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To cite this article: Lauren Banko (2019): Keeping Out the 'Undesirable Elements': The Treatment of Communists, Transients, Criminals, and the Ill in Mandate Palestine, The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, DOI: [10.1080/03086534.2019.1576832](https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2019.1576832)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2019.1576832>



Published online: 20 Feb 2019.



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Keeping Out the ‘Undesirable Elements’: The Treatment of Communists, Transients, Criminals, and the Ill in Mandate Palestine

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ABSTRACT

In the new era of border control beginning after the First World War, the British-administered Palestine Mandate perceived non-Zionist migration as largely undesirable. Both discursively and practically, the Mandate administration crafted the category of the ‘undesirable migrant’ in order to limit its own responsibility for the presence in Palestine of economic, social, political, and morally undesirable Arab and Jewish migrants. Not only did the administration wish to absolve itself from responsibility and diplomatic protection over political agitators such as communists, but it also did not wish to support the mentally ill, transients, and labour migrants who settled in Palestine. The following offers an understanding of how best to situate this unwanted, largely non-Zionist migration into and out of Mandate Palestine within the broader history of Great Britain’s colonial and interwar treatment of undesirable movement.

KEYWORDS

Deportation; migrants; illegal immigrants; Palestine Mandate; citizenship; documentary identity

Introduction

In May 1935, a report from Mandate Palestine’s police force to officers in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) noted that in light of the high unemployment in Palestine, the force observed an increase in incidents of petty theft, breaking and entering of buildings, and other relatively-minor crimes. In addition, the report continued, the itinerant population of cities such as Jaffa had increased, which likely fuelled a number of the recent criminal acts.¹ The previous month, a separate report to the police on the deportation of members of this itinerant population, who largely came from the Hauran region in Syria, stressed the ‘very serious situation’ of potential criminality as linked to the 3,000–5,000 Syrian Arabs employed in temporary work in Jaffa. Almost entirely men and referred to both colloquially and in official immigration statistics as ‘Hauranis’, these temporary migrants had no fixed abode.

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Those who had no lodgings at all often sheltered themselves on verandas of houses and outdoors under orange groves in the mild spring weather. No doubt, according to this report, these men accounted for the increase in crime in Jaffa. The report recommended that the police receive authorisation to arrest up to twenty men per week if they were suspected to be Hauranis loitering without work.² The men would then be classified as undesirable migrants and scheduled for deportation back to Syria. The recommendation offered no suggestions as to how to distinguish between the undesirable Haurani migrant (aside from his active 'loitering') and the desirable one, or even between a Haurani and a Palestinian Arab. The treatment towards the Hauranis based on their mobility demonstrates one of the many ways in which the British administration in Palestine (1920–1948) institutionalised classifications of movement by certain classes or types of individuals as undesirable and unwanted.

The power of the colonial administration to shape and temper mobility worked in numerous ways. In line with the study of the colonial surveillance of mobility by Markovits, Pouchepadass and Subrahmanyam, the following essay demonstrates that interwar British colonialism in Palestine initiated a regime of surveillance and bio-social profiling of undesirable migrants. This regime allowed for governmental control over not only labour circulation but also the movements of a wide variety of other individuals and groups.³ Such movements became subject to difficulties and prohibitions. As argued here, the Mandate shaped mobility through the discursive use of the classification of the 'undesirable' (in official correspondence, *indésirable*) migrant. The discursive expansion of this term went hand in hand with the creation of legal frameworks that both banned the entry of suspected 'undesirables' and legalised their deportation or expulsion from Palestine. Furthermore, the authorities in the Mandate administration carried out these policies neither in isolation nor solely to promote Zionist settler-colonialism but rather as part of what Jean Smith refers to as the 'long history' of deportation of undesirables from British territory.⁴

Middle Eastern historians have long been concerned with social transformations wrought as a result of circulation and mobility.⁵ Persons classified as migrants, and then as undesirable migrants, during the interwar years may not have been perceived in this way until 1918. Few studies have been undertaken on limits to circulation and mobility in the late Ottoman or interwar period. The empirical case studies detailed below demonstrate how the *mobility* of certain Arab and Jewish migrants to Palestine who happened to be (or who the British suspected to be) Bolsheviks, communists, prostitutes, unskilled seasonal labourers, or mentally ill, marked them as undesirable subjects and thus led the authorities to treat them with less favouritism than the Mandate's own terms dictated. From 1920, Palestine's immigration and police authorities began to stereotype as unwanted and undesirable members of certain migrant

communities and socio-economic classes to better regulate non-citizen and citizen movement into the territory. Yael Berda argues that between the two world wars colonial powers in Palestine, Egypt, India, and elsewhere responded to perceived dangers from population movement by initiating surveillance and securitisation of resident populations and immigrants. Berda refers to the colonial foundations of 'biosocial profiling' that conflated criminals, immigrants, and political terrorists, and thus allowed the state to manage mobility by treating these categories interchangeably as undesirable and subject to deportation and exclusion.⁶ Berda's analysis links with similar arguments by historians of empire and migration as to how late nineteenth and twenty century deportation policies employed tactics similar to the poor laws of prior centuries. These laws '[drew] on a categorical distinction between those who should be granted the benefits of citizenship . . . and those who must be managed authoritatively, even despotically' in order to engineer a controlled and controllable subject population.⁷

The essay first examines the discursive categorisation of the undesirable migrant and the use of this category in Palestine at the start of the civil administration to target politically and socially-unwanted individuals and groups. As Torpey notes, identities given to individual migrants by the state significantly shape their short and long-term access to particular spaces.⁸ To paraphrase Mae Ngai, the undesirable migrant cannot be constituted without deportation.⁹ Here, the essay considers the Mandate administration's understandings and uses of deportation to limit migrants' access to certain spaces. The practice of deportation to remove unwanted migrants had to be weighed against the potential imperial and global consequences of the statelessness that these deportations caused. This is especially significant, because the widespread use of the passport and documentary identity to connote nationality had only just begun after 1918.¹⁰ Following this, the essay analyses the motivations behind the classification and regulation of the mobility of those migrants whose entry into Palestine did not stoke any fears of political or social upheaval. In the post-First World War era any Arab, Jewish, or other immigrant to Palestine who posed a significant financial or social welfare burden on the Mandate's limited resources could be placed by immigration authorities into the undesirable migrant category. Finally, it is necessary to consider the extent to which conditions that gave rise to unwanted immigration changed at their source as a result of Mandate policies by the end of the interwar period.

The Creation and Manifestation of the Undesirable Migrant

In pre-war Great Britain, the notion that national, cultural, and moral decline could be arrested by keeping the country culturally and socially *British* bolstered early support for legislation to restrict entry to particular foreigners. In 1905 the regulation of foreign arrivals to the British Isles began in earnest. Prior to that,

the United Kingdom had no legally-enshrined immigration restrictions, although foreigners had to show identity documents when required to do so. Only in the late nineteenth century did the government implement a policy that allowed port authorities to check the background of any individual who arrived by sea. Presumably, this procedure could prevent the spread of cholera and other highly-infectious diseases. The influence for tighter regulations came first from the United States. The US had a restrictive nineteenth century immigration protocol. In 1882, the US outlawed the entry into the country of criminals and prostitutes, and of persons defined as ‘idiots’, ‘insane’, and paupers. The legislation extended restrictions upon the entry of foreign arrivals who presented with any number of diseases including trachoma. In fact, US legislation first termed this range of restricted immigrants as ‘undesirables’.¹¹

As early as 1892, one British Liberal MP praised legislation that barred morally undesirable migrants from entering Australia and suggested that London should follow the lead of colonial officials and enact the same restrictions for the metropole. In the late nineteenth century, the foreign migrant, while unrestricted from entry, had become ‘a major discursive component in public discussion of the great “social evils” of the day’.¹² Eventually, and as a first step, the government decided to consider the status of destitute migrants and convened a special committee to research the restrictions that other states placed upon such individuals. Out of this committee came the 1905 Alien Act, which also targeted persons who suffered from a range of contagious diseases.¹³ The act defined undesirable migrants as ‘previous deportees, fugitive offenders, the mad and the destitute,’ and stipulated specific regulations for their entry.¹⁴

The classification of the *indésirable* was not limited to regulations passed in Great Britain and the US. By the 1920s, the use of this term had become widespread in other imperial metropolises, colonies, settler colonies, and protectorates. The term referenced the same character types: vagabonds, the physically and mentally ill, the unemployed, prostitutes, criminals, and bandits.¹⁵ Often, the lines between these categories blurred. Subsequent acts and amendments after 1905 in British colonies shaped a further definition of *indésirables* that included political agitators. The same classification appeared in French colonial legislation, as well as in places like Turkey and Egypt. It also appeared in settler-colonial legislation such as in South Africa. Within these spaces, the anti-alien sentiment associated with socially, morally, economically, and politically undesirable persons justified and facilitated the legal infrastructure needed to control immigration.¹⁶

As Eldhem Eldem argues for the case of post-First World War Smyrna, the official category of undesirable migrant expanded after 1918 to encompass political subversives such as propagandists, anarchists, and other agitators.¹⁷ Fears over political and social upheaval justified the government’s targeting of these individuals. For instance, Turkish officials in Smyrna focused on Bolsheviks

and communists.¹⁸ Anarchists too came to the attention of European governments by the turn of the century as potential agitators whose presence threatened social and political order in urban centres which depended on low-wage, unskilled labour. This growth of labour migration in the Mediterranean region led to the movement of anarchists across borders, especially from southern Europe to Egypt.¹⁹ By the end of the First World War, anarchists would be supplemented by communists and Bolsheviks as groups that Great Britain flagged as unwelcome aliens both at home and across the empire.

It is this pre-war and immediate post-war legislation which offered the basis for the regulation of certain migrants into and from Palestine after 1920. The establishment of a documentary regime by the British authorities under the Mandate that included visas, passports, and frontier controls abruptly and purposely halted the fluidity of frequent cross-frontier movements between Palestine and neighbouring territories. Any person not defined as a citizen or approved immigrant did not have the conditional right to enter the physical boundaries of Palestine without first passing through British-legislated restrictions on naturalisation and immigration. Most European Jews did have the right to enter and settle in Palestine so long as they promised to naturalise as citizens. The Mandate charter included the text of the 1917 Balfour Declaration in which the British government offered its support for the facilitation of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The charter stipulated Britain's support for Zionist Jewish immigration to Palestine and its foundational articles encouraged this type of migration, close settlement of Jews within the territory, privileges for Jewish institutions, and the creation of a citizenship law to ensure that immigrants received rights and privileges accorded to members of a future nation-state. According to the charter, the economic capacity of Palestine would regulate the number of Jewish immigrants able to settle. This meant that non-Jewish immigration compromised the facilitation of a Jewish homeland.²⁰ In light of this, the 1925 Palestine Citizenship Order-in-Council offered Palestinian citizenship for naturalised and indigenous residents who could prove that they intended to remain in Palestine permanently. The order stipulated that Jewish immigrants could either claim citizenship based on a two-year minimum residence if they arrived before 1925, or through the official, simple process of naturalisation after 1925.²¹

British colonial policy-makers in Palestine and in London undertook a similar task to their metropolitan and Commonwealth counterparts as they drafted naturalisation and immigration legislation that prevented the entry and settlement of non-citizens. Colonial officials' aversion to migrants that could potentially cause political and communal instability played an early role in the categorisation of undesirables. As time went on, the administration placed other migrants into the same category if they posed a potential drain on the Mandate's resources and the diplomatic capabilities of British consuls, or if their presence threatened the Zionist project. Palestine's citizenship legislation

emphasised that would-be citizens possess a vague and arbitrary ‘good character’.²² Any individual who acted with disloyalty towards the government of Palestine, expressed immoral behaviour, or applied for citizenship solely in order to gain British diplomatic protection could be denied naturalisation. In addition, the government reserved the right to revoke the citizenship and naturalisation certificates of individuals who displayed a ‘bad’ character or posed a threat to political and social order.

In the early 1920s, the prevention of communist or Bolshevik infiltration into Palestine sat at the forefront of colonial officials’ minds. In part, colonial practice in Egypt prior to 1920 informed anti-Bolshevik policy in Palestine. Beginning in 1917, British authorities in Egypt severely suppressed any activity that could be construed as evidence of political subversion.²³ Only a couple of years later, the first foreign arrivals to Palestine to be classified by immigration officials as undesirable for their politically-radical sympathies were Eastern European Jews. A small but not insignificant percentage of émigré Jews from Russia entered Palestine before and immediately after Russia’s 1917 revolution. Many of them identified with the secular, nationalist project of the Zionist movement. Even so, and despite the ideological tension between communism and nationalism, Russian Jews had a strong presence in the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) formed in 1923. This alarmed British officials, who sought to restrict the entry of European Jews affiliated with Bolshevism or the Comintern. The officials believed the latter to be unfaithful not only to Palestine as a Jewish national homeland under the Mandate, but also unwilling to offer loyalty to the British administration. As Eli Tzur notes, the Colonial Office truly believed that the Bolsheviks targeted Palestine as a site of expansion, and colonial authorities actively ‘search[ed] for the emissaries of evil in its domain’.²⁴ Palestine’s burgeoning documentary regime and border control system confronted this ‘evil’ as its first immigration and colonial officials advocated a retooling of UK-based deportation laws in order to remove ‘subversives’. As discussed in the next section, the varied national statuses of Eastern European Jews complicated processes of deportation.

Deportation and the Undeportable: Citizen and Non-citizen Communists

Throughout the 1920s, the Mandate government expressed concern that agents of the Comintern, or the Third International, and their Soviet-sponsored activities would potentially radicalise the Jewish workforce in Palestine against British rule.²⁵ Police surveillance of the movements of communists increased, and the police passed information to immigration department officials. From the first decade of the Mandate, these two institutions shared mutually-beneficial information on immigrants. Part of this monitoring involved the assessment by the government as to whether suspected communists could be deported from the

territory. As the government in Jerusalem initiated deportations of unwanted political activists, British consuls soon responded that imported legislative measures were unsuitable for specific contingencies related to the Zionist project in Palestine.

The British Foreign Office, which managed Palestine's relations with foreign entities, faced the brunt of the political impact from complications in the deportation of Eastern European Jews. According to the law of the Soviet Union, Russian Jews who took on Palestinian citizenship automatically ceased to be Russian. Once the Palestine government revoked Russian Jews' naturalisation certificates, they became stateless. This meant that the Mandate, and by extension the Foreign Office, could neither repatriate nor deport Russian Jews who had naturalised as Palestinian citizens. Other countries, including Poland and Romania, adhered to the same principle in cases of Jewish nationals who naturalised as Palestinians and refused to accept their repatriation.²⁶

The Mandate administration found itself caught between a rock and a hard place: statelessness posed international and diplomatic problems between Great Britain and foreign governments, and it forced undesirable migrants in Palestine to become the de facto responsibility of Great Britain. At the same time, neither governments in London nor Jerusalem could issue blanket bans on the immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union. The problems that arose out of deportations of naturalised citizens remained unsolved by the latter half of the 1920s. For instance, in 1928 Palestine's Chief Secretary recommended that three Jewish militant communists imprisoned for taking part in illegal assemblies be swiftly deported. According to the Department for Prisons, twelve other communists housed in the Central Prison in Jerusalem's Russian Compound caused 'considerable trouble', and the department also recommended their deportation. Upon investigation, the Department of Migration found that several of these men, including the three militants, could not be deported without becoming stateless.²⁷ As naturalised Palestinian citizens of Russian, Polish, or Romanian origin, they became 'undeportable' despite the police insistence these prisoners posed significant threats to political and social order. In 1930, Palestine's police commandant stressed to the chief secretary that convicted 'unimportant' and 'lower-class' communists remained dangerous agitators who should be slated for deportation.²⁸

Deportation nonetheless remained a mainstay of colonial policy especially when 'conducive to the public good'.²⁹ Under Foreign Office pressure, both the Palestine Police and Department of Migration sought to find a way to deport naturalised communists convicted under Palestinian law back to their countries of birth. For its part, the government's legal officers argued that Polish and Romanian laws that de-nationalised Jewish citizens who arrived to Palestine as immigrants conflicted with international law. The lawyers suggested that the Foreign Secretary contest in The Hague the laws of Poland and Romania in order to push both countries to adopt international regulations that prevented

the revocation of nationality without an individual's consent. This would solve the involuntary creation of statelessness for certain immigrants.³⁰ The police also suggested that time had come for 'comprehensive action' to deport all political agitators regardless of the changes it caused to their documentary identity. Indeed, in 1930, the police commandant requested permission to apply the Prevention of Crimes Ordinance in cases that involved undesirable migrants and citizens who could not be deported.³¹

Deportations and Minimizing Mobility: The Politics of Deportation Orders

In light of legal and financial complications that arose when the government ordered deportations, Palestine's high commissioner recommended in 1930 that further measures be undertaken to curb the migration of Russian Jews to Palestine in order to exclude entry of Jews deemed likely to engage in communist activity upon their arrival. This recommendation, while not a blanket exclusion of Russian immigrants, nonetheless sparked the ire of the Zionist Organisation and Zionist leaders within Palestine and Europe. The government even formed the Inter-departmental Committee on Immigration from Russia, which met to devise methods to govern the entry of politically-undesirable or potentially-undesirable Russian Jews.³² The committee included the input and presence of the Department of Migration's chief immigration officer, Albert Montefiore Hyamson. Hyamson recommended that Russian Jewish immigrants who intended to settle in Palestine be refused re-entry if they travelled back to the Soviet Union at any point.³³ The suggestion was intended to minimise the cross-border travels to and from the Soviet Union by Palestinians selected as PCP delegates. The paranoia over this type of mobility came out of fear that anti-colonial, transnational Jews (and Arabs) could de-stabilise British rule in the wider Middle East. Just as pressing, however, was Whitehall's aversion to mobile, politically undesirable migrants making claims to British diplomatic protection.

In 1933, an amendment to the ordinance delegated deportation powers to the inspector-general and deputy inspector-general of police, and the head of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). The treatment of persons issued with a deportation order varied, and the deportation process often took several months to complete. Legislation stipulated that migrants and naturalised citizens slated for removal be detained in custody pending deportation.³⁴ According to the 1933 amendment, illegal and unwanted migrants selected for deportation fell into two categories based on their national status. Individuals without nationality or identity papers and whose governments refused to recognise them formed one category. Other migrants who possessed valid national passports and whose governments did recognise them fell into the second category. Individuals in the former group were, in the words of the migration

department, 'practically irremovable'. The government did not view the second category much more positively: as time passed, members of this group became less 'deportable' especially if their passports expired.³⁵

Persons from both groups tried a number of tactics to become irremovable, often making the immigration and documentary regime work in their favour. Common attempts to delay deportation included repeated appeals against deportation orders. More interesting tactics to remain in Palestine included claims to real or false vested interests in the territory, actual or invented employment, ill health, or a potential increase in family size. People also claimed that legal proceedings had been taken out against them in Palestine's courts. In one case, a man convinced friends to take out repeated civil lawsuits against him in order to delay deportation proceedings. Unmarried undesirable women subject to deportation orders often married Palestinian citizens and thus received Palestinian citizenship.³⁶ Other potential deportees used the lack of paperwork to press for concessions or to knowingly lead to diplomatic disputes over nationality and repatriation. As Andrew MacDonald has argued for the case of colonial southern Africa, in the early twentieth century paperwork served as a critical ingredient to make or break migrants' challenges to colonial power.³⁷

In order to prevent disputes over deportation, the Palestine administration increasingly tightened control over its own borders to pre-empt illegal entry through the use of immigration officers who coordinated with the CID. The case study of one suspected communist whose movements came to the attention of the Palestine Police in 1938 reveals the vigilant nature of immigration officials in Palestine in reaction to suspected disloyal citizens. Alexander Loubling, born in Poland and a stonemason by profession, acquired Palestinian citizenship in early 1927.³⁸ Around that time, he served as an elected member of the Quarrier's Union, a subsidiary of the PCP. He held a leading role in as a member of the PCP with connections to communists in Beirut and within Syria. He also supported efforts at labour unionisation.³⁹ In the late 1930s, a report to the high commissioner flagged as suspicious Loubling's five-year absence from Palestine. The police and the Colonial Secretary, in discussion with immigration officials, suspected Loubling's involvement with Comintern-sponsored trips to the Soviet Union. The police inspector-general noted that Loubling's absence from Palestine and his supposedly-dubious political activities justified the revocation of his passport and certificate of naturalisation.⁴⁰ One of the trips took place the year that Loubling received citizenship, 1927, when he participated in a communist delegation that travelled to Moscow to join in celebrations on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.⁴¹

Authorities knew of Loubling's anti-imperial and anti-Zionist connections with more radical communists in Palestine. In March 1931 a mandate judge sentenced Loubling to a fine or two weeks' imprisonment after that judge expelled him from a Jewish agricultural settlement (*moshav*) on the grounds that he

spread propaganda in support of relocating all Jewish settlement from Palestine to Birobidjan (Birobidzhan) in the far east of Russia. A number of Soviet and North American Jews depicted Birobidjan, declared the Jewish Autonomous Region in 1934, as the ideological alternative homeland for Yiddish-speaking Soviet Jews. The site as the alternative to a Zionist homeland in Palestine appealed to Marxist and leftist Jews. Efforts at mass propaganda for settlement in Birobidjan increased in the 1930s when the region became autonomous, and lasted until 1937 when Stalin began purges of Jewish leaders in the Soviet Union.⁴² Loubling's enthusiasm for a new, Soviet-supported Jewish settlement outside of Palestine constituted disloyalty to the administration in Palestine. The presumed act of disloyalty, in combination with Loubling's frequent travels across Palestine's borders to meet with other communists, and his long absences from the Mandate territory, had significant consequences. In 1938 High Commissioner MacMichael approved the annulment of Loubling's Palestinian citizenship *in absentia*.⁴³ Men and women like Loubling—naturalised Palestinian citizens whose migratory paths led to the administration levelling accusations of misuse of their citizenship—faced deportation from Palestine and a government increasingly willing to strip individuals of their citizenship regardless of the consequences.

The Mandate also rationalised the benefit over time of deporting impoverished communists, even if the government had to cover the initial deportation costs. At the time of the Spanish Civil War, Palestine's solicitor-general advised that a number of destitute returnee-communists from the International Brigades be deported to South American states at the government's expense. It is unclear whether these communists held the nationality of any of the South American countries to which they were deported. This posed an interesting case: the government took the responsibility to pay for their removal in order to ensure they could not claim British protection or financial assistance.⁴⁴

Palestinian Arabs who engaged in what the administration saw as equally politically and socially undesirable activities and associations were not immune from mobility restrictions. Their mobility, however, meant that unlike Jewish Palestinian citizens and Jewish immigrants who had not yet naturalised, Arabs could more easily cross the borders without passports. Through the 1920s and early 1930s a small number of Arabs, along with others across Asia and Africa, travelled periodically to Moscow for training in the Communist University of the Toilers of the East at the behest of the Comintern. In the summer of 1930, the CID reported the names of fourteen Arabs selected to travel to Moscow. The government could not prevent the travel of those who possessed passports, visas, and endorsed travel documents.⁴⁵ The CID and immigration officials instead devised other regulations that justified the removal of some of their passports.⁴⁶ The police also suggested that strict action be taken against the individual Arab citizen-travellers. As a result, the CID introduced a new measure to allow for sections of the Prevention of Crimes Ordinance to be

applied to citizens charged with illegal communist activities or disloyalty.⁴⁷ Only in the most serious cases did the high commissioner order the deportation of a citizen for political offenses.

Although the number of individuals deported from Palestine for suspect activities remained low, the issue of responsibility for those persons whom it made stateless remained a thorny one. In addition, political agitators were not the only migrants classified as unsuitable. The administration faced the same problems as it exercised power to limit the mobility of groups whose characters became suspect in more subtle ways.

Restricting the Mobility of Transients in Palestine

State-led attempts to reorder society and politics in both the French and British-administered mandate territories included restricting the mobility of nomadic, semi-nomadic, and transient groups. Within the borders of Palestine, mandatory officials often flagged the movement of indigenous Bedouin as suspicious or unwanted. This bio-social profiling of Bedouin encompassed yet another part of the Mandate's disciplinary project aimed to repress unwanted mobility and undesirable migration. The settlement of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups in the former Ottoman Empire became a contentious political issue only during the late nineteenth century reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. With the assumption of the British and French mandates in the Arab provinces of the former empire, processes to settle mobile groups continued.⁴⁸ This went hand-in-hand with the enforcement of documentary regimes and frontier controls: mandate legislation linked citizenship, nationality, and consequently, mobility, to permanent residence.⁴⁹ The British and French used citizenship as a reward to coerce mobile groups to settle. At the same time, the British pressured Bedouin to assist with information-gathering in the region's deserts and frontier spaces.⁵⁰

For colonial states, the mobility of nomadic and transient populations posed a threat to social order on a local level. Semi-nomadic groups are historically problematic from the perspective of the modern state simply because their movements and activities cannot be easily controlled or managed. Seasonal migration also put a strain on economic resources at various times during the year. Palestine's police and CID depicted mobile persons as akin to transients without permanent domicile. This differed markedly from the Ottoman Empire's symbiotic relationship with tribal groups.⁵¹ Conversely, the Mandate's immigration regulations targeted the migrant-as-transient and barred persons classified as transients from unauthorised entry into Palestine.

Unskilled seasonal or day labourers faced similar restrictions on movement. These mobile persons had few *settled* family connections or references in Palestine that could be called upon in times of need. Significantly, the police often equated migrant workers with potential criminals. The work of Ronen Shamir

traces this particular mistrust of mobility through the nineteenth century, finding its beginnings linked to the urban bourgeoisie's aversion to any individual without property, connections, or work. This mistrust is important, Shamir argues, for the 'increasing formal criminalization of mobility itself' in the century before the First World War.⁵² In Palestine, labelling semi-nomadic persons and seasonal labourers as transients gave the police justification to prosecute and even deport them.

The native Bedouin population faced the expansion of 'settled' space from the beginning of the Mandate. Similar to Arnaud Sauli's argument for the nineteenth century Punjab, the colonial administrative apparatus intruded into the space and practices of nomadic populations and aimed to reorder newly-colonial territory. The circulation of peoples became 'a social practice alien to processes of frontier building and administrative regulation' and officials understood the circulation 'on the margins' of territory to be 'a radical contestation of colonial rule'.⁵³

One case that spanned the 1930s and 1940s highlights the administration's own uncertainty over removing semi-nomadic groups from Palestine. In 1931, a man by the name of Hassan Hussein Said came to the attention of the district commissioner in Haifa, the Palestine Police, and officials in Palestine's Department of Migration. Initially referred to as a non-citizen Bedouin, the district commissioner ordered Said's deportation. A decade later, Said again came to the attention of the police who classified him as an illegal immigrant settled in the village of Salameh, near Jaffa. Calling him a 'Kurdish nomad' who 'wandered into Palestine', one immigration official exasperatedly wrote in 1941 that 'there was no reason why he should not "wander" out again'.⁵⁴ They labelled Said a nomad and the police and immigration department noted that people 'of his type' could not claim *de facto* citizenship or the right to residency within the borders of Palestine.⁵⁵

While the police recommended that Said be deported as a Kurdish illegal immigrant, another immigration official suggested that he be treated as certain Eastern European Jewish illegal immigrants often were: marked as illegally in Palestine but 'undeportable'. In response, Said's advocate wrote to the government that his client belonged to a Kurdish tribe whose members travelled with their animals 'from one country to another'. Entering Palestine as a 'wandering [t]ribesman of the Kurds while still a child' under Ottoman rule, the advocate wrote, Said established residence near Jaffa and qualified as a Palestinian citizen. The advocate added '[Said] being a Kurd does not belong to any other country at all nor hold a passport of any other Land [*sic*]'.⁵⁶ Said's case demonstrates British authorities' perception of mobile, semi-nomadic groups as without rights to claim citizenship or residence in Palestine. By virtue of their mobility they could thus be deported repeatedly as needed. Said's situation also demonstrates the tension that arose from the documentary regime, itself

designed to classify each person in a given territory in order to fix his or her national identity based on that classification.

Unlike the case of political undesirables and communists, Bedouin did not occupy positions as political threats vis-à-vis the mandate government; rather, they posed social threats. From 1920, after waves of violence, banditry, and frequent uprisings by semi-nomadic groups against French authorities, the high commissioner in Syria began a policy of pacification of Syria's tribes. Throughout the mid-1920s, the French army actively divided rival branches of Bedouin tribes on both sides of Syria's frontiers: sections of tribes re-settled across the border in British-controlled Iraq, Transjordan, and Palestine.⁵⁷ This likely impacted the perception by Palestine's authorities of migratory, semi-nomadic persons likely to commit acts of social disorder. Immigration and police officials allowed semi-nomadic groups who came to the attention of the administration to remain in Palestine on the condition that they *permanently* settled there. The latter option did not automatically grant these individuals citizenship, but rather gave them protection from deportation. If Bedouin came to the attention of frontier officials, they had to prove they were sedentary. If they could not, officials deported them back across the frontier in the direction they had come.

Bedouin were not the only category labelled as transients. Seasonal migrants, such as those who came to Palestine as unskilled labourers during the agricultural season, fell within the same category. Since their migration depended upon available short-term employment, authorities feared that the loss of employment caused seasonal migrants to nonetheless remain in Palestine as transients, rough sleepers, criminals, and vagabonds. For immigration officers, a fine line existed between tolerated economic migrants and undesirable ones. The latter, of course, had no recourse to remain in Palestine even if they had settled in that territory.

The case of nineteenth century South Asia is illustrative for the context of early twentieth century Palestine. In large part, the British in India developed a form of 'colonial knowledge' deployed in other colonial situations after 1918. In nineteenth century Madras, the British colonial authorities increased the surveillance of different mobile groups, including itinerant traders, or peddlers, especially near the frontiers and in areas with ethnically-heterogeneous and migratory populations. As Ian Kerr explains, itinerant workers faced degrading treatment through India despite their importance to local economies.⁵⁸ The British also regulated the movement of these workers in order to exercise control over the latter's suspected potential for criminality. In addition propagating stereotypes of petty criminality, authorities in Madras also claimed that the workers' movements posed a threat to destabilising both British rule and society itself.⁵⁹ The colonial government did not always distinguish between criminal and peddler in India since it believed nomadic and wandering groups had no respect for the laws and morals that came out of settled existence.⁶⁰

The reasoning behind modern historical surveillance by colonial authorities of itinerant groups goes back in both time and space to early nineteenth century London. Great Britain's 1824 Vagrancy Act, built upon two centuries of anti-vagrancy fear and legislation aimed to curb social disorder, targeted migrant workers and other groups. Under this law, public authorities could arrest individuals found to be loitering, wandering, trespassing, or causing indecent exposure or indecent behaviour. The legislation, argues Jeremy Martens in his study of colonial Natal, came at a time of increasing movement by an itinerant and mobile workforce into urban spaces. This, in turn, posed a threat to the morals of middle-class women in particular as well as to the social order in the environment of London. The act targeted the threat to public spaces and public morals caused by suspected vagrants (who may or may not be under the guise of itinerant labourers).⁶¹ In the case of Palestine, the threat of indecent exposure to women by such a class of wandering men may not have been the primary motivation for surveillance and classification of mobile groups but the act's principles applied all the same.

During most of the Mandate, large numbers of Syrian Arabs from the Hauran region crossed into Palestine for seasonal work. Haurani Arabs had long-standing social and economic ties with the territory that the imposition of borders and frontier control posts did not immediately nullify. By the late 1920s and early 1930s as the pace of urbanisation, industrialisation, and cash crop agriculture increased, large numbers of Hauranis entered Palestine through the Galilee region without visas or passports.⁶² They sought agricultural work or continued further west to work as urban wage labourers in the ports, on the oil pipeline, and in the construction of the railway across Palestine.

Initially, the mandatory did not necessarily see economically-driven, cross-border migration as undesirable. In 1922, the British and French signed an initial *Bon Voisinage* (Good Neighbor) Agreement to regulate matters that concerned the shared frontiers of their mandate territories. As part of this, the agreement promised that the nomadic inhabitants of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria would all enjoy grazing, cultivation, and water rights on their traditional pasture lands. Importantly, the agreement also promised to allow semi-nomadic Arabs to cross the frontiers of the mandates without the need for passports.⁶³ Hauranis, however, not being traditionally defined as a nomadic population, presented a different case.

By 1937, an estimated 2,500 Hauranis had illegally settled in Palestine although thousands migrated seasonally.⁶⁴ Their migration through the borderland between Palestine and Syria as well as their presence in the port cities had a significant impact upon the workings of the Department of Migration. The department's differentiation between Hauranis and other Syrian Arabs led to its classification of Hauranis as the more undesirable migrants.⁶⁵ On the basis of high migration figures, by the mid-1930s the department offered the Hauranis temporary immigration and emigration privileges that allowed their visa-free

movement within Palestine. The need for agricultural labour on Jewish settlements and the willingness of many Haurani Arabs to work on these settlements meant that Zionist leaders supported their entry into Palestine. This in turn convinced the CID to refrain from their mass deportation during agricultural seasons.⁶⁶

However, Zionist leaders in Palestine did not welcome all Arab economic migrants equally. This attitude offers another explanation behind the immigration department's transition from perceiving Hauranis first as benign and then as unwanted. Responding to fears voiced in letters and petitions by Jewish groups to the government in the early 1930s, immigration officials stated that the numbers of other Arabs in Palestine had not reached high levels. Yet, the Yishuv continued to express fear over excessive numbers of 'illegal' Arab transients who entered Palestine without immigration certificates. For example, in 1935 a total of 1200 Arabs came as labourers or for 'other non-immigrant purposes'.⁶⁷ Combined with reports of criminal activity by labourers, the CID began to target them in various ways. While it did not deport Hauranis en masse, the government reserved the right to deport anyone it deemed to be a financial burden upon Mandate resources or any community in Palestine. This included migrants who became part of the urban destitute population and disabled or sick individuals who did not have resources to provide for their own care.

By the early 1930s, the increased number of Haurani Arabs who entered Palestine and did not return to Syria during the planting and harvesting seasons alarmed both the British and members of the Yishuv. In fact, due to unfavourable economic and weather conditions in the Hauran including a prolonged drought in the mid-1930s, these Arabs often tried to settle more permanently in Palestine.⁶⁸ The Hauranis contributed to what Donnan and Wilson refer to as the 'subversive economy': an economy fuelled by under-the-radar, undocumented labour migrants and cross-border smuggling of people and goods.⁶⁹ In the eyes of a number of CID and Department of Migration officials, this subversive economy undermined the Yishuv as well as the employment of Palestinian Arabs. By the summer of 1935, the Palestine Police considered the regulation of Haurani migrants in Palestine through the introduction of identity cards for non-Palestinian Arab workers. Officials also suggested legalisation of Haurani migration only for a specific period of time during the agricultural season. If the government put these provisions in place, the police could then vigorously deport those Arabs found in 'a state of vagabondage or criminal intent', or without identification. However, the idea to regulate workers did not meet the approval of the high commissioner. The latter did, however, give his consent to allow the police to deport any Haurani suspected of being unemployed or found loitering with no means of support during the night, without the need to refer the case to immigration authorities. Despite the deportation of individual migrants, many swiftly returned to Palestine.⁷⁰

The Moral and Social Boundaries of Palestine's Unwanted Migrants

It is not surprising that the authorities equally targeted migrants who could potentially become a long-term burden on the government or on Palestine's communities. The Mandate administration did not spend a significant part of its budget on public welfare. It had little desire to spend any resources for the hospitalisation or imprisonment of any non-citizen migrant, especially those considered to have questionable moral backgrounds. As a result, individuals deemed to be sick, poor, or of ill-repute, and without the right to settle in Palestine faced the likelihood of deportation.

The high commissioner had the authority to approve the removal or refusal of entry of a number of migrants with illnesses or handicaps, in line with existing United Kingdom anti-alien legislation.⁷¹ This legislation underpinned the administration's justifications for the deportation from Palestine of physically and mentally handicapped or ill non-citizens. This is not unique, of course: Smith demonstrates that in two other cases of settler colonialism during the interwar years, Australia and South Africa, United Kingdom legislation applied to deport settlers who had become undesirable due to mental illnesses. Similar to protocol in Palestine, in Australia and South Africa, mental health hospitals and colonial authorities shared information regarding patients including their means of family and financial support and their 'deportability.'⁷² In Palestine, the Department of Health worked closely with the Controller of Permits section of the Immigration Department. For instance, in the early 1920s, the Department of Health confirmed for immigration officials that it could not guarantee that 'physically infirm' persons who entered Palestine either with the financial means to do so or as a dependent of an economically-stable migrant would not in the future become a charge on public funds. Immigrants who entered through the ports of Jaffa and Haifa underwent medical exams; however, the Immigration Regulations specified that labour migrants who suffered from 'diseases' including 'lunatics, idiots, mentally deficient' would be turned away from entry. 'Diseased' persons who were dependents of capitalist immigrants would only be 'admitted sparingly'. Through the 1920s, immigration officials made the suggestion that immigrant visas should not be handed out to any person who had not first undergone a pre-arrival medical exam.⁷³

The list of mental illnesses which could disqualify migrants from further settlement and citizenship in Palestine ranged from conditions of schizophrenia and dementia praecox to manic depression and hysteria (not surprising, commonly diagnosed in women).⁷⁴ The list of physical handicaps was similarly varied. The government saw these conditions as liabilities. According to the underlying rationale for deporting adult migrants diagnosed with particular illnesses, these people drained Mandate resources. They could not work or earn a living, and those without close relatives had no other means of support.

In the 1940s a blind man originally from Lebanon appealed the government's decision to deport him back to that country. Tannous Nayef Sayah, twenty-six at the time, was sent to Palestine in 1931 to attend the School for the Blind in Hebron. Sayah finished his course in 1937 and obtained a diploma. In 1942, he came to the attention of the police, who claimed the man to be 'conversant with political activities'. By then, Sayah had resided in Palestine for eleven years. Despite the charge of political activism, the Department of Migration doubted the seriousness of these activities and focused instead on the evidence as to whether Sayah held stable employment. When the department found that he had become destitute, it hesitated to allow him to remain in Palestine as a 'burden'.⁷⁵

The report on Sayah's appeal noted that in his eleven years in Palestine, he 'clandestinely' crossed into Lebanon once. This instance, as in many other cases of non-Palestinian residents, was grounds for deportation. The government, as well as the Foreign Office, repeatedly argued that visits outside of the borders of the territory proved an individual's lack of commitment to residence in Palestine. Visits to family or friends, made without visas or passports, across the border marked an individual as an undesirable resident in the eyes of the Department of Migration. Even further, these visits re-classified travellers as illegal migrants upon their return. For his part, Sayah maintained a tenuous link with his brother in Lebanon. As he argued in the appeal, he did not wish to return to Lebanon. Syria, he wrote (including Lebanon), was 'my own ex country'.⁷⁶ Even so, the police recommended a deportation order be issued against him.

Of course, Sayah was not 'undesirable.' He was a young man from neighbouring Lebanon, blind, and without permanent employment, but he had held previous jobs. Two references in his appeal stated their years-long familiarity with Sayah, and both had employed him for several years. In an unusually benign manner, the government suggested that if Sayah could find a job within three months and remain settled in Palestine, it would rescind the deportation order. A brush maker by trade, Sayah soon found regular work at the Organisation for the Welfare of the Blind in Palestine.⁷⁷ The archival record is unclear as to whether his work continued after the three month grace period. Sayah's case can be linked to others in which able-bodied, non-native Arabs found to have crossed into Palestine without permission usually could not produce proof of income or steady work.

Mandate records documented patients in Palestine's hospitals that cared for the mentally handicapped. Citizen-patients under care for mental illnesses in these hospitals were differentiated from non-citizen, immigrant patients. The Department of Health cooperated with the Department of Migration in producing monthly lists drawn from Palestine's hospitals for the mentally ill. The lists marked known migrants as well as patients with unclear migration statuses. The Department of Health sent these lists onward to immigration officers, who

checked the names against their own lists of non-naturalised migrants. The migration department believed mental illness to be a 'permanent disability' and thus immigrants who presented with such disabilities were subject to deportation orders.⁷⁸ Unless a doctor reported otherwise, it seems that the immigration officials had few qualms with marking diagnosed, mentally ill immigrants for deportation. Many migrants classified with health problems resided in Palestine for years if not decades prior to their deportation orders.

The morally-unsavoury also had little recourse to legal appeals to remain in Palestine. The most prominent category of immoral persons was that of 'undesirable women'. According to the authorities, such women used men to access citizenship privileges through marriages of convenience. These marriages compelled the government to allow them to remain in Palestine. The marriages themselves also flagged certain women to immigration authorities in the first place. The idiom 'undesirable women' usually appears in immigration ordinances and correspondence between the Palestine Mandate government and the Department of Migration in relation either to non-citizen prostitutes who entered Palestine or to women who entered Palestine in order to conduct false marriages to obtain Palestinian citizenship.

The government periodically amended immigration and citizenship legislation with the intent to block the pathways through which women married Palestinian men solely in order to receive citizenship. It also targeted men who encouraged their wives to undertake fictitious marriages. Until the 1930s, under Palestinian and British law women acquired the nationality of their husbands upon marriage.⁷⁹ This allowed Jewish women to enter into marriages with Palestinian citizens without the need to independently meet naturalisation requirements. Only in 1939 did the government approve an amendment to the Palestine Citizenship Order-in-Council which required separate naturalisation for men and for women regardless of marital status.⁸⁰ Throughout the years of the Mandate, the government attempted to track the number of Jewish women who divorced their husbands after they entered Palestine. For instance, government statistics showed that out of the total number of registered Jewish marriages in 1936, over half ended in divorce by 1938. In addition, in the first half of 1938 alone, seventy-three Jewish women in Poland were refused Palestinian passports for falsely claiming Palestinian citizenship.⁸¹ Immigration officials pursued suspected women even into its final decade of the Mandate's existence.

While the term 'undesirable women' usually referenced Jewish women, the government occasionally targeted Arab women for their claims to Palestinian citizenship under false pretences. In the mid-1940s, the mandate's attorney general issued a deportation order against an Arab woman, Fatmeh bint Mohammad Hasaad 'Ammar. Fatmeh's brief marriage to Mustafa Kassim Khalil ended in March 1941. The attorney general argued that the marriage was 'probably a fictitious one for the sole purpose of attempting to acquire

Palestinian citizenship'.⁸² The government aimed to deport Fatmeh since her marriage had ended and she thus lost the right to claim citizenship. However, the government found its efforts thwarted once it realised that Fatmeh had been married previously to another Palestinian citizen. That marriage, in 1939, occurred before the passage of the amendment to the citizenship order that stipulated women do not continue to hold the nationality of their husbands after the dissolution of a marriage. Still, the government claimed Fatmeh's first husband had actually been Egyptian. If Fatmeh could be found to have first married an Egyptian, she would retain her Egyptian nationality after the dissolution of the second marriage.⁸³ The correspondence does not explicitly note the final judgment on the woman's nationality, but it is likely that the government deported her. The government sought to minimise chances that divorced women without legal claims to citizenship remained in Palestine.

The government also targeted women suspected of practicing immoral professions. In the 1920s, discussions took place between Palestinian authorities and consuls elsewhere in region on how to categorise solo female travellers. One category of women under scrutiny was that of performers: singers, dancers, and actresses who appeared in dancehalls and theatres in front of 'native audiences' throughout the Arab world. British consuls pressed the high commissioner in Palestine to classify such women (who were largely European) as undesirable and thus ineligible for passport privileges to enter or transit through Palestine.⁸⁴ It seems that the Palestine government agreed to consider the entry of such women on a case-by-case basis, and stressed 'the continuing problem' involving 'loose women under the guise of artistes' who sought to enter the territory.⁸⁵

Prostitution remained a crime during the Mandate. However, the police and immigration authorities debated whether the punishment for prostitution could be as severe as deportation. It is clear that the Mandate government, not unlike the governments of surrounding countries, viewed prostitution a morally reprehensible, but as Liat Kozma has shown, interwar international organisations cared little for non-white prostitutes.⁸⁶ Yet, the deportation of women could be costly, and in a number of cases deportation caused the woman to become stateless. Pimps also came to the attention of the police and immigration authorities.⁸⁷ The government could, and did, deport prostitutes and their pimps if it could justify that their deportation was conducive to the public good. It must be remembered that the immigration ordinance justified an individual's removal in order to benefit the public. The government's self-appointed role in defining women's morals allowed for officials to regulate the entry of women whom it did not want to support financially and whose presence could cause communal tensions.

Finally, any migrant or citizen engaged in criminal activity could also be deported as conducive to the public good. Even minor crimes such as breaking and entering and theft could be punished with expulsion. Arab criminals,

particularly those implicated for illegal fraud or drug dealing, more easily evaded the police and courts. Narcotics smuggling and drug circles were not uncommon in interwar Palestine, and both smuggling and drug dens were often linked to wider networks that spanned Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Lebanon, and Syria.⁸⁸ Cases became slightly more complicated when they involved a crime committed by a person with long-standing residence in Palestine. A 1933 law granted amnesty from deportation to any Arab in Palestine who illegally entered before August of that year. Arabs illegally in Palestine rarely came to the attention of the police unless they committed a crime. Their crime could be as minor as loitering after dark or sleeping rough. Once arrested for a crime, the amnesty no longer applied and these migrants were also then convicted of being in Palestine without legal permission. Between January and March of 1942, over 400 Arabs were deported from Palestine. Of these, nearly 150 were summarily deported, likely as criminals. If Syria, Lebanon, or Transjordan refused to accept their expelled nationals, Palestine police took them to the frontier and forcibly ordered them to cross back into their own territories.⁸⁹ Despite numerous appeals in some cases, long-standing settled residence did not prevent deportation.

Only a year before the end of the Second World War, the Palestine government effectively tightened its frontiers with the aim to prevent the entry of undesirable migrants. Criminals were less of a focus; rather, Great Britain had pledged in 1939 to stop the illegal Jewish immigration which had steadily increased Jewish population numbers. In 1944, a circular instructed all British civilian and naval departments in the Levant to prevent any civilian from crossing into Palestine without permission.⁹⁰ The directive came at a time of upheaval in immigration control. During the war years, the Yishuv's efforts combined with those of European Jewish groups to facilitate unauthorised immigration led to the attempted entry of over 100,000 Jews from Europe and the Middle East to Palestine. While tens of thousands of Jews did enter and settle without authorisation between 1939 and the creation of Israel in May 1948, the Mandate remained steadfast in its attempts to restrict and prohibit this type of immigration.

Changing Unwanted Immigration at the Source? The Impact of Mandate Policies

During the Second World War and in its aftermath, Mandate policy could not compete with the wave of Jews escaping the devastating events perpetrated by the Nazi regime in Central and Eastern Europe. Those policies of classification and bio-social profiling of suspect migrants and itinerants that might have impacted flows of migration to Palestine from Europe no longer had such an influence after 1939. The facilitation of illegal immigration became a moral imperative for the Yishuv and Zionist leadership, and the

Mandate's differentiation between desirable and undesirable immigrants no longer mattered.

Before the outbreak of war in Europe, the stereotypes against migrants and their removal and exclusion from Palestine by colonial officials did have an impact on migration patterns. In the early 1920s, the Foreign Office attempted to enforce the directive that any non-British individual who wished to travel to Palestine had to apply in London at his or her consulate in order to receive sanction to travel.⁹¹ Similar regulations followed: for instance, from 1929 visas for Russian Jews to enter Palestine could only be issued in Russia by the British consul.⁹² These procedures were not free from failure, of course. They simply conferred the power upon consuls and official representatives of other states to determine whether mostly-European Jewish individuals' characters qualified as upstanding enough for entry to Palestine.

Only in the early 1940s did the number of largely-Haurani Arabs entering Palestine as temporary labourers plummet. The immigration tables for the early 1940s show that even in the late summer and early autumn months of the yearly harvests, only a few dozen temporary labourers entered.⁹³ That the strict enforcement of frontier controls and changes to the visa regime in Palestine during the Second World War likely led to a sharp decrease in seasonal labour migrants and long-standing economic mobility in the region. As for Bedouin movement, the evidence that British policies put a stop to nomadic practices is debatable. As Robert Fletcher argues, British policy to contain Bedouin tribes actually managed movement. However, it neither resulted in full sedentarisation nor ended mobility. Despite the perceived political unrest and social disorder caused by Bedouin to the Mandate's settled population, Fletcher adds that both colonial officials throughout the Arab Middle East and Bedouin leaders benefited from nomadic activity.⁹⁴

Classifying and deporting unwanted migrant political agitators, criminals, and prostitutes did have some impact: by the early 1940s, the CID reported fewer cases of deportations of these individuals compared with the prior decade. Of course, by 1940, Bolshevism and the Comintern had fewer ideological adherents compared to the 1920s, and Palestinian citizens who left the territory to travel to the Soviet Union likely knew of the regulations that allowed the Mandate to strip them of their citizenship. Communist activists in Palestine focused their efforts on Palestine's own society and economy by 1940, rather than on involvement with the Soviet Union. It seems that for most 'types' of undesirable migrants, British treatment of these individuals upon their arrival to Palestine may have had some impact on stopping further migration before it began; however, external factors and influences played a significant role in changing migratory flows.

Disloyalty to the Mandate government and anti-colonial activity remained a reason for deportation and exclusion. In the late 1930s, authorities decided on another solution to the problem of statelessness caused by deportation:

removal of suspects and criminals to a third country. With the outbreak of the Arab Revolt against in 1936, the British authorities used emergency laws, including the 1937 Prevention of Crimes Ordinance, to legalise deportation of both citizen and non-citizen political agitators to the Seychelles.⁹⁵ Further research is needed to analyse whether the fear of exile to a third country influenced certain politically-active migrants from entering Palestine, but the practice certainly absolved Great Britain from strict adherence to international norms on reducing incidents of statelessness.

Conclusion

Those persons in the *indésirable* category did not lack agency to challenge their state-imposed migration status. As noted above, migrants could appeal their categorisations and deportations, and many did challenge the government in this way. The women who Mandate officials saw as immoral used citizenship legislation to remain in Palestine by becoming wives of male citizens. Other mobile groups such as Bedouin and seasonal labourers returned back across Palestine's frontiers despite deportations and the imposition of frontier controls meant to keep them out. Numerous other unauthorised migrants slipped under the radar and stayed off the Mandate's meticulously compiled tables of entry and exit statistics.

The actions carried out by British authorities in Palestine, and their discursive framing of unwanted migrants reflects Shamir's analysis that the 'engine' of the contemporary mobility regime is the state's upholding of a 'paradigm of suspicion' of mobile groups. In the case of Palestine, non-Zionist mobility remained suspect through the end of the Mandate because it threatened the very foundations of the Mandate's charter and the potential immigrant-absorption capability of the land. Shamir's argument further reflects the reality of Mandate Palestine's immigration regulations: like other colonial states, the Mandate crafted a conceptual link between immigration and 'social vices' such as crime, prostitution, diseases and illnesses, and overall moral contamination.⁹⁶ This link shaped border control, entry and exclusion from Palestine, and an aura of suspicion of the mobility of both documented and paperless migrants from the 1920s until the end of the Mandate.

Notes

1. CID memo on deportation of Hauranis, 2 Sept. 1935, Central Zionist Archives (hereafter, CZA) S25\22735.
2. Report to Palestine Police, 12 Apr. 1935, CZA S25\22735.
3. The argument that colonialism introduced a new regime that limited mobility, as opposed to one that supported greater movement, comes from Markovits et al., "Introduction," 8.
4. Smith, "From Promising Settler," 505.

5. On labour migration, see Karpat, "Ottoman Emigration to America," 175–209, and Deniz Akarlı, "Ottoman Attitudes," 109–38.
6. Berda, "Managing Dangerous Populations," 628. See also Torpey, *Invention of the Passport*, 4–7.
7. Walters, "Deportation, Expulsion," 282. See also Smith, "From Promising Settler"; Fahrmeir, "Conclusion," 4–5 and Schubert, "Creation of Illegal Migration," 1–22.
8. Torpey, "Coming and Going," 239–40.
9. Mae N. Ngai, "The Strange Career," 72.
10. The historical development of the passport is discussed in Torpey, *Invention of the Passport*.
11. Maglen, "Importing Trachoma," 82–3.
12. Bashford and Gilchrist, "The Colonial History," 409–12.
13. Maglen, "Importing Trachoma," 92.
14. Cohen, "Shaping the Nation," 358.
15. Eldem, "The undesirables of Smyrna," 223–7.
16. MacDonald, "Forging the Frontiers," 159–60. MacDonald offers a detailed discussion on the enforcement of this legislation along the border between South Africa and Mozambique.
17. Eldem, "The undesirables of Smyrna," 224.
18. *Ibid.*
19. A history of this with a focus on Egypt can be found in Carminati, "Nodes, Networks, and Scales," 127–53.
20. Further information of the dual administration and society framework of the Mandate can be found in: Lockman, "Railway workers and relational history," 601–27.
21. Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 51.
22. Thane, "The British Imperial State," 39–40.
23. Ginat, *History of Egyptian Communism*, 25–7.
24. Tzur, "The Silent Pact," 106–7.
25. Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence*, 91.
26. Correspondence on communist activities in Palestine, 1930, The National Archives (hereafter, TNA) CO 733/189/4.
27. Report by High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 14 June 1928, TNA CO 733/146/12.
28. Memo, police commandant to chief secretary, 25 Mar. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
29. Cohen, "Shaping the Nation, Excluding the Other," 361–2.
30. Memo, Palestine Police to Chief Secretary, 25 Mar. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
31. Memo, police commandant to chief secretary, 25 Mar. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
32. Meeting minutes of the Inter-departmental Committee on Immigration from Russia, 30 Oct. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Appeal against deportation file, correspondence dated 3 July 1942, Israel State Archives, Mandate Chief Secretary's Office (hereafter, ISA M) 705/1.
35. Department of Immigration memorandum, 28 June 1933, ISA M223/8.
36. *Ibid.*
37. MacDonald, "Forging the Frontiers," 158.
38. In an unrelated court case against Loubling regarding bigamy, the lawsuit noted that Loubling's father was Sephardi and his mother Ashkenazi. See "Attorney General vs. Lubling, Jerusalem District Court 1931," 13 March 1931, *Palestine Bulletin*.
39. For more on the PCP, see Budeiri, *The Palestine Communist Party* and Franzén, "Communism versus Zionism," 6–27.

40. Alexander Loubling, Naturalization Certificates file 1938, TNA CO 733/357/2.
41. Report on Alexander Loubling, 20 Oct. 1938, TNA CO 733/357/2.
42. For more, see Srebrnik, "The Radical 'Second Life'," 58–60, and Weinberg, "Purge and Politics," 13–27.
43. Report on Alexander Loubling, 20 Oct. 1938, TNA CO 733/357/2.
44. Correspondence, Solicitor-General to Chief Secretary, 15 Jan. 1937, ISA M705/1.
45. Extract from Police summary, 26 July 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
46. Memo, Palestine Police to Chief Secretary, 25 Mar. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
47. Memo, Palestine Police to Chief Secretary, 25 Mar. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
48. Although little has been written about this specific to Palestine, especially as mobile populations tended to reside at the fringes of the mandate territory, work on Ottoman and post-Ottoman attempts to settle 'tribal' populations in the wider Arab region include Rogan, *Frontiers of State*; Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*; Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation," 469–91; Khoury, "The tribal shaykh," 180–93; Thomas, "Bedouin tribes," 539–61 and Fletcher, *British Imperialism*. For the case of the border between Qajar Iran and the Ottoman Empire, see Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*.
49. The creation of borders as the sole factor in sedentarising the Bedouin is more theory than hard fact, according to Fletcher. See Fletcher, "Running the Corridor," 187.
50. Fletcher, "Running the Corridor," 203–6.
51. Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation," 470–1. Kasaba's work on the impact upon nomadic and mobile populations in the Ottoman Empire of nineteenth century state centralisation efforts details these policies as well: Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*. Also see Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," 768–96. More on the destructive nature of new boundaries to Bedouin migratory routes and grazing lands can be found in Fletcher, "Running the Corridor."
52. Shamir, "Without Borders?" 201.
53. Sauli, "Police, Public Space," 216.
54. Correspondence on Hassan Hussein Said, 28 Feb. 1941, ISA M225/32.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Letter to Chief Secretary, 6 Mar. 1941, ISA M225/32.
57. Khoury, "The tribal shaykh, French tribal policy," 182–3.
58. Kerr, "On the Move," 86.
59. *Ibid.*, 108.
60. Bhattacharya, "Peddlers and Itinerants," 193–6.
61. Martens, "Polygamy, sexual danger," 33.
62. HMG Report, 31 Dec. 1934.
63. Bon Voisinage Agreement, 3 Feb. 1922, ISA M108/22. Also see Kaufmann, *Contested Frontiers*, 6.
64. For the debate on numbers, see Peters, *From Time Immemorial* and Blair, "Critique of Joan Peters." See also Eliahu Epstein's report "The Present Condition in the Hauran," (1934), CZA A405\118.
65. Report on returns of deportation of illicit immigrants, CID to Chief Secretary, May 1940, ISA M224/1. Another explanation for the differentiation is found in letter on deportation of Hauranis, from Palestine Police and Commissioner for Migration and Statistics to High Commissioner, 8 May 1935, CZA S25\22735.
66. CID Report on Hauranis in Palestine, 19 October 1935, CZA S25\22735.
67. Migration and Statistics file, 1935, ISA M5132/12.
68. Epstein, "The Present Condition in the Hauran," 1934, CZA A405\118.
69. Donnan and Wilson, *Borders*, 87–8.

70. Letter to Palestine Police and Department of Migration, 8 May 1935, CZA S25\22735.
71. For more, see the work of Becky Taylor, "Immigration, Statecraft," 512–33.
72. Smith, "From Promising Settler to Undesirable Migrant," 503.
73. Memo, Department of Health to Controller of Permits, 25 Oct. 1924 ; memo, Permits Section to Department of Health, 9 Oct. 1924, ISA M6630/22.
74. File: Mentally-abnormal persons ineligible for Palestinian citizenship, 1927 ISA M6629/6.
75. Appeals against deportation: Tannous Nayef Sayah, July 1942, ISA M255/20.
76. Letter, CID Police Inspector to High Commissioner on appeal of Sayah, 29 July 1942, ISA M255/20.
77. Correspondence, July 1942, ISA M255/20.
78. Report, Senior Medical Officer, Haifa, to Department of Immigration, 22 Jan. 1938, ISA M6629/10.
79. For more, see Page Baldwin, "Subject to Empire," 522–56.
80. Banko, *The Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 142–3.
81. *Ibid.*, 200. The use of false marriages for the purpose of immigration to Palestine was relatively common knowledge among the Yishuv. While the Jewish Agency disapproved of the practice, the Yishuv's Chief Rabbinate supported it. The Chief Rabbinate knowingly granted these types of marriages and divorces. For more, see Eliash, "The 'Rescue' Policy," 297–8.
82. Memo from attorney general, 19 June 1944, ISA M705/1.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Memo, British consul, Beirut to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 27 July 1927, TNA CO732/28/14.
85. *Ibid.*
86. Kozma, *Global Women, Colonial Ports*, 22–6.
87. CID to Chief Secretary, 5 Nov. 1940, ISA M223/37.
88. A history of these crimes is too large to incorporate here. Recently, the history of drug smuggling in the interwar Middle East and Turkey has been brought to the fore in works by Shayegh and Ram. See Shayegh, "The Many Worlds," 273–306; Ram, "Hashish traffickers, hashish consumers," 546–63. On elements of the drug trade, see Kozma, "White Drugs," 89–101. On the crime of prostitution, see also Kozma, *Global Women, Colonial Ports*.
89. Memorandum on deportation, 9 Apr. 1942, ISA M223/8.
90. File: Frontier control, illegal migrants, 30 Sept. 1944, ISA M1966/25.
91. Zionist Organization to Foreign Office Undersecretary, 7 Feb. 1921, CZA Z4\41355.
92. Meeting minutes of the Inter-departmental Committee on Immigration from Russia, 30 Oct. 1930, TNA CO 733/189/4.
93. For instance, see the file on statistics of migration and naturalization for 1943 in ISA M264/48.
94. Fletcher, "Running the Corridor," 193–4.
95. On emergency laws and deportation in Palestine during the Revolt, see Banko, *The Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 183–4. In the British colonial era of the twentieth century, over 400 political exiles and their followers had spent time as deportees in the Seychelles. For more on this, see Kothari and Wilkinson, "Colonial Imaginaries and Postcolonial Transformations," 1395–412.
96. Shamir, "Without Borders?" 200.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the anonymous referees for their comments on an earlier draft of the paper. This research was supported by the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL).

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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