

The role of Women in the Palestinian Society under the British Occupation (1917-1948)

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Abstract:

The study aimed to identify the important roles that Palestinian women exercised under the British occupation, and to clarify the political positions of Palestinian women towards the British occupation.

The study aimed to shed light on women's resistance to the British occupation through supplying the revolutionaries with weapons and equipment, and identify their cultural and media role in the Palestinian society.

The study concludes with several results, the most important of which are: the development of the role of the Palestinian women's movement in resisting the British occupation, participating in demonstrations, and sending messages to protest against the policy of the British occupation. Finally, the study recommends increasing attention to the role of Palestinian women in the Palestinian society and conducting studies on the role of Palestinian women under the Israeli occupation.

Keywords: (women, Palestinian society, British occupation).

المُلخَص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على الأدوار الهامة التي مارستها المرأة الفلسطينية تحت الاحتلال البريطاني، وتوضيح المواقف السياسية للمرأة الفلسطينية تجاه الاحتلال البريطاني، كما هدفت الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على مقاومة المرأة للاحتلال البريطاني، وإمداد المقاومين بالسلاح والعتاد، والتعرف على الدور الثقافي والإعلامي في المجتمع الفلسطيني.

وتوصلت الدراسة إلى عدة نتائج، أهمها: تطور دور الحركة النسائية الفلسطينية في مقاومتها للاحتلال البريطاني، والمشاركة الفعّالة في المظاهرات، وإرسال الرسائل للاحتجاج على سياسة الاحتلال البريطاني، كما توصلت الدراسة إلى عدة التوصيات، منها: زيادة الاهتمام بدور المرأة الفلسطينية في المجتمع الفلسطيني، وإعداد دراسات عن دور المرأة الفلسطينية أثناء الاحتلال الإسرائيلي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: (المرأة، المجتمع الفلسطيني، الاحتلال البريطاني).

Introduction:

The Palestinian woman comprises an essential component of the Palestinian society, as women account for half of the community. Palestinian women have played a prominent role in building a generation that is capable of defending its land and holy places, and partook in the political, military, social, media, and art life aspects under the British occupation of Palestine.

Therefore, the researcher investigated the political, military, and cultural role of Palestinian women under the British occupation of Palestine (1917-1948).

First: Study Significance:

1. It provides a clear image of the role of women in the Palestinian society under the British occupation.
2. It contributes to refreshing the Palestinian national memory on the role of Palestinian women.
3. It enriches the Arab library and provides reference to readers and observers of the Palestinian cause.
4. It shows how Palestinian women have experienced a different reality from that experienced by other Arab women due the British and Zionist occupations.

Second: Study Objectives:

1. Highlighting the political role of the Palestinian woman under the British occupation.
2. Identifying the military role of the Palestinian woman under the British occupation.
3. Clarifying the cultural role of the Palestinian woman under the British occupation.

Third: Study Limits:

1. Time limits: the era of the British occupation of Palestine (1917-1948)
2. Space limits: Palestine under the British occupation.

3. Subject limits: the role of the Palestinian women in the Palestinian society under the British occupation.

Fourth: Study Approach:

The researcher applied the descriptive analytical approach.

Fifth: Study Divisions:

The researcher divided the study into three sections: the first addresses the political role, the second discusses the military role, and the third describes the cultural role of the Palestinian woman under the British occupation.

The researcher concludes with the study results and recommendations, followed by the references.

First: The Political Role of the Palestinian Woman

1. The political role of Palestinian women from 1920 until 1929:

The Palestinian women's movement stood against the dangers that threatened the Palestinian cause due to the British occupation's policies that were in favor of the Zionist project. The first political activity in which women participated was on February 27, 1920, when Palestinian women, led by elite and cultured Muslim and Christian women, went in mass demonstrations in Al-Quds, Yafa and Haifa. The demonstration, which included 40 thousand people, headed to the headquarter of the British High Commissioner to express their opposition to the British occupation's policy and demand ending the Jewish immigration to Palestine, cancelling Balfour's Declaration, and stopping the torture of Palestinian detainees in the occupation's prisons.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Khartabil, Seeking Hope and the Nation: Sixty Years from a Woman's Struggle on behalf of Palestine 1936 – 1939), (p. 57); Salheya, Role of Palestinian Women's Movement in the National Struggle (Balfour's Declaration as an Example), (p. 71).

Palestinian women have also participated in the Nebi Musa revolution on April 4, 1920.⁽¹⁾ The Jews' and Christians' celebration of the Easter holiday coincided with the Nebi Musa season celebrated by Muslims at that time. Leaders delivered a political speech declaring their rejection of the British occupation and the Zionist movement and demanding Arab unity and independence. Meanwhile, a mine exploded, leading to the death and injury of some Palestinians. Clashes erupted between the Palestinians on one side and the British occupation forces and Zionist gang members on the other and lasted for days. The clashing led to the martyrdom of four Palestinians and the injury of 28 others. On the other hand, five Jews were killed and 18 others were seriously injured, while seven British soldiers were injured.⁽²⁾ This was a strong motive for Palestinian women to partake in the following political and national events.

In the same year, the British Minister of Settlements, Winston Churchill,⁽³⁾ visited Al-Quds, so the Palestinian students came out onto the street to express their rejection of his visit and condemn the British occupation government's policy that supported the Zionist movement. The protests rapidly developed into a massive popular demonstration in which all groups of the Palestinian society participated. Women played

⁽¹⁾ Nazzal, et al., *Role of the Palestinian Women's Movement in the Palestinian National Work (1917-1948)*, (pp. 296-297)

⁽²⁾ Kayyali; *Palestine: A Modern History*, (pp. 122-123)

⁽³⁾ A veteran British politician and statesman who was born in 1874. He climbed the authority ladder until he became the Minister of Settlements until 1922. He was an extremist Zionist, who contributed to the support of the Zionist project in Palestine. Many western politicians perceive him as one of the important men of modern history. He died in 1965. Kayyali et al, *Encyclopedia of Politics, Part 1*, (pp. 741-742).

a prominent role in this event, as they “walked across the streets of Al-Quds to denounce Balfour’s Declaration and the entire government. When the occupation soldiers shot protesters with bullets, the women of Al-Quds helped in moving the injured to the hospitals and in dressing their wounds.”⁽¹⁾

Palestinian women expressed their political views through sending letters of protest to the government of the British occupation and the British High Commissioner, demanding halting the Zionist immigration to Palestine and cancelling Balfour’s Declaration. In 1920, 29 Palestinian women sent a letter to the Administrative Governor of the north of Palestine to express their denouncement of the Balfour’s Declaration’s implications. The letter read, “We have read your Declaration on settling the Jews in our country and making it a national home for them. As this Declaration is most destructive to us from all aspects, we -Muslim and Christian Palestinian women and in representation of all other Palestinian women- strongly condemn this declaration that will break our homeland apart.”⁽²⁾

In 1922, a group of Palestinian women in Haifa sent the Minister of Settlements a letter that read, “to the Head of Government and Minister of Settlements, Palestinian women of Haifa reject Balfour’s Declaration, demand stopping Jewish immigration, and claim our independence”. Women also participated in the general strike and the public mourning in protest of the visit of Lord Balfour to open the Hebrew University in 1925.⁽³⁾

This proves the participation of Palestinian women in the

⁽¹⁾ Nazzal et al, *ibid*, (p. 297).

⁽²⁾ Salheya, *ibid*, (p. 71)

⁽³⁾ Salheya, *ibid*, (pp. 71-72)

political events and their expression of opinion, which was against the Arab norms and traditions that prohibited women from leaving their houses. Forms of women's participation varied to include popular protests and submission of letters to protest against the British occupation's policies.

2. The political role of Palestinian women in the Buraq Uprising in 1929:

Women's participation in the Buraq Uprising of 1929 was a turning point in the development of Palestinian women's movement. The British occupation forces applied killing and used the airplane force to terrorize Palestinians, leading to the death of 133 Palestinians including nine women: Aisha Abu Hassan (Ali Al-'Attari's wife), Izziya Muhammad Ali Salameh, Jamila Muhammad Ahmed Al-Az'ar, and Tashaweek Hussein from Al-Quds; Mariam Ali Abu Mahmoud and Halima Yousuf Al-Ghandour from Yafa; Fatma Muhammad Ali Hajj Muhammad from the village of Beit Dras, and two women from Arisiya whose names were not known and who were martyred with twelve men near the Syrian borders.⁽¹⁾

Injured women included Suhaila Majdlani from Yafa, who was severely injured and Um Al-Rifa'i, who was injured in her foot. Women's role was evident in Al-Buraq uprising, as they supplied fighters with weapons and ammo for the first time ever.⁽²⁾ This indicates the significant development of Palestinian women's military participation.

As a result, the Arab woman could no longer remain isolated, as she found herself carrying a burden after hundreds of men

⁽¹⁾ Al-Hout, Documents of the Palestinian National Movement (1918-1939), (pp. 329-332).

⁽²⁾ Nazzal et al, *ibid*, (pp. 297-298)

had been sent away, hundreds of houses had been cruelly demolished, and hundreds of children had become orphans. Someone had to undertake the responsibility before Allah and before people to defend justice and erase the shame that smeared the Arab history. It was, thus, not surprising that the Arab woman's life in Palestine has changed.”⁽¹⁾

A group of Palestinian women convened to hold the first Palestinian women's convention to discuss the woman's role in facing the political and national challenges. On October 20, 1929, 14 women from the elites of Al-Quds convened at the house of Tarab Abdul Hadi, Awni Abdul Hadi's wife; under the leadership of Mrs. Mussa Kathem pasha Al-Husseini. Tarab was elected as the Executive Head of the Committee. However, division in the executive committee occurred due to political division and grudge between Palestinian families, which interrupted the internal agenda.⁽²⁾

On October 26, 1929, the women, who were 300 hundred this time, reconvened at the house of Tarab Abdul Hadi. Most of the women were wives or relatives of the Palestinian political elite. The convention itself was a brave step for the Palestinian women, who had been prevented by norms and traditions from participating in any political movement that would bring any dangers to them. However, these norms were overcome with the support of political parties' leaders and women's efforts.⁽³⁾

The women; who had come from Al-Quds, Yafa, and Haifa; expressed their rejection of the Jewish immigration to Palestine and the seizure of lands. They swore to work to

⁽¹⁾ Mogannam, *The Historical Roots of the Struggle of Palestinian Women in the National Movement from the Mandate to 1936*, (p. 12)

⁽²⁾ Harhash, *Jerusalem's Women: Women's Movement in Jerusalem during the British Mandate period*, (p. 56).

⁽³⁾ Khalil, *Palestinian Women's Movement (1900-1939)*, (p. 21).

save the land alongside men, boycott the Jewish stores and goods, encourage national goods, send complaint letters to the Queen Mary of Britain, and thank the Political National Ladies' League in London and Mrs. Newton for standing by Palestine.⁽¹⁾

The convening women also decided to send a delegation to meet the British High Commissioner. However, some women were conservative and demanded that "the delegation meet the wife of the High Commissioner, as the Muslim ladies could not appear before the High Commissioner". The occupation authorities rejected their request under the pretext that "Mrs. Chancellor could not meet women who sought to provide proposals of a political nature. The High Commissioner, however, could meet ten of them for this purpose."⁽²⁾

Some of the women agreed to meet the High Commissioner, who welcomed the delegation. One of the ladies delivered a speech saying, "This is the first time in history for Arab women to introduce themselves to work in political affairs. Arab women are determined to do their share of homeland service through making any sacrifice whatsoever to ensure justice for their countries. Therefore, they demand the cancellation of Balfour's Declaration, the prevention of Jewish immigration, the removal of Norman Bentwich as he is a prejudiced Jew, and finally the cancellation of the joint sanctions."⁽³⁾

The High Commissioner replied, "I am pleased to see you here, knowing that you have defied your traditions. This is

⁽¹⁾ Palestinian Encyclopedia, General Section, Part 4, (p. 380); Nazzal et al, *ibid*, (p. 299).

⁽²⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 22)

⁽³⁾ Sifri, Issa, Arab Palestine between Mandate and Zionism, Part 1, (pp. 123-124).

but the result of true patriotism and faithfulness. I will do my best to return peace to Palestine, but you must understand that my authority is only limited. Some things must be decided by the Ministry of Settlements. I am pleased to see this advanced movement among women in Palestine. I appreciate your concern about the welfare of your country, and I will do my best to help in the education of Palestinian women, so that they can reach the status they deserve in the community.”⁽¹⁾

Upon the return of the women’s delegation to the convention on October 26, 1929, the women decided to elect an executive community that is composed of 14 ladies to follow up with the decisions and administration of the Palestinian women’s movement in the following stage. These were Mrs. Al-Khaldi as Head of the Committee; Ms. Shahinda Duzdar as the treasurer; the wives of Jamal Al-Husseini, Mussa Al-Alami, Awni Abdul Hadi, Shukri Deeb, Polus Shihabi (Shehada), and Subhi Al-Khadra; Ms. Zahia Al-Nashashibi; Fatma Al-Husseini; Khadija Al-Husseini; and Zulaikha Al-Shihabi as members, and Matiel Moghannam as the secretary general of the executive committee”. The committee was named the Executive Committee of Arab Women.⁽²⁾

At the end of the convention, the ladies made several decisions that supported the decisions of other Palestinian conventions such as encouraging national industries; strengthening the economic ties with Syria and other countries; sending a letter to the High Commissioner to express rejection of Balfour’s Declaration, demand stopping the Jewish immigration, and request the cancellation of joint sanctions; establishing a national government; and electing a

⁽¹⁾ Sifri, *ibid*, (p. 124)

⁽²⁾ Moghannam, *ibid*, (p. 15); Al-Hout et al, *Arab Women in the Twenties: Presence and Identity*, (pp. 325-326).

parliament. The convention stressed the need to boycott Zionist goods and support Palestinian ones.⁽¹⁾

The British occupation authorities did not allow the convening ladies to protest after the end of their convention. However, they held a silent demonstration of 80 – 120 ladies accompanied by young men. They went across the city of Al-Quds passing by the foreign countries' consulate compound. Consequently, the occupation sent a force to accompany the demonstrators,⁽²⁾ which proves the occupation's fear from peaceful and popular resistance expressed by the Palestinian woman.

The executive committee assumed its role, as it sent pleadings to the occupation government requesting the release of Palestinians arrested during Al-Buraq uprising, the prevention of weapon smuggling to the Zionist gangs, and the participation with the Palestinian negotiating delegation to Britain in 1930. The committee stressed the need to help the Palestinian farmers face the danger of land loss to Zionists, to stop firing Palestinian employees, and to end political exploitation and discrimination between Palestinian and Jewish employees.⁽³⁾

This shows that the Palestinian woman was strongly present in Al-Buraq Revolution, especially that some ladies were martyred. The women's movement used this fact to announce the first Palestinian women's convention to find ways of fighting the British occupation. The first Palestinian women's convention in the Arab and Islamic World aimed to organize

⁽¹⁾ Umaira, *The Role of the Palestinian Woman in the Social and Political Life in Palestine from 1920 to 1940 (Arab Revolution 1936-1939 as an Example)*, (p. 223).

⁽²⁾ Fu'ad, *The National and Social Role of the Palestinian Woman*, (p. 112); Lawrence, *Palestine Question*, Part 3, (p. 222).

⁽³⁾ Mogannam, *ibid*, (pp. 16-18); Al-Hout et al, *ibid*, (p. 326).

the women's movement and undertake an effective political role to save Palestine. The meeting with the British High Commissioner had a great effect on the Palestinian women's political action and encouraged them to seek their national rights and organize demonstrations despite the occupation authorities' threats.

3. The political role of Palestinian women from 1930 to 1936:

The Palestinian women's movement continued to follow up with the political and national events. Palestinian women participated in the demonstration that was organized in Nablus in 1931 in response to calls to boycott the British occupation government and turn to armed resistance to face the Zionist danger and arrestment of the Palestinian national movement. This led to clashes between the two parties, and many were injured. Among the women who participated was Mrs. Bahija Al-Nabulsi, wife of Haj Saeed Kamal, one of Nablus' elite.⁽¹⁾

On the other hand, the Executive Committee of Arab Women continued to send pleadings. On January, 28th 1932, the Committee submitted a letter to The Permanent Mandates Commission in Geneva. It included the farmers' complaints and referred to the inability of the occupation government to protect them and demanded cancelling Balfour's Declaration and the Mandate Statement and establishing a national government until full independence is reached."⁽²⁾

In addition, the committee held conferences to discuss the taxes imposed on farmers and submitted protest letters against the British occupation's taxing policy.⁽³⁾ As such, the

⁽¹⁾ Al-Nimr, History of Nablus Mount and Balqa, Part 3, (p. 213), Yaseen, Struggle of the Palestinian People before 1948, (p. 138).

⁽²⁾ Yaseen, *ibid*, (p. 138).

⁽³⁾ Kayyali, Palestine: A Modern History, (p. 235).

Palestinian woman became a feature of the Palestinian national movement, proving her active role in any political activity that sought to resist the British occupation.

In 1933, the YMCA invited Lord Allenby and the British Minister of Settlements, Sonniton, to the inauguration of its new building in Al-Quds. Therefore, the Arab organizations and societies protested against the British occupation, while the women decided to organize a demonstration to condemn the visit of the British officials. The demonstrators walked from Masjid Omar to the Holy Sepulchre. It was Friday April 15, 1933, and it rained heavily. The police forces could not break the ladies' demonstration apart or terminate their program. At 10 a.m., the women protesters left the offices of the Women's Executive Committee and walked across the streets of Al-Quds until they arrived at Masjid Omar, where a Christian lady delivered a speech from a masjid for the first time ever."⁽¹⁾

Ms. Matiel Mogannam delivered the speech saying, "This is the second time in the history of our movement that we organize a protest. We want the whole world to know the bad condition that we live in, due to the unfair policy imposed on us by the colonial administration established under the mandate. This is the second time for us to declare, through silent demonstration, that the Arab Ummah that lives near two sacred places; Masjid Omar and the Holy Sepulchre... will never tolerate such injustice or such humiliation... We will continue to work hand in hand until we achieve our national rights." The demonstration then arrived at the Holy Sepulchre, where Tarab Abdul Hadi delivered a speech and stressed the demands of the protesters."⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ Mogannam, *ibid*, (pp. 22-23).

⁽²⁾ Mogannam, *ibid*, (pp. 23-24).

The women's protest echoed at the local and international levels. The objection of the occupation authorities to the demonstration, and the women's defiance to the occupation police drew attention and advocacy to their fair demands. "The work of the Executive Committee received wide attention at the time, until it reached the U.S., Europe, and India. The Committee even received letters of full advocacy with Palestinian women."⁽¹⁾

On October 8, 1944, the Executive Committee in Yafa decided to organize demonstrations in all the cities of Palestine to protest against the policies of the British occupation government against the Palestinian people. The women's movement participated in the demonstrations, especially the one organized in Al-Quds on October 13th. About 50 women participated in the protests; they walked behind men, reciting national songs. They were received with cheering from the protesters. A delegation from the Arab Women's Committee led by Ms. Matiel Mogannam participated in Yafa, despite the occupation authority's disapproval. "They were more courageous than their men in the face of the High Commissioner", so they were attacked by the occupation forces, leading to numerous injuries among protestors.⁽²⁾

As a result, the Palestinian women's movement formed Arab women committees in all Palestinian cities and villages and issued publications supporting the Palestinian people to mobilize as many as possible to join women's demonstrations and conventions. Delegations from the Arab women's committees joined the demonstration of October 27, in Yafa, despite the occupation forces' attempts to forbid them. This

⁽¹⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 27).

⁽²⁾ Sifri, *ibid*, Part 1, (pp. 190-192); Yaseen, *ibid*, (pp. 141-144).

led to the spread and success of demonstrations across Palestine.⁽¹⁾

This shows the quality development of the Palestinian women's movement's role and defiance to the occupation and its policies. Nevertheless, their actions were almost exclusive to peaceful demonstrations, protestation, petitions, and repeated lawful demands. In addition, the women who took part in politics were all from among the society elite with no participation from women from other society groups. This indicates that these women received support by their husbands or relatives in the politics field.

4. The political role of the Palestinian woman from 1936 to 1948:

The Palestinian woman played a prominent role in the Great Palestinian Revolt (1936-1939), which is one of the most significant revolutions of modern history. The revolution erupted on April 15, 1936; when a Qassamite band attacked a Jewish convoy on a highway near the village of Mulabbes, leading to a general strike in Yafa on April, 20th and armed clashes between the Palestinians and the Jews. The occupation authorities imposed emergency law, while the national committees were founded in Yafa, then across all Palestinian cities, and called for general strike.⁽²⁾

The Palestinian women's movement played a significant role in the beginning of the Great Palestinian Revolt, as the Arab Women's Committee in Al-Quds –in cooperation with the other women's societies- issued their first statement, in which they urged Palestinian women to join the strike with men.

⁽¹⁾ Palestinian Encyclopedia, General Section, *ibid*, Part 2, (p. 212)

⁽²⁾ Al-Hout, *Political Leaderships and Institutions in Palestine (1917-1948)*, (pp. 331-334).

Issued on April 30, 1936, the statement included, “Dear courageous woman, you descend from a history of fighters. Your solidarity and your participation in the general strike in the sea and on land will resonate across the world. The future of your country relies on your sacrifice, on your participation in the strike and the boycott which will teach everyone who ignores your sacred rights a hard lesson”.⁽¹⁾

The city of Nablus witnessed the first women’s demonstration on May 1, 1936, when the Arab Women’s Committee called for civil disobedience. Some were even attacked by the occupation forces. Teams of the ladies were responsible for providing first aid to the injured and delivering supplies. Female students also participated in the grand demonstrations organized by their fellow male students⁽²⁾ in Akkah, and were attacked by the occupation forces.⁽³⁾

On May 6, of the same year, the Arab Women’s Committee in Al-Quds held a meeting that brought together 400 Arab, Palestinian ladies.⁽⁴⁾ They issued a decision that included “demanding all political bodies, the Higher committee and the national committees to explicitly declare rejection to any negotiations or talks with the current government until the Ummah’s demands are met. The Arab women add their voices to those of the political and national committees on the matter of not paying taxes.”⁽⁵⁾

On May 11th, “the Arab Women in Yafa held a large meeting

(1) Khartabil, *ibid*, (pp. 73-74).

(2) Al-Qashtini, *Palestinian Civil Resistance*, *Palestinian Encyclopedia*, Special Section, Part 5, (p. 326).

(3) Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 28).

(4) *Palestinian Encyclopedia*, General Section, *ibid*, Part 2, (p. 603).

(5) Khilla, *Palestine and the British Mandate (1922-1939)*, (pp. 615-616); Yaseen, *ibid*, (p. 182).

in the National Orthodox School under the leadership of Adelle Aazer. The convening women decided to second the decision of the Higher Arab Committee and to support all its decisions; boycott Jewish goods, establish a parliament in Palestine, prevent Jewish immigration, legislate laws that prohibit selling lands to the Jews, and join the general strike until the country regains its rights in full.”⁽¹⁾

The Arab Women’s Committee in Al-Quds held a meeting on July 27, 1936 and issued a statement that read, “Our country stands today being stronger, more steadfast and more capable of making sacrifice than ever before. The Arab Women’s Committee, along with all women’s associations in Palestine, hereby supports the national committees and bodies; the promotion delegation to London; the craftsmen, merchants, laborers, and drivers across the country, commending their efforts and loyalty, trusting their wisdom, and valuing their efforts to lead our homeland towards our aspiration of freedom and independence.”⁽²⁾

The Arab Women in Al-Quds also “sent an appeal to the World Peace Conference held in Brussels on September 13, 1936, in which they described the tragedies in Palestine due to Zionist policies. They demanded the protection of Palestinians’ rights, the end of Jewish immigration, and the establishment of a national government”.⁽³⁾

In early 1937, Head of the Women’s Committee in Akkah, Mrs. Anissa Al-Khadra, sent a letter to the Head of the Egyptian Feminist Union, Huda Shaarawi, that read, “O neighbors of the Holy Land! Have you not heard of the calamity that inflicted your brothers there and that is about to

⁽¹⁾ Khartabil, *ibid*, (p. 75); Sifri, *ibid*, Part 2, (pp. 25-26).

⁽²⁾ Khartabil, *ibid*, (p. 75).

⁽³⁾ Sifri, *ibid*, Part 2, (pp. 25-26).

inflict you as well? The features of our nation are about to be altered, and the holiest land of all is about to be erased. How can you leave us to fight this alone when there is still a breathing soul among you?” the Head of the Egyptian Feminist Union replied, “Egypt is horrified by the calamity that has inflected you and shook the whole Islamic World. Maintain your faith in Allah’s mercy. Our hearts are with you. We condemn the British Committee’s violation of the sacredness of your land and degrading of the Muslims’ dignity with their unfair project.”⁽¹⁾

Note that the two letters had an emotional tone to stress the suffering of the Palestinian people and the seriousness of the Palestinian situation when addressing Arab women. The letter proves that the Palestinian woman’s activities to serve the cause were not exclusive to the internal arena. Palestinian women rather worked to raise awareness among Arab women in different countries to mobilize them to stand with their cause.

On the other hand, women of Al-Quds organized a demonstration in July 1938 to protest against British terrorism. Meanwhile, the women of Nablus contested against the British occupation forces’ theft of women’s properties and jewelries. They demanded that the occupation end its violations and give back the stolen properties. They managed to retrieve some of the stolen jewelries and possessions from the occupation.⁽²⁾

On the other hand, the first Arab Women’s Conference was held in Cairo to discuss the Palestinian cause. Held from October 15 to 18, 1938, the conference was attended by

⁽¹⁾ No author, *The Arab Woman and the Palestinian Cause*, Eastern Women’s Conference Cairo in 1938, (pp. 14-15).

⁽²⁾ Al-Qashtini, *ibid*, (p. 326).

women's movements from Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and Palestine. The Palestinian delegation included 27 ladies: Tarab Abdul Hadi, Wahida Al-Khaldi, Catherine Shukri Deeb, Matiel Mogannam, Sathaj Nassar, Su'ad A'-Husseini, Malak Halawa, Katie Antonius, Lamia Salah, Muserra Al-Budeiri, Fatma Al-Muhtadi, Aisha Al-Dajani, Subheia Al-Tamimi, Refqa Al-Shehabi Al-Taji, Mary-Luisa Abu Al-Shaar, Raya Al-Qassem, Salma Raja'i Al-Husseini, Samiha Al-Khaldi, Zulaikha Shehabi, Shahenda Duzdar, Maymana Izz El-Din Al-Qassam, Fatma Al-Nashashibi, Mariam Hashem, Badra Kan'an, and Nabiha Nasser.⁽¹⁾

The Conference issued 22 decisions including:

1. Holding the European countries responsible for the Palestinian cause.
2. Calling upon the Arab and foreign countries to intervene to solve the Palestinian cause.
3. Backing the demands of the Palestinian people.
4. Condemning the British policy of killing and torturing prisoners in Palestine.
5. Releasing the Palestinian prisoners and returning the exiled ones.
6. Supporting the Palestinian people with donations and necessary medications.⁽²⁾

In addition, the Arab Feminist Unions organized an Arab women's conference in Cairo to discuss the Palestinian cause and the Arab women's position on it. On the conference that was held between December 12 and 16, Huda Shaarawi explained that "the reason for the conference is to study the causes of Palestine and women, both of which are about

⁽¹⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 30); Fu'ad *ibid*, (pp. 113-114).

⁽²⁾ (no author), *The Arab Woman and the Palestinian Cause*, *ibid*, (pp. 170-173); Zu'eiter, *The Palestinian Cause*, (pp. 125-126).

stolen rights that must be returned.”⁽¹⁾ The conference was attended by several Arab women delegations including Lebanese, Iraqi, Syrian, Egyptian, and Palestinian ones.⁽²⁾ The total number of participating women was about 3,000.⁽³⁾ The Palestinian women’s delegation included “Zulaikha Shehabi, Tarab Abdul Hadi, Samiha Al-Taji, Mr. Shukri Deeb’s wife, Mr. Jamal Al-Husseini’s wife, Mr. Mussa Al-Alami’s wife, Mr. Hasan Al-Budeiri’s wife, Mrs. Wadi’a Qadoura Khartabil, Mr. Amin Aaazer’s wife, Mr. Ref’at Al-Habbab’s wife, Mr. Tawfeeq Zarifa’s wife, Mr. Rashid Abu Laban’s wife, Mr. HAmDi Qambarji’s wife, Ms. Mariam Hashem, Mr. Omar Al-Massri’s wife, Mr. Wajeeh Al-Nabulsi’s wife, Mrs. Mariam Khalil ‘Arida, Mrs. Sathaj Nassar, Mrs. Mari Sahyoun, Mrs. Rafeqa Miqati, Mrs. Rose Wade’ Bustani, Miss Iffat Baha’i, Mrs. Freeza Barad’i, Mr. Hanna Salah’s wife, Mr. Yousuf Qadoura’s wife, Mrs. Fatma Al-Nashashibi, and Mrs. Hala Eskandar Saba.”⁽⁴⁾

The conference issued several decisions relevant to the Palestinian cause, including:

1. Advocating the Arab’s right to have Palestine as an independent state that is self-ruling through a parliament of Arab majority.
2. Ending the immigration to Palestine once and for all.
3. Calling upon the Arab peoples to support the Palestinian cause financially and spiritually.
4. Raising awareness across all Arab countries

⁽¹⁾ Palestinian Encyclopedia, General Section, *ibid*, Part 2, (p. 213).

⁽²⁾ Khartabil, *ibid*, (pp. 86-87).

⁽³⁾ (No author), *Reality of the Palestinian Woman in the Occupied Land*, *ibid*, (p. 44)

⁽⁴⁾ Khartabil, *ibid*, (p. 86).

about the Arabs' rights to Palestine and founding committees to serve this purpose.

5. Sending protest letters to the United States and Britain to condemn their prejudice with the Zionists.⁽¹⁾

As such, it is clear how the role of the Palestinian women's movement in resisting the British occupation developed throughout time from participation in demonstrations in Palestinian cities to condemn the occupation policies to the participation in international women's conferences. This proves the political and intellectual development of the Palestinian woman, who has always followed up with the political events. It is safe to say that most women who took part in politics belonged to the society elite, which indicates that the political decisions were exclusive to them and did not include the commons. This results from the support these women received from their husbands and relatives.

Second: The Military Role of the Palestinian Woman:

Palestinian women played an indirect military role through their participation in the demonstrations of Al-Buraq Revolution in 1929, during which nine women were martyred and others were injured. As the Great Palestinian Revolt erupted, the military role of Palestinian women became more apparent, as they collected donations and distributed them to the needy among the children of martyrs and prisoners. Female villagers helped transfer the weapons across the British occupation's check points to the fighters' locations in

⁽¹⁾ Khartabil, *ibid*, (pp. 92-93); Nazzal et al., *ibid*, (p. 305).

the mountains. They also provided them with food, drinks, and equipment; took care of the injured; hid the revolutionists; and conducted reconnaissance operations. They also tried to discover any land selling to the Jews. Some women even sold their jewelry to enable their husbands, brothers, and children to buy weapons and participate in the revolution.⁽¹⁾

Some women joined Al-Kaf Al-Akhdar (the green palm group), who was dedicated to assassinating spies. For example, Mrs. Shamsa Al-Hasna used to sell milk in Yafa's market and hide a gun in her clothes. She would then hand the gun to the executer who would shoot the spy and give her the gun back to hide. People would then run away from the scene, all while she was selling her milk. The wife of Yousuf Al-Shambour, who was a member of the group, used to help him in the assassination operations through hiding a gun in her clothes. Aisha Al-Mayat was part of the attempted murder of Fayeze Al-Fahoum, a spy that worked for the British occupation and had killed her husband. Abdulla Al-Hanout's sister killed the British officer Brandt, and was later punished by cutting her hand.⁽²⁾

Fawzi Al-Qawuqji⁽³⁾ gave testimony on the role of

⁽¹⁾ Salheya, *ibid*, (p. 73); Kayyali, *ibid*, (p. 299).

⁽²⁾ Umaira, *ibid*, (pp. 232-233).

⁽³⁾ He was born in Lebanon in 1890 and joined the Ottoman army until he was promoted to an officer of the Cavalry. He joined the fighters of the Great Palestinian Revolution in 1936 and fought with them against the British occupation in four battles: Bal'a, Joba', Beit Amreen, and Kafr Sour. He was subjected to severe siege that led him to leave through Jordan river. He also joined the Salvation Army in 1948. After the Nakbah, he left Palestine to Damascus then Beirut and died in 1977.

Palestinian women in supporting revolutionaries, “In the Battle of Bal’aa [the first],⁽¹⁾ women used to supply fighters with food and water, help us transfer our equipment, and spread a sense of nationalism through national songs. When the British occupation forces surrounded the revolutionaries, the women used to supply us with everything we needed. It is their encouragement that enabled us to seize victory.”⁽²⁾

Palestinian women had a marvelous role in saving revolutionaries, whenever the British occupation forces attempted to arrest them. Women used to fight the soldiers hand to hand to help the Palestinian revolutionaries get away from them. The girls used to throw nails under the occupation vehicles and interrupt military occupations through throwing stones at them.⁽³⁾

Palestinian women took the lead in being trained to carry weapons and put on military uniform. This first occurred in the battle that took place in Azzun Valley between revolutionaries and the British occupation forces on June 16, 1936. Fatma Ghazal (Khaskiya) was the first Palestinian female martyr in a military battle. The number of female martyrs in battles against the

Kayyali et al., *ibid*, Part 4, (pp. 630-631). See: Qasemiya, Fawzi Al-Qawuqi *Memoirs (1890-1977)*, (pp. 181-260).

⁽¹⁾ The battle erupted in the morning of 10/08/1936 between rebels and the British occupation forces, when the occupation forces were ambushed by revolutionaries, leading to clashes. The occupation forces used armored vehicles and aircrafts to save their soldiers. The revolutionaries managed to kill a British officer and hit a number of soldiers. Al-Dabbagh, *The Encyclopedia of our Land Palestine*, Part 3, Section 2, (p. 305).

⁽²⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 27).

⁽³⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 62).

British occupation was nearly 30.⁽¹⁾ Among these were Su'ad Ali Saba'na, Amna Al-Haj Yaseen, Bahiya Nafe' Abu Al-Rub. Many others were injured through shooting or attacks with liquid silver to deform their faces. Among these were Aisha Hassan Abu Wa'r and Houriya Sulaiman.⁽²⁾

Among the women who fought side by side with the revolutionaries was Sabha Al-'Ali who was famous for carrying bullets on her. One Palestinian woman was so courageous that she directly shot an officer dead in the British occupation forces in Jenin. Female military formations were formed to fight with men against the British occupation and the Zionist gangs.⁽³⁾ One of these formations was "Sisters of Al-Qassam" in Haifa. Among the female fighters were Su'ad Tawfeeq Abu Al-Su'oud, Sameera Abu Ghazaleh, Awatef Abdul Hadi, Sa'ada Kilani, Issam Abdul Hadi, and Ruqaia Al-Houri of Haifa.⁽⁴⁾ Some joined scouts groups such as Al-Najada organization.^{(5) (6)}

A proof that the Palestinian woman was present in the military action is that one Palestinian woman was trialed for possession of gun and ammo. The court

⁽¹⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (p. 27); Abu Ali, *The Political Role of the Palestinian Woman at the International Level*, (p. 93).

⁽²⁾ Nazzal et al., *ibid*, (p. 302).

⁽³⁾ Al-Sourani, *The Palestinian Woman and her Role in Modern and Contemporary History*, (p. 75); Harhash, *ibid* (p. 62).

⁽⁴⁾ Umaira, *ibid*, (p. 226).

⁽⁵⁾ The organization was established in 1945 and focused on recruiting the youth. It could not declare its military objectives, so it adopted sports objectives. Advocate Muhammad Al-Hawari was elected president. The organization adopted the slogan "Arabs lands for Arabs". Al-Hout, *ibid*, (pp. 508-509).

⁽⁶⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 62).

judge stated, “I stress that until this date, military courts have prosecuted four women for serious crimes. In each of the cases, the court showed utmost tolerance and mercy. However, I inform everyone who incites women to violate order that such acts will not be met with the same tolerance in the future.”⁽¹⁾

The British military court also sentenced Mrs. Sabha Al-Jallad from Tulkarm to five years of prison for rifle possession, Mrs. Fadiya Khalil from Al-Quds to three months for incitement against the occupation, and Mrs. Haniya Ali Al-Ahmed from Haifa to ten years for possession of a firearm. Similar sentences were given to other women.⁽²⁾

Palestinian women showed exemplary courage, when the occupation forces called for them to identify their relatives among the martyrs, so that they can locate the revolutionaries. “A woman would enter the morgue, look in the face of her dear killed one, and not show the mildest expression that she knew him. She would then lift her head up and walk away with indifference.”⁽³⁾

When the Partition Plan (181) was decided in 1947,⁽⁴⁾ Palestinian women helped build entrenchments; dig tunnels; transfer food, drinks, and medications; secure

⁽¹⁾ Khalil, *ibid*, (pp. 27-28).

⁽²⁾ Aql, *Role of Women in the Revolution of 1936* (online).

⁽³⁾ Al-Qashtini, *ibid*, (p. 326).

⁽⁴⁾ The UN Committee for Palestine proposed a project for partitioning Palestine. The project divided the land into a Jewish state (taking up 56% of the land) and an Arab state (taking up 43%). Al-Quds and its surroundings (taking up .65% of the land) was named as a special international district under UN administration. The Jewish state was composed of all the regions inhabited by the Zionists in addition to vast areas owned by Palestinians. Kayyali et al., *ibid*, Part 1, (p. 776).

hiding places for the wounded; donate their jewelries; and found semi-military teams to help the revolutionaries and treat their wounds. For example, The "chrysanthemum flower organization" was formed in Yafa and included: Yusra Touqan, Fatma Abu Al-Huda, Juhaina Khorsheed, and Arabiya Khorsheed.⁽¹⁾ The organization included 12 girls and formed a delegation headed by Nariman Khorsheed to meet with the Committee on the Defence of Palestine in Amman and the High Arab Commission in Syria to speak about the role of Palestinian women in treating the wounded and participating in military battles.⁽²⁾

Some women from the organization participated in military battles. For instance, "two ladies from noble families left their homes to be in the battlefield. They were observed in all battles carrying their weapons and fighting alongside men, after refusing to work in the backlines. They even threw the first two bombs at the Jews' entrenchments and blew them. They also cooperated with their colleagues in treating the wounded."⁽³⁾ Their names probably remained secret to protect them from being arrested or assassinated by the British occupation forces.

Among the semi-military women's formations was "Al-Ard Organization", whose members included Najlaa Al-Asmar⁽⁴⁾ and "Juliette and Rosette Nayef

⁽¹⁾ Fu'ad, *ibid*, (p. 115); Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 62).

⁽²⁾ Al Defaa Newspaper, "The Chrysanthemum Flower Organization for Joint Jihad", Issue (3928).

⁽³⁾ Palestine Newspaper, Yafa's girls in the Battlefield, The Chrysanthemum Flower Organization Regains the Glory of Bint Al-Azwar, Issue (283-6830), (p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 63)

Zaka, who were among the early volunteers in the Red Crescent and Cross Organization in Haifa in 1947. They were still students at the English School, so they started to take first aid lessons.” Juliette was killed when she was only 19 years old, while helping an injured woman. Her sister could not help her, because the ambulance driver had already been shot. The British occupation forces kidnapped her body and buried it in an unknown location.”⁽¹⁾

High school girls, such as Issam Hamdi Al-Husseini from Yafa, joined scout teams to get training on fighting and using weapons. Some female teachers from Gaza and Nassra cities trained the girls in the scout camps.⁽²⁾

Some women founded societies to support revolutionaries and their families. Among these was the Women’s Solidarity Association headed by Lulu Abu Al-Huda. The association members undertook visiting the prisoners, helping the revolutionaries’ families, and equipping field hospitals for nursing and providing first aid services.⁽³⁾ For example, Mrs. Saniya Al-Aboushi established a field hospital in coordination with women from Jenin to help in the treatment of the revolutionaries wounded in Jenin battles in 1948.⁽⁴⁾

Some women were killed while providing revolutionaries with food and drink. Among these were Jamila Ahmed; Nabiha Attiyah; Hilwa Hussein; Hilwa

⁽¹⁾ Al-Ittihad Magazine, Women from my Homeland, Issue (51-276), (p. 16).

⁽²⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 63).

⁽³⁾ (No author) Reality of the Palestinian Woman in the Occupied Land, *ibid*, (p. 44).

⁽⁴⁾ Nazzal et al., *ibid*, (p. 306).

Salem; nurse Margaret George Abu Keyan, who was killed while transferring one of the injured men to the hospital; Hilwa Zidan, who was killed with her husband and son in Deir Yaseen Massacre while fighting Zionist gangs; and the teacher Hayat Al-Belbeisi, who was killed in Deir Yaseen Massacre on April 9, 1948 while treating an injured fighter. Mrs. Al-Belbeisi had left her home in Al-Quds and rushed to Deir Yaseen to help the injured, as the village was bombarded by the Zionist gangs.⁽¹⁾

All this proves that Palestinian women played a prominent role in the military work; they provided the revolutionaries with logistics and information about the movements of the British occupation forces, aborted the occupation's plans, participated in the assassination of spies, formed semi-military groups, and fought in the frontlines. Palestinian women have lost their lives for the Palestinian cause through martyrdom and imprisonment.

Third: The Cultural Role of the Palestinian Woman:

Palestinian students suffered from deliberate negligence in education by the British occupation in terms of the approved studying stages, the class courses, the curricula, the number of schools and students, and the budget allocated to the Ministry of Education. The percentage of girls who joined schools at that time was small compared to that of boys. For instance, the number of female students in the school year (1919-1920) was 2,243. The number rose

⁽¹⁾ Fu'ad, *ibid*, (p. 116); 17. Al-Ittihad Magazine, *Women from my Homeland*, *ibid*, (pp. 13-16).

gradually and reached 4,782 in (1929-1930).⁽¹⁾

In 1935, there were 15 girls' schools that covered dozens of Palestinian villages. Fifteen girls completed 7th grade. In (1944-1945), the number of girls who had finished elementary school was only 53 out of 2,912 female students in the Palestinian cities and villages. The number of girls who had completed secondary school was 42 out of 10,293.⁽²⁾

This negligence policy proves the occupation authorities' agenda of spreading ignorance among the Palestinian people. Reasons why only few girls joined elementary, preparatory, and secondary schools included the spread of early marriage in the Palestinian cities and villages, the far distance girls had to go to get to school, and the need for girls to help with household chores and agriculture. Therefore, illiteracy was quite common.

Among the main higher education institutions for girls were:

1. Female Teachers' College:

It was established in Al-Quds in 1919 and offered four-year secondary education and an additional year to prepare female teachers to teach at elementary schools. The number of students at the college was 23 girls in 1920, and increased to 104 in the school year (1945-1946). The number of graduates since the college had been opened exceeded 300 in 1946. Most of the graduates worked at girls' schools in the Palestinian cities. At the college, the students also learned

⁽¹⁾ Al-Dabbagh, Education in Palestine Under the Mandate, Palestinian Encyclopedia, Part 3, (pp. 38-40, 73).

⁽²⁾ Al-Ghuneimi, Development of the Palestinian Woman's Conditions.

housekeeping and sewing.⁽¹⁾

Among the women who taught at the college were: Sa'eda Jarallah, Jawhara Qamar, Yusra Salah, Adaweya Al-Alami, and Ester Khouri. Among the graduates were Seba Fahoum, Yusra Barbari, Issam Husseini, Abla Nasser, Rena Matar, Lawaheth Adul Hadi, Nuha Mihles, and Aisha Tijani.⁽²⁾

2. Female Teachers' Village College:

It was established in Ramallah in 1935 to prepare its graduates to work at girls' schools in villages. The college provided education, food, and dwelling for free. In the school year (1945-1946), the number of students was 34, with an average number of graduates of 12 per year.

Nongovernmental teachers' colleges included: Girls College and Schmidt's Girls College in Al-Quds, both of which were run by the foreign missions to Palestine.⁽³⁾

Among the teachers who worked at Al-Ma'mounia school were: Ayda Al-Khadra, Leila Khaldi Sabeeha, Kameran Al-Massri, Nadiya Al-Rassas, Ne'ma Al-Saleh Basema Fares, Aliya Nusaiba, Zakeya Budeiri, Etaf Hammad, Amal Mudawwarm Lam'a Ghosha, Alice Kashishan, Ikram Khaldi, and others. Among the female doctors that worked in Al-Quds were Dr. Abla Fawzi, who worked at the public hospital; Dr. Laura Al-Moghrabi, who was a gynecologist and pediatrician and had her private clinic in Al-Quds; and Dr. Charlotte Nicola Saba, who graduated from London

⁽¹⁾ Al-Dabbagh, *ibid*, (pp. 43-44).

⁽²⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 45).

⁽³⁾ Al-Dabbagh, *ibid*, (p. 44).

and worked in Ramallah.⁽¹⁾

As such, the Palestinian woman had her share of education, despite the British occupations practices to spread ignorance among the Palestinian people. Some girls joined higher education schools, while some worked at public schools and others became doctors.

Palestinian women cared about the media, because it had crucial effects on the internal and external conditions. "In 1921, Mir'at Al-Sharq newspaper⁽²⁾ added a column titled "Ladies' Pens", where it published articles written by pioneers of the women's movement such as Qudseya Khorsheed. The magazine asked women to share their writings in the column."⁽³⁾

Among the female writers were Salwa Al-Amd, Wadi'a Shatara, Aziza Al-Hashim Al-Saleh, and others.⁽⁴⁾

Mrs. Asma Touba was among the earliest writers in Palestine. She had published books such as Nafhat Itr, Ala Mathbah Al-Tadheya, and Abeer wa Majd.⁽⁵⁾ All are her own memoirs and they were important references that documented the role of the Palestinian woman under the British occupation.

Among the pioneer journalists was Mary Sarrouf

⁽¹⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (p. 45).

⁽²⁾ A Palestinian magazine founded in Al-Quds on 17/09/1919. The editor in chief was Polus Shehada. It continued publishing its work, until it was closed by the British occupation forces in 1938. Al-Najjar, *Palestine's Press and the National Movement in Half a Century (1900-1948)*, (pp. 366-367).

⁽³⁾ Tamari, *Al-Quds 1948, Arab Neighborhoods and their Fate in the War of 1948*, (p. 63).

⁽⁴⁾ Al-Jawzi, *History of the Palestinian Radio Station "Huna Al-Quds" (1936-1948)*, (p. 38).

⁽⁵⁾ Bouri et al., *Akka: Heritage and Memories*, (p. 108).

Shehada, who was a writer at Mir'at Al-Sharq Magazine. Her articles courageously criticized the British occupation's policy. She delivered a lecture once in Gaza in 1931, and Al-Quds Governor at that time, Ronald Stores, called to warn her not to speak about politics. He said, "If you do not shut your mouth, we will send you to the Seychelles. I am not joking. I mean my word."⁽¹⁾ The newspaper was closed in 1939 by the British occupation for publishing poems that incited against the occupation.⁽²⁾ This shows the British occupation's silencing policy, intellectual terrorism, and war against Palestinian press.

Mrs. Sathaj Nassar was also famous in the field of journalism. She assisted her husband Najeeb Nassar; founder of Al-Karmel newspaper,⁽³⁾ one of the main newspapers issued in Palestine. Sathaj discussed historical, social, and feminist topics in her writings for Al-Karmel newspaper and the Egyptian Al-Hilal newspaper. She became editor-in-chief of Al-Karmel newspaper between 1941 and 1944.⁽⁴⁾ Another prominent journalist was Samira Azzam, who wrote for Palestine newspaper⁽⁵⁾ under the pen name *fatat Al-*

(1) Al-Hout et al., *ibid*, (p. 321).

(2) Tamari, *ibid*, (p. 63).

(3) A palestinian newspaper issued in Haifa in 1908. It was founded by Najeeb Nassar, who was also the editor in chief. Nassar was among the earliest Palestinian journalists. The newspaper played an important role in exposing the Zionist movement's plans and addressed the matters of farmers and laborers. Nassar was also among the early people who warned the Arabs against the Zionist danger. Al-Najjar, *ibid*, (p. 367).

(4) Al-Hout et al. (p. 322)

(5) Founded in Yafa by Issa Al-Issa. The first issue was published on 1/1/1911. The journal was, then, issued on a daily basis. The newspaper work was suspended due to the war of 1948, and resumed in Amman in

Sahel “coastal girl”.⁽¹⁾

Palestinian women also contributed to the women and girls programs at the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation,⁽²⁾ which allocated time each Friday for a women’s program. The program spoke about Palestinian women that were known in the literary, political, or charity fields⁽³⁾ such as Asma Touba, who hosted a program called “To Arab mothers”. She talked about raising children and the values that must be deep-rooted in children. Among these values, for example, was the sense of duty, which must be taught to the child since early childhood and not be left for time to teach them, as some would claim.”⁽⁴⁾

Mrs. Mary Sarouf Shehada had an active role in the Broadcasting Corporation. She had a program called “Raising Children in the Arab Family”. She said, “I used to say that the Arab family does not need new homes that are furnished with prestigious beddings or gold wares. It rather needs a new woman who knows how to raise children that are the future’s men characterized with faithfulness, virtue, honesty, and hard work. Men that are self-dependent and who understand the meanings of freedom, equality, and

1949, then moved to Al-Quds. Palestinian Encyclopedia, General Section, *ibid*, Part 3, (p. 466).

⁽¹⁾ Bouri et al., *ibid*, (p. 107).

⁽²⁾ It was established in Al-Quds in 1936. The daily program lasted for ten-and-a-half hours in Arabic, English, and Hebrew. The Arabic division was headed by the poet Ibrahim Touqan, Ajaj Nuwaihed, Azmi Al-Nashashibi. Al-Jawzi, *ibid*, (pp. 6-7).

⁽³⁾ Tamari, *ibid*, (p. 63).

⁽⁴⁾ Al-Jawzi, *ibid*, (p. 39).

brotherhood.”⁽¹⁾

Among the ladies that hosted radio programs were Henriette Saksak Farraj, known as Ms. Su'ad, who hosted children programs and Mrs. Fatma Al-Budeiri, who supervised the women and children programs and co-hosted cultural programs.⁽²⁾

On the other hand, Mrs. Katie Antonius opened “a famous salon visited by British employees, Arab elites, and sometimes non-Zionist Jews.” Member of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, Richard Crossman, visited Palestine in the forties, when Palestine was under the British occupation. He described the salon saying, “It seems that Mrs. Antonius has a political salon on the French style. It was a great party... evening clothes, Syrian foods and drinks, and dancing on marble”.⁽³⁾ Note that salons were probably established by the Christians of Al-Quds and the elite of the Palestinian society, as salons were very much influenced by the western culture.

Palestinian women also joined theatre through organizing plays and sketches for the Palestinian radio stations and theatres. Asma Touba, for example, wrote several plays that were played on the theatre of YMCA. Among these were: Women and Secrets, Patience and Relief, Origin of a Christmas Tree... etc. Mrs. Najwa Qa'war wrote two plays: King of Glory and Shahrazad.⁽⁴⁾ Some women also joined theatrical troupes such as Al-Karmel Troup. Women also attended concerts of famous singers such as Asmahan,

⁽¹⁾ Al-Jawzi, *ibid*, (pp. 41-45).

⁽²⁾ Harhash, *ibid*, (pp. 45-46).

⁽³⁾ Tamari, *ibid*, (p. 63).

⁽⁴⁾ Palestinian Encyclopedia, General Section, *ibid*, Part 1, (p. 576).

Farid Al-Atrash, and Umm Kalthoum in Haifa.⁽¹⁾

It was not easy for Palestinian women to join theatrical troupes, as they required educated girls, family's approval, acceptance of assigned roles, acceptance of stage names, and availability of a means of transportation from their homes to the theatre. With time, the notion of theatrical and radio acting became more common. Among the famous girls that joined theatre work were Emily Salty, Julia Baramkeh, Najlaa Hawrani, Badi'a Al-Faris, Georgette Wasili, Mari Wasili, Wedad Khoury, Artance Jabriyeh, Farida Ata, Najlaa Atallah, and Dalal Khalif.⁽²⁾

Most women who joined theatre were probably non-Muslim, as their religion did not prohibit such work. Most of them were also from central mixed cities, in which both Muslims and Christians lived, such as Haifa, Yafa, and Akkah.

This proves that the Palestinian woman played a prominent role in the media and art fields. There were pioneers from the Palestinian women's movement, some of which were subjected to intellectual terrorism by the British occupation. Women also had publications, wrote plays, and joined theatre work.

⁽¹⁾ Mansour, *The Palestinian City during the British Mandate Period (Haifa as an Example)*, (p. 78).

⁽²⁾ Al-Jawzi, *ibid*, (pp. 82-83).

Conclusion:

First: Results:

1. The role of the Palestinian women's movement in resisting the British occupation developed over time.
2. Women actively participated in demonstrations and in sending letters to protest against the British occupation policies.
3. Palestinian women participated in the local, Arab, and international women's conferences.
4. Palestinian women had a prominent role in the military work through providing intelligence, logistic and security support, and weaponry to the revolutionaries and through fighting in the battlefield alongside the revolutionaries.
5. Palestinian women received a share of education, despite the British occupation's policies.
6. Many Palestinian women pioneered in the Palestinian society and made remarkable media and cultural efforts.

7. Second: Recommendations:

8. Increasing the attention to the role of Palestinian women in the Palestinian society.
9. Conducting studies on the role of Palestinian women under the Israeli occupation.

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