

## CHAPTER 1

# A Biography of Zakī al-Arsūzī

Written by **Hiroyuki Aoyama**

Revised by **Malek Salman**

### *Introduction*

This Chapter is a comprehensive biography of Zakī al-Arsūzī, seeking to clarify the background against which his linguo-philosophical and political ideologies are based. It highlights the significant role al-Arsūzī played in politicizing Arab nationalism. The factual outline of al-Arsūzī's personal history is mainly derived from “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr (A Brief Account of al-Arsūzī's Life),”<sup>1</sup> which offers the earliest and reliable biographical article. Based on this article, some details are added by referring to the following studies and documents: al-Arsūzī's *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah* (Complete Works), memoirs of al-Arsūzī's disciples, and previous literature written on al-Arsūzī's linguistic and philosophical theories. When contradictory information is found, supplementary comments are provided in the endnotes.

### *The Early Days*

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, Syria witnessed a series of rapid political changes. Although the Ottoman Empire had ruled the Arab East, including Syria, for about four hundred years, it was shaken by the political interference of the European powers on one hand, and by the rise of the Arab nationalist movement, on the other. After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, Prince Fayṣal, *sharīf* (governor of Mecca) Ḥusayn's son, declared the Arab government in Damascus for a short period, preceding the French mandate.

The Alexandretta Province, where Zakī al-Arsūzī spent his early days with his family, was also not exempted from the turmoil of all these political changes.<sup>2</sup>

Zakī al-Arsūzī (Zakī bn Najīb bn Ibrāhīm al-Arsūzī) was born in June 1900 as the youngest of four brothers and a sister of an ‘Alawi family in Latakia.<sup>3</sup> His father, Najīb, was a lawyer, also known as a member of an Arab clandestine society opposing the Ottoman rule. His mother, Ma’mūnah bint al-Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-‘Ulyā, was from a family of Arsūz village, which was honored for its piety. Among his brothers, two elders, Nasīb and Adīb, were also members of the above-mentioned society.<sup>4</sup>

In his childhood, al-Arsūzī moved with his family to Antakia (Antioch) of Alexandretta,<sup>5</sup> where he studied Turkish and attended a *kuttāb* (Koran school) to learn the Koran by heart.<sup>6</sup> In 1908, he entered a *maktab lil-‘alawīyīn* (elementary school for the ‘Alawis) and then studied at a junior high school until the age of fifteen. In 1914, al-Arsūzī entered Antakia’s *tajhīz* (secondary school) and studied mathematics, Turkish and French.<sup>7</sup>

During the First World War, Antakia witnessed the fiercest uprising against the Ottoman rule only second to Damascus. In 1915, the anti-Ottoman uprising burst out, in which a clandestine society of Amīn Luṭfī al-Ḥāfiḥ played a leading role. However, in May 1916, when al-Ḥāfiḥ was martyred and most activists were expelled, al-Arsūzī and his family suffered from hardships; his family was deported to Konya, and his father and two brothers, Nasīb and Adīb, who were members of al-Ḥāfiḥ’s society, were imprisoned. Despite all these difficulties, al-Arsūzī continued his study at the *tajhīz* until 1918, while studying *taṣawwuf* (mysticism) and the religion of Islam on his own.<sup>8</sup>

In October 1918, immediately after the First World War, the citizens of Antakia declared the victory over the Ottoman rule in the so-called “Hanānū and Barakāt Revolution.” They delegated Adīb, al-Arsūzī’s brother, to the *wālī* (governor) of Fayṣal’s government in Aleppo and entrusted him with a petition signed by tens of thousands of citizens, recognizing Fayṣal’s sovereignty in Antakia and demanding appointment of his representative to Antakia. However, this movement ended in failure when the French army defeated Fayṣal’s army at Maysalūn in July 1920 to establish the mandatory rule as declared at the Conferences of San Remo (April 1920) and London (July 1920).<sup>9</sup> Under the French mandate, Alexandretta was created as a largely autonomous administrative district under the state of Aleppo, which was established separately from the state of Damascus in July 1920.<sup>10</sup>

After the First World War, al-Arsūzī stayed in Beirut for one year to master French, and in 1920, he was appointed a teacher of mathematics at Antakia's *tajhīz* for one year. Then, from 1924 to 1925, he was appointed an administrative officer of Arsūz area, the home village of his mother's and grandfather's, Ibrāhīm. There, he stood up for the peasants and began to oppose the feudal class, which, in his view, was a group of conspirators with the French mandate, oppressors of the peasants, and the major obstacle to the emergence of the Arab identity among the peasants. At the same time, he began to demand the necessity of agrarian reform. The French mandatory authority, which was displeased with al-Arsūzī, appointed him to the secretariat of the cultural bureau from 1926 to 1927.<sup>11</sup> Al-Arsūzī recollects his days in Arsūz as follows:

In 1924, I got a position of the administrative officer of "Arsūz" area, to where my grandfather had moved from Alexandretta. When the peasants told me about the feudal terrors they faced, I was inclined towards agrarian reform. Then I wrote a note to the delegate demanding to restrict the ownership of the agrarian property.<sup>12</sup>

In 1927, the mandatory authority dispatched al-Arsūzī to the Sorbonne University of Paris, where he acquired *licencié* (bachelor) of philosophy after four years.<sup>13</sup> As al-Arsūzī himself confesses, his stay in Paris had a great impact on his intellectual life:

I underwent the first "metaphysical" experience, which altered me completely. It was a self-metamorphosis cloaking my whole life with a new outfit. All my conceptions came to acquire new meanings transforming the old. My own personality was remolded, and my writings in philosophy, art and ethics embodied this new direction.<sup>14</sup>

In Paris, al-Arsūzī studied Western philosophy and scientific rationality through the works of Bergson, Nietzsche, Fichte, Descartes, Kant and others, while he enriched his knowledge on the history and language of the Arabs. Especially, his nationalist ideology was influenced by Fichte, who regarded language as the most important component of any nation.<sup>15</sup> Thus, his intellectual experience in Paris made him "the sole philosopher" of Arab nationalism, as Anṭūn Maqdisī states; that is, it enabled him to give a unique definition to the Arab nation, in contrast to other Arab philosophers who literally imitated the Western definitions of nationalism.<sup>16</sup>

Al-Arsūzī's dispatch to Paris was in effect an expulsion by the French mandatory authority, which concluded that he would not abandon the anti-French position as long as he was in Alexandretta.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, his stay in Paris also had an impact on his political life, as Sulaymān al-'Īsā, one of al-Arsūzī's disciples from Alexandretta, remarks:

For al-Arsūzī, the toiling masses were the source, and nationalism would be built through liberating the toiling masses and giving them their rights by means of the socialist struggle. He perceived of philosophy as embodied in the ingenuous and dispossessed (...). He related the nationalist and ideological cause to the toiling people, not to all the people. This is not some kind of class distinction, as it may seem, but it rests on the assumption that the exploiting classes are not an integral part of the nation as such but strangers to its fatherland. A nation is made up solely of the miserable and dispossessed masses.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Early Political Activities***

In 1930, when he finished his study in Paris and returned to Antakia, Zakī al-Arsūzī was appointed a teacher of history and geography at the *tajhīz*.<sup>19</sup> It was not long before he began resorting to political action against the French mandate, as he recalls:

I returned from Paris in 1930 and was appointed a teacher at the Antakia *tajhīz*. Soon however, I had a row with the French mandate delegate, and our subsequent disagreements gradually turned me away from my main interest in culture and philosophy to the world of politics.

On my way from Paris to Antakia, I had jotted down in my diary the following words in French:

Faire une nation ou créer "fantômes" être prophète ou artiste, voilà le problème.

"To forge a nation or to create images, to be a prophet or an artist, that is the question." While I wavered between literature and politics, the French, with their imperialist policy, dictated my political orientation.<sup>20</sup>

Al-Arsūzī's political activities in Antakia in the early 1930s can be summarized in the following aspects:

- (1) The first action which al-Arsūzī took immediately after his appointment at the *tajhīz* was to abolish the classroom divisions based on religions and sects. In opposition to the French sectarian policy, he reorganized the classes irrespective of the students' religio-sectarian allegiances. Also, he attempted in his lectures to raise the students' consciousness of belonging to one nation and of being threatened by one enemy. He affirmed that sectarianism, social classes and tribalism deviated from human nature and should be abandoned.<sup>21</sup>
- (2) Al-Arsūzī enticed his students to manage some clubs in Antakia. For instance, his Christian and Muslim students affiliated with the Fine Arts Club (*nādī al-funūn al-jamīlah*), which was known as a sectarian club of the Roman Catholics and the Greek Orthodox, and when they constituted a majority in it, they elected al-Arsūzī the president of its administrative committee. Also, he encouraged his supporters and adherents to affiliate with the 'Alawi Renaissance Office (*maktabat al-nahḍah al-'alawīyah*), a welfare office exclusively for the 'Alawis, which was later changed into a welfare office for all the Arabs and was subsequently renamed the Arab Renaissance Office (*maktabat al-nahḍah al-'arabīyah*).<sup>22</sup>
- (3) Al-Arsūzī founded the Arabism Club (*nādī al-'urūbah*) in Antakia. This club, whose members were mainly students and workers, soon spread its activities among peasants in rural areas. In meetings sponsored by this club, people of various religio-sectarian allegiances gathered and discussed the Arab nationality and resurrection.<sup>23</sup> Sulaymān al-'Īsā recollects the meetings of this club as follows:

When we were younger students, we gathered around him [al-Arsūzī] in the Arabism Club in Antakia every evening with our elder comrades; that is, workers, students and peasants (...). He gave us lectures on the Arab nationalist revolution, progressiveness and socialism, as well as on his leadership in the Arab revolutionary movement against the takeover of the Alexandretta Province.<sup>24</sup>

(4) Al-Arsūzī opened his house, in al-Shakmajah (or al-Jakmajah) village neighboring Antakia, for his supporters and adherents of various religio-sectarian allegiances so that they could listen to him and exchange ideas with each other. In his house, as well as at the *tajhīz*, cafés and streets, he talked about modern civilization, politics and the Arab role in human civilizations. He put a special emphasis on rejecting all the superstitions and corrupted values widespread in the society, learning foreign languages, and making any possible contacts with the Western civilization to understand it on the basis of Arab nationalism.<sup>25</sup>

Although al-Arsūzī was frequently arrested and imprisoned for his political activities against the French interests, he was soon released owing to the requests from his popular adherents. However, in 1933, the French mandatory authority, fearing the eruption of anti-French popular movements in Antakia, dispatched him to Aleppo and Deir al-Zur as a teacher. Eventually, he was dismissed from his teaching post and returned to Antakia in 1934, jobless.<sup>26</sup>

### ***The League of National Action***

On August 20, 1933, a conference was convened in Qarnāyil village of Lebanon, which was to carry a special significance in the subsequent development of the Arab nationalist movement. Nearly fifty young nationalists from all over the Arab regions gathered in this conference with an aim to set up a pan-nationalist independence movement on a firm and well-coordinated footing. On August 24, after debates and discussions, they formed the League of National Action (*‘uṣbat al-‘amal al-qawmī*) and announced *Bayān al-Mu’tamar al-Ta’sīsī li-‘Uṣbat al-‘Amal al-Qawmī* (The Manifesto of the Constituent Conference of the League of National Action).<sup>27</sup>

The *Bayān* pointed out Arab shortcomings such as selfishness, discrimination against women, and preservation of the Bedouin way of life, while giving credit to merits such as the great history, the linguistic tie, the strategic location and the economic potentials. Then, it warned of the dangers and conspiracies of imperialism, affirming that the interference of foreign powers did not aim at anything but the colonization of the Arab regions and that the French pledges for treaties with Syria were only synonymous with the extension of imperialism. Thus, the League put up

two purposes: Arab sovereignty and independence, and the comprehensive unity of the Arabs. The League, regarding the Arab regions as one economic unit, called for opposing foreign investments and concessions, resistance against feudalism, and establishment of the law which restricted real estate ownership. In addition, the League asserted its resistance against all fanaticism except Arab nationalism, improvement of women's social positions, and adoption of the Arabic language in education. As for the Syrian domestic politics, it rejected any policy and decision by both the Syrian government and parliament which cooperated with the French mandate.<sup>28</sup>

Although Zakī al-Arsūzī had a plan to form his own nationalist party at that time, he attended the conference held in August 1933 and headed the League's branch in Alexandretta.<sup>29</sup> He talks about his participation in the League:

The formation of the League of National Action was motivated by the Arab sentiments against the national (*waṭanī*) sentiments which the National Bloc (*al-kutlah al-waṭanīyah*) claimed (...) that is, against the replacement of the national (*qawmī*) sentiment to the regional (*iqlīmī*) sentiment.

I represented the League of National Action in our struggle in Antakia (...). The League aimed at realizing the goals which the Ba'th Party is striving for at present. Before I affiliated with the League, I had made a plan to form a party named *ba'th* (resurrection). However, I abandoned this idea and affiliated with the League for supporting our young Arab brethren in Syria and other Arab regions.<sup>30</sup>

According to Fā'iz Ismā'īl, the secretary general of the Party of Socialist Unionists (*ḥizb al-waḥdawīyīn al-ishtirākīyīn*), the Alexandretta branch of the League of National Action was outstanding among other branches in its structure:

Previous to the Ba'th, we belonged to the League of National Action. The League of the Province was distinguished from that of Damascus and other Syrian regions for its structure. It attracted the toiling masses who, out of despair at the current situation of the Arab world as a whole, longed for an ideal Arab nation (...). Those pioneers felt complete responsibility for the Arab nation.

They discussed the idea of purifying the Arab history of the dirt and showing the Arab people as effective participants in this history (...). They regarded themselves responsible for the creation of the modern Arab history.<sup>31</sup>

Although the League became vulnerable when some leaders, such as Şabrī al-‘Asalī, ‘Adnān al-Atāsī and Farīd Zayn al-Dīn, seceded from it to affiliate with the National Bloc in 1936 and 1937,<sup>32</sup> al-Arsūzī continued his political activities in Alexandretta, as the League’s headquarter granted him the freedom of independent conduct. Thus, when the dispute on the reversion of Alexandretta rose to surface between Turkey and France in October 1936, he played a leading role in the opposition against Turkey’s pressures to cede Alexandretta.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Alexandretta Dispute*

When the Alexandretta Province was established as an autonomous administrative district under the French mandate, it had an appearance like a “mosaic” entity, which embraced various ethnic and religio-sectarian communities. Although its population could be roughly divided between Turkish-speakers and Arabic-speakers, and between Christians and Muslims, it was difficult to grasp their exact composition. Each community had its own statistics, and also statistics could be interpreted differently depending on the categories being used. The most reliable estimates are probably those provided by the French mandatory authority in 1936. According to those estimates, the total population of Alexandretta was 220,000, among which 39 per cent were Turks, 28 per cent ‘Alawis, 11 per cent Armenians, 10 per cent Sunnis (Sunnī Arabs), 8 per cent other Christians (mainly Greek Orthodox), and 4 per cent others (Kurds, Circassians and Jews). The Turks constituted the single largest ethnic community but were less numerous than Arabic-speakers, who included ‘Alawis, Sunnis and most of the non-Armenian Christians.<sup>34</sup>

Although ethnic and religio-sectarian conflicts were not so intense until the early 1930s, the dramatic stagnation of Alexandretta’s economy owing to the world depression, coupled with the rapid spread of Turkish and Arab nationalist ideologies, destroyed the harmony of communal interests. The confrontation between the Turks and the Arabs rose to surface in October 1936, when Turkey demanded of France to grant full independence to Alexandretta, and France, as a result, entrusted the Council of the League of Nations to settle this dispute with Turkey.<sup>35</sup>

Within Alexandretta, various Arab responses to the dispute could be detected. Some Arabs, mainly composed of ‘Alawi landowners and Christians in the towns, aimed at preserving the status quo of autonomous administration in Alexandretta.

Others, such as the Sunni landowning class, expected stronger social and economic ties with Syria through the full incorporation of Alexandretta into Syria. Besides these Arabs, Zakī al-Arsūzī fiercely opposed the Turkish takeover of Alexandretta, as he led the Alexandretta branch of the League of National Action and drew support from the growing Arabic-speaking intellectuals (mainly Sunnis and Christians in the towns). While persisting in his struggle against the French and aiming at the overthrow of feudalism, he committed himself to the cause with the conviction that the struggle in Alexandretta, which would catch fire across all Arab regions, would be the first step to establish a single Arab state.<sup>36</sup>

Among the most remarkable activities of al-Arsūzī related to the dispute was the publication of the newspaper *Al-'Urūbah* (Arabism), issued in 114 numbers from October 1937 to June 1938, despite the frequent prohibition by the French mandatory authority. In *Al-'Urūbah*, he attempted to verbalize his nationalist thoughts, raising the slogan “The Arabs are one nation (*al-'arab ummah wāḥidah*)” and affirming that all Arab individuals were obliged to realize this faith in their ideology, struggle, ethics and creativity.<sup>37</sup> However, that did not mean that he rejected Western civilization. Although he regarded himself as an opponent to European conspiracies, he emphasized the indispensability of adopting the achievements of Western civilization in order to strengthen the Arab nationalist movement, as his eldest disciple from Alexandretta, Wahīb al-Ghānim, later remarks:

We all shared al-Arsūzī's belief that we had to emulate all positive aspects of European civilization and put them to effect in the process of solidifying our nation and developing our society.

Such a belief used to color Zakī's thought in that phase: his fascination with European civilization, and his unwavering faith in our people and our nationalism.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to editing and writing in *Al-'Urūbah*, al-Arsūzī maintained his momentum in other grass-root political activities. According to those who visited Alexandretta at that time, he met with the people and listened to them, studied and planned for his movement, instructed the crowds from his balcony and even took to the streets if the crowds got enthusiastic.<sup>39</sup>

However, the National Bloc regarded al-Arsūzī's movement as an obstacle to its regionalist policy, as he did not stop short at Syria's independence but called for Arab unity. It also considered that the Alexandretta dispute was no more than a bargaining

card to extract more concessions from France in concluding the treaty for Syria's independence. The National Bloc's negative stance from the dispute only prompted France and Turkey to sign the Geneva Accord in May 1937 in favor of the Turkish government and the Turks of Alexandretta. In this accord, France and Turkey agreed mainly on five points: Alexandretta would be established as an independent political entity separate from Syria; the resident registration and the parliamentary elections would be enforced under the observation of the League of Nations; the number of the seats in the parliament would be fixed at forty; the minimum number of the representatives for each sect would be as follows: Turks eight, 'Alawis six, Sunnis (Sunni Arabs) two, Armenians two, and Greek Orthodox one; both France and Turkey would be subjected to the decisions reached by the elected parliament.<sup>40</sup>

In response to the Geneva Accord, the Alexandretta branch of the League of National Action held a conference of the administrative committee on June 28, 1937, in Antakia. Nominating a new leadership headed by al-Arsūzī, the committee decided that all its activities in Alexandretta should be in line with Antakia's headquarter headed by this new leadership. Thus, al-Arsūzī reproached and opposed fiercely the sectarian spirit of the Geneva Accord, the conspiracy of France and Turkey, and the negative policies of the Syrian government towards the dispute, while he voiced the rise of Arab nationalism.<sup>41</sup> For instance, in *Al-'Urūbah*, No. 22 on November 25, 1937, he wrote the following:

The Arabs, in spite of the pride they took in their Arabism and their intent on achieving their nationalist aspirations, were viewed on a religious basis by the Geneva Accord, and thus divided into 'Alawis, Greek Orthodox and Sunni Arabs. This is in addition to dismissing the 'Alawis by disregarding them as an Islamic sect; an attitude which rested on a sharp contradiction in the secular outlook on which the Accord relied, and caused great damage to Arab sentiments and interests in spite of their continual protests and demonstrations. By dividing them into various religious sects, the Accord showed the Turks to be the greatest majority in the Province (...). This division, as a result, provided Turkey with a pretext to demand the separation of the Province from Syria since the Turks make up the majority there. It also pushed France to hold private talks with Turkey, away from the Council of the League of Nations, in order to reach a political solution to the problem and not rely on international law (...).

This devious tendency motivated the Council of the League of Nations, in the beginning, to consider Turkish as the official language in the Province (but later

confessed Arabic as an official language, too).

The Arabs deeply felt the injustice done to them and realized the disastrous consequences that might originate from it. As a result, they issued two referenda; one to the President of the Syrian Republic, and the other to the Council of the League of Nations (...), demanding the adoption of one single principle in dividing sects, either on the basis of religion or on the basis of ethnicity. They charged the Syrian government to press their demands at the Council of the League of Nations and with the countries concerned. It looks, nonetheless, that the Syrian government did not take these demands seriously and never bothered to provide the Council of the League of Nations with sufficient and documented information on the issue in question (...).<sup>42</sup>

In spite of al-Arsūzī's opposition, Alexandretta was declared a newly independent regime according to the Geneva Accord and was completely separated from the Syrian administration on November 29, 1937. In no time, the resident registration was enforced under the observation of the League of Nations and proved that the Arabs constituted seventy per cent of Alexandretta's population, contrary to Turkey's expectation. As the registration did not require the residents to identify their ethnic or religio-sectarian allegiances, Turkish landowners forced Arab peasants to register as Turks. Also, the Turkish government encouraged Turks of Alexandretta's origin to return to Alexandretta to increase the Turkish population there. With all these fabrications, the rate of Arabs who registered as Turks was only five per cent. Neither Armenian nor Arab Christians registered as Turks, and some conservative Turks even registered as Sunnis (Sunni Arabs) opposing secular Kemalism.<sup>43</sup>

Alarmed by the result of the resident registration, the French mandatory authority arrested al-Arsūzī in December 1937 and June 1938 on the grounds that the League of National Actions was stirring up animosity between the Turks and the Arabs. Nonetheless, the Arab opposition was never completely subdued. Especially when al-Arsūzī was arrested in June 1938, it stirred even more assertive protests among the Arabs of Antakia who went on a general strike for two weeks. Furthermore, some two hundred Arab women occupied the hotel where the observers of the League of Nations took residence. It was only after al-Arsūzī's release that these sieges were terminated.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, on July 5, 1938, Turkish troops marched into Alexandretta as their rights promised in the Franco-Turkish Friendship Treaty of July 4, 1938.<sup>45</sup> Under the pressure to the elections by Turkish bayonets, the Turks received twenty-two seats

majority, while the Arab residents boycotted. In September 1938, the inaugural meeting of the newly elected parliament of Alexandretta, renamed Hatay, took place, and in February 1939, Hatay was ceded to Turkey.<sup>46</sup>

### ***The Formation of the Arab Ba‘th Party***

On July 8, 1938, three days after the Turkish troops marched into Alexandretta, Zakī al-Arsūzī was released, and left Alexandretta. He migrated with *liwā’iyūn* (Provincials), his disciples and adherents, to Damascus via Aleppo, Hamah and Homs. It is said that every town and village they stopped in first rejected them but soon welcomed them owing to popular demonstrations in support of their nationalist movement. For instance, when al-Arsūzī and *liwā’iyūn* reached Hamah, students occupied the *tajhīz* to receive them and enable them to stay there until the French authority forced the students to evacuate it.<sup>47</sup>

When al-Arsūzī reached Damascus, he was known as the nationalist leader of Alexandretta. At first, he was obliged to live in al-Sibkī District of Damascus with seven or eight disciples of the *liwā’iyūn* enduring poverty and unemployment.<sup>48</sup> Yet, he soon managed to resume his nationalist movement by forming a political and intellectual circle with the Damascenes, especially the students. The core of this circle was constituted by the *liwā’iyūn*, such as Wahīb al-Ghānim, Mas‘ūd and Adīb al-Ghānim (Wahīb’s little brothers), Sulaymān al-‘Īsā, Darwīsh al-Zūnī, Şidqī Ismā‘īl, ‘Alī Muḥsin Zīfah, Yūsuf Shaqrā and Ibrāhīm Fawzī, continuing their studies at the Syrian University (Damascus University at present) and the two *tajhīzs* in Damascus. In addition, some students living in Damascus joined al-Arsūzī and the *liwā’iyūn*, among whom were Jamāl al-Atāsī, ‘Alī Ḥaydar, ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Qaddūr, Sāmī al-Jundī, Jalāl al-Sayyid, Muḥammad Kassāb, Niẓām Manāhir, Yaḥyā al-Sūqī, ‘Abd al-Khāliq al-Naqshbandī, ‘Abd al-Khāliq Mar‘ashī, ‘Abd al-Ghanī Sharīf and Sāmī al-Darūbī. They gathered at al-Arsūzī’s house every day and discussed various subjects such as politics and philosophy for long hours. Thus, just before and during the Second World War, al-Arsūzī played an important role in influencing the youths who later played a leading role in the formation of the Arab Ba‘th Party (*ḥizb al-ba‘th al-‘arabī*) on April 7, 1947.<sup>49</sup>

At that time, some new political organizations rose in opposition to the National Bloc, among which were the Syrian Social National Party (*al-ḥizb al-sūrī al-qawmī*

*al-ijtimā'ī*), the Syrian-Lebanese Communist Party (*al-ḥizb al-shuyū'ī al-sūrī al-lubnānī*) and the Islamic *jam'īyahs* (societies) merging into the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood (*al-ikhwān al-muslimūn fī sūrīyah*). However, al-Arsūzī found no political group suitable for representing his nationalist movements.<sup>50</sup> Also, the League of National Action, which he once affiliated with, was unacceptable to him, because of its deviation from the initial nationalist faith. Thus, the first public action which al-Arsūzī took in Damascus in 1939, according to Wahīb al-Ghānim, was announcing his withdrawal from the League of National Action:

In Damascus, Zakī al-Arsūzī received a great shock on discovering that most prominent figures [in the League of National Action] (...) were no more than political mongers, semi-literates, and did not take the ideas they promoted seriously. On the contrary, most of them failed to embody these principles in their daily life. So, al-Arsūzī had no choice, “six” months after arriving in Damascus, but to announce his withdrawal from the League of National Action and dedicate his time and efforts to meditate on the future of the Arab question and the necessity of founding a new Arab party clean of fundamental flaws in its principles, and one which is not involved in compromises, deals, and political trickeries.<sup>51</sup>

After his withdrawal from the League of National Action, al-Arsūzī formed a party named the Arab Nationalist Party (*al-ḥizb al-qawmī al-'arabī*). According to Sāmī al-Jundī, the party took the tiger as its symbol, which was associated with the Nazism and fascism, and manifested the following principles:

- (1) The Arabs are one nation.
- (2) The Arabs have one single leader who most genuinely embodies and expresses the potentials of the Arab nation.
- (3) Arabism: our national conscience is the source of sacredness, from which ideals spring and against which the values of things are estimated.
- (4) The Arab is the master of destiny.<sup>52</sup>

The Arab Nationalist Party suspended its activities in a short period, because al-Arsūzī gained an opportunity to visit Baghdad for teaching in 1939. However, soon in 1940, the British mandatory authority in Iraq was displeased with his advocacy of Arab nationalism among the Iraqi youths, and consequently dismissed him.<sup>53</sup> When

he returned to Damascus, he increasingly felt the necessity of forming his original party and eagerly encouraged his followers to found one. Thus, al-Arsūzī and his followers, such as Wahīb al-Ghānim, Sāmī al-Jundī, Jamāl al-Atāsī, ‘Alī Ḥaydar and ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Qaddūr, formed the Arab Ba‘th Party towards the end of 1940.<sup>54</sup> Sulaymān al-‘Īsā describes the episode of the formation of the Ba‘th Party as follows:

One evening, we were busy studying ... at our tiny little house ... six or seven students studying together. ... All of sudden our mentor al-Arsūzī – may Allah bless his soul – entered the room with his delightful smile, accompanied by our eldest comrade then, Wahīb al-Ghānim ....

I do not actually remember the exact date; for we, school boys as we were then, never thought to keep record of such events, but our elder comrades sure know them and remember them, no doubt.

It was a winter day in “1940” ....

We raised our heads. Our studying session was over ....

The mentor al-Arsūzī soon addressed us thus:

Today, we have founded a new Arab party ... the “Arab Ba‘th” Party .... Your comrades at the university will contact you and inform each of you of his role .... Of course, each of you is a member in this party, the Arab Ba‘th Party, from this very moment. Prepare yourself to spread the message ... and get yourself ready for serious work. We have decided to initiate a brand new phase in the modern history of our nation .... We have made up our mind to start, practically, the process of establishing a united Arab nation, and a united Arab state. The ideas and ideals we cherished and promoted in the Province will be translated now into an organized historical work ... into a party that shoulders the responsibility of liberating seventy million Arabs (...).

The Arabs are one nation ....

The Arab homeland is an indivisible unity ....

Our national conscience is the source of everything that is sacred to us. Our thought and behavior spring totally from this conscience, and it is the bedrock against which we estimate the value of things.<sup>55</sup>

## ***The Mouthpiece “Al-Ba‘th”***

On the day Zakī al-Arsūzī declared among his disciples the formation of the Arab Ba‘th Party, he also announced the publication of the party’s mouthpiece, *Al-Ba‘th* (The Resurrection), as Sulaymān al-‘Īsā recalls al-Arsūzī’s words:

We decided to establish a newspaper that speaks in the name of the party. It shall be a weekly for the time being, so that we do not seize much of your time and effort, and we call the newspaper by the name of the new party: *Al-Ba‘th*.

You will edit it together .... You will practice writing ...; for writing skills can only be obtained through practice.

Attempt to pass our thoughts to everyone, to every student in this homeland ..., to every worker ..., to every peasant.

Don’t waste too much time on the intellectuals ...; for they will consume you with their hollow rhetoric ... and sterile debates ..., because this is all they are good at, and they do not like to work.

We will repeat the attempt in the Province on the national level ....

The Arab Ba‘th will be the path to liberation.

We want a great and modern Arab state ..., which abandons all eras of injustice, surpasses the periods of backwardness ..., and situates our Arab nation in the twentieth century.

We will find our Arab identity in the light of modern civilization ....

We will reconsider the distribution of wealth ....

We will overthrow this scattered feudal society to replace it with a socialist Arab society where justice rules and the industry prospers.

We will struggle for the equal opportunities to all.

In the midst of the currents and ideologies, fighting for survival in this world ...,

We will not forget our authenticity .... We will always insist on our Arab identity ... and our authentic nationalist character.<sup>56</sup>

*Al-Ba‘th* was a weekly of sixteen pages. Only one copy was issued in handwriting and circulated among the members. It contained columns on international politics, Arab nationalist politics, Syria’s domestic politics, and caricatures. On the cover page, the symbol of the party, a tiger under a palm tree, was described. The contents of *Al-Ba‘th* were characterized by the conceptions and terms

which carried special significance for them: the authenticity of Arab nationalism, the Arab power in history, the Arab mission, the influence of the *shu'ūbiyah* (privileged position of the Arabs) on Arab history, the power of the Arabs in their unity, social freedom, authenticity of ethics, ideals, Arab homeland, the Arabs as one nation, the single Arab people, the Arab as master of his destiny, the ruling traitors alien to this nation, and so on.<sup>57</sup>

According to al-Arsūzī's instructions, each disciple was assigned his own task in publishing *Al-Ba'th*. Al-Arsūzī, who himself became responsible for the intellectual thrust of *Al-Ba'th*, wrote an editorial and some important articles on nationalism and political leadership. His disciples like Ṣidqī Ismā'īl and 'Alī Muḥsin Zīfah also had their contributions. Sulaymān al-'Īsā was appointed chief editor. Wahīb al-Ghānim was subsequently entrusted to collection of articles. Adham Ismā'īl prepared the final copy in handwriting.<sup>58</sup>

At the same time, al-Arsūzī and his disciples published a weekly, *Al-Minshār* (The Saw), which contained critical commentaries, caricatures, and satires called "*al-qaṣā'id al-ḥalamantīshīyah* (Halamentishi poems)." Al-Arsūzī also contributed some articles, commentaries, and critiques in this weekly. As the name *Al-Ba'th* was later adopted as the title of the newspaper of the Ba'th Party which was formally declared on April 7, 1947, so the name *Al-Minshār* was used as the title of the satire column of the Ba'thi army periodical, *Jaysh al-Sha'b* (The People's Army).<sup>59</sup>

### ***Organization, Ideology and Activities of al-Arsūzī's Ba'th Party***

Immediately after the formation of the Arab Ba'th Party and the publication of *Al-Ba'th*, Zakī al-Arsūzī and his disciples undertook a substantial construction of the party's organs, while their activities were limited to the underground.<sup>60</sup> In the two *tajhīz*s of Damascus, Sulaymān al-'Īsā and Mas'ūd al-Ghānim formed and headed party cells individually, and in the Syrian University, Wahīb al-Ghānim, Jamāl al-Atāsī, Sāmī al-Jundī, 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Qaddūr and Yaḥyā al-Sūqī formed cells with students from Syria and other Arab regions. Also, 'Alī Muḥsin Zīfah came to be in charge of overlooking these formations. Everyone who decided to affiliate with the Ba'th Party took the following oath before al-Arsūzī, raising his right hand: "I swear on my honor and Arabism to be faithful to the principles of the Arab Ba'th Party and to work for realizing its aims."<sup>61</sup>

According to Wahīb al-Ghānim, the organs of the Ba‘th Party were based on cells (*khalīyah*). Each cell consisted of a head and two members.<sup>62</sup> It was obliged to have a meeting every week and to discuss various subjects such as Syrian politics, Arab politics, Arab causes and the means of struggle. Every five cells constituted a company (*firqah*). There were two divisions in the two *tajhīz*s of Damascus and some divisions in the Syrian University. In addition, there were divisions of “the popular classes (*al-ṭabaqah al-sha‘bīyah*)” in some districts of Damascus such as al-Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn District. The party at that time did not have upper institutions such as a division (*shu‘bah*), a branch (*far‘*), a regional leadership (*qiyādah quṭrīyah*) or a national leadership (*qiyādah qawmīyah*), in contrast to the Ba‘th Party of April 7, 1947.<sup>63</sup> Instead, it had a leadership (*qiyādah*), consisting of the *za‘īm* (leader) of the party and three heads of the cultural bureau (*maktab al-thaqāfah*), the organizational bureau (*al-maktab al-tanzīmī*) and the financial bureau (*al-maktab al-mālī*). The leader of the party was of course al-Arsūzī. The cultural bureau, the organizational bureau and the financial bureau were entrusted to Sulaymān al-‘Īsā, Wahīb al-Ghānim and Mas‘ūd al-Ghānim respectively.<sup>64</sup>

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1941, the members of the Ba‘th Party in Damascus decided to expand their activities into the whole of Syria, and Latakia was designated the first city for their mission, then al-Qalmūn, Jabal Druze, Aleppo, al-Bāb, and others.<sup>65</sup>

Owing to the construction of the party’s organs by his disciples, al-Arsūzī’s small house in al-Sibkī District became overcrowded with some seventy or eighty students who visited him and listened to his opinions on culture and the Ba‘th Party. Also, he visited schools, houses, streets, cafés and any other place he could go in order to spread the Ba‘thi nationalist thoughts. Aiming at resuming his nationalist struggle in Alexandretta and spreading it to the whole Arab regions, he advocated the greatness of Arab history and the Arab genius and potentials, emphasized the necessity of the personality which enabled the Arabs to regain their dignity and humanity and resurrect themselves from stagnation and decline.<sup>66</sup>

Although al-Arsūzī preceded Mīshīl ‘Aflaq and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Bīṭār by seven years in forming the party named “Ba‘th,” it was not him who raised the slogan: “one Arab nation with an eternal mission (*ummah ‘arabīyah wāḥidah dhāt risālah khālīdah*).” Sulaymān al-‘Īsā notes that this slogan was formed when a member concluded his speech at a party session after 1947 with this phrase.<sup>67</sup> Yet, al-Arsūzī always began and closed meetings saying: “the Arabs are one nation (*al-‘arab*

*ummah wāḥidah*),” which could be regarded as the party’s slogan at that time. In addition, al-Arsūzī repeated another phrase “the Arab country is an indivisible homeland (*bilād al-‘arab waṭan lā yatajazza’*).”<sup>68</sup>

Wahīb al-Ghānim recollects four fundamental thoughts of the Ba‘th Party at that time: the Arabs are one nation (*al-‘arab ummah wāḥidah*), the Arab homeland is one homeland (*al-waṭan al-‘arabī waṭan wāḥid*), the Arab is the master of destiny (*al-‘arabī sayyid al-qadar*), and the leader of the Arab leadership is one Arab (*al-za‘āmah za‘īm-hā ‘arabī wāḥid*).<sup>69</sup> Then, he remarks that freedom and responsibility were two principles in al-Arsūzī’s ideology,<sup>70</sup> stressing the democratic nature of al-Arsūzī’s leadership and the spontaneity of the members:

The single leadership (*al-za‘āmah al-wāḥidah*) was not dictatorial in our view. It was of the kind of Zakī al-Arsūzī’s leadership; that is, the leadership of the father, who took counsel with the sons and made his decisions accordingly. He took counsel and explained things continuously. Zakī never made any decision by himself (...). He raised topics, discussed them with others, and explored the possibilities. He examined the affairs with all of his disciples and supporters. Then he made his decision (...). We decided to take part in demonstrations. Zakī al-Arsūzī seldom interfered in these decisions. We studied the situations of the country. We studied the situations of the secondary schools. We consulted with the cell’s heads, then informed Zakī that a demonstration would be undertaken the next day for such and such a purpose and that we would participate in it. Zakī was enthusiastic about these initiatives (...). We decided to take part in demonstrations. We decided to oppose some conservative movements.<sup>71</sup>

However, in the middle of the Second World War, the French mandatory authority, alarmed by the emergence of the opposition, prohibited any political movement outside the framework of its rule. Although al-Arsūzī never gave up work with the political movements, in the mid-1941, the French mandatory authority arrested al-Arsūzī and dispatched him to Aleppo via Homs, Latakia and the ‘Alawi mountains. Also, some of his disciples, who founded the party with him, were arrested, and others were compelled to escape and go into hiding from the search of the French authority.<sup>72</sup> Sulaymān al-‘Īsā describes the suppression of the Ba‘th Party by the French authority as follows:

News about the new party reached the “authority” ....

The security forces broke in our little house one noon ... and we went back from school just to see the papers and books of our mentor, al-Arsūzī, scattered all around the place .... Worried, we asked about the mentor to be informed by the neighbors that the “detectives” had arrested him ... and had taken him away for investigation.

On the very same day, we learnt that the military mandatory authorities had ordered his exile to Latakia. He had to get there on foot accompanied by a “policeman” on a horse.

In the evening of the following day, the first revolutionary leaflet issued by the “Arab Ba‘th” Party was being distributed all around Damascus; in the streets, in the small packed neighborhoods, at each corner the young “spokesmen” could reach .... The title of the leaflet – I could still see it right now – went like this:

“Get Out of Our Country, You French!”

We went back to our little house to see the security men waiting for us .... They arrested three of us ... but the rest had gone into hiding.

So, we were the first Ba‘this to go to jail.

Do you want the names? The three were: Mas‘ūd al-Ghānim, Sulaymān al-‘Īsā and Darwīsh Diyāb.<sup>73</sup>

### ***The Merger with Mīshīl ‘Aflaq’s Nationalist Movement***

The episode on the formation of the Arab Ba‘th Party and the publication of *Al-Ba‘th* prove that the Ba‘th Party has its origins in Zakī al-Arsūzī’s ideology and political movement. Al-Arsūzī’s disciples and senior Ba‘thi members unanimously asserted that the word *ba‘th* was used by al-Arsūzī and his disciples for the first time and that the party named *ba‘th* was also formed in al-Arsūzī’s house of al-Sibkī District.<sup>74</sup> However, when the Ba‘th Party is referred to, more often than not the focus tends to be fixed on the political activities of Mīshīl ‘Aflaq and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Bīṭār.

‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār, both of whom taught in a *tajhīz* of Damascus,<sup>75</sup> began political activities and spread their influence on the students around 1938, when al-Arsūzī migrated from Antakia to Damascus. In May 1941, when Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kaylānī of Iraq launched the “revolutionary” movement against the British mandate and the Hashimite Kingdom, ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār formed In Support of Iraq (*naṣrat al-‘irāq*), publishing the mouthpiece *Naṣrat al-‘Irāq* as well. Frequently having opportunities of debates and discussions with ‘Aflaq’s group, the Ba‘thi

members felt that ‘Aflaq’s nationalist thoughts were close to al-Arsūzī’s. Thus, they exchanged their mouthpieces *Al-Ba‘th* and *Naṣrat al-‘Irāq* with each other, and some Ba‘thi youths even participated in the movement of In Support of Iraq.<sup>76</sup> Sulaymān al-‘Īsā recollects the intimacy between the two groups as follows:

At the *tajhīz*, we gradually got to know some comrades, sometimes in the same class, who were followers of the professor Mīshīl [‘Aflaq]. They had ideas similar to ours, and they kept pressing questions like: Why don’t you come to our meetings? We have a party *ḥizb ba‘th*. We meet daily, and we have cells. Your ideas and aspirations are so close to ours. Who told you we do not have a “group (*shillah*)” like yours? And we used to ask: And who is in this group of yours? Who is heading this group? When we first got to know this “group” practically, it was after the appearance of two or three leaflets issued in the name of In Support of Iraq at that time of the revolution of Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kaylānī. We used to meet with this student “group” at the *tajhīz*, talk to them, and demonstrate with them. Sometimes we gave them issues of *Al-Ba‘th* (...). The slogan [of In Support of Iraq] was “We sacrifice ourselves for Iraq.”<sup>77</sup>

Despite the close relationship between the Ba‘thi youths and ‘Aflaq group, al-Arsūzī was skeptical of ‘Aflaq’s activities. It is said that ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār got acquainted with al-Arsūzī immediately after his migration to Damascus, and they found ‘Aflaq’s *ṣūfī* (mystical) orientation similar to al-Arsūzī’s metaphysical understanding of nationalism, which enabled them to be associated with al-Arsūzī’s circle. However, the relationship between al-Arsūzī and ‘Aflaq deteriorated in no time due to personal differences. ‘Aflaq avoided and feared al-Arsūzī because of al-Arsūzī’s criticisms of ‘Aflaq’s movement, while al-Arsūzī had a tendency to distrust people, especially political leaders, owing to his bitter experiences in Alexandretta. In addition, the estrangement between al-Arsūzī and Jalāl al-Sayyid prevented the Ba‘thi members and ‘Aflaq’s group from integrating their political movements.<sup>78</sup>

Al-Arsūzī’s criticism of ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār became concrete when the latter formed In Support of Iraq just after al-Kaylānī’s revolution. Al-Arsūzī considered that it was premature to evaluate this revolution and those who sympathized with it, because he suspected that it was incorrect and futile. Although al-Arsūzī admitted that his thought was similar to ‘Aflaq’s, he thought that the merger with ‘Aflaq’s group should not be accomplished on the occasion of temporary revolution.<sup>79</sup> Sulaymān

al-‘Īsā recalls al-Arsūzī’s words on the formation of In Support of Iraq:

Don’t rush into things; for there is something faulty about this revolution [al-Kaylānī’s revolution]. But, it does not serve the high Arab interests to say one single word against it (...).

I do not trust any political Arab leader; so, I do not want you to be so enthusiastic about it [the revolution]. But still, I do not want you to attack it. We do care about the enthusiastic Arab youths in Iraq. They are part of us. But all I fear is that the major goal of this revolution is to “liquidate” these youths (...). Listen sons: “In Support of Iraq” cannot be the name of a party (...). It is all accidental and temporary, and it will soon be over (...). This is not a political party, but just something passing (...). When they [‘Aflaq’s group] greeted us on the street, they used to say during the revolution “We sacrifice ourselves for Iraq,” and we used to answer that we sacrifice ourselves for Iraq and all the Arabs too. But this is not merely a political slogan; it is a national sentiment we should all have.<sup>80</sup>

When al-Kaylānī’s revolution failed as al-Arsūzī had predicted, ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār’s group reorganized a literary circle named the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement (*ḥarakat al-iḥyā’ al-‘arabī*) and continued their activities.<sup>81</sup> The word *iḥyā’* (revival) was clearly an imitated and reduced conception of the word *ba‘th*, as Fā’iz Ismā‘īl observed.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the Ba‘thi members posed a question, as Sulaymān al-‘Īsā recollects:

We began to ask them [‘Aflaq’s group]: Why an Arab Iḥyā’?

We said to them: Why do not we become one “group,” one party, and name ourselves “the Arab Ba‘th”? We said to them: Why do you imitate us and say the Arab Iḥyā’? They said: You are right, but we do not know why.<sup>83</sup>

Also, according to Wahīb al-Ghānim, al-Arsūzī and his disciples evaluated the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement as lacking a clear and detailed ideological point of view:

Another movement started to emerge, headed by two teachers of Damascus secondary schools: “Ṣalāḥ [al-Dīn] al-Bīṭār and Mīshīl ‘Aflaq.” It was a vague nationalist movement with no clear ideals or objectives. Just like us, it called for one Arab nation, but it lacked the party constitution and the ideas fit for a political party,

something which we did have. It was just a cultural movement in formation. Part of the youths we knew gathered around this movement just as they rallied around ours. Part of them belonged to it, while the larger part joined our movement. Our supports in secondary schools and the university were more numerable and much stronger (...). Later on this movement, "In Support of Iraq," changed – especially after the failure of revolution of Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kaylānī – into "the Arab Iḥyā'" (...). [A few papers issued by the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement] touched on some ideas (...) that were quite vague and ambiguous (...) to the point that one could never make anything clear out of them, or know what the author actually wanted to say (...).

They talked about leadership, the Arabs and eternity, and they mentioned things about heritage and sacred things, but reached no conclusions of any kind.

The author did not say what he actually wanted of all these things! He did not say: we wanted to achieve this and that, for instance (...). Stuff like this was out of his interest. There was nothing but a vague exposition ornamented with resonant words which said everything and nothing at the same time (...).<sup>84</sup>

Despite such criticism and skepticism, the ideological and practical similarities between the Ba‘th Party and the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement especially in the days of Rashīd ‘Alī al-Kaylānī’s revolution provided the setting for the merger into a single party. Thus, the young Ba‘thi members met ‘Aflaq and the members of the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement and discussed the merger several times without informing al-Arsūzī.<sup>85</sup> Sulaymān al-‘Īsā recalls al-Arsūzī’s displeasure at the meetings of the Ba‘thi members and ‘Aflaq as follows:

[Al-Arsūzī] would not approve of such meetings, and his attitude was one of discouragement. He would warn us saying: If you bring these people [the members of the Arab al-Iḥyā’ Movement] in, I will quit the party and restrict my activities to promoting its ideals only. These people are not up to such a leading role. As far as we were concerned, we had always regarded al-Arsūzī as a father we never tried to embarrass or question; but at the same time, we were convinced that those people were our comrades and we ought to bring them in to join our party. Wahīb al-Ghānim used to tell us: Leave our mentor "al-Arsūzī" aside with his sensitivities and let us embark on our work in hope of winning these youths over. Try to talk to them and convince them to join us, and later on we will try to get al-Arsūzī’s consent. Each time al-Arsūzī heard anything about this suggested merger, he used to say: "I will definitely quit the party if

you ever merge with this group.” He used to nag about it like a baby, but we always avoided any confrontation with him.<sup>86</sup>

Al-Arsūzī no longer regarded his disciples, who attempted to merge with the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement, as members of the Ba’thi leadership, or worthy of it. In addition, he became all nerves, which made him suspect even his disciples and which reduced the Ba’th Party to “a chaotic group with a single idea and logic, with no particular analytical method.”<sup>87</sup> Thus, al-Arsūzī’s disciples began to keep him at a distance and undertake with the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement the process of the merger, which was completed in 1945, ironically while he began devoting himself to writing a series of theses entitled “Ba’th al-Ummah al-‘Arabīyah (The Resurrection of the Arab Nation).” Finally, on April 7, 1947, the merger of the two groups was formally declared in the Conference for Forming the Ba’th Party at the café al-Rashīd al-Ṣayfī of Damascus, a date is now remembered as the anniversary of the party’s formation.<sup>88</sup>

### ***After Retirement from Political Actions***

After the arrest by the French mandatory authority in 1940, Zakī al-Arsūzī quitted politics, with the young nationalists including his disciples taking over the Ba’thi movement. Several reasons are given for his retirement from political activities, among which are:

- (1) Al-Arsūzī was disappointed with, and also resented, the merger between the Arab Ba’th Party and the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement.<sup>89</sup>
- (2) The more the Ba’thi youths expanded their operation to the whole of Syria, the more they discovered the limitations of al-Arsūzī’s ideology, which prevented them from launching systematic activities and caused them to distance themselves from him. Wahīb al-Ghānim accounts for this crisis as follows:

The primary principles that they [the Ba’thi youths] swore to and the mentor al-Arsūzī fixed were no longer sufficient for leading the future political movement. They began examining their own way for the ground which would be more proper,

more objective and more related to their national situation and the future of their country.<sup>90</sup>

- (3) Al-Arsūzī began to turn his eyes away from the actual life to ideals in the mid-1940s, as Wahīb al-Ghānim remarks:

Zakī al-Arsūzī suffered political fatigue. The imperialist authorities oppressed him vehemently, even to the point of depriving him of his job as a teacher. They suffocated him on all levels, and they pressured us continuously to abandon him. Of course, his disciples showed strong devotions to him and none of them submitted to the pressure. On the contrary, the more the authorities cracked down on him the more their love and loyalty increased and solidified.

As a result of these vicious pressures, and due to his firm belief in his ideals, he started to withdraw gradually from physical realities.

These are sad facts people do not know about Zakī al-Arsūzī. He started to live in an imaginary world as a result of the brutality of real life. He also grew more susceptible and hypersensitive to the question of commitment; for it was enough for him to detect slight signs of hesitation in one of his disciples to doubt his behaviors and function. This continuous exhaustion distanced him more and more away from any possible political leadership. But at the same time, he became more mentally clairvoyant.<sup>91</sup>

- (4) Afflicted with his mother's illness and death in 1944, al-Arsūzī realized acutely the separation between ideals and realities. Sāmī al-Jundī notes:

The mentor [al-Arsūzī] went to Tartus after a short stay in Latakia (...), where his mother had been taken ill. Although the doctor saw her and wrote a medical prescription, she died after two days without taking the medicine.

It seems to me as if this accident marked the end of Zakī's political life as he dedicated his time for writing and teaching. His mother's death (...) severed his imagination from reality and showed that the earth was no more a home for illusions.<sup>92</sup>

Whatever might be the truth behind al-Arsūzī's retirement from political activities, al-Arsūzī devoted himself to spreading his nationalist thoughts to the other Arab

regions, especially to Iraq, when Mīshīl ‘Aflaq and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Bīṭār attempted to merge with the Ba‘th Party. Al-Arsūzī obtained scholarships for some twenty to thirty students through contacts with his Iraqi friends. Al-Arsūzī’s disciples, among whom were Fā’iz Ismā‘īl, Adham Muṣṭafā, Waṣfī al-Ghānim, Mas‘ūd al-Ghānim, went to Iraq for studies and political activities in order to spread the Ba‘thi ideology, which eventually resulted in the formation of Ba‘thi cells in Iraq in 1944. The fruit was such that al-Arsūzī’s disciples in Iraq assumed the merger between the Ba‘th Party and the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement to be al-Arsūzī’s achievement. However, they discovered later that al-Arsūzī had no intention to merge with the Arab Iḥyā’ Movement.<sup>93</sup>

Al-Arsūzī also devoted himself to his intellectual activities. Inspired by the phrase in his dream, “Your Lord will inform you of what is better,” he attempted to compile his views on the Arabic language, the Arab history and heritage, and his own scientific and intellectual accumulations, in order to establish a new philosophical method between 1941 and 1942. Thus, in 1943, his earliest work *Al-‘Abqariyah al-‘Arabiyah fi Lisān-hā* (The Arab Genius in its Tongue) was published, which expressed his linguo-philosophical theory on the Arabic language and its authenticity.<sup>94</sup>

From 1945 to 1948, al-Arsūzī moved to Hamah to teach philosophy at a secondary school, then moved to Aleppo.<sup>95</sup> There, he preached to his students and friends on *Al-‘Abqariyah al-‘Arabiyah fi Lisān-hā*, and examined, in comparison with his thoughts, the new developments in the world: the collapse of Nazism, the establishment of the Socialist Bloc, the foundation of the United Nations, the independence of the Arab states, and the industrialization and rising labor movement in the Arab world. At the same time, he was devoted to writing, and published the series of theses entitled “Ba‘th al-Ummah al-‘Arabiyah.” “Ba‘th al-Ummah al-‘Arabiyah,” which are divided into “Ba‘th al-Ummah al-‘Arabiyah wa-Risālat-hā ilā al-‘Ālam (Resurrection of the Arab Nation and its Mission to the World)” and “Ba‘th al-Ummah al-‘Arabiyah wa-Risālat-hā ilā al-‘Ālam al-‘Arabī (Resurrection of the Arab Nation and its Mission to the Arab World),” are composed of twelve theses: *Risālat al-Madanīyah* (Thesis on Civilization), *Risālat al-Thaqāfah* (Thesis on Culture), *Risālat al-Lughah* (Thesis on Language), *Risālat al-Fann* (Thesis on Art), *Risālat al-Falsafah* (Thesis on Philosophy), *Risālat al-Akhlāq* (Thesis on Morality), *Risālat al-Dawlah* (Thesis on the State), *Risālat al-Ummah* (Thesis on the Nation), *Risālat al-Ussrah* (Thesis on the Family), *Risālat al-Tarbiyah wa-Tanzīm al-Ḥayāh al-‘Āmmah* (Thesis on the Education and Organization on Public Life), *Risālat*

*al-‘Arab* (Thesis on the Arabs) and *Risālat al-Insānīyah* (Thesis on Humanity).<sup>96</sup>

In 1952, he moved to Damascus and settled in al-Barlamān District, and taught philosophy at the Normal School (*dār al-mu‘allimīn al-ibtidā‘īyah*), until 1959, when he retired under the age limit.<sup>97</sup> In Damascus, he advocated, through his lessons on philosophy, the path to Arab unity, the land reform and industrialization, and encouraged the new generation to indulge in scientific and industrial knowledge and training. He repeated this conviction as follows: “Create the Arab individual in a new method, so that he regains his authenticity in the framework of the industrialized civilization.”<sup>98</sup> That was among the reasons that he expressed his pleasure and visited Cairo, when Egypt and Syria declared the Union of Arab Republics in February 1958.<sup>99</sup>

After the retirement in 1959, al-Arsūzī witnessed the Ba‘th Revolution of March 8, 1963, which enabled his disciples and friends to participate in the regime. While continuing to get together with his disciples and adherents in cafés to spread his thoughts, he spent his retired life writing books and articles on language, literature, philosophy, politics, social issues, among which were *Al-Ummah al-‘Arabīyah* (The Arab Nation) (1960),<sup>100</sup> *Ṣawt al-‘Urūbah fī Liwā’ al-Iskandarūnah* (The Voice of Arabism in the Alexandretta Province) (1961), *Matā Yakūn al-Ḥukm Dīmuqrāṭīyan* (When Governance is Democratic) (1961), *Al-Lisān al-‘Arabī* (The Arab Tongue) (1963), *Al-Jumhūrīyah al-Muthlā* (The Ideal Republic) (1964) and the collection of the articles written from 1963 to 1964 *Al-Tarbiyah al-Siyāsīyah al-Muthlā* (The Ideal Political Education) which was not published.<sup>101</sup>

Although al-Arsūzī was publicly recognized as “the spiritual father (*ab rūḥī*)” of the Ba‘th Party by the regime established in the coup d’état on February 23, 1966, which aimed to deprive ‘Aflaq of his authority and discredit him, he suffered an incurable illness. On July 2, 1968, in spite of the treatments in Beirut and Damascus, he passed away at the age of 68. In 1967, one year before his death, the Ba‘th regime praised his political and ideological achievements and offered an exceptional pension. Also, the Supreme Council for Promotion of Arts, Literatures and Social Sciences (*al-majlis al-‘lā li-ri‘āyāt al-funūn wa-al-ādāb wa-al-‘ulūm al-ijtimā‘īyah*) praised him and awarded prizes for his achievements.<sup>102</sup>

## Notes

1. “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” *Al-Ma‘rifah* (Damascus), No. 113, Jul. 1971, pp. 1-4.
2. Zakī al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1 (Damascus: Al-Idārah al-Siyāsīyah lil-Jaysh wa-al-Qūwāt al-Musallahah, 1972), p. 5.
3. Salīm Nāṣir Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī: Wa-Ususu-hu al-Falsafīyah ‘inda Zakī al-Arsūzī* (3rd ed., Damascus: Dār Dimashq, 1984), p. 19; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 5. Although “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” p. 1 notes that al-Arsūzī was born in June 1899, Khalīl Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī: Wa-Dawr al-Lisān fī Binā’ al-Insān* (Damascus: Dār al-Shabībah lil-Nashr, 1978), p. 22 reasserts in the interview with al-Arsūzī’s sister, Nabīhah, that the year of his birth was 1900.
4. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 5-6; Vol. 6 (Damascus: Al-Idārah al-Siyāsīyah lil-Jaysh wa-al-Qūwāt al-Musallahah, 1976), pp. 489-490; Muḥammad ‘Alī Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā’ al-Iskandarūn (Wathā’iq wa-Shurūḥ)*, Vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-‘Urūbah, 1993), pp. 111, 254-255, 308; Vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-‘Urūbah, 1995), p. 256; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 41-44; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 19-20. The name of another brother of al-Arsūzī’s is Fayṣal.
5. “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” p. 1 notes that the move of al-Arsūzī’s family to Antakia was due to his father’s service as a lawyer, while al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah* Vol. 1, pp. 5-6 remarks that it was related to his father’s political task of the anti-Ottoman movement.
6. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 487.
7. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 6; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 44-45; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 20. Muṣṭafā Dandashlī notes that al-Arsūzī learned Turkish and French at a secondary school in Konya from 1914 to 1918. Muṣṭafā Dandashlī (Yūsuf Jabā’ī & Muṣṭafā Dandashlī, trs.), *Ḥizb al-Ba’tḥ al-‘Arabī al-Ishtirākī, 1940-1963: Al-Īdiyūlūjīyā wa-al-Tārīkh al-Siyāsī*, Vol. 1 (Damascus: n.p., 1979), p. 16.
8. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 489; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 49, 59; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā’ al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 1, p. 32.
9. Muḥammad ‘Alī Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā’ al-Iskandarūn (Wathā’iq wa-Shurūḥ)*, Vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-‘Urūbah, 1994), p. 47; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 32, 254-255.
10. The states of Aleppo and Damascus, which were created out of the former Ottoman provinces (*wilāyah*), were ruled by local governors supported by French *conseillers* (advisers). The state of Aleppo also contained the Alexandretta Province and the still sparsely

settled northeastern region around Deir al-Zur, while the state of Damascus contained the districts of Homs, Hamah and Jabal Druze. The mountain districts behind Latakia, with their large ‘Alawi population, became a special administrative regime under heavy French protection and was proclaimed a state. Meanwhile, the desert tribes of Syria, particularly those of the remote northeast, were placed under the military authority of the French *Contrôle Bédouin*. Later in 1922, the Syrian Federation, including the states of Aleppo, Damascus and ‘Alawis, was proclaimed, while Jabal Druze was proclaimed a separate unit under French protection, with its own governor and elected parliament. The Syrian Federation was dissolved at the end of 1924 and replaced by the Syrian state comprising the states of Damascus and Aleppo with the Alexandretta Province, the state of ‘Alawis excluded. It was not until 1936 that the states of ‘Alawis and Jabal Druze were formally incorporated into Syria. However, in 1939, with the scuttling of the Franco-Syrian treaty and the fall of the nationalist government, these two districts were once again separated from Syria until 1942. Philip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 58-59.

11. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 7; Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 49; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 20.

12. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 490.

13. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 8; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 20-21; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, p. 16. “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” p. 2 notes that al-Arsūzī visited Paris in 1926.

14. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, pp. 490-491.

15. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 8; Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 50; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 20-21; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, p. 16.

16. Interview with Anṭūn Maqdisī, as quoted in Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, p. 16.

17. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 8; Vol. 6, p. 490; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 20.

18. Interview with Sulaymān al-‘Īsā, as quoted in Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 60-61.

19. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 9; Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 50-51; Zarqah, *Qaḡiyat Liwā’ al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 209.

20. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 491.

21. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 9; Vol. 6, p. 491; Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 63; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 21.

22. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu’allaḡāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 9-10; Aḡmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 64.

23. Zakī al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 3 (Damascus: Al-Idārah al-Siyāsīyah lil-Jaysh wa-al-Qūwāt al-Musallahah, 1974), pp. 497-479; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 65; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 26.

24. Sulaymān al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī fī Ḥayāt al-Shā‘ir Sulaymān al-‘Īsā wa-Dhākīratu-hu,” Pt. 1, *Al-Munādīl* (Damascus), No. 84, Apr. 1976, p. 54.

25. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 8-10; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 65; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 21-22; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, pp. 209-210.

26. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 10, 27; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 67; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 22, 27; Dandashī, *Ḥizb al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, pp. 18, 34; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 116.

27. The participants in the conference nominated ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Dandashī for the secretary general, and elected five members of the administrative committee; al-Dandashī, Fahmī al-Maḥḥayirī, Ṣabrī al-‘Asalī, Farīd Zayn al-Dīn and al-Arsūzī. The headquarter was set in Damascus, and branches were set in Homs, Tall Kalakh, Deir al-Zur, Antakia and Hamah. Also, they published *Al-‘Amal al-Qawmī* (The National Action), under the direction of ‘Uthmān Qāsim and Abū al-Hudā al-Yāfī. The League’s leaders were mainly young intellectuals who had advanced training; both in Europe (mostly in France) and at the Syrian University. Most of them belonged to poor land-owning or unpropertied families, practicing law or working as law instructors. The members’ average age in 1933 was 29, and the eldest member, Makram al-Atāsī, was 34 years old. With all its organization of the modern political party, the League was failed to establish a popular foundation, due to its elitist orientation and radical character. Nevertheless, it was highly appreciated as a starting-point for the contemporary Arab nationalist movements such as the Ba‘th Party. *Bayān al-Mu’tamar al-Ta’sīsī li-‘Uṣbat al-‘Amal al-Qawmī: Al-Mun’aqid fī Qarnāyil fī 4 Jumādā al-Ūlā Sanat 1352 Hijrī, 24 Aghuṣṭus Sanat 1933 Mīlādī* (Damascus: Al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘Aṣrīyah, 1933), 27 pp.; Muḥammad Ḥarb Farzāt, *Al-Ḥayāt al-Ḥizbīyah fī Sūriyā: Dirāsāt Tārīkhīyah lil-Nushū’ al-Aḥzāb al-Siyāsīyah wa-Taṭawwur-hā bayna 1908-1955* (Damascus: Dār al-Rawwād, 1955), pp. 138-141; Walīd al-Mu‘allim, *Sūriyah 1916-1946m: Al-Ṭarīq ilā al-Ḥurrīyah* (Damascus: Dār Ṭulās, 1988), pp. 264-265; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 400-401, 414-415, 423.

28. Farzāt, *Al-Ḥayāt al-Ḥizbīyah fī Sūriyā*, pp. 138-141; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, p. 401; al-Mu‘allim, *Sūriyah 1916-1946*, p. 265.

29. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 10-12, 27-28; Vol. 6, p. 489; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 26; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 210.

30. "Liwā' Iskandarūn wa-Dhikrā-hu al-Alīmah," *Jaysh al-Sha'b* (Damascus), No. 380, Dec. 1, 1958, as quoted in Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 65-66. See also al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 50.
31. Fā'iz Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Ustādh Fā'iz Ismā'īl," Pt. 2, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 102, Oct. 1977, pp. 44-45.
32. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Duktūr al-Rafīq 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Naqshbandī," Pt. 1, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 99, Jul. 1977, pp. 10-11; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 476-77.
33. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 10-12; Vol. 3, pp. 341-362; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 66; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 26.
34. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, p. 495. The Turkish government disputed the French statistics, estimating that the total population of Alexandretta was 300,000 and that the Turkish population was between 150,000 and 240,000. Avedis K. Sanjian, "The Sanjak of Alexandretta (Hatay): Its Impact on Turkish-Syrian Relations (1939-1956)," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Autumn 1956, p. 380.
35. Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 318; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 494-496, 499-500.
36. Wahīb al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Duktūr Wahīb al-Ghānim," Pt. 1, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 90, Oct. 1976, p. 39; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 11; Vol. 3, pp. 341-362; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 27; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 503-504; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 1, pp. 504-505.
37. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 12; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 66; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 28-29.
38. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 1, p. 39. See also al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 66-67.
39. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 13.
40. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, p. 506; al-Mu'allim, *Sūrīyah 1916-1946*, p. 311; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 280.
41. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 2, p. 459.
42. *Al-'Urūbah* (Antakia), No. 22, Nov. 25, 1937, as quoted in Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, pp. 480-481.
43. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 15; Vol. 6, p. 493; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 506-508; al-Mu'allim, *Sūrīyah 1916-1946*, pp. 314-315; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 277.
44. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 14-15; Vol. 6, p. 493; Khoury,

*Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 507-508, 510; al-Mu'allim, *Sūrīyah 1916-1946*, pp. 319-320.

45. The Franco-Turkish Friendship Treaty provided the following: neither France nor Turkey would enter into any political or economic combination directed against the other; if one of the states became a victim of aggression, the other would lend no help to the aggressor; in case of any threat to the territorial integrity of the Province, both states would collaborate in carrying out their responsibilities under the Geneva Accord. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, p. 511; al-Mu'allim, *Sūrīyah 1916-1946*, p. 317.

46. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 15; Vol. 6, p. 493; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 510-513; al-Mu'allim, *Sūrīyah 1916-1946*, pp. 317, 321; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 2, p. 319.

47. Fā'iz Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat al-Ustādh Fā'iz Ismā'īl," Pt. 1, *Al-Munāḍīl*, No. 101, Sep. 1977, pp. 28-30; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 15; Vol. 6, p. 493; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 22-23; al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, p. 42; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 57-58; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, pp. 510-511; Zarqah, *Qaḍīyat Liwā' al-Iskandarūn*, Vol. 3, pp. 206-207. According to al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, p. 56, the number of the students who migrated from Antakia with al-Arsūzī amounted to more than two hundred. Also, according to al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, p. 39, there were the 285 Arab students, all of whom were from sixth grade to eleventh grade.

48. Among the *liwā'iyūn* who lived with al-Arsūzī were Wahīb, Mas'ūd and Adīb al-Ghānim, and Sulaymān al-'Īsā. Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 45.

49. Sulaymān al-'Īsā, "Al-Bidāyāt," *Al-Ma'rīfah*, No. 113, Jul. 1971, p. 23; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 58-59; Sāmī al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th* (Beirut: Dār al-Nahār lil-Nashr, 1969), p. 26; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 15-18; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 56, 68-69; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 23-24, 30; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, p. 19; al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, pp. 42-45; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 41; al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, pp. 8, 10-11, 13.

50. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 16-18; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 56, 69-70, 73-75; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 23-24, 30-32; al-'Īsā, "Al-Bidāyāt," p. 23; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 68-71; Pt. 2, *Al-Munāḍīl*, No. 85, May 1976, p. 27; al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, pp. 15-16.

51. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, p. 41. See also al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, pp. 20-21; Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*, p. 427.

52. Al-Jundī, *Al-Ba‘th*, pp. 21-25. While Sāmī al-Jundī writes in details on the Arab Nationalist Party, none of al-Arsūzī’s disciples refers to its existence.

53. Al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, p. 46 notes that al-Arsūzī was appointed to a teaching post in 1940 and was soon dismissed.

54. Eric Rouleau, “The Syrian Enigma: What Is the Ba‘th?,” in Irene L. Gendier, ed., *A Middle East Reader* (New York: Pegasus, 1969), p. 158; al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 16-18; Vol. 6, pp. 527-528; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 56, 69-70, 73-75; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 23-24, 30-32; al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, p. 46; al-‘Īsā, “Al-Bidāyāt,” p. 23; al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, p. 61; Pt. 2, p. 27; al-Jundī, *Al-Ba‘th*, p. 25; al-Naqshbandī, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, p. 1. According to al-Jundī, *Al-Ba‘th*, p. 26, the Ba‘th Party was formed on November 29, 1940.

55. Al-‘Īsā, “Al-Bidāyāt,” pp. 31-32. See also al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, p. 61.

56. Al-‘Īsā, “Al-Bidāyāt,” pp. 32-33.

57. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, pp. 51, 493; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 31; al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 62-64; Pt. 2, p. 19; Ismā‘īl, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 2, p. 39.

58. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 493; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 31; al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 62-64; Pt. 2, p. 19.

59. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 493; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 31; al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 62-64; Pt. 2, p. 19.

60. Al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, p. 47 notes that the Ba‘th Party constructed its organs at the beginning of 1941.

61. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 30-31; al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 41, 46-47; al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 62, 64-66; Pt. 2, pp. 28-29.

62. Al-‘Īsā, “Bidāyāt al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 64-66 and Pt. 2, pp. 28-29 notes in his memoir that each cell was constituted by five members.

63. The hierarchical organization of the Ba‘th Party of April 7, 1947 was as follows: the national leadership (*qiyādah qawmīyah*), regional leaderships (*qiyādāt quṭrīyah > qiyādah quṭrīyah*), branches (*furū‘ > far‘*), divisions (*shu‘ab > shu‘bah*), companies (*fīraq > firqah*), and circles (*ḥalaqāt > ḥalqah*). Kamel S. Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party: History, Ideology, and Organization* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. 139-145; David Roberts, *The Ba‘th and the Creation of Modern Syria* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 114.

64. Al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...,” Pt. 1, pp. 47-49. According to al-Jundī,

*Al-Ba'th*, p. 26, when the Ba'th Party was formed, al-Arsūzī appointed 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Qaddūr to the secretariat of the political branch (*al-far' al-siyāsī*), Yahyā al-Sūqī to the secretariat of the cultural branch (*al-far' al-thaqāfī*), and Sāmī al-Jundī to the secretariat of the financial affair and a supervisor of the cells at the *tajhīzs*.

65. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 72-73; Pt. 2, pp. 20-21, 29; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 2, p. 51. According to al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 11-19, the Ba'thi members visited Latakia in the summer of 1942. When the mission composed of four or five students including Ṣidqī Ismā'īl visited Qardāḥah, it was invited by 'Alī Sulaymān, Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad's father to his house and won his sympathy with the movement of the Ba'th Party.

66. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 31; al-'Īsā, "Al-Bidāyāt," pp. 28-29; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, pp. 60, 66.

67. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, p. 60. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Duktūr al-Rafīq 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Naqshbandī," Pt. 2, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 100, Aug. 1977, pp. 7-8 notes that the slogan "one Arab nation with an eternal mission" was first heard in 1943 or 1944 then forgotten for a while, that is, until 1947.

68. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 527; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, p. 65; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 2, p. 50. In addition to these phrases, some student members were willing to scribble on the wall: "here we are living in the shadow of the great socialist Arab state" and "here we are living in the shadow of the one Arab homeland." Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, p. 72.

69. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 1, p. 46.

70. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 1, p. 47.

71. Wahīb Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Duktūr Wahīb al-Ghānim," Pt. 2, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 91, Nov. 1976, pp. 6-9.

72. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 18; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 69, 75; al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, p. 29.

73. Al-'Īsā, "Al-Bidāyāt," pp. 35-36. See also al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 21-23.

74. Wahīb al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat al-Duktūr Wahīb al-Ghānim," Pt. 3, *Al-Munāḍil*, No. 92, Dec. 1976, p. 7; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishtirākī*, p. 19; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 1, p. 58; al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...," Pt. 2, p. 7.

75. 'Aflaq was a teacher of history, and al-Bīṭār was a teacher of physics. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, p. 29.

76. Dhūqān Qarqūṭ, *Mīshīl 'Aflaq, al-Kitābāt al-Ūlā: Ma'a Dirāsāt Jadīdah li-Sīrat Ḥayāti-hi* (Beirut: Al-Mu'assasāt al-'Arabīyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 1993), pp. 172-181; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 32-33; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishirākī*, p. 34; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, p. 29; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 45.
77. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 29-30.
78. Wahīb al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat al-Duktūr Wahīb al-Ghānim," Pt. 4, *Al-Munādīl*, No. 93, Jan. 1977, pp. 12-13; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishirākī*, p. 34; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 46; al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, p. 33; al-Naqshbandī, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 1, p. 11; Rouleau, "The Syrian Enigma," p. 159.
79. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 33; al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, p. 31.
80. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, p. 30. See also al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 12.
81. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, pp. 32-33; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishirākī*, p. 34; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, pp. 45-46.
82. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 6, p. 51; Ismā'īl, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, p. 45.
83. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, p. 31.
84. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, pp. 11-13.
85. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 33; Dandashlī, *Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabī al-Ishirākī*, p. 34; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 31-32.
86. Al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 31-32.
87. Al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, p. 30.
88. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 17, 20; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 33; al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, pp. 14-15; al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī ...," Pt. 2, pp. 26-33; Pt. 4, *Al-Munādīl*, No. 87, Jul. 1976, p. 13.
89. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 35.
90. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 3, p. 12.
91. Al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 2, pp. 13-14.
92. Al-Jundī, *Al-Ba'th*, p. 30.
93. Sulaymān al-'Īsā, "Bidāyāt al-Ba'th al-'Arabī fī Ḥayāt al-Shā'ir Sulaymān al-'Īsā wa-Dhākīratu-hu," Pt. 3, *Al-Munādīl*, No. 86, Jun. 1976, pp. 6-18; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 34; al-Ghānim, "Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākīrat ...," Pt. 3, p. 11.
94. Al-Arsūzī, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 19; Vol. 6, p. 493; Aḥmad, *Zakī*

*al-Arsūzī*, p. 76. *Al-‘Abqarīyah al-‘Arabīyah fī Lisān-hā* is contained in *al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 41-230.

95. “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” p. 3 and Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 24 note that *al-Arsūzī* was nominated for a teacher at a secondary school in Hamah in 1946 then transferred to Aleppo as a teacher of philosophy in 1947.

96. *Al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 17, 20; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 76, 78-83ff.; al-Ghānim, “Al-Bidāyāt fī Dhākirat ...,” Pt. 2, pp. 14-15. These titles are partially contained in *al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 231-261; Vol. 2 (Damascus, al-Idārah al-Siyāsīyah lil-Jaysh wa-al-Qūwāt al-Musallahah, 1973), pp. 1-316.

97. According to “Ḥayāt al-Arsūzī fī Suṭūr,” p. 4, *al-Arsūzī* returned to Damascus to teach philosophy in 1953.

98. *Al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 21.

99. *Al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 19-21; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 76.

100. Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 35 notes that *al-Ummah al-‘Arabīyah* was published in 1955.

101. *Al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, p. 21; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, pp. 76-77; Barakāt, *Al-Fikr al-Qawmī*, p. 35. All these titles are contained in *al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 263-372; Vol. 2, pp. 317-432; Vol. 3, pp. 275-409; Vol. 4 (Damascus: Al-Idārah al-Siyāsīyah lil-Jaysh wa-al-Qūwāt al-Musallahah, 1974), pp. 15-468.

102. *Al-Arsūzī*, *Al-Mu‘allafāt al-Kāmilah*, Vol. 1, pp. 22-24, 27-33; Aḥmad, *Zakī al-Arsūzī*, p. 77; al-Jundī, *Al-Ba‘th*, p. 19.

### **Hiroyuki Aoyama**

Research Fellow of the Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO

Tokyo, Japan

### **Malek Salman**

Lecturer at Tishrin University,

Latakia, Syria