(^{23}\)

The financial accord and the Educational Ordinance theoretically curtailed the rights of Jewish proprietorship, but the Jewish community viewed the government's relationship to the Hebrew public school system as only advisory. In 1945, the Memorandum of the Vaad Leumi stated the Jewish position.

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\(^{22}\)Bentwich, *Education in Israel*, p. 29.

Advice and assistance in the attainment of such standards, applicable not to Jewish education alone, but to all schools in Palestine, is the task of the Government Department of Education which to this end is entrusted with powers of supervision, inspection and the promulgation of regulations of a general character. However, if advantageous cooperation... is to be achieved, such powers must be exercised in a manner which will encourage and not impair the autonomous position of Jewish education.

To the financial agreement of 1926-1927 were added the rights of the government under the Educational Ordinance of 1933. This gave the government's director of education the right to approve or withhold approval of new schools, to reject unacceptable teachers and to establish the rules for conditions of employment. In practice, the government did not impose stringent control over the Hebrew schools. It exercised its authority unevenly. Its degree of involvement appeared to correspond to its financial support of the schools and the government's aid never equaled that of Jewish sources. The British royal commission of 1937 acknowledged, "The degree of autonomy with which the Jewish school system is conducted is due not only to the statutory position of the Jewish community but also to its capacity to pay its way." While the government made recommendations to the Hebrew Department of Education and in some years withheld funds, the mandatory government never became the proprietor of the schools. Such crucial issues as the formulation of the curriculum, the choice of textbooks, the appointment of teachers, the expansion of the system, and the choice of school administrators of all ranks remained the province of the Jewish community.

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24 Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 4.
As early as 1926-1927, the government noted in its annual report a criticism of the trends. Disagreement over the trends, the exclusion of the Agudath's Israel's schools from the distribution of funds by the Jewish Community, salaries of teachers and a proposed educational code caused a series of disputes in the years 1939 to 1941 when the mandatory government withheld part of its grant. In 1941-42, the government noted as satisfactory the improvements in the curriculum of vocational and agricultural schools, and gave the Hebrew schools their regular grant plus the funds previously withheld.

The Jewish community did not adopt the other proposals of the government. In 1945 a British commission under Sir Arnold McNair studied the Jewish school system. The British mandate for Palestine turbulently ended a few years later and in the turmoil of those last years, the commission's recommendations lay dormant.

Trends and the Administrative Structure

Before the mandate there were two types of modern Hebrew schools, those which left religious instruction to the home and others in which religion was the center of gravity of all work. The building of a unified school system depended on some formula to bring together these two groups. The issue arose at the Zionist London Conference in 1920. The Mizrahi was an association of religious Zionists founded in 1926.  


28 Bentwich, Education in Israel, p. 30.
1902. Its name was an acronym of the Hebrew words meaning spiritual center. The Mizrahi believed in the principle of "The Land of Israel for the people of Israel in accordance with the Torah of Israel." In their interpretation, Jewish law was equally binding for the individual and the collective community, the nation being formed. The Mizrahi insisted on the protection of the integrity of religious education as the sine qua non of its support of a single Hebrew school system. According to its educational philosophy, the inclusion of Biblical studies in the curriculum was insufficient. Schools according to the Mizrahi position, had the obligation of inculcating the law, of allocating sufficient hours to religious classes to encourage thorough study, and to approach all subjects from a religious view. Also, the Mizrahi insisted that all teachers be observant Jews. The explanation of the importance given to internal autonomy by a Mizrahi educator and spokesman represented the position of the trend throughout the mandatory era.

We, members of the Mizrahi, are the only ones among Orthodox Jews that accepted the idea of Zionism. We formed a party within the Zionist Organization and thus removed from the Jewish people and Eretz Israel the danger of the rebuilding of Palestine without Orthodox Jewry sharing in it. This gave the Mizrahi the "right" and duty to stand guard for the preservation of Orthodox education. It is because of this, that the Mizrahi allowed itself to participate in the unified system of education which grants autonomy to the Orthodox schools.... But let us make this clear: the autonomy which we now have is the prerequisite to our participation. This autonomy is the condition for unity in education; without it, unity becomes a forbidden act; without it, according to the proper interpreters of the Jewish law, there is no kosher orthodox school .... Discontinuation of


\[3^0\] The Mizrahi rejected the more fundamentalist views of the Agudath Israel which for years rejected Zionism and whose school remained independent. Ibid, pp. 83-84.
autonomy will lead to disunity and to a clash of ideas against which the present debate will look like naught. We have no two ways to go, we have no choice. Without autonomy there will be no unity in education; the lack of it will bring chaos to education and reduce the schools to the status of "hadorim." Who would want that to happen?31

In 1945 the Mizrahi student population was 18 percent of the kindergarten, 27 percent of the elementary and 10 percent of the secondary school enrollments.32

The secular schools which existed before the mandate formed the nucleus called the General Trend or division affiliated with the General Zionist party. "Unlike the Labor and Orthodox parties, which adhered to well-defined and clear-cut principles, these Center parties were, on the whole, much more loosely organized and represented a great variety of views and tendencies."33 The Mizrahi and Labor Trends respectively projected the more conservative and more experimental branches of educational theories which corresponded to the tendencies of the organizations with which they were affiliated. The General Trend was more loosely connected with a political party than the other two trends and its program was less doctrinaire and particularistic.34

31Quoted in Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 239.
33Burstein, Self Government of the Jews, p. 84.
In the schools belonging to the General Trend, the general educational fundamentals common to all sections of the Yishuv are emphasised. Hebrew culture and the appreciation of national values occupy a central position in the curriculum. Owing to its positive attitude towards the principles of Jewish religion, the General Trend school strives that the spirit of the Jewish religious tradition should rest on its educational work, but the observance of practical religious commandments is left to the parents and environment. In some General Schools, however, public prayer is a regular feature. Its slogan is to give to its pupils a National-Zionist education combined with the progressive ideals of Humanity.\footnote{Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 12.}

The General Trend enrolled the greatest number of pupils and dominated the secondary level of education. According to figures cited in the 1945 British study of education, 45 percent of the kindergarten enrollment, 49 percent of the elementary pupils and 87 percent of the secondary pupils in the Hebrew system attended the General Trend schools.\footnote{Great Britain, Colonial Office, System of Education, p. 9.}

The London Conference resolved the issue of religion and education by instituting a structure known as trends. There were to be two divisions of schools, religious schools affiliated with the Mizrahi and general schools more loosely identified with General Zionism. Each division had the right to supervise the schools within its jurisdiction, maintained its own school council or board and appointed its own teachers. Each group had representation on the central administrative bodies.\footnote{Berkson, "Jewish Education in Palestine," p. 305.}

Another strong doctrinaire coalition had emerged in Palestine. The labor movement was committed to socialist Zionism based on a vision which sought the creation of a worker's society,
the physical return of the population to the land, the end to exploitative labor and the renewal of Hebrew culture with an avowedly nationalistic bias. Labor had begun to organize formally in the early twentieth century with a program synthesizing "Zionism and Socialism," and since Palestine had few industrial employees, the labor party expanded its interests with the establishment of an Agricultural Workers' Union in 1912. Combining the interests of agricultural and industrial workers became part of the activities of the Hebrew labor movement and made it as effective in rural as in urban areas. Berl Katznelson, a champion of the labor movement, described the genesis of socialist Zionism as the realization of the dreams of Judaism in a particular kind of political, economic and social experiment. The pioneering farmer was the movement's symbolic hero and the kibbutz the embodiment of its ideals. "The Chalutz [pioneer] is not the obedient slave of a system of exploitation, for he does not 'run away' to Eretz Yisrael [the land of Israel], but comes there with a vision and will of his own to take the wheel of destiny in his own hands." To coordinate the efforts of labor parties and associations the Histadrut, General Federation of Jewish Labor of Palestine was created. According to statistics cited by Nardi, in 1920 the year

of its establishment, the Histadrut enrolled "4,433 or 6.6 per cent of the total Jewish population ...; by 1944 its membership was about 140,000, or 75 per cent of the Jewish working population in Palestine and more than 40 per cent of the total Jewish population."\(^1\) The organization's interests were broad. It was deeply involved with the new settlements, sponsored health care, cultural and educational services, maintained cooperatives and other economic programs and was joined to the labor political parties.\(^2\)

The objective of fostering Hebrew cultural development was the task of the Histadrut's cultural council. At first involved with adult education, the council extended its activities to assisting educational development in the settlements. Few in number these schools were not part of the Zionist system. In 1923 these schools had an enrollment of one hundred fifty-three and a faculty of fifteen.\(^3\) A report of the Zionist Executive describes the schools and points out the implications of communal life for the course of educational development.

The schools of the Workers' Federation are organised in accordance with the peculiar conditions of life in the Kevuzoth and Moshavim. The parents both work in the fields, families do not keep separate houses, and the meals are taken in a communal kitchen at hours adapted to the exigencies of work. Under these conditions it is natural that children require far more care and attention in the school than in customary elsewhere. The teachers must spend the whole day with the children, must live and work with them. The kindergarten mistress must look

\(^1\)Nardi, *Education in Palestine*, p. 33.

\(^2\)Burstein, *Self Government of the Jews*, p. 82.

\(^3\)Nardi, *Education in Palestine*, p. 34.
after the children at night also. For this reason, there is no division of the school day into specific hours in the schools of the Kevuzoth."

As explained in the report, the social philosophy of the cooperative was reflected in its educational theories and practices. The democratic nature of the classroom corresponded to the egalitarian spirit of the village, but as noted in the report, the pedagogic results were uneven.

The work of the school is also profoundly influenced by the specific views on education which prevail in the Kevuzoth. Accustomed to a life of freedom in which all decisions are taken in common, the workers desire these principles of personal liberty applied to the upbringing of their children even at a tender age. There is, therefore, no fixed external discipline in these schools; the children themselves decide, in consultation with their teacher, how the work is to be arranged. The children are trained to take responsibility, and the teacher is the friend and comrade of his pupils. This system of the Workers' Cultural Commission is successful when a gifted and strong-willed teacher manages to educate the children in a spirit of inner discipline and to influence them without their noticing it, but it fails and is sometimes even dangerous when the children are allowed to rule the teacher and the school. At any rate, the system is still in an experimental stage and it is too early to judge it. The Workers' Federation has succeeded in finding a number of teachers entirely devoted to their work, and devotion and faith can always do wonders."

In 1925 the Histadrut asked to have its schools included in the Zionist system which it joined in 1926-27 as the third official trend. The Report of the Executive to the XVth Zionist Congress noted that the inclusion of the Labor Trend was an administrative change which did not anticipate the imposition of uniformity. "This will not necessarily involve a uniform curriculum for all the schools, 

45Ibid.
and the internal autonomy of the various establishments will be preserved." Like the Mizrahi and General Trends, the Labor Trend had its own schools, inspectorate, governing board and representation in the Department of Education.

Initially the smallest of the three divisions the trend grew steadily. In 1936-37, it enrolled 17 percent of the Hebrew school population. In the beginning of the mandate, most of the work of the labor movement was on a kindergarten and elementary level. It began to expand its secondary facilities in the late nineteen thirties. While it had great strength in rural areas, the division in 1945 supported only eight schools in urban areas. Nardi attributes the under representation of the schools in cities in part to the politicization of the educational system. "Each of the Beth Hahinuch [labor schools] had to fight for its existence, the length of the battle depending on the political make-up of the respective municipal or Kehillah council." The situation was particularly acrimonious in Tel Aviv and that city, along with Rehovoth, did not give the labor schools a percentage of public funds to which, as recognized public schools, they were entitled. The

46 Ibid., p. 377.
47 Palestine, Department of Education, Annual Report 1936-1937, Table XII.
49 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 241.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., pp. 242-243.
attitude of the Tel Aviv municipality towards the Labor Trend was symptomatic of two greater issues. Political antagonisms and rivalries had become enmeshed with education and the central department of education lacked the authority to implement its policies in case of conflict with local authorities.

The granting of "internal autonomy" to the trends, affirmed in the resolution of the Sixteenth Zionist Congress and subsequent congresses determined the administrative pattern and character.\textsuperscript{52} The trend inspectorate could appeal decisions of the director of education or educational committees to the Palestine Zionist Executive and its successors.\textsuperscript{53} The trends had substantial authority for self management while a series of checks and balances vitiated the authority of the director of education and the central administrative bodies. "A reluctance to entrust sufficient power to any individual renders a proper location of responsibility impossible."\textsuperscript{54} The director of education was not "master in his own home" and the stated responsibilities of committees were not their actual ones.\textsuperscript{55} Theoretically, the opening and closing of schools required the approval of the administration. In practice, the procedure was often ignored. Once a school was open, party or public pressure discouraged its closing.\textsuperscript{56} While the central administration

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\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54}Great Britain, Colonial Office, \textit{System of Education}, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{55}Ibid., and Bentwich, \textit{Education in Israel}, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{56}Bentwich, \textit{Education in Israel}, pp. 25-26.
\end{flushright}
set common standards for all schools, it lacked effective machinery to insure the implementation of its ideas. Under these circumstances there was unity of purpose and broad objectives within the system but at times conflicting practice. For example, financial constraints were an ever present impediment to quality and quantity. Yet the system tolerated a duplication of facilities and a rivalry of trends in some localities which it could not afford. Since each inspectorate represented the interests of its own trend and the three trends were represented in all committees, the administrative structure permitted party self interest and partisan competition to interfere with educational planning. It was an organizational structure designed to promote unity of the major power blocks and to sustain the broad representation in the management of the schools which had made possible the foundation of a national system. In addition to the trend councils and central committees there were local educational authorities of varying sizes and self sufficiency. The largest of these also participated in the central administrative bodies.

The administrative groups were the Vaad Leumi, the political and administrative council of the Jewish community, the Department of Education, the Educational Executive Committee, a Board of Education or Vaad Hahinuch, sometimes referred to as the Educational Advisory Committee, and the Trend Councils. The Vaad Leumi, in consultation with the Jewish Agency appointed the director of

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education, approved the school budget, ratified salaries, and was the spokesman with the mandatory government in issues of Hebrew educational interests.

The Department of Education had a staff of school inspectors and subject specialists. Only the latter visited schools of all trends. The inspectors of the Labor and Mizrahi Trends supervised elementary and secondary schools. In the General Trend each level of schooling had its own inspectors. The range of duties included administrative tasks, school supervision and classroom observation of new teachers. The chief inspector of each trend and the director of education were the highest officers of the department of education. In theory the chief inspectors were assistants to the director, but in reality their role as representatives of trend interests overshadowed the line of command because the director of education lacked the authority to enforce issues of dispute in matters concerning the trends.\textsuperscript{58}

The Executive Education Committee included a representative of the Jewish Agency, one representative of each trend, of the city of Tel Aviv and of the rural settlements.\textsuperscript{59} A member of the government's Department of Education was a non-voting member of the committee. The committee dealt with financial and administrative issues, however its major decisions were subject to the ratification of the Vaad Leumi and frequently the Vaad Leumi preempted the committee's work.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60}Palestine, \textit{Survey of Palestine}, 2:671.
The Va'ad Hahinuch, the Board of Education, was the longest standing and the most broadly composed educational committee. It drew its members from each of the trends which had seven seats, the faculty, which had three seats, the Hebrew University and Executive Education Committee, one seat each. The three chief inspectors and a representative of the government were non-voting members. The director of education, ex officio was the chairman of the board. The Board of Education was an advisory committee for pedagogic issues. It was supposed to decide such questions as school openings and closings, the hiring and firing of the inspectorate and faculty, the determination of common principles of the curriculum, but the independence of each trend rendered the board much less influential than its duties suggested. The tasks attributed to the Va'ad Hahinuch were in practice the purview of the school councils which had considerable authority for all staff appointments and the direct operations of the schools.

By 1945 the division of trends had existed informally or formally for more than twenty-five years. Accompanying the transfer of authority of the schools from the Jewish Agency to the Vaad Leumi was a commitment to maintaining the independence of the trends. The trend structure had many shortcomings. While the Labor Trend incorporated many of the principles of progressive education, the Mizrahi and General Trends gave little attention to the psychological

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61 Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, pp. 34-35.
63 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:672.
aspects of child development and learning. 64 Few schools of the General Trend and almost no Mizrahi schools integrated non-literary courses with the regular curriculum. In the Labor Trend where work was part of the program, many assignments were too difficult and mechanistic. 65 The strengths of one school division were not shared with the others. 66 Some Hebrew educators and the government recommended consolidation, but the trends remained the basic division. Commenting on the system Bentwich described it as not "wholly pernicious" for when the rivalry of schools "was conducted on the educational plane" it stimulated educational inquiry and efforts. 67 Political partisanship too frequently led to decisions which were indefensible from an educational viewpoint, but the means to remedy these deficiencies were not available within the existing administrative structure.

The trends corresponded to the particular political, cultural and social realities of the community. Though frequently criticized, the tie between political parties and schools remained a close one. The political parties were more than single-purpose agencies. Many began as associations of like minded Zionists, attracted by common purposes. The involvement of the major parties with education was both an offshoot of their intense ideological character and the multiple services which were within their domain.

64 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 206.
65 Ibid., p. 216.
66 Ibid., p. 218.
Much that developed in the process of nation-building — the settlements, cooperatives, health care, forms of social welfare and schools — were not the product of planned state policy, but of popular volunteer efforts carried out by the multi-purpose political parties.

Differences in educational theory and practice also sustained the trends. In the General and Mizrahi Trend, the program concentrated on the transmission of subject matter; little attention was given to contemporary insight into child development or the psychology of learning. The Labor Trend introduced to Palestine a pattern of education sympathetic with the progressive educational movement such as the need for active participation of pupils in classroom management, the desirability of the project method, the equivalency of theoretical and practical subjects, the importance of an intimate relationship between school and society, the value of contemporary insight into child development and psychology. Isaac Berkson, a director of education, pointed out:

If Mizrahi schools are truest to the Jewish past... these schools [the Labor Trend] may be said to direct themselves to the future, to the task of upbuilding of Palestine on the basis of labor... Some of the schools are conducted under the guiding ideas of the new education. These ideas, originating in America, have come to Palestine not directly, but via Russia, and have in their travels acquired a Russian accent; i.e., education must be related, not merely to the social, but also to the socialist situation. Undoubtedly the Labor schools instil into the minds of their youth ideology as the guiding principle of social economic organization. Like the Mizrahi they have a definite doctrine to inculcate. The Labor groups have gone beyond other groups in adapting education to realities around them, to the need of developing workers, the Laborer rather than the Lamdan (scholar versed in Jewish law) being their ideal.  

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The trends served an educational purpose in the pre-statehood period. The Mizrahi successfully settled the debate over the acceptability of secular subjects in a religious school. Its liberalizing influence in the field of religious education set a standard later used by the Israeli state religious school system and insured public support for religious as well as secular education. By providing a religious school in every level of education, though to a limited extent during the mandate and primarily on an elementary level, the Mizrahi set the precedent for Israeli religious schools of all types, academic, vocational, agricultural, teachers' training institutes and schools for working youths which parallels the secular school division on all school levels. Notwithstanding their limitations such as their difficulty in translating their ideals into reality, their tendency at times to burden pupils with work which was too arduous or mechanical, and their doctrinaire approach to economics and theology, the Labor schools provided an alternative to formalistic schooling which hitherto had prevailed in Palestine.

The mandatory government had on several occasions proposed an alternative school structure. The issue of the trends came to a head in 1939 when the director of education of the government's Department of Education published a critique of them and also

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69 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 203.
71 Ibid., p. 61
withheld a portion of the government's grant pending acceptance of the government's recommendations for change. By then, the relationship between the Jewish community and the government had deteriorated; the Jewish community rejected most of the government's suggestions.72 The question of the trends arose again in 1945 during the review of the Jewish schools by a British commission which concluded that "the Trend system reflects the balance of forces in the Yishuv and the wishes of the majority (though by no means all) of the parents...."73 Noting the disadvantages of the system, the commission accepted the necessity of the trends, but urged administrative changes reducing their influence by giving the director and educational boards more authority, and by more directly involving the government with Hebrew education.

Financial Structure

The system of funding Hebrew schools was complex and burdensome. There were three principal sources of income, the contribution of Palestinian Jewry through tuition charges and education rates, that of the World Zionist Organization and later the Jewish Agency and that of the mandatory government. The percentage of the educational budget contributed by each of the main sources varied over the course of years. The available money for schools in a given year was uncertain. Only public funding, the government grant and the educational rate, had legal status and the rest of the budget came

72Nardi, Education in Palestine, pp. 238-239 and Bentwich, Education in Israel, pp. 29-30.

from voluntary contributions.

Public funding of schools was divided into four forms of support. These varied with the level of schooling and the degree of fiscal independence of a community. Tel Aviv which had a local educational rate received less help than Haifa and Jerusalem which adopted those rates at a much later date. The Vaad Leumi was totally responsible for and maintained one category of schools; it provided a grant to a second group of schools whose principal source of funding was locally established education rates. In the second category, the Vaad Leumi guaranteed faculty salaries, but the local authorities employed and paid teachers. These two groups included the majority of elementary schools and a few teachers' training institutes. The arrangement was necessary because of geographic variations in the application of an educational rate.

In addition there were minimally assisted schools, commonly new schools in the settlements which had not yet entered the maintained status. The majority of teachers' training institutes and vocational schools were also in this category. The Vaad Leumi supervised, but gave only a token grant or did not fund "affiliated schools." Secondary college preparatory schools and kindergartens were in this category. In 1944, 10,630 pupils attended schools maintained directly by the Vaad Leumi, 36,340 were enrolled in schools maintained by local communities, 2,206 were in assisted

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\(^{7a}\) Ibid, pp. 43-44.

\(^{7b}\) Ibid, p. 47.
schools, and 17,563 were in affiliated schools.\(^7^6\) This financial system was a stopgap measure, helpful to a department of education which was not part of a bonafide government. It did not lend itself to long range or systematic financial and administrative planning.

From 1921 to 1926 the mandatory government provided from 1.5 percent to 3.4 percent of the total Hebrew school budget. The Zionist Organization contributed between 51.5 percent to 77.0 percent, Palestinian and other "sources" contributed the remainder.\(^7^7\) In this period school enrollments increased from 17,244 in 1920-21 to 26,849 in 1925-26; local and world wide Jewish communal funds bore almost all of the system's costs.\(^7^8\) During these years the relative growth of the Hebrew schools was greater than that of the government public school system though in absolute numbers the enrollment in the latter was greater than in the former.\(^7^9\) Financially hard pressed, the Hebrew Department of Education sharply reduced its grants to secondary schools, increased the size of classes, made some reductions in classroom hours and drastically cut its support of new schools.\(^8^0\)

The priority given the elementary level of education continued throughout the remaining years of the mandate. Though the department supported vocational and teachers' training institutes, secondary college preparatory schools had to rely almost exclusively on tuition

\(^7^6\)Ibid.
\(^7^7\)Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 63.
\(^7^8\)Ibid., p. 67  \(^7^9\)Ibid.  \(^8^0\)Ibid., p. 6.
charges with their obvious penalty on the children of poor families. The system of financing contributed to a class bias in education; the independence of the grammar school impeded the integration of elementary and secondary education.

After protracted negotiations, the mandatory government revised its pattern of funding Hebrew education and began to subvene the system on a regular basis. In 1926-1927 the government almost doubled its contribution to the Hebrew schools, providing 6.1 percent of the system's income. For a five year period the government's subvention ranged from 10.4 percent to 12.5 percent of the budget, a figure representing an allocation of approximately 20,000 pounds annually.\(^8^1\) In the same period, the Palestinian Jewish community, now more self-sufficient, assumed a greater share of its educational costs while the Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency's contribution decreased. It was slightly less than 50 percent of the budget in 1926-27. In the next five years the organization's assistance fluctuated and the percentage of its contribution ranged from a low of 22.9 percent to a high of 42.4 percent.\(^8^2\) The contributions of Palestinian Jewry steadily rose and by 1931-1932 local sources provided more than half the income of the Department of Education.\(^8^3\)

The Hebrew school population grew from 27,040 in 1926-1927 to 35,228 in 1931-1932. The government schools in 1931-1932 enrolled 50,444.\(^8^4\) While not the only schools enrolling Jewish children, the

\(^{8^1}\) Ibid, p. 63
\(^{8^2}\) Ibid.
\(^{8^3}\) Ibid.
\(^{8^4}\) Ibid, p. 67.
Zionist school system had clearly become the preference of the majority of the Jewish population.

To support the schools, the community assumed an additional tax burden under the government's ordinance permitting local educational authorities to levy an educational rate. Jewish villages and towns availed themselves of that option more readily and extensively than did Arab villages and towns or mixed Arab and Jewish localities.\(^8\)\(^5\) The mandatory government did not require districts to levy an education rate although the government had the authority to do so.\(^8\)\(^6\) Those Jewish localities willing and able to pay the tax supported a common system which gave disproportionate funds to mixed municipalities and less affluent localities.\(^8\)\(^7\) The unequal adoption of the educational rate and the consequent need of the Department of Education to distribute funds unequally created a problem which, according to Nardi, jeopardized "the very delicate structure of centralized Jewish education in Palestine."\(^8\)\(^8\) Both the Vaad Leumi and the Zionist Organization felt impelled to articulate the "danger" inherent in a fragmented structure and to articulate the need for a common educational system as then maintained.\(^8\)\(^9\) In Tel Aviv which supported its own schools there were at times calls for separation from the system,

\(^8\)\(^6\) Great Britain, Colonial Office, System of Education, p. 42.
\(^8\)\(^7\) Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 9.
\(^8\)\(^8\) Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 63.
\(^8\)\(^9\) Ibid., p. 64.
but these demands represented a minority viewpoint and did not prevail.⁹⁰

In 1933 and in succeeding years the government increased its subvention, tripling it by 1945. Since educational costs had increased by a greater magnitude than the subvention, the government's contribution to the Hebrew Schools ranged from a high of 13.7 percent in 1934 to a low of 5 percent in 1945.⁹¹ According to statistics prepared by the Vaad Leumi, the "Percentage of the government's contribution to Jewish education as compared with the Government's Budget for Education" in the years 1932-1933 to 1944-1945 extended from 10.6 percent to 18.8 percent with a median of 15.4 percent.⁹² During the same period grants from the Jewish Agency ranged from 20.9 percent to 5.7 percent with a median of 6.9 percent. In 1935 and in the following years local sources contributed more than three quarters of the income of the Hebrew schools.⁹³ From 1932-1933 to 1943-1944 school enrollments increased from 38,337 to 97,991. For comparable years the government's system, expanded from 53,606 pupils to 105,368.⁹⁴

The Hebrew school system enrolled the largest percentage of Jewish children, the alternatives being philanthropic schools, traditional religious schools and schools under non Jewish sponsorship. The following chart shows the growth of enrollments and categories of schools attended according to the figures cited in the Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science.

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⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 65-66.
⁹¹Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 63.
⁹²Ibid., p. 66.
⁹³Ibid., p. 63.
⁹⁴Ibid., p. 67.
### SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Years</th>
<th>Vaad Leumi Schools</th>
<th>Other Jewish Schools</th>
<th>Non-Jewish Schools</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1925-1926</td>
<td>17,174</td>
<td>9,211</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-1930</td>
<td>20,368</td>
<td>10,535</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>34,063</td>
<td>17,271</td>
<td>992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-1940</td>
<td>56,900</td>
<td>25,701</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Percentage of Distribution in Various Schools

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<tr>
<th>School Years</th>
<th>Percentage Vaad Leumi</th>
<th>Percentage Other Jewish</th>
<th>Percentage Non-Jewish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1925-1926</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-1930</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-1940</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Palestine did not have a compulsory school attendance law. A greater percentage of Jewish school-age children received some schooling than did Arab children. Though they sought to provide universally eight years of elementary education and sacrificed to do so, Palestine Jewry did not achieve their objective. While complete figures are unavailable, a 1940 study by the city of Tel Aviv indicated that approximately one thousand children had not enrolled in any school. In a study of school attendance in Jerusalem, M. Brill concluded, "fixing the school age at 6-13 or 7-14, we find that..."

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there are about 2,400 Jewish children ... of both sexes not attending any school." Brill estimated that an additional 1900 children attended "very primitive institutions which do not provide even the rudiments of reading and writing."  

The achievement of high educational standards and of rapid growth, particularly in a new school system, are not easily reconcilable. The Hebrew schools juggled the priorities of each and as a consequence the system had several shortcomings. Despite exceptionally high educational taxes, only Tel Aviv and some settlements could provide tuition-free schooling. The alternative would have been a drastic reduction in the number of schools. Public funds provided 79 percent of the maintenance of kindergartens, 81 percent of elementary schools, and 6 percent of secondary schools. The system lacked a well planned vocational alternative below the secondary level for pupils leaving schools to work. Smaller classes, improved physical plants, better material and equipment, and alternative curricula require financial investment which the system lacked and so recognized problems went uncorrected. The quality of education was uneven. Secondary preparatory schools modelled after the continental gymnasium or real school were generally of high standard. Vocational schools and teachers' training programs were less carefully planned. Most serious was the lack of adequate funds to prepare teachers. "There is no part of the Jewish Educational 

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{96}M. Brill, The School Attendance of Jewish Children in Jerusalem in Hebrew, pp. iii-vii in English, tables in Hebrew and English (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press Association, 1941), p. iv. \textsuperscript{97}Ibid. \textsuperscript{98}Goldberg, "Jewish School Systems in Palestine," 1:153.}
System which bears clearer marks of improvisation, inadequacy of of available finances, and a constant struggle to cope with the demands of a highly ambitious scheme of education than the training of teachers."

Many factors contribute to premature school leaving. Some lie within the family, others pertain to individual pupils, and some are attributable to the educational process. To the extent that financial shortages inhibit the development of teachers' training programs, make difficult the adjustment of the curriculum to individual pupils, make necessary the dependence of a system on a minimally qualified staff and lead to inferior classroom conditions, fiscal constraints undermine education. It was a hardship endured by both the Arab and Hebrew school systems. Palestinian Jewry assumed a very high percentage of the costs of educational development. The 1945 British commission studying education did not concur with the Jewish community's argument that the formula for distribution of public funds was unreasonable. It did criticize the government's view of its obligation for schooling.

Summary

The Jewish population of Palestine was numerically less than the Arab population, was predominantly urban and acculturated to a European way of life. Its predominant institutions and organizational patterns were non-traditional. Similarly, the economy of

100 Ibid., p. 49. 101 Ibid., p. 57
the Jewish sector was more comparable to that of a developed society than to that of an underdeveloped rural community. Although Jews and Arabs lived in the same land, their communal structures were, thus, quite different.

With assistance from abroad, Palestinian Jewry established a public educational system which was initially independent of the government. The schools retained a great degree of autonomy after the system's relationship with the mandatory government changed.

Initially the Zionist Organization had the major responsibility for funding the system, but gradually Palestinian Jewry assumed that obligation by levying educational rates and charging tuition fees in most schools. Public funds were the major source of income for elementary education; secondary schools were more dependent on tuition charges. The government's contributions to the Hebrew school system were based on the ratio of the Arab and Jewish school age population. The formula and sums paid were a continuous subject of debate. The Jewish community preferred a division of funds which corresponded to actual school enrollments, a criterion more favorable to its interests.

From its inception, the Hebrew school movement was part of the broader effort to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The relationship between education and Zionism was evident in almost every aspect of development, stated educational objectives, the priorities of the curriculum, school administration and financing. A theme of Zionist literature had long expressed the importance of a form of Hebrew education which overcame the cultural dualism
implicit in educational solutions adopted by European Jewry. The Hebrew cultural renaissance in Palestine laid the foundation for modern schools which synthesized Hebraic and general studies. The link between Zionism and education gained support from the terms of the mandate for Palestine and the initial attitude and practices of the mandatory government. Legislation enacted in this period gave additional legitimacy to the role of the Zionist Organization and its successors, the Jewish Agency and local self-governing institutions. The Hebrew public school system grew steadily during the mandate to enroll the majority of Jewish pupils and it was avowedly nationalistic.

Hebrew public school development depended upon voluntarism. The successful unification of a variety of Hebrew schools required some mechanism to elicit the support of religious and secular Zionists. The community adopted an administrative procedure known as trends, which vested school proprietorship with three ideological groups, each linked with a political party. The Mizrahi Trend was composed of religious Zionists who believed religion to be the quintessential foundation of a state and its schools. The Labor Trend, affiliated with the Histadrut or General Federation of Labor, envisioned a state shaped by socialist, egalitarian principles and its schools were dedicated to promoting the Histadrut's ideals. The Labor Trend and the General Trend were the two secular branches of the Hebrew public school system. The General Trend, associated with centrist parties, had a less doctrinaire approach to education and its course of instruction left decisions about religion and
economy to the home. Each trend had its own administrative structure, supervised schools associated with it and had representation in the central committees of the Hebrew department of education. This decentralization of responsibility and the competition amongst the trends vitiated the authority of the director of education and central administrative bodies. A second disadvantage of the trend was its allowance of excessive politicization. The advantage of the trends was its encouragement of unity without the imposition of uniformity. The trend structure permitted a degree of experimentation which might otherwise have been unlikely and ensured a form of educational development which paralleled other aspects of Jewish society.
The development of Hebrew education in the years preceding the mandate set the direction for the course of schooling during the mandate. With the exception of the experimental work of the Labor Trend, Hebrew education had basically concluded its innovative phase by 1920. The essence of the curriculum had been determined; its mainstay was a core of Hebraic studies. Once having integrated Hebrew and secular subjects, a departure from both religious and culturally dualistic schools, the General and Mizrahi Trends scarcely can be said to have extended innovative ideas to other aspects of education. The Labor Trend, on the other hand, pursued experimentation, but in some respects without a well-defined sense of balance. Within the framework of a common language, comparable syllabi and shared nationalistic aims, each trend pursued a separatist stream of education. The schools of the General Trend occupied a centrist position which left religion to the home. The Labor Trend sought to forge a commitment to socialist Zionism and had no place for religion in studies. The Mizrahi Trend made orthodox Judaism, a commitment to an observation of the law, central to education.

An eight year elementary school theoretically divided educational levels at approximately the age of fourteen, though many pupils did not complete the elementary course of study and only small numbers proceeded to secondary school. Post elementary
education was selective and single track. There were academic, vocational and teachers' training colleges.

The Jewish community simultaneously established kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools and two institutions of higher learning, though not all were part of the public school system. The Haifa Technical Institute and the Hebrew University were independent, and secondary schools were only loosely affiliated with the public system.

Their experience with modernity, their greater economic resources and per capita wealth, their organizational background and cohesiveness, their voluntary activities, their assistance from abroad, and their educational heritage enabled the Jewish community more readily to develop a national school system than did the Arab sector. Autonomy in turn allowed the Jewish community latitude which the Arab sector sought, but failed to receive. Though operating theoretically under the supervision of the mandatory government, the Hebrew schools were in large measure independent.

Universal elementary education was an objective of the system, but one not reached during the mandate. The study, Hebrew Education in Palestine, published by a member of the Hebrew department of education, estimated that 6 percent to 7 percent of the school age population did not attend any school and that an additional 3 percent to 4 percent received the substandard education in primitive schools.¹ The school age population, ages five to fourteen, was approximately

87,000 in 1944.\(^2\)

The progress of development in Jerusalem illustrated the kind of problems encountered in the establishment of a modern educational system. A British commission studying education in 1945 concluded that between three to ten thousand children received no schooling, and that an additional two thousand children living in Jerusalem received inadequate instruction in substandard religious schools which were "quite unsatisfactory as regards curriculum, staffing and premises, and their use amounts practically to no more than the accommodation of the pupils while the parents are out at work, and the provision of some rudimentary instruction by mechanical repetition."\(^3\) These figures do not include children leaving school prematurely. Jerusalem was the center of the orthodox community and several groups maintained their own schools. There was no educational code in the country or a means of enforcing a minimal standard of instruction in these traditional institutions. A municipality of mixed Jewish and Arab populations, Jerusalem levied a special education rate long after more prosperous or homogeneous towns did and its education rate was low. As a result, the city was more dependent on nationally gathered communal funds than other locales, but its subsidy was insufficient for the population's needs.\(^4\) The city's facilities were inadequate; Jerusalem, in addition, had below average enrollments. A study in 1931 concluded that 15.4 percent of the Jewish school age

\(^2\)Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:638.

\(^3\)Great Britain Colonial Office, System of Education, p. 32.

\(^4\)Ibid, p. 112.
population was illiterate and ten years later that the percentage of illiteracy was 15.6 percent. In the decade the illiteracy rate amongst boys had decreased, but the rate amongst girls had increased. Approximately twice as many girls as boys did not attend school and far more children of non-European background, estimated to be 2100 children, than of western background, approximately 300, received no schooling.\footnote{Brill, "School Attendance of Jewish Children in Jerusalem," pp. iv-v.}

In an analysis of Jerusalem's status, M. Brill concluded that "poverty in itself would not account for non-school attendance."\footnote{Ibid, p. v.} Wastage was, in Brill's estimation, in part attributable to the background of the children. There was no mutual attraction between a "complicated western milieu" and "the peculiar economic, social and cultural structure of poorer Oriental communities," whose rate of non-attendance was significantly higher than that of children from European backgrounds.\footnote{Ibid.} Other reasons were internal. The Hebrew school curriculum lacked the flexibility to take account of the varying abilities of pupils; failing pupils had no incentive to remain in school.\footnote{Ibid, pp. v-vi.} The system lacked compensatory programs and operated on the principle that a fixed educational course was suitable for all.

A major need of the system was to coordinate the structure of its elementary and secondary divisions. The oldest schools had developed as twelve-grade institutions with an elementary division. As eight-year elementary schools were established, they
and twelve-year elementary-secondary schools overlapped. A second group of secondary institutions admitted pupils at the age of twelve to a six-year program. A third type of school had four grades and was more closely integrated with the elementary school.\(^9\) Seventeen of the twenty-eight schools affiliated with the Hebrew public system had an elementary grade.\(^10\) Approximately one-third of the secondary students began their studies in the twelve-year elementary-secondary program, and of the remaining two-thirds, most entered secondary school at the age of fourteen and a relatively small number did so at the age of twelve.\(^11\)

The secondary school structure had economic, educational and social disadvantages. The report to the sixteenth Zionist Congress in 1929 noted:

The present educational system in Palestine has been built up partly in imitation of the Continental system which, particularly before the War, involved certain duplications between the upper grades of the elementary school and the lower grades of the Gymnasia and the secondary schools; and, likewise, duplication between the lower grades of the Teachers' Seminaries and the upper grades of the Gymnasia. Underlying the Continental organisation was a dual system which arose essentially out of class distinctions....The unified coordination of the school system is advantageous from the point of view of economy, but its educational and social benefits are even more important.\(^12\)

The cost of secondary education was a major barrier to non-discriminatory access except in the kibbutzim. At the beginning of the mandate the Zionist Organization financed both elementary and secondary education. A curtailment of its budget, however,

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\(^10\)Ibid, p. 106
\(^11\)Ibid, pp. 33-34.
demanded a reconsideration of priorities and the organization sharply reduced its grants to secondary schools.\textsuperscript{13} After 1929, the organization no longer supported secondary education on the same basis as elementary schooling.\textsuperscript{14} For the duration of the mandate, elementary education continued to receive priority and secondary schools were fiscally independent of the department of education. The burden of tuition charges belonged to parents. From 1933 through 1938, according to figures cited by Goldberg, between 91 and 96.3 percent of the income of secondary schools came from tuition charges. Local communities and organizations provided the balance.\textsuperscript{15} In that period: "The parents covered 21\% of the expenditures of the kindergartens, 19\% of the elementary schools and 94\% of the secondary schools."\textsuperscript{16}

Secondary education stratified pupils at a young age. A member of the educational department, Joseph Bentwich, wrote "the schools lost their public character; the secondary schools, in particular, took on more and more a class and utilitarian stamp;..."\textsuperscript{17}

During the mandate the mobile nature of pioneering society helped to contain the discriminatory consequences of variations in educational attainment because, "the educational system was

\textsuperscript{13}Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{14}Zionist Organization, Report to the XVIth Zionist Congress, p. 271.
\textsuperscript{15}Goldberg, "Jewish School Systems in Palestine," 1:151.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 154.
\textsuperscript{17}Bentwich, Education in Israel, pp. 22-23.
not a crucial factor in regulating occupational positions,...\(^{18}\)

Nevertheless, the penalties of inequalities existed and according to Eisenstadt, affected one group more than others. "Among oriental Jews, the picture was entirely different. Here a continuous relation between low-educational level and equally low-occupational level developed, initiated and accentuated by the 'culture conflict' in which the oriental Jews found themselves."\(^{19}\)

Because of its affinity with European standards and culture, the Hebrew school system, like the Arab public school system, became one of the liabilities faced by those groups which either did not have a high rate of adaptability to a different cultural environment or did not have sufficient access to new educational systems. The disparity in the levels of education of the many sub groups within the population became an issue of even greater magnitude after 1948 when Arab and Jewish populations formed one nation and, in addition, the state absorbed a vast number of immigrants with traditional, non-European backgrounds.\(^{20}\)

**Elementary Education**

Hebrew educators sought to create an authentic Hebrew education, one which attempted to synthesize ancient Jewish studies with contemporary courses and at the same time respond to the special circumstance of Jewish society in Palestine.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{19}\) Ibid.


diaspora separated humanistic and Judaic studies and treated the religious man as distinct from the secular. Palestinian education concerned itself with the whole.

Education moulds a man's character and prepares him for integration in the society in which he is to live...only in Palestine can Jewish education really play this role. Only here do Jews live in normal conditions so that there is no gap, as in the Diaspora, between "Judaism" and "humanity," between Hebrew studies and general studies, between "ours" and "theirs".22

In addition to overcoming the schism between general and Jewish studies, Palestinian educators gave particular importance to correlating education with nationalism. The objectives of elementary education which had gained common acceptance were character formation, training of the mind and preparation of the pupils as citizens. The Hebrew school system related these aims to Zionism. The 1923 report of the executive of the Zionist Organization explained that the system sought the following:

to imbue the pupil deeply with the Hebrew spirit. This purpose is to be achieved by thoroughly acquainting the pupil with the Hebrew language, as well as with the Scriptures and Hebrew literature...In the teaching of geography special attention shall be given to acquainting the scholars thoroughly with their country. Special importance shall also be attached to the neighbouring countries and to the other lands which are of special interest to the inhabitants of Eretz Israel (Palestine). In the history lessons Jewish history shall be taught, and of general history only those events which are connected with Jewish history. In mathematics, greater stress is to be laid on the practical side...and gardening is to be taught parallel with natural history.23

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A 1945 memorandum of the Vaad Leumi reiterated the association of education and Zionism.

It is essential that the progress of Jewish education be organically connected with the progress of the Jewish Community itself. That involves its being in harmony on the one hand with the basic unifying elements of Jewish tradition and on the other with the dynamic needs of the country and the developing internal situation in a community whose national revival is inevitably a process of welding diverse elements into a united national group.²⁴

Except in the religious schools which followed a traditional course, the place of the Bible was pre-eminent as a foundation of national culture.

The Bible receives much emphasis in the schools. This is not for the sake of religion, but is due to three main factors:
A. National, the Bible being the precious monument of Jewish past glory.
B. Linguistic, the Bible still remaining the most invaluable model of pure literary Hebrew in both form and style.
C. Educational, the Bible being in Palestine a realistic book which is readily grasped and felt, in spite of the distance of thousands of years separating us from the times of its creation.²⁵

The study of history concentrated on ancient history and contemporary Zionist history while giving comparatively little time to the centuries of Jewish exile from Palestine. Geography, nature study and Palestinography stressed the local environment and in the higher grades included neighboring countries and the Mediterranean. A great effort was made to imbue pupils with an interest in and love of the land.²⁶ The use of Hebrew like the use of English in

²⁴Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 5.
²⁶Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 282.
the United States helped to fuse an immigrant population into a unified people.²⁷

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THE PERCENTAGE OF DISTRIBUTION OF CLASSROOM HOURS BY TREND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>General Schools</th>
<th>Mizrachi Schools</th>
<th>Labor Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew (language and Literature)</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible, Rashi's commentary on the Bible</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishnah, Gemarah</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy, customs and ceremonies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic, algebra</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual training, agriculture</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The chart indicates the distribution of subjects in grades two through eight of the Mizrahi schools and grades three through eight in the General and Labor Schools.

The schools were pluralistic, their educational practice varied and their interpretations of Hebraic subjects stood sharply in contrast. Distinguishing between secular and religious schools was not uncommon, but the Hebrew school system divided secular schools into

two streams, the General Trend and the Labor Trend. The General Trend occupied a centrist educational position and its theories were less doctrinaire than those of both the Mizrahi and Labor Trends. The trend viewed religion sympathetically, and in some of its schools the educational program included prayers, but the trend left the full complement of religious observance and interpretation of the law to the family. "Its slogan is to give to its pupils a National-Zionist education combined with the progressive ideals of Humanity."\(^2\)\(^8\)

The school day was shorter in the General Trend than in the Mizrahi and Labor Trends, in the former because of the additional hours devoted to sacred studies and in the latter because of the additional time given vocational subjects. The Labor Trend devoted more time to the social sciences and fewer classroom hours to literary studies than did other trends. Social science included the discussion of topics important to the history of the labor movement and current events. Only in the Labor Trend was vocational training an integral feature of classwork. The study of the Mishnah and Gemara, the compilation of the oral law, adages and commentaries, were subjects taught intensively in traditional religious schools, but only the Mizrahi Trend continued to allocate a major segment of the curriculum to the Mishnah and Gemara. The Bible was an important area of study in all schools though its study in the Labor Trend was less intensive than in the others.

The choice of Hebrew as the language of instruction presented

\(^2\)\(^8\)Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 12.
pedagogic problems. Many children had to learn a new alphabet and script since Hebrew like Arabic was not derivative of Latin. The similarity of some Hebrew letters, the absence of vowels, the geographic variations in sounds, the tendency towards the admixture of Hebrew and Latin syntax complicated its study. Modern Hebrew was still a language in formation with new words being adopted, its grammatical structure still being refined, its textbooks in short supply. Each trend taught Hebrew as a separate subject and extended its study in the teaching of literature.

In the fifth grade, all elementary pupils began the study of English and, as for Arab pupils, the dissimilarity of languages studied made the course particularly demanding. The government and Hebrew departments of education worked together in formulating the syllabus. The course aimed at the gradual understanding of and communication in written and oral English. At the end of four years pupils were expected to have "a passive vocabulary of about...2000" words, an active written and oral vocabulary of 1000, be familiar with English grammar, and able to read books of modest difficulty. Classroom instruction was in English and Hebrew with the latter used to explain grammatical rules and new words. Geography taught for two hours weekly in the four highest grades of each trend focused on Palestine and the Middle East. Geography and

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31 Ibid., p. 2
32 Ibid., p. 4.
Palestinography were complementary courses. Palestinography included the study of the local environment, holidays, "Communications, population distribution and characteristics, climate, location of offices of public services, plant and animal life of the vicinity, local history and legend, map-reading, and important characteristics of naturally defined areas of Palestine." The number of weekly periods in arithmetic varied with the trends by grades and in the total elementary program. The Mizrahi Trend had the fewest class periods."

The difference between the Mizrahi and other trends was not a question of subject matter in the syllabus, many of which were the same, but of attitude, interpretation and emphasis. In the Mizrahi Trend, orthodox Judaism gave education its purpose and basis. The teachers in the trend were orthodox Jews; the spirit of the schools was imbued with religious ceremony and commitment. Religious education was based on a belief in the divine interpretation of the scriptures, whose truth and values were immutable and eternal. The Mizrahi's position was that it could not "sanction a system of ... education ... indifferent to the Jewish tradition in which the Bible and other works of Jewish religious lore would be taught in a secular spirit, and merely as literature by teachers themselves unobservant."  

33Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 282.  
The Mizrahi maintained separate schools for boys and girls. In the girls' schools the study of religious subjects was less intensive than in the boys' schools which in the higher grades devoted more than half of the weekly program to Hebrew and theological courses. The school day was shorter for the girls than for the boys, the arithmetic program was more extensive and drawing, singing and handwork, had more importance.

In the boys' school, the subjects in the curriculum for grades two through eight were as follows: "Prayers, Explanation of Prayers and Laws, Biblical Chants, Pentateuch, Pentateuch with Rashi Commentary, Prophets and Chronicle, Talmud, Mishnah, Hebrew, Geography, Palestinography, Nature Study and Physics, History, Arithmetic, Drawing, Singing and Physical Training, English."\(^{36}\)

The weakness of the trend was its conservatism. It gave minimal stress to secular courses. "Whatever the merits of religious philosophy upon which Mizrahi education rests, it is hardly reassuring to realize that half hearted teaching of secular subjects is the only attempt made by the Mizrahi schools to prepare children to enter upon the complexities of modern Palestinian life."\(^{37}\) Though, according to Nardi, few of the Mizrahi pupils were able to afford to continue their education, the elementary curriculum gave little attention to vocational subjects.\(^{38}\) In this respect, both the


\(^{38}\)Ibid.
General and Mizrahi Trends had much less of a commitment to a prevocational program than did the Labor Trend.

While more conservative than the General and Labor Trends, the Mizrahi introduced an important dimension into the field of Hebrew religious education by modernizing religious education. The trend became the foundation for a state religious division now encompassing a more diverse religious educational program than had existed during the mandate.

The General and Mizrahi Trends stressed the acquisition of information. They appeared to have no set policy encouraging individualized programs whether for gifted children or slow learners, and little for ability grouping. Schools were in session for "six days a week" for a minimum of "210 days in a year" and most operated on the basis of one session; after the second grade classroom periods were "forty-five or fifty minutes" long without any seeming flexibility for subject matter or the needs and interests of the children. Many schools lacked adequate gymnasiums, playgrounds and libraries. The schools ranged in size from one having an enrollment of more than 2,000 to the small village schools in the countryside. In some localities where one school would have been sufficient, two or more trends established competing schools. The Hebrew department of education intended to limit the size of classes to 45 pupils, but a shortage of facilities made that class size an unrealizable goal.

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40 Ibid., p. 88.
41 Ibid., p. 86.
42 Ibid., p. 33.
The Histadrut believed in the fusion of Zionism and socialism. Political and economic ideology became the cornerstone of the movement's social vision, the creation of an egalitarian and cooperative society in which each person worked according to his ability and was rewarded according to his needs. The Histadrut and the Labor school trend began as a relatively small group. The first schools it maintained were in agricultural settlements and the schools of the Kibbutzim, affiliated with the Labor Trend, became the models for its educational program. In 1939 the Labor Trend supervised 38 percent of rural schools and 8 percent of urban schools. In 1945-46, the trend enrolled 24 percent of the Hebrew public school population.

The Labor Trend's adoption of non-traditional educational methodology appeared to have evolved from the life-style of the kibbutz. Traditional schooling was identified with a socio-economic order rejected by the kibbutz and Histadrut. The anti-authoritarianism and anti-traditionalism of the kibbutz, its displacement of the smaller social unit of the family by the community, its rejection of individualism and competition as either a social or economic value, its interest in preparing children for cooperative living and of perpetuating a special kind of society led to the selection of educational policies suitable to its values and needs.

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3 Rieger, Hebrew Education in Palestine, 2:145.
4 Palestine, Department of Education, Statistical Tables 1945-46, p. 16.
The kibbutz and Labor Trend introduced progressive education to Palestine.

The kibbutz or kvutzah was born of ideological aspirations and practical expediency. Unhappy with the management of the first Zionist agricultural settlements, a small group of pioneers started a new form of agricultural community. The harsh conditions of life made sensible some form of cooperative endeavor and that need was compatible with the goals of socialist Zionism.

The cooperative...wrote on its banner the ideal of labor, which, together with the Jewish workers at large, it came to sanctify to the point of a cult. It further stressed the communal character of that work in all its aspects: property, service of the individual in the interests of the group and service of the group in the interests of the individual. These considerations were prompted and enhanced by another, perhaps even more important: freedom from exploitation of anyone by anyone--the aim of a true self-realization.46

The kibbutz offered an alternative to conventional society. Economically, it was organized on the basis of shared labor, public or communal ownership, and the rejection of hired workers. Politically, it was a self-contained self-governing democracy. Socially, the kibbutz altered family life by involving men and women in the working force. It prized the extended family above the nuclear family and shifted the upbringing of children from the personal responsibility of parents to the collective responsibility of the kibbutz.

The sparse material resources of the early settlements, their unsettled physical security and their economic dependence on the work of women as well as men were practical reasons for establishing

separate living quarters for children.

The upbringing of children occupies a considerable part of the mother's day in any ordinary working family. In the kibbutz, the individual care of children by individual mothers was found, even in the first experiments at Deganiya before the First World War, to reduce disproportionately the number of women available for work on the collective farm and in the common household. It was also regarded as desirable in principle that all children should be brought up on identical lines from birth to ensure equality of opportunity and early adaptation to communal life. For that reason, day-crêches were established in which, originally, each woman, whether married or unmarried, took her turn to look after the children. Attached to the day-crêche was a special kitchen in which food was prepared by special children's cooks. Later, it was found undesirable to wake the children and to bring them to the day-crêche from their parents' sleeping-quarters when the parents left for work in the early morning, especially on wet winter days. The day-crêches thus developed in the later kibbutzim into permanent houses in which the children live both day and night almost from birth. This is found to have the further advantage of allowing the parents an uninterrupted night's sleep.

The fact that each child is fully provided for from birth removes from the parents one of [the] main incentives to amass private capital.47

The typical kibbutz had three separate children's communities, one for babies and toddlers, another for young children ages three, four and five, and a third for children six or seven and older.48

Kibbutz society also valued the children's community for ideological reasons. The wisdom of a self-contained children's community, an extended version of boarding school, was discussed at a convention

47 Edwin Samuel, Handbook of the Jewish Communal Villages in Palestine (Jerusalem: Zionist Organization Youth Department, 1945) p. 15.

48 Ibid, p. 16. According to statistics cited by Samuel, there was a ratio of one adult for every "2½ to 5 children"; of these, approximately fifty percent worked in the children's communities on a rotating work schedule.
of kibbutzim in the early twenties. An egalitarian and cooperative upbringing would, it was pointed out, give sound preparation for adult life in a kibbutz. Secondly, the care of children was the responsibility of the entire community not just of their parents and this larger vision of childrearing corresponded to the philosophical values underlying the kibbutz. Partly through necessity and partly through choice, the early kibbutzim broke away from traditional childrearing patterns within the family and their concept of a children's community, modified to some extent in non-kibbutz schools, became the model for the schools of the Labor Trend.

Education in the kibbutz was free. By 1945, most schools retained pupils until the age of sixteen, a few for one or two years more. Except for a small number of religious kibbutzim affiliated with the Mizrahi, the kibbutz schools were part of the Labor Trend, their teachers were associated with the Histadrut and often with the kibbutz where they worked.

A striking feature of the labor school was its social purpose.

The school assumes that every child is a social being who can develop properly only in an appropriate social environment in which he will acquire the habits of work, responsibility, and cooperation needed in later life. The school assists the children in forming their community, and intends it to be a gradual transition to participation in a democratic community. This is to be achieved by implanting proper habits in the children, who are organized in an autonomous group in which all


50 Samuel, Jewish Communal Villages, pp. 16-17.
have equal rights and responsibilities and to which the teachers also belong. The children's community is governed by laws passed by its general assemblies and carried out by special committees -- the committees on the kitchen, on labor, on culture, on the National Fund, and so on. The community consists of two parts: the organization of the older children (the upper four grades) and the organization of the younger children (the lower four grades). There is constant cooperation between the two organizations. The children's community as such supervises the relations between its individual members and their common property (tools, books, etc.)

The form of the children's community varied with the locale of the school. In urban areas and in the moshav, the cooperative agricultural settlement, the children lived at home and their community was adapted to a day school. The children's community made the school a social as well as learning environment in which pupils had their own system of government, organized committees to carry out special tasks, supervised relationships within the group and were encouraged to assume as much self-responsibility as possible. The total school environment as well as the educational process itself thus became a means of transmitting a particular socio-economic order and ideology.

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### THE CURRICULUM OF THE LABOR SCHOOLS, 1945-1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<td>Reading (Literature)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Arithmetic and Algebra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Labour, Sewing, Handwork, Gardening and Farming</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Drawing, Modelling</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** | 29 | 29 | 30 | 33 | 40 | 41 | 41 | 41 |


The curriculum of the Labor Trend followed the basic outline of the course work in other trends, but its emphases were different. Current events and issues of importance to the labor movement formed part of the social studies program; the trend assigned fewer weekly class periods to Biblical studies and more to history and contemporary events. In grades three to eight, the syllabus set aside five to seven periods for vocational subjects, an integral aspect of curriculum not an addendum to it. Instead of approaching subject matter as
disciplines, the course work was designed to integrate studies and relate them to practical experiences outside of the classroom. The project method was prominent in the elementary school, but in an effort to establish a more systematic foundation for studies, the use of the project method was less pronounced in the higher grades. Much more attention was given to the interest of children in the Labor Trend than in the other Hebrew divisions and the classroom was far more informal. The teacher functioned as a counsellor and guide rather than as the leader of the class. Habit formation was more highly valued than the accumulation of knowledge. The Labor Trend synthesized the theoretical and practical aspects of instruction, adopted progressive teaching methods and had a flexible, child centered curriculum while other trends followed a more formal and conservative course, were subject and teacher centered, and in general, lacked the flexibility to accommodate the classroom to individual needs or interests.\textsuperscript{52}

Vocational training as developed by the Labor Trend had a utilitarian stamp. An inspector of the trend commented:

In general, the physical work done by our children is too far removed from play and entirely too practical and utilitarian in nature. We put undue stress upon the prosaic tasks connected with the necessities of everyday life, and too little stress upon work that answers a creative urge. What seems worth while to the child, rather than to us, should be the basis of our school work. I have no doubt that for the first five grades - and probably the sixth as well - the emphasis should be very largely upon the playful and creative aspects of physical labor.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 38-43.

\textsuperscript{53}Quoted in Nardi, \textit{Zionism and Education}, p. 63.
Manual training, farm work or sewing were an integral part of the curriculum not, as in the other trends, a less important addendum. The number of hours devoted to the vocational program increased as pupils grew older and in the highest grades represented almost one sixth of the classroom schedule. The labor movement believed that self and manual labor were quintessential to the normalization of Jewish society and the basis of an egalitarian community. Non-academic work was, therefore, a legitimate part of the educational program. Vocational training had automatic acceptance in the labor movement, but there was too little discrimination in the choice of tasks or in the assessment of the broader educative worth of a work program. Hebrew schools of Palestine failed to achieve a balance between the almost total disregard of vocational training in the Mizrahi and General Trends and, at the other extreme, the uncritical inclusion of vocational training found in many schools of the Labor Trend.54

The division of schools into ideologically distinctive trends seemed to give approval and support to the doctrinaire education most clearly evident in the labor and religious trends. In Rieger's estimation, labor schools insufficiently guarded the distinction between idealism and dogmatism.55 Social sciences and the humanities became vehicles for a parochial rather than liberating view. Some form of indoctrination undoubtedly exists in every school program, but labor's intense view of studies from the perspective of the

54 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 204.
55 Rieger, Hebrew Education in Palestine, 1:53-59.
labor movement was a limiting one for pupils too young for independent exploration of the world of ideas. In stressing labor's ideological vision, Nardi suggests that the trend sometimes tended to disparage other currents of Jewish life and to become so dogmatic as to inculcate "a partisan and class attitude rather than a feeling for Jewish Palestine as a whole,..."  

When the trends were integrated in 1953, the General and Labor Trends merged to form the state secular system. The labor school did not become the model for Israeli elementary school though education in many kibbutzim remains progressive and follows precepts adopted during the mandate. However, the activity and child centered labor school modified the contours of Hebrew education. Pre-vocational training, a flexible curriculum, interest in child development, a willingness to experiment, concern with the family and cultural backgrounds of pupils, and equalization of educational opportunity are features of the Israeli elementary program. The Labor Trend first put their principles into practice in the Hebrew schools of Palestine.

Secondary Education

There were three types of secondary schools: college preparatory or academic schools, vocational schools and teachers' training institutes. The college preparatory program consisted of four years of study which prepared students to sit for matriculation examinations. Though the schools were not uniform, the examinations which  

56 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 204.
measured proficiency in course work set a common standard. The vocational schools had courses of varying length designed to meet occupational needs and to make possible extended schooling for the poorer or non-academically oriented student. Most teachers' training institutes combined secondary education and professional courses. The largest number of secondary schools affiliated with the Vaad Leumi were academic schools. In 1944-1945, the Hebrew school system had 28 college preparatory schools with an enrollment of 5,322 in the secondary grades; 9 vocational schools with an enrollment of 1,067 and 6 teachers training schools with an enrollment of 886.  

College Preparatory Schools

In 1906 the Herzliya Gymnasium opened in Jaffa and a second grammar school was started in Jerusalem a few years later. The schools were pioneering institutes and they became the prototype for future college preparatory schools. Their course of study was expected to be comparable to, but not identical with similar schools in other countries.

It was impossible simply to translate the curriculum of a secondary school abroad into Hebrew; for what was required was an organic fusion of Hebrew and general culture. We did not wish to make our pupils conscious of a line of demarcation between humanity and Judaism. We envisaged a type of Jew with a complete education, like an Englishman or Frenchman - whose culture is that of his own country but impregnated with general culture.  

The difficulty in planning was not with mathematics or sciences, disciplines without a cultural bias, but with the humanities. The

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literary-linguistic heritage in the west owed its direction to ancient cultures and Christianity, modified in later centuries by the infusion of national cultural studies. In place of this core, the Hebrew schools turned to the large body of Hebrew literature and Jewish history as the foundation of the humanistic side of the curriculum.\textsuperscript{59}

The essence of Hebrew literature was religious and that posed the question of interpretation. Should religious literature be presented from the orthodox viewpoint?\textsuperscript{60} The question was never formally resolved. "Bible is studied in all the schools and forms a major subject, though not everywhere to the same extent, and is taught from very different points of view (i.e., religious, national, social, historical, geographical, linguistic, etc.). In general, the nationalistic rather than the universal aspect of the Bible is stressed."\textsuperscript{61} Secular schools tended to follow the example of the Herzliya Gymnasium whose report of 1909 explained:

In the teaching of the Bible, attention will be paid first of all to ensure that pupils obtain a clear understanding, as regards language and ideas, of what is written in this Book of books; but mainly that the Bible shall become their source of knowledge of the political, social and moral life of the ancient Hebrews in our land. That life must be made clearly visible to the new Hebrew, so that the Bible shall become for him an incessant fountain of feelings of national pride, feelings of reverence for the lucid past and of hope and confidence for a shining future.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., pp. 26-27. \textsuperscript{60}Ibid., p. 26.
The approach to religious literature ranged from traditional interpretation of the Mizrahi schools to contemporary criticism, generally typical of labor schools. Secular literature of the nineteenth century Jewish enlightenment and of the Zionist era were taught in all trends, but to a far lesser extent in the Mizrahi schools.\textsuperscript{63}

The academic program consisted of two parts, studies required of all students and areas of specialization. The basic core consisted of the Hebrew language, literature and history, mathematics, science, English\textsuperscript{64} and, in some schools, a second foreign language. The areas of specialization were the literary or humanistic option, mathematics, biology and agriculture, but not all schools offered every specialty. Except for the selection of an area of concentration, and, in some schools, of a second foreign language, the curriculum consisted of required subjects.

The curriculum of the Herzliya Gymnasium in Tel Aviv indicates the range of the academic program. The school had a preparatory section. In the fifth year which corresponded to the first year of secondary school, the required courses were "Bible, Talmud, Grammar, Hebrew" for ten hours weekly, "Algebra and geometry, Physics, Natural science" for ten hours weekly, eight hours weekly of language studies which included "English" and either "Arabic or French," two hours of "History," two hours of "Physical training" and one hour of

\textsuperscript{63}Simon, "Hebrew Education in Palestine," p. 197.

\textsuperscript{64}Assessing the competence of students in English, Rieger noted that few students other than the most talented pupils in the upper classes had a mastery of English. Rieger, "Revival of Hebrew," p. 478.
"Drawing" and "Music." The school had three options, agriculture, literature and mathematics. In the tenth grade, students choosing agriculture began their concentrated studies. Six hours weekly of agricultural courses and two hours of natural science replaced courses in music, drawing and the Talmud which were taken by students in the literary and mathematics divisions. In the two highest grades, the curricula and the number of weekly periods allocated subject matter varied according to division. The literary division required additional study of the Talmud, geography, history and literature; the mathematics tract had additional courses or hours in mathematics, physics, chemistry and geography; the agricultural division had a more concentrated program of natural science and devoted six and seven hours weekly to theoretical and practical agricultural courses. All pupils studied the Bible, Hebrew, Mathematics, Physics, History, English and had physical training in addition to the courses in their areas of concentration.

Matriculation examinations culminated the college preparatory program. The Hebrew department of education in consultation with a board of examiners including members of the Hebrew University Faculty, prepared the examinations. Students sat for examinations in their area of concentration. Some schools had the additional requirement of a paper in Arabic, French, Palestinian studies or economics. The examinations focused on the last two years of

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65 Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 287.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid., p. 273.
class work. The actual examination mark and class grade were represented in the final mark leading to the school leaving certificate. That certificate permitted graduates of fourteen approved public schools without additional examinations to qualify for admission to Hebrew higher institutions of study and many foreign universities. The mandatory government did not accept the validity of the examinations and the Hebrew high school leaving certificate. The examination and certificate, therefore, did not make graduates eligible for British universities or Palestine's law classes.

The government's attitude towards the examinations and the school leaving certificate to which they were linked was controversial. The Vaad Leumi viewed the government's judgment as discriminatory; the government's position was that the Hebrew school system's examinations failed to meet scholarly standards. The government Department of Education concluded, "For a matriculation test the percentage of failures is very low considering that the process of selection...is very rudimentary." In an attempt to resolve the controversy, a British commission in 1945 addressed the issue of examinations. The commission did not support the government's evaluation. It recommended that the Hebrew School Leaving Certificate be recognized as the equivalent of the Palestinian Matriculation Certificate and that two representatives

68 Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, pp. 28-29.
of the mandatory government be appointed to the examination board of the Hebrew Department of Education. In the increasing tension between the government and the Jewish community in the forties, the issue of the examination remained unresolved. The problem was indicative of the lack of mutual confidence and cooperation between the Hebrew and government departments of education.

**Teachers' Training Colleges**

The dilemma of the Hebrew system was similar to that of the Arab public schools. The need to prepare teachers rapidly mired the preparation, particularly of elementary school teachers, at a level which was deficient. Both systems had utilized a two-tiered approach in which training colleges, which were the equivalent to extended secondary schools, tended to prepare elementary school teachers. The systems sought to recruit university graduates and the most qualified candidates for the secondary schools and higher elementary grades. The assumption that primary school teachers needed only a minimal education may have been expedient, but it was unsound. The standards of teachers' training colleges bore clear evidence of the consequences of the competing demands of quantity and quality in the development of Palestine's public school systems.

Until the mid-thirties, the Hebrew schools were only partially dependent on graduates of their own institutions. Many of their most experienced teachers and those having the most advanced education had studied abroad. This flow of European graduates meant

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72 Ibid., p. 61.
that the quality of local training colleges was somewhat a less critical factor for Hebrew school development in the early years of the mandate than it was for the government school system. However, as conditions in Europe worsened and the mandatory government imposed severe immigration restrictions, the system had to depend primarily on graduates of its own schools.

The Hebrew training colleges began as secondary schools admitting fourteen year-olds on a non-selective basis to a combined program of secondary and specialized studies. By the end of the mandate, three schools had expanded into a five or six year course and two were post-secondary institutes. The curriculum varied. Generally, the lower grades were devoted to secondary studies; the higher classes continued selected general subjects and included courses in hygiene, methodology, psychology, the history and philosophy of education, classroom observation and practice teaching. The General Trend had elevated one school to a two-year post-secondary institute with a preparatory class. That school had a much more concentrated and extensive course to prepare teachers than did, for example, the Mizrahi school for men. As a five-year school, the Mizrahi seminary allocated fewer hours to pedagogic courses and the practical arts while it, conforming to the priorities of the Mizrahi Trend, gave priority to Hebrew studies.\(^7^3\)

In the forties, the system began to strengthen the training colleges. Two schools added a sixth year to the program, a change giving more breadth to secondary studies. It also allowed pupils

\(^7^3\)Rieger, Hebrew Education in Palestine, 2:Table 20.
to begin their professional studies at an older age and in a more concentrated manner. The Labor Trend, which in previous years had no training college, opened a two-year post secondary school. In 1944-45, the institute had twenty-five graduates. The Hebrew school system had not yet overcome major deficiencies. Most of its potential teachers were graduates of combined secondary schools and seminaries. Teachers' training colleges did not enjoy a reputation equal to that of college preparatory schools and thus had difficulty in attracting the most able students. The course of preparation required most aspiring teachers to choose their career at too young an age and allowed entry into the profession to many with minimal academic backgrounds. The system also lacked adequate provisions for subject specialists.

During the mandate, the teaching profession lost some of the prestige which it had previously enjoyed. In the pre-mandatory era the task of education was to create a new Hebrew culture, not to transmit an established one. Teachers were pioneers in this movement. The work of teachers on behalf of the Zionist movement and Hebraic cultural renaissance broadened the duties of the profession and gave a heroic dimension to the teachers' role. In the mandatory period, teaching and education became more traditional. "The teacher's role ... changed from that of cultural creator to technical

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74 Great Britain, Colonial Office, System of Education, p. 68.
75 Ibid.
76 Rieger, Hebrew Education in Palestine, 2:281-282.
transmitter of knowledge, skill and tradition. This process of change began in the early twenties and gathered momentum in the thirties."77

In addition, the salaries of teachers were not competitive with other branches of the Hebrew civil service and wartime inflation imposed an additional strain.78 The estimate of a British commission studying the system in 1945, succinctly summed up the problem of teachers' training in the Hebrew school system. "There is no part of the Jewish Educational System which bears clearer marks of improvisation, inadequacy of available finances, and a constant struggle to cope with the demands of a highly ambitious scheme of education than the training of teachers."79

Vocational Education

The development of a public branch of vocational instruction was neglected until the early thirties.80 Throughout the mandatory era voluntary organizations and the schools maintained by them were the mainstay of vocational training and enrolled far more pupils than did the public vocational schools.81 There were several possible explanations for the imbalance. A philanthropic association had established the community's first vocational school in the nineteenth century and many of the early philanthropic schools offered

77 Eisenstadt, Israeli Society, p. 244.
78 Vaad Leumi, Executive, Memorandum, p. 43.
80 Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 90.
81 Palestine, Survey of Palestine, 2:667-668.
vocational courses. Continuation of support for this type of instruction was a logical extension of the work of voluntary organizations whose objectives were to help the populace become more self-sufficient. In this period of history, the level of Palestine's industry did not spur the growth of vocational schools and the potential contribution of such schooling to the economy was not yet apparent, a situation which changed substantially only under the impetus of World War II. The place of vocational instruction within the Hebrew educational structure was comparable to that of European schools in the early stages of national educational development. Vocational schooling was viewed as an extension of charitable education and a humanitarian substitute for the apprenticeship system. The purpose of vocational schools was to enable the poor and less academically talented pupils to extend their schooling and acquire useful skills. Beyond the elementary level, in imitation of European models, formal education followed class lines. During the mandate, the relatively mobile and egalitarian nature of society and its pioneering values minimized the effects of an elitist educational system. Nevertheless, the educational structure was not supportive of the general democratizing trends within society and would ultimately be a contributing factor in social disharmony in the state of Israel.

Financial constraints also inhibited the growth of public vocational schools. Post-elementary schools depended heavily on tuition charges. The requirement to levy fees for secondary

\[82\text{Zionist Organization, Report to XVIth Zionist Congress, p.272.}\]
education was disadvantageous to vocational schools whose equipment was costly and whose students came from the least affluent sectors of society.

Thus the cost of schools, their lack of status, the community's educational biases, the shortage of public funds and the availability of philanthropic schools all tended to retard the growth of public vocational schools. The lack of systematic planning was an additional deficiency. Pre-secondary introduction to vocational instruction was negligible in most elementary schools. Since most vocational courses required pupils to select their area of specialization immediately, or shortly after the completion of the eighth grade, the absence of pre-vocational experience and guidance was a handicap. In addition, the Hebrew school system dealt on an ad hoc, utilitarian basis with such fundamental questions as the suitable age level for the introduction of vocational studies, the proper balance between the theoretical and practical aspects of courses, the nature of the preparation which vocational education teachers should receive, the correlation between school programs and industrial needs. On the other hand, vocational education was not static. Schools adapted to fluid conditions within the country including changing immigration patterns. While not an equivalent of a regular day school, evening classes extended the opportunities available to working youths and special programs were introduced for refugee children.

The quality, length and course of studies given in vocational
schools had wide variations. Courses ranged from two to four years; most schools had a three-year program which pupils entered after having completed elementary school. The two-year schools concentrated on workshop training; the three and four-year schools had a balance of general and technical studies. The shorter programs gave the most mechanical and narrow training. Fewer areas of study were open to girls than to boys. The "metal trades, engineering, radio operating,...the woodwork trades, instrument making and the mercantile marine" were fields for which boys prepared while the "needlework trades, commerce and catering" were available to girls.83
Not all schools had all specialties. There was, for example, one school in Haifa which prepared students for the Merchant Marines.84 One of the largest and oldest vocational schools for boys was the Max Pine Vocational School. It had a three-year program divided between general and shop courses. In the first year, all students had the same program; in the second and third years, pupils specialized in metal work, electrical work and "auto mechanics." The school also had evening courses for working youths.85

The Technical High School in Haifa similarly combined general and practical studies in its three and four-year programs, and in addition, had a two-year plan for boys who had completed two years of high school.86

84Nardi, Education in Palestine, p. 91.
85Matthews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 288.
The Reali High School in Haifa was a noteworthy exception to the prevailing model of secondary schools. In addition to a humanistic and scientific-mathematic track, the school had a commercial option combining general education and vocational courses.  

Of the various forms of technical studies, agricultural programs had made the greatest progress. Mikveh Israel, established in the nineteenth century by a French philanthropic society, was a coeducational school with an enrollment in the forties of more than four hundred pupils to a three-year program combining classroom studies and field work. In the final year, students specialized in one of ten branches of agricultural work. Agricultural training was not, however, limited to technical schools. In the Herzliya Gymnasium students could choose agriculture as their area of concentration. The Hebrew University and a research center in Rehovoth addressed the problems of agriculture on a university level. The advancement in this field of study undoubtedly reflected the community's high regard for land settlement, a tenet of Zionist ideology. Farming settlements physically extended the areas in which Jews lived and had political as well as ideological implications for the statehood movement. Because Jewish agricultural patterns were dependent on modern technology, the community's need and regard for the schools were high.

Conceived as an alternative to academic schools, vocational

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87 Rieger, Hebrew Education in Palestine, 2:244-245.
88 Ibid, 1:159.
89 Matthews and Akrawi, Education in the Arab States, p. 288.
training generally was not integrated with the more prestigious college preparatory program. The Hebrew educational system met individual differences, as Bentwich points out, by giving "different syllabuses to different children" rather than by giving "the same syllabus, but with different treatment according to the background of the class."90 While seemingly adequate and acceptable during the mandatory period, this issue became critical for the state of Israel when the background of its population grew more diverse and society more actively rewarded or penalized its members on the basis of their educational background.91 Many shortcomings in the post-elementary level of education were the result of rapid growth and of a compromise between quality and quantity. Within each area of secondary instruction, the competencies of the schools varied. Of the three types, college preparatory, teachers' training and vocational schools, college preparatory schools had the most stable standards.

Summary

The course of Hebrew education in the post-war period continued the pattern established in the prior era. The eight-year elementary school was the mainstay of the system. Instruction stressed the transmission of Hebraic culture synthesized with western studies.

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90 Bentwich, Education in Israel, p. 99.
91 A disproportionate number of immigrants' children from non-western cultural backgrounds did not enter college preparatory schools and had a high dropout rate in all schools. Kleinberger, Schools, Society and Progress, pp. 288 and 290. Israeli Arabs were similarly disadvantaged. Ibid, pp. 311-313.
Except in the Labor Trend, the experimental phase of Hebrew educational development had ended. Education was not free or universal except in the communal villages or kibbutzim and the cost of education, particularly on the secondary level, was a major barrier to continued schooling. The schools progressed steadily towards achieving the goal of eight years as the standard for universal schooling, but did not reach that objective. However, selective access to post-elementary education, and the unequal prestige and quality of the three types of secondary schools temporized the consequences of the egalitarian thrust of education on the elementary level. The system needed to establish a more comprehensive vocational division, to strengthen the quality of teachers' training institutes, to reduce unnecessary duplication of facilities and the costs of schooling and to address the issue of the parochialism of partisanship which characterized the trends.

There was tripartite division of schools into three vertical trends, General, Labor and Mizrahi. Instruction in all schools was in Hebrew and Hebrew studies were pre-eminent, but the trends' emphasis, interpretation of studies and classroom ethos varied. The Mizrahi Trend inculcated a commitment to religious Zionism and formed the nucleus of what later became state religious schools. The strict observance of religious law characterized the Mizrahi school program. The Labor Trend emphasized the concept of a Jewish state in which socialism and the labor movement had paramount importance. Its schools adopted many of the theories of the progressive educational movement. Instruction in the other trends was far
more formal and subject centered. In the General Trend the curriculum was independent of a specific theocratic or socio-economic bias and the schools were more typical of those found in western countries.

The basic curriculum stressed courses supportive of the Zionist movement. The study of literature and history focused on those periods in which Zionism emerged or ancient eras which established a link between the present and a legacy to the land. In the Labor Trend curriculum social and natural sciences had greater emphasis than in the other trends and the Bible was approached from a secular viewpoint. The Labor Trend was the only division to integrate vocational courses with general studies; the stress on practical training, according to some critics was excessive. The Mizrahi Trend devoted additional periods to religious studies and of the three groups had the least interest in manual training. The dissimilarity between the Mizrahi and other trends was ultimately more significant that than of the two secular divisions and the State of Israel later combined the General and Labor Trends into one secular network.

Secondary schools were single track except in the Labor Trend and the length of the course varied with the orientation of the school. Many college preparatory schools had an elementary section; the four highest classes prepared students to sit for the Hebrew matriculation examinations. Teachers' training institutes began as secondary schools though a few were eventually able to transfer professional studies to the post matriculation level. Each trend
maintained its own training colleges. The system supported a proportionally small number of vocational schools of two, three and four year duration.

The Hebrew school system conducted its own matriculation examinations, but they were not recognized by the mandatory government. Graduates of approved secondary schools without additional examinations were able to enter the Hebrew University and many colleges abroad.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Historically the development of public education in Palestine was linked to Western influences generated by missionary and philanthropic societies, by the Ottoman government, by European-born settlers and by the mandatory government. The popularity of westernized education came from its political and economic potential. As the desire for independence and parity with Europe grew there was an equivalent rise in the valuation of modern schooling. To the individual pupil modern education offered the opportunity for economic improvement and mobility. The popularization of public education particularly for boys was not a problem to the mandatory government.

Palestinians did not want indiscriminately to imitate European civilization, but sought the tools to shape their own societies. Because of its greater self sufficiency and unity, the Jewish community was better able to accomplish this objective than the Arab sector. The independent status of Hebrew schools during the mandate was made possible by resources which pre-dated the establishment of a public educational system and the growth which accompanied it. The schools were influenced by and in turn affected socio-economic and political changes in Palestinian Jewish life. The same process occurred within Palestinian Arab society, but in a more constrained fashion because that society was still largely traditional, because
the percentage of the population with prior access to modern schools was less and because the government in charge of the system and the populace did not have the same objectives. The course of public educational development of the two systems revealed similarities in some of the policies adopted and differences in others. In general dissimilarities appeared in strategies to promote nationalistic ambitions, but variations were also a consequence of the legacy of the pre-mandatory era. In resolving the issues associated with the early stages of a common school movement, Arab and Hebrew schools adopted many of the same techniques.

Until the mid-nineteenth century education in Palestine reflected the values of a theocratic society whose paradigm was the civilization of an earlier age. Removed from the cultural, political and economic currents which altered European societies and educational development, Palestine lacked the internal stimulus to introduce change. In form, content and objectives Arab and Jewish schools conformed to their respective medieval prototypes, but the quality and breadth of scholarship had in time deteriorated. Though devoted to different bodies of theological literature and law, Arab and Jewish schools were similar. Secular subjects when taught were the handmaidens of religion. Innovation was an anathema, and the intellectual development of the pupil was expected to follow a fixed course.

In contrast, the locus of western education had shifted from theological studies to secular studies and from the proprietorship
of the church to the state. The schools transmitted national cultures and prepared students for citizenship not primarily to meet the obligations of religious law. This transformation had occurred gradually and as a concomitant of broader societal change. The traditional education of Palestine and modern education of the west were products of environments and historical processes which after the Middle Ages had few commonalities. The cultural contact which once had enriched both geographic areas had so diminished that its awakening would ultimately alter the nature of Palestinian education.

Educational transplantation has characterized western educational development since ancient times and the process was not unique to colonial or mandatory educational history. Its underlying assumptions were that contact amongst various societies contributed to progress, that selected areas of knowledge had universal value, or that a particular culture represented the ideal. In some periods in which universal standards of scholarship predominated, transplantation was latitudinal; in ages in which one society sought to imitate a preceding one the process was longitudinal. In different periods of history the degree of emulation and selectivity varied with some eras almost totally assimilationist and others syncretic.

From the nineteenth century until the post World War II era the direction of flow was from western to non western societies and occurred commonly in dependent areas governed by European countries. Transplantation generally took the form of assimilation,
the nearly total transfer of the metropolitan educational, or adaptation, the synthesis of western and indigenous cultures. The major distinction between adaptation and assimilation rested with the degree of importance native studies received, but the two procedures inevitably altered the substance and form of traditional education.

This change began in Palestine during the Ottoman era, but for a variety of reasons the context, pattern and consequence of educational transplantation differed within the Arab and Jewish communities.

Three external movements altered the nature of Palestinian education in this stage. In an effort to recoup its strength the Ottoman Empire opened a small number of schools modelled after the French system. A second challenge to the primacy of traditional education also came from foreign sources. Christian missionary societies opened a second group of modern schools. Both missionary and Ottoman schools served one religious community and not the entire Arab speaking population. To varying degrees instruction in these new schools tended to emphasize foreign languages and cultures and to disregard or give proportionally little time to Arabic studies. As a result, neither cluster promoted the unity and sense of cohesion of Palestinian Arabs. There was an imbalance of facilities. Fewer of the Moslem than of the Christian school age population had access to contemporary institutions and urban areas had far better facilities than villages where the majority of the population lived. In addition, westernized education had its roots in a Christian
civilization and, therefore, presented more of an ideological confrontation to Moslem than to Christian Arabs.

Emerging in approximately the same era the Arab nationalist movement manifested similar schisms in some of its forms between supporters of a pan-Islam and a pan-Arab movement, between secularists and non-secularists, between Islamic traditionalists and reformers. The Arab nationalist movement was not in a comparable position to the Zionist movement to effect society's transition to modernity or the course of education. Its social and political vision and the mechanism to implement its objectives had not yet matured. In addition, Arab society was still semi-feudal. It did not, like the Jewish sector, have the infusion of western immigrants able and willing to support far reaching changes.

Traditional Jewish education encountered its initial challenge from the schools opened in Palestine by Jewish philanthropic societies. A second thrust towards modernization came as a result of a nationalistic movement which began in Europe and took root in Palestine. The older Jewish communities were pietistic and awaited divine redemption to restore a Jewish homeland. Modern Zionism inspired a new type of settlement, one devoted to the normalization of Jewish life by which Zionists meant its complete transition to modernity in a society which was as authentically Hebrew as England was English or France, French. Zionist influence was manifest in a variety of areas, social, economic, political and cultural, which were transforming the Jewish communal structure, patterns and spirit.
The rise of the modern Hebrew school was part of the indigenous Hebraic cultural renaissance and closely identified with Zionism. The new school movement gained impetus after a language controversy erupted between Europeanists and Hebraists. Under the sponsorship of the Zionist Organization these Hebrew schools became the dominant nucleus of non-traditional schools.

The dilemma of the Hebrew educational movement was to ensure its acceptance by a broad spectrum of Palestinian Jewry. In a compromise which made the system acceptable to religious Zionists, the schools could be either religious or secular with authority for each group vested in its particular sponsors. This formula enabled the fledgling system to gain support from all but the ultra-orthodox segment of the community. The choice of Hebrew as the medium of instruction and the centrality of Hebraic studies in the curriculum were also unifying factors which halted the fragmentation of a society having a plethora of national cultures. Evolving as a concomitant of widespread and parallel changes in many areas, the Hebrew schools were integrated with society.

The pre-mandatory era set a precedent for pluralistic schools each under the supervision of its own religious community. The Arab community had two nuclei of modern schools, but they did not merge into a single network and they remained the product of foreign direction. To some extent these multiple schools were evidence of the lack of unity of Palestinian Arabs still fragmented by religious cleavages. Many teachers in these schools were unprepared to teach in Arabic while teachers in traditional Arabic schools were
unfamiliar with secular subjects. Of the three major religious divisions, the Moslem community had the most severe educational disadvantage. Under Britain's administration of Palestine, this disadvantage was reduced, but not eliminated. The British government's initial approach to education, the League's Articles for Palestine and conditions in the country gave additional impetus to the development of separate school systems for Arabs and Jews.

The British mandate in Palestine functioned in many respects as a crown colony. While the mandatory structure was designed as a temporary precursor of independence, British officials occupied the most significant administrative positions, drafted the country's laws and decided the disbursement of public funds. The government directly controlled the Arab public school system. In contrast, the Hebrew schools were relatively autonomous of the government and under the management of the Jewish community's self-governing institutions.

Palestine was in the position of condensing into decades the centuries of gradual transition to national school systems experienced in western countries. State support of education with its implicit obligation to strive for universal schooling, non-traditional instruction and educational diversification had only a shallow precedent in the area. The relative strengths or weaknesses of the Ottoman's era legacy determined many of the mandatory period's priorities. A study of the development of the two public school systems also suggests that the political contexts in which they evolved affected some, but not all of their characteristics. Near
independence and dependence were contributory factors, but not the sole factors responsible for the qualitative and quantitative variations amongst the schools.

Both systems shared problems associated with the early stages of public-school development. They had to decide the distribution of facilities and the degree of the equalization of educational opportunity desirable, the acceptable proportion of varied types of institutions and the priority to be assigned the levels of schooling, the appropriate role of foreign and indigenous cultural studies, the balance between vocational and literary-scientific subjects.

Arab and Hebrew public-school development gave priority to elementary education, but from a fundamentally different vantage. The Hebrew schools were Zionist schools and considered a key to preparation for statehood. The government's interest was protecting its position and avoiding the potentially destabilizing influence of education. The government's premise was that education beyond the primary level was the province of the elite. The Hebrew schools were more egalitarian. These two sets of attitudes led to dissimilar valuations of educational funding, the rate of the systems' growth, the standards for the common school and its curriculum. The Hebrew elementary school program was two and four years longer than the Arab urban and rural school respectively. They had a greater per capita investment and expanded more rapidly than the government network. Of the two systems, the Hebrew one was more nationally oriented; Hebraic and Zionist studies had pride of place. In
the Jewish community, rural and urban areas had equivalent facilities. The government's anomalous attitude towards rural education was at least partially attributable to its stated objective of controlling rural-urban migration, even though that policy in practice disadvantaged the rural school age population. Nor did the government build an adequate number of agricultural schools and teachers' colleges, which solution would have mitigated a major liability of the rural school division.

Education has two strands, essentialism and progressivism. The former stressed the teaching of essential ideals to all children irrespective of differences in individual ability and potential careers. The role of the teacher was central in the classroom and education's role as cultural transmitter was dominant. The latter established no priority of subject, but emphasized the scientific method and experience in an atmosphere in which the interest of the individual pupil was paramount.

Palestinian education was essentialist. Most schools offered all pupils instruction preparing them for continuing studies though only a small percentage of pupils proceeded beyond the elementary level. Pre-vocational experience was minimal or poorly designed. The Labor Trend alone had an integrated program of vocational and literary studies, but had not resolved the issue of the kind of experience appropriate for a given age. The government system relied primarily on the primary school as the center for its agricultural program, an unrealistic objective. With the exception of the Labor Trend, schools were subject oriented. An intensive, inflexible
curriculum, large classes and minimally trained teachers encouraged formalistic classrooms with their traditional reliance on rote learning and the accumulation of information. Progressive educational theories were influential only in the Labor Trend.

Vocational studies in Palestine as in western countries bore the bias of centuries of educational history in which practical training was not at first the province of the school and then had a denigrated status. It was considered unsuitable experience for the talented or elite. The early vocational schools in both areas of the world were identified with the lower classes and that identification persisted under a two track division of instruction. The bias was evident in each school department's failure to grant equivalency to vocational education and in the popular prestige of academic schools.

In resolving the problem of a shortage of teachers, both systems repeated western patterns in the initial stage of public school development and adopted similar strategies. The majority of teachers' training institutes were post elementary schools which combined general and professional studies. Many classroom teachers had few years of schooling beyond the elementary level. In the second half of the mandate, professional programs in a few schools were transferred to one or two year post secondary courses.

Both systems relied on the private sector to complement secondary facilities. The policy had a practical, short term benefit of supporting mass education, but it also had discriminatory consequences
and a structural disadvantage. It impeded the integrated planning of school levels and created a situation in which geography, wealth or religious association became the general determiners of access to secondary schools. Most schools were located in towns and were maintained by Jewish and Christian associations. Issues such as shortened teachers' training programs, selected access to secondary schools and the imbalance of college preparatory and vocational studies tend to come to the forefront when developing areas introduce public educational systems. The problems persisted in the post-mandatory era and appear to be more a characteristic of a stage in educational history than of a particular form of government.

The mandatory government did not enact a compulsory or universal educational law. In an era in which education's importance to the individual and community had axiomatic acceptance, the government's failure to promote more actively education breached its implied responsibility under the terms of the mandate. Accompanying this issue was the problem of financial support for schools. The level of public funding inhibited the course of public educational development. During the mandate the numbers of school-age children increased substantially, but many had no access to a school or had only a few years of instruction. The realization of universal education depended on sufficient personnel, buildings, equipment and an adequate level of funding. The educational rate was accepted by Jewish localities and was becoming more popular in the Arab sector. The government's commitment to education was not equally progressive.
The mandatory era concluded a cycle in Palestine's educational history. It embraced in one system Christian and Moslem pupils, unified in a second one the majority of Hebrew schools, and concluded the transfer of the Common school from a religious and traditional domain to the public sector.
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