

Egyptian Nationalism as Seen by a French Diplomat

Syria has a border with Egypt, currently under European domination; at several times in its history, the former has been dependant on the latter – as indeed it currently is in commercial matters. Syrian merchants have ongoing relations with Egypt, they visit and know it; wealthy Syrians winter there.

The British do not trust the full-blooded Egyptians who serve them but reluctantly and with ulterior motives; they have accordingly filled Cairo and Alexandria's administrations with Syrians. Ideas of rights and freedom enjoy in the eyes of these young employees the full prestige of British power. In their continuous to-and-froing between Egypt and their country, the Syrians brought home the seeds of new ideas that were to take root in the ancient Lebanese soil.

M. Campana, French Consul in Beirut to M Pichon, Beirut 21 mars 1907, in Adel ISMAÏL, Documents diplomatiques, Tome XVII (1897-1907), n. 112