

Dr. Shibli Shumayyil (1860-1916) was perhaps the first Arab intellectual who introduced the concept of ishtirakiyah [socialism] to the Arab world. To him socialism meant the intervention of the state in the social process "to bring about co-operation in pursuit of the general welfare."²² He rejected all kinds of exclusive solidarity whether they be religious or nationalist. "National fanaticism was as bad as religious, and sooner or later loyalty to the limited watan must give way to the wataniyya of the world."²³ Other forerunners of the socialist trend were Farah Antun, Nicola Haddad and Amin al-Rihani. The three of them utilized the Arab Writers Association which was founded in New York in 1910 to further their objectives. They also contributed to al-Jami'ah, a socialist review, to expound their ideas on society and government. Unlike the main stream of liberal nationalists who put their faith in the initiative of the private entrepreneur to achieve national development along capitalist lines, these writers opted for a democratic socialist program carried by socialist parties through democratic means. At about the same time Salama Musa returned to Egypt from Britain where he received his education. He was keenly aware of the unprivileged position of his people, so he embarked on selling the ideas

²²Ibid., pp. 252-253.

²³Ibid., p. 252.