

ABSTRACT

The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem holds a unique position as the oldest and largest church in Jerusalem, and as one of the four ancient orthodox patriarchies, but the ethnic and linguistic differences between the Arab Orthodox community and the Greek Brotherhood (fraternity) of the Holy Sepulcher brought the struggle of the Arabization of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem to the surface during the second half of the Nineteenth Century. The points of differences between the two struggling sides revolved around the Greek brothers' control over the property and affairs of the Patriarchate, the Bishops and Archimandrites of the synod (the governing body of the Patriarchate) who were elected only from the Brothers and none from the Arab Orthodox community. On the other side, the Arab Orthodox community demands greater participation in the election of the Patriarch, admission of Arab members into the Brotherhood, the establishment of local councils in the centers, and recognition of the rights of the Arab Orthodox to a mixed council. The Arab orthodox community demanded that the plundered rights of the

Arab community should be restored and acknowledged by the Patriarch and the governments that rule over Palestine. Although many commissions of inquiry were formed to study the aspects of struggle and ensure the rights of the two parties, but they all failed to keep their promises. The negotiations continued until the end of British mandate over Palestine, but with failure to reach an acceptable solution for both parties and the matter lasted for a generation.

In conducting this research, the researcher utilized written sources in Arabic and English and examined British published documents from the British Mandate period that included documents of correspondence about the orthodox case. Some of the files have only recently been rendered accessible to the public, the whole collection being preserved in "Israel State Archives House".

The first chapter of the thesis provides background information about the roots of the orthodox disputes from the 1875 to the Jerusalem uprising of 1908.

The second chapter deals with the conflict between the Arab Orthodox Community and the Greek Brotherhood from the Jerusalem uprising of 1908 until the end of the first world war.

The third chapter discusses the critical financial condition of the Patriarchate and the results of Bertram commission of inquiry in 1921.

In Chapter four the researcher discusses the results of the second commission of inquiry by Sir Bertram in 1925 which was concerned with the task of examining the merits of the controversy and whether the interference of the government was found to be necessary in proposing a suitable course of action.

The last chapter discusses the Arab orthodox struggle during the Second World War (1939 - 1945) and until the end of the British Mandate and the establishment of Israel in 1948.