

Syria's situation on Arab Agreements and treaties 1943-1951 The Greater Syria Project as a Model

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ABSTRACT

Since the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921, Prince Abdullah bin Al-Hussein realized the goals of the colonial policy whose goal was to achieve division between the countries of the Levant; He sought to restore political unity between the regions of the Levant by adopting the Greater Syria project, but the project was met with strong opposition by the colonial powers, as well as other Arab countries. As for the Syrian government, the project was totally and completely opposed; Because it preferred independence with its republican system over the common unity between the countries of the Levant, as Syria witnessed disparities in support of the project at the popular level, and that the Greater Syria project witnessed strong opposition in its Arab surroundings, especially from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt; In addition to Syria, the subject of our research, which led to the establishment of the League of Arab States to be an alternative to any desired Arab unity.

Keywords: King Abdullah, Greater Syria, project.

I. INTRODUCTION

This study focused on examining Syria's position on the Greater Syria project, as it traced the historical development of that from 1920 until the assassination of King Abdullah bin Al Hussein in Jerusalem in 1951. The study deals with the efforts of King Abdullah bin Al Hussein and the Jordanian government to work towards achieving a union between the countries of the Levant; To be a starting base for a broader Arab unity, as the importance of this study lies in knowing Syria's position on achieving that unity; Because Syria is one of the main pillars of the unity process, the project dealt with Syrian positions, whether official or popular, and the reaction of each of them in terms of supporting or opposing the project. The Unity Project, accusing King Abdullah of seeking to achieve his own interests and achieving Zionist and colonial goals, and other accusations that ultimately led to the failure of the implementation of the Greater Syria Project.

The concept of Syria during the Ottoman era meant the Levant with its natural borders, and when the Great Arab Revolt broke out, it proposed another concept for the Levant, which is that a state from the Middle East includes the Levant, the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, meaning that it be one independent state, but Colonialism announced their fragmentation through secret agreements to include four countries, namely Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan. In Damascus, Prince Abdullah tried to support his brother, Prince Faisal, so he gathered a special army, and announced his desire to march on Syria; to expel the French from it, and on his way he entered the British Mandate lands east of the Jordan River; As he established a central administration in Amman.

He declared his intention to take back Syria from the hands of the French, but circumstances did not help him to achieve this. Because of the weak popular will in the resistance and liberation, as well as Britain's pursuit of a new settlement of the Arab cause; Abdullah deceived Britain; to be the Emir of Transjordan in 1921, and as soon as Abdullah bin Al-Hussein assumed the Emirate of Transjordan, he made great efforts; To achieve his ambitions to take over the countries of the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan) after unifying them under his crown.

Prince Abdullah bin Al-Hussein's concept of Greater Syria meant one Syria, whose borders start from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the Egyptian borders in the south, and meet the borders of Iraq in the east and the Mediterranean in the west, and that the first step of achieving Arab unity and their exploitation is Syrian unity; Prince Abdullah began to adopt a policy based on supporting the revolutionaries; to liberate Syria, and Jordan was a safe haven for the Syrian rebel movements, as Amman became a meeting place for the leaders of the Arab nationalist movement in Syria and Palestine, as he formed an Arab administration under his authority in order for that country to be a starting point for working to liberate Syria from the French occupation; But the intervention of the British commissioner and the commander of the Arab army, Bey Pasha, led to the exclusion of the Arab nationalists from Jordan, and with the continuation of the British Mandate over Transjordan and Palestine and the French Mandate over Syria and Lebanon, and the preoccupation of the Arabs in the Mashreq between the two world wars with their regional affairs, all of this led to the failure to achieve unity. Between those countries, but the idea of the Greater Syria project, was not lost on Prince Abdullah's mind; The Syrian politician Abd al-Rahman al-Shahbandar, along with about sixty Syrian personalities, visited the city of Amman on June 7, 1939; To offer condolences to Prince Abdullah on the death of King Ghazi of Iraq, and the Syrian delegation expressed its desire to achieve union between Syria and eastern

Jordan, and as soon as the Second World War broke out, Prince Abdullah saw that the opportunity was available; To resurrect the Greater Syria unity project, he was convinced that achieving this required strengthening his relations with Britain, which has great and powerful influence in the Middle East, and when France collapsed in 1940 at the hands of German armies, Prince Abdullah saw an opportunity for the principle to implement his project; So he addressed a note on July 1, 1940 to the British High Commissioner; To support the idea of Syrian unity, but the British delegate refused the request, and called the Emir for more patience and non-interference in the affairs of Syria, but the Emir's call for Arab unity intensified following the elimination of the Vichy government in Syria and Lebanon in 1941, as he saw the necessity of That this unity be achieved gradually and in stages, starting with the unity of the Levantine countries (Greater Syria), then the Levantine-Iraqi unity, then the unity of the Arab countries of Asia; He used every opportunity to call for unity or Arab union .

Prince Abdullah also carried out a number of correspondences with the British, which prompted the British Foreign Secretary Antony Ayden to make a statement in May 1941 in which he said: "His Majesty's government is very sympathetic to the Syrians' demand for independence, and it is right to strengthen The cultural, economic and political ties between the Arab countries, and that His Majesty's government will provide support to anyone who obtains the approval of all." Prince Abdullah tried to deviate from the advice of British officials, and to contact the leaders of Syria and Lebanon, as he sent letters to them inviting them to support the Greater Syria project. And it is not a personal position, and yet it is a position that belongs to the Syrian group and not others, and that Syria today must prove that it is in competence and appeal, like a free France, that understands and accepts reality, and demands its realization and its declaration.

Prince Abdullah also sent another telegram to Nuri al-Saeed , in which he says: "The issue of creating an Arab unity or an Arab union is a dangerous delusional issue. Therefore, it is the duty of Baghdad and Amman to seek to pursue a unified Hashemite policy while diverting efforts to eliminate those who want to remove the Arab cause from The principles of the first renaissance in the Syrian country", but Prince Abdullah clashed with the Fertile Crescent project, which Nuri Al-Saeed was seeking , despite that, Nuri Al-Said explained the position of his government as follows: "The Iraqi government sees the necessity of establishing an entity A united Syrian, consisting of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan, like the Iraqi entity." Nuri Al-Saeed saw that the first thing to be done was to form a unified political entity for all of Syria, chosen by the country in the way it wanted , and also between Nuri Al-Saeed the desire of the residents of the Syrian regions to achieve The Union except for the Maronite sect who want to preserve the independence of Lebanon, as it proposes to them the right of self-administration in their areas, and with regard to Palestine, it suggested that the Jews enjoy administrative independence within the framework of the United Arab State, so that the Jews do not pose a threat to the Arab State .

But Britain was opposed to the Hashemite projects (Greater Syria and the Fertile Crescent), on the pretext that it did not urge the collective Arab sayings, and sought to bless the idea of the Arab League; Because this project secures for Britain its influence in a wider area than the areas of the Hashemite projects; In addition, the idea of the Arab League is a formality, while the two Hashemite projects were calling for complete unity that Britain did not want .

As for Syria, it held its consultations with Egypt on October 26, 1943, and the Syrian side was represented by its Prime Minister, Saadallah al-Jabri , and its foreign minister, Jamil Mardam , and the Egyptian side by Mustafa al-Nahhas . Al-Nahhas reviewed the opinions he had collected regarding Arab unity; Al-Jabri said, "Syria is ready to implement any decision that serves the interests of the nation and its unity without hesitation." He also said: "If the union is a source of strength for others, it is a source of life for us, through which we look forward to survival and safety. Those who bear the burden of responsibility are in our homes." Al-Sham express their wishes by calling for the union of the Arab countries", as Saadallah Al-Jabri gave a speech in the Syrian Parliament about the mission of the Syrian delegation, which went to Egypt; For the purpose of consultations regarding Arab unity , and as a result, the Syrian government raised obstacles to the great project of Syria. The President of the Syrian Republic, Shukri al-Quwatli stated that this unity faces many difficulties, including the problem of Zionism in Palestine and Christianity in Lebanon .

The coronation of Abdullah as King of Jordan on March 25, 1946, following the signing of the British-Jordanian treaty, led to Jordan being an independent, sovereign state known as (the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan), and in the meantime, King Abdullah delivered the Throne Speech before the Jordanian Legislative Council, in which he renewed his call for a project Greater Syria, saying: "When Syria lost its king and sovereignty and resolved to fight for independence, we were the first to lead the people to victory, and had it not been for the hesitation of some Syrian circles, we would have reached our goal and achieved our unity with the help of our ally Britain", but that speech stirred up the government Syrian; Acting Syrian Foreign Minister Khaled al-Azm made the following statement, in

which he said: "The position of the officials in the Kingdom of Jordan that their plans and statements contradict the general principles of international rights, and the rules followed between countries and the Charter of the League of Arab States that each country must respect the existing system of government in the state. the other, and not to interfere with its affairs, and prejudice the spirit of cooperation and harmony upon which the charter of the Arab League is based.

The Syrian government was not satisfied with that statement, but rather presented the issue to the Council of the League of Arab States, declaring that the Syrian government was determined to oppose the Greater Syria project, but King Abdullah continued his efforts to realize the Greater Syria project. On January 8, 1947, King Abdullah visited Turkey and met the President The Turkish Ismat Inonu, and a treaty of peace and friendship was concluded between them, and as a result of that treaty, it was rumored in Syrian circles that King Abdullah admitted the annexation of the Alexandretta Brigade to Turkey in exchange for Turkey's support for the Greater Syria project; However, King Abdullah sent a letter to Syrian President Shukri al-Quwatli in which he confirmed that these news and rumors published by some newspapers were not true. To create an atmosphere of enmity between the two countries .

The Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between Iraq and Jordan was signed on April 14, 1947, which provided for military cooperation between the two parties in the event of an external aggression, and that there should be committees tasked with maintaining security and order in the two countries. Evidence of the Hashemite control attempt over Syria and Lebanon, and in May 1947 King Abdullah issued the Jordanian White Book in which he called for the establishment of Greater Syria, which would consist of Transjordan, Syria and Palestine within the framework of the League of Arab States, and during the broadcast of the Jordanian royal statement That statement was published in the newspapers by the Jordanian commission in Beirut, at the time when Muhammad Al-Sharifi arrived in Damascus carrying a letter from King Abdullah to President Shukri Al-Quwatli inviting him to consider the issue of the Syrian union .

The majority of Syrian newspapers, especially the National Party and Al-Qabas newspapers, as well as Barada newspaper, and other government newspapers launched a fierce campaign against the Jordanian book and the statement, and what encouraged the newspapers to the statement broadcast by Prime Minister Jamil Mardam, saying: "It is a Zionist colonial project.. The newspapers repeated that meaning, and said: "The purpose of Greater Syria is to distract the Arabs in it and to distract them from dividing Palestine, so that the divided Arab part of Palestine can be attached to Greater Syria, and the Lebanese newspapers also encouraged the campaign against the Jordanian statement", and as a result of this President Shukri al-Quwatli sent a letter to Syria's Minister Plenipotentiary in London, Najib al-Armanazi, asking him to meet with the guardian of the throne of Iraq, Prince Abd al-Ilah, who was in London, and after his meeting with Prince Abd al-Ilah, he discussed the Greater Syria project. He regretted the interference of King Abdulaziz Al Saud in the Greater Syria issue, and declared that he would like to let Syria and Jordan handle the issue between them .

The Syrian House of Representatives also held a special session on the Greater Syria project on September 2, 1947, during which the deputies showed the disadvantages of the project, and the obstacles it encloses that could lead to the cracking of Arab unity. They signed a statement denouncing the Greater Syria project, which stated: In Damascus, we support the statement issued by the pillars of the Syrian and Lebanese republics denouncing the statement published by King Abdullah, which aims to restrict Syria and Lebanon... expressing our absolute support for all the measures the government deems to take to preserve the country's independence and sovereignty and to preserve its republican rule.), and despite the opposition of the Syrian and Lebanese peoples to the project, the popular and official bodies in Jordan continued to support King Abdullah's policy aimed at achieving the unity of Greater Syria .

The Syrian arena in 1949 witnessed an important event, namely the military coup led by Husni al-Zaim on March 30, 1949. Husni al-Zaim was initially a supporter of the Greater Syria project, and he saw that the reason for Syria's defeat in the 1948 war was its non-acceptance of the idea of Syrian unity. And that Syria's union with Iraq and Jordan will strengthen its position .

King Abdullah welcomed the coup; The Jordanian Royal Court issued a statement, in which it said: "The coup was a sudden accident carried out by the Syrian army, and its occurrence in this way indicates that public opinion in Syria wants to build the state's building on an explicit basis of solidity and honesty, and there is no thought except to cooperate with Syria." present until the nation says its word, as cooperation was in the past."

However, Hosni al-Zaim changed his position on Syrian unity, and turned to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt; Because he wanted to obtain economic aid, as well as France's opposition to unity, as France had great influence

over the officers of the Syrian army, and he wanted to obtain diplomatic recognition from France for his rule, and that he was aware that the unity project would limit his authority, and would not make him non-president. temporary; The leader became hostile to everyone who called for the project until he executed the supporters of the project .

This policy led to the summoning of a number of army officers, including Sami al-Hinawi, who carried out a military coup on August 14, 1949, and ended with the fall of the rule of Hosni al-Zaim. On November 13, 1949, King Abdullah sent a letter to Al-Hinnawi, communicating the conditions of the Levantine countries and the unity between them.

But the obstacles soon came to naught at the attempts to implement the Greater Syria project. Both Saudi Arabia and France harnessed their influence within the ranks of the Syrian army; To obstruct the completion of the union, and some Syrian officers began working to thwart that project, which led to the project's faltering and paving the conditions within the army for a new military coup .

On December 19, 1949, Adeb Al-Shishakli overthrew the Hinnawi regime. Al-Shishakli was one of the opponents of the Greater Syria Project; Al-Shishakli entrusted Nazim al-Qudsi as prime minister. In November 1950, Nazim al-Qudsi and Defense Minister Fawzi Selo traveled to Amman, and the discussion revolved around Arab affairs; King Abdullah renewed his call for unity and the removal of estrangement between the two countries and warned the Arabs of the danger of the Jews, but the Syrian delegation asked King Abdullah that Jordan agree to a policy that requires that Syria not be a theater for Arab disputes, and that Syria is for all Arabs ; In addition to the government's rejection of the Greater Syria project since King Abdullah bin Al Hussein called for it; The Syrian representatives, such as Hamed Al-Khouja, and MP Muhammad Suleiman Al-Ahmad, who attacked the advocates of the project in Jordan , MP Hani Al-Sibai also stressed adherence to the charter of the Arab League, attacked the monarchy, praised the republic, and rejected the project outright. As for MP Mazhar Arslan, he demanded the inclusion of Jordan to Syria, not vice versa, according to a republican system of government and the building of a broad Arab union .

The Syrian parliamentary position continued its opposition to the project, and from what was stated in one of the Parliament's sessions: "The Syrian House of Representatives unanimously decides to denounce the Greater Syria project, behind which personal ambitions, Zionist purposes and mandatory restrictions are intensifying, that would affect Syria's independence, sovereignty and the existing system of governance, and would violate The charter of the League of Arab States, and that it violates the charter of the United Nations, and violates public international law, calling on the government to take effective measures to eliminate the attempts aimed at realizing this dangerous project for Syria and all Arab countries."

As for the position of the Syrian parties on the unity project; It was between supporters and opponents, and one of the parties supporting that project was the National Bloc Party. The party's representative, Abd al-Rahman al-Kayyali, issued a statement in which he stressed that France must respect the natural unity of Syria, including the Alawites, Jabal al-Druze, and Alexandretta Brigade with the Bekaa and the districts that annexed Little Lebanon against the will of its people. , but the party turned against the Hashemite policy in the 1940s after allegiances switched; The British and the Hashemites began calling for the unity of Iraq and Syria at the expense of the emerging independence of Syria.

As for the Liberal Party, it was inclined to the monarchy and supported the Greater Syria project, and most of the members of that party were characterized by a monarchical tendency, such as Hassan al-Hakim, Zaki al-Khatib and Saeed Haider, and that party was facing strong opposition from the Syrian government; Due to its monarchical tendency, As for the Baath Party, it supported the Greater Syria project, but with a republican system. political isolation; This is because the absolute majority in the Syrian political arena is against the project; He became one of the opponents of the Unity Project .

As for the position of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, which is the party of Antoine Saadeh, the party believed in the idea of Syrian unity within its natural borders, and was in contact with King Abdullah bin Al-Hussein, and its members believed that Jordan is part of the Levantine sovereignty, while the National Party controlled the The reins of government and condemning the republican regime, and Shukri al-Quwatli supports the President of the Republic, including the personalities of Saadallah al-Jabri and Mazhar Arslan , as for the Muslim Brotherhood, its position was characterized by opposition to the Greater Syria project; The party called for the need to preserve the republican system, as it considered: "The republican system of government makes Syria a focal point for the popular movements in the Arab and Islamic countries, and a starting point for liberation from the shackles of colonialism, and to lag behind in a decent life"

As for the Communist Party, it was one of the enemies of the project. Because he considered the project to be a colonial project motivated by foreign powers; To consolidate its feet in the region, and threaten the independence of Syria and the republican system of government in place .

The popular position was mostly with unity; This is due to the belief of many Syrians in the importance of the Levant remaining united, due to the interdependence of economic and social interests among the residents of the Levant; The Syrians had ties and connections with the rest of the inhabitants of the Levant, when it was united; The spirit of unity remained in them, and that the leaders of the Syrian governorates were in constant contact with King Abdullah, and prominent politicians had expressed their willingness to work for unity, and thus it became clear that the Syrian people, most of them the Syrian parties, were in favor of unity, despite the opposition of the Syrian government and members of its parliament Supporter of it by virtue of political interests .

The currents surrounding the Hashemite project continued to stand against it until King Abdullah was assassinated on July 19, 1951 while he was outside the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and thus the Greater Syria project was enclosed indefinitely , despite the attempts of King Abdullah bin Al Hussein from the beginning of the twenties until the end of the forties In achieving Syrian unity, however, the Greater Syria project did not receive a sympathetic ear, not only in Syria but also in other Arab countries that stood against that project to prevent the establishment of the Hashemite project.

II. CONCLUSION

This study came to identify Syria's position on the Greater Syria project, at the official and popular levels, as that project affects the existing republican system of government, as the ruling groups in Syria felt the danger of the project on their positions and authority in the state; It worked with all its might to obstruct the implementation of the project and influence public opinion in it to cast doubt on Jordan's intentions to achieve the project. Four countries, as colonialism wanted them, and far from any project, we believe that the correct expression affects their sovereignty.

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