

Justin Leopold-Cohen

Jews in the Ottoman Empire During WWI. How the Germans Saved the Jews

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Justin Leopold-Cohen

History 230

May 6 2013

Research Paper

Jews in the Ottoman Empire During World War I: Saved by the Germans & the Legacy of the Armenian Genocide

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1 Introduction:

The four months of this course have focused on the various aspects and influencing factors of the Armenian Genocide. The course has explored the Armenian Nationalist Movement, Ottoman massacres, Armenian resistance, foreign indifference, missionary work, the First World War, the height of the Genocide, and its subsequent legacy and denial. Sporadically throughout the course work there have been brief mentions of the various other ethno-religious groups within the Ottoman Empire, most of which were minority groups. This includes but is not limited to the Kurdish Muslims, members of the Greek Orthodox faith, Balkan nationalists, and Jewish Zionists, all of whom experienced their own unique treatments and persecutions under Ottoman rule during the years that encompassed the Armenian Genocide.

Although all of these groups evidenced similar separatist/nationalist leanings, it was only the Armenian Christians who suffered to the point of genocide at the hands of the Turks. I intend to examine the treatment of the Jewish population residing in Ottoman territory, how the Ottomans responded to the Zionist movement, and why the Jews were spared the fate that befell their Armenian neighbors.

2 Jews in the Ottoman Empire:

Under Ottoman rule, the Palestine province had been divided into several districts known as Sanjaks, and “incorporated within the province of greater Syria.” These districts were made up of Gaza, Jerusalem, Nablus, Lajun, and Safed. Spread out across the province was a sizable Jewish population; while not a majority, it was large considering that Jews had not yet begun returning to the land at the time. (Smith 19)

As for the Ottoman Empire, the multi-religious nature of the vast amount of territory initially posed many problems for governance. In order to deal with, they created the Millet System, which separated each non-Muslim group into its own class. This then evolved to incorporate the dhimmi status for the non-Muslims, which outlined what rights they had as Ottoman subjects. (Barkley 15)

The Millet system was first organized as a loose administrative set of laws, made in the nineteenth century, and acted as a guide for multi-religious rule, in the hopes of keeping a peaceful status quo. (Barkley 16) The four main groups of the Ottoman Empire were “Muslims, Greeks, Armenians (and) Jews.” The Muslims were considered Ottomans, while the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, all of whom were not Muslim, received a different set of rights in their Millets. (Davison 320)

The non-Muslims in the aforementioned dhimmi category, would be “protected, could practice their own religions, preserve their own places of worship and to a large extent run their own affairs provided they recognized the superiority of Islam.” For the most part, this system broke down religious groups to be “separate, unequal, and protected.” (Barkley 16)

As a minority group that also was non-Muslim, the Jews had a different set of legal rights attached to their Ottoman citizenship, as “Muslims had traditionally viewed Jews as occupying dhimmi status, protected by, but subordinate to, Muslims.” (Smith 36)

As previously noted, “despite their autonomy, the dhimmi were not considered equals of Muslims and their inequality was manifest in a series of political and legal limitations.” For example, intermarriage was forbidden between dhimmi men and Muslim women, and dhimmi testimony would not be counted in court against a Muslim. On top of legal restrictions, “the dhimmi were also subject to humiliating practices.” Religious observance was allowed, but it could not “disturb Muslims.” Churches and synagogues were generally not allowed to be built. Most individuals under the dhimmi status were not allowed to ride horses past Muslims, or permitted to bear arms. Different dhimmi groups were assigned to wear distinguishing colors (Jews, for instance, had to wear some form of turquoise). As well, dhimmi houses could not have windows overlooking the Muslim parts of the town. So though this was beneficial in some ways; autonomy, and freedom to worship, the Ottoman Empire was still lacking in religious tolerance. (Akcam I 24)

The Millet groups, though unequal in rights, resulted in considerable changes in the governance of the Ottoman Empire, presumably because of two reasons: first, their contact with Europe by way of merchants and diplomats (a network which

religion played a factor in building). (Davison 319) Secondly, there was the simple flux of social and political changes throughout the world that the Millets helped incorporate into the Ottoman Empire. (Davison 319)

Though negligible to political change, the Millets' primary Western influence was manifested through clothing. Naturally, along with clothing, other visual influences appeared in furniture and furnishings, and gradually "these habits spread to Turks in the seaboard cities, especially upper-class Turks." (Davison 322) The expansion of non-Muslim jobs also played a part in bringing about Western influence, particularly as Millet members began to dominate the profession of translation. (Davison 324) Millet schools played a large role, too. Those attended them were often considered more educated, and graduated with Western values, and many Turks felt it necessary to obtain greater education less they fall behind. Overall, though they may have been separated in legal rights, non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire were responsible for laying a great deal of the groundwork for modernizing trends in the Ottoman Empire. (Davison 331)

3 Jewish Immigration & Modern Zionism:

The middle of the 1880's saw the growth of anti-Semitism throughout Western and Eastern Europe, so much so that leaders of the Jewish community abandoned the idea of assimilation as an answer to what was known as the Jewish question. "They came to realize that Jews were not only a religious group, but also a separate nation." This belief was a huge part of the foundation of modern Zionism, the idea that Jews should once again have their own sovereign nation and join their Jewish brethren still living in their ancestral homeland in the Palestine province of the Ottoman Empire. (Oke 329-330)

Theodor Herzl, an Austro-Hungarian journalist, became one of the primary leaders of the Jewish Zionists. Realizing that due to Ottoman sovereignty, the "decision is in the sole hands of His Majesty the Sultan," in 1896, Herzl went to Istanbul to meet with Abdulhamid II. Knowing that the Empire was riddled with debt, Herzl made an offer of 20 million pounds in exchange for the allowance to have

the Jews living in Europe join the Jews living in Palestine, but the Sultan responded with an adamant rejection. (Oke 330)

Herzl did not accept no for an answer, and proceeded to have a second meeting with Abdulhamid, stating that in exchange for the allowance of settlement, the Jews would buy the Ottoman debt from the Europeans, and place it back in Turkish hands. This proposition was much more favorable for Abdulhamid, and he agreed, although the deal fell through during the negotiations, in part due to fear of nationalist movements. (Oke 330)

The Ottoman refusal was primarily rooted in the “pressure of separatist movements in the Balkans and East Anatolia, [and] the Turkish Government feared the possibility of nurturing another nationality problem within its domains.” In truth, the empire was dealing with significant trouble stemming from nationalists from the Balkans, from the Armenians. (Oke 331)

Further fears arose for the Ottomans, when Herzl began meeting with the British, and negotiating over Jewish settlement in the Sinai, which was interpreted as proof of Jewish expansionist designs. (Oke 331) From then on, Abdulhamid was self-described as “the enemy of those Jews who entertained certain ideas over Palestine,” though he was still intent on protecting those Jewish subjects and Jews in service to the Ottoman Empire.

It was resolved that the Ottoman Empire would do what it had to do to prevent Jewish nationalism from reaching a point comparable to the Armenian movement within their territory, which the Ottomans felt was only solvable by the destruction of the Armenian people. (Oke 332)

In addition, Abdulhamid was “haunted by the fear of opening another door for European influence, and stressed to Herzl that any Jewish immigrants that were allowed into Palestine, must become Ottoman subjects and placed under the Millet system.” Though Herzl supposedly gave these instructions, most did not look for citizenship. This enhanced the perception that “the Zionists were another advance guard of further political European influence.” (Oke 333)

Turkey, realizing to clamp down on Jewish immigration would reflect poorly on them in world opinion, decided it would benefit to have one of the great powers on

its side. Naturally, it turned first to its closest European ally: Germany. The problem was that the German leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II, had been largely a supporter of Jews leaving Europe, thus in favor of Zionism. However, the Sultan was able to convince Wilhelm that Zionism was a threat to “the integrity of the Ottoman Empire (and that) the Germans should renounce the idea...because this project, by creating a state at the center of the Ottoman empire, would assure the ruin of Turkey.” This reasoning managed to convince the Germans to pull their support; subsequently, like dominos, the Russians and the French also rescinded whatever support they had given. (Oke 334)

Even before the growth of the modern Zionist movement, “the Ottoman Government was strongly opposed” to Jewish settlement in Palestinian districts. This opposition was put into practice in 1882, restricting the number of Jews allowed entry each year, and later the Ottomans “imposed restrictions on Jewish land purchase.” Both of these practices escalated in 1897 when the Ottomans learned of the Zionist movement and the hopes of a Jewish state. (Mandel 33)

None of these restrictions were entirely “watertight” however, as Jews claiming to be pilgrims were never excluded; once allowed entry as pilgrims, they would often establish what was considered illegal residence. As well, many Jews could become classified as foreign nationals by the consulates of their original citizenship, and if successful they would be able to enjoy diplomatic immunity through the system of capitulations, freeing them of any legal consequences of their actions. (Mandel 33)

A good deal of the treatment towards Jews varied under the different regional governors who had the discretion of which laws to enforce and how to go about doing so. One of the Ottoman regional governors, Resad Pasa, who had obtained a law degree in Paris, was “well disposed to Europeans” and overall more tolerant of the non-Muslim population, even allowing the construction of “churches in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jaffa, and elsewhere.” He even permitted the Jewish residents at Rishon le-Ziyyon to construct a large wine cellar in the town. (Mandel 34)

Another governor, Rauf Pasa, was less tolerant. He harshly enforced all restrictions, even organizing the local Arab police to focus their efforts on expelling

Jews living in the districts illegally. Rauf's policies made it considerably difficult for Jews to become Ottoman citizens, and those who did manage to obtain citizenship received heavy tax burdens once naturalized. (Mandel 34)

Rauf's policies were largely an effort to discourage Jews from wanting to live in Palestine. He frequently denied the applications of Jews wanting to build houses on land they had bought; those who tried to build without permission were hauled into court, and orders were given to have their houses demolished. Only when the German regional Consul intervened, were appeals granted, although Rauf had enough influence to have the courts manipulated so that frequently, the appeals lapsed. Fortunately, there were times the German Consul "referred the case[s] to his Embassy in Constantinople where representations were made to the Sublime Porte," ultimately allowing the houses to stand. (Mandel 35)

Though Consul protection was sought and utilized when necessary, more often than not, Jews who were "being harried" by local authorities working for Rauf, resorted to bribing their way past any red tape. Unexpectedly, this created a positive relationship between the Jewish immigrants seeking new lives in their ancestral homeland, and the Ottoman officials who "with their miserable salaries, could scarcely afford to refuse the bribes offered." (Mandel 35)

Seeing Jewish immigration fail to dwindle, the Ottoman government created a new department to handle Jewish immigration, known as the "Special Commission for the Prevention of Jewish Immigrants from Settling in Palestine." It was ordered to operate intermittently throughout the region seeking out Jews who were believed to be living in the region illegally. Though its mission had no specific limitations on territory, it chose to specifically focus on preventing Jews from living in Jaffa, and obstructing the building of Tel-Aviv on the outskirts in 1902. (Mandel 38)

As plans for eventual Jewish autonomy were more and more apparent, the situation became increasingly worrisome to the regional governors. One specifically, Resid Bey, sent a memo to Istanbul in 1906, declaring "Jews already in Palestine should be expelled. If this [is] impossible, they should be harassed, physically if the Government [sees] fit--so that others would be discouraged from coming." The idea was initially rejected, but would appear again in several years. (Mandel 39-40)

The Ottomans continued to deliberate on what to do about the Jews, and in their investigations were informed that many of the Jews were coming from Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, “the two Empires who were arch-enemies of the Ottoman Empire.” This promoted the spread of the idea that these Jews might start a rebellion on behalf of one or both of their previous places of residence. The Russian-Vice consul assured the Ottomans that there was no such intent from Moscow, but that “the Jews were anarchists and revolutionaries, similar to the bands in Armenia and Bulgaria,” and that they wanted to make their own nation as a vassal to the Great Powers. This was hardly a positive comparison for the Ottomans, who were experiencing increased tensions in the Balkan region, and had been slaughtering the Armenians for years due to their nationalist goals. (Mandel 40)

It was gradually decided to disrupt Jewish activities to a point where Jews would not want to come to Palestine, and those already settled there would want to leave. (Mandel 41) In 1908, this policy had evolved into violent hostilities, after a Muslim-Jewish fight broke out in March. After the police arrested those responsible, the military arrived at the scene and opened fire on thirteen Jews. The incident was met with a great deal of outcry in Europe, to the point where, as a compensatory action, much of the discrimination against Jews was reversed, particularly the lifting of blocks on Jewish land transfers. (Mandel 42)

These early 20th century Jews rebuilding the Jewish community in Ottoman Palestine were split into two main groups. On the one hand, there were the “traditional, extremely observant Jews who, politically are entirely quiescent.” The other group was made up of what was described as “weirdly idealistic dreamers-- Jewish intellectuals from the czarist Russian Empire who dream of turning themselves into farmers.” (Sieff 6) As well, in Jerusalem, there were a growing number of Jewish pilgrims trying to restore the areas around the site of the ancient Jewish Temple, as much of the historic city had begun to disrepair during the four hundred years of Ottoman rule. (Sieff 7)

4 The Build up to and Years of World War I:

In Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm II had charged himself with the mission of “bringing enlightenment and progress to the slumbering east.” Throughout the ending of years of the 19th century and early 20th century, Germany had been inching closer to the Ottoman Empire. (Sieff 13) This was a welcome friendship for the Young Turks, and in only a few years they had “moved at a remarkable speed into Imperial Germany’s corner,” in hopes that Germany “would take care of their most dangerous enemy in modern times, the vast Czarist empire of Russia to their north.” (Sieff 13)

In addition, in the building of tensions that led to World War I, it made strategic sense for Germany to cultivate an alliance with Ottomans. Not only had the two empires been close in the past, but also Germany was planning on challenging Russia and Great Britain, which coincided with Turkish interests as the Turks believed that Russia had “ambition[s] to dominate the Straits area.” As for the British, they had opposed the Empire during the Balkan wars, as well as stolen “two warships being built for the Turks by private English shipbuilders.” Thus it was that the German and Ottoman Empire made a secret military alliance, sealed by the launch of a joint German-Ottoman fleet in an attack on a group of Russian ships in the Dardanelles. (Trask 16, 18)

Though the Ottomans were ready for a fight, “when World War I broke out in July 1914, Turkey was neither prepared militarily nor disposed to commit itself instantly and unconditionally to the camp of the Central Powers, though with increased action against Russia, the Ottomans issued a “declaration of holy war against the infidel allies.” (Dadrian 203) Meanwhile, not much had changed in the Holy Land, and the view of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire was extremely negative, though not as negative as attitudes towards the Armenians. Still, Jewish “aspirations for Palestine, harnessed to the Zionist movement, did pose a territorial problem.” (Dadrian 270)

At the start of World War I, many Zionists foresaw the Central Powers losing, and that the Ottoman Empire’s participation would lead to the eventual dismantling of the Empire’s territory, and the potential for “eventual sovereignty” in the Palestine province. (Chapin)

As “British military fortunes in the Middle East deteriorated,” Lord Herbert Kitchener, acted as the British consul in Egypt, saw the benefits of inciting both Arabs and Jews to fight against their Ottoman overlords. Each group agreed to fight; the Jews in exchange for support of Jewish self-determination, and the Arabs for support of new Arab kingdoms. (Chapin)

The British eventually put the majority of its support behind the Jews, who were felt to be a more trustworthy future ally given their largely Westernized way of thinking, along with the idea of Jewish influence in United States foreign policy, as the United States had yet to join the war. There also was the belief that there was a great deal of Jewish influence over the Bolsheviks, which could keep Russia in the war, and finally the idea that if the British did not support the Jews, then the Jews would ally with the Germans. (Chapin)

Indeed, Jews from around the world began enlisting to fight with the British against the Ottomans. It had started with just a few hundred volunteers who were hoping to participate in the liberation of Palestine. Initially, the British had sent them to serve in support functions in the Gallipoli Campaign, but after the British began to realize the quagmire of that expedition, the Jews were reformed into their own regiment “designated as the 38th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers.” Composed of Jewish volunteers from Palestine and other Ottoman provinces, as well Jews from many other parts of the world, these Jewish fighters participated in the Sinai Campaign. (Oren 363)

During the early stages of the War, just as the fear that many Armenians might receive military assistance from abroad and thereby revolt, the same fear arose concerning the Jewish residents of the Ottoman Empire. (Akcam II 58) This seemed entirely possible especially considering how many Jews had enlisted to serve with the British. The most effective way to address these concerns seemed simple: remove the problem. The method that was presented was by way of deportation.

The first Jewish deportation orders “targeted many of the members of the new Jewish Yishuv in Palestine.” In August 1915, for example, the interior minister sent a message to the Fourth Army commander, demanding that “those Jewish citizens of

the enemy states who are in the lands of Palestine and who are hostile to the Ottomans be deported to Corum.” (Akcam II 59)

In addition to those deportation orders given by Istanbul, “some deportations were carried out by local authorities without consulting or notifying the central government.” A telegram in December of 1914 from the Ottoman governor of Jerusalem, noted how many evictions were already under way before the “wide-ranging deportation operations were” even ordered. (Akcam II 60) As well, shortly after that, a complaint by the interior minister, Talat, made mention that “reports that the government had not been notified in advance that 500 Russian Jews living in Jaffa had been expelled.” (Akcam II 61)

Many of the reports indicated that the central government was worried about how the “expulsion of these Jews had created a hostile attitude toward the Ottoman government.” This concern was so great that the district governor ordered, “no more people be deported without prior permission.” The previous deportations had created a “mood of hostility toward us (the Ottoman Empire) among American public opinion...more gentle treatment must be accorded in this regard and in any case, absolutely no Jews should be deported without first asking [permission from] here.” (Akcam II 61)

Unfortunately, these deportations continued, “without informing Istanbul, that army commander ordered a number of expulsions that he saw as necessary on the basis of political and or military necessity.” On 23 August an irate Talat cabled the general that “it has been learned that in this time some 1,700 Jews” had been forcibly expelled.” Afterwards, the central government tried to put an end to these expulsions. (Akcam II 61)

Deportations of Jews would flare up again in 1917, this time causing a political intervention by the Germans on behalf of the Jews. “German-Zionist relations during the First World War were unique” on a whole. Indeed, despite the legacy of the Third Reich several years later, Germany, at this time was the “Zionists’ foremost protector.” (Friedman 23) In fact, Alfred Zimmerman, perhaps most known for the infamous Zimmerman Note, which has been cited as cause for America’s entry into World War I, was largely responsible for the forceful intervention that stopped

“Djemal Pasha, Commander of the Ottoman Fourth Army, from delivering a crippling blow against the Yishuv.” (Friedman 23)

This began in March 1917 after the Ottomans defeated the British in the First Battle of Gaza. Fearing a second battle and bombardment of the region, Djemal Pasha, the Ottoman Governor of Jerusalem traveled to Jaffa where he proposed plans for evacuation of the entire region. (Friedman 23) These plans allowed for certain allowances to be made for farmers and owners of orange groves to stay behind, but when the local Jewish population asked for exemption, too, “they were threatened with immediate expulsion.” (Friedman 23) The words “immediate expulsion” had an ominous effect at the time, and “with the memory of the Armenian atrocities fresh in their minds, the Jews feared the worst.” (Friedman 24)

In what might be considered a fortunate turn at the time, news of the British defeat spread, and military reasons for the evacuation were discounted. This alerted the German Consul, Karl von Schabinger who became curious about why the plans had not been reversed, and shortly thereafter acquired the opinion that the “objective of the Turks was to annihilate the Jews.” (Friedman 24)

Schabinger approached the local authorities in an attempt to persuade against deportations, which would certainly end in deaths, and would have an “adverse effect” on public opinion abroad. Schabinger argued that this “discrimination against the Jews was inexcusable.” In addition, as Schabinger was responsible for the many German Jews who still retained citizenship, he was able to assert that this course of action could be interpreted as persecution towards Germans. (Friedman 24)

However noble Schabinger’s intentions were, higher authorities ordered him not to interfere with the Ottoman’s internal regulations and leave the issue to his superiors who had more authority. (Friedman 24) The efforts by Schabinger’s superiors focused on how the deportations would look, rather than pointing out the immorality of discrimination. This did make some sense to Djemal, but it “affected his tactics more than his purpose.” Djemal proceeded to make the deportation seem more humane and militarily necessary for all, not just Jews. He strongly stressed that he was not an anti-Semite, but an anti-Zionist. (Friedman 25) This explanation, however, did not meet the standards of the Germans or Austrians, who felt that “the

evacuation of Jaffa would serve merely as a prelude to that of Jerusalem...(and) that Djemal intended to deliver a death blow to the Jewish enterprise in Palestine.” (Friedman 25)

The deportation of Jaffa was carried out, and brutally at that; 9,000 Jews were deported on April 9th alone. Severe difficulties were faced that day, included “no transport facilities” which meant that the Jews had to travel on foot, thereby subjecting them to theft and banditry. (Friedman 25-26) Luckily, Jewish solidarity in the region was high, and “people living as far away as Galilee rushed to rescue the afflicted.” Still, despite the announcement that the deportation was for everyone, in reality, it turned out to focus primarily on the Jewish population. (Friedman 26)

Just as foreseen, Djemal next went to Jerusalem with the same demands for evacuation of the civilian population for its own protection. The local Consuls of the Central Powers gathered to protest asserting, “there was no military danger threatening Jerusalem.” (Friedman 26) The Consuls concluded that Djemal had the agenda of ridding Jerusalem of the Jews, and “converting it into a purely Moslem city and Turkish stronghold.” (Friedman 27)

A German Colonel, Friedrich Kress von Kressenstein took the lead on preventing the Jerusalem deportation, enlisting the German embassy in Istanbul to get word to Enver Pasha, who upon realizing what was happening “instructed Djemal that the evacuation of Jerusalem was not practical.” It was Zimmerman who had gotten to Enver Pasha and persuaded him to act. (Friedman 27)

Unfortunately for the Central Powers, British Military Intelligence learned of the events after the fact, and as expected, it was used to fuel a wave of fiercely anti-Ottoman public opinion (and by association, that of all of the Central Powers). It was reported, “Tel-Aviv had been sacked, ten thousand had been made homeless, Djemal Pasha had declared that Armenian policy would be applied to the Jews, the whole Yishuv threatened with destruction.” Like wildfire, the story spread to newspapers all around the world, making the Central Powers out to be monstrous nations. (Friedman 28-29)

In an attempt to compensate, Talaat Pasha traveled to Berlin to assure the world media that “that there would be no repetition of the atrocities against the

Armenians.” (Friedman 30) Despite its best efforts, blame was thrown specifically at Germany as much as Turkey. The fear that neutral countries might take a stance against the Central Powers began to spread, along with questions as to whether Germany would intervene in Turkey to prevent a repeat of the Armenian atrocities where the world had largely stood by. (Friedman 30)

In an effort to reverse the unsavory reputation that had been thrust upon them, Germany insisted that the Turks “undertake full-scale relief work to meet Jewish grievances.” This later amounted to several thousand Turkish pounds, and three Turkish army physicians to help any injured. (Friedman 32, 34)

This aid, however helpful it may have been at the time, required that Jewish leaders communicate with the global media outlets that the Tel-Aviv evacuation was “for their own safety, that transport facilities had been procured and the poor assisted, that Djemal Pasha, both by word and deed, had shown his benevolence and magnanimity,” and that stories of massacres and plunderings, let alone the total evacuation, were slanders.” (Friedman 34)

Despite aid services provided after the fact, there was still the problem of Jews being refused re-entry, an issue which was paramount to the Germans in order to restore public opinion. Talaat had ordered Djemal to allow the repatriation, which he insisted would help end anti-Entente propaganda, but Djemal refused outright, citing the original military reasons of safety, as well his belief that a Jewish presence would be “injurious to Ottoman interests.” (Friedman 36-37)

Djemal took this fear seriously, and his paranoia was further heightened by the discovery of British Intelligence assets within Palestine, many of whom were Jewish spies. After the arrest and subsequent executions of the Nili Group, one of the Jewish groups working for British Intelligence, “Turkish authorities carried out extensive searches all over the country. Hundreds of individuals, including most of the communal leaders, were arrested and received harsh treatment.” (Friedman 39) Djemal began to suspect all Jews of being spies, and fearing a rebellion, ordered the Jaffa evacuees to continue moving out of the region and into the Syrian interior. Djemal also had managed to stir the Muslim population into an anti-Jewish fervor.

As a result, there were growing fears of a coming massacre, unless there was an intervention. (Friedman 39)

Fearing that a repeat of previous events would be unfixable, Germany answered this call, and using all the diplomatic clout it could muster to dissuade the Ottomans against such actions. This time, the Ottomans listened before doing anything drastic, and released those Jews innocent of crimes, which turned out to be the majority of those arrested. Djemal verbally protested, but at this point, was powerless to resist. (Friedman 40, 41)

Before Djemal was forced to retire from his post, he had managed to deport “forty American Jews and an unspecified number of Zionists of Ottoman nationality.” (Friedman 42) The following December, when the British forces pushed the Turkish military out of the region, they were welcomed by the Jewish population as liberators from Djemal’s awful treatment. The Jews also made sure to thank the Germans, whom they accredited with stopping Djemal from annihilating them all. (Friedman 43)

5 Conclusion:

As history has shown, after World War I came to a close, the Ottoman Empire was dissolved, and the vast amount of territory was turned into Mandates controlled by various Entente powers. The Ottoman province of Palestine became known as the British Mandate of Palestine, and after a separation from the region which became Jordan, a failed partition plan, and the first Arab-Israeli War, the Zionists finally won their independence and their own state. (Chapin)

Before the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks had organized non-Muslim groups into Millets and given them certain rights. Years later, they nearly brought the Armenian Christians to the point of extinction, because of fears of nationalism, religious differences, and questions of loyalty. Though as previously mentioned, the Jewish population was engendering similar problems for the Ottomans, the Jews benefited from the growing nationalistic movement of Zionism in which tens of thousands of Jews immigrated to Palestine in hopes of eventually splitting from the Ottomans to have their own nation. As they were obviously not

Muslim, their loyalties during World War I were allied largely with the British who organized an all-Jewish military regiment. Djemal Pasha saw this, and based on the precedent set by the Turk's treatment of the Armenians, felt the obvious step was to get rid the Empire of the Jews. Why was he eventually stopped?

Pre-war, aside from a rise in anti-immigration laws and restrictions on buying land, it seemed that the Jews were enduring mostly the same treatment as the other Millets groups. Upon examination, there appear to be two primary answers to the question of what saved the Jews from sharing the fate of the Armenians. The first and foremost was German intervention. Not only was the German consul furious that German-Jewish citizens were being subjected to brutal deportations, but the German Empire at large was extraordinarily concerned with fallout from public outrage against the deportations of Jews. Blame was being placed on the Germans to such an extent that they were worried that some of the world's neutral states would reconsider their neutrality. The second answer is that the world had only recently sat by and stayed silent while the Armenian population was decimated, and apparently did not have the stomach to allow such events to repeat themselves so soon afterwards. This global community's unexpected outcry not only had a huge influence in motivating the Germans to intervene, but also on the Ottoman central government's need to control their own officers. Unfortunately, as time passed and the conflicts of the Second World War loomed, the Jews began suffering the decimating policies that the Ottomans had imposed upon the Armenians. This time, though, the opposition was their previous savior, the Germans.

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