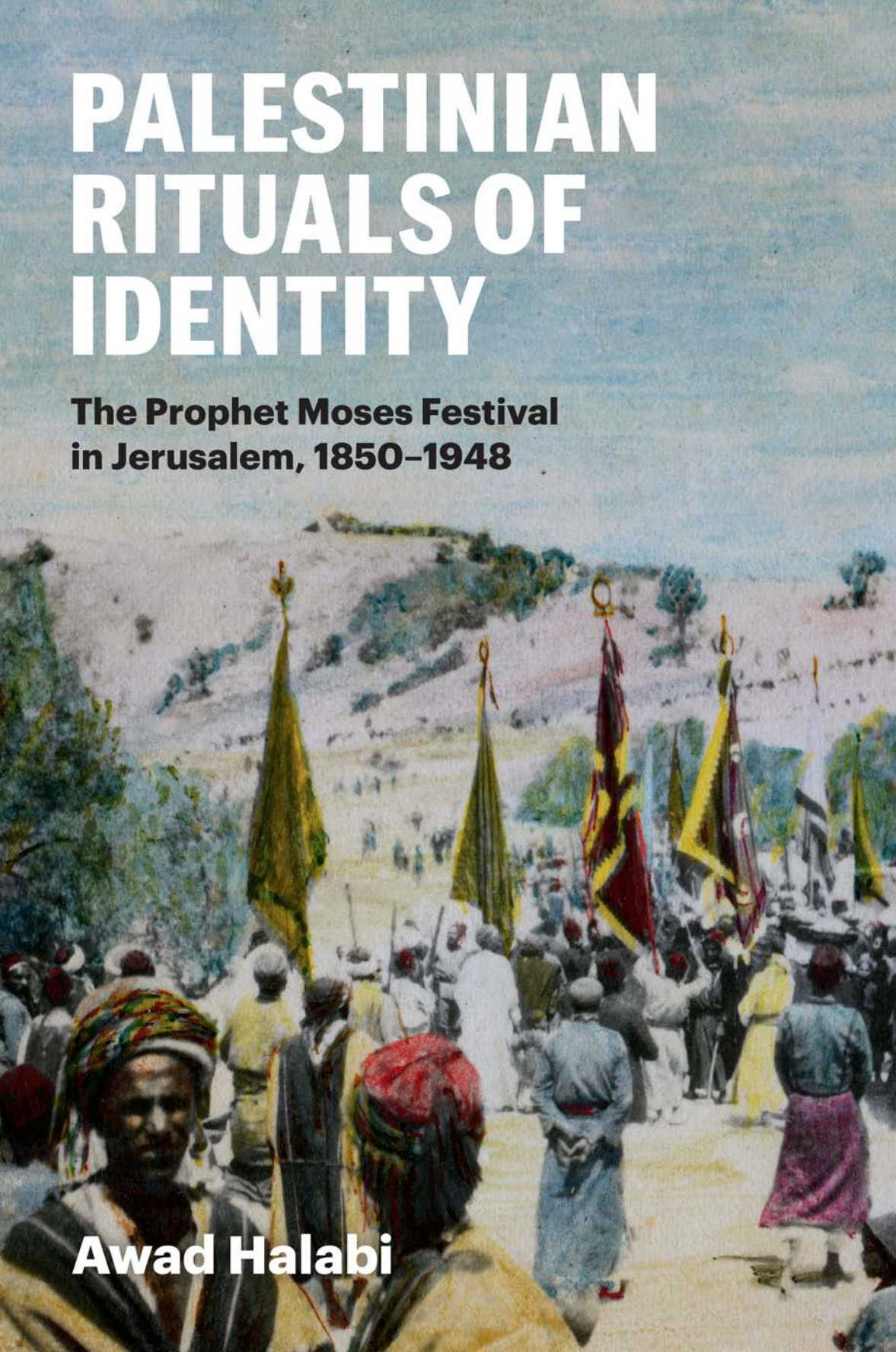
PALESTINIAN RITUALS OF IDENTITY

The Prophet Moses Festival in Jerusalem, 1850–1948



Awad Halabi

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To Barbara, Ispiro Saba, and Jenin, with all my love and gratitude for their support

"God knows that I did not aim for glory with this work nor to be reputed among the ranks of authors, for I am aware of my genuine shortcomings and realize that my share of knowledge is insignificant."

(al-ʿUlaymi, *al-Uns al-Jalil bi-Taʾrikh al-Quds wa-l-Khalil*, 1:5; quoted in Little, "Mujir al-Din," 238)

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NOTE ON TRANSLATION

All diacritical marks except the ʿayn (ʿ) and the hamza (ʾ) have been omitted. The Arabic definite article (al-) is used at the first mention of an individual's full name (al-Sakakini) but omitted thereafter when only the last name of an individual (Sakakini) is noted.

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This book has taken a circuitous route. It began at the University of Toronto after James Reilly was intrigued by my casual mention in class about a festival in Jerusalem honoring the Prophet Moses. His questions piqued my interest, leading to this study. I'm fortunate to have received his erudite mentorship and generous support over the years.

Years later, I revisited the topic and expanded my research. It's ironic to have completed this book during a global pandemic. There is no better example of scholastic solitude and the isolation academics long for than that which a global pandemic can cruelly offer.

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I thank my children for allowing this work to hover in the background. One day, as my son Saba and I walked out of Taekwondo practice, he noticed Michelle Campos's *Ottoman Brothers*, incredulously asking how they could be both Ottomans and *brothers*. At his early morning hockey practices, I learned that it is futile to try and read in a frigid arena at seven in the morning. At my daughter Jenin's dance classes, I still associate her attempts at learning a pirouette with material I was reading at the time about Sufism. Watching her perform over the years, including with the Dayton Ballet in *The Nutcracker*, became an image of mystical beauty on its own.

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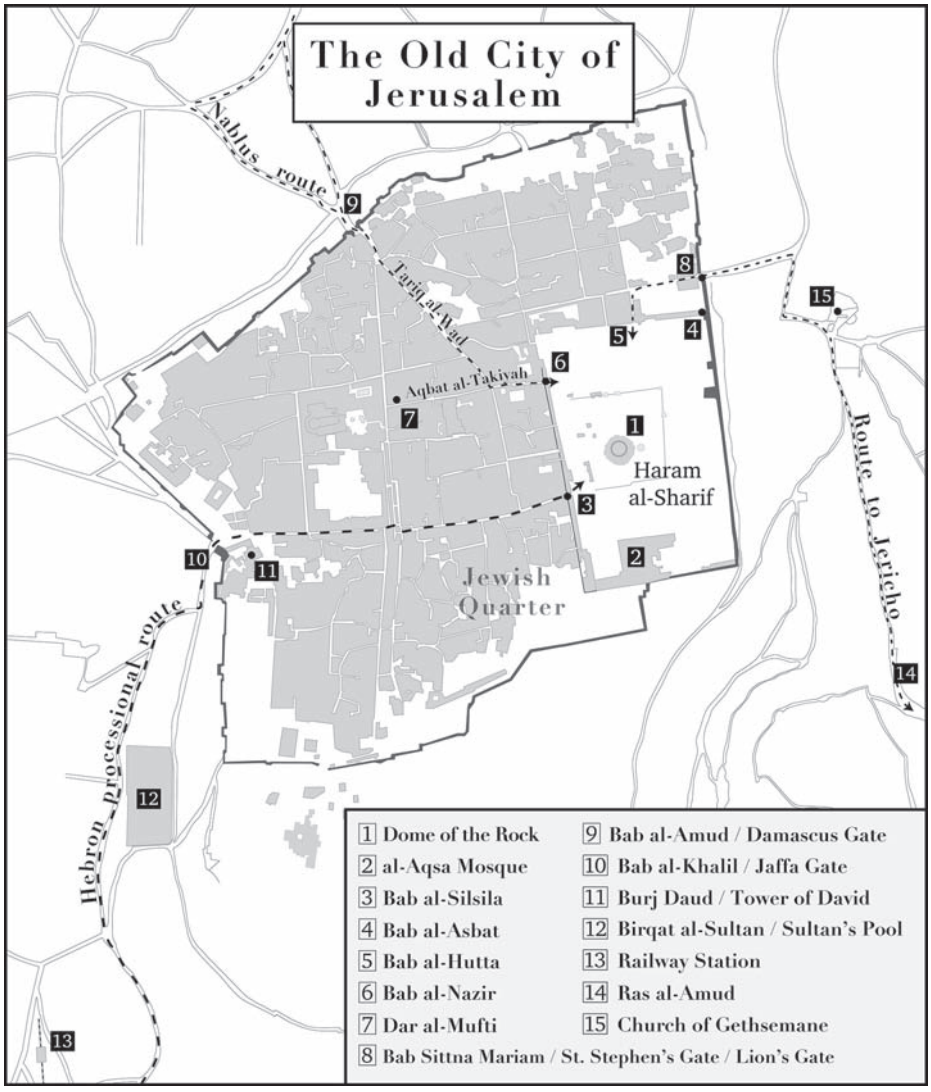
PALESTINIAN RITUALS OF IDENTITY



MAP 0.1. *Map of the Old City of Jerusalem with processional routes (© Mark Sanagan)*

INTRODUCTION

IN THE MID-1990S, THE BLACK, GREEN, RED, AND WHITE colors of the Palestinian flag began to appear at the newly revived Prophet Moses festival (*mawsim al-Nabi Musa*) at the shrine (*maqam*) devoted to the prophet twelve kilometers southwest of Jericho and twenty-seven kilometers southeast of Jerusalem.[1] Strewn throughout the shrine were banners inscribed with nationalist and patriotic pronouncements honoring Yasir Arafat (d. 2004), president of the newly formed Palestine Authority. Arafat's association with the thirteenth-century shrine linked him with Mamluk and Ottoman rulers, military and state officials, religious authorities, British colonial figures, and Arab nationalist leaders, along with urban notables, peasants, Bedouin, women, Sufis, and anti-Zionist communist Jews. How and why all these groups participated in the festival in the late Ottoman (1850–1917) and British Mandate (1917–1948) periods is the focus of this study.

As a ritual activity, each social group competed to control the festival's symbolic order, such as its images, processional routes, rhetoric, rites, and participants.[2] By ordering these symbols, each social group promoted distinct social and political agendas.

In this book, I challenge how scholars have treated Islamic rituals as univocal events unaffected by historical changes and immune to social transformations.[3] For example, Ignaz Goldziher locates the origins of the ubiquitous Islamic practice of the veneration of saints in pre-Islamic Arabia, proposing, "The temple becomes the grave of a saint, the god a *wali* [saint]."[4] The Nabi Musa festival, like all rituals, manifested in variegated and polysemic ways. It did not remain fixed in a "timeless ethnographic present" but was tied to the historical dynamics of society.[5]

As this study examines, rituals project a broader purview of messages beyond what functionalist and structuralist approaches have emphasized, such as the nature of existence or the relationship between God and man.[6] In its

course, this study does not consider rituals solely as symbolic expressions of how people collectively understand their larger worldview, ethos, or shared cultural values.[7] As Talal Asad suggests, we should ask not "What do rituals mean?" but rather "What do rituals accomplish?" in forging new social relationships and religious discourses.[8] Following practice theory, I identify the productive capacity rituals possess to uncover a complex range of groups that challenge, defy, and even remake a panoply of messages about social order, hierarchy, existence, identity, gender relations, belief, and religious praxis.[9] Rituals allow people to "acquiesce yet protest, reproduce yet seek to transform their predicament."[10]

As a result, my discussion will rest on the claim that rituals function as the locus of interaction between various social groups. They serve as "an arena for competing discourses" to project both religious and secular agendas, serving ritual officials and nonofficial participants, establishing consensus and what the anthropologist Victor Turner called *communitas*, as well as facilitating countermovements toward separateness and division.[11] Like carnivals, rituals "can evolve so that [they] can act both to reinforce order and suggest alternatives to the existing order."[12] This process of fashioning the symbols of a ritual is best understood as a discursive practice, as Michel Foucault investigated in his *History of Sexuality*. These "symbolic discourses" are the chief tactics powerful social groups use to promote their agendas, a discursive ordering that, significantly, allows subaltern social groups to contest and redefine the hegemonic messages of more powerful groups.[13] Ultimately, a festival is not a static, uniform practice but a resonant document that is subject to multiple interpretations. It is not the design of a single auteur but the creation of "multiple architects."[14]

This approach mirrors the increasing attention scholars have devoted to investigating the dynamics of Islamic and Middle Eastern rituals. They identify how these rituals are subject to changing historical and political contexts, represent contested visions of society and religion, and are infused with synchronic religious practices.[15] They afford opportunities to contest identities that defy the hegemonic symbolism powerful groups promote.[16] Rituals construct mythologies of national identities, articulate state policies, provide legitimacy to a ruler, and challenge traditional gender roles.[17]

The Nabi Musa festival mirrors these approaches. Some works assume that it had always expressed a militant, hostile version of Islam,[18] others that it served as an idiom for Palestinian nationalism.[19] The few works examining it closely fail to recognize how the festival transformed in different historical periods.[20] Examined more closely, the Nabi Musa festival and other Islamic rituals appear dissonant rather than univocal and static. Here, rites, traditions, and symbols are introduced as fluidly as they are obviated.

A diverse range of social groups participated in the modern Nabi Musa festival from the period of late Ottoman to British rule (1850–1948), as we have seen. Some of the more influential ones could curate ritual actors, designate processional routes, authorize images, and sanction rhetoric. But non-elite groups, such as the urban poor, villagers, Bedouin, young nationalists, women, mystics, and anti-Zionist communist Jews, forged their own discursive messages. They defied their assigned roles, evoked unauthorized chants, raised unsanctioned images, and forged unapproved processional routes. Overall, the festival captured responses that are absent from earlier scholarship on Palestine's modern history, and it illuminates Arab society as variegated, contested, and dissonant, particularly concerning how people defined identity, beliefs, politics, and culture. By examining the participation of non-elite groups at the festival, this study highlights the importance of "disenfranchised social groups long excluded from historical discourse," revealing the complex social formation of Palestinian society. This practice of "writing Palestinians into history" can expose not only how these marginalized groups responded to Zionism and colonialism but also how they understood the challenges of modernity, particularly the expansion of market capitalism, the arrival of Western culture, and the formation of new social hierarchies.[21]

I begin by examining the shrine's founding in the thirteenth century and how the shrine and festival functioned as part of the larger Islamic tradition of the ritual veneration of tombs (*ziyarat al-qubur*), referred to in this study as the "traditional *ziyara*" (ritual pilgrimage). The traditional festival's symbolic order emphasized the singular essence of pilgrimage: attaining proximity to the sacred. In chapter 2 I explore the festival's transformation into a modern, official ceremony in the mid-nineteenth century. Newly formed municipal and provincial institutions in late Ottoman Jerusalem reconfigured the symbols of the traditional ziyara into a civil ritual centered mainly on Jerusalem. The symbolic changes they introduced, such as new processional routes and ritual actors, defined the Ottoman empire as a modern state that respected traditional Islamic culture. The festival organizer's requirement that villagers from throughout the Jerusalem province converge in Jerusalem before embarking on their pilgrimage to the shrine compelled rural people to acknowledge the new authority that urban notables wielded.

In chapter 3 I examine the role British colonial officials appropriated for themselves in the festival. Dispatching military bands to precede the arrival of Islamic sacred banners and appointing colonial officials to assume visible roles were discursive attempts to project Britain as respectful guardians of Palestine's Islamic culture. Their response to the 1920 Nabi Musa riots in Jerusalem spawned discursive claims justifying Britain's presence in the country.

Chapter 4 focuses on the role of Palestine's Arab elite families, the wealthy urban-based landowners who led Palestine's nationalist movement after World War I. This group possessed the greatest opportunities to order the festival's symbols. The mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni (1921–1937), converted the festival into a nationwide and nationalistic event by inviting pilgrims from throughout the country to participate. Although these crowds fostered an image of an "imagined" Palestinian community, Husayni initiated them mainly to support his claim as preeminent religious and national leader. In addition, although factional interests divided Palestine's notables, this elite stratum also sponsored symbolic changes at the festival that expressed their shared modern *Weltanschauung* on an array of political and cultural issues.

However, the Nabi Musa festival became a venue for non-elite groups to posit their unique notions of identity, politics, and religious beliefs. In chapters 5 and 6 I outline the activities of middle- and non-elite groups at the festival, whose members employed creative, subversive, and at times mundane ways to articulate their unique social and political concerns. They voiced unauthorized rhetoric, raised unsanctioned imagery, partook in acts of misrule, or simply chose not to participate. Together, these non-elite groups exposed the polymorphous and polysemic messages at Nabi Musa. In so doing, they exemplified how rituals are far from univocal expressions used to impose power and authority upon passive recipients. Instead, their participation brings to light the multivalent range of messages that percolate at all ritual events. At times, their actions affirmed a national identity or expressed a collective impulse to resist the Zionists and British; at other times, they manifested local identities, rural religious practices, and village traditions of gender relations.

In chapter 7 I explore how the British took advantage of the strains the Arab community endured during the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt to shift the festival's symbolic order once again. The British restructured the festival's mise-en-scène to display their military triumph over Arab resistance, which they had quelled by 1939.

Finally, in the conclusion I sketch the festival's fate after Palestine's collapse in 1948. Under Jordanian (1948–1967) and then Israeli (1967–) rule, authorities sought to ban the celebrations and limit access to the shrine to subdue what they perceived to be militant expressions of Palestinian nationalism. The newly formed Palestinian Authority (1994-) revived the celebrations to awaken an atavistic memory of Palestinian identity, personified by images of the colors of the Palestinian national flag at the shrine. Many pilgrims, though, prioritized the festival as a religious rather than a political event. As the celebrations after 1948 reveal, the Nabi Musa festival has emerged as a "symbolic system created in history" to meet the changing historical concerns of its participants and organizers.[22]

1 / THE TRADITIONAL *ZIYARA*

TRAVERSING EGYPT AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, the thirteenth-century traveler and chronicler of religious sites ʿAli al-Harawi (d. 1215) made it his mission to document the many tombs and burial sites honoring biblical and quranic figures.[1] He expressed any doubts about the veracity of these sites with the familiar refrain "and God only knows" (*wa-allahu aʿlam*). Upon reaching the desert southwest of Jericho, Harawi chronicled a tomb (*qabr*) locals believed to be the grave of Moses, the most frequently mentioned prophet in the Qurʾan.[2] About half a century after Harawi's visit, the Egyptian Mamluk sultan Rukn al-Din al-Zahir Baybars (r. 1260–1277) patronized this popular site by constructing a shrine (*maqam*) with a dome (*qubba*) over the tomb and an adjoining mosque; he also endowed lands for its upkeep.

In subsequent centuries, the shrine attracted pilgrims who performed *ziyara* (ritual visitation to tombs) and celebrated its annual festival (*mawsim*, pl. *mawasim*). By 1800, this festival emerged as one of the most anticipated religious holidays in the Islamic calendar for the people of eastern and southern Palestine. The celebration encompassed what this study refers to as a "traditional festival" devoted to religious worship at the shrine, including enactments of rural and Bedouin folk traditions.

Although many Palestinians today associate the annual festival with larger celebrations in Jerusalem, ziyara to the tomb represented the singular focus of many pilgrims before 1800. Pilgrims in different religious traditions seek the same goal: "to see and touch the sacred."[3] At Islamic shrines, Muslim pilgrims encountered this holiness by approaching the entombed.[4] Although Islam does not accept the idea of intercessors (*shufaʿa*) to God, Muslims, both Sunni and Shiʿa, revere prophets (*nabi*, pl. *anbiyaʾ*) mentioned in the Qurʾan, companions (*sahaba*) and successors (*tabiʿun*) of Muhammad, as well as Sufi saints (*wali*, pl. *awliyaʾ*) and other holy persons (*salihun*).[5] People believed

that these holy figures maintained their intercessory power after death. Pilgrims visited holy sites even if religious authorities opposed or condemned the practices they conducted.[6]

Pilgrims believed (and continue to believe) that the entombed served as mediators with God, who could bestow *baraka* (blessing, pl. *barakat*) upon petitioners.[7] Baraka is the "emotive force" of how devotees experience the sacred, similar to the intangible manifestation of the sacred found in various religious traditions.[8] Revered banners, relics, and bones associated with a holy person can emit this baraka.[9] Devotees sought these blessings to alleviate immediate distresses in their lives (e.g., as a cure for an illness) or for strength before undertaking a vow or for the fulfillment of one, representing a "pèlerinage thérapique."[10] The shrines pilgrims worshiped could be ornate structures with international recognition (e.g., the Dome of the Rock), large complexes with regional importance (e.g., Nabi Musa, Nabi Rubin in Jaffa), or humble sites with purely local significance.[11] At the site of a tomb-shrine, the most efficacious period to solicit blessings occurs during the commemoration of a saint's or prophet's death. These were communal celebrations—termed *mawlid/mulid* as well as mawsim—involving a collective festival, usually funded through endowments (*waqf*, pl. *awqaf*), and attended by the followers of Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqa*, pl. *turuq*) and high-ranking religious officials (*ulama*).

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these events proliferated. The Crusades and the Counter-Crusade inspired the belief in a "Muslim sacred geography," a religious claim meant to bolster an Islamic defense of the Bilad al-Sham (Syria-Palestine/Greater Syria).[12] Muslims generated a belief in an Islamic Holy Land through popular and scholarly stories and legends associating quranic prophets ("Stories of the Prophets," *qissas al-anbiya*), the Jewish people ("Stories of the Israelites," *adab al-israʾiliyyat*), and the sanctity of Jerusalem (i.e., "Praises of Jerusalem," *fadaʾil bayt al-maqdis*) with this area.[13] This period witnessed Sunni Islam's revival, as Sunni rulers and officials patronized the construction of religious structures to assert Sunni Islam's presence in competition with Shiʿa rulers and Crusader armies.[14] As these shrines proliferated throughout Muslim lands, they retained an "inner unity of faith clothed in outward diversity of form," as shrines reflected local styles and aesthetics.[15] During this period, Sufi brotherhoods crystallized as institutions for mystical worship throughout Greater Syria.[16] By the thirteenth century, large seasonal festivals in honor of a sacred tomb or a saint's day attracted large numbers of pilgrims, becoming major annual events, such as the mulid of al-Sayyid al-Badawi of Tanta, Egypt.[17] By the end of the Mamluk period, ziyara as a group activity to a sacred site at a fixed time, rather than as an individual or occasional endeavor, became commonplace.[18]

Although all these forces likely inspired the belief in locating Moses's tomb near Jericho, his final resting place was open to debate in the Islamic tradition. Some Muslim scholars accepted the biblical claim that he died east of the Jordan River in an unknown location (Deuteronomy 34:1–12).[19] Others located it elsewhere in Syria-Palestine, including Damascus and towns to the south of that city.[20] The oral tradition (*hadith al-nabawi*) of the Prophet Muhammad's seeing Moses praying likely inspired the choice of the Jericho site as Moses's tomb. In this tradition, Muhammad witnessed Moses standing and praying (*qaʾimum yusalli*) in his grave at *al-kathib al-ahmar* (red sand hill) during Muhammad's night journey and ascent to heaven (*lailat al-israʾ wa-l-miʿraj*).[21] Locals in the Jerusalem area associated the Hebrew biblical name of the road, Ma'ale Adummim (Red Ascent), which stretched from Jerusalem to Jericho, with the red sand hill mentioned in the hadith.[22] By the thirteenth century, one account claimed, "It is well known that his tomb is in the Holy Land [*al-ard al-muqaddas*] and it is near Jericho. And it is said that the tomb which is known as the tomb of Moses is at *al-kathib al-ahmar* and its road."[23]

This reference associating al-kathib al-ahmar with Moses's tomb precedes Baybars's patronage of the shrine. It is coterminous with the period of Muslim conflict with the Crusaders, suggesting a pattern of "rediscovering" biblical, quranic, and historical figures to assert an Islamic sacred landscape.[24] Eventually, this shrine would eclipse other sites honoring Moses's final resting place in Greater Syria by attracting the most powerful figure at the time, Sultan Baybars.

SULTAN BAYBARS'S CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOMB

In July 1269, Baybars embarked on a pilgrimage to Mecca to perform the sacred duty of the *hajj*.[25] While returning to Egypt by way of Syria, he learned of the local reverence for Moses's tomb near Jericho.[26] Baybars had gained prominence fighting the Crusaders, a reputation he sought to amplify by restoring shrines and founding mosques to establish his legitimacy as the ideal Muslim ruler and leader of jihad.[27] Despite these lofty aims, Baybars founded a humble shrine dedicated solely to worship at Moses's tomb. The inscription tablet over the door proclaims that Baybars had ordered the construction of a dome over the grave (*darih*) of Moses and an adjoining mosque, and that he had also established an endowment to provide funds to maintain the shrine and organize its annual festival.[28]

The Nabi Musa shrine, comprising two domes over the tomb and the mosque, was completed at the end of 1269. The mosque measured 150 square

meters (15 m × 10 m), and the room with the tomb is nearly thirty square meters (5.5 m × 5 m).[29] Over the years, patrons expanded the site to accommodate the growing number of visitors.[30] Ottoman sultans, officials, and private donors patronized these projects.[31] Support for restoration even came from as far as Damascus.[32] By the final decades of Ottoman rule, the design of the shrine complex included three floors, thirty-five domes, a minaret, two kitchens with an oven, two reception rooms, and a cistern.[33] Throughout the three levels are porticoes divided into more than one hundred cells, sufficient to house hundreds of visitors. The ground floor's internal surface area covers 45,000 square meters, while the third level served as a terrace to observe events and religious ceremonies. The shrine had evolved from a site dedicated to venerating Moses's tomb to ritual space able to accommodate hundreds of pilgrims devoted to the ritual visitation of tombs (*ziyarat al-qubur*), what I call the "traditional ziyara."

The traditional ziyara incorporated widely practiced worship throughout the Muslim world, such as revering the sacred covering (*sitr*) over Moses's tomb, conducting Sufi rituals, chanting religious eulogies, circulating tales of miracles at the site, lighting candles, and making votive offerings.[34] The conduct, performance, organization, and administration of the traditional ziyara incorporated different strata of Muslim society, such as Ottoman officials, the Ottoman military, peasants, Bedouin, mystics, notable families, and religious officials from Jerusalem and the southern and eastern parts of Palestine. The interactions of these different social groups defy discursive typologies between popular and orthodox worship, great and little Traditions, or the scripturalist and saint-worshipper.[35] This two-tiered model of popular and official Islam falls short of adequately explaining the complex cultural and historical forces that shaped religiosity in the premodern era, as recent works have demonstrated.[36] Sufi-scholars pursued exoteric knowledge grounded in Islamic scholarship and esoteric knowledge guided by mystical worship.[37] Within this context of a shared religiosity, members of the ulama did more than administer shrines and their endowed properties; most medieval Muslim scholars regarded ziyara as permissible and even beneficial for Muslims.[38] At Nabi Musa, ulama shared with peasants and Bedouins alike a belief in the sanctity of the tomb and the overall sacredness of prophets. At the same time, commoners and the elite embraced Sufi mystical practices and participated in their rituals. Thus, the significance of the traditional ziyara to Nabi Musa goes beyond how Muslims conducted pilgrimage to one shrine; it maps how Muslims in Palestine and the wider region—be they villagers, Bedouin, urban residents, scholars, mystics, or imperial officials—negotiated their place within an Islamic sacred landscape and exhibited their shared beliefs and religious practices.

The patronage Sultan Baybars bequeathed to the shrine allowed these traditional forms of worship to flourish. The endowment deed registered the revenues from properties to be used to maintain the shrine and the organization of its annual mawsim and feast (*simat*).[39] During most of the period of Ottoman rule in Palestine, two branches of the Ghudayya family, the Yunus al-Ghudayya and the Yunus al-Ghudayya al-Husayni,[40] dominated the posts responsible for administering the affairs of the endowment, serving as *mutawalli* (controller),[41] *nazir* (administrator), and *wakil* (agent).[42]

The shrine eventually attracted the attention of pilgrims and scholars from throughout the Muslim world. By the fourteenth century, the prolific traveler Ibn Battuta (d. 1369) and the chronicler Ibn Fadal al-ʿUmari (d. 1349) linked the Moses shrine near Jericho with the kathib al-ahmar mentioned in the prophetic tradition.[43] Nearing the close of Mamluk rule, more scholars acknowledged its claims as a sacred site.[44] By the sixteenth century, although the eminent scholar of hadith Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qastallani (d. 1517) could acknowledge other claims locating al-kathib al-ahmar, he asserted that it was "well known" that the tomb of Moses near Jericho was the true site.[45] One source from the late Mamluk period claimed that the shrine had become a popular destination for "visitors and people from the ulama and pious" to visit.[46] Jerusalem chronicler and jurist Mujir al-Din ʿUlaymi (d. 1522) observed on the eve of Ottoman rule that the people of Jerusalem visited every year immediately after the rains, that is, in spring. They remained there seven days after having had to endure the challenges of traveling on a roadless terrain to reach it.[47] During his pilgrimage to Palestine, the Swedish theologian and Dominican Felix Fabri (d. 1502) observed the cairns Muslims had piled on the road to mark their arrival to the shrine, suggesting that ziyara had become a collective group activity by this time.[48]

The shrine's proximity to Jerusalem encouraged Ottoman authorities to monitor its affairs and security closely.[49] Sultans secured the routes intersecting Jerusalem, Hebron, and the shrine of the Prophet Moses to benefit local pilgrims and those visiting from beyond Palestine. Some of these visitors also combined a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina with a visit to the holy shrines in Palestine.[50] The Ottomans exempted land-grant cavalry troops (T. *sipahi*) in Palestine from campaigning to guard these routes in Palestine, including to Nabi Musa.[51]

Ottoman officials in Istanbul followed the affairs of the shrine so closely that they expected their functionaries in Jerusalem to uphold the punctilio of worship at the maqam. Decrees reproached provincial authorities, such as the district governor (*sanjak beg*) of Jerusalem and the Islamic court judge of the city, for failing to keep candles lit or neglecting to replace the sacred covering of Moses's tomb.[52] One decree from Sultan Selim II (r. 1566–1574)

inquired why money collected from endowments to support the shrines of the Prophets Yunus (Jonah), Lut (Lot), and Musa (Moses) did not appear to be used for their stated purpose. He noted how these sites were in ruins, sacred coverings were neglected, and lamps were not lit, reminding officials that "Muslim people ask their holy spirits for help and assistance." The order asserted, "I have commanded that . . . the sacred tombs of the prophets . . . be restored and their lamps hung up" and that the shrine staff's payment be withheld until these orders were fulfilled.[53] In 1552, one document warned that the sacred covering on the tomb of Moses had rotted and was in need of replacement, just as the mosque (*masjid*) itself was in need of repair.[54] Some decades later, Ottoman officials dutifully recorded in the Jerusalem court that they had replaced the green cloth (*thawb khudra*) that covered the tomb.[55] The reverence for the covering even attracted the attention of Sultan Suleyman I "The Magnificent" (r. 1520–1566). He commissioned a covering in which the profession of faith (*shahada*) was interwoven with Moses's epithet "*Musa al-kalim*" ("Moses is he who spoke with God") instead of the more familiar phrase "*Muhammad rasul Allah*" (Muhammad is the Messenger of God).[56] Ottoman rulers enjoined local authorities to secure access to the shrine and maintain its upkeep because they identified ziyarat al-qubur and the appurtenances associated with it, such as candles and sacred coverings, as integral to the Islamic culture of their time.

Historical accounts of visitors to the Moses shrine capture how widely belief in ziyara radiated throughout the premodern era. These accounts fail to sketch differences between urban and rural pilgrims or commoners and scholars. Shortly before the collapse of Mamluk rule in Palestine, one writer described the "people of Jerusalem" (*ahl bayt al-maqdis*) visiting the tomb and sleeping there, "toiling" in their efforts to prepare for their extended stay.[57] Another recalled ulama and pious visitors arriving from Jerusalem.[58] In the early years of Ottoman rule, Jerusalem's Shariah court is recorded as having closed in order for its officials to conduct a pilgrimage, and Ottoman officials, such as the commander of the Jerusalem district (*amir liwa al-Quds*) and the judge (*qadi*), are recorded as having worshipped there.[59] Despite the threat of brigandage and attacks from Bedouins, Moroccan diplomat Muhammad al-Miknasi (d. 1799) visited, and Shaykh al-Khalili (d. 1734), the head of the muezzins at the al-Aqsa mosque, remained there ten days.[60] By the early nineteenth century prominent scholars, such as Shaykh Hassan al-ʿAttar (d. 1835), who later became Shaykh al-Azhar in Cairo, accompanied the heads of the Husayni family as they led pilgrims to the shrine.[61]

Pilgrims not only shared a common devotion for the tomb but also circulated and listened with pious reverence to accounts of the shrine's wonders (*muʿjizat*), such as of apparitions (*khiyal ashbah*) and miracles or marvels

(*karamat*), which supported the likelihood that the site was the true resting place of Moses. Sufis were more inclined to accept accounts of miracles and visions of ghostly figures at the shrine. The eminent mystic ʿAbd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi (d. 1731) enumerated the many examples of the shrine's wonders.[62] The eighteenth-century Egyptian mystic and leader of the Khalwatiyya Sufi order Mustafa b. Kamil al-Din al-Bakri al-Siddiqi (d. 1749) told of how during his visit in 1710 he rubbed the sitr over his forehead and immediately sensed God drawing closer to him. Miraculously, the headache that had been troubling him abated. People believed the shrine's baraka radiated beyond the tomb. Siddiqi added that water collected from the shrine's well could heal wounds.[63]

Shaykh Khalili recounted two episodes to attest to the shrine's miraculous nature. Once, as he was reading the revered collection of prayers *Dalaʾil al-Khairat* in front of Moses's tomb, he suddenly realized that his prayers honoring God's messenger in the sight of the tomb of the Prophet Moses were misplaced, prompting him to switch his devotions to Moses and his brother Aaron.[64] Suddenly he heard a voice from the tomb reproaching him. The voice instructed him that the "alliance of family" (*ʿasuba al-nisb*) took priority over the "alliance of loyalty" (*ʿasuba al-walaʾ*), which he took to mean that prayers to the Prophet Muhammad held priority over other prophets. In another episode, Khalili recounted how Bedouins who had robbed the group of goods he had collected for the shrine fell victim to divine retribution; within days of the robbery, three of the bandits had died.[65]

The shrine also served as a site for "Muslim sonic performance," capturing the "intimate relationship" between sound and "Muslim architectural space."[66] The shrine provided sacred space for Sufis to conduct their distinctive rituals, such as performing *dhikr* (ritual invocation) ceremonies, chanting religious eulogies, and playing drums, cymbals, and tambourines.[67] There are also instances of singers hired to perform there, but this was still controversial.[68] Siddiqi commented on how Sufi troops (*al-fuqaraʾ*) marched with their banners and played their hand drums every day as they greeted the increasing number of pilgrims arriving to the shrine. One Jerusalem scholar who accompanied Siddiqi assured him that all these activities conformed to the legal category of "permissible" (*mubah*) acts.[69] At the shrine, the boundaries separating scholars from mystics were nebulous, since both groups engaged in the same devotional practices within the same devotional space.[70]

While it is unclear to what extent members of Jerusalem's ulama were active participants in Sufi rituals, elite families and Ottoman officials in Jerusalem were known to be receptive to mysticism, openly practiced it, and greeted mystics visiting their city.[71] Members of the ulama often accompanied Sufi travelers who were enthusiastic about visiting Moses's shrine. Shaykh Khalili

accompanied the aforementioned visit of Siddiqi and the Egyptian mystic Mustafa Asʿad Luqaymi Dumiyati (d. 1764).[72] During one visit, Siddiqi recalled that after Khalili read a prayer in the presence of the "sublime one who spoke [with God]" (*al-kalimiyya al-munifa*), Khalili wept and inspired many around him to weep profusely.[73] Renowned mystic Nabulsi lauded the esteemed members of Jerusalem's ulama who escorted him to the shrine.[74] Unlike characterizations of Jerusalem's ulama as "more conservative and religiously fanatic than anywhere else in the country," the evidence suggests that they shared many of the same practices and beliefs in mysticism and ziyara as Sufis and the wider, mostly rural population.[75]

Another central feature of the traditional ziyara included the organization of the simat, the repast the mutawallis financed from the revenues of the shrine's endowments.[76] The funds dispersed for this expense reveal how highly the Moses shrine administrators regarded ziyara as the shrine's primary purpose, just as the endowment deeds of other shrines reveal this same objective.[77] Catering meals to the increasing number of visitors imposed great financial burdens on the administrators. In 1555, the earliest extant records documenting expenses for the simat, the festival must have been a humble affair: barley, wheat, onions, beans, and honeyed dates (*dibis*) amounted to just 391 qitʿa.[78] Two decades later, the organizers required 1,600 qitʿa, which nearly doubled to 3,013 qitʿa less than a decade after that.[79] By 1600, a Jerusalem court record referred to the simat as an "old custom," and the amount of 2,477 qitʿa required to organize this event reflected an established culinary tradition. That year, funds were needed to purchase 110 ratl of rice, 25 baskets of wheat, 120 ratl of clarified butter (*samna*), as well as dibis, chickpeas, and flour, and other nonfood expenses to serve the daily needs of pilgrims.[80] At times, the growing demands to furnish the simat required organizers to borrow items from other shrines.[81] Although meat is not recorded as an expense, festival organizers and wealthy donors slaughtered sheep outside of the shrine at their own expense, a luxury beyond the means of most rural pilgrims.[82] These large quantities of food suggest that the organizers could provide enough to feed hundreds.[83] By the early eighteenth century, the organizers could proudly boast of pilgrims arriving "from all the lands of Islam" (*min saʾir bilad al-islam*).[84] The shrine's revenues, though, could not keep up with the ballooning expenses. The celebrations held in 1703 incurred a debt of 5,000 qitʿa misriyya (Egyptian coins).[85]

Clearly, the shrine of the Prophet Moses was not a site restricted to popular worship by peasants and Bedouins, beyond the interest of religious and imperial authorities. In this premodern era, different strata of Islamic society participated in a crucial feature of Islamic worship, ziyarat al-qubur. Wealthier and more politically influential figures accomplished this by patronizing the

shrine's expansion and structural upkeep, maintaining its ritualistic appurtenances such as the sitr and candles, providing security, and serving meals. Members of the ulama, Sufis, and rural and town pilgrims exercised the same devotional practices associated with ziyara: lighting votive candles, revering the tomb's sacred covering, performing mystical worship, and circulating tales of the shrine's miracles and apparitions. Most worship was carried out with minimal oversight by religious authorities and failed to clearly delineate popular and orthodox Islamic praxis. As Sheila Blair observes, fourteenth-century Sufi shrines were not places of retreat, like *ribats*, but were "social establishments" where the veneration of the dead produced "lively spots, more popular than scholarly or official foundations."[86] Ziyara to Nabi Musa encompassed more than individuals conducting a religious practice. It involved a complex network of religious, imperial, and urban officials who worked jointly to make pilgrimage possible in the first place, allowing a sacred center to flourish for worshippers of different social strata and backgrounds.

However, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, a new religious tradition emerged in pockets of the Muslim world that more clearly demarcated the practices of commoners from those of the learned. In conjunction with modern reforms to the Ottoman state and governance, the festival's new impresarios transformed the traditional ziyara into an official mawsim that centered on Jerusalem. They displaced the festival's focus on venerating Moses's tomb with a new public spectacle highlighting the role of representatives of the modern Ottoman state and Jerusalem's urban notables. These symbolic changes defined how these actors understood modernity, social hierarchy, and Islam in fin-de-siècle Jerusalem.

2 / THE OFFICIAL CEREMONIES IN FIN-DE-SIÈCLE JERUSALEM, 1850–1917

A world wholly demystified is a world wholly depoliticized.

Clifford Geertz, "Centres, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power"

BY THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, THE traditional form of venerating the tombs of holy figures was ubiquitous in Palestine. The renowned Palestinian ethnographer Tewfik Canaan captured its vibrancy in the early twentieth century, observing how worshippers believed that saints and spirits inhabited not only tombs and shrines but also trees, shrubs, caves, springs, wells, rocks, and stones. Shrines and sanctuaries were "innumerable in Palestine," he wrote, with many villages honoring more than one saint.[1] While an earlier, premodern religiosity had displayed little distinction between popular and official Islam, a two-tiered religious system emerged in the modern era. These distinctions were a product of the Ottoman Empire's adoption of Western, secular reforms of government in the nineteenth century. The reforms recast the relationship between state and citizen and shaped a new, modern understanding of Islam, social hierarchy, and religious worship.[2] In this setting of social transformations, traditional religious celebrations proved protean. The Nabi Musa festival manifested the arrival of these modern changes through the new rites, participants, and processional routes Ottoman officials and urban notables introduced in the mid-nineteenth century. These changes to the festival's traditional symbolic order championed the state and urban elite's ascendancy over rural people and defined the place of Islam in the fin-de-siècle Ottoman Empire.

The new modern state institutions the Ottomans introduced in Jerusalem in the mid-nineteenth century were central to this process of converting the traditional pilgrimage to the Prophet Moses shrine into a civic festival centered in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Municipal Council (A. Majlis al-Baladi; T. Meclis-i Belediye) and the Administrative Council (A. Majlis al-Idara) of the province (*sanjak*) of Jerusalem acquired administrative jurisdiction over the province of Jerusalem and the Jerusalem subdistrict (*qada'*) by 1863.[3] The Administrative Council gained an expanded purview of authority

with the introduction of the 1864 Law of the Provinces; after 1872, Jerusalem became an independent province (*mutasarifiyya*), directly responsible to the Ministry of Interior in Istanbul.[4] The Jerusalem Majlis al-Idara, as Haim Gerber explains, was "one and the same time" the council of the province and of the Jerusalem subdistrict.[5] In conjunction with the opportunities the newly enacted 1858 Land Code provided, serving in these councils allowed Jerusalem's notables, as well as elites in other urban centers, to generate great wealth from investments in land and exporting rural produce.[6] By the close of Ottoman rule, a "landowning and office-holding aristocracy" with wealth gained from global commerce and political power derived from administrating local and provincial state institutions had emerged.[7] By the reign of Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II (1876–1909), the *aʿyan* had transformed from competing factions isolated from one another into a more cohesive elite fully incorporated into the imperial structure and administration.[8] They believed the Western education they acquired and European fashions they wore designated them as "modern."[9] Palestine's Muslims, Christians, and Jews who embraced this modernity formed a "modern, multi-religious civil society" who espoused a "civic Ottomanism."[10]

However, the expansion of state control over rural areas and the commodification of the rural agricultural in an era of expanding trade in global markets came at the expense of traditional social order in the countryside. Rural and tribal peoples had been accustomed to engaging with the Ottoman state through a patron-client relationship, relying on local leaders to serve as intermediaries with imperial officials. Before the arrival of modern reforms, James Finn, British consul in Jerusalem (1846–1863), suggested that the *fellahin* (peasants) "govern[ed] themselves pretty much as they liked."[11] But into the mid-nineteenth century, the modern state could enforce its presence throughout the region and subject rural and tribal peoples to taxes, censuses, and conscription more efficiently and effectively.[12] In the eyes of villagers and Bedouin, the Ottoman state "had ceased to be an amorphous, ill-defined entity."[13] The Ottomans achieved this by subduing powerful rural families or recruiting them into the modern bureaucracy.[14] Ottoman officials and local urban notables in Jerusalem and other large towns worked jointly to promote state authority, either for the benefit of expanding the trade of rural agriculture or for increasing their ownership of landed property. Concomitantly, rural and tribal people experienced greater threats to maintaining access to their traditional landholdings, since they were subject to indebtedness to urban moneylenders and increased taxation from the state. In addition, disputes over boundaries and property rights with new landowners multiplied, and, with the advent of Zionist settlements, conflicts with new Jewish settlers increased.[15]

Jürgen Habermas describes disruptions to traditional social structures, such as what Palestinians experienced in the late Ottoman period, as precipitating a "legitimacy crisis" or "legitimation deficit." In these circumstances, rulers drew upon traditional culture to appear as if they possessed the legitimate credentials to rule.[16] Yet, as Lisa Wedeen finds in her study of the Syrian state rituals Hafiz al-Asad (1971–1999) introduced, state rituals failed to legitimize the ruler or impose the ruler's hegemony. Instead, these rituals possessed the productive capacity to discipline citizens into political obedience, dramatize the state's power, and frame spectators as citizens.[17] In other examples, state rituals included the capacity to impart larger ideas of social hierarchy, social relations, identity, and religious praxis.[18] The new symbolic order of the modern Nabi Musa festival manifested similar objectives. As a newly "invented tradition," it accomplished more than to elide the troublesome arrival of social and economic change; it defined how Jerusalem's notables and the Ottoman state understood religion and state in the modern era.[19] The official festival symbolically asserted the authority of the Ottoman state and its urban functionaries over rural lords and rural people. It provided a public venue to express the elite's acceptance of Western, secular reforms and cultural practices, just as it defined Islam's place in a modern state. The official festival evoked these new power and cultural dynamics because rituals do not merely represent power but manifest it; as Clifford Geertz writes, Balinese court ritual was not "an echo of politics taking place somewhere else. It was an intensification of politics taking place everywhere else."[20]

The Jerusalem councils at the municipal, subdistrict, and provincial levels were instrumental in transforming the traditional Nabi Musa ceremonies into the official Prophet Moses festival. The festival's earliest iteration began before the founding of the municipality and provincial councils.[21] Finn described scenes of the celebrations held during the week of Orthodox Easter between 1853 and 1856, including events that later became standard: the arrival of pilgrims from Nablus, the procession (*ziffa*) of banners, and the pilgrims beating drums (*tabl*) and cymbals (*kass*).[22] Sarah Barclay Johnson, who published her account of visiting Jerusalem in 1858, described a religious figure, likely the mufti, bearing revered banners and leading the procession.[23] One Ottoman document from 1855 recorded the visit of Armenian, Greek, and Jewish representatives to the shrine, suggesting that the shrine had become an important site associated with Ottoman prestige in the area.[24] These celebrations, though, may have been irregular. Ermete Pierotti, Jerusalem governor Surya Pasha's (1857–1863) architect, whose time in the city overlapped with Finn's, described the shrine but not the festival.[25]

Based on the limited extant records from the late nineteenth century, it appears that the subcommittees of the Jerusalem Administrative Council

(responsible for both the Jerusalem province and subdistrict) organized the Jerusalem portion of the celebrations. In effect, its members became its impresarios. These committees included the Lajnat Awqaf al-Quds (Council of Jerusalem's Endowments) and Lajnat al-Mawsim (Festival Council).[26] Members of the administrative council, including *ex officio* Muslims and non-Muslims representing the city's highest religious and secular offices, authorized its payments.[27] In 1913, the mufti of Jerusalem Muhammad Kamil al-Husayni (d. 1921) served as president of the festival council (*ra'is lajna li-l-mawsim*), alongside other members of the city's elite, including those whose families had only recently ascended to the city's notable ranks. In 1911, Khalil Husayn al-Dajani, a member of a family with no previous involvement with the Moses shrine, undertook the logistically daunting tasks of purchasing food and organizing security.[28] Clearly, modern state institutions and officials were central in converting traditional rituals into public spectacles.[29]

The development of religious celebrations into public spectacles was not unique to Nabi Musa. Newly formed municipal councils throughout the Jerusalem province appropriated traditional celebrations and granted local urban notables amplified roles. These new festivities projected the elite into the role of "actors who shape, change or use space."[30] Salim Tamari attributes these large, public gatherings to expanding public spaces in Palestine's urban centers during the late Ottoman period. Public gatherings broke down "private and public domains," where people could enjoy "bourgeois domains of leisurely pleasure," such as attending a soccer game or picnicking. Some of these gatherings may have originated in Christian and Jewish religious ceremonies and festivals. Still, these new "secular spaces" became "shared social activities" that members of all faiths enjoyed attending.[31] Ottoman authorities even attended the prominent Christian and Jewish celebrations in Jerusalem, providing security and seated as honored guests.[32]

Ottoman participation in these new civic ceremonies resembled the rituals of civil religion. As Robert Bellah describes, civil religion is a collection of beliefs, symbols, and rituals that express the implicit religious values of a nation in the modern era.[33] The rituals appropriate traditional religious symbols and imagery but are organized by mostly nonreligious figures who assume a visible role. Civil religion can establish a belief system that rallies diverse people around the nation, emerging in a moment in history when modern, secular changes have frayed the influence of religious institutions in society.[34] Although the role of official religious institutions may have eclipsed in a modern era, the "primordial sense of cultural continuity" persists.[35] Civil religious rituals incorporate religious and secular imagery and symbols, without the two domains appearing as conflicting or unnaturally coterminous.[36]

In these new, public spectacles of the late Ottoman period, secular figures assumed visible roles in traditionally religious celebrations. Nablus's notables and municipal officials became central actors in ceremonies honoring the city banner's retrieval for its inclusion in the Prophet Moses festivities.[37] At the annual festival in honor of the quranic prophet Salih's shrine in Ramla (Q. 7:73–78), organizers commissioned an Ottoman ceremonial band and a troop of mystics to lead the large crowds and retrieve the ceremonial banner.[38] At the procession to the shrine of Nabi Rubin (Prophet Reuben) south of Jaffa, political and religious figures, among them Jerusalem's district governor and subdistrict governor and Jaffa's mayor and chief judge, joined a procession led by Sufis playing their music to the shrine. Jaffa's notables usurped these roles from the shrine's traditional custodians in Ramla, its less prosperous neighbor to the south.[39] Ottoman officials also converted the religious ceremony of the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (*Mawlid al-Nabi*) into public expression of Ottoman patriotism by offering prayers at the al-Aqsa mosque to the Caliph and the Ottoman army.[40] After 1908, this developed into a "national Ottoman festival" that engulfed Muslims, Christians, and Jews.[41] These civic and modern ceremonies appear in the 1911 Birthday of the Caliph (*ʿId Milad al-Khalifa*) ceremony. The Jerusalem director of endowments invited the Jerusalem governor to the municipal council, instructing him to wear "official clothes."[42] Donning Western accouterments while hosting a traditional—albeit nonreligious—celebration exemplifies how Muslims negotiated the place of Western culture within a traditional Islamic culture.[43] Invoking traditions at rituals is how modernity unfolds at the local level.[44] In all these examples, the transformation of traditional celebrations into official ceremonies represented a unique Ottoman response to modernity, achieved by culling symbols from both the religious and secular domains.[45] The celebrations displayed Jerusalem's representatives of the modern Ottoman state such as the governor and municipal officials as faithful to Islam by revering traditional religious icons (banners), holy figures (prophets), and traditional rulers (the sultan).

BIFURCATED CEREMONIES

The first step the Jerusalem Administrative Council took to reorder the traditional Nabi Musa festival was to align the celebrations with the solar Orthodox Easter calendar and designate Jerusalem as a locus of its activities.[46] Although the annual *mawsim* had traditionally acknowledged the Orthodox Easter Julian calendar,[47] by the middle of the nineteenth century the festival was fixed

to commence one week before Orthodox Good Friday at the Haram al-Sharif and end one week later at that revered site. The Jerusalem Shariah court judge announced the upcoming festival dates after Friday prayers a week before they commenced in an event known as the Call (*al-munadi*).[48] Town criers traveled Jerusalem Province, notifying villagers and townspeople. Eventually, the festival would serve as the "nucleus" of a spring festival season in Palestine, as ritual pilgrimages (*ziyarat*) to other shrines were held on the days and weeks corresponding to this calendar.[49] The ability to set the ritual calendar for the entire sanjak of Jerusalem demonstrates the "infrastructural power" the Jerusalem municipal and sanjak councils now wielded.[50]

The most prominent change the organizers introduced was to bifurcate the pilgrims between ritual actors and spectators. This division was necessary because modernity demands people construct polarities between different groups.[51] Organizers separated the ceremonies into two groups of participants, practicing different rites, and evoking unique messages. One ceremony was devoted to rural and town pilgrims, who were provided with the space to chant religious songs, perform traditional folk dances (*dabka*), and march in processions led by mystics (*darwish*, that is, Sufis). The second comprised the newly coalesced political and religious elite of Jerusalem, who distanced themselves from what was now designated as "popular" religion. This bifurcation arose at a time when modernist Islamic discourses condemned as unorthodox and un-Islamic the practices pilgrims conducted at *mulids* and shrines. These critics abjured "ecstatic" forms of Sufism, rituals associated with what they considered the swinish spectacles of dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments, as mystics entered a trance and performed dramatic feats of piercing themselves with skewers. Those critics believed that these "backward" practices threatened Islamic civilization and exposed Muslims to European conquest.[52] Their criticism invented the novel typologies of traditional/modern and popular/official worship, "discursive traditions" constructed through modern interpretations of religious texts.[53]

Their Muslim contemporaries in Palestine, however, offered little support for these attacks. They defended pilgrimage to tombs, and Jerusalem's religious hierarchy refrained from restricting or condemning mystical and popular forms of worship.[54] Nonetheless, the official Nabi Musa festivities espoused a distinction between popular and official Islamic practices. By the close of Ottoman rule, observers began to describe the rites and practices Ottoman leaders, urban notables, and religious officials performed as "official" Islam, and the mystical and folk traditions of the mostly rural pilgrims as popular (*sha'bi*) religion, when previously no such nomenclature existed.[55]

The most visible manifestation of the festival's bifurcation was the arrival of pilgrims to Jerusalem organized along village and town contingents

(*mawkib*, pl. *mawakib*) representing Jerusalem, Hebron, and Nablus and their neighboring villages. They entered in a boisterous din of chants among the banging of drums and cymbals led by members of their local Sufi brotherhoods crying out religious anthems.[56] By the end of the nineteenth century, the processions conformed to a set schedule. These parades began with the arrival of the Nablus pilgrims who left their city one week before Orthodox Holy Thursday and camped overnight at the Shaykh Jarrah neighborhood just outside of the Old City.[57] The following morning they entered Jerusalem through the Damascus Gate/Bab al-ʿAmud, led by members of their local Sufi orders, made more energetic with the clattering of tambourines and striking of drums.[58] Each village had its own *sayyara* (literally "moving") leading the pilgrims and villagers in boisterous chants and a cacophony of music. Pilgrims hoisted on their comrades' shoulders sang traditional songs, while others performed folk dances (*raqsat baladiyya*) and playfully brandished swords in mock battles. Even the rattling of the swords corresponded to the rhythms of songs. The procession took several hours to reach its destination at the Haram al-Sharif. After Friday (*jumʿa*) prayers, some villagers from the Jerusalem area joined the Nablus pilgrims as they marched out of the Old City through St. Stephen's Gate/Bab al-Asbat to Raʾs al-ʿAmud, a high point southeast of the city on the road toward Jericho. The city council erected a tent where religious and political leaders joined the mayor, other municipal officials, and the governor in bidding the pilgrims farewell as they embarked on their march to the shrine. Though it traveled only a short distance, the slow-moving procession took two or three hours to complete.

Jerusalem then hosted a separate reception for the Hebron pilgrims and villagers from its environs. They arrived at the outskirts of Jerusalem on the Saturday before Palm Sunday in the Orthodox calendar. Some reached as far as Mar Elias church near Bethlehem, while others chose to bivouac for the night at Sultan's Pool (Birkat al-Sultan). In Bethlehem, local Catholic notable Suleiman Jasir prepared a meal for the pilgrims.[59] The following day, Palm Sunday in the Orthodox Easter calendar, Hebron's banner-bearers announced their arrival to Jerusalem by hoisting their town's green flag, flanked by other blue, gold, and green religious banners and supported by a guard of swordsmen, singers, and dancers from mystical orders. The banner bearers from Hebron's villages followed closely behind, bearing their red, green, yellow, and white town banners embroidered with text from the Qurʾan. The procession headed toward Jaffa Gate/Bab al-Khalil, greeted joyously by Jerusalem's youth and Nablus pilgrims who had stayed behind. They wended their way through the city's narrow lanes through David Street and the Street of the Chain to enter the Haram compound. Those who started their ceremonial entrance early in the morning from Sultan's Pool did not reach their

destination until midday.[60] Many choose to spend the night in the mosque compound. The following day—Monday of Easter week—pilgrim contingents arrived from the surrounding villages of Jerusalem, representing from the west Lifta, al-Maliha, Bayt Safafa, and Qaluniya and from the north and east Silwan, Abu Dis, and al-Azzariyya. Young men from Jerusalem formed their own contingent, led by the Shaykh of the Youth (Shaykh al-Shabab), who proudly bore their colorful banner.[61] They were dispatched to greet the arrival of each contingent with displays of mock swordfights. Pilgrims began returning to the city on Wednesday of Holy Week and joined the official procession on Maundy Thursday to retire the Nabi Musa banner. The following day, Good Friday, they filled the Haram compound for the valedictory ceremonies.

This motley scene immediately captivated the attention of Western visitors. One commented, "The Bethany Road for a mile or more is lined on both sides by spectators, who are anxious to see this display. And it is a display! Such varieties of costume, such wealth of banners, such a display of colors can be seen only in the Orient."[62] Wasif Jawhariyya (d. 1972), a Christian musician from Jerusalem, recalled in his memoirs that the "awe-inspiring festival" (*ihtifal muhib*) took four hours to complete as spectators, especially women and children, crowded the road at dawn to catch sight of the "national fair" (*al-mahrajan al-qawmi*). The streets were so crowded that he remembered having difficulty seeing the ground.[63] British traveler George Lees was similarly struck by the scene: "Men and women, and children, rich and poor alike, all dressed in the brightest holiday attire pour into the city from all parts of the country."[64] Vendors selling all kinds of foods, drinks, nuts, sweets, and children's toys, cigarettes, and waterpipes added to the atmosphere of bonhomie. The vendors themselves contributed to this lax, playful mood, wandering among the women selling reed sticks, shouting, "Discipline your husband, for one piaster," and among groups of men amending this phrase, "Discipline your wife, for one piaster."[65]

As a spectacle, the processions were indeed impressive. However, the ceremonial focus of this resplendent scene strayed far from the essence of ziyara—gaining proximity to a holy person or place. Instead, the new rites designated pilgrims and elite into the "bicameral roles of actors and an audience, performers, and spectators."[66] As the audience, the pilgrims were there to validate the messages the elite projected. In the words of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, "The crowd has a part to play, a part of consecration."[67]

The organizers choreographed these roles of actors and audience in the opening ceremonies. The festival organizers designated the patriarch of the prominent Qutb family in Jerusalem, newly ascended elites with no previous

involvement with the festival, to present the sacred banners to the Jerusalem governor for inspection at his headquarters. These banners included those of the Prophet Muhammad, the Haram al-Sharif, and the al-Aqsa mosque, with two of al-Nabi Dauwd (Prophet David).[68] In the company of an Ottoman military band and separate from the many spectators, the banners were ceremonially unfurled and affixed to a pole, then presented to the governor, who granted permission for their official inclusion in the processions.[69] This newly unified coterie of elite and state officials publicly confirmed their continued respect for sacred artifacts and traditional religious culture by holding, folding, and presenting the revered banners. Although they lacked religious credentials, the governor and the Qutb patriarch were bestowed with roles that appeared religious. Similar to an everyday nonsacred object's (water, for example) possessing a sacredness during ceremonies at a holy site, these nonreligious figures were bequeathed with duties suggesting religious rituals in a space that was imbued with religiosity.[70] The continuity of Islamic tradition in a modern era can succeed only through these acts of subterfuge, providing stages for nonreligious actors to acquire religious roles, the raison d'être of civil rituals.

The new official ceremonies also enhanced the mufti of Jerusalem's role. Since the eighteenth century, the Husayni family had dominated this post.[71] During the traditional festival, the mufti did not perform any distinct ceremonial duties.[72] The Ottoman decision to declare Jerusalem as the capital of an autonomous province in 1874, however, augmented the mufti's influence.[73] The new roles the mufti acquired at the modern festival reflected his ascendent status. He first made an appearance in a staid ceremony ensconced in the arched courtyard of his Great Residence (al-Dar al-Kabira), a Husayni family home where the Prophet Moses banner was kept throughout the year.[74] In the presence of the city's "highest spiritual and secular officials" (e.g., governor, Shariah court judge) and purposefully distant from the throngs of pilgrims, he unwrapped the revered Nabi Musa banner. The mufti affixed this green banner, embossed with the words "There is no god but God, Moses is the Interlocutor of God" (based on Q. 4:164), to a pole, preparing for its official inclusion in the ceremonies.[75] The Orientalist Hans Spoer captured the solemn atmosphere of how "deep silence held sway now over the gathering, and many an eye was moist as the mufti raised his voice for prayer."[76] The mufti then led all those gathered in a procession to the Haram al-Sharif for communal prayer. An Ottoman musical band and Sufis chanting songs and playing mystical rhythms on small drums, tambourines, and cymbals accompanied this procession, producing a cacophony of festive sounds. Young men of the Bab Hutta neighborhood bearing the "Flag of the Youth" joined the festivities.[77] Following midday prayers, large contingents of pilgrims proceeded in

a grand parade out of the Haram al-Sharif through the Via Dolorosa, finally exiting the Old City walls through St. Stephen's Gate. The sight of ebullient pilgrims captivated the late nineteenth-century Jerusalem resident Estelle Blyth, who described spectators crowding all along the road and "on the top of every wall and house, at every window." As the procession appeared, she continued, "the excitement, which has been simmering in the waiting crowd for hours, bubbles over. Shrill cries are raised on every side, the ululating Moslem wedding-song."[78]

Outside the Haram complex the mufti, banner-bearers, and other officials mounted horses and slowly trod down past the Garden of Gethsemane, an event known as "descent of the banners" (*nazlat al-bayraq*).[79] The mufti rode on a horse near the rear, accompanied by members of the Yunus clans.[80] Two riders from the Dauwd-Dajani family bore the banners of the Prophet David shrine in Jerusalem, two from the Qutb family bore the banners of the Haram al-Sharif and al-Aqsa mosque, and a member of the Qlibu family usually held the banner of Nabi Musa.[81] The presence of an honor guard (*qawwas*) in front carrying an imposing cane added to the official demeanor of this procession.[82]

Agnes Smith, a British pilgrim to Jerusalem, provides an early description of this procession as it exited the Haram. Ottoman mounted troops and foot soldiers led a procession headed by the "Pasha," the governor of Jerusalem, and his two sons followed by a man with "a long grey beard" (likely the mufti) carrying a banner.[83] At the turn of the century, Jawhariyya witnessed the tide of pilgrims exiting the Haram. His observation astutely captured more than the procession's pomp; he parsed its power. He described how the apogee of religious and state authority in the city arrived at the rear of the procession. First the mufti and then other banner-bearers appeared, representing members of Jerusalem's elite, such as the ʿAlami and Jaralla families, followed by a "full parade of the power of the Jerusalem city-state" (*ʿard kamil li-quwat madinat al-Quds al-dawla*) represented by gendarmes and mounted police. The two most influential figures in the city—the Shariah court judge and the governor—closed the processions.[84]

Clearly, the annual mawsim, dating back to the thirteenth century, had transformed into a civic event curating religious and secular authorities. As a civil ritual, what appears as a religious ceremony, such as the presentation, unfolding, and procession of sacred banners, is coordinated with civic officials; in fact, it demanded their participation. This parade included parvenu families with no previous association with the festival, such as the Qutb, ʿAlami, and Jaralla. Although the mufti assumed a prominent role in the processions, its coda was reserved for the governor and the Shariah court judge, a coveted position in the processions the mufti would usurp after World War I.[85] As

Jawhariyya commented, although the few Turks the Ottomans sent to Jerusalem "mattered little," they now assumed an esteemed place in the city's largest public ceremony.[86]

The spectator's gaze upon civic and state figures continued until the procession reached the outskirts of Jerusalem at the Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion. At this site, the mayor, other municipal officials, and the governor convened to bid the pilgrims farewell before they embarked on their arduous peregrination to the shrine, located twenty-seven kilometers away and below sea level. Pilgrims were offered refreshments to slake their thirst, and many would take shelter from the springtime heat under umbrellas.[87] Ottoman troops, all armed and in uniform, escorted each town and village contingent to the tent. The music of the Ottoman military band added to the convivial atmosphere.[88] Cannon blasts punctuated the din of the music and religious anthems that pilgrims and Sufis cried out, coordinated with precision to fire as each town and village contingent arrived at the tent. After all the pilgrims had assembled, a shaykh delivered a speech in honor of the Prophet Moses and the sultan, closing the ceremony by reciting prayers and folding the Prophet Moses banner, which was then transported to the shrine.[89] The Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion was an additional confection upon the traditional ceremonies. It provided ceremonial space to civic (i.e., municipal council members), state (e.g., governor), and religious (i.e., mufti, shaykh) authorities. Their joint assembly and the commingling of political activities (a speech in honor of the Sultan) with religious rites (blessing and folding the sacred banner) demonstrate the flexibility of sacred space in the modern era.

The ceremony purposefully blurred the lines between the sacred and the profane, just as celebrations in Jerusalem greeting the announcement of the 1908 constitution with supporters dancing and feverishly waving banners with religious slogans resembled, to one contemporary witness, Jerusalem's annual religious festivals.[90] This ambiguity suited the ambitions of Jerusalem's elite and Ottoman authorities. Their aim to appear as upholding a commitment to Islamic culture in an age of Western and secular reform could succeed only when they appeared coterminous with religious imagery and actors. The governor, the mayor, and other civic authorities received and bore the sacred banners at the pavilion, just as religious leaders did.

On a literal level, the pavilion set the territorial limits of the municipality of Jerusalem, but it also set the boundaries of the official ceremonies on a figurative level. As the urban notables, Ottoman officials, municipal figures, and religious hierarchs bid the pilgrims farewell, they also symbolically truncated themselves from the more popular, traditional celebrations practiced at the shrine. There, Jerusalem's elite could no longer impose any more changes to

FIGURE 2.1. *Last Ottoman celebration, 1917, as the banners arrive at Raʾs al-ʿAmud (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 00757)*

the traditional celebrations, where pilgrims sang and performed Sufi dhikr ceremonies and folkloric songs and dance and venerated Moses's tomb through popular forms of worship.[91]

While the separation between social groups is a crucial marker of power and hierarchy at any ritual, the modern Nabi Musa ceremony expanded the range of who would be separated from whom in the new symbolic matrix of actors and spectators. The official festival expunged ritualistic activities that had once bound Muslims of different social strata. Unlike an earlier period of Ottoman rule, when the borders between mystics and scholars were "permeable," religious officials and urban notables in the modern era did not deign to participate in the processions with Sufis or be included in their popular forms of veneration.[92] Western observers noticed these divisions. One described the ceremonies notables led as an "official affair, in which the Dervishes have no organic part, as it were, though they appear prominently in the procession."[93] Spoer noted, "With the exception of the spiritual and secular authorities, who are compelled due to their position, the better classes of the Muslims do not participate in the procession, which consists almost entirely of the lower people from Jerusalem and the surrounding villages."[94] Participation in such a raucous public forum among the thicket of pilgrims would have belied the sublimated status of these "better classes."

The Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion also defined modern Islamic praxis. While officials received the sacred banners with careful, reverent movements, pilgrims displayed spontaneous acts of devotion, as they endeavored to "take hold of the floating folds and kiss them, or rub their faces with them, afterwards

passing them to friends."[95] Yet, rather than engage in similar extemporaneous gestures, the elite expressed their authority by designating an appointed hierarchy to conduct carefully orchestrated bodily movements as they handled these sacred objects, what Paul Connerton has described as the "choreography of authority."[96] The different ways these two groups engaged in a religious habitus designated one as upholding official, proper Islam and the other popular Islam.

The introduction of a new ritual devoted to the closing ceremonies continued the festival's messages about Jerusalem's new social order and an elite religious praxis. The events began when pilgrims returned to Jerusalem on Maundy Thursday and assembled at the Haram al-Sharif. In a colorful and musical spectacle known as the "ascent of the banners" (*talʿat al-bayraq*), the pilgrims entered the city with as much pomp as when they had left. Upon reaching Raʾs al-ʿAmud, where the municipality once again hosted the pilgrims, they marched down the road leading to the Shrine of Our Lady Mary, and then up toward St. Stephen's Gate/Bab al-Asbat into the Old City. Town and village banners fluttered alongside the banners of the youth and the many Sufi orders. The Jerusalem and Prophet Moses banners had the "privilege" of appearing up front, another marker of the city's elevated status above all others in the politics of late Ottoman Palestine. According to one pilgrim's account, military commanders, notables, ulama, the pashas and high-ranking government officials (*al-bashawat*), and Ottoman military troops, including the city governor Raʾuf Pasha (r. 1877–1889), greeted them as they entered the Haram. This distinguished coterie stood as one group apart from the many villagers and mystics playing instruments and singing religious anthems (*anashid al-diniyya*). The ceremony marked the folding of the Nabi Musa banner as it was carried from the al-Aqsa mosque to the Dome of the Rock. The mufti, surrounded by a contingent of military commanders and merchants, led pilgrims out of the Haram al-Sharif, reverently holding the Prophet Moses's green banner and preparing its return to al-Dar al-Kabira.[97] This ceremony, though, did not mark the official end of the festival.

The following day—Orthodox Good Friday—pilgrims celebrated the procession of the flags (*zaffat al-aʿlam*).[98] The resplendent spectacle colored the Haram al-Sharif platform with banners representing Palestine's major towns, villages, and mystical orders. While pilgrims loudly sang folk chants and danced traditional dabka, youth mimicked sword and shield dancing (*saif al-turs*) to the delight of onlookers. After communal prayers, though, the ceremonies assumed a more "official" tenor. The Qutb family reverently carried the flags of the Dome of the Rock and the Prophet Muhammad from the al-Aqsa mosque to the Dome of the Rock. Under an olive tree within the Haram al-Sharif precincts believed to have been blessed by the presence of

the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, a representative of the family ascended the pulpit (*minbar*) and received the flags. These were then wrapped in a silk cloth and carried back to their resting place at the Dome of the Rock.[99] With no historical association with the shrine of Moses, the Qutb family's presence was an opportunity to elevate a member of Jerusalem's *aʿyan* at a festival that had become a civic affair, just as the opening ceremonies included "notable" (*wujahaʾ*) families, such as Dajani, ʿAlami, and Disi, raising their family banners, even though they had no previous involvement with the traditional festival.[100] As the banners were reverently carried to their storage without pilgrims performing the saif al-turs, the cynosure was the Qutb family rather than pilgrims performing popular celebratory acts.[101]

The introduction of new participants (e.g., the governor, municipal officials, *aʿyan*), ceremonial routes (e.g., parading in and out of the Haram al-Sharif, marching to Raʾs al-ʿAmud), and rites (e.g., presenting and folding banners) demonstrate how culture renders power legitimate.[102] But the modern ceremonies also project messages beyond legitimacy. Rituals such as storytelling, verbal arts, performances, and games can manifest new social orders.[103] In the theater of the modern festival, Jerusalem was a ritual actor that defined a new social order in the closing years of Ottoman rule. While Jerusalem had always possessed a holy status (i.e., *bait al-maqdis*, *bait al-muqadassa*, "the holy city"), it acquired greater importance as a modern administrative center.[104] During the modern Nabi Musa festival, requiring rural pilgrims to proceed to Jerusalem organized along town and village contingents and to attend rituals led by the city's religious and civil elite became symbolic gestures to wrest compliance from rural peoples. These rituals acknowledged Jerusalem (not villages or other towns) and its elite (not rural lords) as the true loci of power.[105] The social transformation and new social hierarchy these rituals espoused resembled the royal circumcision ceremonies the Kingdom of Imerina in Madagascar had sponsored in the early nineteenth century. Although the circumcision rituals could have been carried out privately and independently, they were now transformed into a state ritual, confirming the state's authority, the king's leadership, and the subordination of the child and his family to the king.[106]

Similarly, although pilgrims had traveled in small groups to the Moses shrine for centuries, the festival's new organizers now commanded them to proceed to Jerusalem, the new center of Ottoman authority in the sanjak. Their arrival represented the ultimate aesthetic expressing submission of rural peoples to urban leadership and the modern state. Pilgrims waited along crowded streets to herald the arrival of the city's political and religious potentates or witness them lead ceremonies. The official ceremonies symbolically inculcated rural people with the view of the modern Ottoman state as

an "idea" that exercised "complete power and territorial sovereignty."[107] The festival defined the ethos of the late Ottoman era: the authority of the modern Ottoman state and its continued respect for Islamic traditions.

Some scholars have suggested that the iconic image of pilgrim contingents arriving from throughout the sanjak of Jerusalem formed a nascent sense of Palestinian national identity linked to Jerusalem as a cultural center.[108] However, assigning the festival nationalist pretensions is anachronistic.[109] The new, modern festival highlighted local, not national, identity. The arrival of village and town contingents into the Old City upheld the subterfuge that traditional social bonds remained vibrant in a modern era. One longtime Jerusalem resident remembered, "each little procession has its own flag, around which they sing and often stop to have a little dance."[110] Ted Swedenburg argues that the late Ottoman-era Prophet Moses festival displayed the "paradox" of how the subordination of Palestine's economy to Western industrial capitalism still required the reinforcement of precapitalist or "feudal" ideologies.[111] The official ceremonies were a ritualistic act of dissimulation, as the elite, and by extension the Ottoman state, made it appear "as if" a traditional (rural-based) social order remained vibrant in an era of centralized state power and the commodification of rural agriculture.[112]

Jonathan Z. Smith captures this paradox by explaining how rituals project the incongruities between a people's ideals of how society ought to be ordered and their historical reality.[113] The village and town contingents of the Nabi Musa festival celebrated the ideal that Palestinian society placed in local identities when the reality of state centralization, the commodification of agriculture, and modern state reforms had begun to unravel them. The processions manifested the incongruities between the ideal of local identity and the reality of a fraying rural social structure. These contrasts captured the ritual's potential, for "ritual gains force where incongruency is perceived and thought about."[114]

To accentuate the local and popular dimensions of the festival, the organizers assigned the Sufis a new visible role in the processions. The festival organizers viewed the mystics as a metonym for popular Islam, easily distinguishable from the ways in which respectable notables, ulama, and Ottoman officials practiced Islam. Tewfik Canaan claimed that Sufis arrived from "all parts of the land," "each sect with its special banner, and their drums decorated with calico of the same colours as their banners."[115] Finn added that Muslims visiting Jerusalem "from India, Tartary, even to the confines of China" regularly attended.[116] Jawhariyya described a *sayyara* accompanying each contingent proceeding out of the Haram al-Sharif, with a group of musicians playing large and small drums, tambourines, and brass cymbals, reciting *muwashahat* and "Qur'anic verses in a high, strong, far-reaching voice."[117] The festival endowed

Sufis with the appearance of an organized structure that mostly lower classes and rural people practiced. The modern festival needed to uphold this subterfuge to encourage the impression that local Islamic culture continued to thrive in an era of modern Western reforms. But, as Frederick De Jong's research has shown, membership in Sufi brotherhoods (*turuq*) in nineteenth-century Palestine was limited, reflecting their loose organizational structure. Some orders may have shared the name of an order but lacked the unity of mystical doctrine.[118] This structure may have facilitated the integration of mystical forms of worship into the regular religious practices of both rural and urban communities; it also may explain the absence of enmity in Palestine between adherents of mysticism and those following nonmystical forms of Islam.[119] The suggestion that mysticism (*tasawwuf*), as opposed to formal membership in a brotherhood, was vibrant in Palestine also appears in the widely used term "*darwish*," nomenclature reserved more for "popular/ecstatic orders as opposed to formal or elite-based movements."[120] As Kahle observed before the Great War, "a very large proportion of Muhammedans from simple circles belong to some dervish order."[121] Also, despite the small number of designated areas in a mosque or shrine to conduct mystical worship (*zawiyas*), the few that existed in Palestine remained the "focal points of dervish life" there.[122]

Nonetheless, Western observers enthusiastically related fantastic tales of mystical practices at the festival, endorsing the distinctions Muslim elites drew between popular and official Islam. The "exotic" practices mystics performed confirmed Orientalist tropes of Islam as primitive and backward, a jarring claim in an era of European colonialism.[123] These commentaries resembled what Roland Barthes observed of wrestling: the audience viewed it not as a sport but as cues or signs to direct the spectator in how to understand the performer. "Thus the function of the wrestler is not to win; it is to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him."[124] For Western observers, Sufism fulfilled a role. They did not need to parse the religious significance of mystical worship and the centuries of scholarship that informed their movements, including how public mystical performance advanced a Sufi adept's progress along the mystical path (*tariqa*). Rather, Western viewers focused on the grotesque element of the human bodily gestures that revealed all they needed to know about Muslims and Islam—at least as it was practiced on the popular level—as erratic and extreme.[125] Western travelers related fantastic stories of Sufis with snakes suspended from their necks, grasping spears and flourishing swords as they cried "Allah akbar!"[126] A recurring image was of the "half-naked" mystic striking their bodies with swords or skewers.[127] American Andrew Breen, who would later be ordained as a Catholic priest, described the "wildest fanaticism" of Sufis dancing and their naked bodies as "a whole scene . . . of revolting ignorance and degradation."[128] Spoer's wife, the medium

and clairvoyant Ada Goodrich-Freer, recounted with amazement the physical punishment one Sufi endured as he conducted a dhikr performance at Nabi Musa. In the span of an hour and a quarter, the Sufi continually repeated "Allah." She estimated that he had uttered this name one thousand times. Like a broadcaster describing the brutality a wrestler endured or inflicted upon his competitor, Goodrich-Freer recounted with equal zeal the rigor and energy that the mystics expended to conduct their mystical performance: "their cries and their movements become more and more rapid, they are panting and breathless, the singing is intermittent, and finally there is but an occasional gasp." After a brief respite, they resumed the performance.[129] Western writers fetishized these tales of mystics and the unnatural actions their bodies endured. These unscripted, spontaneous, and chaotic movements conformed to—or, in Barthes's understanding, "fulfilled"—the Orientalist image of the Muslim "Other" as pell-mell and erratic, opposite the rigid, staid gestures representatives of official Islam performed. In contrast, Western polemics of Islam depicted orthodox Sunni Islam that the urban notables and high-ranking ulama practiced as a kind of "Muslim Protestantism."[130] Thus, the festival organizers never suppressed the Sufis' unscripted bodily movements, for they needed to fulfill their role as the representatives of popular Islam.

THE CALENDAR AND VIOLENCE

The arrival of masses of pilgrims to Jerusalem during Orthodox Easter (as well as Passover when the Christian and Jewish calendars intersected) has led to speculation that the modern ceremonies were designed to foster anti-Christian and anti-Jewish sentiments.[131] The increased number of Western pilgrims to Jerusalem to celebrate Easter contributed to the impression of Easter as a time of heightened tensions.[132] In an age of empire, Jerusalem had become "an arena of competition for European rivalries." Anxieties about European claims over Jerusalem may have prompted the Ottoman Empire to elevate the city's status in 1874 and effectively become the capital of Palestine.[133]

Western commentators drew upon the familiar Orientalist trope of Muslim fanaticism to explain Nabi Musa's intersection with Easter. They described the festival as a time when "the spirit of fanaticism runs high."[134] Finn regarded the influx of "devout" and "fanatical" Muslims as intended to "counterbalance" the arrival of so many "sturdy Christians" present in the city.[135] He portrayed the pilgrims as "extremely fanatical and in a high state of religious excitement."[136] Blyth depicted pilgrims from Hebron and Nablus as hailing from "two fanatical towns."[137] Some present-day scholars echo the theory that the Ottomans staged the festival to counter the influx of Christians during

Easter.[138] Shmuel Tamari contends the festival's calendar was intended to assert Islam's "triumph" over the competing monotheistic faiths, especially since Sultan Baybars, the bearer of jihad par excellence, founded the shrine.[139] Yet, as we have seen, it was not uncommon for Muslim worshippers to adhere to the Christian solar calendar.

The semiotics of pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem can be interpreted differently by unique sets of audiences. In fact, it was intentionally designed as multivocal to appeal to separate groups.[140] One audience was the mostly rural contingent of pilgrims arriving to Jerusalem; by the late nineteenth century, Western visitors, European consuls, and Christian pilgrims formed another. This second audience interpreted the arrival of Muslim pilgrims in their unique way, for rituals, like texts, are not one story but multiple stories in a relationship with audiences.[141] As Laleh Khalili finds in her study of Palestinian memorials, commemoration is "dialogic and shaped by the constant interaction with its audience," allowing for "ambiguity and polyvalence" of meaning.[142] The triumphant entry of village and town contingents into Jerusalem proved polysemic. Organizers encouraged one audience, Muslim pilgrims, to view the processions as a testimony of the Ottoman state's respect for Islamic traditions. They prompted another audience, Westerners, to interpret them as asserting Islamic and Ottoman suzerainty over Jerusalem.

This second discourse was born out of both historical and contemporary Muslim anxieties regarding European designs on Jerusalem, ranging from the Crusades to the contemporary era of European colonialism. By the eve of World War I, most Muslims worldwide had come under some degree of European colonial occupation.[143] While Muslims' societies revived a memory of Saladin (Salah al-Din) in the second half of the nineteenth century in response to the contemporary colonialism they were experiencing, these anxieties surfaced long before the modern period, as Rashid Khalid and Haim Gerber describe.[144] Gerber further interprets Nabi Musa as an "anti-European" ceremony commemorating a memory of the Crusades and contemporary European threats.[145] Yehoshua Ben-Arieh contends that because the Ottomans were too weak to prevent European encroachment on holy places in Jerusalem, they responded indirectly by encouraging pilgrims to visit Jerusalem during Easter. He suggests that Jerusalem governor Raʾuf Pasha (1876–1888) sponsored the festivities in Jerusalem and invited pilgrims from Nablus and Hebron to respond to the increased European and Christian presence during the Christian holy week.[146] He even sponsored a new eastbound road to facilitate travel to Nabi Musa and renovated the Khan al-Ahmar rest house along this route.[147] Although the incunabula of the official ceremonies had emerged before his tenure, the governor may have amplified the governor's ceremonial duties, which initially seemed limited.[148]

So widely did fears of colonial expansion and a memory of the Crusades pervade late Ottoman Palestine that popular lore began to claim that Saladin had founded the festival as a bulwark against European designs on Jerusalem.[149] Emma Aubin-Boltanski calls this anachronism the "Saladin myth."[150] The alacrity with which this apocryphal account gained currency in the modern era appears in a 1913 document referring to one family as having administered the endowment since the "Saladin conquests" (*al-futuh al-Salahi*), a novel appellation, since the festival had not existed during that time.[151] In 1919, only two years after the end of Ottoman rule, the Palestinian educator Khalil al-Sakakini compared the pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem to fighters going into battle to protect Jerusalem.[152] Despite the Saladin myth's ahistoricity, a contemporary Muslim audience troubled over a memory of the Crusades and witnessing expanding European colonialism over Muslim lands was eager to couple the heroic legacy of Saladin to the festival. Like the Algerians suffering under French colonialism (1830–1962), Palestinians defined the threats in which they lived by producing a new historical discourse to imagine their "past truth, present nature and future destiny."[153]

Fear of a renewed European conquest of Jerusalem was so palpable that it even manifested spontaneously. In 1911, pilgrims returning from the Moses shrine heard rumors of a British team of excavators looting Islamic treasures at the Haram al-Sharif. They confronted and cursed the Ottoman governor of the city, Azmi Bey, who had gone out to greet them. The governor, nervous of the growing tumult his presence incited, was forced to retreat and canceled all future appearances at that year's ceremonies.[154] A similar episode occurred in the seventeenth century, indicating how sensitivity to European designs on the city was not restricted to the modern era.[155] Both events testify to a persistent historical memory of confrontation with Europeans.

Ottoman authorities acknowledged the public anxiety of European threats on Muslim lands by amplifying Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II's image as protector of Jerusalem's holy sites. They sponsored chants heard at Nabi Musa extolling his defense of Jerusalem:

> Do not fear, O ʿAli!
> The people around you are men
> They [i.e., the enemies] are the goats, O ʿAli!
> And we are their slaughterers, O father!
> O Abdʾul Hamid! Do not notice them,
> Thy sword is always dripping with blood.[156]

Another chanter bellowed, "Open the gate for us, triumphant Abdul-Hamid; we brought the wall down and the sword."[157] These chants mirrored this

sultan's larger efforts to conscript Islamic symbols and themes to underscore his image as caliph and protector of Islam.[158]

Despite the militant tone of these chants, the Ottomans did not seek conflict with Europeans. While the optics of Muslim pilgrims marching into Jerusalem conjured a picture of an Ottoman and Muslim antagonism against Europeans and Christians, it is unlikely that any Ottoman governor would have intentionally inflamed religious strife and broached conflict with European powers. The 1860 Mount Lebanon attacks against Christians provided European powers with justification to intervene in the Ottoman Empire's political affairs. Despite the defiance the processions may have projected, many European observers credited the Ottomans with organizing an orderly celebration, free of unrest, even at a time when pilgrims bore arms.[159] While a British visitor to the Holy Land, Rev. Alfred Charles Smith, interpreted the choice to intersect Nabi Musa with Easter as "provocative,"[160] German Orientalist Richard Hartmann contended that the festival harbored no such anti-Christian animus. Spoer concurred, regarding Nabi Musa simply as a spring folk festival.[161]

The arrival of the pilgrims not only failed to engender confrontation, but Christian and Jewish Jerusalemites also had fond memories of the festival. Jawhariyya, an Orthodox Christian, extolled the revelry of the celebrations. At one point, he pondered with incredulity how his city could host simultaneously two major religious celebrations: "So imagine what Jerusalem was like on this Holy Thursday, as Christians from the various denominations held an unequaled celebration in which they were joined by foreign tourists and pilgrims visiting the Holy City. Then imagine the gathering of Muslims who were either from the city itself or from neighboring villages, in addition to the people of Hebron, the Hebron mountains, Nablus, and the Nablus mountains."[162]

Jerusalem's Jews had similar recollections. While Jews hesitated walking near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher during Easter, fearing attacks from Christian pilgrims who had arrived from Europe, Jerusalemite Ya'akov Yehoshua expressed no such reservations during Nabi Musa, where "a warm and happy atmosphere prevailed among us. We knew that they were honoring the memory of a prophet and a man of God whom we also accepted."[163] Another Jewish resident recalled how the community's youth and elderly men went to the city gate to receive the celebrants. He remembered the processions passing through the Jewish alleys to the sound of drums and cymbals as Jews cheered the pilgrims and sprinkled rosewater on them. Jews, he recalled, even participated in local festivities inaugurating and concluding the Moses ceremonies. This spirit of a shared reverence in a revered biblical prophet even managed to survive the growing nationalization of the festival

in the immediate years after World War I. As one Jewish resident recalled, in the days after the 1919 and 1920 festivities, life eventually "got back on track. Jews and Arabs again met with each other and both apologized for the spilt blood."[164] The experience of inclusivity between Jerusalem's Christians, Jews, and Muslims differs from communities where violence between religious groups was cyclical, erupting annually at parades and processions that followed a fixed calendar.[165] Despite significant numbers of Muslims marching in proximity to Christian and Jewish neighborhoods, intracommunal scuffles between fellow Muslims and between fellow Christians were more likely to occur at their respective ceremonies than intercommunal conflicts.[166] Reflecting on the account of the festival by David Yellin, a Jewish resident of late nineteenth-century Jerusalem, Gerber opines that the enthusiasm Muslims displayed during the festival did not "automatically earn the appellation of 'fanaticism.'"[167]

While both Europeans and Ottoman officials understood the processions in the context of a larger competition over the holy city, its native Muslims, Christians, and Jews formed a third audience. Locals regarded it as a civic, public festival, just as mawlids in modern Egypt have become a form of "civic religion."[168] Jerusalem's Arab Christians and Jews could enjoy the celebrations alongside their Muslim neighbors because these three religious groups' quotidian experiences rendered them into a single civic community, a topic recent scholarship has masterfully explored.[169] The memoirs of Wasif Jawhariyya that Salim Tamari and Issam Nassar have edited poignantly capture the intercommunal dynamics that bound Jerusalem's religious communities together. Jawhariyya's narrative captures a civic community where Muslims, Christians, and Jews considered religion "coincidental to their wider urban heritage."[170]

Examples of people crossing communal boundaries to worship at sacred sites or to participate in another community's religious festivals were not new or novel to the modern era.[171] Nonetheless, as noted, newly opened public spaces offered Jerusalem's Jews, Muslims, and Christians opportunities to continue to transgress confessional boundaries. Jawhariyya related how the city's Muslim, Christian, and Jewish residents regarded the new public celebrations of traditional religious festivals as "the equivalent of our sea, our public park, our cafes, and our cabarets, all wrapped in one event."[172] Nabi Musa offered Jerusalem's different religious communities an opportunity to enjoy a public event purely for its atmosphere of bonhomie. Yellin noted how thousands cheerfully watched the parade of pilgrims, leading Gerber to suggest that the Moses festival had transformed from a "folkloristic pilgrimage to an official event," open to all the city's communities.[173] Only Western travelers were surprised to see members of different faiths cross communal boundaries

at holy sites.[174] Thus, despite the Jewish tradition of believing that the burial site of Moses was unknown, Jerusalem's Jews watched the processions and reveled in the carnivalesque atmosphere alongside their fellow Muslim and Christian residents, just as members of the three communities were in the habit of visiting each other's shrines and festivals throughout Palestine.

CONCLUSION

Between the historical period of Sultan Baybars's construction of the shrine (*maqam*) and the modern ceremonies of late Ottoman rule, the Prophet Moses festival underwent numerous changes that transformed it from a locus of traditional worship at the shrine to an official, civic pageant in Jerusalem. The modern festival projected the new social order of fin-de-siècle Jerusalem, for as Catherine Bell writes, rituals act as the "vehicle for the construction of relationships of authority and submission."[175] The authority and power assembled in the ceremonies resemble Clifford Geertz's description of the Balinese court rituals as a "theatre state" where "the ceremonies were not a means to political ends: they were the ends themselves, they were what the state was for." Similarly, Jerusalem's nabobs believed the ceremonies captured the raison d'être of the modern era: the expanded authority of the modern Ottoman state and rural people's subordination to urban centers. The official ceremonies crafted the roles of actor and audience, organizer and viewer to manifest Jerusalem's new social order, just as the Balinese ceremonies transformed "kings and princes [into] . . . the impresarios, and the priests the directors, and the peasants the supporting cast, stage crew, and audience."[176]

No doubt the elite organizers of the official festival sought not to immerse themselves in popular forms of worship. Nor did they seek to contain and control the festival as a cultural movement for their benefit, as had been the fate of other popular celebrations.[177] Rather, Ottoman political and religious officials abjured the traditional ways of worship. They founded in the mid-nineteenth century a sui generis festival, one without an exact precedent. Although the organizers culled a historical event from the past ("the traditional festival"), the official celebration was not a "work of creative imagination, not of 'recovered memory,'" but a wholly new ritual devoted to their own engagement with the modern era.[178] The elite organizers of the modern Nabi Musa festival sought to articulate their understanding of the modern era through a reference to a cultural event, not through its replication. The modern organizers devised a new ritual that championed social relations and power dynamics unique to the modern era, such as the authority of urban notables over rural peoples, the power of the modern state, and a modern Islamic praxis.

The traditional festival could in no way have served these discursive purposes. The modern ceremonies had bifurcated into the new categories of "popular" and "official," as opposed to having the elite insinuate themselves into traditional activities that had existed since the thirteenth century. This separation had to exist because at public spectacles hierarchical powers are manifested through separation.[179]

The new events centered in Jerusalem had so quickly become the center of the festivities that the annual celebrations would rarely again be described as a ziyara; rather, the entire week-long pageant would be known as the season of the Prophet Moses Festival (*mawsim al-ihtifal al-Nabi Musa*). By the late nineteenth century, the emphasis would be placed on the festival (*ihtifal*) held in Jerusalem rather than the actual ziyara to the shrine. After World War I, the word *mawsim* would become synonymous with the term *mawsim al-ihtifal* (season of the festival), shorthand for the program of events that took place every year in Jerusalem and at the shrine. The impetus to reorder the festival's symbols would continue after World War I. The competition to control Palestine between Arabs, Zionists, and the British would influence the ritual agenda. Soon after conquering the country, British colonial authorities discovered the advantage of reordering the festival's symbolic structure to fulfill their own political and cultural objectives.

3 / BRITISH COLONIALISM ATTENDS THE FESTIVAL

IN FEBRUARY 1922, PALESTINE'S CATHOLIC COMMUNITY celebrated the election of Pius XI (né Achille Ratti, 1857–1939) as its new pontiff (1922–39). In honor of the event, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem organized a solemn Mass, inviting many diplomats and consular representatives residing in the city. The French consul took advantage of the ceremony to confirm his country's claims as "protectors" of the Catholic community. The American and Italian consuls protested these intentions by refusing to attend; the Spanish consul arrived late, signifying his country's "partial recognition" of French claims. Ronald Storrs (d. 1955), governor of Jerusalem, chose to attend the two-hour ceremony despite the provocative aspirations of the French.[1]

The son of a London vicar, Storrs was sensitive to the potent meanings that ceremonies and rituals elicited. He hoped his attendance would not validate French designs on the Catholic community. Instead, the ceremony would stoke the acute awareness ruling authorities had about public rituals and religious ceremonies. As the events concluded, a priest led an improvised procession with the French consul general and his staff following immediately behind, which took Storrs by surprise. Suddenly, this ritualistic display of hierarchy presented the governor with a "dilemma": if he walked behind the French consul general, he would appear to be symbolically recognizing the French Protectorate in Palestine; if he ignored the procession, he would then be seen as slighting esteemed religious authorities. Storrs devised an artful response. He walked three yards behind the French consular group, dutifully informing a Franciscan monk that he, as an Anglican, did not feel entitled to walk with the Catholic group in front.[2]

This minor episode captures British colonial sensitivities to ritual performances and public ceremonies. Imperial officials demonstrated this concern in Palestine as they did throughout their empire. It drove the British to invest great energy in the Prophet Moses festival by participating in its ceremonies,

assessing its political significance, constantly monitoring its security, and managing its activities.

Soon after conquering the country, British authorities grasped the Muslim community's esteem for the Prophet Moses festival. One skeptical American observer suggested some rationale for British participation in the festival: "for the sake of the natives who dote on the pageantry of government and are sometimes more wholesomely impressed by a little march past of soldiers than by any other means."[3] However, the British valued participation for more strategic reasons than merely placating the natives.

They entered Palestine believing their colonized populations were easily impressed with public spectacles. They believed a colonized population's traditional rituals or the new rituals European powers introduced could serve as a mechanism to forge relationships with colonized elites or communicate political messages to the larger public. As Terrance Ranger observes, the participation by the colonized elite in colonial sponsored rituals became "points of entry into the colonial world and entry into the subordinate part of a man/master relationship."[4] Whether at Empire Day celebrations the British hosted in their African colonies or the Durbar Indian princely installation ceremonies that the British appropriated, local elites assumed prominent places in these processions and ceremonials that defined their place in the hierarchical order of colonial society. One scholar describes the symbolic importance of hierarchy in the pageants, festivals, and ceremonies British imperial officials sponsored as "ornamentalism," for "ornamentalism was hierarchy made visible, immanent and actual."[5]

British colonialists were familiar with Muslim rituals because of their extensive rule over Muslim populations. They and their Russian imperial counterparts governed most of the world's Muslims. Both appreciated the value the hajj held for Muslims and facilitated the movement of Muslims living under their rule during the pilgrimage season, believing these served imperial interests.[6] The British monitored the hajj just as they would engage with other institutions in Islamic societies where they ruled, such as religious endowments (*awqaf*), the Shariah, Sufis, and religious celebrations (e.g., *Mawlid al-Nabi* and shrines of local saints). As David Motadel asserts, colonial officials throughout the empire believed that Islam was "an organized religion that could be understood."[7]

The Nabi Musa festival quickly piqued British interests because it provided them an opportunity to address, in powerfully symbolic ways, the controversial and problematic dimensions inherent in colonial rule.[8] British occupation of Palestine drew the Arab community, its political leaders, the Palestine government,[9] and the (Jewish) Yishuv into a debate on the political future and social order of post–World War I Palestine.[10] The need for the Brit-

ish to engage with the Muslim community was especially pressing. Muslims made up close to 80 percent of the population and were largely united in their opposition to British rule and Britain's support for Zionism as outlined in the Balfour Declaration. This debate played out in many ways. Arab national leaders formed political parties, staged protests, dispatched petitions, and organized boycotts. From 1936 to 1939, Arab nationalists organized a general strike, and peasants launched an armed revolt. However, the Jewish community forged close ties to British authorities who facilitated Jewish immigration and Jewish land purchases.[11] Zionists created political, educational, and military institutions that amounted "to a para-state within, dependent upon, but separate from, the mandatory state."[12]

Palestine's colonial rulers, though, were in a superior position to define this post–World War I order. They drafted new laws to enhance their security and impose legal classifications between Arabs and Jews; they promoted town planning and rural land use to meet colonial interests; they reconfigured Ottoman-era land laws to facilitate Jewish land ownership; they supported "traditional" religious education as a bulwark against nationalist passions; they drafted laws and policies to monitor and control the press and radio; they promoted Palestine's technological development to advance the Yishuv's interests; they endowed the office of the high commissioner and other government agencies with great authority to promote the settler-colonial interests of the Zionist movement; and they equipped the military and police to impose their rule.[13] In the end, the British maintained complete control of central state power in the mandatory administration, despite allowing the Yishuv autonomy over its internal administration. British participation in the Nabi Musa festival was an additional attempt for the British to confront the challenges they faced in the country. The value of participating lay in offering British colonial officials opportunities to encounter Muslims directly and stand in close proximity to Islamic leaders, symbolically demonstrating to an Arab public British respect for Islamic culture.

In addition to these legal, military, and political mechanisms to control the country, a colonial epistemology guided British rule in Palestine and their participation in the festival. They believed that religion defined a people's national identity (or race, as English society termed it).[14] They attributed all anticolonial uprisings to religious motives.[15] British forces and high-ranking officials regularly attended the principal ceremonies of the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities. They repeatedly pledged to preserve the status quo, an amorphous legal concept they invoked to demonstrate their commitment to preserving local culture and tradition.[16] As Suzanne Schneider explains, the British inherited a post-Enlightenment belief separating religion from power, defining the Western concept of the secular realm as a neutral space.

Religion inhabits an innocuous realm, separate from the politically charged public sphere where politics was debated and citizens engaged in mass movements.[17] She adds that it was "precisely *because* religion was conceived of in apolitical terms that the British chose to govern through it."[18] Consequently, British colonial officials did not regard Islam as a peripheral feature of Palestinian society but, Nicholas Roberts contends, as "central to the consolidation of British rule."[19] By designating non-Western people as traditional and religious, the British assumed Muslim celebrations like Nabi Musa were apolitical and therefore easily subject to their machinations.

Through a language of symbols—a "ritual lingua franca"[20]—colonial officials articulated three discursive objectives in their participation: "historical continuity with the Ottomans," "race/nationalism," and "bearers of communal tolerance and harmony." The first demonstrated how British rule continued Palestine's former Ottoman rulers' respect for the local Islamic culture. The other two worked synchronically. Because the British assumed a people's race determined their national politics, a discourse of race/nationalism identified hostility between these groups as a product of inherent racial tensions, granting the British the responsibility of promoting communal harmony. These three discourses guided British participation in the festival. More broadly, these discourses were part of a larger British effort to justify their presence in the country, assuage Arab anxieties over British sponsorship of Zionism, and define the status of Islam and Muslims under the authority of a European Christian ruler. This British discoursing on the festival reflects what Gayatri Spivak argues is the larger purpose of the production of the colonial knowledge: to serve imperial interests of economic exploitation, conquest, and colonization.[21] The British immediately pursued their colonial interests at the festival only a few months after they had conquered the country.

HISTORICAL CONTINUITY WITH THE OTTOMANS, 1918–1920

Less than five months after the British occupied Jerusalem, Muslims convened to honor the Prophet Moses (Friday, April 26, to Friday, May 3, 1918). Fighting in World War I persisted in northern Palestine, and the Ottomans would not sign a truce until August 1918. British colonial officials confronted the Arab opposition to their presence in the country through a discourse of historical continuity with the Ottomans. It drew upon a familiar tactic the British employed throughout the empire: promoting the image of historical invariance with the traditional, precolonized culture. In 1877 the British organized the Imperial Assembly, a spectacular pageant with 84,000 people

in attendance that lasted two weeks, in which Queen Victoria was bestowed with the newly fabricated imperial title "Kaiser-i Hind." The scholar of Oriental cultures who contrived this title believed that it permitted British imperialism to connect to India's former Mughal rulers.[22] Mirroring this tactic, the British adopted the roles Turkish officials had once performed at the Nabi Musa festival and maintained proximity to the symbols, images, and representatives of Palestine's Islamic culture.

The continuity of the festival's symbols from Ottoman Islamic to British Christian rule, however, raised a paradox. Functionalist and structuralist approaches to rituals would suggest the change in context would require a commensurate change in its symbols to convey messages the new social order or ruling group wished to convey. Maurice Bloch confronted the same paradox in the royal circumcision ceremonies of the Merina tribe in Madagascar. He found symbolic continuity in a period of political transformation from 1800 to 1971. Yet, the continuity of the ritual's symbols did not mean the ritual was isolated from the politico-economic context. As he argues, these symbols could be "recovered and used for almost any type of domination."[23] Although the British supplemented the Ottomans, the festival's rites (e.g., the presentation of the banners), the imagery (e.g., the sacred banners), and participants (e.g., banner-bearers, mufti) remained consistent. By replicating the roles of the Ottomans, British colonial officials conveyed the same messages the Ottomans evoked when they participated, namely of Jerusalem's rulers respecting Palestine's Islamic culture. As performers, British officials did not merely transmit messages others had authored, nor did they simply mimic a series of designated movements. Instead, as Roy Rappaport observes, they gave life "through their own body and breath" to a social and political order the ritual projected. The performer and the messages they transmit are "fused" and become "indistinguishable" from one another. At rituals, the participants indicate to themselves and to others that they accept whatever is "encoded in the canon of that order."[24] Consequently, at the annual Moses celebrations, British participation confirmed the Ottoman-era message of preserving and continuing Islamic culture in an era of modern changes.

As preparations for celebrating Nabi Musa began, Brigadier General Gilbert F. Clayton, the chief political officer of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, was dispatched to monitor its activities.[25] His report captured how British participation went beyond attending or observing a colonized people's ceremony to assuming the role of authentic performer. The British resided in a liminal phase through their participation: while not Muslim, they were no longer wholly Christian and European. As Eitan Bar-Yosef argues, before colonization, the British had internalized concepts of the Holy Land and biblical imagery, understood as "Jerusalem in England." Upon colonizing

Palestine, they believed they were endowed with the role as rightful ruler, becoming "England in Jerusalem."[26]

On the festival's first day, Jerusalem governor Ronald Storrs inspected the "Jerusalem banners," those of the Prophet David and the Haram al-Sharif, just as the Ottoman governor had routinely done. As a mnemonic device, this ritual displayed continuity with Palestine's Ottoman past, for the body is the locus of memory. Social memories are preserved by habituating bodily movements at rituals.[27] To evoke this memory, familiar performers—urban elites and Islamic officials—joined Palestine's new British actors in performing the same habitually prescribed movements that Ottoman officials had once performed to capture the same message that modern rulers respected Palestine's traditional Islamic culture.[28]

The ease with which British officials slipped into the role as Jerusalem's new rulers is captured in a 35mm film on the first day of the 1918 festival, April 26.[29] The mayor of Jerusalem, Musa Kazim al-Husayni, and a Muslim shaykh (likely the Shariah court judge) presented the sacred banners for inspection to Governor Storrs at his headquarters. Storrs saluted both men, a gesture that even the shaykh felt obliged to return. The mayor and the shaykh hurriedly summoned to retrieve the sacred banners, hoping to avoid inconveniencing their esteemed guest. The mayor and the shaykh assisted the governor in mounting the banners on their staffs, a level of cooperation that metaphorically captured their relationship for the remainder of British rule. The entire ceremony concluded with a brief prayer.[30] However, this explicitly religious activity proved unproblematic in the presence of the British government's leading representative in the holy city. As Clayton observed in his report, immediately following the prayers, the governor saluted the banners and congratulated the shaykh, an action that constituted a type of imperial unction.[31]

The ability of a Christian colonial official to participate in a ceremony honoring sacred Islamic artifacts reveals more about Islam's place in the modern era than the nature of colonial rule. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the banners maintained their sacredness in a setting that included secular officials as ritual actors. They remained sacred even as the mayor and governor exchanged them, not only when the shaykh handled them.[32] The banners remained sacred, but the context had become adulterated, no longer exclusively religious. The presence of officials from the realm of the profane (the mayor, the Ottoman governor) intermixed with officials and objects from the realm of the sacred (the shaykh, the banners) to produce a distinctively modern alloy.

The British further evoked Ottoman tradition by contributing troops and military musical bands to join the processions. In 1918, Indian and Egyptian

army bands joined various ceremonies during the festival.[33] Their presence helped position Britain's proximity to Palestine's religious and political elite. After communal prayers, undulating crowds of thousands watched along Jerusalem's narrow streets to catch sight of the resplendent display of town, village, and religious banners and hear a pastiche of mystical anthems intermingled with sounds of beating drums and cymbals. Clayton captured this pulsating atmosphere as the Hebron pilgrims exited the Haram al-Sharif:

> It is just at this point that the most spectacular portion of the ceremony commences. The procession has grown enormously. It is headed by the pilgrims from Hebron carrying their flags; next come those of Jerusalem carrying the youths' banner (Bayrak el-Shabaab) and pennons. Parties of Bedouins and villagers perform all manner of dances, others indulge in displays of swordsmanship, fighting mimic duels; some recite strange eastern chants or repeat prayers, while others sing ancient pilgrim songs strongly western in character.[34]

Yet, in Clayton's opinion, the overflowing procession of pilgrims hoisting banners and reveling in mock swordfights as mystics sang religious elegies was merely a secondary affair to what he later referred to as the "main procession": "All these slowly precede the main procession which is made up of gendarmes, mounted police, town police, a military band (pipes and brass instruments), and a guard followed by the sacred banners."[35] By distinguishing the two processions, Clayton espoused familiar views of popular and official Islam. He regarded the procession of villagers, Bedouin, and Sufis as a clamorous cacophony with their warbled intonations of "strange eastern chants" and exotic displays of dancing and swordplay. This welter of fanaticism (in British eyes) contrasted with the sober procession of Muslim clerics bearing revered banners. British officials valued this portion of the festival more because it brought them in proximity to Jerusalem's Muslim leadership and sacred artifacts, just as the Indian Durbar ceremonies brought them closer to India's elite. The Moses festival successfully portrayed Britain as the respectful guardian of Palestine's Islamic culture only because Palestine's prominent religious figures—all scions of Jerusalem's notable families—willingly acceded to this presence. In effect, the elite of Jerusalem granted the British entry into Palestine's Islamic culture, just as Ranger claims that colonial celebrations provided the opportunity for colonized elites to be given entry into British imperial culture.[36] The festival served as an additional venue for the British to negotiate "power relationships and identities" with local notables in order to exercise and facilitate colonial authority.[37] Thus, British participation in the festival was not a mere symbolic expression of this power or an "an echo

FIGURE 3.1. *Hebron pilgrims enter the Jaffa Gate (courtesy of Ali Qliebo)*

of a politics taking place somewhere else." Rather, it "was an intensification of politics taking place everywhere else," for it was as much a part of British authority and power as the military or the law courts.[38]

The British presence at the Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion, though, raised a dilemma. No ceremony or event up to that point had so publicly confirmed the reality that a European Christian power supplanted Ottoman Islamic rule. Storrs acknowledged this vexing predicament. He proudly described how the Nabi Musa festival formed the "apex of the Moslem year," in which the "chief figures" of Jerusalem's Muslim community formally received the banners at the pavilion.[39] The governor recounted how both the British and the Arab elite feared that tensions against British rule could surface. He fretfully reflected: "Both for them [i.e., Arab notables, Islamic officials] and for us the transition between the Ottoman and the British control of this festival was a delicate matter, for it marked too sharply, unless the Administration was prepared for a little give and take, the passing of thirteen hundred years' Islamic theocracy."[40]

In many ways, the British presence at Raʾs al-ʿAmud resembled the dilemma Jonathan Z. Smith identified with the Babylonian Akitu festival. He explains how sources for this festival described a later rite when Babylon was under foreign domination (8th–2nd centuries BCE), when this festival was redesigned to reconcile the presence of a foreign king of the Assyrian, Persian, and Seleucid dynasties who had conquered Babylon. For example, the rite of ceremonially slapping the king attempted to breach the incongruity of a people's ideals (native kingship that rules in cosmic harmony with the gods) and the historical realities (foreign rulers on the throne and the potential for cosmic chaos). Through questions the king answered in the negative (e.g., "[I did not]

destroy Babylon . . . I did not forget its rites"), the ritual reconciled the reality of foreign rule.[41] Storrs faced a similar contradiction: "the passing of thirteen hundred years' Islamic theocracy." To address this dilemma, he encouraged the British "to give and take" and participate in the festival to the same extent as the Ottomans once had. Enthusiastically, he encouraged the army, which "enter[ed] into the spirit of things," to provide gun salutes as the pilgrims exited the Haram al-Sharif; he collected a regimental band to lead the "disorderly ceremony." Most important, like the foreign ruler on the throne in Babylon, Storrs appropriated the traditional role of Jerusalem's Ottoman ruler, boasting that the "Mutasarrif's [Ottoman governor] duties I fulfilled myself."[42]

Although Storrs acknowledged concerns remained over Britain's participation in an Islamic festival, he insisted that it bestowed the British with a valuable legacy:

> There are doubtless serious objections to this employment of a British Military Band, but on these early occasions it was more than justified by the intense satisfaction it gave to the population, Christian as well as Moslem; both of whom felt the British were taking an interest in their traditions and were, generally, trying to do the right thing. Indeed, I am convinced that without this support from the original military authorities the Arab discontent, already beginning to smolder, would have broken out even earlier than it did.[43]

By supplanting Ottoman ceremonial duties at the festival—receiving and inspecting sacred banners, leading pilgrims with musical bands, and remaining in proximity to religious and urban leaders—the British publicly effaced and overcame the contradiction between the reality of British colonialism and the ideal of Arab, Ottoman, or Islamic sovereignty, captured in Storrs' proud statement about fulfilling the Ottoman governor's duties.

ʿAjaj Nuwayhid, however, dismissed Storrs's pretense to appear "as if he were a '*mutasarrif*.'" At one Moses festival, Storrs attempted to recite the *fatiha*, though his poor pronunciation compelled the Shariah judge (*qadi*) to intervene and execute this duty. Storr's belief that he could publicly recite this sacred verse is a testimony of how deeply he had internalized the duties of Jerusalem's former Ottoman rulers.[44]

BEARERS OF COMMUNAL HARMONY

British justification for remaining in the country depended on promoting two other interrelated discourses: one identified Jews and Arabs as races with

distinct national identities innately hostile to one another, and the other justified colonial rule to remedy this conflict. These two discourses allowed them to project their vision of society and social order, what Clifford Geertz referred to as a "model *for* reality."[45] They achieved these goals not solely through coercion and military might but by disciplining the premodern individual and "enframing" them in ways to "infiltrate, rearrange, and colonise" them.[46] For example, they promoted communal harmony by regularly hosting events that included heads of each religious community and Zionist leaders.[47]

The British extended this ideal of communal harmony to the Nabi Musa festival. Clayton immediately recognized the potential the festival possessed to promote this objective. He related the festival's anti-Christian origins, citing the apocryphal account of Saladin's founding it when "bitter enmity" existed between Christians and Muslims during "those dark ages long since passed away."[48] Clayton optimistically reported how the festival overcame this legacy of communal enmity.[49] Its inclusive nature portended a stable future for British rule, one free of communal tensions and amenable to British suzerainty: "The number of pilgrims [in] this year's celebration will remain forever memorable. It augured well for the future of Palestine when through some happy inspiration, representatives of all religious bodies in Jerusalem were united to meet the Governor and the principal Mohammedan families on the slopes of the Mount of Olives [Raʾs al-ʿAmud]."[50] The official involvement of Christians and Jews in the 1918 ceremony was an innovation of the late Ottoman ceremonies. While local Christians and Jews enjoyed watching the festival's jovial scenes, the invited representatives of "all religious bodies" included the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, Hakham Bashi Rabbi Nissim Danon, and other leading Jewish figures.[51] Their attendance reified a "model *for* reality" the British hoped would one day materialize. These rituals of communal harmony also confirmed to Arabs and Jews the emphasis Britain placed on religious identity, part of the British effort to establish a confessional system of politics in Palestine.[52]

Orchestrating the mise-en-scène at the Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion continued the following year. Nissim Danon and other Jewish leaders once again attended.[53] Frederick Kisch, a member of the Palestine Zionist Executive (1923–1931), documented attending the festival accompanied by leading members of Zionist organizations in Palestine.[54] At the 1921 festival, the newly appointed Jerusalem mayor, Raghib al-Nashashibi, invited the leaders of all of Palestine's religious communities to attend. Although the status of the Hebrew language was contested and debated in Palestine, the mayor inscribed the spirit of communal harmony by printing the invitations in Palestine's three official languages—Arabic, Hebrew, and English.[55]

In the following years, although fewer Jews attended, festival organizers still assembled a large pool of colonial authorities, British civilians, and West-

ern spectators. While in the early 1920s only the governor of Jerusalem had gone to the pavilion, members of the British police joined in the following decade.[56] Beyond Raʾs al-ʿAmud, a larger number of Western residents of or visitors to Jerusalem, including European royalty, not only watched the processions but also participated in them. Princess Elena of Romania and Hohenzollern marched in the processions in 1930 "as if she were one of the people."[57] In 1931, Princess Mary and the earl of Athlone attended many ceremonies that year.[58] Two years later, the Belgian king and queen, Albert and Elisabeth, watched the processions from the balcony of the Austrian Hospice.[59] Choreographing an assembly of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religious leaders, Western spectators, and government officials at the largest segments of the festival reified Britain's vision of how communal relations in Palestine should function: harmonious, amicable, and untroubled by British occupation and its support for Zionism. Philip Graves, the *Times* correspondent in Jerusalem, endorsed these motives, wondering what a "cruel paradox" it would be if the festival became a source of "anti-Jewish nationalism."[60]

The clarion call for communal harmony became more urgent after the 1920 Nabi Musa riots. The British identified the riots as a product of the inherent racial antagonism between Jews and Arabs, vindicating British colonialism's role to instill the values of communal harmony upon the two groups.

THE 1920 NABI MUSA VIOLENCE

The tensions and frustrations brewing since Britain occupied the country erupted at the 1920 Nabi Musa celebrations in Jerusalem, known widely as the Nabi Musa Riots. Designating the violence as a "riot" certainly served a colonial narrative of events.[61] A year earlier, Khalil al-Sakakini had already witnessed the festival's transformation into a nationalist event, observing tersely, "The Nabi Musa celebration *in Jerusalem* is political, not religious."[62] His contemporaries shared this impression.[63] The following year, fears of impending violence circulated within the Jewish community.[64] In the months preceding the violence, deadly clashes between Arabs and Jewish settlers had already erupted.[65] Arabs staged demonstrations to protest the adoption of the Balfour Declaration as official British policy. Activists in the Arab Club (Nadi al-ʿArabi) and the elite-led Muslim-Christian Association (MCA) advocated for Palestine's unification with Syria under Amir Faysal.[66]

The celebrations began on Friday, April 2, against the backdrop of these tensions and anxieties. They opened with the familiar colorful events inaugurating the celebrations. That year, Nabi Musa intersected with Orthodox and Western Easter, as well as Passover.[67] Yet even Colonel Meinertzhagen, a

passionate supporter of Zionism, did not anticipate any trouble.[68] The day's innocence was captured in the scene of one woman dropping a kerchief from her balcony as the processions passed through Jerusalem's sinuous lanes. One of the dancing dervishes picked it up and rubbed it on a banner, producing an immediate connection to the sacred for all to revere.[69]

Trouble soon began to stir on the morning of Sunday, April 4, when the Hebron pilgrims began their ceremonial march into the Old City.[70] Jerusalem's Jews do not seem to have anticipated any impending problems, gathering to greet the pilgrims at the Jaffa and Damascus gates as they had customarily done.[71] The Hebron pilgrims, though, arrived chanting "soul-stirring patriotic hymns against the Zionists, Jewish settlers, and the British," according to Wasif Jawhariyya.[72] Activists supporting Faysal's Syria diverted the pilgrims to the pro-Faysal Arab Club to hear speeches condemning Zionism. By the time they reached the municipality building at the junction of Jaffa and Mamillia roads, a crowd of tens of thousands had gathered.[73] Events culminated with Amin al-Husayni—an Arab Club member and future mufti of Jerusalem—raising a portrait of Amir Faysal and clamoring to the crowd, "O! Arabs! This is your King" (*ayyuha al-ʿarab hadha malikukum*), to which the pilgrims reportedly replied, "God save the King!"[74]

The procession entered the traditional route through the Jaffa Gate intersecting the Jewish quarter; suddenly, the "whole city became like a battleground," as one witness recorded.[75] Some Arab youth were already harassing Jewish residents and damaging Jewish stores.[76] By 9:00 in the morning, a riotous conflagration had erupted.[77] There are conflicting accounts of what instigated the violence. Arab writers tend to blame Zionist activists for provoking the violence, such as waving the Zionist flag, cursing Faysal, or spitting on the sacred banners, as one Jewish bystander allegedly did.[78] Arab members of the police reiterated these accusations.[79] Contemporary Arab newspapers dismissed the claim that the speeches contributed to the fracas, claiming that the speakers did not incite violence.[80] Some reports claimed the violence began when an explosion occurred near the Jaffa Gate between Christaki's Pharmacy and the Credit Lyonnais Bank. Whatever ignited the spark, great panic soon seized the large crowd. In such a contentious political environment, it is not difficult to conclude that "the most trivial incident would be sufficient to cause an outbreak."[81]

Fortuitously, a film camera captured the moment the violence erupted. Shot from high above one of the Old City's buildings or walls just opposite the Androusky Hotel, the film recorded the procession's arrival after entering the Jaffa Gate near the Citadel. The camera captured the halcyon scene of pilgrims enjoying their traditional celebrations, such as mock swordfights, *dabka* dances, and a chanter hoisted on the shoulders of a pilgrim. In the

opinion of the Palin Court of Inquiry, this scene suggested that there was little evidence of a "preconceived intention" to attack Jews.[82] Abruptly, the crowd's attention is drawn to events behind them—possibly gunfire or an explosion. Many moved quickly in the direction of the Jaffa Gate.[83] Shortly after sallying toward the source of the tumult, they retreated, indicating that police may have attempted to obstruct the surge with live fire.[84]

Soon a tumult erupted. Pilgrims began hurling stones at Jewish shops and breaking glass. Sakakini witnessed Arabs attacking "Zionist soldiers" (*junud al-sahiyuun*), likely the Beitar militia that Ze'ev Jabotinsky had founded, as well as an unfortunate Jewish shoeshine boy and a British policeman, who barely escaped a bloody beating.[85] By midday, the riot had settled, and 118 people had been injured. Most of the Arab orators had been arrested.[86] Musa Kazim Husayni was ousted as mayor of Jerusalem for giving a speech on the balcony of the Arab Club, and the British replaced him with a member of a rival family, Raghib Nashashibi. The British troops escorted the Hebron pilgrims to the police barracks, where they were sequestered for the night.

The following day, Monday, April 5, British police accompanied the Hebron pilgrims to the Moses shrine. Soon after, a second outbreak erupted as Arabs looted Jewish-owned shops and raided Toras Chaim Yeshiva, tearing up the Torah scrolls and setting the college on fire.[87] Storrs imposed martial law at 3:00 p.m. and suspended the Arab members of the city police. Events, however, continued to worsen.[88] Isolated violence continued until Wednesday, leaving two Jews killed, a Muslim girl struck dead by an errant bullet, and a Jewish woman raped.[89] By Saturday, almost one full week after the disorder erupted, the British police and military forces regained control of the city. An Arab mob even tried to force its way into the Church of the Holy Sepulcher during the Orthodox Easter Saturday services.[90] The riots resulted in nine deaths—five Jews and four Muslims—and 251 casualties, mostly Jews.[91]

THE HISTORICAL DEBATE

Given the competition to narrate the conflict between Arabs and Jews in Mandate Palestine, conflicting interpretations explaining the source of the violence in 1920 are to be expected. Most interpretations follow either of two sets of narratives: those portraying the events as instigated by elites or those portraying them as erupting through spontaneous, unforeseen actions.[92] Zionist leaders immediately branded the Nabi Musa violence as a pogrom.[93] Some regard it as part of a long, familiar pattern of Arab anti-Jewish sentiments, portending Amin Husayni's future links with the Axis powers.[94] Similarly, a Palestinian narrative inflects the riot with nationalist objectives,

identifying it as the first expression of nationalist opposition to British rule.[95] They laud Amin Husayni for leading a revolt (*thawra*), comparable to other post–World War I Arab uprisings,[96] or an *intifada* (uprising), a word echoing a distinctive expression of Palestinian resistance.[97] A distinctly Palestinian identity was undeveloped, though, and most contemporary Arab accounts referred to the violence as a riot (*fitna*), clash (*istidam*), conflict (*idtirab*), disturbance (*shaghab*), or events (*hawadith*).[98]

The official British government investigation, the Palin Commission Report, accused Amin Husayni of converting the Moses festival into a political demonstration.[99] Scholars share this impression.[100] This assessment, however, relies on approaching religion as naturally apolitical. Locating the starting point for the politicization of the festival assumes religion exists as a "standalone category," separate from power and authority.[101] The festival did not become politicized due to the conflict with the British and Zionists; it had always conveyed political messages about Ottoman authority and modernity, for example. In 1920, activists incorporated the festival into Palestine's expanding public sphere. They realized how the festival could express their political concerns in a broader public arena, as the following chapters will examine more closely. The British, however, interpreted any political action as a dilution of the purely religious nature of the festival, indicting political actors for politicizing the festival for their own crass agendas.

The violence did not evolve from Arab protesters suddenly introducing politics into the festival, but from a new, sectarian environment that Britain had stoked in Palestine. British colonialism propelled the transformation from communal affiliation in Palestine into sectarian identity. Based on their experience governing multireligious and multiethnic colonies, the British intensified religion's importance as a marker of identity to create a sectarian political environment, which went beyond the communal identification Palestinians expressed for the members within their religious community.[102] Roberto Mazza argues that Arabs undertook organized violence at the festival as a "political tool" in this sectarian competition, in which they associated all Jews with Zionism. As a result, he considers it to have been "meticulously planned" and organized.[103] Steven Wagner claims that the Arab Club had encouraged the violence as part of a "loosely organized attempt to coordinate revolution simultaneously against all colonial powers."[104]

Clearly, rioters failed to distinguish between Arab Jews—referred to in the local argot as *awlad al-balad* (native Arabs) and *yahud awlad al-ʿarab* (native Jews)—and newly arrived European-Jewish immigrants.[105] In this new sectarian landscape, "a Jew in Arab Palestinian eyes became a European intruder contesting ownership of the land."[106] Although the violence conformed to the structure of a religious riot that Natalie Zemon Davis outlined, attacking the

Talmudic College and members of the Jewish community, the motives appear political rather than religious.[107] Moreover, although it targeted Jewish landmarks in the city, the violence does not appear to have been organized, as Mazza argues.[108] In contrast to Wagner's opinion, Arab Club members actively attempted to prevent unrest, as Zionist sources confirmed.[109] The violence was less a product of a coordinated, planned event and more a result of the sectarian context that Britain had cultivated, leading Abigail Jacobson to describe it as "the peak of intercommunal conflict" in the early years of British rule.[110] This sectarian political context began to unite Muslims and Christians as "*a single religious community*" in contrast to Jews.[111]

This sectarian environment informed how British officials interpreted the violence. Coupled with their understanding of the racial nature of Arabs and Jews, they believed British colonialism could resolve inherent hostilities between the two groups. Some historians have uncritically cited British accounts of the riots as if they were unbiased observers or passive actors in Palestine's political drama.[112] Yet, as Edward Said proposed of European writings about colonialism in general, "Above all, authority can, indeed, must be analyzed" and not merely accepted as objective truth.[113] The British debate about the riot—articulated by the Palin Court of Inquiry, reports written by British officials, and the observations expressed by British citizens in the press or private papers—must be treated as a colonial discourse serving imperial aims. As Lori Allen argues, Western and international-sponsored commissions on Palestine "shaped the form, content, and tenor of political discourse about Palestine, determining the nature of authorized conversation between Palestinians and Western Powers."[114] Just as Arab and Zionist narratives understood the riots through a nationalist lens, a British discourse about the violence in 1920 viewed it through the prism of imperialism, refracting the violence to justify colonial rule.

A DISCOURSE OF RACE

British discourse on the riot deployed widely held racial tropes of Muslims and Jews current in Edwardian England. British imperialists believed that Islam possessed intrinsically fanatical and violent elements.[115] According to the Palin Report, the Nabi Musa pilgrimage had always been a time of "turbulence."[116] For Storrs, fanaticism was a part of Palestine's natural environment: "the air was full of rumors and of that nervous quality to which the altitude of Jerusalem undoubtedly contributes."[117] In his memoirs, Storrs deflected blame for allowing the violence to occur by claiming that Eastertime in the Holy Land does not augur peace; instead, it elicited "for generations

the sharpening of daggers and the trebling of garrisons."[118] The English feminist and suffragette Millicent Fawcett (d. 1929) suggested that the festival's calendar was subject to the Ottoman governor, depending on his whims about whether to stir up a riot.[119] Albert Hyamson, a Zionist activist and the chief immigration officer (1921–1934) in Palestine, traced the riot's origins to the biblical period: "The age-long hatred of the Jews, apparently ineradicable among the people of Nablus, is said to go back to the massacre of the inhabitants of the neighbouring city of Shechem narrated in Genesis xxxiv."[120]

Equally important, English views of Jews stemmed from their assumptions that religion defined a people's identity. Europeans constructed an image of "the Jew" in the same epistemological framework that represented "the Arab," "the Indian," and "the African" by designating religion and race as the chief markers of a people's identity. In the metropole, English society and the *Weltanschauung* of the British government identified Jews as a distinct ethnic group or race (according to English parlance). In an age of modern nationalism, British society believed that Jews embodied a fixed racial physiognomy and innate characteristics.[121] Late Victorian British society conjured contradictory stereotypes of Jews as primitive immigrants and empire-builders.[122] These images transformed their "race" (Hebrew) into a national entity.

The British collapsed their understanding of the riot into this racial epistemology, finding its origins in the conflict between intolerant and hostile Arabs and aggressive and clannish Jews. As Ussama Makdisi asserts, the British "reproduced all the elements of modern sectarian discourse" to locate the origins of the violence and absolve themselves of responsibility for creating its conditions.[123] Concomitantly, they invoked a discourse of communal harmony to mollify these tensions and justify their place in Palestine. In the end, the British response to the violence in 1920 reinforced their sectarian vision of Palestine, just as their response to the tumult in 1929 would.[124] In this way, the semiotics of the violence proved to be multivocal. As Edward Said observes, imperial powers had the power to narrate and to block other narratives from emerging, a process crucial to defining how imperialism was understood and justified.[125]

RACIAL ANTAGONISM AND COMMUNAL HARMONY

British colonial officials quickly seized on framing the violence as a product of racial antagonism. In one of the earliest accounts, Colonel Meinertzhagen reminded Lord Curzon, the secretary of foreign affairs, that the Nabi Musa season was a "function at which inter-religious and racial feeling runs high."[126]

The centrality of the "racial tension" theme is epitomized in a question one British member of Parliament posed to the minister of foreign affairs only days after the deadly clashes. He asked if the riots resulted from "racial difficulties" and if the Jewish population resented the Arab nation's claims to the sovereignty of Palestine. The undersecretary of state for foreign affairs responded confidently that there could be "little doubt that the recent disturbances were caused by racial feeling" and that British authorities would take action to "allay racial feeling."[127] Of course, the British could frame the violence only as a product of religious strife. This narrative exculpated them for their occupation and support for Zionism, two issues the Arab majority resented.

The racial hostilities narrative filtered into the official inquiry studying the riot. Authorities directed the Palin Court of Inquiry to move beyond studying the riot's causes and assess "the extent and causes of racial feelings that at present exist in Palestine."[128] Although the report blamed the military administration for its logistical failure to prevent the disturbances, an understanding of Arab and Jewish racial motifs shaped the court's epistemological approach to the violence.[129] The report highlighted the perfidy of Arab political leaders for waging a deceitful campaign that falsely accused the British of intending to grant Palestine to the Zionists and rid the country of Arabs.[130] It explained how both pro-Zionists and Arabs misread the true, balanced, and nuanced intent of the Balfour Declaration, resulting in stirring "great tension."[131] As Storrs related with a crestfallen tone, the riots had damaged the British vision of Palestine: "All the carefully built relations of mutual understanding between British, Arabs, and Jews seemed to flare away in an agony of fear and hatred."[132]

The British attributed the source of this Arab fear to anti-Semitism. Early in the report, it described Arabs as possessing "deep-seated fear of the Jew, both as a possible ruler and an economic competitor."[133] The report proposed instead that the peasant (*fallah*), "extremely backward in his methods and apathetic and slow in his intelligence," could benefit from the "vigorous mental force of the Jew" were it not for fears of Jewish "extremists and uncontrolled immigration."[134] Arab anti-British and anti-Zionist propaganda contributed to these fears, the report claimed.[135] The penultimate section, "Extent of Racial Feeling in Palestine," outlined the harm caused by an Arab public susceptible to hostile propaganda: "It is impossible to exaggerate the gravity of the position created in Palestine by the various misunderstandings and indiscretions narrated in the foregoing report." Evoking a paternalistic tone, it described Arabs as easily "played upon" by deceitful leaders, ready to heed calls for revolt. It characterized Arabs as simple dupes, warning that the "native population" must avoid becoming "the catspaw of anti-Allied and anti-Christian conspirators," one of many animal metaphors the report would

employ. It urged Arabs to trust the administration to protect them and their interests in the country.[136] As one British staff captain crudely phrased it, "The Jews are so clever, and the Arabs are so stupid and childish, it seems only sporting to be for the Arabs."[137]

G. N. Barnes, a former member of Britain's Parliament, reflected on how easily deceptions and misinformation circulated in the "orient." He described the propensity of the "Eastern mind" for exaggeration so that "the most strange stories get ready credence and rumour flies in the wings of credulity with extraordinary rapidity." Equally harmful were Zionist leaders who recklessly pursued their goals. Through their "impatience to achieve their [Zionists'] ultimate goal and indiscretion [they] are largely responsible for this unhappy state of feeling."[138] The chief administrator of the OETS, Major General Louis Bols, accused the Zionist Commission of operating within the OETA's departments as "a complete administrative machine."[139] The Palin Court of Inquiry endorsed these familiar tropes. It depicted Jews as forming a powerful cabal that could exercise influence at the highest levels of government. Its authors alerted the British government to the Zionists' ability to use "their powerful foreign and home influence to force the hand of this or any future Administration."[140] The report further depicted Zionists as a "body bearing a distinct resemblance to an independent administration apparently able to control the actual administration," listing examples of this interference.[141] By framing Zionists with familiar anti-Semitic traits as aggressive and intrusive, the report could easily conclude that they had tampered with carefully designed colonial plans: "From the very beginning, the extremists among the Zionists both in their writings and speeches adopted one interpretation only of the Balfour Declaration. There was no question of moderate colonisation or a national home, but a declaration of Palestine as a Jewish state, 'As Jewish as England is English.'"[142]

British media and visitors to Palestine similarly disparaged Zionists and Jews as impertinent interlopers disrupting British colonialism. The *Times* correspondent quoted British residents eager to dispel the impression that the attacks were "spontaneous," for Jewish actions were not always "blameless." These expatriates regarded the festival as an opportunity for the Arab population to satisfy "pent-up religious feeling."[143] Yet, Zionist leaders had every reason to appear confident. They had forged close relations and contacts with officials at the highest ranks of the British and Palestine governments. The Mandate granted them legal right to advise the Palestine government on fulfilling the aims of the Balfour Declaration.[144] Notwithstanding these close and very open ties, the Palin Court of Inquiry offered an explicit and acerbic depiction of the Zionist movement's role in stirring unrest and fomenting ethnic tensions. The report ended with the somber observation: "That the

Zionist Commission and the official Zionists, by their impatience, indiscretion and attempts to force the hands of the administration are largely responsible for the present crisis."[145] The British had located the cause of the riot in the synergy of extreme Zionist ambitions clashing with a volatile and gullible Arab public, a product of each race's inherent characteristics. As echoed in the opinion of one British resident of Hebron, Zionists appeared to be "arrogant, insolent and provocative. To the native, they seem to have adopted an attitude at first contemptuous and peremptory, and later, when they became aware of the growing feeling aroused by their attitude, a resentment not unmingled with fear." The Palin Report embellished this acidic sketch by quoting the French fabulist Jean de La Fontaine (d. 1695), "Cet animal est très méchant / Si on l'attaque il se défend."[146] Having outlined the racial traits of both the "Jew" and the "Arab," an Orientalist and British epistemology could quickly locate the true causes of the violence. The British could now "play their favorite role of arbiter" and be perceived as "above or outside a 'local' conflict."[147]

Yet the British reserved their greatest animus for Jewish communists, adopting the European characterization of Eastern European Jews as Bolsheviks. European society believed that Jews had orchestrated the October Revolution.[148] British officials feared that Bolsheviks targeted Palestine "as a site of expansion" and diligently worked to deport them from the country.[149] The Palin Court of Inquiry identified the "adverse influence" Zionists from "Russia, Poland and elsewhere"—the *axis mundi* of communism—had on communal relations in Palestine.[150] The final report asserted that Eastern Europe Zionists imposed extremist political ideals upon the more moderate Zionist leadership. It portrayed Russian Bolshevism as a seditious movement "working underneath the surface," moving southward from the Caucasus to Palestine, "the very heart of Zionism."[151] Winston Churchill echoed these impressions in his article "Zionism versus Bolshevism," where he distinguished Zionists wishing to rebuild their homeland from "international Jews" who formed "a world-wide conspiracy to overthrow civilization."[152] Barnes similarly divided Zionism into two camps: one politically sophisticated and culturally inclusive, identified with cultured British Jews, and the other politically aggressive and culturally exclusive, identified implicitly with Eastern European Jews. As he opined, "Most harmful is, in my view, the Zionist propaganda. Some Zionist speeches are pitched in quite a different key from those of Sir Alfred Mond and Lord Rothschild. They breathe the spirit of conquest rather than of fellowship."[153] As a "friend" of Zionism, Barnes advised the Zionist leaders to "put a muzzle on some of their most volatile members."[154]

British officials and observers encouraged the British government to clarify its goals to quell misinformed campaigns and propaganda. The Palin Report concluded with the need to address how misconceptions created

"misapprehension" over the "true meaning of the Balfour Declaration."[155] It urged the government to alter the nature of its rule in Palestine immediately to prevent another outbreak of violence.[156] Even before the report was issued, military rule was replaced with a civil administration, inaugurating the tenure of the Jewish and pro-Zionist supporter Sir Herbert Samuel as Palestine's first high commissioner.[157]

Many British colonial officials believed the imposition of the Mandate would clarify British rule and help prevent misunderstanding from fueling further violence. Barnes reiterated these claims, confident that once the Mandate's terms were known, this would mollify the population. He added with a sense of foreboding that violence could recur if Britain failed to clarify the country's political future.[158] He was hopeful that both Arabs and Jews would accrue great benefits from British rule after suffering under the long-derelict rule of the Turks.[159] Erasing the Eastern European Zionists' extremist language and quelling the anxieties of the Arab population would inspire "Muslim and Jew" to give the Balfour Declaration "mutual blessing" for the country's future well-being.[160]

Clashes between Arabs and Jews in Jaffa in May 1921 confirmed to British officials that Arab misunderstanding of Zionist aims in Palestine fomented conflict.[161] The following year, the "Churchill White Paper" attempted to clarify British policy in Palestine, acknowledging that British aims in Palestine appeared nebulous, creating an atmosphere of "uncertainty," "apprehensions," and "exaggerated interpretations of the meaning of the [Balfour] Declaration."[162] Samuel responded to this anxiety by restricting Jewish immigration.[163]

The British who discoursed on the riot understood the violence not as an anticolonial outbreak or an Arab nationalist response to Zionism but as a product of the inherent racial typologies of Arabs and Jews: Jews as clannish and politically aggressive and Arabs as easily manipulated and prone to violence. This narrative contributed to imperial aims by justifying continued British rule to resolve these tensions.

In the Nabi Musa celebrations after 1920, the British continued to encourage a vision of Palestinian society by promoting discourses of the "bearers of communal harmony" and the "historical continuity with the Ottomans" to address the persistent Arab opposition to colonialism and Zionism.

BRITISH DISCOURSES AFTER 1920

Although the 1920 riots raised troubling questions about British participation in Islamic rituals, Palestine's colonial authorities had difficulty extri-

cating themselves from them. Nuwayhid speculated that the British were aware of the pride Arabs took in the Nabi Musa festival yet were forced to acknowledge that it had become a site of increasing political opposition to Zionism and the British. Thus, he conjectured, they had to "choose the lesser of two evils" and maintain a peaceful ceremony.[164] After 1920, they continued to uphold the punctilio of the ceremonies to achieve these ends. Herbert Samuel solidified this tradition in the first ceremonies he celebrated as high commissioner. The need to appear as someone who would actively preserve Palestine's Islamic traditions guided this participation. During the first two years of British rule, a military band accompanied the procession from the Haram al-Sharif to Raʾs al-ʿAmud. However, Samuel wanted a band to lead pilgrims in and out of the Old City. Only a year earlier, Jerusalem governor Storrs had bemoaned that no military troops or band were permitted to take part in the ceremony announcing the upcoming dates of the festival, a decision, he averred, that caused "great dissatisfaction among the Moslems." The attendance of Field Marshall Lord Allenby, though, "compensated for the absence of the military honors to which they [Arabs] had been accustomed for generations by the Ottoman Government."[165]

British authorities in Cairo balked at permitting more troops to participate. As he explained in a letter to Winston Churchill, principal secretary of state for the colonies, Samuel ignored these instructions and dispatched the band for the ceremonies on Friday, April 22, 1921. As Samuel recalled, this was "much appreciated by all those present."[166] Samuel immediately submitted a letter of dispensation to the commanding general in Cairo, requesting a band's services for the Sunday ceremonies to receive the Hebron pilgrims at the Jaffa Gate and direct them around to the Damascus Gate. After his superiors denied his request, Samuel outlined the strategic value of including an army band. It could lead the Hebron pilgrims away from their traditional entrance along a route intersecting the Jewish quarter, the scene of the deadly violence a year earlier. Samuel warned that without a band to lead the pilgrims, the potential for conflict would always menace future ceremonies.[167] The British had already granted themselves the legal authority to direct processions on public roads; they now just needed to make it appear natural by incorporating a military band into the parade.[168]

Samuel's appeal to British authorities can be seen as a product of what Martin Thomas refers to as "intelligence states," in which colonial rulers in the interwar period gathered information about the colonized Arab populations and cultivated relations with indigenous groups to prevent the eruption of violence. This process of information gathering, such as monitoring and managing the Nabi Musa festival, became the "primary weapon"

of occupying powers.[169] But Samuel also highlighted the cultural salience for his request. Reverting to historical continuity with Ottoman discourse, Samuel depicted a military band's inclusion as the one visible testimony that affirmed Britain's respect for Palestine's Islamic culture. In one letter, Samuel reminded Churchill of the historic Ottoman legacy of the festival:

> It may be observed that the Pilgrimage to Nebi Musa is the one great Moslem festival in the year. The according of a Band for the occasion constitutes no precedent for there is no other religious festival in Palestine comparable with it. The Moslem population expects that the British Government, whose respect for the Religious Customs and Ceremonies of their Moslem subjects in other parts of the British Empire is so well known, shall adopt a not less favourable attitude towards the Moslems of Palestine than the latter enjoyed under the late Turkish regime.[170]

His appeal to upholding Islamic tradition resonated with Churchill, who had boasted to his cabinet colleagues, "We are the greatest Mohammedan power in the world. It is in duty . . . to study policies which are in harmony with Mohammedan feeling."[171]

Samuel believed participation made visible Britain's respect for Palestine's Islamic culture by replicating the roles the Ottomans had once performed. But, as Yair Wallach astutely notes, the British exaggerated the Ottoman military tradition in the festival. The Ottoman band was in effect a municipal band. The British exaggerated this Ottoman tradition to respect Islamic culture at one of Palestine's most significant celebrations in its holiest city.[172] As Samuel's appeals make clear, including a military band helped erase the apparent contrasts between Ottoman Muslim and British Christian rulers. The following year, the British expanded the role mounted police and gendarmerie had in the ceremonies.[173] In years to come, the military and colonial officials remained regular participants in the ceremonies.[174]

Future governors of Jerusalem continued to value participation in the Jerusalem ceremonies. They attended the rites held at the Jerusalem Islamic court announcing the dates of the upcoming festival. They stood with pilgrims at the Husayni al-Dar al-Kabira (the Great House) as the mufti ceremoniously unfurled the Prophet Moses banner. They greeted SMC officials and pilgrims as they entered the Haram al-Sharif.[175] The attendance of British military bands, troops, and officers bestowed such a great honor that the editors of the central organ of the Supreme Muslim Council felt compelled to announce in a headline, "The Officer of General Security Greets the Parade."[176] Conversely, the absence of British officials raised suspicions in the Arab press.[177]

On a few occasions, British officials participated at the Prophet Moses shrine. Their attendance represented a modification of the late Ottoman ceremonies, for there is little evidence that Ottoman officials, other than the Jerusalem mayor and mufti, attended.[178] In 1921, the high commissioner received the banners that the youth of Jerusalem and Hebron had prepared for his inspection at the shrine. Amin Husayni also accompanied the high commissioner in reviewing an assembly of Arab fantasia that Bedouin performed as entertainment for the crowds.[179] Ronald Storrs also happily posed with pilgrims at the shrine.[180]

High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope (1931–1938) exemplified the importance British officials placed on the cultural value of participating in Nabi Musa. He regularly viewed the Hebron procession's arrival from the prestigious vantage point atop the citadel near the Tower of David. One report described it as the "Distinguished Visitors' Gallery," where guests watched along the citadel's parapet.[181] From this high perch, Wauchope cast his gaze upon the pilgrims below. His presence conflated a representative of British colonialism with an architectural symbol of Islam's sovereignty over Jerusalem. Standing alongside Arab members of the Palestine government, Wauchope temporarily erased the borders dividing colonizer from native, Briton from Arab, Christian from Muslim, and supporter of Zionism from the Zionist opponents marching below.[182] Through a ritual act of dissimulation, he temporarily blurred these incongruities and crafted Britain's image as a natural feature of Palestine's Islamic culture.[183]

However, Frederick Kisch (d. 1943) was aggrieved by precisely this act of ritual dissimulation. He possessed a distinguished imperial pedigree. Born in Britain's imperial epicenter of India, he served from 1923 to 1931 as chairman of the Palestine Executive, in charge of implementing the program of the Zionist Congress. In Kisch's view, the sight of British colonial officials deigning to take part in native ceremonies offended his staunch imperial sensibilities. He took offense at how Ronald Storrs and Herbert Samuel greeted and exchanged salutes with the Mufti Amin Husayni at the Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion, while—he indignantly noted—the mufti "remained seated on horseback." He complained that the high commissioner gave "this function too much honour," since he appeared in uniform and was made to wait for over an hour for the procession's arrival. In 1925, Kisch complained once again of the "humiliation" of the mufti addressing the high commissioner on horseback. Kisch drew upon his colonial service to explain the source of his resentment. He had once ordered a Baluchi chief off his horse for attempting to address him when Kisch was dismounted and in uniform.[184] This anecdote reveals why he opposed British participation in the festival. In his eyes,

the festival obfuscated the stratification between colonizer/colonized and British/native. As a Jew, he relied on this stratified context to enjoy a position of superiority he could not fully acquire in his native Britain. Despite his grievances, other officials believed participation was valuable precisely because it blurred these differences, depicting the British as a natural feature of Palestine's traditional culture. In return, Arab leaders rarely took action to limit this participation.[185]

The British had mostly succeeded in replicating the roles the Ottomans had once performed at the festival. The value in their participation went beyond token displays of respecting Palestinian traditions, such as providing a military band or inspecting the banners. This symbolism should be seen as more than mere tokenism. Assessing symbolic acts as tokens "stems from [the] belief that 'symbolic' opposes to 'real' as fanciful to sober, figurative to literal, obscure to plain, aesthetic to practical, mystical to mundane, and decorative to substantial."[186] Instead, the inclusion of a marching band, for example, reified British colonial power, made visible and tangible for a colonized Muslim population to witness and acknowledge, as much as the British expected Arabs to recognize other aspects of their authority, such as the military or law courts.

Both Samuel's and Wauchope's careers as high commissioners demonstrated the value British rulers placed on participation. Both are remembered for promoting the interests of Jewish colonization at a time of growing Arab hostility to Zionism. Samuel encouraged Jewish immigration when it was lagging; he loosened citizenship requirements to stem the outflow of Jewish émigrés; and he provided financial support and incentives to bolster the fledgling Jewish community when it confronted an economic crisis.[187] Wauchope oversaw the largest influx of Jewish immigrants to Palestine. According to Albert Hyamson, the first four years of Wauchope's tenure were the "heyday of Zionist history in Palestine." He helped triple Jewish immigration, increased the size of their land holding, and promoted Jewish public works and civil engineering projects.[188] Both high commissioners faced amplified opposition to Zionism, with Arabs staging strikes and rebelling against British rule in 1936. Yet, participation in the annual ceremonies continued uninterrupted, permitting British officials to temporarily suspend their role as colonial rulers and as pro-Zionist supporters and don the pretense of respectful custodians of Palestine's Islamic culture. Both tactics—overt political support for Zionism and subtle cultural acts courting the Arab community—stemmed from the same source of colonial power, one exercised by economic, military, and legislative means and the other through symbols and rituals. Both tactics shared the objective of promoting British imperial aims aligned with the Zionist movement.

CONCLUSION

In the competition to define the meaning and purpose of British rule, colonial officials appropriated the ceremonies and roles that Ottoman officials had once performed at Nabi Musa. Their discoursing on the 1920 riots incorporated two intertwined narratives of British colonialism in Palestine: locating race as the source of Arab opposition to colonial rule and Zionism and positioning British colonialism as the instrument to usher in harmony between the Arabs and Jews.

Palestine's Arab community, though, engaged in the festival and transformed it in more active ways than the British had. As Peter Marshall writes in his review of David Cannadine's *Ornamentalism*, "Historians have written a great deal about imperial enthusiasts . . . and a fair amount about the opponents of empire. They rarely write about the great mass who were neither enthusiasts nor critics, but 'went along.'"[189] As the following chapters will show, the involvement of those who went along engaged in reframing the festival's symbols to reflect their political agendas, nationalist orientations, and social visions. As these social groups grappled with the changes of post–World War I Palestine, they offered varied messages that reveal that not everyone went along after all.

4 / ARAB ELITE DISCOURSES AT THE FESTIVAL

If Palestine did not have the Prophet Moses festival, then it would have been appropriate to have created it, for it has a necessity today, just as it did in the past.

Khalil al-Sakakini, *al-Shura*, May 7, 1926

DURING THE PERIOD OF BRITISH RULE, THE NABI MUSA festival came to acquire its iconic place in the Palestinian national memory. Many now remember the festival more as a national gathering than as a religious celebration when pilgrims from throughout Palestine convened in Jerusalem to proclaim their new national bonds. While the celebrations themselves were not new, the arrival of British colonialism and Zionist immigration were the new factors that shaped the festival. Although no one Palestinian national narrative exists, the festival is pregnant with nationalist memories: the 1920 violence as an early expression of Palestinian resistance; Amin al-Husayni as the great architect of a national pageant; and youth and Scouts attending from throughout the country. The festival was an impressive sight, with attendance reaching the tens of thousands.[1] The march of banners from the Haram al-Sharif to Raʾs al-ʿAmud, a distance of about a kilometer, took four hours to complete.[2] Ronald Storrs, Jerusalem's governor, described it as the "apex of the Muslim year," and Herbert Samuel, the high commissioner, claimed that "no other religious festival in Palestine [was] comparable with it."[3]

Palestinians have culled these images to sketch a nostalgic memory of the past before war and flight would dominate their shared experiences. These images, though, capture a reality representing an elite class narrative. This social group led and designed the Mandate-era festival to impose their hegemonic control over its symbols, for culture is an essential site for any dominant group to assert its hegemony.[4] "Symbolic discourses" such as spectacles allow these groups to exercise power through consent, rather than through force or domination.[5] Palestine's elite reordered the festival's participants, routes, and rites to construct discourses that upheld their social class understanding of politics, identity, and religion in post–World War I Palestine.

These Arab elites came from the families that established their wealth and political influence in the late Ottoman period and maintained their social status after World War I.[6] They imagined the festival as a *liminal* space where ritual elders, such as the mufti Amin Husayni, could impart pilgrims with normative beliefs, and they legitimated actions on understanding colonialism, Islam, national identity, and Zionism.[7] Between 1918 and 1937 the Husaynis expanded opportunities to manipulate the festival's symbolic order, the topic of the first part of this chapter. While factionalism constitutes the prevailing paradigm for viewing Palestine's politics of notables during the Mandate era, these elites nonetheless all embraced Western and modern views of Islam and gender relations. They exhibited and publicly displayed these shared values at the annual ceremonies, the topic of the second part of this chapter.[8]

THE 1918–1920 FESTIVITIES: INVITING BRITISH OFFICIALS

The two-year period between 1918 and 1920, though brief, marks the initial attempts of the Husayni family to reorder the festival under their purview of influence. This initiative began when Jerusalem mufti Kamil al-Husayni allowed the British to participate in the festival.[9] He acceded to their attempts to substitute for the Ottomans. His alacrity to accommodate the British appears in the preparations for the 1920 festival. Storrs had requested permission from his superiors in Jerusalem to continue the Ottoman military tradition of firing guns and cannon salutes and dispatching a military band to march in the processions.[10] Twice his superiors denied his requests. The mufti responded that this news not only "grieved" him but also troubled the "whole nation in general and our community in particular." He insisted that British nonparticipation contradicted their pledge to observe "old customs" and preserve religious traditions. Incredulously, he asked how Britain, the "noblest nation," would neglect an "old established custom," which the "ex-regime" (the Ottomans, that is) had upheld, reminding them of their "obligation" to continue them. He hoped the sincere goodwill of the British would "attract the hearts of the nations of all creeds." Regretfully, he reminded Storrs that abolishing established customs "will break the hearts of the Moslem population and . . . change their happiness into sorrow."[11]

The patriarchal colonial structure that Elizabeth Thompson studied in French-ruled Syria and Lebanon can clarify Kamil's attitude. Thompson argues that the French established a paternalistic colonial civic order that allowed mediating elites to broker benefits to the masses through their privileged access to the state. This structure was intertwined with colonial, gender, class,

FIGURE 4.1. *Yorkshire Band leading the processions, April 2, 1920 (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 00751)*

and religious hierarchies, in which "French trumped Syrian or Lebanese, male trumped female, wealth trumped poverty, and religious office trumped laypeople."[12] Kamil coveted his role as a mediating elite under colonial rule. The British cultivated his status by elevating the religious prestige of his office from Hanafi Mufti of Jerusalem to Grand Mufti (*al-mufti al-akbar*). They injected a national dimension to this office by designating him as mufti of Jerusalem and the Palestine Regions (*mufti al-Quds wa-l-diyar al-Filastiniyya*), far loftier than the traditional title of mufti of the Jerusalem Regions (*mufti al-diyar al-maqdisiyya*).[13] They also appointed him as head of the Shariah court of appeal and as guardian of all Muslim religious properties in the city through the newly formed Central Waqf Council. As Yehoshua Porath explains, Kamil encouraged Arabs to get used to the "idea of a Christian power ruling in Jerusalem."[14]

British participation in the Nabi Musa festival was the aesthetic expression of this colonial relationship, which Storrs clarified to his superiors. He explained that the mufti "protested very strongly" against the denial of a band and troops. The mufti warned that Arab pilgrims and clerics would have interpreted the British absence as a slight against Islamic culture and tradition. Storrs claimed "on the best authority" that had the band not appeared, the standards would not have been brought to the governor's residence for inspection. He warned that the grand mufti would have displayed his displeasure by feigning illness and refusing to take part in the proceedings, fearing that "there is no saying how far the smouldering discontentment might have spread."[15] Of course, the day after Storrs raised these dire warnings,

rioters would disprove the suggestion that Arab discontent could be mollified merely by British participation in native rituals.[16]

As this episode reveals, Palestine's highest-ranking Islamic cleric did not passively acquiesce to Britain's participation; rather, he actively petitioned for it. For Kamil to assume his stature as a mediating elite, he needed to associate with and remain in proximity to visible vestiges of state power, such as military troops, bands, and rulers, be they Ottoman or British. In turn, British claims of respecting Palestine's Islamic culture relied on coordinating these symbolic expressions with the colonized elites.

AMIN HUSAYNI AND THE SUPREME MUSLIM COUNCIL

The al-Husayni family maintained its influence over the festival after Kamil's death in March 1921. The family secured the appointment of Kamil's half-brother Amin (d. 1974) as mufti in 1921 and as president of the SMC in 1922.[17] These offices allowed Husayni to assume the role of the festival's impresario. His involvement with the festival has stirred a range of impressions. Some credit him for nationalizing the festival.[18] Others see him as a surreptitious anti-British agitator or accuse him of encouraging its anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic tendencies.[19] Although there may be elements of truth in each of these assertions, Philip Mattar cautions that varying and contradictory accounts of the mufti's career tell us more about his biographers than about the Palestinian leader himself.[20] While the festival could become a forum to express Palestinian nationalism and anti-Zionism, Amin Husayni reconfigured the late Ottoman-period celebrations into an idiom expressing an elite, conservative Palestinian nationalist discourse that positioned him as Palestine's chief Islamic figure.

The Prophet Moses festival in many ways launched Husayni's career. He first gained notoriety for organizing Arab nationalist activity at the 1920 festival, leading to violence and his conviction in absentia. His reputation as an agitator, though, did not mar his appeal in the eyes of the British. In July 1920, Samuel, the newly appointed high commissioner, pardoned Husayni for his involvement and appointed him to succeed his recently deceased half-brother.[21] The high commissioner likely favored Husayni because of his family's distinguished religious pedigree, believing he could keep Arabs on the path of diplomacy and prevent violence. Husayni seized on Samuel's concerns over security when he met the high commissioner on April 11, 1921, only days before the Prophet Moses celebrations opened. He conveyed his fervent belief in "the good intention of the government towards the Arabs."

He further promised that disturbances would not erupt, describing last year's events as "spontaneous and unpremeditated" and confident they would not be repeated.[22]

The 1921 festival proved valuable in allowing Husayni to secure his candidacy as mufti. That year, Husayni assumed the mufti's traditional duties and encouraged his supporters to acknowledge him as its true holder. While the post was still in contention, Husayni arrived at Raʾs al-ʿAmud in the familiar fashion, mounted upon a steed and surrounded by the revered banners.[23] However, upon his arrival, the crowds began shouting chants in his honor, exclaiming, "Long live al-Hajj Amin, mufti of the holy lands" (*mufti diyar al-qudsiyya*). By appropriating the mufti's traditional duties and having crowds crown him with traditional titles, his supporters bestowed him with legitimacy even before he was officially awarded the office.[24]

After securing the post of mufti of Jerusalem, Amin Husayni enhanced his authority further when the British established the Supreme Muslim Council, an organization authorizing Palestine's Muslims to govern their own religious affairs.[25] As mufti of Jerusalem and SMC president, Husayni now wielded a broad purview of administrative power to pursue his conservative, cautious approach to British rule. He maintained this stature until his support for the general strike and revolt (1936–1939) outweighed his commitments to the British, or, as the eminent historian Walid Khalidi related, until the events of 1936–1937 forced him to "cross his Rubicon."[26] On September 30, 1937, the British dismissed Husayni as president of the SMC, and he soon fled the country. But from 1921 to 1937, Husayni pursued a "dual policy of cooperating with the British while uniting Palestinians against Zionism."[27] In Samuel's estimation, Husayni faithfully upheld this policy. During his tenure as mufti and SMC president, he favored diplomacy (e.g., petitions, delegations, and conferences) over militancy, believing that the British could be induced to reverse their pro-Zionist policy.[28] His new authority also allowed him to advance his family's interests as national leaders, especially in their rivalry with the Nashashibis. He incorporated these two objectives—leading a conservative national movement and furthering his family's political ambitions—into one of his most public duties: the organization and the performance of Nabi Musa.

The Prophet Moses festival, though, was only one of the religious celebrations the SMC controlled. The SMC's expansive duties permitted them to propel religious celebrations into the realm of national politics.[29] By the early 1930s, the SMC had grown adept at mobilizing large populations and intersecting political activities with religious celebrations.[30] Here they could fuse Islamic rhetoric, images, and idioms to voice an emerging Palestinian nationalist movement. The SMC broadened participation at the Nabi Salih

celebrations in Ramla, inviting Nablus's residents to attend.[31] After Muslims and Jews clashed over proprietorship over the Western Wall/al-Buraq, the SMC encouraged the transformation of Mawlid al-Nabi ceremonies at the al-Aqsa mosque into a national and patriotic festival.[32] By 1933, the British uneasily observed that these ceremonies had developed into a "quasi-national festival on the lines of the Nebi Musa."[33] The two celebrations mirrored one another, as speeches celebrating the life of the Prophet touched on "Zionism, the sale of land, and other political topics."[34] If these public religious ceremonies served the aims of the Husayni family, then no doubt one of the largest and most widely attended Islamic celebrations certainly would do so as well.

REORDERING THE CEREMONIES

It is commonly assumed that Amin Husayni and the SMC designed a festival solely to promote Palestinian nationalism. But Husayni initiated changes to the festival's symbolic order to solidify his place as national leader, not foster a burgeoning national identity or mobilize the masses against the British. Nor did he reorganize the festival to inculcate pilgrims with messages about proper Islamic practices. Under his tutelage, the festival had become an example of civil religion, not orthodox beliefs.[35] Husayni and the SMC intended these ceremonies to fulfill the functionalist aims to legitimize his status as both religious and national leader, reaffirm his family's leadership of national politics, and champion diplomacy in the public discourse. The folkloric status the festival has achieved as a national festival should not betray its intended, didactic purpose to reinforce factional, elite ideals of political leadership. Amin Husayni materialized these goals by directing the route the pilgrims marched, assigning the rhetoric they chanted, expanding the range of participants, and, most important, enhancing his ceremonial duties.

Husayni's most significant changes were in Jerusalem. During the late Ottoman period, the mufti of Jerusalem shared the same ceremonial space reserved for Ottoman authorities, municipal officials, and urban notables. Although he rode near the end of the procession, the Jerusalem governor and Shariah court judge closed it. Husayni's predecessor described his ceremonial role curtly, stating, "I have certain duties to fulfil there."[36] Once Husayni ascended to the post, he transformed this medium-ranked religious official's duties into the center of attraction.

The first step Husayni initiated was to excise the role the Jerusalem governor and the Islamic court judge had in the procession. He then designated his arrival as the procession's culmination. A 1927 account of the concluding ceremonies is typical of this configuration. The Hebron pilgrims entered the

Old City hoisting their town, village, and religious banners and chanting slogans praising the mufti. The Nablus and Jerusalem youth and Scout troops played their musical instruments, following close behind. At the rear of this cacophonous procession, the mufti appeared alongside the bearers of the sacred banners of Nabi Musa, the Haram al-Sharif, and the Prophet David, flanked by the administrators of the Prophet Moses *waqf*.[37] Although the processional order resembled its late Ottoman-period formation, Husayni's arrival now marked its apex. These changes added to the Ottoman-period practice of bifurcating the popular/official dimensions of ceremonies. Unlike the scenes of pilgrims dancing and singing, the mufti's arrival was "quiet and dignified," evoking solemness: "The din and uproar of the crowd was stilled as they passed and everything was seemly and impressive."[38]

Husayni also altered the pilgrims' traditional processional routes to complement his stature as Palestine's chief Islamic figure. Beginning in the mid-1920s, he directed pilgrims to pass the SMC office, located at the Gate of the Inspector/Bab al-Nazir on the outer perimeter of the Haram.[39] In 1927, Nablus pilgrims passed or, in the words of *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, "visited" (*zaru*), the SMC office, greeting the mufti with shouts and applause.[40] Although the official British Order of 1921 announcing the formation of the SMC outlined that the responsibilities of the SMC president should become a position at Government House as a senior official of the government, Husayni established its office within the Haram precincts.[41] The mufti rendered the SMC's authority as coterminous with Jerusalem's sacred geography by choosing this esteemed location. While in other religious communities processional routes could endorse a specific religious identity or assert a nationalist presence, these routes now served Husayni's interests to be seen as Palestine's leading Islamic figure.[42] He even shrewdly turned the SMC office into a coveted venue to watch the processions.[43] He extended invitations to do so to those who procured him favors, as in the case of annually inviting Baruch Katinka, a Jewish contractor who surreptitiously aided the mufti's construction of the Palace Hotel by concealing the fact that it was built on a Muslim cemetery. He watched the pilgrims as they entered the Haram al-Sharif as the mufti's private guest.[44]

Husayni also assigned SMC members to greet pilgrims, thereby conflating the festival with the institution he led. High-ranking clerics greeted pilgrims at the mosque of Shaykh Jarrah, located a short distance from Bab al-Sahria.[45] Husayni extended this association with the festival to his family members and the groups they led. A year after the Western Wall/al-Buraq violence, Husayni's supporters led pilgrims in chants honoring the Arab Executive Committee (AE) president, Musa Kazim al-Husayni, the mufti's relative.[46] The following year, the Nablus pilgrims were rerouted to pass the AE's office, cheering, "Long Live the [AE] Council" and "Long live the country and unity."[47]

Husayni also welcomed support from other political figures, inviting them to the ceremonies to endorse his status as an Arab leader. As the Nablus pilgrims entered Jerusalem to celebrate the 1934 festival, they were greeted not only by Husayni and other high-ranking SMC members but also by a prominent contingent led by the Syrian nationalist Ihsan Jabiri, who fought the French after World War I.[48] Jabiri and his two brothers, who were accompanying him, lent the mufti the pretense that even devoted Arab nationalists supported him.[49] Amin Husayni, however, failed to emulate Jabiri's commitment to militancy and anticolonialism.

Overall, Husayni took great care to preserve his position at the festival, as the 1924 ceremonies revealed. Husayni recruited his nephew to assume the mufti's duties during his absence while traveling outside the country. Storrs speculated that the Husaynis intended to publicly introduce the young man, a student at al-Azhar, as a candidate for the upcoming SMC elections (which were eventually cancelled) in case Amin Husayni did not win. With two Husayni family members as candidates, the family could retain the two most important religious posts in Palestine, mufti of Jerusalem and SMC president.[50] Husayni replicated the same strategy he had employed in 1921 in his bid to become mufti. The use of the festival to secure a potential political post reaffirms Clifford Geertz's argument that rituals do not just represent power, but they also help forge power, "for pomp does not serve power, power serves pomp."[51]

FORGING A DISCOURSE OF NATIONAL UNITY UNDER HUSAYNI LEADERSHIP

The most significant change Amin Husayni initiated at the festival was to invite representatives from towns and cities that had not customarily participated. For most of the Ottoman period, the festival largely attracted Muslims from the country's hilly regions and southern Palestine. As SMC president, though, Husayni designed a festival with grander national dimensions, yet again to serve his own political interests.

Beginning in the late 1920s, he recruited pilgrims from throughout the country, predominantly the coastal and plains regions. The optics of throngs of pilgrims with their distinctive town and village banners hoisted in parades marching in and out of Jerusalem produced the iconic images most observers associate with the festival today. Part of the mufti's motivation to broaden participation in the festival can be attributed to the sectarian system of politics the British established in Palestine. He realized that the British viewed Arabs as Muslims, not Palestinians.[52] A more crucial reason explaining why he expanded the participants and intensified Islamic idioms at the festival was

in response to the political challenges he and his family confronted in the late 1920s. During this period, various familiar and new political actors became more politically active and threatened the Husayni monopoly over Palestinian politics. They challenged Husayni, the SMC, and the Husayni family for control over the Arab Palestinian national movement and the political direction it was taking.

An emboldened opposition (*muʿarada*) posed the first challenge. By the mid-1920s, the Nashashibi-led National Party gained influence after winning the Jerusalem municipal elections in 1927 and the Seventh Palestinian Congress in 1928.[53] The Husayni family patriarch, Musa Kazim, even cooperated with the Nashashibis on some issues.[54] The greatest challenge came from non-elite groups and a younger generation of nationalist activists who were more successful than the elite politicians in the art of mass mobilization. Nationalist youth, the topic of the next chapter, joined new political organizations that defied an elite understanding of identity and politics. They advocated militancy against Zionists, condemned British colonialism, and embraced a national identity that encompassed the larger Arab region, not one restricted to Palestine. Tensions in 1928 and violence in 1929 between Arabs and Jews over the proprietorship of the Western Wall, known in the Islamic tradition as al-Buraq, amplified the threats Arabs in Palestine confronted. The violence represented a "watershed" moment in Arab politics in Palestine.[55] While Husayni had organized the al-Buraq campaign and hosted the Jerusalem Islamic Conference to respond to these challenges, after 1929 he was besieged on multiple fronts that undermined his claim as both national leader and protector of Islamic holy sites. He and his family recognized the changing political landscape in Palestine. They and other notables were now required to "adjust to a new mode of politics in which a self-aware and nationalist public expected to participate."[56] As an AE member confided to High Commissioner Arthur Wauchope in 1933, "We have never in the past resorted even to peaceful demonstrations; now we have been pushed to it by the people themselves."[57] In the context of this new political environment, Amin Husayni reconfigured the late Ottoman-era Nabi Musa festival. He introduced these changes not to instill a message of national unity or compel the British to change their policies, as the politics of mass mobilization would demand. Instead, he reordered the festival to serve his objectives to embolden his image as a religious and national leader confronting Zionism, defending Islam, and representing all Palestinians.

The festival celebrated in 1929 may have represented the first attempt to broaden the ceremonies and enhance Husayni's image as a credible, national leader.[58] *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* reported that the processions held on the first Friday of the festival (April 26) included the residents of Ramla and Jaffa and

the members of Ramla's Young Men's Muslim Association.[59] The newspaper proudly boasted that this was the first time pilgrims from these cities had participated in an official capacity. They also chanted national slogans and anthems in praise of Palestine. In 1931, the youth of Lydda joined the youth of Ramla and Jaffa in the procession of banners to the Haram al-Sharif as well as out to Raʾs al-ʿAmud.[60] By 1934, the appearance of the three coastal cities of Jaffa, Ramla, and Lydda had become so routine that they were included in the official announcement of the weeklong celebrations alongside other traditional groups.[61] That year, pilgrims from Ramallah, a predominantly Christian town, participated.[62]

At first glance, the assembly of pilgrims and youth and Scout groups at the festival immediately evokes the image of a disparate Arab population crystallizing its embryonic national ties into an "imagined community."[63] As Husayni wrote in a public address (*bayan*) for the 1937 festival, he hoped people would attend in great numbers and arrive from throughout these "holy lands" (*al-diyar al-muqadassa*) to appear as a "united block."[64] In many ways, the festival became an "aestheticization of politics" symbolizing a budding national identity.[65] The large crowds and youth groups captured in an account of the 1931 festival evokes this impression:

> Thousands of people crowded today [Friday April 3] at the Haram al-Sharif, arriving in Jerusalem yesterday and today from all parts of Palestine to attend the great national festival, the Prophet Moses festival (*al-mawsim al-watani al-kabir mawsim al-Nabi Musa*). And after the celebration of the Friday prayers at the al-Aqsa mosque . . . groups of youths from villages began to proceed ahead with their banners. Students and bands of Scouts with their banners and the musicians of the Islamic orphanages and the youth of Jaffa, Ramle, and Lydda, and the youth of Jerusalem, and the people of Nablus with their banners and religious men exulting (saying *la ilaha illa llah* "There is no god but God") and shouting praises. The Nabi Musa banner then [arrived], with a number of other banners surrounding it, [followed by] the procession of the president of the SMC, including the ulama and the notables and the crowds leaving Jerusalem.[66]

In these ceremonies with an expanded range of participants, the festival appeared as an expression of a burgeoning nationalist identity. In an era of mass politics, it could appear to give tangible meaning to the "general will" of the nation.[67] Mass movements function in the public sphere, where private individuals assemble to shape public opinion.[68] Some scholars doubt that the elite used these tactics of mass mobilization in Palestine.[69] Others see it as only arriving with the Istiqlal (Independence) Party or the 1929 riots.[70] Peter

Polak-Springer regards the Nabi Musa festival as a "sacred forum for mass politics" that allowed clerical and lay authorities to use religious symbols to mobilize pilgrims for their political interests.[71]

Journalists who reported on the arrival of pilgrims from throughout the country regarded the festival as an expression of the mass mobilization of "the nation" demanding their independence. Pilgrims symbolically invoked their demands in "the clatter of the swords and the knocking of the canes."[72] An *al-Yarmuk* writer hailed the pilgrims as "nationalists" devoted to gaining their "national rights," bound in "sacred unity" against the enemy.[73] For another correspondent, their demands resembled a "call to arms," as if the beating of drums and clashing cymbals were calling pilgrims to the battlefield.[74] One journalist proposed designating the week of festival as a "national week" to facilitate even larger participation.[75]

No doubt the scene of pilgrims marching and demanding their independence, invoking their national and political rights, and condemning colonialism and Zionism resembles a form of mass politics that sought to assert popular demands in an expanding public sphere. As Jerusalem activist Ibrahim Dakkak (d. 2016) recalled, the festival was "an opportunity to express our ideas, and we felt no one could stop us," not even the British.[76]

Despite the enthusiasm of writers in Arab print media, the SMC leadership did not mobilize the festival as a vehicle of mass mobilization to pressure the British. Nor did it devote the festival primarily to inculcating participants with a concept of the nation. Husayni assembled pilgrims, youth, and Scouts from Palestine's coastal areas to reify his stature as national leader. He understood well that the "audience is part of the spectacle, is itself spectacle."[77] Their mere appearance gave the impression of Husayni as a popular leader. Their attendance resembled the mass rallies of Amir Faysal's Arab government in Syria. Faysal employed the "techniques of mass organizing," but he delegated the crowd with a nonparticipatory role merely to endorse his leadership. [78]

Subhi Ghusha recalled those who were "close" (*muqarrabin*) to the mufti or his protégés (*mahsubin*) uttered chants in his honor, not chants condemning the British or hailing the nation. Husayni's supporters honored him as a valiant defender of Muslims, with the sobriquet, "The sword of religion, al-Hajj Ami!" and "Hajj Amin! O! Victor." Pilgrims addressed both Husayni and God in one chant. In the first three stanzas, the crowd cried out to the mufti:

> Hajj Amin, may your glory be everlasting! A medal suits you/
> Hajj Amin O! Victor! With your sword we tore down the wall!
> Hajj Amin, don't frown. Do you want us to wear military uniforms?

In the second part, the marchers pleaded to God:

O, Protector of the sound truth
Make our leader al-Hajj Amin victorious
O! Our Lord of *al-Baqara* and of the Ten Men
You ruined the lands of the nonbelievers (*diyar al-kufra*)
Until they all die[79]

Husayni coveted this public adulation. The SMC even paid 40 jinaya to Nablus youth to shout in the mufti's honor at the 1932 festival.[80] The festival proved to be an ideal venue to promote his leadership because it allowed him to conflate both the novel message of nationalism with established religious tropes. As mentioned earlier, Husayni referred to Palestine as these "holy lands" (*al-diyar al-muqadassa*). In less than a decade after the founding of the state of Palestine, religious idioms, themes, and rhetoric still resonated far more powerfully than secular nationalist ideas. As Musa Budeiri has observed, Islam imbued nationalist discourse in the Arab Middle East after World War I with a crucial source of legitimacy and familiarity, and in Palestine, "it could not have been otherwise. No other ideological idiom would have been familiar or comprehensible" to rural people of the country to whom "the idea of nation and national interests was totally alien."[81]

The Hebron banner's arrival at the 1932 festival vividly illustrates how profoundly Islam could impart the meaning of Palestinian nationalism with an elite-conservative inflection. As the pilgrims entered Jerusalem, they raised a banner etched with an image of the Kaʿba and inscribed with a verse from the Qurʾan (3:103): "Hold on firmly together to the rope of God, and be not divided among yourselves."[82] For a Muslim and Arab people subjected to foreign occupation, it is striking that this verse was chosen instead of one that emphasized an Islamic identity (umma in 3:110) or sanctioned holy war (jihad in 2:191–193). In a traditional Arab society dominated by urban notables, this verse's message enjoining obedience to God and unity endorsed existing social norms demanding deference to Palestine's social leaders.

An event at the 1928 celebrations further illustrates how Husayni pursued his conservative-elite vision for the festival. As the Nablus pilgrims entered the Damascus Gate on the first day of the celebrations (Friday, April 6), the crowd began shouting and denouncing the Christian Missionary Conference convening in Jerusalem. Hajj Amin had publicly denounced the choice of Jerusalem as the conference site, and he found the festival a convenient forum to vent his opposition.[83] As the Nablus pilgrims reached the SMC office, the mufti and Musa Kazim Husayni greeted the crowds and led them in chants condemning missionaries and the conference.[84] By participating in and leading the protests, Husayni associated himself with the mass opposition to the conference and clarified the Palestinian national agenda. While Husayni

FIGURE 4.2. *Procession with Hajj Amin al-Husayni exiting the Old City of Jerusalem, 1937 (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 16961)*

avoided the militant nationalist anthems and anticolonial slogans commonly heard at the larger processions, he regarded denunciations of Christian missionaries as an innocuous political activity. He appeared attuned to Muslim sensitivities while dodging calls condemning the British and urging violence. Although the festival became synonymous with Palestinian nationalism and the mobilization of Arabs condemning colonialism and Zionism, Husayni's attempts at mobilizing pilgrims in a mass movement proved shallow. He discursively designed the festival—assigning new roles to his family and SMC officials, redirecting pilgrimage routes to pass the SMC, placing himself as the center of attraction in the procession, and expanding participation—to confirm his role as uncontested national and Islamic leader.

HUSAYNI INFLUENCE AT THE PROPHET MOSES SHRINE

Al-Hajj Amin and the Husayni family extended these political aspirations to the Prophet Moses shrine. Husayni's reordering of the shrine ceremonies proved just as strategic as his orchestrating of the Jerusalem ceremonies.

The Husaynis as Traditional Patrons

Throughout most of the Ottoman period, one of the most important duties the Husaynis and Yunus al-Husayni family performed at the shrine was

organizing the *simat* (repast). Each claimed a *matbakh* (kitchen) to cook food with funds derived from the endowment.[85] Their service in providing two public meals a day to the visitors "demonstrated notable generosity and claims to supremacy in powerful ways."[86] Serving meat to rural people who rarely ate this food enhanced their status as patrons.[87] Tewfik Canaan estimated that each of these families cooked one qintar (approximately 250 kilograms) of meat each day and prepared large quantities of *ruzz mufalfal* (peppered rice), *ful* (broad beans), *mulikhiyya* (garden mallow), eggplant, and onions, all cooked in the *yakhna* style of mixing vegetables and rice with meat and clarified butter (*samna*).[88] Outside the sanctuary, pilgrims slaughtered sheep, with the meat either distributed to peasants uncooked or sent to the two kitchens for preparation.[89]

The practice of disbursing food to the pilgrims replicated Palestine's larger social structure, which had once been based on patron-client relationships, linking notable rural families with peasant clients. If families rested their social prestige as patrons on their ability to fulfill a function for social inferiors, then social acts, such as gift-giving and doling out food, endorsed their status as patrons.[90] As Michel Dietler argues, commensal hospitality and feasting rituals, centered on the distribution and consumption of food and drink, comprise a ritualistic practice that aims to "establish and reproduce social relations," as well as create and define differences in status.[91] Distributing food to a primarily rural population maintained the image of the Husaynis as patrons, a patron-client relationship Albert Hourani termed the "Politics of Notables."[92] Although modernity was eroding these traditional patron-client relationships, Palestine's elite continued to view the Arab masses through the myopic category of "clients" instead of as engaged citizens, imbued with nationalist consciousness demanding national and political rights.[93] Although the chants at the festival described earlier reveal a politically active citizenry, Palestine's elite were incapable of relating to rural pilgrims in any way other than as clients.

Records attest to the great expense placed on organizing meals at the shrine and its continued cultural importance.[94] For the ceremonies held from 1933 to 1935, the SMC devoted 237 jinaya, 121 jinaya, and 230 jinaya, respectively, for financing the ceremonies, yet these amounts proved insufficient, forcing the SMC to fall in arrears.[95] In 1942 the SMC spent 223 jinaya for 373 ratl of meat (approximately 930 kilograms). Through a tender one grocer submitted for the 1933 festival, we find that meat cost 600 mil per ratl, and the SMC ordered approximately 1,130.5 kilograms.[96] But even these quantities were insufficient. Al-Hajj Musa ʿAbd al-Latif, a cook who served at the shrine, recalled how the Mufti Hajj Amin encouraged him to mix samna into the dish of rice and meat to inflate its volume.[97] The second costliest expense

was usually rice. Quantities of rice were calculated by sacks called *shuwal* that weighed approximately 50 kilograms. At the 1942 festival, a sack of *arz rashidi* (rice from Rosetta, Egypt) cost 1 jinaya, 20 mil. The endowment purchased 200 jinaya, 128 mil of it, or approximately 166 sacks.[98] While only 13 jinaya was spent purchasing bread, this was a great quantity given that bread cost about 10 mil each; therefore 1,300 loaves of pita were provided.[99] For the festival celebrated a few years later, in 1945, the total expenditure was substantially less, most likely due to the difficult circumstances during the war.[100]

Other than the rural pilgrims, the Husaynis refined their image as patrons before another audience at the shrine. The Husaynis began inviting a distinguished coterie of European and Arab guests to the shrine, depicting the family as national patrons in a new, nation-state environment.

Fealty to Amin Husayni as National Patron

The ceremonies the Husaynis introduced at the shrine were novel additions. Initially, Husayni fulfilled prosaic duties at the shrine, such as inspecting the kitchens and observing Bedouin arts such as horse racing, dancing, and falconry skills.[101] Only a few British officials and Arab notables attended. But as the competition to control the national movement intensified, so did the shrine's importance as a medium of ritual politics. The Husayni family began inviting high-ranking British officials, members of notable Arab families, Islamic dignitaries, and Arab political figures formally to visit the mufti at his reception room (*diwan*), located in the shrine's courtyard. These visits served as a public spectacle affirming Amin Husayni's role as an Arab and Islamic leader to two audiences—pilgrims and Europeans. A *Filastin* correspondent devoted significant space to discussing the reception of guests at the 1931 festival. Although he ignored the many activities the pilgrims conducted (e.g., Sufi *dhikr* ceremonies, folk singing, and dancing), he noted the arrival of a distinguished cadre of guests.[102] Upon their arrival, Husayni youth escorted these visitors to the mufti's tent erected in the courtyard. The mufti welcomed many "high-ranking [government] employees and dignitaries" to a meal his family had prepared. The guests included members of the Palestine government, tribal leaders, foreign consular representatives, notable families, and educators—Palestinian, Arab, Middle Easterners, and Westerners.[103]

During the Ottoman period, scholars and pilgrims from throughout the Muslim world conducted *ziyara* to the shrine.[104] However, the new public spectacle of receiving guests had no connection to the act of pilgrimage. It was organized to serve the mufti's pretensions as nationalist leader. At a time when Husayni faced increasing challenges to his leadership, this new public spectacle upheld the family as the most capable of leading Palestinians.

Because the "politics of notables" system the Arab notables upheld lacked institutionalized political statuses, and roles existed without formal rules for determining who should fill them, rituals such as doling food or receiving prominent guests become the "means by which individuals assume and hold . . . [notable] roles and statuses."[105]

In many ways, this distinguished coterie of guests continued the festival's civil nature. The secular elements that penetrated the festival's rituals since the late Ottoman period made it convenient for the Husaynis to invite representatives from a successful Palestinian cigarette company, Qaraman-Dik-Salti, to the shrine. In 1932, representatives of the Haifa-based company arrived and informed the crowd that the company and its workers were friends of the mufti and of all of those who attended this "dignified festival." They then proceeded to distribute cigarettes to the pilgrims, to which the crowd responded with shouts of gratitude to the company and praises honoring the mufti.[106]

This episode reveals the depth to which the festival had become a civil affair. By the late nineteenth century, Palestine's economy was increasingly incorporated into the world capitalist economy. As Sherene Seikaly has argued, the elite in Palestine were not "homogenous" and included a new, "middling" class of nonlanded, wealthy entrepreneurs who made their wealth in commerce, the professions, and industry.[107] Husayni's association with representatives of Qarman-Dik-Salti was a natural union formed between this new corps of wealthy merchants and traditional urban notables.[108] A commercial, industrial entity celebrated their ties to Palestine's top Islamic official at the shrine, ineluctably obfuscating the festival's religious nature. As Mahmoud Yazbak describes, this process accelerated at the Nabi Rubin festival after World War I as visitors enjoyed secular entertainment, such as cinemas, musical ensembles, cafés, restaurants, and shops. By the early 1930s, visitors to the shrine were "vacationers more than pilgrims."[109] This comingling of religious and commercial pursuits inspired one writer in *Lisan al-ʿArab* to propose that the organizers of Nabi Musa convert the festival into a "small fair" (*maʿrid saghir*) to display "national products" in the style of Nabi Rubin and the French *foires* (fairs). The writer dismissed popular activities at the shrine such as singing, warbling (*agharid*), playing with toys, and horsemanship as distractions that weakened efforts to strengthen the umma, a goal the "nation's people" (*muwatinun*) truly desire.[110]

These commercial associations with the festival accelerated in the 1930s. At the 1930 festival, a group associated with the Arab Manufactured Goods Company (al-Shirkat al-Masnuʿat al-ʿArabiyya) sponsored a large rectangular banner of the Arab flag inscribed with their company name in the middle. Written on the top was "Order all the national goods," and at the bottom the

company's location ("Jerusalem–Jaffa Gate"). This national flag advertising a local company was surrounded by the traditional imagery of the festival, the sacred religious banners and crowds of pilgrims (see fig. 5.1, p. 102). The following year, as pilgrims streamed out of the Haram, the Husayni youth Jawad Raf'at delivered a patriotic harangue urging pilgrims to support their country's advancement and products.[111] By 1943, the *Palestine Post* advertised savings certificates during the respective spring holidays of each religious community: "Make your festival a lasting gift" with the words "Easter, Passover, Nebi Musa" bordering the advertisement.[112] Clearly, during the modern era the polarities of the religious and secular domains imbricated as the gap between them loosened. Both Ottoman officials and British authorities promoted Western reforms and modern culture while also participating in Nabi Musa. Likewise, Palestine's Islamic leaders both led the festival and welcomed the participation of secular, nonreligious officials, making their involvement with commercial, capitalist enterprises inevitable.

THE MORPHOLOGY OF CONTROL

How did the mufti and other Husayni family members exert their influence over the festival? What were the mechanics of how the Husaynis organized, reconfigured, and reordered the late Ottoman-period ceremonies? Unraveling the morphology of this control elucidates how religion, culture, and social hierarchy are concepts and structures social groups struggle to assert, shape, and define rather than things that exist as sui generis, timeless, and inviolable.[113] Husayni's position as head of the SMC granted him extensive bureaucratic reach over a large network of religious officials that he could draw upon to promote the festival. In 1924, the SMC employed 1,193 teachers, marriage registrars, and waqf officials and demanded their loyalty.[114] Husayni exploited the SMC's centralized bureaucracy to promote the festival and increase participation; as one British report on the 1935 ceremony claimed, the SMC provided the "usual propaganda, subsidies, and arrangements" to encourage a larger procession.[115] The SMC had already recruited religious officials to support opposition to the proposed Legislative Council in 1922.[116]

Amin Husayni also enlisted his close ties with the AE to marshal participation at the festival. The AE was already well acquainted with staging public events, having assembled a reception in honor of the Muslim-Christian Association (MCA) delegation's return from Europe in 1923.[117] That same year, it encouraged participation at the Moses festival. More important than numbers, though, the AE worked to ensure a strict, conservative discourse at the festival.

The AE met about a week before the festival began (March 29–April 6).[118] The members addressed how to better manage the crowds, such as directing the processional route and stemming hostile chants. Husayni took great pride in conducting peaceful ceremonies, expressing his gratitude to the police for the "excellent and courteous manner" in which they fulfilled their duties at the 1922 celebrations.[119] The following year, the AE convened and proposed that members of each nadi (club) pay £P 0.50 toward the festival's expenses and collect additional funds from the pilgrims.[120] The AE encouraged each member to spread national propaganda among the pilgrims during the ceremonies in Jerusalem and at the shrine. It also welcomed Christians to attend. The AE discussed the need to monitor and control chanters in the procession, insisting that the processions remain peaceful, and it designated "foremen" and supervisors to contain unruly behavior.[121]

On the opening day of the celebrations (March 29), the AE published a supplement in the pro-Husayni Jerusalem newspaper *al-Sabah* entitled "Program of Ceremony of Departure of Nabi Musa Banner." Based on plans adopted at the previous meeting, the supplement outlined a set of instructions for the pilgrims to follow. Signed by Jamal al-Husayni, the mufti's relative and the AE secretary, the supplement referred to the festival as "one of the greatest and most important seasons in Palestine," with visitors arriving from "every part of the country to participate in it and visit the shrine."[122] The program bid the pilgrims to enjoy the ceremonies peacefully and in an orderly manner, reminding them that doing so would dignify the procession. They also instructed pilgrims to submit to the authority of designated foremen: "To every contingency[123] there has been appointed a committee responsible for conducting and arranging [processions] and all these committees are attached to the manager of the procession through its foreman. These committees will see that the songs are national but devoid of all sentiment against other religious communities."[124]

While organizers of the festival encouraged chants in support of the SMC, AE, or the mufti, a corpus of supporters ("managers" and "foremen") ensured that these anthems were not directed against other communities. The restrictive tenor of these instructions echoed the language the British had encoded in the Prevention of Crime Ordinance of December 1920, which gave the government the right to detain individuals suspected of "disseminating any seditious matter" that could lead to violence between religious communities.[125] Palestine's elite abided by these directions, fulfilling their end of the colonial ruler/colonized elite bargain: to maintain order and prevent Islam—in rhetoric, symbols, or idioms—from mobilizing into violence. In return, the British granted them limited political influence and government posts.

The AE's ability to impose its authority over the festival allowed it to elevate its distinctive, elite version of nationalism to the status of "normative truth," to which Michel Foucault claims all discourses aspire.[126] Pilgrims not adhering to this message could have been accused not only of disloyalty to the Palestine nation but even of transgressing their faith, as the *al-Sabah* notice concluded: "We ask Almighty God for many happy returns of the feast when the nation is dressed with the robes of unity and enjoying full freedom and independence."[127] The reference to "unity" is used here as a trope enjoining Palestinians to accept Husayni/SMC/AE leadership and their diplomatic style of politics. As will be discussed later, these notices regularly appeared in the Arab media to encourage pilgrims to uphold a peaceful festival. The AE and SMC took advantage of modern techniques of organizing mass politics to disseminate their views. The hegemonic aims of any modern nation and group depend on their ability to exploit the communication techniques of modern industrial societies.[128] The *al-Sabah* supplement solicited donations, appointed "foremen" to monitor rhetoric, and announced directives through the press to distill the AE/SMC's vision of Palestine's politics.

NASHASHIBI FAMILY TACTICS AT THE FESTIVAL

As the Prophet Moses festival entered the arena of factional politics after World War I, the Nashashibi family's patriarch, Raghib al-Nashashibi (d. 1951), spearheaded the challenge to undermine the Husayni-led festival.[129] By 1923, the Nashashibis founded the National Party (Hizb al-Watani) to advance their family's political goals and take advantage of the support they enjoyed in Hebron and Nablus.[130] In this atmosphere of elite factionalism, the annual Moses festival galled the Nashashibis. One British official opined that "the Prophet Moses and, indeed the founder of Islam, derive less benefit and prestige from the festival than the Husseini family."[131] The festival served as "a convenient sparring ground" for the two families. Although the British recognized the mufti's success at the festival in demonstrating "his own popularity and importance as the religious and political leader of the country," the Nashashibis responded by devoting their efforts to challenging his esteemed stature.[132]

The Nashashibis employed the few tactics available to weaker groups in society. While certainly not "subalterns," the Nashashibis employed strategies that James Scott terms "weapons of the weak."[133] These were essentially prosaic strategies weaker groups use to resist the authority of more powerful

social groups, such as acts of misrule and nonparticipation. If the mufti Amin Husayni had designed the festival to appear as a public endorsement of his status as a national and Islamic leader, then misrule and nonparticipation sent the opposite message.

The two families valued the optics of the ceremonial processions so highly that they regularly clashed or attempted to undermine one another. Some years Nashashibi supporters convinced the Nablus pilgrims, the base of their support, from dispatching the banners or sending only small groups to attend.[134] In 1924 they threatened to orchestrate a separate festival. The Husaynis took this threat seriously and responded by circulating a counter-threat that nonparticipation would set a precedent and prevent the Nablus contingent from joining future celebrations.[135] The two sides also scuffled over the protocol of their ceremonial entrance into the Old City. In 1933, the bearers of the Jerusalem banner halted at the SMC office, waiting for the mufti and Jerusalem notables to greet them. However, the pro-Nashashibi bearers of the Nablus banner demanded they march directly into the Haram sanctuary. Offended by this slight against the mufti, the pro-Husayni pilgrims attempted to block the Nablus parade, and the two sides came to blows. One Nablus pilgrim brandished his ceremonial sword, causing panic and injuring five.[136] The following year, clashes erupted between the two groups over which faction would have the honor of carrying the Nablus banner, requiring the police to intervene and disperse the crowd.[137]

Other times, the Nashashibis employed rhetorical ploys, either expressing disdainful language against the mufti and his supporters or remaining silent.[138] At the 1926 festival, Nablus pilgrims jeered their town's SMC representative, Amin al-Tammimi, as he greeted them. They then conscripted an inebriated shoeshine to "slander" him. In a comic turn of events, their newly designated spokesman rambled through a drunken diatribe that ended up embarrassing them.[139] Other times they chanted only in honor of the opposition.[140] After the deadly violence in 1929, Nashashibi supporters even creatively crafted a new persona of the family's leader, Raghib, as a bellicose defender of al-Buraq, declaring, "With your sword we defended the wall."[141] The hyperbole in this chant is striking, for its protagonist was the paragon of diplomacy who abjured violence. Not only did he raise only milquetoast criticism of the British, but he also cooperated with them and the Zionists to suppress pro-Husayni factions during the Great Revolt.[142]

The Nashashibis also organized more confrontational encounters at the festival. They assembled their own "anti-mufti faction" to disrupt the processions.[143] This group remained active even after the Husaynis and Nashashibis agreed to form the Arab Higher Committee in April 1936 to organize the na-

tional strike. The following year, as the pro-Husayni National Committee of Jerusalem was busy enrolling Boy Scouts and other youth organizations to march in the grand parade with the Hebron pilgrims, the anti-mufti factions hurriedly organised their supporters. The main figure managing the anti-mufti contingents was a thuggish figure named Salih ʿAbdu, whom the British anticipated would stir up fights between the two parties. Police records identified him as "a Jerusalem garage proprietor and a member of the [pro-Nashashibi] Arab National Society under the presidency of Faiz Effendi Haddad . . . a 'tough' who organises the rougher element of the supporters of the Nashashibi faction."[144] That year, ʿAbduh clashed with supporters of the mufti's party in Jerusalem. The two sides wielded sticks and threw stones at one another, injuring eight and leading to six arrests. In response, the police sequestered Haddad in Jaffa and ʿAbdu near Hebron for the festival's duration.[145] A year earlier ʿAbdu had proven to be as pugnacious. He and his associates scuffled with the mufti's supporters at the shrine, where his friends shielded him from arrest.[146] At the closing ceremonies in Jerusalem, authorities forbade ʿAbdu and his supporters from taking part in any processions.[147]

Eventually, the Nashashibis extended their disruptive efforts to the shrine. In 1931, they convinced the Hebron pilgrims to abstain from eating food the Husaynis served.[148] Some even camped some distance away from the shrine to demonstrate their aloofness from their rivals, the Husaynis. One British official noted how these anti-mufti activities yielded an "unusual feature" at the 1931 processions: "the absence of shouts" for the mufti.[149] This diminished support may have been due to a pamphlet the Nashashibis surreptitiously printed at a local Jewish press for distribution to the people of Hebron denouncing the mufti. British authorities warned Raghib Nashashibi against distributing them. Although he denied any involvement, he promised to destroy the remaining pamphlets.[150] The following year, however, Nashashibi tactics had proven so anemic that the family withdrew any organized effort to oppose the celebrations.[151]

While the Nashashibi family employed mundane tactics to challenge the symbolic control the Husayni exerted over the Jerusalem portions of the celebrations, at Raʾs al-ʿAmud Raghib Nashashibi wielded greater control as mayor (1920–1934). While the site had always included the attendance of religious leaders and municipal officials, in the early 1930s Raghib expanded the entourage of guests to include Nashashibi family members, their close family supporters, the highest-ranking members of Palestine's government, and their English guests.[152] The Nashashibis valued this site so highly that Fakhri al-Nashashibi would substitute for his absent relative the mayor, just as Amin Husayni designated family members to stand in for him.[153] The SMC

organ *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* countered this growing attention the Nashashibis attracted at Raʾs al-ʿAmud by providing only a perfunctory, laconic record of the attendees, listing them by their titles and not their names.[154]

ELITE DISCOURSES ON MODERNITY

Although the Husayni-*majlisi* camp and the Nashashibi-led opposition may have been factional rivals, they differed little in political outlook, social class standing, and cultural orientation from notables in other Arab countries. Arab notables were "indebted" to, if not products of, the social transformation of the late Ottoman period.[155] They espoused the modern ideals of the *Nahda* period, embracing both an Arab identity and Western values.[156] They acquired a modern education and acculturated to Western styles of fashion and architecture.[157] Both Arab Christian and Muslim elites in Palestine saw themselves as "avatars of a multi-religious Arab identity that could serve as the basis of a modern nationhood."[158] As Ellen Fleischmann finds, Palestine's Arab elite reconciled their dual Arab/Islamic and Western identities by "articulating a hybridized culture that synthesized the best of both East and West."[159] The festival allowed the elite to showcase their acceptance of Western modernity, proudly displaying it to a foreign audience and Palestine's colonial rulers. Their beliefs manifested through discursive categories they introduced at the festival: invoking modernist Islamic discourses, promoting the attendance of women, displaying acts of religious inclusivity, appealing for nonviolence, and defining Palestine as a modern nation.

A Modernist Islamic Discourse of Revival

The Nabi Musa festival attracted two contrasting religious discourses that both stemmed from modern Islamic criticism and thought. One discourse incorporated the festival into a narrative of Arab cultural revival, and the other condemned popular practices as contrary to proper Islam.[160]

Palestine's Arab elite invoked a modernist Islamic discourse to promote reforms and strengthen Arab society.[161] While this discourse bred criticism of popular worship in other Muslim countries, the SMC not only tolerated these religious activities but also incorporated them into a larger project of social reform.[162] As Ernest Dawn has found, Arabism's origins lay in the discourse of Islamic reform.[163] Erik Freas adds that Salafi Arabism "smoothed the transition" from Ottoman to a post-Ottoman Arab nationalism.[164] The SMC articulated calls for social progress through a modernist argot advocating

"revival," "reform," and "revivification" of Islamic practices, religious shrines, and schools.[165] The SMC's 1922–1923 annual report (*bayan*) outlined plans to reform Palestine's Muslim festivals and ceremonies. It proposed that the Islamic veneration of saints and tombs were traditions dating to ancient times that needed to be revived and reformed: "the SMC has recognised the benefits of these celebrations and it is pleased to revive them and work to refine them, to reorganise their management, to increase their amenities. It has attempted to convert some of them into cultural-education fairs (*aswaq adabiyya ʿilmiyya*) and industrial exhibits to encourage Arab culture and national crafts and [so] that the benefit of festivals and gatherings like these will bring more advancement and God's prosperity."[166] As this statement demonstrates, the SMC aimed to incorporate traditional religious practices into a program to revive Arab culture, industry, and advancement, all hallmarks of modernist Islam and the *Nahda*. As a writer for *Lisan al-ʿArab* added, he hoped that the festival could "awaken" and drive "knowledge, literature, and national crafts" among Arabs.[167]

That same year, festival organizers conflated these themes of traditional Arab culture and Islamic revival at a new event held during the week of the celebrations. The Council for the Revival of National Festivals organized a literary competition (*al-sibaq al-adabi*) open to Arab youth held at the Islamic school in Jerusalem, Rawdat al-Maʿarif al-Wataniyya.[168] The judges even included the renowned Arabic scholars Khalil al-Sakakini and Isʿaf al-Nashashibi.[169] Yusuf Yasin, the organizing committee's secretary, hoped that this competition would represent "the first drops of rain quenching the hills and bringing to life the knowledge of our ancestors."[170] As Sherene Seikaly states, these poetic claims fit the "*nahda* narrative structure" of Arabs' being conflicted at having neglected and forgotten their heritage; their future, though, depended upon reviving their past cultural glory, ultimately leading to a "teleological path to awakening."[171] The organizers stoked these *Nahda* tropes by hosting the event at an Islamic school that provided a modern education rather than at a madrasa where these modern ideals may not have been as welcome.[172] They displayed the *Nahda* values of communal inclusivity by inviting Sakakini, the Christian founder of al-Dustur, a school offering modern education. And they appointed two scholars of Arabic, not of Islam, as judges.

Modernist Islamic Opposition

The same ideological source that believed that popular Islamic traditions could contribute to the revival of Arab society also produced discourses

that condemned these very traditions as heretical.[173] Modernist Islamic critics went from chastising certain ritual acts that defied proper interpretations of *fiqh* (Islamic law) when performing *ziyarat al-qubur* (ritual visitation to tombs) to condemning the entire performance of popular festivals (e.g., *mulid*) and ziyara.[174] Inspired by their modernist reading of the fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), they abjured "ecstatic" forms of Sufism, rituals associated with the putatively swinish spectacles of dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments. They regarded the entire practice of performing ziyara to seek the intercession of a revered figure as an unlawful innovation (*bidaʿ*), undermining the "unicity of God's lordship" (*tawhid al-uluhiyya*).[175]

Their contemporaries in Palestine, however, offered little support for these attacks. Many of Palestine's ulama had enjoyed the patronage of Sultan ʿAbd al-Hamid II (1876–1909), who drew upon popular Islamic traditions to promote a pan-Islamic vision for the empire based upon his role as caliph.[176] They defended pilgrimage to tombs, and Jerusalem's religious hierarchy refrained from restricting or condemning mystical and popular forms of worship.[177]

Nonetheless, critics of Palestine's Islamic festivals voiced their concerns in the Arab press. The religiously conservative journal *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* (The Straight Path, a name that quotes Q. 1:6), based in Jaffa, reflected the tenor of this criticism. In April 1932, the journal published a collection of articles, likely written by ʿAbdullah al-Qalqili (d. 1969), who served as its editor and held a degree in Islam from al-Azhar University. One piece, for example, demeaned the rituals pilgrims performed at Nabi Musa as a "shameful unrecognized innovation" (*mustaqaha bidʿa munkara*) contravening Islamic law.[178] Articles denounced these acts in a chorus of vituperation as "sinful," "immoral," and "evil." The author scorned the scene of men mixing with unveiled women at the shrine, performing acts resembling those of polytheists and unbelievers.[179]

These articles also slandered the mufti Amin Husayni for exploiting the celebrations to serve his political goals. The author succeeded in disambiguating the functionalist goals the mufti had set for the festival as a liminal space to impart pilgrims with messages about political authority and Islam. As the article's author explained, the mufti appeared in the processions as a "savior" (*munqidh*), and pilgrims returned to their homes inculcated with positive impressions of him. The writer denied that the mufti was mobilizing people to "God's house and *jihad*." Instead, it was clear that he was no more than a government employee authorized to disperse *awqaf* funds. He claimed that people harbored so little respect for the mufti that they refrained from following his banner or eating meals his kitchen prepared. Even the prospect of the Hebronites operating their own kitchen had enraged the mufti. The journal

concluded that Husayni worked for not the umma's interests but his own.[180] *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*'s critique is a rare example of how modern Islamic discourses could not only condemn popular worship but also recognize the larger transformations that converted local religious celebrations into public spectacles and political pageants.

While it is unclear how widely Palestine's religious leadership shared these conservative opinions, popular religious practices had begun to be debated in the public sphere. Aside from *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*'s vociferous condemnation of these acts, Shaykh ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam had publicly denounced the visitation of shrines and public mixing of the sexes.[181] Moreover, it is striking that only a few SMC officials attended festival events when their participation was required.[182] Even Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar, one of the mufti's closest associates, is never recorded as attending any ceremonies. Yet, many "traditionalist Palestinian ulama" opposed Shaykh Qassam's criticism of popular religion.[183] Clearly, both critics and supporters of the Nabi Musa festival conscripted modernist Islamic rhetoric to reflect on how the festival defined Islam and its relationship to modern identity and practice.

Religious Inclusivity: Inviting Arab Christians and Jews

One prominent way Palestine's Arab elite expressed their modernist ideals was through acts of religious inclusivity. Although Christians varied in their political views and were subject to factional politics, cooperation in nationalist, nonsectarian events challenged a colonial impression of Palestine as mired in religious strife.[184] As earnestly as Arabs attempted to promote a multiconfessional identity, British rule enforced and codified sectarianism. As Laura Robson notes, this sectarianism peripheralized Arab Christians, despite sharing with Muslims an antipathy to British occupation and Zionism and with the elite in particular a belief in the modernist project of nationhood and social revival.[185] In response, Arab leaders sought to demonstrate "interreligious unity as a well-established fact" and Muslims and Christians as part of the same ethnonational movement.[186]

Inviting Christians to participate in the festival became a prominent expression of these nationalist ideals. During the 1920 Moses celebrations, a Christian banner appeared in the procession as Palestinian Christian marchers called for Arab unity and independence; a Christian Arab also delivered a speech at the balcony of the Arab Club.[187] The following year a banner captured the spirit of nonsectarianism, inscribed with the words, "Moslem and Christians are brothers"; later, a Christian delivered a speech in favor of Arab farmers and condemned Zionism.[188] In 1923, the AE extended an official invitation to "all Christians . . . to participate in the procession."[189] Orthodox

Christians, whose Easter ceremonies in Jerusalem coincided with Nabi Musa, fondly remembered joining the procession.[190]

This Christian participation often served as a symbolic reference point to distinguish Arab from Jew, and Palestinian nationalism from Zionism. As the pilgrims from the mostly Muslim village of Bani Hasan near Nablus entered Jerusalem in 1930, they were accompanied by their fellow Christian residents. One Christian woman even led them in nationalist chants. As the *Filastin* correspondent related, Christian participation contrasted sharply with the scene of Jews watching the procession behind a barricade of British troops. The barricade was a powerful metaphor that distilled the conflict into the image of British might protecting Jews and the Zionists from Arab Christians and Muslims.[191]

A correspondent from *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* covering the 1934 celebrations seized on the optics of Arab Muslims and Christians participating together. He regarded the tens of Christians as forming a "true participation" who joined Muslims in chanting national anthems, while others guarded the processional route. The writer passionately described how their presence manifested a "power that bound" them in unity and patriotism for Palestine.[192] In contrast, Jews were compelled to use new routes to enter the Old City the British designated to prevent them from intersecting the processions.[193]

These displays of intercommunal solidary, however, troubled the British. The British espoused a colonial discourse of communal harmony to justify their rule, not undermine it. One official warily noted how Christians at the 1925 Nabi Musa festival "march[ed] side by side with their Moslem compatriots . . . singing the same patriotic songs they had chanted at the ceremony of the 'Holy Fire.'"[194] Jerusalemite Issa Boullata confirmed this impression, recalling how the nationalist anthems Arab Christians chanted during Easter resembled those at Nabi Musa.[195] The same nationalist anthems sung at both Christian and Islamic religious events indicate the extent to which the novelty of Palestinian nationalist rhetoric had quickly diffused throughout Arab society. The British resented how expressions of intercommunal solidarity conjured an image of an "overarching secular anti-colonial Arab unity," as Ussama Makdisi describes. He asserts that these overtures represented "Western colonialism's great anxiety" because it undermined the ideal of "colonial tutelage" in which European powers justified their rule.[196] As a result, the British restricted intercommunal ceremonies (among Arab Muslims and Christians) and barred the attendance of Christians at Muslims holy sites during a political event.[197] Colonial officials extended these restrictions to the Moses festival because rulers understand that places are "politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local" and subject to "multiple construc-

tions."[198] Controlling space allows powerful groups to define identity and difference. As Abigail Jacobson argues, Britain imposed its vision of controlling Jerusalem through a "dynamic of inclusion and exclusion of different groups from the urban space."[199] Despite British-sponsored ceremonies that, on the surface, brought the representatives of all of Palestine's religious communities together, the British also relied upon a sectarian system of politics that distinguished citizens along religious lines.[200] Consequently, in 1921, the Jerusalem governor issued a notice prohibiting non-Muslims from visiting the Haram al-Sharif during the week of Nabi Musa.[201] This restriction must have been common, for it was reissued in 1930.[202]

However, Palestine's Arab leadership was eager to exploit British colonialism's fetish for scenes of religious inclusivity. Although infrequent and in fewer numbers compared to Christian participation, Arab politicians invited members of Palestine's Jewish leadership to the ceremonies. These scenes achieved the model of tolerance and communal harmony British colonial discourses had long championed. These elite politicians understood that their role in post–World War I Palestine was intended to serve not as social leaders representing their peasant clients' interests and concerns, a role that notables fulfilled in the Ottoman period, but as sanctioned leaders tasked to maintain order and prevent violence. As Wendy Pearlman finds, Arab leaders in Mandate Palestine did not possess the capacity to promote violence since their "organizational structure was aimed at marshaling pressure, not activating, integrating, or ruling society." When leaders did exercise authority, it was intended not to instigate but to quell violence.[203]

As discussed in chapter 3, a year after the 1920 clashes, the city's new mayor invited Jewish religious leaders to attend the ceremony at Raʾs al-ʿAmud. His successor, Husayn al-Khalidi (1934–1937), also invited Jewish councillors to the municipal pavilion more than a decade later. *Filastin* responded with the alarming headline "A Dangerous Initiative in the Nabi Musa Festival," informing its readers that "for the first time" in the festival's history foreigners participated, "in particular" Jewish members of the Jerusalem council, even though this was an "Arab, popular (*shaʿbi*) and religious" festival. The newspaper accused the mayor of meeting Zionist leaders such as Chaim Weismann, Felix Warburg, and Moshe Shertok to facilitate contacts with members of the British Parliament, a "violation" of his national duty and his commitment to the traditions of the festival.[204] A few years earlier, the same journal was dismayed to learn that Jews mixed with Arabs during the processions in Jerusalem, all in full view of the police and government officials. It accused Jews of seeking to disrupt order at the festival. It questioned why the government ignored them, rhetorically asking if it wanted another new revolt to erupt, a reference to the violence in 1929.[205]

While it is unclear in what capacity these Jews participated—whether they were Jerusalemite Jews accustomed to attending or those marching with provocative intentions—exhibiting surprise at Jewish participation was misplaced. Jewish representatives had attended the municipal pavilion before and were the mufti's guests at various sites. The need for Jerusalem's Arab mayoral candidates to appeal to Jewish voters may have swayed his decision to invite these Jewish officials. Palestine's Arab politicians realized that public displays of communal harmony disassociated them from the crass slogans pilgrims routinely chanted at the festival, which the *Palestine Post* described as "patriotic songs with strong anti-Jewish and anti-British flavour."[206] These sounds resonated through Jerusalem's streets, compelling the elite to construct rituals communicating the opposite message, or, as John Skorupski explains, "Ceremony says, 'Look, this is how things should be, this is the proper, ideal pattern of social life.'"[207] Thus, immediately beneath the headline in 1931, "We Want to Kill Our Enemies: Cries in Nebi Moussa Procession," the *Palestine Post* reported that the Jerusalem mayor, Raghib Nashashibi, visited the ideological founder of religious Zionism, the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Abraham Kook, as well as the Sephardic Chief Rabbi Yaakov Meir and Jerusalem council member David Yellin, and that he offered them his greetings on Passover.[208] By conducting these rituals, Palestine's Arab elite acknowledged that the colonial matrix of power Britain had calibrated in the country depended on upholding order and preventing violence from erupting. Throughout the Mandate, very few elite Arabs rebelled against these benchmarks or challenged their claims.

Mobilizing Arab Women

The Arab elite also manifested its shared embrace of Western culture and modernity by including women at the celebrations, for gender is "one of the central modalities through which modernity is imagined and desired."[209] In colonized societies, gender and sexuality have shaped how the colonized and colonial ruler have interacted.[210] Members of Palestine's Arab elite were receptive to these Western, modern notions of womanhood due to "the cultural, political, social, and economic imprint of British imperial hegemony."[211]

Public displays of gender provided the Nashashibi family an additional way to appear as moderate in contrast to the religiously conservative Husayni family. Raghib Nashashibi achieved these aims by expanding the attendance of Arab and European women viewing the processions. In his first year, he greeted the arrival of the banner-bearers at the municipal tent accompanied by his wife, likely the first woman to participate in the ceremonies in any official capacity.[212] Later in the Mandate era, the Jerusalem municipality established a new site for a larger group of spectators to watch the main proces-

sions. This site was a grandstand to accommodate the increased number of guests located just outside St. Stephen's Gate as the pilgrims marched out of the Old City. The accommodations provided "comfortable chairs" for the mayor, notables, and anyone willing to pay two piasters, a price beyond most rural people.[213] One photo captured both European and Arab men and women sitting together, watching the procession under a covered stand.[214]

The new pavilion became a public spectacle, reflecting bourgeois tastes and the Nashashibi family's embrace of liberal standards of gender and dress. Through fashion and dress, the expanded pavilion made visible the dichotomies of urban/rural, traditional/modern, and popular/official Islam. On the streets below, the pilgrims visiting Jerusalem and the city's residents exhibited a variety of clothing, ranging from traditional styles to recent Western fashions.[215] A correspondent for the *Palestine Post* captured this diversity at the 1935 Moses festival, describing "Jewish residents in holiday attire, old and modern, Christian visitors and tourists. Moslem inhabitants in their gay raiment."[216] These unorchestrated scenes reflected the heterogeneous cultural currents that shaped the newly expanded public spaces, where people of different religions and nationalities interacted with one another, donning a variety of sartorial styles. However, the organizers of the new stands designed the site to spatially separate urban, culturally Western guests from rural Arab pilgrims. The Muslim women watching along the road wore the typical village attire of the cloak (*ghalabiyya*) and outer garment (*thawb*).[217] No Arab woman sitting in the stands dressed this way, nor does it appear that any Muslim woman donned the veil, even though traditionally urban women were more likely to wear it than rural women. The absence of the veil signaled how the Arab elite accepted liberal notions that equated Western culture as the marker of progress and modernity and the native culture as the embodiment of backward traditions.[218] In the Western imagination, the veil represented the "otherness of Islam," an "affront to contemporary notions of 'gender emancipation' and 'universal progress.'"[219] These beliefs led state leaders in the Middle East to promote Western fashions in their bid to demonstrate their nation's modernity.[220]

In many ways, the Arab guests seated in the pavilion had assumed the viewpoint of "privileged spectatorship." They were actors, just as the mufti and the mayor, performing a distinct role for an audience that comprised Palestine's colonial rulers and their families who joined them. These stands proliferated throughout the British empire, whether in Nigeria at sporting events or in India at Durbar ceremonies, where they served as "theatres of empire" through which the social stratification of colonialism was framed.[221] In an imperial setting, these stands became the "central stage of elite spectatorship" that included the highest colonial officials, their families, and native elites.[222]

Therefore, in Jerusalem, the stands were not just a privileged site to view the processions, but also a "mode of being viewed" by both Europeans and Arabs, confirming the Arab elite's membership in the global club of modernity.[223]

The attendance of these elite women also had an edificatory purpose: to complement the ambitions of the Arab male national leaders. By acquiring a Western education and donning European fashions, these women fulfilled the role as the "new woman," the "mothers of tomorrow" (*ummahat al-ghad*) who could propel the next generation of youth, primarily boys, and the nation toward modernity.[224] The "new woman" was understood to be progressive, modern, and untraditional, an adjunct to the "new bourgeois man."[225] Although the wealthier Arab women in the stands appeared to have ignored gender divisions, it did not undo the gendered social hierarchical structure in which they lived. They were at once both elite and subaltern, as Islah Jad argues.[226] They remained in a paternalistic colonial system that maintained colonial (colonizer over colonized) and gender (men above women) hierarchies.[227] Thus, Arab elite men accrued all the benefits from the presence of the Arab women seated at the pavilions, for it overturned the problem of segregation in Islamic societies by displaying Arab women as embodying bourgeois values.[228] More specifically, these women served the interests of the Nashashibi family. Unveiled, donned in Western fashions, and defying traditions of segregation, these women evoked "progress" and "modernity," unlike the antediluvian culture the Husaynis were reputed to espouse.[229] In the bid for the Nashashibi family to curry the favor of Palestine's colonial rulers, women were subject to the same system of symbolic control as any other element of the festival.

Appeals for Nonviolence

The need for Palestine's Arab leaders to maintain security and avoid disorder and religious strife led them to critique anticolonial and militant rhetoric as harmful to the cause of national independence. Their efforts at subverting this popular rhetoric defy an impression of Nabi Musa as a bold expression of Islam, with the Husaynis orchestrating a pageant to "defeat what they saw to be new crusaders, the British and Zionists."[230] In actuality, Arab leaders regularly suppressed militant and confrontational rhetoric. They issued public appeals in the press that infused messages of order and peaceful celebrations with religious idioms and rhetoric.[231]

The first appeal arrived one year after the riot. Although the British had dismissed Musa Kazim Husayni as mayor in 1920, he still hoped to maintain good relations with Palestine's colonial rulers. As the 1921 festival approached, he published "A Statement [*bayan*] to the Noble Palestinian Peo-

ple" on the cover of Jerusalem's *Bayt al-Maqdis* newspaper. He wished the Palestinian people a joyful celebration during the upcoming Nabi Musa and Easter holidays but enjoined them to celebrate peacefully. He reassured the public that violence would never be necessary since "the government of Great Britain . . . will not fail the trust of the people because what the people want is what God wants."[232]

After the outbreak of violence in 1929, these appeals for nonviolence became more urgent. A year after the clashes, the AE published a bayan addressed to the "Noble Arab Umma" urging them to refrain from violence during the upcoming celebrations. The AE explained that representatives were negotiating with the British to seek their legal rights and liberate the country.[233] Another appeal that appeared before Amin Husayni celebrated his final Moses festival. As Arab fighters crippled the British army's efforts to contain mass insurrection in 1937, Husayni issued his bayan, addressed, once again, to the "noble people." He informed them that the youth and others were working to maintain security during the festival to ensure peace and dignity for people to celebrate in "brotherhood" and "cheerfulness." The mufti issued this warning when incendiary opposition was spreading throughout the country, and British officials feared it would reach Jerusalem, which it eventually did. However, the bayan was directed less to assuage pilgrims anxious about attending the festival and more to satisfy British concerns that mass recalcitrance would erupt in Jerusalem. His message reassured colonial officials that he and the SMC were working assiduously to dampen any unrest from fomenting at the festival.[234]

The three bayans also shared strikingly similar rhetorical styles. Two referred to the "noble Arab nation" and addressed people with the Islamic designation *umma* instead of the nationalist designations of *watan* or *qawm*, with one referring to the "people of Palestine." None addressed their readers explicitly as Palestinians. Clearly, religious rhetoric remained a potent force shaping national identity. At times, Arab leaders aimed this language directly at pilgrims. At the 1932 festival, Amin Bek al-Tamimi, the SMC representative in Nablus, greeted pilgrims arriving from his hometown before their ceremonial entrance into Jerusalem. While he wished they depart the festival "with the blessing of God," he also implored them "to celebrate in the peace of His glory" and to desist from any disturbances.[235] Tamimi's call for order reflected a familiar elite discourse that conflated Islamic rhetoric with political imperatives to maintain peace.

The elite could also rely on their surrogates in the press to articulate their appeals for nonviolence.[236] Religious tropes were dominant in these messages, which one appeal in *Mirʾat al-Sharq* makes clear. In this pro-opposition paper, an article on the 1922 ceremonies described the ubiquitous British

military presence in the city as inconsistent with the city's great religious heritage.[237] As the writer proudly informed his readers, Jerusalem represented the unity of mankind, where its citizens embraced peace and calm. He rhetorically asked how Muslim and Christian pilgrims intended to draw closer to the creator if they revolted, demonstrated, and killed their brethren. He punctuated his call for nonviolence by quoting a *hadith al-nabawi* (tradition of the Prophet Muhammad passed along orally): "Man is the brother of man, whether he likes or dislikes [him]" (*al-insan akhu al-insan in ahabba am kariha*). He concluded by claiming that the spirit of this hadith derived from the belief that "All men are the children of God."[238]

So fervently had some in the Arab community been inculcated with the need to repudiate violence that the Jaffa newspaper *al-Difaʿ* praised the absence of political slogans. Reporting on the events inaugurating the 1935 celebrations in Nablus, the newspaper published an article with the byline "First Festival Not to Have Shouts for Anyone." Amid the revelry of the celebrations, the correspondent noted a unique development—"a festival dedicated solely to worshipping God" and not to "any group of people." The editors even inserted a brief addendum: "This last sentence [about the absence of political slogans] is the best news to appear" because "we dislike" those who shout and chant slogans that "deceive" (*yaghurru*) and "dupe" (*yakhdaʿu*) the umma.[239]

Another forceful appeal against hostile rhetoric appeared in an article on the page following the mufti's 1937 bayan examined earlier. The article's title captured its pacific tone, "The Prophet Moses Festival, the umma is in Need of Tranquility and Peace." Appearing in *Mir'at al-Sharq*, it enjoined Arabs to uphold a peaceful celebration free from unrest. Under the editorship of Bulus al-Shihada, a Christian, the newspaper had espoused a conservative agenda since its founding in 1919: it supported the opposition, adopted a moderate tone toward the British, and offered only tepid criticism of the Zionist movement.[240] On the eve of the arrival of the Hebron banner to the city, the writer asked, "Are disturbances in the umma's interests?" Drawing heavily on incendiary metaphors, he feared that large crowds in Jerusalem's congested streets could quickly "spark the fire" that could cause a disastrous conflagration. The journal accused those who only wished to bring harm and "calamity" to the "Arab cause" for supporting such actions. While admitting that people confronted legitimate social grievances, such as unemployment and high rents—though curiously not mentioning Jewish immigration and Zionist land purchases—the writer concluded that unrest would only worsen the country's calamitous state. Violence against Jews, he asserted, only "fans the flames" of animosity between people. He reminded readers that Nabi Musa was a national, civic affair made for the enjoyment of all people, not for causing troubles, riots, and bloodshed. Lamenting the possibility that some

pilgrims could turn "days of happiness into days of bloodshed," the writer insisted that "Palestine" needs a peaceful festival "this year," an oblique reference to the unrest engulfing the country. Returning to the incendiary metaphors, he urged that Palestine's historic status as a land of peace could not be transformed into a "furnace of fire," imploring the "Children of Palestine" to maintain calm and order at the festival and protect the country's "reputation, honor and dignity."[241] As the articles in *al-Difaʿ* and *Mirʾat al-Sharq* make clear, Palestine's elite relied on their supporters in the press to maintain a conservative national discourse. By derogating anticolonial and anti-Zionist anthems as unpatriotic and harmful to the nation, they secured their status as Britain's trusted interlocutors.

Other times, British authorities imposed immediate conditions on Palestine's Arab notables to pledge that violence would not erupt at the festival. Many times, these elite echoed colonial language of tolerance and communal harmony to assuage British concerns. Notables from Lydda and Ramla responded to the fear the latter's governor had of pilgrims causing a disturbance at the 1932 Moses festival by assuring him that the people were "most reasonable" and would "respect [others] as equals." The journal *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* retorted that this conciliatory language was evoked to display "tolerance" to the Jews.[242] Before the 1931 festival commenced, the Nablus governor demanded that members of the municipality provide surety of 3,000 jinaya before receiving permission for the city banner to be included in that year's ceremonies.[243]

The mass violence that erupted in 1929 intensified the already cautious attitude the elite displayed toward the British. The political anthems and chants against the British and Jews/Zionists heard at the annual Moses festival grew more acerbic, as we will see in the next chapter. The chants' hostile and bellicose tones so rattled Palestine's elite leaders that it may have dissuaded them from delivering public speeches during the festival. As the Nablus contingent marched into Jerusalem for the 1931 ceremonies, mounted and foot police closely followed the procession. As they passed the building of the AE office, Musa Kazim Husayni and Isʿaf al-Nashashibi greeted them, "though no speeches were given this year," as the correspondent for *Mirʾat al-Sharq* noted curiously. Two of Palestine's most senior Arab political and cultural figures greeting pilgrims at a site that most approximated the Arab community's political headquarters would seem a likely venue to rally the crowds in a show of national unity. Yet, this was not the purpose. As the correspondent described, the procession reached the Haram al-Sharif peacefully.[244]

As these examples of appeals for nonviolence reveal, the festival manifested the dynamics at play between Palestine's elite and the Palestine government, whether these ties existed formally in the case of the mufti or informally in

the case of the press. The British could rely on these voices to circumscribe the potential for social unrest, becoming an added tool in the colonial repertoire of tactics to assert colonial dominance, alongside the military, the police, and the judiciary. Through coercion, the more powerful party (the colonizer) wrested compliance from the weaker party (the colonized) that Rashid Khalidi describes as an "iron cage" from which Palestinians "never succeeded in escaping."[245]

A Modern Nation

Concomitant to the claim of nonviolence was the elite assertion that orderly celebrations elevated the Palestinian nation into the ranks of modern nationhood. Unwittingly, this logic upheld a colonial epistemology that justified the "tutelage" of European powers over non-Western people, as declared in Article 22 in the Covenant of League of Nations, the basis of the Mandate for Palestine. Calls for nonviolence shared these same ethical and normative axioms. As a result, the elite regarded the festival as a contained test case to justify Arab aspirations for self-rule and prove to the British their ability to govern themselves.

The AE's program of events for the 1923 Prophet Moses ceremonies exemplified the claims associated with conducting a peaceful ceremony. The supplement urged pilgrims to demonstrate "unity and love" and avoid incidents that could "mar . . . or disturb public security." The AE insisted that an orderly celebration would prove to the British that the Arab nation could "manage its own affairs."[246] A year earlier, a *Mirʾat al-Sharq* writer insisted that the British government trusted the Arab nation to control order at the festival, knowing that the umma would act only to benefit the country and increase its dignity. Conversely, acts of violence only sullied the lofty reputation Jerusalem enjoyed internationally. For Palestine to reach its potential, the writer instructed pilgrims to avoid unrest. He insisted that Palestine was an intelligent nation (*ummat ʿaqila*), aware that "revolts do not benefit it at all, but complicate its [political] situation, marring its reputation in the civilized world." Dignity, he concluded, demanded that Arabs take command of this "folly" in their own hands.[247]

Consequently, at the outcome of peaceful ceremonies, Arab leaders made sure to take credit for their success. After the 1923 festival concluded, Amin Husayni wrote to Samuel and "thank[ed] Almighty God," congratulating the high commissioner on the orderly nature of the celebrations, which Husayni claimed was "only one of the many proofs" that endorsed the Arab people's aims to "live in tranquillity." Husayni boasted that there was "not one single case of outward intervention in any religious gathering," proving that the

Arabs could maintain order without the assistance of British troops.[248] Both the AE, in a bulletin it published, and *La Palestine* (the French-language version of the Jaffa-based *Filastin* newspaper) credited this absence of violence to the devolution of policing from British to Arab hands.[249] Even as late as 1936, *Mir'at al-Sharq* suggested it was "worth mentioning" that celebrations that year ended without any disturbances.[250]

The elite were also prepared to exploit British fears of the "raising of the religious cry" that could erupt at the festival.[251] Palestine's Arab political leadership exaggerated their abilities to suppress and contain Islamic rhetoric and disorder, thus elevating their own strategic place in Palestine's security apparatus. In May 1920, the Greek Orthodox Fraternal Society in Jerusalem warned the Palestine government that adopting the Balfour Declaration as official policy would lead to further unrest. Only one month after riots had erupted in Jerusalem, and at a time when the status of the Balfour Declaration in the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine had not been officially resolved, the Fraternal Society raised the prospect of further violence.[252] Although the Arab elite rarely threatened the British with violence, which undermined their status as sanctioned leaders, these notables could intimate the threat of impending violence to prise political gains. In a letter AE representative Jamal Husayni drafted to the high commissioner in 1923, he raised the possibility that unrest could erupt at the festival if the British continued with plans to establish a legislative assembly.[253] Amin Husayni related a similar threat to High Commissioner John Chancellor during the height of the violence in 1929, suggesting that the approaching Nabi Musa violence could incite pilgrims to flock to the Western Wall if the Jewish ritual appurtenances were not removed.[254]

Although the elite stratum was the weaker party in its relationship with the British, raising the specter of violence was one tactic it could wield to influence British policy. In the end, the relationship British colonial rule forged with the elite demanded that Arab organizers execute an orderly celebration. The elite were compelled to follow a path of nonviolence despite the growing skepticism with which Arabs viewed the tactics of diplomacy and negotiations.

CONCLUSION

During British rule, the Arab elite identified Nabi Musa as a valuable cultural resource to exploit. Both the Husaynis and the Nashashibis ordered the participants (e.g., Arab Christians, women, Jewish officials, and colonial authorities), processional routes (e.g., passing the offices of the SMC or the AE),

and rhetoric (e.g., praising leaders, condemning violence). The elite regarded the festival as a malleable cultural resource from which they could cull Arab, Islamic, and Western tropes, symbols, rhetoric, and images to forge their discursive messages about Islam, gender relations, national identity, modernity, and colonialism. Their reorganization of the festival's symbols reflected the new historical realities British rule had fostered: the formation of a state of Palestine and Britain's co-option of the urban notables as national representatives committed to a diplomatic style of politics. Amin Husayni and other elite politicians hoped the festival would serve the functionalist goals of civil religion to legitimize their role as national leaders while remaining honorable interlocutors with the British.

Palestine's Arab elite and religious leadership could exploit the festival to direct the Palestinian national movement, but many yearned for more militant, immediate actions to end British occupation and Zionist immigration. These groups comprised Western-educated youth who espoused ideas that challenged an elite understanding of nationalist identity, social hierarchy, and colonial politics. They attempted to reorder the festival's symbols to challenge the elite leadership and its control over the Palestinian national movement, a topic to which I now turn.

5 / NATIONALIST YOUTH ACTIVITY AT THE FESTIVAL TO 1937

How but in custom and in ceremony
Are innocence and beauty born?

W. B. Yeats, "A Prayer for My Daughter"

SIX MONTHS AFTER THE 1920 JERUSALEM VIOLENCE, THE Palestine government tackled the persistent fear that accompanied the assembly of large public gatherings. The 1921 Police Ordinance imposed new restrictions on mass gatherings on public streets, allowing the police to prohibit unauthorized assemblies, direct processional routes, restrict music, ban flags, and prevent unlawful rhetoric, whether in songs, speeches, or political chants.[1] Over the years, authorities added further restrictions to public ceremonies; as Edwin Samuel, High Commissioner Herbert Samuel's son, wrote, after 1920 there was a need for the "management of religious ceremonies."[2] The Palestine government did not pass these laws to monitor the festival's organizers, such as the Supreme Muslim Council (SMC) and the Jerusalem municipality, but to contain and control groups beyond their immediate influence. Groups unfettered from such administrative ties took advantage of large public gatherings to disseminate their messages to a broader public. As a result, the British introduced restrictions on the festival. These restrictions represented a familiar ambition of British colonial rule—to manage Islam, just as colonial officials in other imperial domains governing Muslims managed the Shariah, religious endowments, the ulama, and the madrasas.[3] The British were not passively going to observe the festival, despite the worries of an American tourist in a cowboy hat who watched the 1931 festival near the Jaffa Gate and brusquely asked, "Say, are you Guys going to sit and watch these Mutts all day?"[4]

Although a Palestinian memory imagines the Mandate-era festival as a moment of defiance and unity, this image belies a reality of conflict, contestation, and opposition within the Palestinian Arab body politic. As Michael Sallnow reflects, "When people converge in pilgrimage, meanings collide."[5] Popular images of the festival fail to convey how rituals are "received, negotiated, and

FIGURE 5.1. *Procession with Palestinian flag near the Church of the Gethsemane, likely 1930s (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 16778)*

reinterpreted by those who consume them. In other words, they neglect the problem of 'reception.'"[6] The efforts of non-elite groups to order the festival reveal how the ceremonies were a product of multiple authors and architects, beyond the direction of a single auteur.[7] From the late 1920s to the time of the 1936 Arab Revolt, young nationalist activists, peasants and villagers, Bedouin, women, Sufis, and anti-Zionist communist Jews, in unique ways, each challenged an elite and colonial ritual narrative and proposed an alternate understanding of identity, politics, colonial rule, gender, and Islam.

PALESTINE'S ARAB YOUTH

A generation of young Arab nationalist activists in Palestine began to take shape in the late 1920s, possessing an education grounded in a Western curriculum and eager to secure professional employment in education, medicine, law, journalism, and the like or careers in commerce. They shared with their generational counterparts in other Arab countries an antipathy to European occupation and an embrace of the *Nahda* ideals of pride in the Arabic language and their Arab ethnicity.[8] In French Mandate Syria, educated youth advocated "social and economic justice for the masses [and] Arab unity."[9] In French Mandate Lebanon, "young sociopolitical actors" were active agents in the site of power politics, popular culture, and radical social change.[10] In Iraq, these Arab nationalist ideals manifested in newly published history textbooks youth read, rearing a generation of nationalist activists devoted to Arab independence and anticolonialism.[11] In Egypt, a recently emerged, radicalized *effendi* class propelled the country away from a nationalism tied to the state of Egypt and placed it within a "supra-Egyptian, Arab-Islamic nationalism,"

stressing, as its constituent elements, the Arabic language, Arab culture, and Islamic heritage.[12] By the late 1920s, urban-based, educated youth throughout the region began to challenge colonialism, calling for civil disobedience (e.g., nonpayment of taxes), mass protests, strikes, and militancy.

But, as Charles Anderson observes, the term "youth" is "a plastic and expansive designation" that must be seen as a "social process constructed and shaped by social and institutional factors, much like class, race, and gender."[13] In Palestine, just as in other Arab countries, "the culture of youth politics" was led mainly by male professionals, who mobilized populist discourses, and claimed to support and defend the people and popular demands.[14] Thus, this group was defined more by their class standing and ideological outlook than by generational periodization.[15] Like their peers in other Arab countries, they received a modern education but did not possess the noble lineage of the traditional landed elite (*aʿyan*), and therefore could not take advantage of their Western education to ascend the social ranks.

Arab nationalist youth in Palestine faced similar challenges as those of their cohorts in other Arab countries. As Weldon Matthews finds in his seminal study of this social group in Palestine, the Arab youth faced a "dilemma." They coveted government jobs but abhorred the cultural and political restrictions Britain imposed on them.[16] In response, they founded political organizations such as the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA, Jamʿiyyat al-Shubban al-Muslimin) to highlight their Arab identity. They convened conferences to articulate their political views publicly. In one case, Shaykh ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam, one of the YMMA's founders, formed secret cells training for military action.[17] These "youth-centric organizations" began to multiply, and by 1932 the most formidable party to harness the growing frustration with the elite approach to politics emerged.[18] The Arab Independence Party in Southern Syria (Hizb al-Istiqlal al-ʿArabiyya fi Suriyya al-Janubiyya) represented a Palestinian, pan-Syrian, and pan-Arab political party that made the first credible attempt at mass mobilization in Palestine's expanding public sphere.[19] In Palestine, this included the voices, opinions, and agendas that circulated by way of mass street protests, the press, and the radio.[20]

The ability of Palestine's young nationalist activists to mobilize workers and peasants, rural and urban people, men and women in this emerging public sphere helped sway public opinion toward immediate confrontation with British colonialism and an identity that embraced the larger Arab region. To the chagrin of the elite politicians, youth groups had compelled them into adopting anti-British positions by the mid-1930s. The protests and demonstrations the youth organized, the circulation of their ideas in the press, and the formation of their youth groups and associations, began to sway public opinion in the early 1930s. In an evident tone of frustration,

a Nashashibi-faction supporter described the youth as "disruptive" and "irresponsible."[21] The British were wearier of these youth activists than they were of the elite politicians.[22] They described them as a "dangerous element who hold revolutionary views and are intent on militant activity."[23] The large demonstrations in Jerusalem and Jaffa in October 1933, where twenty-six protestors died, placed even greater pressure on the elite. These two protests demonstrated that support for "sacrifice was far greater than it had been in the past."[24] Six months before young activists declared the national strike, the chief secretary's office candidly acknowledged that the youth had managed to compel the national politicians to adopt a more "extremist policy . . . to satisfy public opinion," a clear admission of the potency of mass politics within the public sphere. The official conceded the inefficacy of the elite's diplomatic style of politics, stating that "all their [Arab elite's] previous efforts in protest, demonstrations, public meetings, etc., have failed to attain their objective."[25] Steven Wagner argues that the mufti attempted to cultivate ties with these youth groups to harness their potential at mass mobilization to pressure the British. He suggests he may have even funded some of them. In the end, though, these youth acted as "their own agents with their own interests, and not pawns of the mufti or the SMC."[26]

In their bid to explore the potential of the public sphere, a younger generation of urban-based nationalist activists quickly discovered the value of public religious events. These gatherings brought together a diverse social composition in a setting that could fuse deeply held religious beliefs with nationalist sentiments. Arab nationalist youth had already attempted to convert the Prophet Muhammad's birthday into a nationalist holiday, inviting Arab Christians to amplify its nationalist dimensions.[27] The Nabi Musa festival became an obvious choice for a similarly nationalist celebration.

Despite lacking direct control over organizing the celebrations, the nationalist youth attempted to subvert the official pageant, tampering with its symbolic matrix just enough to fashion it as a forum for mass mobilization. The festival allowed the youth to subvert British limitations on political activity and transform the inchoate crowds into a "public," in the way Jürgen Habermas proposed.[28] Borrowing a dramaturgical reference, the youth aimed to transform the pilgrims into a "citizen audience" united in the political discourses of anticolonialism and pan-Arab ideals.[29]

NON-ELITE RHETORIC

The young activists projected political rhetoric at the festival, such as nationalist anthems and unauthorized speeches, highlighting anticolonial and

pan-Arab themes. Whereas marginal social groups may attempt to project their political opinions by physically forcing their presence at public events, essentially challenging the elite control of space, they may similarly use chants, slogans, and speeches to challenge elite and colonial control over rhetoric and sound in public spaces.[30] The British, though, considered the chants and slogans as an unwelcome presence in the public sphere. They noted with satisfaction the rare absence of slogans and chants at the festival.[31] British vigilance against vitriolic and vituperative rhetoric at the festival led them to vet the speeches of scheduled speakers.[32] In the months following the 1920 riots, the British passed laws restricting rhetoric and declared it a crime to stir up violence between religious communities.[33] The comprehensive Police Ordinance of 1921 even allowed the government to regulate music played in the streets.[34] By the mid-1920s, the British had issued orders printed in Palestine's three official languages and posted during all annual religious holidays, prohibiting songs or "making use of words or gestures" that had the potential to stir unrest.[35] One member of the ʿAyn Karim and Lifta contingent attending the 1931 celebrations was subjected to these punitive measures, indicted for leading songs that "disturb[ed] the peace."[36] Young activists, though, defied these restrictions even in the presence of Palestine's most senior figures. During the 1932 festival, when the youth of Nablus visited the mufti at the Haram compound, British officers encouraged them to cheer for one Mr. Spicer, the inspector general of the police force. The young people scoffed at this suggestion and began hectoring for an end to the Mandate.[37]

The youth's messages of anticolonialism, Arab nationalism, and militancy reflected how nationalism as an ideology became an increasingly dominant discourse after World War I, though not the dominant one, as I will explore in the next chapter. For these chants to resonate with an increasingly politically conscious audience, the nationalist youth understood that they had to adopt a new range of semiotic references. The traditional folk anthems and slogans pilgrims chanted at the festival were deeply rooted in Arab and rural culture, sung when peasants worked in fields or celebrated weddings.[38] At Nabi Musa, the chants celebrated village identity, Sufi mystics, and biblical prophets. This rhetoric could not be mobilized to confront colonial rule or Zionism, nor to instill an idea of the "nation." As Yair Wallach observed, the 1920 riot demonstrated how the Nabi Musa banners could not serve as symbols to articulate modern Arab political concerns because they were too traditional and religious. Nationalist imagery such as the Arab flag and Prince Faysal's image, not the traditional banners, inspired and incited the crowds.[39] Thus, pilgrims and young nationalist activists crafted a new political discourse to define Arab and Palestinian nationalism.

Khalil al-Sakakini recognized the potential traditional songs possessed to shape new forms of political identity. The songs and anthems he heard at the 1919 Moses festival inspired him to view "festival ceremonies" as the most potent "agent" (*wasita*) to stir emotions and awaken the feelings of the crowds. He hoped they could inspire a "new spirit" and instill a "nationalist feeling." He proposed convening a council of "righteous poets" (*shaʿraʾ al-barr*) to compose new songs "for all the country" that will "pour out of the nation."[40] Sakakini proved prescient. The following year pilgrims demonstrated their creativity to infuse modern political messages into traditional music heard at the festival. To the chagrin of ardent Zionist Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, Hebron's pilgrims injected the words "Long live King Faysal" and "Down with any nation that helps the Jews" into the Western musical melodies a British military band played as it led pilgrims in the procession.[41] Pilgrims also substituted a traditional chant praising the caliph ʿAli for one hailing Prince Faysal and the Arab army.[42]

By the late 1920s, a younger generation of nationalist activists incorporated modern political ideals into traditional rhetoric. As Ela Greenberg has found, the hymns the students at the Islamic school Rawdat al-Maʿarif sang as they hiked through the country now included the cultural tropes of patriotism (*wataniyya*), Arabism, and Islamic identities.[43] These same themes resonated in chants heard at the festival by the late 1920s. The semiotic range of these ideals is best understood as "key symbols," as Sherry Ortner calls them, symbols that a society highlights as culturally resonant. Since anything can be a symbol and serve as a "vehicle for cultural meaning," it is essential to distinguish the way symbols operate in society and cultures. Within key symbols are "elaborating symbols," which fulfill two purposes. One purpose is to order how a society conceptually understands its social and cultural experience. The second serves as a "mechanism for successful social action." The value of these symbols lies not in their inherent sacredness (e.g., flag or cross) but in instructing societies how to conceptualize their experiences and how to formulate actionable goals to achieve them.[44] The many references in the chants contrasting a glorious Arab past to the contemporary subjugation of colonial occupation, combined with calls for militant resistance, were the key symbols of the elaborating type Ortner outlines.[45]

The first feature of the chants as elaborating symbols is how they conceptualized an Arab past and culture. Subject to colonial occupation, deprived of sovereignty, and bereft of independent political institutions, Arab youth adopted the German approach to nationalism, in which cultural markers (e.g., language, history, and ethnicity) rather than political institutions (e.g., parliaments and constitutions) served as the constitutive elements of their identity.[46] They echoed the common *Nahda* themes of a revival of Arab cul-

ture and language. Rather than assume that the youth revived a primordial, preexisting Arab identity, they engaged in a "psychological process" culling "cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, [and] discursive frames" to shape an Arab "groupness."[47] The chants at Nabi Musa made repeated references to "dignified Arabs," "our esteemed glory," "the Arab glory," and "our nobility." Arab pride is personified as lions (*usud, sabʿ*). One chant heralded the unique linguistic features of the Arabic language, such as the letter *dad*, and praised legendary Arab figures such as Ghassan and ʿAdnan.[48] Another rhetorically bemoaned a fallen civilization:

> O, Arabic language, remember us, [as you] lament what has passed
> How have we forgotten you so completely? [You] are the soul of life[49]

Many young people gravitated to this Arab cultural identity because they believed it could unite Arabs against colonialism throughout the region. One chant hailed an Arab identity that stretched from the Maghrib to the Arabian Peninsula: "The Arab land[s] are my nations" that extends from al-Sham to Boghdan (*li-Bughdan*) and from Najd to Yemen, and Egypt to Tétuan.[50] In some of these sites Arabs were fighting for their independence, such as "Najd," or resisting colonial occupation (i.e., the revolts in "al-Sham" and "Tétuan").[51] More simply, Palestinian scholar Subhi Ghusha recalled Scouts declaring at the Prophet Moses ceremonies he attended before 1948, "We are Arab Scouts!"[52] The frequent references to Arab tropes in these chants suggest the youth imagined a nation bounded and limited to the larger region, not just the state of Palestine.[53]

One writer proposed how Nabi Musa could reflect this broader Arab identity. During the 1931 ceremonies, ʿAli Nasuh published an article in *Filastin* questioning why the SMC limited the festivities to Palestinians.[54] He encouraged them to allow pilgrims arriving from other Arab countries to participate formally by raising their flags and marching alongside their "Arab Palestinian brothers." He proudly proclaimed that the festival was not only for "the people of these lands [Palestine], but it is truly a festival for the participation of all Muslims . . . and for Arabs, in general." He insisted that the inclusion of all Arabs produced a patriotic (*qawmi*) spirit and "strengthen[ed] the bond" (*yashiddu ʿasabiyata-ha*) of Arab countries.[55] Here, the author strategically preferred to associate the Arab identity he envisioned with the term *qawmi*, which related to a broader cultural embrace of the Arab region, rather than the more contemporary term *watani*, which many readers understood to refer to a state-based nationalism.[56] He also drew upon the term *ʿasabiya* to adumbrate these shared bonds, a word understood as engendering a corporate identity, such as ethnicity, and stressed common ancestry or collective

acceptance of a religion.[57] In modern nationalist argot, *ʿasabiya* and *qawmi* stood as ideological contrasts to *wataniya*. For ʿAli Nasuh and other young activists, culture, language, and ethnicity formed the sinews of Arab identity—not citizenship in separate states.[58]

The purview of these chants embracing the Arab region appears poignantly in the many references to "Greater Syria" (Bilad al-Sham, Suriyya). Before the formal adoption of the Mandate (September 1923), Arab Palestinians hoped Palestine would become independent or incorporated into "Greater Syria," encompassing the post–World War I states of Syria, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon.[59] One banner at the 1920 festival bore the slogan "Palestine is part of Syria" (*Filastin juzʾ min Suriyyaʾ*).[60] The inability of the elite politicians to confront the Jewish National Home project and undo colonial rule likely led the youth to continue to stoke their national embrace of the larger Arab region. Salim Tamari contends, "Palestine was, and continues to be, part of a much larger social and political formation" tied to "affinities it continues to have with major currents in the Arab East." Its uniqueness, he finds, is Palestine's forced separation from the larger Arab context after World War I.[61]

Some of these chants arose during the Great Syrian Revolt (1925–1927) against French rule, suggesting how the key symbols of Arab identity and resistance at the festival intersected with contemporary political events. During the fighting, pilgrims at Nabi Musa interspersed their chants denouncing Zionism with cries hailing a Syrian revolt leader: "Long live Sultan Atrash, the Druze hero!" and expressed solidarity with Syria, calling out, "Long live united Syria!"[62] Youth lauded Syria for its dignity and promised to defend it with "passion." They pledged to revive the glory that lays in the grave (*rams*), swearing, "All will sacrifice for you, o my nation!" (*fa-ʿl-kull fadaki ya watani*).[63] A decade after the arrival of the British, the youth upheld Syria as the ideal Arab nation at the 1927 festival, chanting, "glorified and powerful in the past," the "cradle [of civilization]." Or, as one chant pithily stated, "Syria, you are my country (*biladi*)."[64] But which country? Is it French-Mandate Syria? Is it the historic Bilad al-Sham that Arab nationalists hoped to revive?

Although historians debate the existence of a Palestinian identity with an understanding of a distinct geographic designation before World War I, the chants these urban, educated youth promoted in the late 1920s and early 1930s emphasized an identity beyond Palestine so heavily that, at times, they subverted the Palestinian dimension of their nationalism.[65] The chants mentioned above addressed "Arab people," "Arab youth" (*shabban al-balad*), and Arabs, generally, and used terms like "country" (*bilad*) and "nation" (*watan, umma*).[66] They enumerated specific Arab states, especially Syria, but "Palestine" or "Palestinians" was far from ubiquitous.[67] Although unity with Syria may appear as a strategic tactic Palestinians pursued in the ephemeral

period of Faysal's rule in Damascus (1918–1920), the frequent references to Syria the nationalist youth of the late 1920s and 1930s promoted at Nabi Musa belie the claim that Palestinians "hastened to forget Syria" after Faysal's ouster.[68]

The chants also reflected the nationalist youth's commitment to a nonsectarian Arab identity. They hailed, "No border separates us and no religion divides us."[69] At the 1930 festival, Christian and Muslim marchers recalled the clashes of the previous year, declaring, "I swear by the life of Palestine!" (*bi-hiyat Filastin*).[70] As the Ramla youth entered Jerusalem that same year, they extolled this unity, shouting: "Christians and Muslims, rose and joined one another/Palestine, don't you see? Within you there are men of war!"[71] The following year, Christian and Muslim participants shouted in unison "*al-Buraq lana*" ("The *Buraq* Wall is ours"), "*al-Haram lana*" ("The [Noble] Sanctuary is ours"), and "*Filastin lana*" ("Palestine is ours").[72]

Although it is tempting to assign fixed categories to this burgeoning identity ("pan-Arab," "Palestinian"), it is more helpful to follow those works that appreciate the existence of overlapping identities, composed of region (Arab), state (Palestine), village, and religion (Islam).[73] The nationalist youth were active participants in competition with the elite politicians to define identity, as national identity rested on contested ideological terrain during the Mandate era.[74] As we will see in the following chapter, rural people, too, made their own claims to this identity.

The second dimension of the key symbols in these slogans was their "action-elaborating power" to formulate a strategy to achieve a vision of society.[75] One chant appealed to the "Arab nation" to prepare for war and to "demand" not a Palestinian state but an "Arab state."[76] During the final stages of the Great Syrian Revolt, one spectator of the 1927 festival gazed upon the pilgrims and compared them to warriors going into battle. Their chants resembled a "call to arms" to storm the battlefield, as their traditional banners resembled flags of war. Their rebellious spirit, the writer declared, inspired them to "unsheathe" their "sharp swords" and bid farewell to their homes, as he praised their willingness to sacrifice to revive Syria's glory.[77]

Another feature of how these chants inspired people to act drew heavily upon the metaphor of sleep to rouse Arabs from their present stupor of subjugation and humiliation. The motif of sleep echoed larger *Nahda* themes that aspired to revive an Arab glory.[78] Chants called on Arabs to "wake up/rise up" (*habba*) or "revive" (*ahya*) their past and used various forms of the root *h-y-y* (e.g., life, to live) to motivate resistance. In the style of the Socratic method, these chants posed probing questions to encourage people to think critically about their reality. They asked, "Do you know who you are, O Arabs?," informing them that their past has been forgotten and they with it. One

reminded the Arab nation that it had possessed a glorious past but, in a crestfallen tone, wondered, "Why then today do you accept the life of an animal? Oh! Woe the Arab nation."[79] As a student, the Palestinian historian Mahmud ʿAbidi recalled hearing one chant asking whether the sons of Syria, Egypt, and Iraq had forgotten their past? One professed guilt for allowing Arabs to have languished in the nation's cause (*sabil al-watan*).[80] Another expressed indignation for allowing Palestine to have sunken to despair, with a memory of the nation burning in one's heart.[81] Both ʿAbidi and Abu Gharbiyya—the Palestinian veteran of the 1936 revolt and the 1948 war—relate a slightly different iteration of a chant that personified a glorious Arab past as a lion. It posed the familiar question of how long Arabs have been asleep, allowing this passivity to continue? The chant prodded Arabs to awaken from this dormant state, accept a "dignified death," if necessary, and walk again as lions.[82]

In contrast to the pacific tones the elite politicians used, many chants made explicit calls for Arabs to take up militant and violent attacks against the British and the Yishuv. Scouts vowed to sacrifice their souls to redeem the life of the nation, asking if there is anything greater than the life one sacrifices for "the souls of the nations." Another made the bold declaration, "Attack our fierce enemy with fire!" and "Colour the land with blood!" calling on pilgrims "to make the sword [your] authority."[83] One chant heard on the eve of the 1936 Revolt condemned Britain for their perfidy in deceiving Arabs: "We will be free. The Jews are taking our land. England promised us liberty and will not keep the promise. Let our Grand Mufti know that we are strong and fear nobody!"[84] Another began by crying, "Woe to my nation from the invasion of the enemies" and identified this despair as having begun—with a tone of sarcasm—"since the beginning of the 'peace,'" an oblique reference to the optimism Arabs harbored in the years immediately after the Great War. The chant continued with the cynical claim, "They [the enemies] feigned smiles and showed unity until they got what they wanted and [then] poured (*saqqu*) on her [the nation] division." Youth pledged to resist this betrayal by declaring, "I heard her [the nation] crying, my chest is ablaze! Hurry our children to gain our independence! Hurry to battle to lift the occupation!" The final stanza left little doubt of what it would take to achieve these goals, in language the elite abjured: "Obtain independence with harsh cutting," a metaphorical illusion to the act of wielding a sword.[85]

Local Jewish-owned and Hebrew newspapers reported on these slogans with alarm. *Filastin* cited the coverage in *Haaretz* of chants heard at the 1930 festival. The Hebrew-language journal reported how these chants resembled more a "demonstration" than a pilgrimage. The writer feared these belligerent slogans could reignite the clashes that erupted in Hebron a year earlier, with chants that included taunts, such as, "Zionists, you've lost and we've won," "All

the land is ours," and other "excited words."[86] The slogans certainly captured the growing Arab vitriol against Zionism and the mounting anxieties they associated with Zionism, a point the commission studying the 1929 riots asserted.[87] The following year, a headline in the *Palestine Bulletin* declared, "We want to Kill Our Enemies: Cries in the Nebi Moussa [*sic*] Procession."[88] The Jaffa newspaper *Filastin* enthusiastically reported this bold headline proving that the festival's bellicose nature unnerved the Jewish community. The two papers related similar accounts of how villagers from ʿAyn Karim, Lifta, and Maliha approached the Old City locked arm-in-arm singing "patriotic songs," marching through the Jaffa Gate, a route passing the Jewish Quarter. One youth mounted on the shoulders of his comrade hectored the pilgrims:

> We will either live free or die free
> The promise of Balfour knows not God
> Attack the Zionists
> Come! We want to kill our enemies . . . and no one will oppose us![89]

Palestine's Arab leadership no doubt bristled at these bellicose chants and their calls for Palestinians to take up arms, especially when they were framed in Islamic terms. Commingling religious and militant rhetoric made it more difficult for the elite politicians to maintain order and prevent violence, a goal British colonialism expected them to uphold. In various chants, youth pledged to serve "the army of God."[90] Another called on pilgrims to "Raise the banners and march to holy war (*li-l-jihad*)."[91] One heard at the 1932 festival associated Amin al-Husayni with militant resistance, though it was unlikely he endorsed its message: "Zionists, take your chattel and leave this country—this country is ours," concluding, "Hajj Amin, don't worry. We are drinkers of blood!"[92] Before the British severed their relationship with the mufti in 1937, he had never uttered the passionately charged word *jihad*, nor did he associate with activists who called for violence.[93] He never proclaimed jihad until public pressure in the revolt compelled him to endorse it.[94]

Nevertheless, as calls for independence and noncooperation amplified in Palestine's public sphere, the British leaned even more heavily on the elite's loyalty to quell the demands of the young nationalist activists.[95] As High Commissioner Wauchope (1931–1937) pithily expressed in 1932, "it is of great advantage that I work with the Mufti."[96] Amin was anxious to hold him to that claim, or, as Yehoshua Porath bluntly portrays it, as "buying off Amin."[97] Failing crop yields and collapsing agricultural prices drove the SMC into bankruptcy. In the spring, Wauchope agreed to advance the SMC funds to meet this shortfall in January 1933. The funds arrived at a time when Amin avoided any association with the newly formed Istiqlal Party. The following

year, the high commissioner and the mufti reached a second agreement, whereby the SMC received £P 7,000 a year and were granted a £P 43,690 lump-sum payment. In spring 1933, Amin reciprocated Wauchope's generosity by repudiating calls for noncooperation and providing only tepid support for demonstrations in early 1934 the youth had organized.[98] In addition, his supporters publicly expressed their loyalty to him. Two Khan Yunis residents published a telegram on the first day of the 1935 Nabi Musa festival that chastised the mufti's critics, pledging fealty to him and hailing him as a national leader waging holy war, a misrepresentation that went unchallenged. The two signatories announced that they placed their trust in him, declaring the "nation will not die, [as long as] you are its leader." In a paternalistic tone, they reproached the mufti's critics, demanding, "subdue your anger!"[99] This public defense of the mufti misread the public mood. The festival proved to be a far more accurate barometer of public opinion. A year later, peasants launched an armed rebellion, the ultimate rejection of the mufti's cautious style of politics.

UNAUTHORIZED RHETORIC

Aside from crowds crying anticolonial chants, young activists brazenly delivered unauthorized political speeches. The expanded political presence of nationalist youth in "urban space where they could mobilize mass opposition to imperial rule" was met with a commensurate increase of British intelligence-gathering about them.[100] Many of the orators the British arrested at the festival were teachers who served in nationalist organizations. The British blamed teachers, generally, for spreading radical "national propaganda" among the youth.[101] Although the British attempted to promote a traditional education grounded in religion to deter youth from political activity, Arab teachers provided their students an education grounded in Arab history, culture, and Islam that shaped their identity.[102] Shaykh Qassam taught his students at al-Burj Islamic School in Haifa about Saladin's victorious battle over the Crusaders at Hittin in 1187, drawing parallels with the need to liberate Palestine from its contemporary European occupation.[103] Istiqlal founders and activists Muhammad ʿIzzat Darwaza and his protégé Akram Zuʿaytar instilled an Arab nationalist consciousness at Nablus's al-Najah school where they taught.[104] Darwaza was the senior figure in this relationship. Born in 1888, he had been active in Arab nationalist causes since the waning days of Ottoman rule. Though he belonged to an older generation of activists supporting Arab nationalism, his experience and leadership shaped the "culture of youth politics" in Mandate Palestine during the late 1920s.[105] One British intelligence officer identified his colleague Zuʿaytar's presence at al-Najah as "the seat of political propa-

ganda of an extreme character, and hostility towards Government, European rule, and Christians in general," the latter a disingenuous accusation given Zuʿaytar's emphasis on fostering a nonsectarian, anticolonialist movement.[106]

By the late 1920s, these educators quickly began to appear as agitators at the festival. As the Nablus pilgrims began slowly entering Jerusalem during the 1930 festivities, Jerusalem teacher ʿUmar Salih al-Barghuthi addressed the crowds with political oratory that the newspaper *Haaretz* critically noted included a reference to "complete independence."[107] A few days later, when the Hebron pilgrims arrived in Jerusalem, police summoned Sayyid Rashad ʿAbd al-Hali, a professor at the Madrasa li-Islah (Reform College), for making nationalist declarations. That same day, news arrived from Nablus that the authorities had also arrested Zuʿaytar.[108] The police accused him of delivering an "inflammatory speech" on the first Thursday (April 10) of the weeklong ceremonies.[109] When the police apprehended the twenty-one-year-old in Nablus and prepared to transport him to Jerusalem, his supporters greeted him with a chorus of applause, clamoring for his release. One reassured him, "This is the first step, O Akram!" During his detention, Zuʿaytar met others whom the British imprisoned for giving speeches or leading unauthorized processions.[110] Members of his town's YMMA branch who attended the court proceedings would have been inspired to hear the transcript of his unlawful peroration that was read aloud: "They say that one day our country will be foreign! Certainly not! By God, it will not be foreign as long as the Arab world is one. The country will be Arab in defiance of those who create obstacles!"[111] Although it may seem odd that Nablus youth appealed to the Arab Executive Committee (AE) to assist in releasing their colleague, these young activists remained tethered to the political influence of elite politicians. Only after Shaykh Qassam's funeral did the youth publicly excoriate the notables for adhering to a doomed policy of negotiations and diplomacy.[112] Despite AE assurances that they were treating this issue with great importance, Zuʿaytar's speech, which included references to the unity of the Arab world and pledges to defy European occupation, represented demands that were well beyond its political bailiwick.[113]

The following year, the police apprehended young activists arriving from Jaffa and Ramla for delivering inflammatory speeches as the pilgrims proceeded out of the Haram at the 1931 festival.[114] These youth represented the new centers of political activity beyond the reach of the traditional leadership. The residents of these coastal towns, among them migratory workers, tradespeople, professionals, small-scale entrepreneurs, and intellectuals, increasingly projected a "radical mood."[115] When the Jaffa newspaper *Filastin* learned of their arrest, the editors sarcastically apologized for their "offences," asking why speakers were detained at national festivals when the celebrations

always ended peacefully.[116] These arrests and the constant monitoring of rhetoric at the festival demonstrate Britain's increasing awareness of the festival as a public forum used to influence national politics toward an anticolonial and Arab nationalist trajectory.

YOUTH AND SCOUTING GROUPS

Many of these educated youth also formed sports clubs, youth associations, and Scout troops (*kashshaf*) to expound their political messages.[117] These groups proliferated throughout Palestine, just as they did in other Arab countries.[118] Eager to chart their vision for Palestine, Arab youth founded troops independent of the British-controlled Palestine Boy Scouts Association (PBSA) to voice their nationalist and anticolonial sentiments.[119]

While ostensibly the British hoped scouting would promote the Edwardian goals of health, fitness, and comradeship, in reality, their motives were more prosaic.[120] The British sought to transform colonized youth into loyal subjects but were forced to acknowledge that the Scouts had emerged as the locus of anticolonialism throughout their empire.[121] In Palestine, scouting became an additional activity separating Arab Muslims and Christians from Jews.[122] Arab youth wanted to transform their troops into nationalist associations, dissociated from the PBSA, an initiative Shaykh Qassam and the members of the YMMA led.[123] As one Arab teacher explained, "the English Scouts . . . is foreign to us, colonialist in spirit, and English in its slogan and flag."[124] Many of the troop leaders were teachers themselves, providing more opportunities to instill students with nationalist ideals.[125] Nationalist Scout troops soon appeared in Jaffa and nominated King Ghazi I of Iraq as their leader.[126] The British acknowledged by 1938 that "the [scouting] movement has become almost entirely political" and that the Baden Powell Group, the original scouting organization, "has been discredited."[127] By the end of the Mandate, the authors of the *Survey of Palestine* agreed with this dim assessment.[128]

The British grew anxious witnessing scouting groups participate more regularly in Nabi Musa. One British official enumerated with telegraphic brevity the themes members of these groups chanted at the 1934 Nabi Musa festival in support of "sacrifice, war, swords, revenge . . . condemn the mandate, colonization, enemies, foreign rule, etc."[129] Colonial officials noted many Scouts well over twenty years of age carrying staves and daggers at Nabi Musa.[130] One 1933 Palestine Police report on Arab Scouts identified two troubling developments associated with their attendance at that year's Moses ceremonies. The first was the ability of the YMMA to organize youth in Lifta and other villages to participate in the festival, and the second was the larger num-

FIGURE 5.2. *Boy Scouts leading the processions outside the Bab al-Asbat (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 16783)*

ber of Boy Scouts and YMMA members at the ceremonies singing "national songs of an extreme character." The author lamented how youth groups were deviating from scouting's original objectives toward more "political purposes," an outcome that was well advanced by this point.[131]

The mufti Amin Husayni encouraged the Scouts' participation at the annual Moses festival, believing their presence would complement his objectives. While it had been customary for Scouts of the Islamic Orphanage and the Rawdat al-Maʿarif school to participate in the processions, by the late 1920s, a time marking increasing stress on the mufti's political authority, the SMC invited Scouts from parts of the country that had not traditionally been represented at the ceremonies. The mufti and the SMC hoped that the youth's energetic and animated presence would confirm Amin as Palestine's chief national and Islamic authority and signify the popular support he enjoyed throughout the country.

The increased importance of the Scouts manifested in the prominent position they began to assume in the processional order. They usually appeared at the apex of the parade, behind the long train of Sufis and pilgrims. At times they arrived close behind the military escort the British provided to the town banner-bearers, surrounded by their city's youth and villagers, chanting nationalist songs. Their arrival in the penultimate position in the processions just before the appearance of the mufti and the banner-bearers signaled their ascendant political status in Palestine.

At the processions inaugurating the 1932 ceremonies, for example, the Scouts of al-Marhum Mawlana Muhammad ʿAli (Our Lord the Deceased

Muhammad Ali) and the youth of Jerusalem and the Islamic Orphanage musical band ushered the arrival of the sacred banners, joined by the Jaffa Scouts of Dar al-ʿUlum al-Islamiyya (School of Islamic Sciences) and al-Islamiyya al-Mutaja (Islamic Rovers), the Ramla YMMA Scouts, and the Scouts of the Rawdat al-Maʿarif school.[132] In the ceremonies marking the conclusion of that year's festivities, the Hebron Scouts named in honor of Saladin (Kashshaf Salah al-Din al-ʿAyyubi al-Khaliliyya) led their townspeople in a boisterous parade, chanting national anthems and clamoring for the freedom and liberation of their country.[133]

The processions out of the Old City marking the 1934 ceremonies included an expanded field of troops, including members of Young Men's Cultural Charity Society (Jamʿiyyat al-Shubban al-Khair al-Adabiyya) from the village of Bait Hanina, and the Nablus Scouts of the Modern Athletic Club (al-Nadi al-Riyada al-Hadith), preceded by the Scouts of King Ghazi I of Iraq (Ghazi al-Awwal) from the village of Silwan.[134] The following year, marking the unfurling of the Prophet Moses banner at the Husayni home al-Dar al-Kabira (the Great House), youth and scouting groups representing nontraditional centers, such as the Scouts of the Islamic School in Haifa, were assembled alongside their compatriots from Jerusalem, shouting praises in honor of the mufti. At the closing ceremonies that year, the correspondent for *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* proudly boasted that 375 individuals officially participated in the procession out of the Haram al-Sharif.[135] That year, the procession comprised troops representing towns from throughout the country, including the Scouts of the Arabic Schools of Haifa (al-Madaris al-ʿArabiyya), the "Holy Struggle/War" of al-Birah (al-Jihad), ʿAli b. Abi Talib of Dayr Yassin, al-Buraq of Bayt Hanina, al-Ma'mun (the sobriquet of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, r. 813–833) of ʿAyn Karim, the Union of Islamic Fighters of Haifa (ʿAsaba al-Mujahidin), Abi ʿUbayda al-Jarrah (d. 639) of Tul Karam, and the Troop of the al-Najah School (Fawj al-Najah) of Nablus.[136] These scouting and youth groups also assumed an increasingly prominent presence in local ceremonies inaugurating the annual celebrations. The Scouts of Khalid b. al-Walid retrieved the Nablus banner before pilgrims embarked on their way to Jerusalem.[137] In Hebron, the youth of the Athletic Cultural Club (al-Nadi al-Riyada al-Adabi) led pilgrims in national chants gathered in the Abraham Mosque (Haram Ibrahim) to begin the celebrations.[138]

From a functionalist perspective, the youth and Scout troops served as a metonym symbolizing a unified Palestinian nation, under Husayni leadership, united in its struggle against the British and the Zionists. Like Scouts in Algeria, they exhibited a "muscular Islam."[139] Their presence, marching together, cemented the bonds of an "imagined community," unifying Arabs

from Palestine's coastal regions to its hilly terrains, comprising peasants and townsfolk alike, committed to anticolonialism and an Arab-Islamic identity. One photo, likely taken in the mid-1930s, captured these themes. It showed the mufti Amin Husayni and dozens of members of the ulama standing on the steps in front of the Dome of the Rock with Scout troops, all donning Arab headdress, standing proudly in front, bearing scout banners, religious flags, and the Arab flag, before departing to the shrine. The photo depicted the representatives of Palestine's Islamic culture and nationalist youth as one unified group—a message the mufti had long desired to project at the festival.[140]

This image of national unity, though, exposed the dissonance in the debate about identity and politics. Rather than inscribe the image of national unity, the youth groups and Scout troops exposed conflict and contestation. The semiotic range of names they used to designate their groups exemplified this dissonance. Despite lacking political power to influence the country's direction, they possessed the agency to craft their ideals through the nomenclature they assigned to their troops that honored Arab and Islamic historical figures and contemporary state leaders. As the editor of *al-Difaʿ* observed, these names suggested that "the younger generation has grown weary of the old-fashioned ways of the leadership. Therefore, they are searching for ways to arouse national feelings."[141]

The youth named their Scout troops in honor of heroic figures from Islam's past whom they revered for their close association to the Prophet Muhammad, especially in battle. They recalled ʿUmar al-Faruq, the sobriquet for ʿUmar b. al-Khattab, the second caliph (r. 634–644), and Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law ʿAli b. Abi Talib (d. 661), the fourth caliph. They animated their admiration for early Muslim warriors by naming their troops in honor of Khalid b. al-Walid al-Mughira Makhzumi and Abi ʿUbayda al-Jarrah.[142] Young people named a troop after the famed Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 813–33). And the Hebron Scouts made a powerful claim for their support for an Islamic resistance by recognizing Saladin, Jerusalem's Muslim conqueror. Contemporary figures also personified the "culture of youth politics."[143] Silwan's Scouts named their troop in honor of King Ghazi I of Iraq, the first Arab ruler of a mandated territory to gain independence.[144] The militant spirit in these names continued to resonate into the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt, as fighters adopted similar names for their rebel bands.[145]

For a Muslim and Arab youth constantly counseled to mollify their anger toward the British and the Zionists, these historical figures more accurately reflected the verisimilitude of their political goals. The historical figures after whom the youth named their troops exemplified their call for sacrifice and resistance needed to confront the contemporary threats of colonialism and Zionism.

Beyond these historical and contemporary figures, the Scout troops adopted sobriquets espousing an Islamic-based resistance and militancy. Youth in al-Birah invoked the quranic term *jihad* to designate their group's name, just as Haifa's youth adopted the designation ʿAsbat al-Mujahidin (Union of Islamic Fighters). Bait Hanina's youth assumed the name al-Buraq, the sacred site Muslims sought to defend in 1929. These names are a barometer measuring how the youth perceived the world around them as beset with threats from foreigners that demanded a militant, not a diplomatic, course of action.

The semiotic range of these names also championed Islamic institutions, such as charities, that served the needs of more impoverished populations. These groups included the Islamic Rovers (al-Islamiyya al-Mutaja)[146] and the Young Men's Cultural Charity Society (Jamʿiyyat al-Shubban al-Khair al-Adabiyya). Through their charitable work, the youth shone a spotlight on the failure of the Palestine Government and the national leadership in addressing the plight of the country's swelling numbers of landless peasants and urban poor. As part of a growing mass movement eager to shape public opinion, these young people deftly exploited the potential of the festival to address these populist ideals, as youth in other Arab countries pursued.[147] As Lauren Banko argues, although Palestine's nationalist youth appealed to the rural population to forge a horizontal, nonsectarian, nationalist coalition, they failed to engage actively and include them in an urban-based nationalist movement.[148]

The younger generation of nationalist activists also established groups highlighting their connection to modern schools, sports clubs, and Islamic-led professional organizations. Their membership in these groups affirmed their Arab and Islamic identity in an era when social advancement relied on possessing a Western and secular education. As Salim Tamari describes in his assessment of the diary of Sami ʿAmr, a young man from Hebron living in the waning days of the Mandate period, he and other educated youth confronted a "dilemma": how they could embrace modernity and ideals of advancement and progress when the Mandate Authority was itself an "instrument of this modernity."[149] Participating in Nabi Musa allowed the youth to publicly affirm their commitment to traditional Islamic identity and modernist ideals. The Scouts of the Arabic Schools and the School of Islamic Sciences from Haifa marched in the processions alongside those from Rawdat al-Maʿarif and al-Najah. Notwithstanding their religious appellations, these schools provided students with a modern education grounded in a Western curriculum. These youth displayed the compatibility of Islam and modern education, just as Algerian Scouts exhibited how "national and religious consciousness were intertwined."[150] Furthermore, membership in the YMMA Scouts and the Mod-

ern Athletic Club similarly signaled their generation's understanding of Arab culture as receptive to modern pursuits, as sports became a site for nationalist activities aimed directly at young men.[151]

The annual festival also allowed scouting organizations to foster links with other Arab Scouts beyond Palestine. H. P. Rice, the inspector general of the Palestine Police, observed with some consternation the presence at the 1933 Moses festivities of Iraqi Scouts, who sang about "the combat of colonization and the West, restoration of Arab glory, the force of arms, the attainment of absolute independence."[152] For Rice, their participation was symptomatic of the broader anti-British mood that had permeated the country.[153]

As mentioned earlier, the British met the youth's expanding political activity with an increase in monitoring their growing public presence. The byline in *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* incredulously asked, "Is this true?" questioning if the British had indeed intended to close the Ramla chapter of the YMMA because many of its members participated in the 1930 Nabi Musa pageant. The writer added that it had long been a "dream" of the police to close its offices.[154] A year earlier, the British had taken more concrete legal actions. They initiated legislation to place all Boy Scouts under "effective control" to check "hostile and subversive propaganda and confine the movement to its proper objective." In 1933 they drafted but did not enact the Juvenile Societies Ordinance to control the scouting movement.[155] That year, the Palestine Government did pass the Scouts (Wearing of Uniform in Public) Ordinance, which permitted only Scouts to don any kind of emblems or badges.[156] Measures restricting the participation, rhetoric, and livery of Scouts in public settings represented novel responses to the unique threat the public sphere in Palestine began to wage. Following Wallach's assessment of British attempts to restrict the festival's banners, Scouts represented a new form of "insurgency," unsettling the "urban order," that required greater regulation and scrutiny.[157]

The Arab elite, too, took steps to manage the influence the youth and scout movements could cast in the public arena. The overwhelming public response to the death of Shaykh al-Qassam in November 1935 captured the popular hostility toward elite politicians for their failure to stop the Jewish National Home project. The funeral and the memorial the youth organized—which many of the elite politicians, including the mufti, did not attend—attracted tens of thousands of Palestinians. Mourners heard speeches condemning British colonialism, extolling Qassam's example of martyrdom, and excoriating the elite politicians for their misguided trust in diplomacy and negotiations.[158] Besieged by an ascendant youth movement, the example of Qassam's sacrifice, and a resurgent opposition, the Husaynis launched the Palestine Arab Party. The party sponsored its own youth wing under the name Futuwwa, a term designating youth and various Islamic organizations, such

as Sufi brotherhoods and guilds.[159] In January 1936, the Palestine Arab Party organized a meeting at the Rawdat al-Maʿarif school, attended by more than seventy people, to establish the Futuwwa.[160] The oath that Jamal al-Husayni scripted for the members betrays a palpable awareness of the militant spirit and Arab culture energizing the youth: "Liberty is my right—independence my hope—my language Arabic—Palestine is mine alone. This I attest, and God is my witness to my loyalty."[161]

Of course, the Arab sponsors of Futuwwa had hedged their bets. They proposed an oath that allowed them to court a younger generation advocating an Arab identity and a radical political agenda without endangering their ties with the British.[162] The oath stressed the themes of an Arab identity (i.e., "my language Arabic") and Islam (i.e., "This I attest to God"); yet, the youth pledged to gain independence, but did not demand it ("independence *my hope*" [italics added]). Its neutral tone contrasted with the acerbic language the youth regularly used to denounce colonialism. Moreover, the oath restricted loyalty to the state of Palestine, not to the larger Arab region around which a younger generation's national and cultural identity orbited. Despite politically offering less than what most youth had yearned for, the SMC exploited its close contacts to this group to invite its members to participate in the 1936 Nabi Musa celebrations, where it marked its first public appearance.[163] The following year—the last celebrations that Amin would lead—a Husayni-dominated group, the National Committee of Jerusalem, undertook diligent efforts to enroll large numbers of scouting and youth groups to march in the festival. As one British official observed, the Husaynis wanted to have "an imposing parade of supporters for the mufti."[164]

POPULAR HEROES

The full spectrum of the political and cultural views of the non-elite population, including youth, peasants, urban workers, and townspeople, is revealed in the personalities they honored at the festival. As Peter Burke contends, a culture's "heroes, villains and fools . . . reveal the standards of that culture by surpassing them, threatening them and falling short of them respectively."[165] Through dint of popular will, the pilgrims, independent of the elites, embraced certain protagonists who espoused the themes of an Arab and Islamic-inspired defense of and resistance to European aggressors. Aside from naming some of their Scout troops in honor of these figures, the youth reserved great admiration for three protagonists in particular: Mustafa Kemal, Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, and ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam. Despite the limited number of times pilgrims called out these names at the festival, the periodic evocations

of their names attest to the depth of support for confrontation with the British and Zionists and an identity encompassing the larger Arab region. Examining whom the youth and non-elite pilgrims chose to valorize, celebrate, and commemorate exposes a critical process by which modern nationalism is defined.[166]

Mustafa Kemal

Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish general who led the resistance against European occupation (1918–1922), was one of the earliest figures to attain iconic status in Palestine. After World War I, many Arabs maintained an Ottoman identity.[167] Solidarity with the Turkish resistance was ubiquitous in Palestine's Arab community. Arabs raised the Turkish flag and honored Turkish forces and Kemal at political demonstrations and religious celebrations.[168] In the political environment of British-ruled Palestine, where political organization was limited, rhetoric monitored, and leadership predetermined by the colonial government, symbols became a surreptitious tool to circumvent all these restrictions.[169] Although by the week of the 1922 Moses festival (7–14 April) conditions had improved for the Turks and a diplomatic resolution to the conflict neared, the *Times* of London cautiously reported that "it was interesting to note" that only one reference was heard in honor of Mustafa Kemal. The loudest cry, however, was, "God prosper Palestine and the Arabs!"[170] The public embrace of Kemal as a Muslim leader who had successfully resisted European occupation continued after the tumultuous events of the early 1920s, with his name sporadically evoked throughout Mandate-period ceremonies. *Filastin* reported during the 1929 festival that pilgrims did not chant in praise of al-Hajj Amin, as was traditionally done, but shouted, "Long live Mustafa Kamal Pasha!" Others petitioned God to "grant the King of the Wahhabis Ibn Saʿud victory!"[171] Thus, pilgrims extolled leaders who succeeded in achieving their country's independence against European occupation, such as Mustafa Kemal, or ruled without European sponsorship, such as Ibn Saʿud.[172]

Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi

Beyond naming Scout troops in honor of Saladin, pilgrims eulogized this historic figure to conceptualize their contemporary conflict with colonialism and Zionism. As Yael Zerubavel argues, collective memories of historical figures and events, such as Saladin and the Moses festival, can "transform historical events into *political myths* that function as a lens through which group members perceive the present and prepare for the future."[173] Shaykh Qassam and young activists organized commemorations of Saladin's victorious battle

in 1187 against the Crusaders at Hittin in northern Palestine. Large crowds heard speakers compare Saladin's fight against the Crusaders with the contemporary struggle against the British and Zionists.[174] These public events compelled even a politically conservative—if not feckless—organization like the SMC to invoke Saladin. In 1933 its main journal published an editorial with the headline, "We Want Another Battle of Hittin!"[175] SMC-appointed speaker Sayyid Hilmi al-Muhtassab recalled to Hebron's pilgrims attending the 1932 festival the apocryphal account of how Saladin had founded the Moses festival to defend Jerusalem.[176] On the eve of the Arab Revolt, SMC official Amin Tamimi "paid a tribute to the spirit of Saladin" as the Nablus contingent entered Jerusalem.[177] The journal *al-Quds* printed an image of Saladin in its reporting on the 1935 celebrations, reiterating how this warrior had founded the "Palestinian festival" (*al-mawsim al-filastiniyya*) to defend Jerusalem from Christian invasion.[178]

However, elite politicians and their supporters in the press did not evoke a memory of Saladin to inspire a mass campaign against colonialism and Zionism. Their value as social leaders lay in their ability to contain, not marshal, violence. As a result, Saladin enjoyed a more enthusiastic embrace among the Palestinian public than he did among the Arab notables. During the 1930 celebrations, as pilgrims from Hebron and southern Palestine marched out of Jerusalem, participants extolled Saladin.[179] And when Hilmi al-Muhtassab had lectured the Hebron pilgrims on the "lofty goal" (*al-ghard al-ʿazim*) Saladin had envisioned for this festival, a group of Christian residents attending the ceremonies enthusiastically cheered. They made it clear that they, too, identified with the widespread adulation of this heroic figure. These Palestinian Christians had framed a memory of Saladin in nonsectarian terms. To them and other Arabs, Saladin and events like the Battle of Hittin represented less a Christian-Muslim conflict and more a struggle between "East" and "West."[180] Proud of their fellow Hebronites' mutual embrace of Saladin, a bevy of Muslim pilgrims approached their Christian neighbors, loudly chanting, "Long live our Christian brothers!"[181]

Saladin defied communal boundaries because nationalism is adept at extracting religious memories, myths, and beliefs to create a modern, civil identity.[182] Tamir Sorek adds that commemorations that followed a calendar, such as an anniversary of a martyr's death, the Battle of Hittin, or the Nabi Musa festival, helped unify Muslims and Christians in a distinct Palestinian collective identity during the Mandate period.[183] Yet, as stated, the Arab elite organizers of the ceremonies remained cautious of embracing the symbolic potency of Saladin. Although *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* interpreted the anthems pilgrims chanted in praise of Saladin as confirming the "national spirit of the

country," the newspaper's politically conservative sponsor, the SMC, was reluctant to endorse Saladin's bellicose reputation.[184] It evoked his name only cautiously during public speeches at the festival, and the SMC refrained from exploiting his image to mount a political campaign to defend the Buraq wall.[185] While Saladin's legacy may have inspired defiance and sacrifice for some, including a nonsectarian identity, the stirring words Hilmi Muhtassab delivered at the 1932 festival were followed with pleas to "preserve unity and protect the country"—a Mandate-era shibboleth to avoid conflict.[186] Thus, the image of Saladin was a conflicted one in the Palestinian nationalist discourse, contested between elite politicians cautious about stoking his reputation as a Muslim warrior and a Palestinian public eager to emulate him in their battle against foreign occupation.

Shaykh ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam

The popular appeal of Shaykh Qassam testifies to how strongly the currents of militancy rippled throughout the country, especially among a younger generation of nationalist activists. Qassam was a Syrian-born Islamic cleric who preached to the country's urban and rural poor from a mosque in Haifa. His bellicose rhetoric against the British and Jewish immigration defied the more cautious approach the SMC and al-Hajj Amin endorsed. Although the military campaign he launched in November 1935 led to his death, his actions proved incendiary. The "network of associates" he had cultivated for a decade, such as youth, workers, and peasants, inspired a population frustrated with a political process based on meetings, negotiations, official protests, and white papers. The following spring, members of a militant band named in his honor, Qassam Brothers (Ikhwan al-Qassam), resumed attacks, igniting the countrywide Great Revolt (*al-Thawra al-Kubra*) that would last three years.[187]

When the 1936 Prophet Moses ceremonies commenced in early April only days before Qassam's comrades launched their attacks, his memory still animated an Arab public. As the Hebron pilgrims reached Jerusalem on April 5, they honored Qassam with the epithet "martyr" (*shahid*) and championed his fallen companions. As the procession continued, the pilgrims inveighed against a colonial program that had severed them from other Arabs by clamoring, "Long live the men of Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Arab unity!" [188] Once the revolt erupted, villagers accompanying the Nablus contingent at the 1937 festival sang heroic ballads in honor of the battles that rebels fought and their new leader, Fawzi al-Qawuqji.[189]

By recalling historical personalities such as Salah al-Din or extolling contemporary figures such as Mustafa Kemal and Qassam, the pilgrims and

young nationalist activists enumerated their distinctive register of political concerns and cultural underpinnings, favoring militancy and resistance above diplomacy and negotiations.

CONCLUSION

In British-ruled Palestine, Arab history, Islamic culture, and Arab identity rested on contested terrain. The Arab elite leaders attempted to promote a hegemonic notion of identity and limit it to the state of Palestine, as they led a diplomatic approach to reverse British policy favoring Zionism. The mufti in particular believed that the Prophet Moses festival could serve the functionalist goals to induce group loyalty and solidarity under his leadership. However, the young nationalists, deprived of formal opportunities to engage in the colonial-controlled political arena, articulated a different vision of identity and politics. They delivered this message directly to the Arab public by utilizing the tactics of mass politics at the Nabi Musa festival, chanting slogans, and giving speeches articulating their Arab national identity and support for militant resistance. The names they designated their youth organizations reflected these ideals. Their rhetoric appealed to "Arabs," "Syria," "al-Sham," and "Palestine." And they valorized historical and contemporary figures that personified an Arab identity and resistance against colonialism, such as Saladin and Qassam.

The youth were not the only social stratum to expose the multivalent nature of identity and politics at Nabi Musa. As the following chapter explores, not only was the nature of Palestinian identity contested, but nationalism as the primary mode of identity was itself also challenged. Loyalties to the village, tribe, and family remained vibrant after World War I. The festival was an opportunity for many pilgrims to partake in religious practices that superseded its political aims. Failing to discover the nonnational dimensions of the festival disregards the polysemic valences of rituals where different social groups contest hegemonic messages to express their unique visions of identity, politics, and religious practices.

6 / NONNATIONAL INFLECTIONS: THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-ELITE GROUPS

Huppa society is built on rules you are supposed to follow every day. We do these rituals, prayers, and ceremonial dance and we are of good mind and good body. In our prayers we say, "Immortal Spirit, now we are doing that which you have left us to do."

Mervin George Sr., Community Curator, 2000,
National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC

SINCE THE COLLAPSE OF PALESTINE IN 1948 AND THE subsequent exodus of more than 700,000 Arabs, Palestinians have searched for historical artifacts and remnants from their past to give meaning to a national identity that only tenuously remains connected to its ancestral homeland.[1] Key figures such as the Mufti Amin al-Husayni and pivotal events such as the 1936–1939 Great Revolt have shaped a nationalist memory imbued with an ethos of resistance and unity. The Nabi Musa festival conveniently conforms to this nationalist script. The festival fused folk culture with a nationalist spirit, bringing together rural and urban people in great numbers collectively to defy British colonialism and Zionism. This approach upholds the festival as a "model *for* reality," reflecting how Palestine's elite political leaders envisioned the festival as a paradigm to define the nation and social hierarchy.[2]

Rituals, though, are "polyvalent devotional space; space that mean[s] multiple things to varied groups of devotees."[3] Non-elite groups are overlooked as possessing any political agency or ability to influence its order because it is assumed, as the audience, that they merely "appropriate the performance with a great deal of attention and involvement."[4] At Nabi Musa, non-elite groups such as villagers, workers, Bedouin, and women mounted creative and at times undramatic challenges to the official messages British and nationalist leaders promoted. In the words of Beshara Doumani, these challenges represent "the historically 'silent' majority" who have been absent from a "living portrait of the Palestinian people."[5] These non-elite inverted the "models *for* reality" rubric the elite had configured to construct instead "models *of* reality."[6] This framework reflected how Arabs experienced and understood

the world they inhabited after World War I: a colonial state with the authority to implement Zionism's settler-colonial project; a rural economy tied to global capitalist markets that denuded peasant landholdings; and a nationalist movement anemic in confronting these challenges. The ways non-elite groups engaged with these realities emerged through their participation in the annual Moses festival. Peasants and villagers exposed the vibrancy of local and nonnational sources of identities that thrived in rural and tribal communities during an era of the nation-state and modern nationalism. The surreptitious participation of anti-Zionist communist Jews on the margins of the festival, proposing nonsectarian, class-based solidarity among Arabs and Jews, further challenged the nationalist framework the elite projected at the festival. Moreover, the participation of women and Sufis reflected their devotion to the festival primarily as a site of religious worship. In the end, not only did global capitalism, colonialism, and nationalism fail to fray or dilute rural and tribal people's attachment to local identities, social networks, and religious practices, but these historical trajectories may have even helped to sustain them.

ANTI-ZIONIST COMMUNIST JEWS

Since Zionist immigration to Palestine in the early 1880s, the largely Eastern European Jewish immigrants harbored a socialist orientation, albeit one restricted to the Jewish community. After World War I, Jewish procommunist groups began to espouse an anti-Zionist agenda that aspired to include all of Palestine's workers and peasants, regardless of religion.[7] In 1924 they formed the Palestine Communist Party (PCP), which the Soviet Union recognized as the official Comintern Section in Palestine.[8] The PCP sought to mobilize the support of the Arab population against both the Zionists and the British. They denounced Zionism as a reactionary and colonialist movement and condemned Arab leaders for cooperating with the British.[9] Although the Soviet leadership by World War II eventually reconciled its ideological differences with Zionism, an earlier period represented a time of overt anti-Zionism.[10]

Anxious to disseminate their messages to an Arab peasantry and urban workforce, communist activists intermingled with the crowds at Nabi Musa in Jerusalem. The intercommunal violence that erupted during the 1929 Western Wall/al-Buraq riots spurred the party's goal of "Arabization" of its members, prompting them to become involved in the festival the following year. As one of this group's resolutions in 1930 declared, it was at mass celebrations such as the Moses festival that "the fighting capacity of the fellahin [peasants] is appreciably aroused."[11] Pamphlets they distributed condemned Arab elite

landowners, rejected British imperial rule, and demanded a binational state led by Jewish and Arab workers and peasants. Undoubtedly, Zionism was not a monolithic ideology but was understood differently by various actors.[12]

Despite its anticolonial and anti-Zionist tone, communist rhetoric rattled Palestine's nationalist leaders and their supporters in the press. The class-based, nonsectarian, and Marxist worldview of Jewish communists stood in ideological contradistinction to the ethnonational and capitalist ethos the Arab elite and their supporters in the press espoused. The elite bristled at communist rhetoric that targeted a population they professed to represent, even though the rural poor had witnessed their traditional social structures (e.g., land tenure systems and patron-client relations) unravel. In the virulent and acerbic responses Arab leaders and their supporters lodged against communists, they shaped a nationalist discourse that edified its Arab and Islamic features. Their responses functioned as a "relational paradigm," in which Arabs and Jews "shaped one another in complex ways and at many levels."[13]

An example of this dynamic between anti-Zionist communist rhetoric and Arab elite responses appeared in the coverage a *Filastin* correspondent provided of the 1930 festival—likely the first appearance of the anti-Zionist communists at the celebrations. He noticed the heavy military presence in Jerusalem, such as soldiers and armored cars equipped with machine guns. He accused both Zionists and communists as the only groups intent on disrupting order. The red-colored pamphlets they distributed only confirmed to him their seditious intentions. Although he assured his readers that "no one noticed" them, their provocative slogans were intended to rouse Arab anger at the British: "The unjust English colonization will fall—revive the rule of the workers and peasants!" and "The land is for those who cultivate it with their blood and the sweat of their brow, so down with it [English rule]! Begin the rule of Arabs and Jews!"[14] Although most Arabs shared an antipathy to colonialism and suffered economic hardships, many found it challenging to embrace a group made up mainly of Jews, who were "hardly distinguishable in Arabs eyes from the rest of the Jewish community."[15]

The Arab nationalist leaders and their proxies in the press deflected communist criticism by proffering a narrative that blamed Zionism as the sole cause of peasant indebtedness, landlessness, and poverty. This narrative obscured other factors responsible for peasant distress, such as the elite's ownership of large tracts of land, the collection of onerous loan payments, the sale of property to Jewish groups, and the expulsion of peasants from traditional landholdings.[16] Anti-Zionist communist Jews exposed the contradiction of the elite as wealthy landowners nominally representing an increasingly destitute rural population. Exposing this contradiction rattled Palestine's notables.

The task of responding to the anti-Zionist communists fell to the press.[17] They not only rejected the communist platform but disavowed leftist causes in general, such as campaigns for workers' rights and unions.[18] The *Filastin* correspondent quoted earlier derided communist activity, reassuring his audience that "their ruse comes to nothing."[19] Of course, an elite nationalist discourse could offer little else beyond this offhand rejection. The elite families and the journals they patronized could never match the acerbic tones anti-Zionist communists used to denounce the British.

Journalists covering the festivities in Jerusalem were vigilant of communist activities, portraying them as the "Judeo-communist" enemy.[20] They accused them of distributing their "spies" to disturb the peace.[21] At the 1932 festival, one blamed communists for causing disorder, suggesting they "marred the reputation of this calm peaceful country" and tarnished its "lavish and dignified" character. They denounced the pamphlets communists distributed to pilgrims for spreading "wickedness throughout the country" and tarnishing Palestine's esteemed reputation, which it had enjoyed throughout history. He vowed that only the mercy of God and the dignity of the "noble Arab people" allowed them to resist this "deceit."[22] Another writer branded communism as a foreign ideology to the "Holy Land," condemning the Polish and Russian Jews who introduced these ideas and the Arab "slaves" (*ghulam*) who supported them.[23]

The alacrity with which the Arab elite demonstrated their disdain for communists even extended to remaining silent when the police detained their Arab supporters in the days and weeks before the celebrations opened.[24] The image of Arab and Jewish communists enduring these arrests jointly, however, failed to inspire a class-based, Arab-Jewish opposition to Zionism and British colonialism. Nationalism along an Arab ethnic trajectory remained the prevailing discourse, as the general strike and revolt would later prove. Attempts to unite Arabs and Jews against British colonialism were greeted with an intensification of what Jonathan Gribetz describes as the mutual understanding of a Christian-Muslim religious civilization.[25] Judaism served as a counterpoint to a joint Palestinian Arab national identity that united Arab Muslims and Christians on "religious/textual grounds."[26] Thus, the *Filastin* writer referred to Palestine as the "Holy Land," accentuating its shared religious heritage to a Muslim and Christian audience. While a fledgling Palestinian nationalism already possessed these qualities, communist rhetoric only served to intensify it. The *Filastin* correspondent covering the 1930 festival concluded his article not by condemning the British, as the anti-Zionist communists had, but by declaring his appreciation for the men who maintained security during the celebration.[27]

Undoubtedly, communist rhetoric demonstrated how sensitive the Arab elite and their supporters in the press were to any criticism of the nation-state paradigm. Their criticism undermined the unified, horizontal solidarity the elite projected of Arabs—Muslims and Christians, rural and urban—united against Zionism. Yet, Palestinian society was splintered along an urban/rural axis.

Palestine's rural population comprised semisedentary Bedouin, a sedentary population, landowners, tenants, and relative newcomers, and those who had settled the land for generations.[28] On the eve of the Nakba, villages averaged seven hundred to eight hundred people, with larger ones nearing three thousand to five thousand residents.[29] In 1931, rural Arabs (Muslims and Christians) constituted more than two-thirds of Palestine's Arab population.[30] They practiced land-tenure systems that bound extended families and their rural communities together.[31] The extended family was the "heart of rural society," as the village was the "most important unit in the fellah's life," whose functions encompassed the social, economic, and in the broadest sense, the political dynamics of the peasant's life.[32]

While the press and a Palestinian nationalist narrative edified peasants, assigning them the vital role as "a metonym for the Palestinian attachment to the land," this narrative subverted any discussion broaching the class realities that divided Palestinians.[33] Palestine's rural population was vulnerable to the deleterious effects of market capitalism and the commodification of rural agriculture, a process that began in the nineteenth century. After World War I, land sales to Jewish buyers and indebtedness to urban moneylenders abraded peasant life in the countryside even further.[34] By 1930, 30.7 percent of the rural population had no land at all but worked on the land of others; another one-third of peasants worked partly on self-owned plots of less than five dunams (approx. 4,500m^2), insufficient to maintain their sustenance. The year a mostly rural population launched an insurrection, 0.21 percent of the population owned 27.4 percent of the land, and a fifth of Palestinians had been made landless.[35] Some peasants sought work in the burgeoning towns and citrus orchards along Palestine's coast, living in hastily erected shantytowns. As Rachelle Taqqu suggests, though, their labor migration did not necessarily lead to proletarianization, since the village remained a source of "sociocultural strength."[36] Charles Anderson adds that before 1936 Palestinian peasants adopted a political consciousness and agency that he terms "communal autonomism." Rural people, as well as urban workers and migrant laborers, acted in a "defensive impulse" not only to resist colonialism and Zionist encroachment

but also to preserve their patrimony over their rural communities and lifestyle, laying the ground for the peasant-led Great Revolt (1936–1939).[37]

Although Palestine's Arab elite crafted the image of a cohesive singular nation, class differentiation (peasant/Bedouin/notable/professional), social environment (rural/urban/tribal) and topography (coast/plains/hills/desert) continued to cleave Arab society. These persistent identities prompted Palestine's Arab political leaders and their supporters in the press to highlight and affirm the validity of a national movement at a time when Zionists and Europeans doubted its verisimilitude, an attitude that persists.[38] Western and Zionist critics accused Palestinian nationalism of being an invention of the urban effendi.[39] This provocative slur shattered the image of "deep horizontal comradeship" that bound Palestinians together as a nation.[40] British observers raised similar critiques.[41] One rural notable, Shaykh Abu Ghush, even published a series of open letters after the 1920 riots denouncing opponents of British rule as the purveyors of effendi interests who manipulated peasants for their objectives.[42] Although the editors of *Bayt al-Maqdis* condemned these claims, critics could easily summon the charge of effendi nationalism to discredit Palestinian nationalism.[43]

In the bid to repudiate doubts of Palestinian nationalism, those in the press, particularly the SMC-sponsored journal *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, turned to the Nabi Musa festival as an aesthetic manifestation of national unity. The festival became "a means of performing the way things ought to be in conscious tensions to the way things are."[44] Writers asked readers to engage in a mystical exercise of looking beyond the visible differences of rural and urban pilgrims and parsing the nation's (*umma*) "consciousness" (*al-shuʿur*). Correspondents drew upon similar language, repeatedly referring to a "true" and "thriving" "national spirit" and a "national feeling" that confirmed "we are a living/thriving umma." They routinely pointed to the anthems pilgrims chanted to attest to the depth of this national spirit within people's hearts.[45] Indeed, the sensorial act of collective singing instills the idea of a shared identity among large crowds.[46] One writer proudly enumerated the towns and villages that attended the 1934 festival. He informed his readers that their distinct characteristics only added to the procession's "charm and splendor." The inclusion of more than twelve national Scout troops, raising their banners and the four-square-shaped Arab flag, became a further semiotic reification of this solidarity.

Similarly, a *Filastin* correspondent urged his readers to look past the differences of urban and rural pilgrims and acknowledge the "national feeling" pervading the "popular festival." He dismissed Zionist claims of Palestine's national movement as merely espousing effendi interests, citing the Shaw Commission's report that marveled at the peasants' political consciousness.[47]

The increasing numbers of urban residents marching alongside peasants confirmed to him the authenticity of the "Palestinian national movement" (*al-haraka al-qawmiyya al-Filstaniyya*).[48]

Notwithstanding the press's enthusiastic depiction of the festival as a site of national solidarity or the disparaging portrayals of Palestinian nationalism as simply a ploy of the urban elite, national identity was a contested and complex ideology, in possession of no one social group. Even historical events that enjoyed a vibrant nationalist reputation still conveyed divisions. Ted Swedenburg finds that the memories peasants had of the Arab Revolt exposed the "cracks in this constructed mnemonic edifice of national unity."[49] Doumani adds that social biographies and family histories of Palestinians reveal a more complex depiction of daily life and identity than nationalist narratives tend to portray.[50] Even in large towns like Nablus, pilgrims returned from the Moses festival in a public ceremony that emphasized civic, not national, pride.[51] In addition, there are questions of how widely the Arab flag served as a semiotic reification of Palestinian nationalism. While Khalil al-Sakakini's daughter Hala remembered seeing the Arab flag fluttering throughout the crowds, its appearance in photos is largely obscured in the refulgent sea of village, town, and Sufic banners during the festival, a visible testimony of the potency of local identity in the Mandate era.[52]

While the nationalism that coalesced in Palestine after World War I may not have been an effendi invention, neither did it always mirror the elite impression of unquestionable national harmony. Broaching the question of nationalism in Palestine during the period of British rule needs to extend beyond asking, "What different versions of nationalism existed?" and "Which versions of nationalism competed for primacy?" (e.g., Palestinian state–based or Arab regional). We should be cautious in predicating our inquiry on the assumption that Arabs debated only conflicting versions of nationalism, as typified in Rashid Khalidi's assertion, "The only question, in Palestine and elsewhere, [after World War I] was not whether nationalism would supplant other forms of loyalty, but rather which specific form of nationalism would do so."[53] Instead, we must also ask, "To what extent was nationalism itself even upheld?" As Khalidi further adds, Palestinians possessed multilayered identities.[54] These overlapping identities allowed attachments to kin, faction, village, region, Islam, Arab national, and Arab ethnic loyalty (*qawmi*). Of all of these, Musa Budeiri claims, "*watani* [nationalist] feeling was probably the weakest."[55]

The symbolic actions peasants and Bedouin took at the festival reveal how their local identities endured after World War I. At the festival, rural and tribal people challenged which version of nationalism existed—pan-Arab or Palestinian—and even contested the centrality of nationalism itself as

the locus of all identity. Arab peasants and Bedouin undoubtedly shared the same concerns about Jewish immigration and British colonialism as nationalist politicians, journalists, and young national activists. They identified with a shared Arab, Palestinian, and Islamic culture. They also recognized the existence of a distinct geographic region called Filastin (Palestine) even before Britain had demarcated these borders. But the elite national leaders and the Palestine government were incapable of confronting the tripartite challenges of market capitalism, Zionism, and colonialism in a meaningful way. The elite politicians had "neither the unity nor the strength to shield villagers from the transformation of Palestine."[56] As a result, rural and tribal social networks and identities remained buoyant throughout the Mandate era. The attachment to these local identities and social structures periodically eddied into the Nabi Musa festivities in what was supposed to be a wash of nationalist imagery and meaning.

PROTESTS OF NONPARTICIPATION

The most powerful tactic rural and tribal people possessed to challenge the elite-led ceremonies was their ability to undermine the roles elite organizers had assigned them. After the mid-nineteenth century, the elite's control over the Jerusalem municipality allowed it to order space to serve its political interests, a process Henri Lefebvre refers to as "representations of space."[57] The festival organizers had designated villagers and tribes with the role either as spectators or as actors representing "popular" Islam. They marched along specific routes to acknowledge the authority of religious and political leaders. While the youth challenged the elite through rhetoric, villagers and Bedouin employed a different tactic—defying their designated roles. Inverting Lefebvre's dictum, Don Mitchell argues how marginalized groups can reorder public space, which he terms "spaces *for* representation." Marginalized groups "stake out the space that allows them to be seen" and represent themselves to a larger population.[58] Earlier anthropological studies on performances dismissed these challenges as episodes that failed to achieve the ultimate blessings of rituals—social unity.[59] However, the new spaces of resistance that non-elite groups forged allowed them to challenge the dominant discourses of power.[60]

Pilgrims from the village of Baytuniyya exemplified these attempts at reordering ritual space.[61] On the Monday of the 1931 festival week, Baytuniyya residents and those from the surrounding villages set out to Jerusalem to march with their banners unfurled as their own contingent (*mawkib*), ready to join other pilgrims in the grand ceremonial parade into the Old City. Brit-

ish officials responded by designating Baytuniyya's request an "innovation"[62] on the traditional festival, as if the British had "authoritative knowledge about the traditions of the festival."[63] After Jerusalem governor Edward Keith-Roach rejected the SMC petition to reverse this decision, he informed the police that under "no circumstances" should Baytuniyya's villagers be allowed to unfurl their banner.[64] The spirit of containing "innovation" must have been in the air, for Keith-Roach also met the leaders (*mukhtar*) of the village of ʿAyn Karim, similarly informing them that authorities would not "tolerate" their village banner to be raised on the Jaffa Road.[65] In a conciliatory gesture, the police allowed villagers to begin their ceremonial entrance into Jerusalem at the opposite end of the YMCA on Princess Mary's Avenue, just outside the Old City, and some distance from the main procession.[66]

However, the Baytuniyya and ʿAyn Karim villagers did not regard their participation as novel. Their actions resembled those of other protesters who challenged their exclusion from official space by demanding they be included in the main procession on their terms.[67] The two villages likely had attended past celebrations as part of the Jerusalem contingent that traditionally entered Jerusalem on Monday of the festival week.[68] Their decision to organize in their own contingent represented the changes rural societies were experiencing. As Salim Tamari and Rana Barkat explain, the boundaries between village and city were eroding, as residents of the villages surrounding Jerusalem (Lifta, ʿAyn Karim, al-Malha, and Dayr Yassin) became workers in the city and were "folded" into Jerusalem's population.[69] While villagers may have been more exposed to an urban economy, rural identities persisted. Modifying village participation in the festival by entering as a separate contingent testified to these enduring ties.

Their expanded presence, though, conflicted with the British vision of governing Palestine. As colonial rulers, they monitored the public domain, including texts such as banners.[70] Concomitantly, they regarded "uncontrolled text as a menace," as Yair Wallach argues, believing that it spurred unrest between religious and ethnic groups. During the Mandate period, political banners assumed an amplified public presence, hung from buildings, and carried in street protests, with messages denouncing the British and Zionists. The British associated political flags with stirring violence, most notoriously the appearance of the Arab flag during the 1920 Nabi Musa riots.[71]

Subsequently, they passed ordinances that restricted the unauthorized display of flags, written slogans, and "notices written on cloth" on the roads during the Moses festival.[72] As Wallach insightfully observes, the British had "fetishized" the appearance of the Nabi Musa banners, speaking of them in police reports as animated objects, noting not the arrival and departure of the pilgrims but instead on the arrival of their flags.[73]

This concern over vetting unwanted or unauthorized texts demanded the British maintain their ceremonial inspection of banners. The famed "Pasha of Jerusalem," Edward Keith-Roach, boasted of his role inspecting the sacred banners at the Gate of the Chain, surrounded by hundreds of pilgrims. Although his position may have appeared as a "secular priest blessing the proceedings," the inspections were far from a perfunctory duty performed to appease a native audience.[74] Their value lay in the ability to restrict unwelcome symbolic and textual messages. After inspecting each banner, Keith-Roach "bade" each bearer "to receive it and to bear it with honor and in peace"—a discrete instruction best understood as a type of perlocutionary force—from Jerusalem's most potent figure against allowing these objects to become sources of incitement.[75]

Villagers and tribal people, however, interpreted ritual images (banners) and performances (marching as a separate contingent) differently. To them, not all the festival's symbols possessed nationalist significance or latent political meaning. Banners were proud emblems identifying a village, town, and tribal contingent. Jerusalem's neighborhoods, youth (*al-shabab*), and prominent families each possessed their own.[76] They raised these at Nabi Musa, as well as at other religious celebrations, alongside Sufi banners.[77] In contrast to British claims, there is no reason to assume the ʿAyn Karim and Baytuniyya villagers raised their banners to fulfill patriotic sentiments or pursue a political agenda. The following year, the ʿAyn Karim contingent confirmed how local, rather than national, motives animated their decisions.

In 1932, the residents of ʿAyn Karim revived their attempts to march as a separate contingent. Once again, colonial authorities blocked them. Undeterred, villagers encouraged one of their own, lawyer Shaykh Ismaʿil al-Khatib, to seek a dispensation. He telegraphed the high commissioner, arguing that the government's denial infringed on their rights to worship and conduct their "established custom."[78] The previous year, the governor could depend on the village leaders to enforce any prohibition against raising new banners. These leaders were charged with upholding government policy in their village.[79] Rural people, however, grew increasingly distrustful of them, turning to those with a professional education to voice their concerns.[80]

Emboldened by their demands, early Monday morning on April 25, 1932, more than four hundred residents of ʿAyn Karim congregated as one mawkib, determined to embark on their march to Jerusalem. They were met, however, by eighty Arab and English police officers. Shaykh Ismaʿil, who had struck such a defiant tone only a few days earlier, intervened and entreated his fellow villagers to disband. He pledged to challenge the governor's order, but until then he advised them to disperse.[81]

His pleas, though, went unheeded. The villagers, especially the youth, were unwilling to participate in any form other than as official representatives of their village. In the tumult that followed, some youth attempted to break through the police barricade, injuring villagers and police. Jerusalem's police chief apprehended the demonstrators and issued criminal charges. In the tradition that typified the relationship between the colonizer and a member of the native professional class, Shaykh Ismaʿil invited the police chief to his home to settle the affair over coffee. Adhering to the pretense of imperial decorum, the chief assured his host that he would forget this incident, hold no grudges, and continue to respect the villagers; nonetheless, he arrested eighty of them and set bail at £P 50, a hefty sum that Shaykh Ismaʿil promptly paid.[82]

Shaykh Ismaʿil later invited Jerusalem's deputy governor to lunch to fully assuage any mistrust, even extending this invitation to the police under his command. ʿAyn Karim's spokesman was untroubled that a European country prevented his fellow Muslim villagers from exercising their desired religious practices. Rather, he prepared a meal in the "traditional Arabic way" and encouraged some villagers to attend the luncheon, bringing the two groups together, in the words of *Filastin*, on the "most friendly and sincere terms." Dutifully, Shaykh Ismaʿil also surrendered the village banner, promising that it would not appear at that year's festival. However, village youth clashed again with the police and lobbed a volley of stones, leading to the arrest of seven more of them.[83]

On the surface, the ʿAyn Karim dispute exhibited the familiar forces at play between a colonial ruler and a recalcitrant colonized population. Concerned with the festival's growing politicization, the British imposed new restrictions. They could even rely upon a member of an ascending professional class to execute this unpopular decision.[84]

While a Palestinian nationalist narrative could hail this confrontation as anticolonial resistance, it fails to conform to a nationalist script upon closer examination. The episode exemplifies the vibrancy of nonnational, local sources of identity. The ʿAyn Karim villagers vowed to participate as a separate mawkib—rather than as part of a larger national procession. In the assessment of the *New York Times*, they were "forced" to disperse into small groups throughout Jerusalem.[85] The British denied them permission to march as a separate mawkib because village banners appeared as anticolonial signifiers. The competition to establish the political order in Palestine was waged over this prosaic battle—the public appearance of pieces of cloth. As V. N. Voloshinov observes: "The struggle between different discourses, different definitions, and meanings within ideology is . . . a struggle within signification: a

struggle for the possession of the sign which extends to the most mundane areas of everyday life."[86]

The British had failed to appreciate that not all political actions were inherently anticolonial or nationalist. Although Yehoshua Porath disagrees with the thesis that villagers possessed a political consciousness in the 1920s, the proliferating press and collective reading practices helped to instill this awareness.[87] Unable to acknowledge the existence of a Palestinian national entity and formation of a political consciousness, British authorities regarded it as paradoxical that peasants could be politically active for nonnational reasons. As Lauren Banko demonstrates, villagers invoked citizen-based civil rights for local concerns, such as petitioning the government to establish agricultural banks, agricultural schools, and secondary schools for boys and girls and to reduce tithes and taxes.[88] Villagers confronted the historical forces of market capitalism, Zionism, and colonialism through the filter of their experience as rural people. These forces not only threatened their aspirations to establish national sovereignty, but it also burdened them with financial hardship and a tenuous hold on the land. Even the 1936 revolt—the apotheosis of rural resistance in the Palestinian national narrative—evoked family and clan (*hamula*) signifiers, not solely nationalist ones.[89]

Because the nationalist movement proved anemic in its attempts to address or resolve rural grievances, villagers maintained an identity that encompassed the local as much as the national, as their actions at the closing ceremonies captured. On Wednesday, April 27, pilgrims and village contingents began returning from the shrine, entering the Old City with as much pomp as when they departed. To many, this procession represented the apex of Palestinian nationalism during the Mandate era. The ʿAyn Karim villagers, however, abstained from participating. Although they had suffered injury, incarceration, and fines as they struggled to be officially included in the opening ceremonies, they immediately returned to their homes, bypassing the grand processions in Jerusalem. As the *Filastin* correspondent remarked, the villagers resented that they were not permitted "to go out with their banner and their [own] parade."[90] While they could still have joined other pilgrims in one national congregation, they instead chose to exercise a more familiar sentiment: to identify as villagers.

By choosing to remain absent, ʿAyn Karim's villagers forfeited their designated role as an audience validating the messages of the ritual's main actors. If Arab political and religious leaders had transformed ritual space and participation into a nationalist exercise, then nonparticipation and abstention manifested the opposite message, the assertion of traditional, nonnational loyalties. The villagers understood the messages the elite organizers projected at the festival relied on their presence. As a character in Fatima Mernissi's mem-

oir *Dreams of Trespass* observes, "To speak while others are listening is indeed the expression of power itself . . . the silent listener has an extremely strategic role, that of the audience. What if the powerful speaker loses his audience?"[91]

As these non-elite groups demonstrated, ritual space and symbols could evoke more than one meaning. Lynn Hunt observed in her study of the French Revolution's symbols that "colors, clothing, adornments, plateware, money, calendars," and the like could serve more than one political purpose, informing one people's political stance and becoming the symbolic forms of "adherence, opposition, and indifference."[92] Rituals, symbols, and space can impose a hegemonic discourse for a powerful social group; or they can become another's counterdiscourse to overturn hegemony.

TRIBAL LOYALTIES

Palestine's Bedouin also exhibited their resolve for traditional social structures at the festival. In 1931, their population numbered 66,553, composed entirely of Muslims residing mostly in the southern, arid regions of the country.[93] Although modern reforms of the nineteenth century had reconfigured the relationship between tribes and the state, tribal social structures remained an essential source of security, livelihood, and identity, reinforced through ties of consanguinity and endogamy. Consequently, group loyalty to the tribe meant that personal disputes involved the larger tribe. Periodically, these conflicts erupted into minor skirmishes at the Jerusalem portion of the festival. Aside from violence in April 1920 targeting Jews, most scuffles were intracommunal among Muslim pilgrims.[94]

However, fights between Palestinians tarnished the pristine image of national unity. The clashes were irksome reminders that traditional tribal and village identities survived in an age of modern nationalism. At the 1922 festival, the Bedouin of the Sawarka tribe clashed with pilgrims from Hebron as the procession passed the Garden of Gethsemane. A few days later, a dispute arose between the Arabs of the ʿAdwan tribe and the Jerusalemites at the shrine, requiring the mufti to intervene.[95] A decade later, as pilgrims debouched the Haram al-Sharif and marched toward Raʾs al-ʿAmud, a quarrel erupted between some of the villagers of Abu Dis and the villagers of ʿArab al-Sawahira. What began as a minor dispute escalated into a serious brawl, injuring bystanders as they threw stones at one another and requiring the police to separate the two groups.[96] Both the police and *Filastin* claimed this was a dispute over land.[97] *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya* even downplayed the conflict with the headline, "The Events of a Simple Dispute in the Procession."[98] Yet these conflicts were more complicated than minor skirmishes. They involved

members of both rural and clan communities because both continued to cultivate crops and graze flocks on communal lands; for them, land was a collective, not a personal issue.

The scuffle between the villagers of ʿArab al-Sawahira and Abu Dis unnerved Amin Husayni, who considered the festival an annual confirmation of his status as national leader. The image was further marred after the police arrested six residents from each party and set bail at £P 100. The mufti, however, was intent on subduing tensions. He cut short his stay at the shrine and returned to Jerusalem to convene a traditional Islamic ritual of reconciliation (*sulha*) with the notables of the two parties. The mufti so eagerly sought an immediate resolution that he freed those who had been arrested. He then hosted a meal for the notables of both groups at his personal table (*maʾidah*) at the shrine, which the SMC's main organ acknowledged by thanking him for his "wise successful effort" at resolving the dispute.

However, the two groups had so tenaciously embraced their local identities that at the closing ceremonies, both refrained from marching.[99] Mirroring the actions the ʿAyn Karim villagers had taken, the Abu Dis and the ʿArab al-Sawahira villagers proved unwilling to discard their nonnational and traditional attachments merely to play a role in the dramaturgical representation of "the nation."

MAINTAINING CUSTOMARY PROCESSIONAL ROUTES

Other than the tactic of nonparticipation, Arab pilgrims asserted their traditional identities by adhering to traditional processional routes. Every cadre of pilgrims organized along village, town, or tribe had followed a set route since organizers formalized the official ceremonies in the late nineteenth century. These paths helped to forge a community's unique identity, just as they signified nationalist and religious identities in other religious contexts.[100] At Nabi Musa, these established routes determined how pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem, where they stopped en route, and through which gates they entered the Old City. Nablus's pilgrims rested for the night at Shaykh Jarrah before they entered the Old City through the Damascus Gate on the first Friday of the celebrations. Youth from Shuʿafat greeted them as they entered.[101] On the first Saturday of the celebrations, the Hebron pilgrims bivouacked at the Church of Mar Elias (St. Elijah) near Bethlehem, where the Christian notables of the city invited them to partake in a meal prepared in their honor.[102] They entered Jerusalem bellowing a chant, "We Hebronites have just arrived. . . . Zionists take your people and leave!" The Nablus pilgrims countered by boasting, "We

are the children of Jabal al-Nar [mountain of fire]," their city's proud sobriquet, continuing, "We are a thorn in the throat of the occupation."[103] The act of converging along a path dedicated to a pilgrimage center is crucial preparation for pilgrims approaching a holy site; altering these routes disrupts that process.[104] As a result, Palestinians responded suspiciously to any attempt to interfere with their set routes. British authorities, however, were eager to adjust them for security reasons.

The Palestine government earnestly passed laws and new regulations in the months after the 1920 violence to impose greater control over public ceremonies.[105] Public meetings conducted in the streets required prior approval.[106] The police could also prescribe routes and set the time processions should pass.[107] The British launched their first bid to manage the Nabi Musa routes one year after the violence. They attempted to divert pilgrims from entering the Old City through the Jaffa Gate—a trek adjacent to the Jewish Quarter—and direct them toward the Damascus Gate. The British had closed the Jaffa Gate and blocked the wall's opening with artillery, tanks, and soldiers. Bedouin and Hebron pilgrims worried that this diversion would delay their arrival to the Haram al-Sharif, causing them to miss communal prayers. While some veered toward the Damascus Gate, others, "With the blink of an eye," according to Wasif Jawhariyya, attempted to rush the opening in the wall, attacking heavily armed British forces.[108] According to *Mir'at al-Sharq*, a tumult erupted because of "their love of custom for maintaining the traditional routes."[109] Jerusalem governor Ronald Storrs recognized how these changes provoked the pilgrims. He conceded and allowed them to resume along their traditional trek.[110] Under duress, he graciously announced, "Welcome, welcome, to the heroes. Yes, please come this way. You are right to keep up the tradition and walk to the Haram al-Sharif inside the wall. Come on this way." The agent (*wakil*) of the Armenian Patriarch even intervened to help defuse tension.[111] Reassured that they could continue along their traditional route, the members of the Muslim audience applauded the governor and resumed their march through their usual routes. The crowd's mood changed from a charged atmosphere intent on unleashing violence to one of appeasement because authorities acceded to their demands to worship according to their traditions.

Years later, the British revived their attempts to redirect pilgrims. As peasants entered Jerusalem during the concluding ceremonies of the 1937 festival, they marched along the Via Dolorosa toward the Majlisi Gate.[112] Upon reaching this point, a cordon of British and Arab mounted and foot constables awaited them, attempting to direct them toward the Faysal Gate, an alternate route to which the mufti had consented.[113] Pilgrims, however, insisted upon following their established route. "Rowdies" rushed the police

lines, according to the *Palestine Post*, while *al-Jamiʿa al-Islamiyya* referred to those who stood up to the British as "heroes" (*abtal*). In a show of nationalist solidarity, youth from Hebron, Nablus, and Jerusalem and villagers banded together, hurling stones and upturning chairs and tables from nearby cafés at constables. After an Arab officer fired into the crowd, wounding two, the British relented, and the pilgrims continued along their customary route.[114]

One way to interpret this disorder is as a colonized people resisting interference by a colonial ruler. This interpretation is consistent with many Arab historical accounts of the festival as a nationalist event. Although recalcitrance can appear to be motivated by national sentiments, it implicitly suggests that pilgrims searched for any opportunity to resist the British. However, it is difficult to corroborate this claim when considering the ubiquitous British presence at the festival. As discussed throughout this work, British colonial officials, members of the Palestine Police, and other European and American guests, including European royalty, regularly watched the ceremonies from various venues. Some even marched in the processions. The British military band was a regular feature throughout the weeklong ceremonies. Keith-Roach recalled how he attended the inspection of banners "surrounded by thousands of worshippers."[115] Periodically, British officials visited both the shrine and the Haram al-Sharif, and in 1922 Storrs posed with pilgrims at the shrine.[116]

Despite this extensive presence, there is little evidence to suggest British participation incited unrest. Violence at the festival was restricted mainly to the 1920 clashes, occasional scuffles involving pilgrims, and arrests of communists and those delivering unauthorized speeches. Only two years after the 1920 festival, Jewish shop owners were confident enough to keep their stores open as pilgrims passed through without incident.[117] The disruption to traditional pilgrimage routes and not the mere presence of British authorities ignited the unrest in 1937. As the correspondent for *al-Jamiʿa al-Islamiyya* surmised, the 1937 conflict arose because pilgrims wanted to maintain "the established custom."[118] Some pilgrims denounced the mufti for agreeing to the redirection, a criticism the Arabic press failed to record.[119]

The reservation against attributing all colonial-era violence to nationalist motives mirrors the communal strife between Sunni and Shiʿa Muslims in British-ruled Lucknow, India. Keith Hjortshoj found that violence erupted between these two groups primarily during the Shiʿa ʿAshura processional ceremonies. British authorities and historians interpreted these disputes as manifestations of political or national conflicts between Sunnis and Shiʿa against colonial rule. Yet, if these were anticolonial conflicts, why then did violence only emerge during these religious commemorations? As Hjortshoj asks, would not any occasion for conflict against the British "do

just as nicely?"[120] These conflicts subsided after the ʿAshura commemorations ended. As Hjortshoj contends, the source of this violence was Shiʿa religious identity and disputes over authority, not colonial or national politics. Similarly, opposition to British attempts to redirect pilgrimage routes at Nabi Musa stemmed not from anticolonial, nationalist motivations but an attachment to local customs and traditions.

LOCAL RELIGIOUS PRAXIS

Nowhere did the resilience of nonnational and local identities manifest more forcefully than at the Prophet Moses shrine. Here, peasants and Bedouin were free to practice their traditional forms of religious worship and folk culture with little oversight from religious officials. Arab journalists and British authorities rarely took an interest in these events, focusing instead on the official celebrations in Jerusalem that religious and political figures led, a dismissal of popular religion common to other traditions.[121] Palestinian nationalist narratives further diminished the significance of "popular Islam" by excluding the "local, the gendered and the personal" and consigning popular culture to the margins of the debates about politics and power.[122] Although festival organizers orchestrated the ceremonies to project various political messages, peasants and Bedouin approached it primarily as ritual pilgrimage (*ziyara*). Their devotion to worshiping at the shrine may explain why pilgrims, as shown earlier, had periodically espoused tepid enthusiasm for participating in the Jerusalem ceremonies.

The mostly rural and tribal pilgrims who visited the shrine arrived from throughout the country, enduring the taxing desert environment for their weeklong visit.[123] The French novelist Pierre Loti (d. 1923) described the foreboding landscape that awaited the pilgrim: the "heat increases in proportion as we descend," and the rocky hills of Moab surround the area "like a Dantesque wall."[124] The warren of tents pilgrims pitched outside the shrine compound provided little comfort from the high winds and cold nighttime temperatures, leading to one pilgrim's death in the late 1880s.[125] Pilgrims playfully incorporated these hardships into their songs, such as one pleading for comfort: "Be joyful, O way [leading to the sanctuary] of the Prophet / [Be as soft as] fresh butter under the feet of the visitors!" Another left no doubt that the trek to the shrine was beset with many hardships, admitting that they endured small stones below their feet solely for the sake of visiting the shrine.[126] The difficulties pilgrims were willing to endure to travel to the remote, isolated shrine is captured in the impressions of the eighteenth-century mystic and religious scholar Shaykh Shams al-Din al-Khalili (d. 1734). Overcoming

the struggle of reaching a location denuded of vegetation, water, and people, he described his alacrity to visit in the familiar Sufic language of a lover seeking the beloved. At Moses's tomb lay the ultimate object of devotion in Islamic mysticism: closeness to God. The costly attire he and his companions donned to conduct their pilgrimage demonstrated their enthusiasm, a sartorial tradition pilgrims upheld centuries later.[127] As pilgrims neared the shrine, they performed the familiar act of piling cairns and reciting the *fatiha*.[128] Many pilgrims and Sufis would first visit the humble sanctuary of al-Ra'i, believed to be Moses's shepherd, located two kilometers south of the shrine.[129]

But the arduous peregrination along the parched ocher landscape hardly deterred devotees. Before modern transport appeared, some pilgrims rode a camel or mule or hired a carriage.[130] A carnival atmosphere awaited them, with large crowds rivaling attendance at Nabi Salih in Ramla or Nabi Rubin in Jaffa. Pilgrimage to the shrine became one of the most anticipated holidays in the peasants' calendar. There they ate foods they rarely had the pleasure to enjoy, such as lamb, ice cream, and the sweet pistachio treat *halwayat al-Nabi Musa*, made especially for the occasion.[131] Even these sweets were imbued with holiness, as vendors called out "*halwayat Musa baraka*" (blessed Moses sweets).[132]

At the shrine, pilgrims joined Sufis in chanting religious anthems and performing *dhikr* ceremonies, as well as singing, dancing, or celebrating the circumcision of a young boy. Outside the shrine merchants erected coffee stands, sold other food and drinks, and provided *arjila* (waterpipes) as performers entertained children with Punch-and-Judy shows.[133] Rural audiences marveled as Bedouin performed fantasia and mock swordfights (*al-saif al-turs*) and fired rounds into the air. "Movie boxes" were available for viewing later in the Mandate period.[134] A correspondent for the *Times* of London remarked on the gaiety of the atmosphere: "in every corner men sell their wares—handkerchiefs of rainbow colours, sweets of kaleidoscopic variety . . . the lovely blue and rich green glass of Hebron." He advised his readers: "It is a religious festival, a fair, and a Bank Holiday all in one; and those who have failed to visit it must never pretend to know the life of Southern Palestine."[135]

The devotion pilgrims expressed at the Moses shrine reflected a larger religiosity grounded in the local worship of saints and shrines. The ubiquitous sight of the *qubba* (dome) in rural communities became synonymous with the term *maqam* (shrine).[136] By 1881, the surveyors of the Palestine Exploration Fund had catalogued 331 shrines across the Palestinian landscape.[137] Famed Palestinian doctor and ethnographer Tewfik Canaan (1882–1964) captured this popular adoration for sacred shrines in his seminal work *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine*, opening with the dramatic observation, "Sacred shrines are innumerable in Palestine. Nearly everywhere—in the villages, on the mountains, in valleys, in the fields—do we meet with them.

FIGURE 6.1. *Sufis with drums at the shrine, 1937 (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 16973)*

There is hardly a village, however small it may be, which does not honour at least one local saint. But generally every settlement boasts of many."[138] The need for rural people to address immediate fears (e.g., a sick child, infertility of a woman), and the longing to be in close physical proximity to a sacred site, encompassed the religiosity of saint worship in modern Palestine. Women and Sufis in particular epitomized this devotion. The religious practices and gender dynamics these two groups conducted at the Nabi Musa shrine demonstrated how pilgrims prioritized the festival's spiritual dimensions over its recent transformation into a political spectacle.

THE DEVOTION OF WOMEN

In Jerusalem, women watched as spectators, but at the shrine they worshipped as pilgrims. The shrine provided them space to engage in a distinct religious praxis that official organizers deemed forbidden at other sanctuaries under their control.[139] Their participation reveals, once again, the multivalent and conflicting nature of rituals. Although the organizers intended the official festival to propagate a host of messages about identity and authority, they failed to extend this symbolic order to the maqam. There, mostly rural women engaged in religious practices that they had formed in their village or tribe, independent of how religious authority figures believed these should work.

A prevailing assumption of sacred sites in Islamic societies suggests that Muslim women visited them to escape the patriarchal and oppressive norms that dictated their traditional lives. Some scholars have declared that shrines

foster a liberal space for women or serve as sites that suspended social hierarchies.[140] Others endorse Mikhail Bakhtin's dictum: "In the world of carnival all hierarchies are canceled. All castes and ages are equal."[141] Although Bakhtin was referring to the erasure of social class differences at carnivals, some have extended it to the erasure of gender differences. Ottoman soldier Ihsan al-Turjman, stationed in Jerusalem during World War I, echoed a similar sentiment. Upon seeing women congregating at the Haram al-Sharif for the 1915 Moses festival, he bemoaned how they yearned to attend to be "free of the pressures of their husbands and homes."[142] Arab-Jewish writer Yitzhaq Shami (d. 1949) captured in his story "Vengeance of the Fathers" how women from Nablus joined in the revelry of the Nabi Musa processions leaving the city, enjoying the spectacle of dancing youth, fantasia, and dabka. Shami believed it emboldened them enough to uncover their faces and bellow out an ululation, a moment of resistance against their patriarchal oppression. As they neared the end of the processions, they became crestfallen, forced to return to their "enslavement," their "monotonous working days, with no spark of joy or consolation to illuminate them."[143]

Indeed, religious authorities enforced patriarchal norms, such as segregating men and women at the Haram al-Sharif during the annual celebrations.[144] Women also confronted other forms of exclusion based on their sex regarding questions of ritual purity (*wuduh*), preventing any suspected of being "unclean" (*najis*) from entering the maqam.[145] Popular lore also attributed the powerful whirlwinds that passed through the shrine to the presence of an "unclean woman" or the conduct of improper relations between a man and a woman.[146] Yet, the assumption that women worshipped at shrines to liberate themselves from patriarchal restrictions only serves to "block . . . and distort . . . analysis of the situation of Muslim women," as Mernissi contends.[147] Saba Mahmoud argues that the feminist binary model of resistance/subordination presumes all women's religious practices share the same teleological goal of leading to a secular form of agency. Yet, the agency of Muslim women, whether deciding to don a veil or to participate in a ritual, fails to conform to this secularist vision.[148] As a "liberatory discourse,"[149] this approach too quickly elides over other motives, such as piety, "virtue, fears, [and] hope," that explain how women define their religious praxis and beliefs.[150] It is more productive to recognize how shrines are sites where worshippers—both men and women—define rituals in their own ways that can challenge how Islamic authorities assume they should function.[151]

Women did not visit the Moses shrine seeking a liminal space to liberate themselves from patriarchal hierarchies. Nor did they submit to strict normative practices of gender segregation. Women were not attracted to carnivals and religious ceremonies to release their "repressed libido."[152] Rather, when

they visited, they upheld social and religious patterns that existed in their home communities. Instead of regarding a people's culture as the product of religious officials or texts, the culture people practice reflects the social structures in which they live. As Sherry Ortner argues, practice theory intricately ties questions of practice to questions of social structure. Because this approach does not regard structure as distinguishing culture from society, "culture/society" is treated as a "totality informed by common principles."[153]

Women, especially those from rural environments, honored the Moses festival primarily as a site for religious devotion because they inhabited a landscape imbued with holiness. Writing in 1882 in the *Survey of Western Palestine*, French archaeologist Clermont Ganneau captured this close relationship between a sacred site and its landscape by suggesting that a name given to a maqam "is not merely a simple name, but a personification, or deification . . . *of the place itself*."[154] In rural and tribal communities, the immediate access and proximity to shrines and tombs were central to how villagers and Bedouin conducted rituals and formed beliefs. Gideon Kressel, Sasson Bar-Zvi, and Aref Abu Rabaʿi argue that the few mosques found in tribal communities and a lack of formal knowledge of Islamic prayers led Bedouin to favor the local tombs of holy persons (*awliya*) to seek God.[155] Other observations have noted the infrequency of mosque attendance in rural communities.[156] In a study Seth Frantzman and Doron Bar conducted based on British-period maps and government statistics, almost three-quarters of the sacred shrines were in the country's hill regions. Since almost 70 percent of Muslims lived in the hill regions, the authors concluded that the Muslim population was congruent to the location of shrines. Most of these shrines were separated from settlements by a short walk, usually near a cemetery. Their short distance from the village was likely because many shrines were located in or near cemeteries, which tended to be situated outside of a village.[157] Villagers also likely had to maintain the upkeep of these shrines after Egyptian authorities dissolved the religious endowments (awqaf) supporting Sufi orders during their occupation of Palestine (1831–1840).[158]

While some scholars regard the "local" proximity of shrines as negating the act of pilgrimage, in Palestine this proximity was inextricably connected to the belief in a sacred landscape.[159] Peasants stored their agricultural tools and sacks of grain at local tombs after working in fields close to shrines, believing these sites' sanctity would deter thieves.[160] Palestinian folk culture also attributed a sacredness to the natural environment and rural topography. As Canaan discovered, 45 percent of tombs in the Jerusalem area that he had studied belonged to the built-up maqam type (constructed shrines); in comparison, 55 percent were associated with natural features, open-air tombs, and trees.[161] No doubt not all tombs contained graves, with many situated or

associated with caves, springs, trees, and large stones.[162] As Andrew Petersen surmises, these findings suggest that a shrine's location may have depended on the rural topography as much as on religious considerations.[163] This belief in the holiness of the land extended to minerals: the bituminous stones on the shores of the Dead Sea, local people thought, were combustible minerals possessing a numinous power. Local lore associated these stones with stories of the Prophet Moses striking such a rock and causing it to flow with water (see Exodus 17:6 and Qurʾan 7:160); hence, they were known as Moses's stone (*hajjar Musa*).[164] Trees stood out as central to this sacred landscape. Canaan located them in 60 percent of the shrines he surveyed.[165] Villagers and tribal people so powerfully associated them with possessing the soul of a godly individual that they commemorated various ceremonies near or under trees. During the Moses festival's closing ceremonies, pilgrims hung their banners on the tallest trees within the sacred precincts of the Haram al-Sharif.[166] Trees even replaced sacred shrines or graves, in the absence of a tomb.[167] As Canaan concludes, "I have no doubt that with few exceptions every Mohammedan sanctuary is, or was once, characterized by one or more trees."[168]

This intimate connection rural people forged with a sacred topography influenced how women worshiped at shrines. Village women regarded ziyara as a local outing with family members and friends, feasting and eating sweets.[169] Nineteenth-century American biblical scholar Samuel Ives Curtiss cited various sources suggesting that this was a convivial affair.[170] Canaan described the annual commemoration of the "Thursday of the Dead" (*khamis al-amwat*), when women visited the tombs of those who had departed in the past year, as a "feast day of the women." It was a social occasion restricted largely to women and their children, resembling more a picnic than a dour memorial.[171] At one shrine, the men of the village were not permitted to enter.[172] Other springtime festivals, such as "Girl's Friday" (*jumʿat al-banat*) were explicitly devoted to women. They demanded special gifts such as trays of sweets and nuts, donning fine clothes, and gathering among other women to dance and eat.[173]

To some extent, the sight of women conducting ziyara among themselves may appear as an example of "female dominated" religion, as women led and performed their rituals.[174] Although women were (and still are) regarded as more "active" in visiting sacred shrines than men, both genders jointly participated in large festivals.[175] *Mulids* and *mawasim* (s. *mawsim*) brought men and women together in joyful gatherings, a safe space for women and children to participate alongside the men and boys of their village or tribe. At the annual celebration of Job's Wednesday (*Arbaʿat Ayyub*) in the southern coastal village of Jura, people from the surrounding villages gathered at the sea, where they sang, danced, and ate sweets, becoming a "free for all" that culminated

with all the visitors—men and women, young and old—playfully entering the water.[176]

Shrines could serve as centers for these types of gatherings because religious outings were concurrent with patterns of social exchange at the tribal and village level. They attended in the company of pilgrims who were related to one another through links to clans and endogamy, in the case of tribes. Like other rural residents in the Levant, they lived in a "nucleated village" of small clusters of homes belonging to extended families surrounded by fields they cultivated.[177] Endogamous relations linked villagers together into a larger clan.[178] As Rosemary Sayigh suggests, the village is a "family of families."[179] These shared lineages were so significant that new residents were compelled to invent fictious kinship relations to link them to one of the village's leading clans.[180]

Absent a feudal rural aristocracy, villagers depended on kin as a source of protection against tax collectors, moneylenders, Bedouin raids, and conscription. Sayigh terms this form of solidarity "moral familism."[181] These close relationships obviated the need for barriers of gender segregation practiced in urban environments or rural communities in other Arab countries, such as in the homes of Egyptian and Algerian peasants. Instead, peasants in Palestine treated their homes "as an open social meeting ground between kin and neighbors, not as a private domestic preserve."[182] As Abdullah Lutfiyya observed in his ethnographic study of the Ramallah-area village of Baytin, the strong kinship ties among villages inspired them to regard one another with the common saying, "we are all cousins." Villagers referred to themselves in the collective "we," "united against all others who are 'they.'"[183] These close ties among family members in a village permitted women to maintain a connection to a larger family network, providing them support and protection. Extended family members came to their aid in times of conflict with their husbands, even if they had moved out of their home village.[184]

While studies on women and ritual tend to emphasize what they did over what they believed, it is equally important to investigate the theological motivations that guided their forms of worship.[185] Local and family concerns shaped their theological impulses to conduct ziyara. Reema Hammami suggests that rural women in Palestine visited shrines because their proximity allowed them to address how they experienced nature, life cycles, and social relations at the village level. The predominant motive for women was to seek divine support for the "everyday issues" they endured, such as concerns over family health, especially of a child, and anxieties about reproduction.[186] James Grehan adds that Muslims, Christians, and Jews in premodern Greater Syria regarded shrine visits as one additional religious practice to draw upon to

curb the hardships and uncertainty they confronted in everyday life. They visited shrines for the same reasons that they concocted herbal remedies, chanted incantations, and collected amulets—to heal a sick child or cure infertility.[187] As Susan Sered finds in her study of female-dominated religions, "matrifocal societies," such as Islamic ones, that stress the role of women as mothers as opposed to wives, encourage rituals and theology that "enhance, dramatize, and strengthen women's identities as mothers."[188] In modern-day Cairo, women maintain these patterns of worship. They visit the shrine of Sayyida Zaynab to address the immediate distress in their lives, such as housing problems, poverty, illness, and the lack of medical care.[189] Today Palestinian women continue to cross communal boundaries to petition a holy figure or worship at sacred sites to resolve their quotient concerns, particularly fertility issues.[190]

Palestinian village women transferred their experiences of worshiping at local sacred sites to the Nabi Musa shrine. Women attended as celebrants and pilgrims, enjoying the time as a social outing with family and fellow villagers and as a religious exercise to meet the daily challenges they faced. Estelle Blyth commented how in Jerusalem, "women and children abound" during the festival.[191] So numerous were they that Jawhariyya remembered that he had difficulty seeing the ground. Women "dedicated the day" to watching with their children, clambering on top of walls, hovering over balconies, and crowding streets and the cemeteries on Mount Zion to watch the processions. They jostled for a strategic site since they were deprived of the enjoyment of marching in the processions themselves, a practice of gender segregation they would not be subjected to at the shrine. Only rarely are women recorded as participating in the processions, and in one instance, a village woman led nationalist chants.[192] The men who did not march in the procession were content watching it at one of the city's many cafés.[193]

The pomp of the procession, though, failed to distract the women from their main spiritual purpose for attending. Once in Jerusalem, they eagerly gravitated to the holy city's many conduits that radiated its spiritual force (*baraka*). At the Haram al-Sharif, they bound rags to the windows of the Throne of Solomon (Kursi Sulaiman) structure so thickly that they concealed the iron on the grills.[194] These rags, often torn from a sick child's clothes, were believed to serve as a medium through which God's blessings could flow and heal the child, a practice repeated at the grills covering the windows of Prophet Moses's tomb.[195] Likewise, at the shrine, mothers held their babies under the window of the tomb; sterile women swallowed the wicks of candles; others suffering from miscarriages tied threads along their waist, which had been passed around the tomb. Desperate mothers also surreptitiously attempted to cut pieces of the sacred banners to fashion into a cup for a sick

child to drink.[196] As one Palestinian woman named Sitte, whom the biblical scholar Florence Mary Fitch observed in the late 1920s, said, her interest in attending the Moses festival was devoted to praying in Jerusalem, worshipping at the shrine, dancing, singing, and celebrating the circumcision of boys, mentioning nothing of the festival's recent iteration as a political pageant.[197]

The most poignant example of the religiosity of these women appears in haptic sensation they sought with the sacred banners. Their ritualistic praxis contrasted sharply from that of the elite. Revered religious banners were intricately embroidered with the saint's name and laid upon their tomb, possessing a mystical baraka devotees sought to capture by kissing or touching.[198] In this way, banners resembled the mediating role that Christian icons possess. Although different social groups (e.g., urban elites, rural peasants) believed in these banners' numinous potency, Ortner cautions that while cultural actors may share the same symbols, cultural groups may have diverse interpretations of them.[199] As discussed earlier, high-ranking religious officials and urban notables presented or held the banners in carefully scripted bodily movements. Women, though, spontaneously vied to touch or kiss them as they passed in the parade route. Sufism had encouraged cultural practices that made "the immediacy of religious experience with, through, and in the body" central to the pilgrim's experience.[200] Although both social groups displayed a devotion to the same objects, only in the hands of the rural women were the banners regarded as artifacts of popular religion. Through their alacrity to touch and kiss the flags, the women evoked an "informal lower-class habitus," because popular culture itself does not possess an intrinsic or historically fixed value. Rather, objects are designated as "popular" because of the class tensions and struggle over culture.[201] The class differences of how these two groups encountered the banners determined that the "constrained habitus" of the elite practiced orthodox, official Islam, and the unrehearsed actions of the women represented popular Islam.[202]

Women also personified a notion of gender relations at the shrine that reflected the social practices they experienced in their home village or tribe. These practices lay beyond familiar tropes of segregation and patriarchy that Western observers had of Muslim women, a topic that recent scholarship has challenged.[203] The family connections that solidified a sense of solidarity among villagers and tribal members rendered the shrine a welcoming space for women. Families worked together to plan their visit to the Nabi Musa shrine on the Thursday or Friday night before the festival began, known as the "night of standing" (*lailat al-waqfa*).[204] Shami described in one of his stories the frenetic atmosphere gripping Nablus's residents as they prepared for the mawsim, filled with days planning their visit to the shrine and anticipating the festivities that awaited them.[205] Once there, the intermingling of men

and women was not a novel activity, unique to this sacred space, liminal and set apart from the "real" or profane world. Instead, at the shrine, women encountered not strangers but extended family, reflecting the social makeup of their home communities. These interactions conformed to the rules of permissible (*mahram*) relations, excluding the need for seclusion between the sexes. However, one *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* writer branded these interactions as "repugnant mixing" (*ikhtilatan qabihan*) antithetical to Islam.[206]

Observations by a trio of German Orientalists who visited the shrine at the close of Ottoman rule testified to the dominant presence of family members and the fluid interaction between the sexes. Richard Hartmann attended the festival before World War I and noted its importance for women. He opined that of all the sights at the shrine, "the more colorful is the picture that the women offer. The Nebi-Musa festival is conducted as a family festival."[207] Even Canaan refers to the ceremony at the shrine simply as a "family feast."[208] Paul Kahle, who attended in 1910, claimed that rooms reserved for women at the shrine were much more heavily occupied than those for men, reaching well over a thousand attendees.[209] Inspired by the scene of village women singing songs in praise of the Prophet Muhammad and the Caliph ʿAli, Kahle declared: "For many the somewhat freer life there in the shrine, where there is so much to see, where everything is filled with festive joy, where one meets so many acquaintances, is the event of the year."[210] Palestinian historian Subhi Ghusha, who attended the festivals up to 1946, confirmed that more women than men attended, mostly for religious purposes to bless their children, fulfill a vow, or circumcise their sons.[211]

Bedouin women similarly enjoyed the shrine as a site to relax with family. Bedouins had already rebuffed the festival organizers' attempts to exclude their women from marching in Jerusalem's larger processions.[212] Hartmann commented on the bonhomie of a Bedouin encampment at the shrine, where one "high-grown slender woman," sword in hand, danced among a row of men who sang and stamped their feet to the rhythm of the music.[213] Observing the pilgrims enjoying the ebullient mood, a third German Orientalist wrote: "A very lively picture presented itself to us. Bedouin and fellah, men, women and children and here and there a pair of soldiers filled the air with their laughter and playfulness or sat quietly amused in the shade of an improvised tent, looking at the colorful goings-on, set into the right festive mood through the relaxing addition of a nargile or a small cup of black coffee."[214] During a "delightful" nighttime stroll through the camp outside of the shrine, Canaan heard the music of an oud accompanied by periodic emphatic gasps of "Allah" by groups of men. He noted how "men and women, old and young, rich and poor enjoy it and every class finds amusements to satisfy its taste."[215]

Pilgrims conducted their celebrations at the shrine in the company of family members and fellow villagers. Even the vow (*nadr*) a pilgrim made to provide a sacrifice at a saint's shrine in honor of a petition's being granted may have been initiated individually, but the sacrifice was consumed communally as family and friends joined to partake in the meal.[216]

However, the flexible nature of these gender interactions was less likely to apply to urban women, who lived in an environment that more fully enforced segregation. Living in World War I Jerusalem, Turjman pined to glimpse his beloved unveiled.[217] Mahmoud Yazbak's description of the anticipation of women attending Jaffa's Nabi Rubin festival for temporary relief from the "four walls" of their traditional private space applies more to urban than rural women.[218] Egyptian feminist Huda Shaarawi typified this urban experience, recollecting how visiting a resort as a young girl represented an escape from the "routine" life of seclusion and veiling.[219] Because Western observers regarded veiling as the "most visible marker" of the oppressed Muslim women, scenes of women intermingling with men confused them.[220] Frederick Bliss, who visited Palestine before World War I, gazed upon women working in fields and mingling with the men, "chatting and joking with them in full comradeship." Incredulously, he pondered how peasant women did not "preserve the ideal of feminine conduct entertained by Mohammed."[221] Fellow Europeans shared Philip Baldensperger's impression that "veils are only worn by the townswomen" and the Bedouin.[222] ʿUmar Salih al-Barghuthi noted the stark differences between the peasant women of his Ramallah-area village of Dayr Ghassana and the women of his notable family, who emulated urban customs of veiling and segregation. He marveled at how peasant women went about unveiled and worked alongside men in the fields.[223] Canaan—a self-described "close student of the country"—discerned these differences between urban and rural women at the shrine, observing how "peasants, half-Bedouin and Bedouin mix with people from Jerusalem, Nablus and Hebron. . . . *With the exception of the city women*, who keep [to] the rooms most of the time or stand on the open veranda of the second story, all female visitors take part in the activities of the men, with whom they mix continually."[224] Hartmann noticed the timid demeanor of the city women "in the background," wrapped in veils concealing the shape of their bodies, while the view of the "pretty features" of the peasant (*fallah*) women in their many-hued embroidered garments animated the scene at the shrine.[225] Eunice Holliday, a British resident who resided in Jerusalem in the first half of the 1920s, pleasantly recalled the many rural women who arrived to the city in their new clothes of "wonderful, bright pink, purple, or blue velvet coats, yellow dresses with embroideries in red and green," wearing a white veil that produced "a gorgeous sight."[226] City

women, however, watched the parade in Jerusalem standing on rooftops with their faces veiled.[227] In contrast, village women did not hesitate to join the crowds convening at the Haram al-Sharif to dance dabka and sing folksongs, as Ghusha recalled witnessing in the waning years of the Mandate.[228]

Because women regarded other pilgrims they encountered at the shrine as either family or neighbors, they remained guarded against non-Muslim visitors and members outside their immediate community. When Kahle was about to embark on his visit, the wives of his drivers expressed concern their husbands should be seen with a Christian. Others warned Kahle against "going about the shrine without accompaniment," requiring him to secure two Husayni family members as escorts. Within distance of the shrine, his drivers soon avoided traveling with him.[229] The proximity to women and children may have raised concern that non-Muslims could not properly respect the shrine's sensitive space for largely unrestricted encounters among different ages and genders. Although the Nabi Rubin (tomb of Reuben) festival had a far more open atmosphere, locals still considered it a "family affair" in which it was improper for the single men to attend on their own.[230] This trepidation against engaging with members beyond one's village, tribe, or family extended to fellow Muslims, even to the generation following the catastrophic events of the Nakba. Scattered from their ancestral lands, one Palestinian refugee woman who had settled in Gaza explained that she hesitated from attending the local festival of Muntar because she was surrounded by strangers: "No one knew each other, and we were alone. It's not good to go alone."[231] Refugees who lived in camps in Lebanon still preferred "in-village marriages" (marriage to the refugees from villages that their family had hailed from before 1948) so their girls would not live with "strangers."[232] The Husayni family, however, did not share these concerns. Not only did they defy local customs by escorting Kahle to the shrine, but by the early 1930s Amin Husayni began inviting a coterie of distinguished guests, including non-Arabs and non-Muslims, to his personal tent in the shrine's courtyard as a public endorsement of his authority.

MYSTICAL DEVOTION AT THE SHRINE

The Sufis were another group that devoted ritualistic attention at the festival to worshipping at the shrine. For them, as well as for many other pilgrims, ziyara was an act Michael Frishkopf terms "language performance," combining rituals of speech and sound, such as reading the Qur'an and performing ritual invocation ceremonies (dhikr), with devotional acts of supplicating a sacred tomb.[233] Mystical brotherhoods gravitated to the Moses shrine in

sizeable numbers, worshipping throughout the night and ceremoniously welcoming the arrival of each large pilgrim contingent with a cacophony of songs, drums, and cymbals.[234] They led parades of newly arrived pilgrims around the shrine, termed a *tawaf*, resembling the circumambulation pilgrims perform upon first reaching the Kaʿba. Their music increased with intensity and reached a crescendo as they approached the tomb of Moses, accompanied by the women's celebratory ululations (*zagharit*).[235]

The dhikr ceremonies they performed were grand spectacles that entertained pilgrims throughout the night. Although the mystical *hadra* ceremonies were no longer held in the Haram al-Sharif after 1917, mystics attempted to perform a truncated version of it after Friday prayers at the Haram as they marched out with the Nabi Musa banner, to the chagrin of one conservative commentator.[236] No such prohibition, however, existed at the shrine. Usually, after evening prayers, Sufis formed large circles (*halaqat*) of more than one hundred men in the courtyard outside the tomb. Their master recited a strophe that his followers repeated as they danced to the tempo he set by swinging a sword, a stick, or a handkerchief or followed the rhythmic beating of metal cups. A *munshid*, one who chants *nashid* (Sufic poetry), joined with a mystical song praising the entombed prophet or repeatedly reciting the profession of the faith, "There is no god but God."[237] Paul Kahle admiringly observed, "The moon shone brightly on the dervishes and the large number of those who looked on devotedly, and I could well understand how this strange form of veneration of God may leave a deep impression in the hearts of the faithful."[238] Spectators also marveled at the zeal Sufi devotees expressed to their master. They witnessed the dramatic spectacle of the *dawsa* ceremony that required Sufi disciples to prostrate themselves on the ground as their master rode into the shrine, trusting that his munificence would protect them from being trampled.[239] The most significant family-centered ceremonies—the circumcision of young boys (*khitan*)—also involved mystics. One contemporary observer of the late Mandate period referred to it as "among the most important sights" at the festival, where family members joined in religious and folkloric chants to honor the young inductee.[240] A Sufi band and troupe of dancers escorted his family and friends ceremoniously around the shrine. As all stopped at the door of the maqam (i.e., the tomb), the drums played *fortissimo* to drown the cries of the inductee.[241] All these sensory events involving music, songs, and celebratory zagharit became the shrine's familiar ambient sounds; they defined a distinctly rural ritual praxis from which urban residents, especially wealthier classes, had gradually divorced themselves.

Despite the prominence of these popular and spiritual celebrations, the Arab press largely ignored them, just as they failed to cover the muezzins from Jerusalem performing the mawlid, the legendary history of Muhammad

in verse, until 2:00 a.m.[242] While newspapers recorded the nationalist slogans pilgrims chanted in Jerusalem, they rarely repeated the religious chants, such as *adʿiyaʾ* (supplications) and *ibtihalat* (prayers), that pilgrims regularly recited.[243] Nor did they take much interest in the playful folksongs pilgrims sang, such as: "The marriage festival is not a (real) joy / Nor is the circumcision of the boys / There is no real joy except visiting Moses." Another pithy rhyming couplet rejoiced at visiting Moses's shrine, expressing eagerness to visiting the tombs of the patriarchs in Hebron.[244] Pilgrims also exhorted religious chants in their excitement as they neared the shrine.[245]

Although festival organizers bifurcated the festivals into popular and official ceremonies that made it appear "as if" Sufism were the domain of poorer, rural, lower classes, mysticism enjoyed wide support among Jerusalem's residents. The memoir of Gideon Weigert, a German Jew who had arrived in Palestine in 1933 to study cattle breeding, testifies to its vibrancy. His passion for Arabic, which he studied in Jerusalem, led him to befriend mystics and attend their performances. Through his encounter with workers, shopkeepers, café owners, shaykhs, and peddlers at mystical events, Weigert provided a record of the dynamic nature of mysticism in the city that belied the impression that it was solely the purview of a rural, peasant population.[246] In addition, Mahmud ʿAbidi, writing in the final years of British rule, described the day pilgrims and Sufis from Nablus and neighboring villages assembled before their procession to Jerusalem. In civic ceremonies preceding the pilgrims' departure, the city's civic and religious leaders joined mystics in a grand parade through Nablus, defying the impression of mysticism as the domain of the lower classes.[247] Nonetheless, the ability of the elite to obfuscate Sufism's vitality in Palestine served their social class interests. As Guy Debord suggests, the preponderance of images of commodities in the modern world are not intended to be the focus of a spectacle, but rather to define social relations: "The spectacle is not a collection of images, rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images."[248] The placement of Sufis in the processional route was intended not to be the spectacle's focus but to define the hierarchical order between the elite and subalterns, as part of the larger project of the official festival to contrast the dichotomies of official/popular religion and urban/rural hierarchies. The Sufis who attended, though, did not participate to play the role of deviants of Orthodox Islam; they attended believing they were part of the "congregation."[249] Their mystical styles of dance, music, and song affirmed their religious beliefs as devotees honoring a beloved prophet, not as actors choreographed to manifest a social order.

The many ritual activities Sufis, women, and rural and tribal people conducted at the shrine may invite comparisons of ziyara to Victor Turner's understanding of pilgrimage.[250] The Moses shrine assembled pilgrims from

throughout Palestine, where they could appear to have embraced an ephemeral communal identity Turner termed *communitas*.[251] Moreover, he suggested that the movement of pilgrims from the realm of the profane to the domain of the sacred could direct them toward a liminal phase where ritual elders could instruct them in right and moral action.[252]

The shrine, however, appears less as a liminal space where ritual leaders "prescribed formal behavior" to worshippers.[253] Religious authorities were largely absent from the shrine and possessed few opportunities to inculcate pilgrims with messages of normative behavior.[254] Moreover, religious leaders refrained from imposing restrictions on practices at the Moses shrine that were forbidden at other shrines under their control, such as lighting votive candles, dancing, singing, and playing music. Rather than serve as a space for religious authorities to inculcate pilgrims with proper religious practices, the shrine possessed an "ambiguous" liminal space resembling the present-day carnivalesque atmosphere at Egyptian mulids. Here, sacred genres such as Sufi hymns and quranic broadcasts intermingle with the secular cadence of children's rides and electronic musical beats.[255] The Moses shrine was as much space for sacred performances and religious worship as it was for non-religious entertainment, such as folkloric dancing and singing, puppet shows, and displays of Bedouin arts. Pilgrims visited the shrine as *both* secular revelers and religious devotees.

The liminal space of the shrine also failed to proffer a sense of a communitas. Pilgrims arrived wearing distinct styles of dress that reflected the diverse social environment from whence they hailed, such as the striped abayas of the Bedouin, kaftans of the city dwellers, and embroidered designs of village women. Even their songs betrayed their regional accents.[256] These sartorial differences piqued Sakakini's interest when watching the 1919 ceremonies. He noticed the varieties in headgear: some men wore the religious style of the turban, others the rural tradition of the kaffiyeh, while some city dwellers donned the tarboosh. These varieties in dress included some men arriving wrapped in a traditional *ʿabaʾa* (cloak), while others adopted the more recently introduced style of the jacket (*saku*), inasmuch as some arrived wearing shoes and others socks, while some arrived barefoot.[257] Not only did "each district" have its own "gorgeous raiment of needlework," but "often each village" designed its distinctive dress, "dyed and embroidered at home."[258] While the canonical pilgrimage to Mecca requires all men to don the same simple white clothing of *ihram* to demonstrate their unity as believers, pilgrims to Nabi Musa arrived wearing styles distinct to their particular village and region, failing to engender a notion of communitas.[259] While rulers of post–World War I states encouraged their citizens to adopt Western fashions to foster the impression of national unity, at the shrine pilgrims displayed their

differences without reservation.[260] They proudly wore their distinct styles of dress, sang traditional folksongs unique to their own village or tribe, and hoisted their banners as proud emblems signifying their local origins.

Unlike many urban pilgrims and festival organizers, these rural and Bedouin pilgrims easily crossed between the ambiguous spaces at the shrine. They engaged in profane entertainment (e.g., dancing, singing, horse racing) as comfortably as they immersed themselves in sacred pursuits (e.g., Sufi dhikr, lighting votive candles, praying at the tomb). They treasured ziyara to the shrine more than they did the ihtifal and mawsim in Jerusalem. The shrine, specifically Moses's tomb, was the cynosure of their devotion. Despite many distractions, such as impromptu coffeehouses, contests of horsemanship, falconry, "picture boxes," sweets, dancing, and singing, the pilgrims kept their focus on prayer and worship. Some pilgrimage centers that host fairs, festivals, and markets concurrently attract pilgrims and nonreligious visitors; in such contexts, it may be difficult to discern "true religious pilgrims" from the tourists and vacationers.[261] Yet, at Nabi Musa, as Canaan observed, as soon as the muezzins called the faithful to prayers, most people responded. Many visitors who attended certain dhikr ceremonies remained "absolutely quiet," refraining from talking, smoking, or drinking coffee.[262] Another noted that the largest throng of pilgrims congregated around the grave, not the stalls or entertainment outside the shrine.[263] So powerful was their belief in the sacredness of the tombs that a chain had been strung over the door leading into the mosque, demanding that the devotee display humility as they bent in order to enter.[264] In a devout setting illuminated with lamps, the grave of the Prophet Moses remained the spiritual axis of the shrine, or as Hans Spoer asserted, "the actual goal of the pilgrimage is reached here."[265] Possessed with a spirit beseeching mercy, the pilgrim kneeled in front of the tomb and pleaded, "The cares are upon you, O son of ʿUmran."[266] Although pilgrims and mystics had entered Jerusalem proudly hoisting town, village, and Sufi banners, at the shrine they worshipped not as Ottomans, Palestinians, or even as village or townspeople, but simply as pilgrims (*zuwwar*). For peasant and Bedouin pilgrims, the mawsim al-Nabi Musa was a ziyara long before it was an ihtifal.

CONCLUSION

Since the Mandate era, a Palestinian nationalist narrative has hailed the Prophet Moses festival as a symbol of national resistance to the British and Zionists and a force for national unity. Yet, as a nationalist idiom, the festival failed to uphold the hegemonic notion of nationalism that Palestine's Arab political and religious leaders had hoped to engender. Anti-Zionist com-

munist rhetoric calling for class unity and anticolonialism rattled the ethnonationalist identity the elite propagated and their diplomatic approach to politics. At the festival, pilgrims demonstrated the continued importance horizontal ties assumed at the village and tribal level. These ties remained vibrant because peasants and Bedouin continued to consider them relevant to confront the tripartite challenges of global capitalism, colonialism, and Zionism. The periodic withdrawal of pilgrim contingents from the official ceremonies indicates the limits of the national project that elite political leaders had pursued. While the festival physically assembled Arabs from throughout the country, this nationalist spectacle failed to mobilize the masses to address the genuine grievances peasants and urban workers confronted in the Mandate era. In response, peasants and Bedouin remained tenacious in maintaining their ties to their rural and tribal identities. Their religious praxis and gender dynamics resembled how they experienced life in their village and tribal communities. Their actions and practices are an ethnographic example of how women defied the dominant tropes of gender segregation Muslim religious officials encouraged or Western observers believed existed. Although the shrine's activities were the center of ritualistic focus for rural and tribal pilgrims, colonial officials, Arab political leaders, and the Arab press paid little attention to them, just as they tolerated from a distance the annual festivals of Nabi Rubin, ʿAlil b. ʿAlim near Arsuf (north of Jaffa), Nabi Salih near Ramla, and the shrine of Husayn near Ashkelon. They regarded these religious activities as politically innocuous and peripheral to the country's politics.[267]

7 / THE FESTIVAL'S DENOUEMENT, 1938–1948

PHOTOGRAPHS OF PALESTINE'S PAST BEFORE 1948 abound.[1] Issam Nassar has found that photos taken before the Nakba have helped form a "collective nostalgia of the Palestinians."[2] They serve as visual metonyms for a life Palestinians had once lived. They substitute for a sovereignty Palestinians are currently deprived of, unable to define themselves in ways other nations can, such as through architecture and ordering public space.[3] As Nassar notes, photographs in general shape "what we know and how we know it."[4] Quoting Susan Sontag, he relates the importance of how "photos alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe."[5] For many, photos of the Nabi Musa festival have shaped a Palestinian memory of resistance and national unity.

Drawing upon the work of Sontag once again, we can interpret photos of the festival as attempts at "imprisoning reality." Through images, the viewer believes they have captured the past: "One can't possess reality, one can possess . . . images . . . one can't possess the present but one can possess the past." Ultimately, though, these images prove illusory. As Sontag concludes, "To possess the world in the form of images is, precisely, to reexperience the unreality and remoteness of the real."[6] If the festival's predominant memory is of resistance and unity, personified through images of the mufti Amin al-Husayni leading the processions, the celebrations held after the mufti fled the country in 1937 convey the "unreality" of this narrative. These images, like public memory, cannot express the contested nature of the festival about which this study has argued. Nor can these images relate how after 1937 the festival shed its persona as a theatrical celebration of "the nation" resisting the British and Zionists. Instead, it assumed a new symbolic order expressing deference to the British and a deflated nationalist movement, a reality that photos fail to capture.

The Arab general strike and the launch of the Great Revolt (al-Thawra al-Kubra) between 1936 to 1939 proved decisive in determining the course of the festival in the remaining years of British rule. The revolt began after Shaykh ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam and his followers launched attacks against Jewish and British targets in November 1935.[7] Soon after the initial strikes, British forces confronted and killed Qassam. His martyrdom electrified the Arab public, mainly peasants and a younger generation who had long clamored for militant action to be taken against the British and Zionists. Qassam's followers resumed their attacks the following April. Arab workers, youth, and national activists immediately called for a general strike, a tactic the elite politicians had long eschewed. These notables founded the Arab Higher Committee (AHC, al-Lajna al-ʿArabiyya al-ʿAliya), with the mufti Amin Husayni as president, in their bid to maintain control of this growing mass movement. They submitted their political demands to the British while rebels staged attacks.[8] The British inflicted harsh measures to end the strike and quell the growing tumult in the countryside. By the end of September 1936, the British had deployed twenty thousand troops and, in the words of the British Peel Commission sent to study the revolt, imprisoned Arab leaders in a "concentration camp" and "round[ed] up Arab bands."[9] The British compelled Arab leaders to end the strike in November 1936, the most prolonged labor stoppage in the world during the interwar period.[10]

After the Peel Commission recommended in July 1937 that Palestine be partitioned into Jewish and Arab states, including a proposal to transfer a quarter-million Arabs from the proposed Jewish state into an Arab state joined to Transjordan, rebels renewed attacks.[11] Frustrated at the mufti's covert support for the violence, the British dismissed him as Supreme Muslim Council (SMC) president and as chairman of the General Waqf Committee on September 30, 1937, prompting him to flee the country the following month.[12] The British also disbanded the AHC, with its leaders arrested and deported to the Seychelles. The British armed Jewish forces and the Nashashibi family, the Husayni family's rivals, to quell the insurgency. Resistance, however, spread throughout the country, and by the fall of 1937 the British had to withdraw from several major urban centers, including Jerusalem's Old City.[13] The British deployed two full infantry divisions, or some 25,000 men, plus contingents of the Royal Air Force to suppress the revolt. They stripped Arab officials of government positions who supported it, initiating a policy, in the words of one British official, of "removing subversive and terrorist elements from the administration of Moslem institutions," such as the Awqaf and Shariah courts.[14] The British exacted a heavy toll on Palestinians for supporting the revolt, arresting people en masse, levying punitive fines, demolishing homes, and even destroying large parts of Jaffa's Old City.

They employed depraved methods of torture at the euphemistically termed "Arab Information Centers."[15] Rashid Khalidi estimates that the revolt led to the killing, wounding, exile, or imprisonment of 10 percent of the adult Arab male population between 1936 to 1939.[16] By the end, the Arab population was "defeated, demoralized, and hopelessly divided along several divergent fault lines."[17]

Within this context of military repression, the British turned their attention to the Prophet Moses festival. While they simply could have canceled it, as other rulers in Jerusalem would later do, or not participate in it, the British reordered the festival. They tampered with the symbolic order of the "traditional" Mandate-era festival (1918–1937) to construct a celebration that more accurately reflected their military supremacy and the Arabs' subjugation after 1937. The "traditional" Mandate-era ceremonies could not have accomplished these goals. The British recast the ceremony's symbols to reaffirm colonialism's credible presence in the country at a historical moment when mass insurrection openly defied it.

Their efforts to restructure the festival began immediately after the mufti's departure in 1937. In the first ceremony with a depleted national leadership, religious and government officials hosted Jerusalem governor Edward Keith-Roach at Jerusalem's Shariah court to announce the dates of the 1938 festival. This ceremony was usually a banal affair demonstrating British respect for Palestine's Islamic culture. During a time of mass insurrection, though, this humble event took on new meaning. In the presence of the country's top colonial rulers, Arab officials expressed a benign plea declaring their hope that they would receive their rights the next time the pilgrimage took place.[18]

The festival, though, presented a dilemma by conducting the ceremonies without its main protagonist: the mufti. Although in the past the Nashashibi faction had favored boycotting the festival, in 1938 the two factions reversed tactics: the Husayni faction endorsed a boycott, and the Nashashibis supported participating. Officially, the mufti's supporters claimed they were canceling the festival to express solidarity with those suffering under Britain's harsh military reprisals; more likely they were protesting their leader's absence, precisely the reason the Nashashibis wanted to participate. So eager were members of the Nashashibi family to displace the mufti as the central figure at the festival that Fakhri Nashashibi had proposed to inscribe his family's name on a banner and have villagers escort it to the Moses shrine.[19]

On the first day of the festival, despite the fighting that ravaged the country and daily reports of attacks, spectators from Jerusalem began assembling to watch the anticipated entrance of the Nablus contingent. They enthusiastically waited on balconies and on the parapets of the city's walls. Boy Scouts darted up and down Jerusalem's streets, selling ceremonial badges, awed by

the sight of empty streets. Only a small group of pilgrims, joined by members of the ulama and led by the Muslim orphanage band, carried the sacred banners to the municipal tent. Although young activists had issued an announcement declaring Nablus's boycott, the editors of *al-Difaʿ* published the program for the celebrations to be held the following day (Sunday) for the Hebron pilgrims' arrival. Yet they, too, were convinced not to attend.[20] Once again, spectators were puzzled to find that no parade had arrived. On the pilgrims' return from the shrine on Thursday, April 21, small crowds greeted the parade of the sacred banners at Raʾs al-ʿAmud. The crowds were so anemic that the ceremonial march to retire the Nabi Musa banner at the Husayni residence of al-Dar al-Kabira (the Great House) arrived shortly after noon, well before the usual time it took to arrive by the evening.[21] These depleted crowds afforded the British the opportunity to seize wanted men, such as arresting an *awqaf* clerk whom the British had recently discharged from his post.[22]

The British gladly welcomed a festival shorn of nationalist chants, boisterous crowds, and hostile pilgrims. Officials gleefully noted the "complete failure of Nebi Musa as a political measure."[23] They attributed the sparse attendance to the inability of the Husaynis to dole out "lavish" sums to entice people to attend.[24] By "failure," though, the British understood the festival solely as a political act directed against them, not as a religious activity from which many Arabs continued to derive great spiritual and cultural fulfillment.

The following year, security concerns led the British to cancel the celebrations. One official offered little explanation for this extreme measure, curtly noting, "The Nebi Musa ceremonies were not held."[25] The casual manner the Jerusalem district office entered this information demonstrates how politically triumphant the British had become.[26] Even the *Palestine Post*, accustomed to regularly providing extensive coverage of the ceremonies, merely announced the news in a small header on the top corner of page two.[27] That year, Keith-Roach explained that the Palestine government had also taken steps to "curtail many ceremonies in collaboration" with authorities from other religious communities. He assured them that these suppressions "in no way detracted from their rights and privileges," a familiar refrain from colonial rulers.[28] Despite the cancellation of the festival, the British maintained a corridor of troops to prevent pilgrims marching into the city.[29]

By 1940, the British now governed Palestine securely enough to reorder and reconfigure the festival in new and radical ways. These changes would leave their colonial imprimatur upon the ceremonies in ways as extensive as those the Ottomans introduced in the mid-nineteenth century. This new festival excised its most problematic feature, the unruly assembly of pilgrims. Absent the main ritual actor of the Mandate-era celebrations, Amin Husayni,

and an audience too reticent to voice nationalist and anticolonial rhetoric, the ritual's new auteur recalibrated the ceremonies to declare their political supremacy over Palestinians and maintain the pretense of respectful guardians of Palestine's Islamic culture.

The British outlined these new restrictions approximately a month before the 1940 festival opened. The Jerusalem district commissioner intimated to SMC officials that he did not want to proceed with the ceremonies, hoping to revive it the following year when people had more money to spend.[30] A few weeks later, Keith-Roach informed the custodians of the Prophet Moses endowment of the high commissioner's decision to forbid the processions or the carrying of banners in Jerusalem during the upcoming festival, confining their presence to the Haram al-Sharif and the Moses shrine. The new directives permitted the banners' transport only by motorcar from Bab al-Asbat/St. Stephen's Gate to the shrine, bypassing Raʾs al-ʿAmud.

Shayk al-Din al-Khatib had the unenviable task of announcing these new directives to a gathering of Palestinian religious and government officials. To their chagrin, Muslim officials acquiesced and hoped that they "may not be taken as precedent for years to come." Despite this meek protest, a British official noted that the "Husayni family and the Muslims of Jerusalem received the restrictions well" and the festival "passed off peacefully."[31] Possibly Keith-Roach was aware that Palestinian leaders had likely not taken the news of the festival's restrictions "well," which is why this stalwart of ritual, who boasted of regularly attending the ceremonies, dispatched his assistant to announce these changes.

Brian Gibbs, who had served as acting assistant district commissioner of Jerusalem between 1935 and 1937, sketched these new restrictions in a report he filed near the end of the Mandate before his death in the bombing of the King David Hotel in July 1946. Claiming that the Palestine government had "no objection" to Nabi Musa per se, he outlined how the festival was now restricted to the Haram al-Sharif and the shrine. Ceremonies marking the banners' departure now eliminated the grand processions military and Scout bands were accustomed to leading, even extending these restrictions to other ceremonies.[32] The newly truncated rites permitted the raising of the sacred banners of Nabi Musa, Nabi Da'ud, and al-Aqsa only in a procession within the Haram al-Sharif compound. The Nabi Musa banner could be retrieved from Dar al-Mufti in a procession to the Haram through Bab al-Nazir (Bab al-Habs). The new regulations permitted the sacred banners to be raised only as the procession departed the Haram from the northeastern gate of Bab al-Asbat to the Old City's egress of St. Stephen's Gate (also named Bab al-Asbat). Upon exiting, the banners would be removed from their staves, folded, and taken by motor car to the shrine. The ceremonies marking the

return of the banners followed similar procedures.[33] The banners, always a symbol of incitement in British eyes, now disappeared as a public spectacle.

Spectators who once had packed Jerusalem's streets leading to Raʾs al-ʿAmud now dwindled in number. The abbreviated festival stripped the ceremonies of its most iconic images—pilgrims and banners. No longer would each contingent herald their arrival with musicians and Sufis playing their instruments; no longer would pilgrims raise Sufi, town, and village banners that blurred Jerusalem's streets in a pastiche of colors.[34] If the festival had always posed a security threat, then these reordered ceremonies obviated that concern by limiting the ritual actors to British and Arab officials in a more highly choreographed and restricted arena.

Ironically, the restructured ceremonies achieved what modern Islamic reformers had attempted to suppress at mulids and other popular ceremonies—the impulsive, unscripted religiosity of pilgrims.[35] The restructured festival permanently subverted opportunities for pilgrims to express a religious habitus in fluid and erratic ways, such as singing, dancing, or striving to touch sacred banners. The British had always regarded these practices as chaotic and potentially violent. Concomitantly, Gibbs's report twice mentioned the availability of the police to "control" crowds at the Haram al-Sharif, with additional security ready, if needed.

After suffering defeat and witnessing their leaders exiled or imprisoned, Palestine's Arab leaders submitted to the British designs on the festival. In many ways, the Arab elite were put in the same position as the British had been when they first entered Palestine. Presented with the challenge of hosting a ceremony that would demonstrate the finality of Ottoman rule, Jerusalem governor Ronald Storrs coaxed the military "to give and take" and participate in the 1918 ceremonies so as not to draw too much attention to the fact that the British had just supplanted four hundred years of Ottoman Islamic rule.[36] Now, the Arabs had to learn the art of "give and take." The festival allowed the elite to "camouflage, naturalize, or contest asymmetries of power" that downplayed the tension between the ideal of independence their people sought with the reality of harsh military rule.[37] In effect, the festival had become a ritual demonstrating Palestinian obeisance to British rule.

Clearly, the British continued to value the punctilio of conducting their "traditional" roles, albeit in a festival deprived of its nationalist, anticolonial, and militant inflections. Keith-Roach took great satisfaction in watching the 1940 festival. Enthusiastically, he noted a "good parade of banners" inside the Haram and at the shrine. While five thousand attended the opening ceremonies, a smaller number watched its return.[38] Some Palestinians, though, attempted to revive the recalcitrant spirit they were accustomed to expressing. A few young boys hoped to incite the crowds with provocative shouts, and a

supporter of Hajj Amin posted the former mufti's photograph in the souk in Nablus, though these efforts failed to stir any action.[39]

Despite these new restrictions, British colonialism remained prominently on display. In the new mise-en-scène of the post-1937 ceremonies, the ritual activity focused on the joint appearance of Palestine's Arab notables, Islamic authorities, and high-ranking British officials. Absent large contingents of pilgrims, Sufis, musicians, and Scouts, Arabic newspapers turned their attention to recording an esteemed coterie of participants. This group of Arab religious and political leaders and British officials attended all the familiar ceremonies, such as the "Call," the reception and the presentation of the sacred banners at the Haram al-Sharif and the procession into and out of it.[40]

The account of the closing ceremonies of the 1940 festival reveals how these abbreviated rituals in no way compromised British participation. On the contrary, they accrued an amplified presence after Amin Husayni, Scouts, Sufis, musicians, and village and town contingents no longer distracted the spectators' gaze. In the procession marking the conclusion of the ceremonies, religious dignitaries bore the sacred banners surrounded by police and the chief of the Criminal Investigation Department in an orderly procession into the Haram al-Sharif beginning at 9:00 a.m. Because this procession did not have to maneuver around obstreperous crowds, it ended quickly at 9:50 a.m., far sooner than it usually took to complete. The objective, though, was not to abbreviate the length of the ceremonies but to erase images associated with Palestinian identity. The Nabi Musa banner now came folded, not hoisted in the air as it had customarily arrived before. After a shaykh of the al-Aqsa mosque recited the Fatiha (the first sura of the Qu'ran), the *mutawallis* of the Nabi Musa *waqf*, alongside officials from the SMC and Awqaf, Keith-Roach, and other district governors, assembled behind the police. The mutawallis surrendered the banners to a group of muezzins, who then performed their new task of carrying them from Bab al-Habs to Bab al-Asbat. Usually, this procession took hours to complete, but it ended after a mere fifteen minutes. The British had proven so eager to restrict not just participants of the modern festival (e.g., villagers, Sufis, Scouts, etc.) and images (i.e., sacred banners) that in 1940 they also canceled the ceremonial march to the Husayni home of al-Dar al-Kabira, where the Prophet Moses banner was retired, intent on effacing any association of the festival with the Husayni family. Despite these newly truncated ceremonies, crowds of pilgrims attended the closing ceremonies in large numbers. They attended, as *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* described, to perform a *farida* (religious duty), revealing once again how many Palestinians regarded the festival as an act of religious worship.[41]

During the war years, the festival closely observed and strictly enforced these restrictions. Not only did the British take comfort in pilgrims celebrating

FIGURE 7.1. *Jerusalem District Commissioner Edward Keith-Roach receives the banners, 1941 (Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, 21268)*

the 1941 Nabi Musa ceremonies in a "calm" and a "quiet and peaceful manner" without "trouble," but they also proudly witnessed how well "everyone obeyed the orders of the administration" and refrained from cheers "of any kind for any personality," a novelty at a public event known for chaotic crowds and acerbic anticolonial chants. This reordered festival borrowed from familiar colonial efforts to discipline the colonized body as submissive and orderly.[42] The British imposed this discipline by curating ritual actors such as Arab and Islamic officials, redirecting processional routes, and suppressing imagery. Arab officials understood the value the British placed on maintaining order, which is why one wrote to the high commissioner to thank him for his "great effort" in providing security during the 1945 festival.[43]

The ceremony held in 1943 may have been an aberration; for the first time in many years, the British permitted processions in and out of the city, though they still prohibited the parade to the Raʾs al-ʿAmud pavilion. The "largest crowds for many years" assembled to greet contingents arriving from traditional centers, as well as from Jaffa and Ramla. Pilgrims attended, despite the new legal impediments the British imposed on public processions.[44]

A notable consequence of the constrained and abbreviated ceremonies stripped the festival of its spontaneity and, for some visitors, dampened its convivial atmosphere. As the *Palestine Post* explained in 1942, the "usual procession of out-of-town contingents" did not occur because of the war.[45] One report estimated the attendance of four thousand to five thousand spectators, much smaller crowds than in past years.[46] Subhi Ghusha, who attended the ceremonies before and after the mufti fled Palestine in 1937, observed the differences between the two periods. He surmised that the British suppression of Palestinian political activity after 1937 was mirrored in the deflated enthu-

siasm at Nabi Musa, claiming it had "lost a part of its beauty," since people were less willing to confront the Mandate and the Zionists. The last festival he attended in 1946 was "not passionate and not well attended."[47]

The festival had experienced a sudden shift, from a celebration inflected with popular religiosity and nationalist passions to a staid ceremony dominated by religious and colonial officials. Arabic newspapers seized on this transformation. Soon the festival of the Amin Husayni era had become a memory, compelling writers to recount past celebrations. They recalled the former festivals with nostalgia, contrasting vignettes of past revelry with the subdued images of the current ceremonies. Writing in *al-Jihad* in 1945, Mahmud ʿAbidi described it as something "the Arabs of Palestine *used to* [*kana*] enjoy." He reminisced about a time when pilgrims, Sufis, and dancers lined up in grand processions and chanted nationalist and religious anthems, recalling these scenes to an audience less familiar with the festival's storied past.[48] In "How and When did the Festival Begin?" director of Islamic endowments (*mudir al-awqaf*) ʿAbdullah Mukhlis reflected on the shrine and festival's long history, contrasting sharply the period before and after 1937.[49] The government-sponsored journal *al-Muntada* recalled the annual celebrations fondly as a popular and folk festival but shrewdly avoided any mention of its nationalist reputation. Instead, they hailed the festival as "the best of the old heritage," recalling how pilgrims from towns and villagers used to gather in Jerusalem. "No wonder," it added, were the days of the festival the most joyful time of year for visitors.[50]

However, the most conspicuous change after 1937 appeared with stripping the ceremonial role Amin Husayni had designated for himself. In his absence, the department of endowments assumed greater control over the festival's affairs. While officials from the Awqaf, al-Aqsa mosque, and the Haram al-Sharif are recorded as participating in the ceremonies after 1937, there is no mention of the mufti. The British had not placed a new person in the post, allowing it to lapse.[51] As a result, nowhere was Palestine's leading religious official greeting pilgrims, saluting them as they cheered him in the procession, or resolving disputes, as Amin had once done.[52]

A new tradition also seems to have evolved. During the war, British officials appeared more regularly at the shrine, when previously their attendance was limited and infrequent. In 1941, Keith-Roach attended a lunch that the mutawallis of the shrine had prepared. When the mufti had hosted these lunches and invited foreign, colonial, and Arab dignitaries, he remained its focus; after 1937, the British usurped much of the attention. Mr. Miller of the YMCA, faculty from St. Luke's College in Haifa, Major Shadforth of the Palestine Police, and British and Arab officials of the Palestine government attended a luncheon at the 1941 festival. Boy Scouts who were more accustomed to

chanting incendiary slogans against the British now greeted the guests with a guard of honor. After the British exerted repressive measures to quell the revolt, officials could confidently attend these ceremonies with few concerns for their safety, captured in the *Palestine Post* headline covering this luncheon: "Warmly Welcomed by Pilgrims."[53] During the war years, a new participant began to appear. The American consul in Jerusalem attended the presentation of the banners and other rituals, portending the expanded role his country would assume after 1945.[54]

The rapid societal changes Arabs experienced during the three decades of British rule may lead to speculation that Arabs had withdrawn from the Nabi Musa festival because they viewed it as a cultural anachronism. By World War II, conservative religious values led people to rebuff "popular" religious traditions. The Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin) began to open branches in Palestine, attracting a membership of between twelve thousand and twenty thousand.[55] Recent works by Salim Tamari and Itamar Radai add to this debate by identifying how Palestinians in inland cities, such as Jerusalem, experienced modernity differently than those along the coast. Tamari phrased this experience as the "mountain against the sea," pointing to the Nabi Rubin festival as an example of Jaffa's liberal culture, resembling more a "secular" celebration than an exclusively religious festival.[56] Radai attributes these two cities' experiences with modernity to their respective fates during the Nakba.[57]

Despite these societal changes, Palestinian pilgrims continued to flock to the festival. Large crowds attended the 1944 ceremony of the unfurling of the banners.[58] A reporter from the *Palestine Post* who accompanied dervishes to the shrine discussed the many taxis and buses that crowded the Damascus Gate to meet the demand for transportation.[59] He noted how pilgrims had already rented 190 rooms at the shrine in advance of the festival. Upon reaching the shrine, he marveled at all the activity, such as the distribution of food, the vendors selling various drinks, the impromptu cafés providing hookahs (*nargelieh*), a radio set up for entertainment, and a playground for children outside the shrine. A week later, Gazans celebrated the festival of al-Muntar. People danced, sang, and enjoyed the festivities as they trekked up to the shrine at the top of the hill of Muntar.[60]

Moreover, the British continued to recognize the importance Muslims attached to these ceremonies. At the final Nabi Musa festival to be celebrated in Mandate Palestine on April 4–11, 1947, the British made a vigorous effort to maintain the pretense of continuing to respect Palestine's Islamic culture. They needed to magnify these goals because tensions in the country had escalated and were approaching a regionwide conflagration. Less than two months after the British announced their planned withdrawal from the country, they dispatched "a large party of senior Military and Government officials" to the

shrine, since celebrations in Jerusalem were canceled. The commanding general, chief secretary, inspector general of police, and the Jerusalem governor all attended. These officials joined Arab consuls from Jerusalem for lunch at the shrine, partaking in the familiar meal of rice and mutton.[61] Even as the British were planning their evacuation, they continued to cling to the cultural precepts that had guided their understanding of Arabs and Muslims since they had first occupied the country: as a people, like all their colonized subjects, dominated by primitive beliefs and customs. The British retained these views despite the evidence that Palestinians possessed a national consciousness and identity.

The following year would bring about the dismemberment of Palestine as a country and the onslaught of a refugee crisis. During a month that included the momentous events of the death of Arab military leader ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Husayni and the massacre of villagers of Dayr Yassin by Zionist forces, the festival's organizers conducted the "Call" to announce the upcoming schedule. Eventually, they declined to conduct the ceremonies in such a chaotic environment.[62] One Arab resident bemoaned this decision:

> There will be no feast, even this year. . . . No pilgrimage and no "Saffeh"—procession—with the flags and banners down to the Jericho site of the Holy Prophet's grave, as we have always had. Even during the "thourah" [i.e., *thawra*, revolt]—disturbances of 1936/1939—we celebrated Nebi Musa . . . and now they say we cannot have it, they are afraid the Jews would attack at a place where tens of thousands of Moslems gather. There'll be no "Debka" (sword dance) this year, and no feasting in honour of Musa, Moses, the Prophet, who spoke to Allah.[63]

Less than a century after Ottoman officials and Jerusalem notables had launched a new civic experiment by designing the Prophet Moses festival as a civic pageant, the ceremonies were unable to withstand the twin challenges of collapsing colonial rule and a more powerful militant Zionist movement. Although by World War II the festival ceremonies had become a mere simulacrum of their earlier, nationalist iterations of the 1920s and 1930s, the remaining vestiges of what was once a convivial, boisterous affair, drawing pilgrims and spectators of different faiths and nationalities from throughout the country, had faded. No longer would these pilgrims dominate Jerusalem's streets. It would take another half-century to revive the festival, when a new generation of organizers would reproduce it yet again in new ways to meet the political challenges that rose after the Nakba.

CONCLUSION:
THE NABI MUSA FESTIVAL AFTER 1948

SINCE ITS ORIGINS AS A HUMBLE SHRINE IN THE DESERT southeast of Jerusalem, ritual pilgrimage (*ziyara*) to Nabi Musa proved malleable, receptive to the interests and demands of a diverse range of participants. Different social groups vied to impose their symbolic order upon the festival as "an arena of competing interests," such as its ritual actors, processional routes, images, and rhetoric.[1] Although not all social groups exercised equal influence over its symbolic order, the festival produced a panoply of discursive messages about various social, religious, and political issues.

For much of its history, the shrine and festival upheld the practices of the "traditional ziyara," where pilgrims performed widely held devotional activities at a time when the boundaries between "popular" and "official" Islam were blurred. In the mid-nineteenth century, festival organizers transformed the festival into a civil pageant primarily centered on Jerusalem to confirm the Islamic identity of the Ottoman empire in an era of modern, Western reforms and reify the new social hierarchy of the fin-de-siècle city. Upon the arrival of the British, colonial officials immediately participated in the festival to make the discursive claim that Palestine's Islamic culture could continue in an era of foreign rule. British discoursing on the 1920 riots further justified colonial rule to undo the endemic racial hostility that an Orientalist discourse claimed existed between Arabs and Jews.

Although Palestine's social groups competed to control the festival's symbols, Arab elite families wielded the most influence. The mufti Amin al-Husayni converted the festival into a nationwide and nationalistic event to give ballast to his status as Palestine's preeminent Islamic and national leader. While his efforts at curating youth groups and pilgrims from throughout Palestine had the appearance of nation-building or the mass mobilization of citizens, his objectives were solipsistic. At the festival he forged an elite version

of Palestinian nationalism dedicated to upholding diplomacy and restricting national identity to the state of Palestine. Other elite families similarly conscripted the festival to serve their shared social-class embrace of modern, Western values, particularly ideals of communal tolerance, gender relations, and nonviolence.

However, the Nabi Musa festival became a venue for non-elite groups to posit unique notions of identity, politics, and religious beliefs. Both Arab nationalist youth and anti-Zionist Jewish communists challenged how Arab leaders envisioned the nation and its identity. The participation of villagers, tribes, women, and Sufis manifested the most pointed examples of the festival's polysemic nature. Throughout the years of the modern festival, they maintained local sources of identity and exhibited enthusiasm in performing ziyara to the shrine over the festival's recent manifestation as a nationalist ceremony. They subscribed to an understanding of modernity that did not require them to abandon local loyalties, discard traditional forms of worship, or restrict identity to the state of Palestine.

JORDANIAN RULE: 1948 TO 1967

After the collapse of Palestine in 1948 and Jordan's absorption of the West Bank, the Prophet Moses shrine and festival entered a new phase. In this expanded Kingdom of Jordan, Palestinians outnumbered native Jordanians; Palestinians also harbored a distinct national identity and political consciousness, having struggled against the British and Zionists for three decades. They mistrusted King ʿAbdullah (d. 1951) for his role in the 1948 war, eventually leading to his assassination. The king and his successor, his grandson Hussein (r. May 1953 to 1999), approached Palestinian identity cautiously, concerned that it competed with the loyalty they expected all the kingdom's citizens to devote exclusively to the monarchy. Jordan's attempts to impose their order over the Nabi Musa festival represented one response to these challenges.

Jordan approached the shrine and festival in the same way they managed all the Islamic sites under their custody after 1948: eager to cultivate an association with their Christian and Islamic heritage but cautious to avoid association with any that elicited a distinctive Palestinian identity.[2] Eventually, the Nabi Musa festival fell victim to diluting traces of Palestinian identity in the kingdom. In the first festival under Jordanian rule, government officials balked at allowing it to be held. Palestinian festival organizers announced the dates of the upcoming festival on Friday, April 8, 1949. Immediately, a report appeared in the press instructing Muslims to mourn the victims of the war by "sacrificing their favorite amusement." Later, Jordan prohibited pilgrims

from holding a *zaffa* (parade) into Jerusalem, the ceremony's signature feature. Only a few religious leaders and administrators of the Moses endowment were permitted to carry the sacred banners from the Haram al-Sharif to the shrine, replicating the restrictions Britain had once imposed.[3] Yet, even these restrictive conditions would not endure. In 1950, these administrators (*mutawallis*) urged the Jordanian Director of Religious Endowments to open the shrine and allow them to begin preparations for the festival.[4] The tone of urgency suggests that the new Jordanian officials overseeing the shrine's affairs may have equivocated in undertaking the ceremonies.

A year later, the Jordanian state clarified its attitude to the festival, anxious to contain the ceremony's potential to stir nationalist passions when the Hashemite monarchy faced challenges in its bid to assert its legitimacy. In March 1951, the shrine's mutawallis petitioned Jerusalem's governor to permit visits to the shrine and allow the celebrations to continue. They culled a memory of the festival's legendary origins, claiming that celebrations had been held since Saladin had founded it. They inquired why all the Christian denominations continued their religious celebrations in Jerusalem, while they had not been allowed to perform Nabi Musa for the past four years.[5] They pleaded to receive the endowment's revenues and begin preparations.[6] Jerusalem's new Jordanian rulers hesitated at allowing the annual ceremonies to continue. In fact, it would survive only one more year.

By 1953, Jordan banned the processions in Jerusalem and limited all celebrations to the shrine itself. This decision, though, was drastically taken immediately before the 1953 ceremonies were set to open. As the date of the festival approached (Friday, March 28, 1953), one Moses *waqf* official informed the Haram al-Sharif's police to prepare for the arrival of large crowds to the Haram al-Sharif. He urged him to do "what is necessary . . . to protect order and peace."[7] This concern over security may have prompted Jordanian officials to cancel the festival at the eleventh hour. The Jerusalem governor prevented the parade of banners from being performed, harming the endowment's revenues, as one waqf official bemoaned.[8]

While Jordanian officials may have had concerns over security and the arrival of thousands of pilgrims to a pageant known for its vibrant expressions of Palestinian nationalism, the impending coronation of Hussein may have been a more pressing factor. Almost two years after a Palestinian gunman assassinated King ʿAbdullah, the young prince ascended the throne on May 2, 1953. Despite his young age, he toured his kingdom to rally support for his rule and hosted rituals that bestowed him legitimacy as Jordan's new king.[9] Only weeks before Hussein's coronation, Jordanian officials chafed at permitting a public ceremony pregnant with images of Palestinian identity from being held.

In the following years, Jordanian officials marginalized the already maligned Nabi Musa ceremonies when they permitted only individual pilgrimages to the shrine, abolishing any remnant of the Jerusalem festivities. The shrine had been converted in 1950 into an encampment for the Jordanian army, making individual pilgrimages difficult.[10] Storing weapons and uniforms there epitomized Jordan's contemptuous attitude toward the holy site. Soldiers slept on the top floors and separated themselves from the few visitors who continued to trickle in. King ʿAbdullah may have contributed to his country's dismissive attitude, scoffing at its claim to contain the tomb of a biblical prophet.[11]

Not all the Hashemite monarchy's subjects accepted these restrictions. Palestinians who were accustomed to visiting persisted in their traditions. In 1954, one awqaf official complained that although the Jordanian department of endowments had not sponsored the festival that year, pilgrims had insisted on arriving outside of the allotted times of visiting. These pilgrims, the official complained, came from cities, villages, and refugee camps, seeking the blessings of the shrine, with many of them staying in the building two days or more, just as they had done during the festivals of earlier years. The official planned to prevent further unauthorized visits by ordering guards to be placed at the shrine.[12] These additional restrictions gradually led to eliding the festival into the realm of public memory, even as some Palestinians resisted this new meaning. They continued to define the shrine as a site of convivial and spiritual pursuits, even if the state no longer wished to have it serve these purposes.

ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINE AUTHORITY: 1967 TO 2017

As Jordan's actions demonstrated, government officials eschewed any attempts to revive the festival's nationalist reputation. Israel adopted the same attitude when it occupied the West Bank in 1967, subjecting the festival to the demands of a new authority.

The Prophet Moses festival represented a challenge to claims proclaiming Jerusalem as the "united and eternal" capital of Israel. The need to uphold Jerusalem as a Jewish city rendered competing non-Jewish images threatening, especially those highlighting the city's Arab and Muslim heritage.[13] The competing Israeli and Palestinian nationalist claims over the land intensified the role religious sites assumed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both in Jerusalem and throughout historic Palestine. As Meron Benvenisti asserts, "Control of sacred sites . . . is a preeminent source of power," seen as a "spoil of war."[14] As

each religious group claims a sacred site as "their" place, holy places become sites of "political theatre" in this battle for the "exclusivity" of each religious group.[15] This understanding of sacred space led Israel to subvert Islamic and Arab identity in the Arab towns and villages they controlled after 1948. They converted some Muslim shrines and mosques for Jewish religious worship or secular purposes such as restaurants; in other instances, Israel destroyed them.[16] The sites that have survived have no local community to care for them and have thus deteriorated over the years. Moreover, fewer Muslims practice rituals associated with these shrines, and most do not live in communities where these shrines were once located.[17] Nonetheless, while shrines no longer comprise the "mainstream part of religious Islam in Palestine," the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has intensified the political and cultural significance of those that remain.[18]

In this bid to limit Palestinian claims to the land, especially religious ones, Israeli officials continued the Jordanian policy of banning the Moses festival in Jerusalem and restricting access to the maqam. They designated the area around the shrine as a military zone, imposing further obstacles on Palestinian pilgrims seeking to visit it.[19] Israel permitted only personal visits, though only a small number of visitors ever arrived.

Although Israel imposed these obstacles throughout the first two decades of its rule, it did permit celebrations to resume in 1987. A Jerusalem Islamic organization, Lajnat al-Muhammadiyya (Muhammadan Council), in cooperation with the Idarat al-Awqaf al-Islamiyya (Department of Islamic Endowments) in Amman, organized a mawsim at the shrine.[20] Ifrah Zilberman argues that much of the incentive to revive the festival derived from West Bank Palestinians seeking an opportunity to support Jordan's claim over Palestinian Islamic holy sites and restore Jordan to a more influential position in the West Bank.[21] They revived the festival not as a folkloric vestige of the past but as a living historical memory that animated contemporary conflicts. Memories of the festival's nationalist past appeared in a poster printed to advertise the events. The poster narrated the origins of the annual mawsim, relating the popular tale of how Saladin, described as an "Islamic hero" (*al-batl al-Islami*), founded the festival to deter the country's "treacherous enemies" from capturing the city and its holy sites.[22] These historical myths provoked an image of the festival as a metaphor to resist the current Israeli occupation. The organizers revived the practice of having the pilgrims assemble first at the Haram al-Sharif, led by musical bands and Sufis holding flags, before departing to the shrine. Estimates placed the crowds at fifteen thousand, with at least a thousand cars transporting pilgrims.[23] The newly revived ceremonies tweaked a historical memory of the "traditional" Mandate-era festival by staging a diminutive replica of the grand processions into the shrine, with ten

Sufis carrying only one flag. Groups of young people marched into the shrine dressed in paramilitary garb.[24] Although the festival attempted to endorse a Jordanian claim to administer Islamic holy sites, the Palestinian uprising (*intifada*) against Israeli rule in December 1987 immediately dispensed with any proposals to unify the West Bank with Jordan.

The Prophet Moses ceremonies would undergo another change after the newly formed Palestine Authority (al-Sulta al-Filastiniyya, henceforth PA) assumed administrative responsibilities over some regions of the West Bank and Gaza in 1994, including the area around the shrine. The following year, the Muhammadan Council revived the celebrations, which had organized the 1987 festival.[25] In 1997, the PA Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments assumed all responsibility for organizing the festival.[26] The festival was less a site of a public reenactment of the Mandate-era festival and more an example of "*social* invocation of past events, persons, places, and symbols in variable social settings."[27] The revived ceremonies borrowed images and rites of past festivals, serving as cues for a generation that had little familiarity with the festival before 1948 or possessed memories of it only through images or popular stories. The revived ceremonies were part of the larger Palestinian project to stoke a vestige of the era before 1948 by collecting oral histories, organizing staged commemorations, or recording the details of their former villages.[28]

Unlike the celebrations at the shrine before 1948, the PA-sponsored festival devoted ritual space to orchestrated events. The ceremonies lasted approximately one week, as the shrine's festive atmosphere combined religious rituals with political pageantry. Palestinian newspapers published notices from the Ministry of Religious Affairs encouraging the public to attend. At the 1998 ceremonies, Sufi orders and dervishes carrying canes, drums, and tambourines participated alongside Scout troops, a scene that one participant recalled resembled those of an "era of past festivals."[29] However, these ceremonies were less a simulacrum of the Mandate-era festival and more a product of how Palestinians remembered (or imagined) how the festival had once existed. While the festival appeared as reviving a long-held Palestinian tradition, Talal Asad cautions that the modern invocation of "tradition" is not the exact replica of the past but relies on "the practitioner's conceptions of what is *apt performance*, and of how the past is related to present practices, that will be crucial for tradition, not the apparent repetition of an old form."[30]

Although only a few hundred people attended the first PA celebrations, the pilgrims who visited were impressed to see five Sufi orders raising the banners they had preserved from the Mandate era. Yet, the ecstatic forms of rituals Sufis performed in front of Moses's tomb and the sight of women joining them in mystical forms of dance troubled a more conservative audience, less accustomed to these unorthodox practices.[31]

Emma Aubin-Boltanski has conducted extensive ethnographic research on the revived PA-era celebrations. She finds that the images of the Palestinian flag, portraits of Arafat, Scouts marching, and Sufis carrying banners and conducting their mystical rituals demonstrate how the PA had reappropriated the festival and its images as a "mnemonic" technique to capture a memory of the past.[32] Another way to conceive of the revived festivities is as a palimpsest. The original features of the festival that had once existed in the late Ottoman and British Mandate eras such as the image of Scouts, Sufis, and banners remained visible over the layers of the recent rituals the festival's new impresarios introduced, such as speeches and orchestrated events. The new ceremonies held the same goals Amin Husayni and the SMC had held during the Mandate years. Although President Arafat did not participate, the presence of the PA at the shrine loomed large. Both the SMC and the PA believed they could accrue "symbolic capital" by being involved with the ceremonies, imbuing them with the credentials to lead a Muslim community that sought independence.[33]

While the revived Prophet Moses celebrations appeared similar in form to those of the British era, the religious culture of the two eras was drastically different. After 1948, Arabs no longer engaged in the practice of the visitation to tombs as widely as they once had, coupled with a growth of conservative values condemning these practices as un-Islamic.[34] Nonetheless, the PA coveted the festival's religious symbolism to enhance their credibility as protectors of Palestine's Islamic culture when negotiations with Israel were still tackling the conflict's core issues. During Arafat's time as president, the shrine's courtyard was decorated with banners and flags of the Palestinian national colors, and his image was ubiquitous.[35] A pamphlet promoting tourism to the shrine lauded it as a nationalist institution in the Palestinian national struggle, neglecting to highlight its connection to a much longer tradition of ziyara. The Prophet Moses shrine existed, it stated, as a "proud witness" in Palestine, opposing the occupation forces on the same status as Palestine's other great shrines, such as the al-Aqsa mosque and Christian holy places. The shrine served as a contemporary "historical model" for Palestinians to emulate, in which visiting it could help protect the country's "Arab and Islamic identity."[36]

In addition, Aubin-Boltanski regards the PA-sponsored festival as an attempt to assert a territorial claim to the land. The scene of Sufis and Scouts marching into the shrine assert "territorial actions" common to all pilgrimages.[37] Ironically, though, the access the PA has to the shrine derives from Israeli sufferance. As she explains, the shrine exists as a separate space in the domain of the law where the 1994 agreement permitted the shrine to be placed under the Palestinian Authority's "auspices for religious purposes."[38] The presence of PA preventive security at the shrine may give the impression

of the shrine as "Palestinian territory," but it falls within the jurisdiction of Israeli-controlled "Area C."[39] These arrangements allowed the shrine to be "built and rebuilt every year" by participants and organizers, a ritual sleight of hand that temporarily transformed the shrine into "Palestinian territory."[40]

At the 2014 festival I attended, Sufis from throughout historic Palestine participated, adding to the impressions of the ceremonies as a nationalist event. Representatives holding banners from the Qadari, Disi, Naqshabandi, and Rifayyia orders gathered outside the shrine and ceremoniously entered as they once had done. As they came in, representatives of the PA greeted them. Banners representing various towns arrived with the residents leading their ceremonial march into the shrine. Palestinian Scouts, both girls and boys, wearing sashes with the national colors marched proudly before them. In the courtyard, organizers set up a stage for the official ceremonies and designated seating for an audience that included religious and government dignitaries.[41] Speakers highlighted familiar secular Arab nationalist tropes, such as a nonsectarian vision of Palestinian nationalism. One speaker praised the shrine as one of Palestine's greatest religious sites, in the company of al-Aqsa mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Seating the Palestinian Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Sebastia Theodosios (Bishop ʿAtallah), who enjoys a strong reputation as an outspoken advocate of Palestinian rights, in the front row personified this nonsectarian vision.[42] These orchestrated events upheld the festival as a ritual of civil religion, incorporating both religious and government officials as central actors in an aesthetic celebration of the nation.[43]

The PA officials opened the celebrations by welcoming the audience and recalling the story of Saladin's founding of the shrine. Speakers praised President Mahmud Abbas and former president Yasir Arafat. They championed a future when Jerusalem would be the capital of Palestine. One woman speaker pleaded for national unity and freedom for Jerusalem.

Despite the attempts to inject an image of national unity, the bifurcations that had existed since the formation of the official festival in the late Ottoman period resurfaced. Aubin-Boltanski observed these differences in the festivals she attended between 1997 and 2000, consistent with my observations. This bifurcation manifested spatially. Aubin-Boltanski refers to the shrine's southern courtyard as "secular" space, where Scouts marched, dignitaries delivered speeches, and invited guests and the audience were seated. The northern courtyard, where the tomb of Moses is located, is conversely devoted to more unrehearsed religious activity. Here, Sufis formed circles (*halqa*) and performed rituals, such as the clanging of copper cups (*mubarazat al-kas*).[44] Some years older women have performed traditional folk dances. It does not seem that the two groups coordinated their activities. At times, Sufis competed with the PA for the pilgrims' attention; other times, the Sufis ignored

the PA events. These mystics chose to remain in proximity to the baraka of Moses's tomb, where they chanted in familiar Sufi timber "Allah," repeatedly swaying in rhythmic motions to its cadences. In contrast, the PA published in the local press a schedule of events listing times when troupes and dancers would perform.[45] While these activities, such as "folk dances" and "religious readings," may appear as authentic replicas of the pre-1948 festival, participants never had to be solicited or scheduled to perform in the past.

Not all the traditional pre-Nakba religious traditions have survived. Pilgrims have primarily forgotten the shrines of Sittna ʿAyasha and Hasan al-Raʾi. Located a short distance in the hills outside of the shrine walls, pilgrims no longer visit them, and they collect debris unnoticed.[46] Pilgrims have also discounted the practice of slaughtering sheep to fulfill the pilgrim's vow and sharing this food communally. The most striking absence from the revived ceremonies is the banner of the Prophet Moses itself. Some believed that it had been lost.[47] Not so: a member of the Husayni family possesses this historic artifact. When Aubin-Boltanski inquired why he did not include it in the revived ceremonies, he replied, "The mawsim no longer exists. What is happening today has nothing to do with the real mawsim." Another older man shared his cynicism. He extolled the festival of the Amin Husayni era as a "celebration of the union of Palestine," but today's ceremonies were merely for young people to mingle (*ishammu al-hawa*) and watch the girls, adding, "They did not come to defend Jerusalem."[48] The revived ceremonies and the prominent presence of PA officials and Palestinian national symbols at the shrine are doubtless contested messages. As Laleh Khalili has argued, nationalist narratives are not only contested and "challenged from within and without," but commemorations of past and nationalist events are also themselves challenged, constructed, and reconstructed. As a result, commemoration of the past exhibits a "far less stable notion of historical or national memory."[49]

While the PA has seized on the allure of the shrine and festival in Palestinian national memory and has encouraged or at least tolerated popular religious practices, an official religious pronouncement on the authenticity of the shrine as the final resting place of the Prophet Moses expresses more ambiguity. The official Palestinian news agency WAFA (Wakalat al-Anbaʾ al-Filastiniyya) lauds the shrine's history but claims that it is not associated with Moses because he died in the desert and did not enter Palestine.[50] The first mufti to deliver a sermon at the PA-revived festival, Shaykh Akram, reminded worshippers that according to Islamic belief the location of Moses's tomb is unknown; however, pilgrims were free to worship at the shrine.[51] Shaykh Nuh, the director of religious endowments (*mudir al-awqaf*) in the Jericho region responsible for organizing the annual celebrations, exemplifies these conflicting popular and official views. In my conversations with him,

he stressed the shrine's importance as a nationalist site, not a religious one, explicitly doubting that Moses was indeed buried there. When inspecting the shrine a few days before the festival opened, he instructed the tomb's guard not to let women enter before the festival commenced. He feared that they would perform pre-Islamic (*jahali*) practices, such as praying in front of the tomb. He also informed me of reports of women surreptitiously cutting the sacred banner draped over the tomb, a practice they have been accused of doing in the past, as they vied to seize the banner's baraka. When I entered the tomb during the festival a few days later, indeed, I found a woman prostrate in prayer in front of the tomb, provoking a conservative response from one woman who rebuked her with a dismissive wave of her hand, declaring "*ma fi*" ("there's none of that [here]").

More recently, the Palestinian nationalist dimensions of the shrine have had to compete with a new ritual actor. Since the 2010s, the shrine has benefited from the patronage of the Turkish government through the government-sponsored Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (Türk İşbiriliği ve Koordinasyon Idaresi Başkanği, TIKA). This group has provided funds to restore the shrine, such as cleaning up debris, setting up electricity, and repairing the walls. TIKA's involvement could be seen as part of the Erdogan government's outreach to Muslim countries, in which Palestine assumes a prominent place. Turkish media hails this connection to Palestine and its religious sites.[52] Unlike some segments in the Palestinian government, the TIKA website endorses religious claims of the shrine as Moses's true resting place, highlighting its connection to an Ottoman past.[53] This Turkish presence at the shrine has increased over the years. In 2014, representatives from the country's embassy addressed the crowds, recalling Saladin's role in founding this holy site and calling for Palestinian freedom. Cultural groups, such as a contingent of the Istanbul Tahrihi Türk Müziği (Istanbul History of Turkish Music), regularly participate. Members of this troupe dressed in the robes of janissaries while playing large drums (fig. 8.1).[54] In other years, Turkish whirling dervishes performed. I observed how Palestinian festival organizers fawned over the attendance of the Turkish ambassador and his entourage. Turkey's increasing importance in Palestine is reflected in newspaper advertisements announcing the festival's upcoming dates, where the TIKA logo appeared alongside the PA national crest. In addition, the flags of the two countries were positioned symmetrically, as their ends blended into one blurred image, symbolizing their unity.[55] The advertisements included brief texts highlighting the shrine's Ottoman heritage, even though Palestinians more commonly associate it with the nationalist celebrations of the Mandate period. Nonetheless, the newspaper *Al-Quds* hailed the thousands

FIGURE 8.1. *Official 2014 Palestinian Authority ceremonies at the shrine, with honorary Janissary troops (author's photo)*

of Palestinians and Turks who attended, with photos of Palestinian Scouts and the Turkish military bands performing together.

Yet many pilgrims ignored these events and focused on seeking spiritual and religious pursuits. As mentioned previously, during the official ceremonies, some Sufis performed *dhikr* ceremonies in the southern courtyard while performers entertained the audience and government officials delivered speeches. The mystics continued their performances in the mosque, where pilgrims formed one large *halaqa* rhythmically swaying to the beat of the drums and cymbals, an act forbidden at most other Palestinian mosques.

Some of the men who participated in these Sufi activities were residents of a new program at the shrine. Since the early 2000s, the shrine housed a drug rehabilitation center. A few years after the 1987 revival of the festival, "religious men," as described to me, forcibly brought drug users to the shrine to stem their addiction, though this was not part of a proper drug treatment program. Israeli authorities intervened and closed this "program." In the early 2000s, the group al-Jamʿiyyat al-Huda (Mercy Association) founded a drug rehabilitation center at the shrine under the direction of medical professionals who had formal training and certification in drug treatment programs.

FIGURE 8.2. *Venerating the tomb of the Prophet Moses (photo taken by the author)*

Patients were taken to the shrine to serve as a place to detox and, according to a pamphlet, to "reduce the patient's suffering."[56] Approximately a dozen men at different times remain at the shrine. Unofficially, mysticism is blended into recovery program, though, until further study, it is uncertain to what extent Islam, and specifically mysticism, plays a role in the treatment the residents receive. Many of the men who were members of the rehabilitation program

participated in the dhikr ceremonies during the festival and prepared food for the pilgrims.

The pilgrims who attended the revived PA festival resembled pilgrims who had been visiting the shrine and celebrating its annual festival for centuries. Pilgrims failed to uphold and conform to the symbolic order urban notables, municipal officials, nationalist leaders, colonial figures, and religious leaders had designed. The pilgrims who performed mystical forms of worship, dancing, and singing during the official pageant reaffirmed a theme woven throughout the shrine's history. Since its founding, it has continually served as a spiritual center to partake in its sanctity.

Despite the many demands placed on Palestinians to engage with the political challenges of dispossession since 1948 and Israeli occupation since 1967, the festival's nationalist inflections demanded their attention less than visiting the *maqam* as a sacred site to perform ziyara and celebrate the mawsim al-Nabi Musa. Their devotion to worshipping at the shrine is a testimony of the Palestinian attachment with a sacred landscape. Their continued engagement with Nabi Musa predates the festival's incarnation as a political and nationalist event and affirms its place in Palestine's religious culture.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. The section from Nabi Musa to Jerusalem is marked on the Palestine Exploration Fund map, sheets 17–18.

2. For discussions of various approaches to the study of ritual, see Bell, *Ritual Perspectives* and *Ritual Theory*; Kertzer, *Ritual*; Morris, *Anthropological Studies*; Albera and Eade, "Pilgrimage Studies," and "International Perspectives," 1–22. Catherine Bell notes that universal definitions of ritual can obscure the many different reasons people produce ritualized actions. *Ritual Perspectives*, 82.

3. For a critique of this approach, see Chiffoleau and Madoeuf, "Introduction"; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*, 1–14.

4. Goldziher, "Veneration of Saints," 303.

5. Kelly and Kaplan, "History, Structure, and Ritual," 120.

6. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*; Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion*.

7. Geertz, *Interpretation of Culture*; Turner, *Forest of Symbols*.

8. Asad, "Anthropological Conceptions," 237.

9. Bell, *Ritual Perspectives*, 76–88; Bloch, *Ritual, History*; Ortner, *High Religion*; Comaroff, *Body of Power*.

10. Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 1.

11. Eade "Introduction," 2; Sallnow "Pilgrimage," 143.

12. Davis, *Society and Culture*.

13. Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*.

14. Ryan, "American Parade," 133 and 137.

15. Eickelman, *Moroccan Islam*; Breger, *Sacred Space*; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*; Chambert-Loir, "Saints and Ancestors"; Chiffoleau and Madoeuf, *Pèlerinages*; Schielke, *Perils of Joy*; Mulder, *Shrines of the 'Alids;* Albera and Couroucli, *Sharing Sacred Spaces*; Meri, *Cult of Saints*; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*.

16. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*; Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*; Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*.

17. Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*; Sorek, *Palestinian Commemoration*; Aghaie, *Martyrs of Karbala*; Aubin-Boltanski, *Pèlerinages et nationalisme*; Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*; Podeh, *Politics of National Celebrations*; Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth"; Torab, *Performing Islam*; Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*; Aghaie, *Women of Karbala*.

18. Morris, *Righteous Victims*; Elpeleg, *Grand Mufti*.

19. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*; Darwaza, *Khamsa wa Tisʿun ʿAman*; al-Hut, *Mudhakkirat*, 211–213.

20. Roger Friedland and Richard Hecht examine the festival's politicization during the British Mandate era and highlight its militant expressions of Palestinian nationalism. See "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage." Kamil al-ʿAsali provides a valuable summary of the shrine and festival during different historical periods but presents the festival as espousing a uniform nationalist message. *Mawsim*.

21. Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine," 22. See also Fishman, *Jews and Palestinians*, 11–15.

22. Bloch, *From Blessings to Violence*, 10.

CHAPTER 1: THE TRADITIONAL *ZIYARA*

1. For the various typologies of Islamic shrines, see Grabar, "Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures." For shrines in Palestine, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*; McCown, "Muslim Shrines"; Wilson et al., *Survey of Western Palestine*, 1:258–273; Petersen, "Archaeology of Muslim Pilgrimage," and *Bones of Contention*.

2. Al-Harawi, *Kitab al-Isharat*, 18, and Meri, *Lonely Wayfarer's Guide*, 36. See Wheeler, *Moses in the Qurʾan*.

3. Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred*, 6.

4. The word most associated with holy and revered figures in Islam is *wali*, which at its root means "to be near" or "to be close" to someone or something. Taylor, "Saints, Ziyara, Qissa," 106.

5. Aghaie, *Martyrs of Karbala*; Meri, "Ziyara."

6. Memon, *Ibn Taymiyya's Struggle*, 24–84; Fierro, "Treaties against Innovations."

7. Meri, *Cult of Saints*, 15–26, 101–108; Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*, xxviii–xxxv.

8. See Meri, "Aspects of Baraka," 46. Scholars have employed various terms to describe this sacred force: "hierophany" in Eliade, *Myth and Reality*; "*praesentia*" in Brown, *Cult of the Saints*; "numinous" in Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*.

9. Wheeler, *Mecca and Eden*; Talmon-Heller, "Graves, Relics and Sanctuaries," 611–613.

10. Dupront, "Pèlerinage et lieux sacrés," 198, cited in Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred*, 9. For the different motivations that led pilgrims to pursue baraka, see Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety*, 208.

11. Petersen, "Three Muslim Shrines," 98.

12. Talmon-Heller, "Graves, Relics and Sanctuaries," 618–620.

13. Brinner, *ʿAraʾis al-Majalis*; Goldziher, "Israʾiliyyat"; Hanson, "Muslim Literature."

14. Grabar, "Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures"; Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety*.

15. Frishkopf, "Venerating," 113.

16. Ephrat, *Spiritual Wayfarers*; Taylor, *In the Vicinity*.

17. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*.

18. Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety*, 207; Taylor, *In the Vicinity*, 62–63.

19. Al-Yaʿqubi, *Taʾrikh al-Yaʿqubi*, 1:45–46; Ibn Khaldun, *Taʾrikh ibn Khaldun*, 3:86–87.

20. El'ad, "Some Aspects of the Islamic Traditions"; Sadan, "Tombeau de Moïse."

21. El'ad, "Some Aspects of the Islamic Traditions."

22. The road is named after the red hue of the rocks found along it. It is mentioned in the Bible (Joshua 15:7 and 18:17).

23. Muhammad b. Ibrahim ibn Jamaʿa (d. after 1496), quoting Hafiz al-Diyaʾ al-Din al-Maqdasi (d. 1245), Chester Beatty Library, no. 3461, folio 110, reprinted in ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 105–106.

24. Taragan, "Tomb of Sayyidna ʿAli," 90. The location of the Jericho tomb was especially pointed, since the Crusaders had constructed a fort in the immediate area. Mayer, "Two Inscriptions," 29 and 31.

25. Amitai, "Some Remarks," 48.

26. Ibid., 50; ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 25.

27. For an overview of Baybar's building projects, see Frenkel, "Baybars and the Sacred Geography," 169.

28. For the inscription, see Mayer, "Two Inscriptions"; Amitai, "Some Remarks."

29. For accounts of the shrine's construction, see Ibn Shaddad, *Taʾrikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 351; al-Yunini, *Dhayl Miʾat al-Zaman*, 3:258–259; ʿUlaymi, *Uns al-Jalil*, 1: 101.

30. For an architectural survey of the shrine, see Tamari, "Maqam Nabi Musa," 167–168; Murrar, *Maqam*, 73–94; Taragan, "Holy Place in the Making"; ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 29–47.

31. Sultan Muhammad Khan III (r. 1595–1603) provided a fund to construct twenty-three arches at the shrine. Jerusalem *Sijill* (henceforth JS) 85: 432, date 6 Shawwal 1010 *hijra* (henceforth *h.*) (29–30 March 1602). See also Tamari, "Maqam Nabi Musa," 170–171; Cohen, "al-Nabi Musa," 40; Murrar, *Maqam*, 62.

32. In 1609, an endowment from Damascus provided support for cleaning the well and pipes. JS 89:109, date 21 Dhu al-Hijja 1017 *h.* (27–28 March 1609). Another Damascene resident provided funds for construction at the shrine. JS 82:252, date 1109 *h.* (1600–1601).

33. Shmuel Tamari refutes Tewfik Canaan's claim that the complex included a women's mosque and a stable. "Maqam Nabi Musa," 174 and 177.

34. Pilgrims did not recite hagiographies of the Prophet Moses at the shrine, as was conducted at other festivals. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*.

35. For a critique of this approach as it applies to Europe, see Brown, *Cult of the Saints*.

36. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*; Meri, *Cult of Saints*; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*; Boaz, *Popular Religion*.

37. Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*; Ephrat, *Spiritual Wayfarers*.

38. Berkey, *Popular Preaching*, 4; Talmon-Heller, *Islamic Piety*, 183; Taylor, *In the Vicinity*, 70–75.

39. For these properties, see ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 52–57.

40. The Yunus family traces its descent to Shaykh ʿAbdullah b. Yunus al-Armawi (d. 1292), who is mentioned as the first controller of the endowment. He is also associated with a popular story in which Moses informs him through a dream that the Jericho tomb is that prophet's true resting place. ʿUmari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 176–177; Mukhlis, "*Kaifa wa Mata*," 176.

41. Murrar, *Maqam*, 63; Abu-Manneh, "The Husaynis," 94.

42. Today the Yunus al-Ghudayya family is known as Al-Judda. For documents that record positions the Ghudayya family held, see JS 33:223, date 14 Rabiʿ II 964 *h.* (13–14 Feb. 1557); JS 54A: 609, date 21 Jumadi II 979 *h.* (9–10 November 1571); JS 80:426, date 8 Shawwal 1008 *h.* (22 April 1600); ʿAsali, *Wathaʾiq*, 2:278 and 3:268–272; Ghudayya, *Sulalat al-Ghudayya*, 107–110. In 1913 the family defended its right to inherit these positions. Reiter, *Islamic Endowments*, 13. For emergence of the Husayni family, see Mannaʿ, *Taʾrikh Filastin*, 41–46; Pappé, *Rise and Fall*, 11–52.

43. Ibn Battuta, *Rihlah ibn Battuta*, 1:113–114; ʿUmari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 1:340–341.

44. Yunini, *Dhayl al-Mirʾat al-Zaman*, 3:258–259; Ibn Taghribirdi, *al-Nujum al-Zahira*, 7:194.

45. Qastallani, *Irshad al-Sari*, 3:494, 5:383.

46. Ibn Jamaʿa, *al-Durr al-Nazim*, in ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 155.

47. *Al-Uns al-Jalil*, 1:101.

48. *Wanderings of Felix Fabri*, 188.

49. Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans*, 54–73.

50. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents*, 76, 151; ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 94 and 158–159.

51. *Evliya Tshelebi's Travels*, 61–62. For threats to pilgrims traveling to the shrine, see Ze'evi, *Ottoman Century*, 13–14; Heyd, *Ottoman Documents*, 101.

52. The covering measured 5 m × 1 m and is made of silk embroidered with gold stitching. ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 90; Tamari, "Maqam Nabi Musa," 180n64. Mujir al-Din ʿUlaymi described it as made of black silk and embroidered and spun along its side with gold. *Al-Uns al-Jalil*, 1:102. Many objects, such as the covering over the tomb, cushions, and curtains used at the shrine, were kept in Jerusalem. Cohen, "Al-Nabi Musa," 39.

53. Dated 1 June 1572; Heyd, *Ottoman Documents*, 158. For these shrines, see ʿArraf, *Tabaqqat al-Anbiyaʾ*, 2:30–33 and 91–96. By comparison, 750 lamps were regularly lit at the al-Aqsa mosque and 540 at the Dome of the Rock. Little, "Mujir al-Din," 242.

54. Heyd, *Ottoman Documents*, 155–156.

55. JS 75:107, date Shaʿban 1000 *h*. (May-June 1592).

56. The commissioned banner read: "There is no god but God, and Moses is he who spoke with God," based on *Q.* 4:164. T. Oz, *Turk Kumas ve Kadifelerl* (Istanbul, 1946), 82, plate 27 (5183), cited in Tamari, "Maqam," 180.

57. Suyuti, *Ittihaf al-Akhissa*, 154.

58. Ibn Jamaʿa, *al-Durr al-nazim*, 155.

59. Cohen, "Walls of Jerusalem," 473n19; JS 33:87, 964 *h*. (1556).

60. Miknasi, *Rihlat al-Miknasi*, 299; Khalili, *Taʾrikh al-Quds*, 188–189.

61. Pappé, *Rise and Fall*, 56.

62. The following references about the shrine's miracles are found in ʿAsali, *Mawsim*: Nabulsi, *al-Hadra al-Unsiyya*, 161; Luqaymi, *Mawanih al-Uns*, 171–172; Siddiqi, *al-Khamra al-Hisiyya*, 168. ʿUlaymi, though not a mystic, also recounts these miraculous accounts. *Uns al-Jalil*, 1:10.

63. Siddiqi, *al-Khamra al-Hisiyya*, 168.

64. These prayers are devoted to honoring the Prophet Muhammad and were written by the Sufi Muhammad Shadhili (d. 1465).

65. Khalili quoted the prophetic hadith "My nation is my alliance" (*ummati ʿasbati*) to underscore that prayers in honor of the Prophet Muhammad extended to all the prophets because they were all related to Muhammad through a "family alliance." *Taʾrikh al-Quds*, 188–190.

66. Frishkopf and Spinetti, "Introduction," 1–2.

67. Murrar, *Maqam*, 100.

68. Cohen, "Al-Nabi Musa," 39n14.

69. Siddiqi, *al-Khamra al-Hissiya*, 168–169.

70. At this time, chroniclers distinguished "sober" Sufi mystics, who were "learned" and "institutional" and upheld the Shariah, from practitioners of "extreme asceticism" (*zuhd*). Ephrat, "From Wayfaring Elites," 82–85. Nonetheless, the "deviant" dervishes Ahmet Karamustafa studied in the period after the Mongol invasions included educated and learned men, as he writes in *God's Unruly Friends*.

71. For the Jerusalem ulama's being receptive to mysticism, see Ze'evi, *An Ottoman Century*, 68–69, and Master, *Arabs of the Ottoman Empire*, 112. For the Jerusalem ulama's greeting Sufi visitors, see ʿAsali, *Bait al-Maqdis*, 104 and 111.

72. Luqaymi, *Mawanih al-Uns*, 170–172.

73. Siddiqi, *al-Khamra al-Hissiya*, 168.

74. *Al-Hadra al-Unsiyya*, 160.

75. Abir, "Local Leadership," 292.

76. The term *simat* denoted the daily provision of free food at Abraham's tomb in Hebron. Sharon, "Al-Khalil."

77. For example, see the waqfiyya for the Abu Madyan Shuʿayb shrine in Morocco. Blair, "Sufi Saints," 45.

78. Forty qitʿa equaled one sultanic gold coin. Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*, xvi. The expenses for this simat were registered two years after it was held. JS 33:223, 14 *Rabiʿ* II 964 *h*. (13–14 February 1557).

79. For the year 1576, see Cohen, "Al-Nabi Musa," 38n13. For the food served in 1617, see Murrar, *Maqam*, 100.

80. One ratl equates to 1.82 kilograms. Singer, *Palestinian Peasants*, xvii. Expenses and quantities for nonfood items at the festival held in 1600 included soap, planks, covers for the melting pots, towels, and rent for a sifter. The endowment also paid for a cook, water carrier, carpenter, baker, messenger, firewood carrier, and a "caller" (*munadi*) to announce the festival's dates to villages. JS 80:426, date 8 *Shawwal* 1008 *h.* (21–22 April 1600). For the role of the munadi in the Ottoman empire, see Ayalon, *Reading Palestine*, 135.

81. Examples of borrowed items included cauldrons (*dusut*), a red on white rug, copper plates, and skewers. JS 54B: 609, date 21 Jumadi II 979 *h.* (9–10 November 1571).

82. For other private support for the simat, see JS 89:109, date 1017 *h.* (28 March 1609). For the rarity of peasants eating meat and foods served at other shrines and festivals, see Singer, "Michelin Guide," 87.

83. ʿAsali believes the numbers reached thousands of pilgrims in the sixteenth century. *Mawsim*, 94.

84. JS 202: 66, date middle Muharram 1115 *h.* (May-June 1703), in ʿAsali, *Wathaʾiq Maqdasiyya*, 3:130–131.

85. JS 202: 66. The shrine's endowed properties may have yielded less revenue as a result of disruptions throughout the Ottoman empire in the eighteenth century.

86. "Sufi Saints," 46–47.

CHAPTER 2: OFFICIAL CEREMONIES IN FIN-DE-SIÈCLE JERUSALEM

1. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 1–2. One British team of surveyors in 1881 counted three hundred shrines. Wilson, *Survey of Western Palestine*, 258.

2. For these modern reforms, see Hanioğlu, *Brief History*.

3. Mannaʿ, *Taʾrikh Filastin*, 196–209; Gerber, *Ottoman Rule*, 113–121. As Yasemine Avci and Vincent Lemire argue, while the establishment of the Jerusalem municipal council is usually dated to 1863 or 1864, it is less about "founding" municipalities and more "a process of municipalisation." "Modernité administrative," 52, quoted in Büssow, "Ottoman Reform," 105. For these institutions, see also Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine*; Gerber, *Ottoman Rule*, 113–121. For Jerusalem municipality's activities in the city, see Lemire, *Jerusalem 1900*.

4. The Ottomans referred to the province of Jerusalem as Kudus Serif, Arabic al-Quds al-Sharif (holy Jerusalem). Tamari, *Great War*, 8.

5. Gerber, *Ottoman Rule*, 123–125 and 122–142. See also Abu-Manneh, "Jerusalem in the Tanzimat Period," 1, 13–19, and *Taʾrikh Filastin*, 196–197. Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation*, 241.

6. Doumani, *Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine*.

7. Manna', "Continuity and Change," 84. For Palestine's commercial growth, see Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation*. For a survey of merchants and council members working in tandem in the Nablus region, see Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*.

8. Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine*.

9. Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 10–11. For the elite's adoption of Western culture, see Kark and Oren-Nordheim, *Jerusalem and Its Environs*; Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem: New City*, 352–355; Tamari, *Great War*, 38–66; Davis, "Ottoman Jerusalem."

10. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*, 16; Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 3.

11. Finn, *Stirring Times*, 1:217, quoted in Reilly, "Peasantry," 93.

12. Gerber, *Social Origins*, 76; Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation*, 197–240.

13. Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan*, 5.

14. Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation*, 197–240.

15. Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan*; Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*; Shafir, *Land, Labor*.

16. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, esp. 71.

17. Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, esp. 5–24.

18. Geertz, *Negara*; Yang, *Gifts, Favors*.

19. Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*.

20. Geertz, *Negara*, 120.

21. There is no evidence the celebrations began with the Jerusalem council (*majlis al-shura*) established during the Egyptian occupation (1831–1840).

22. The banners were referred to by various names: in Arabic, *'alam* (pl. *a'lam*), in Turkish *sanjak* and *bayrak*. Finn, *Stirring Times*, 1:253 and 455, 2:222 and 457.

23. Johnson, *Hadji in Syria*, 238. The author does not indicate when exactly she visited the city.

24. TR-BOA/İ-HR/121-6015, dated 21 Ramazan, 1271 *h*. (June 7, 1855). Thanks go to John Curry and Yigit Akin for their assistance in reading this document. Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister's Office (B)A), retrieved from Open Jerusalem Archives (10/2/2021), http://www.openjerusalem.org/ark:/58142/w7GSv#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0.

25. Pierotti, *Customs and Traditions*, 67–70.

26. During this time, the Yunus and Husayni families continued to serve as *mutawallis* of the endowment.

27. These signatures included the offices of Jerusalem governor, Islamic judge, Jerusalem mufti, director of endowments, accountant, engineer, education councilor, agricultural councilor, and the representative of the Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenians, and Jewish communities. "*Masrafat al-matbakh*," April 13, 1913, file 13/1332/67/24 (1332 *h*.) (ADA).

28. "*Lajnat al-Quds*," 1329 *h*./1911, File 13/323/6, 1/24 (ADA). The Daud-Dajani family had been custodians of the Prophet David tomb in Jerusalem since the eighteenth century. Baer, "Jerusalem's Notables," 111. In the final years of Ottoman rule, the revenue from the Nabi Musa endowments, as well as other larger endowments, were no longer collected by the mutawallis but by the state, in which the tithes were commuted into a fixed sum. Dumper, *Islam and Israel*, 17.

29. Moore and Myerhoff, *Secular Ritual*.

30. Weber, *Damascus*, 1:21.

31. Tamari, *Great War*, 38–66.

32. *Filastin*, 17 April 1912; Finn, *Stirring Times*, 2:458; Rogers, *Domestic Life*, 323.

33. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America" and *Broken Covenant*.

34. Cristi, *From Civil to Political Religion*.

35. Demerath, "The Rise of 'Cultural Religion,'" 137, quoted in Laniel, "What 'Cultural Religion' Says," 380.

36. Liebman and Don-Yehiy, *Civil Religion in Israel*, 5.

37. Nimr, *Taʾrikh jabal Nablus*, 2:330n1.

38. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 178–179; ʿArraf, *Tabaqat*, 2:115–122 and 578–579.

39. Yazbak, "Muslim Festival," 182–184.

40. "*Ihtifal dini*," in Tamari, *Yawmiyat jundi*, 346.

41. Bourmaud, "Political and Religious," 319.

42. Celebrated on al-Sabt 21 Shawwal 1329 (Saturday, 15 October 1911) for Sultan Mehmed V. File:13/1329/6, 3/24, 4 (ADA).

43. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*; Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities."

44. Stauth, *Archaeology of Sainthood*, 7.

45. For debates about modernity in the Middle East context, see Watenpaugh, *Being Modern*, 1–30; Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, 1–15.

46. The Muslim peasants of southern Syria had long observed the Julian solar calendar of the Orthodox Church because it provided them with a system to determine annually fixed dates. Stephan, "Division of the Year." The mulid of al-Sayyid Badawi in Tanta, Egypt, also follows the solar calendar. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*, 87.

47. The following Jerusalem court documents make reference to pilgrims visiting the shrine one week before Orthodox Easter Sunday: 9:303, date 20 Dhu al-Hijja, 948 *h.* (6 April 1542), cited in Cohen, "Walls of Jerusalem," 473n19; 146:283, date 19 Jumada I 1062 *h.* (28 April 1652), cited in Ze'evi, *Ottoman Century*, 81. Sixteenth-century Jerusalem historian Mujir al-Din al-ʿUlaymi (d. 1521–1522) wrote of pilgrims visiting "every year immediately after the rains," a season that corresponds with Easter. *Al-Uns al-Jalil*, 1:101.

48. Mukhlis, "*Kaifa wa matta*," 179; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 189.

49. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 214–215; Barghuthi, *al-Marahil*, 55–56; Mukhlis, "*Kaifa wa matta*," 175–180.

50. Mann, "Autonomous Power of the State," 185. The Jerusalem sanjak's influence even extended to Nablus, located in a separate province (Beirut).

51. Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 10–11.

52. Schielke in "Hegemonic Encounters"; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Pèlerinages d'Égypte*, 301–344, and *Mulid*, chapter 5; Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*; Commins, *Islamic Reform*; Lauzière, *Making of Salafism*, 1–59.

53. Asad, "Idea of an Anthropology."

54. Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 116–123; Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*, 273–304.

55. The term *shaʿbi* became more prominent in the first half of the twentieth century. Schielke, *Perils of Joy*, 138–139. After World War I, Arab newspapers regularly described the festival this way.

56. For these instruments, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 201. For the active orders at the end of Ottoman Era, see Petersen, *Bones of Contention*, 65–83; De Jong, "Sufi Orders"; Baldensperger, "Orders of Holy Men."

57. Jawhariyya is incorrect that they arrived on the Monday of Holy Week.

58. Shariah court judge Yusuf al-Hakim, who served in Jerusalem in 1910, referred to these chants as *adʿiya* (supplications) and *ibtihalat* (prayers). *Suriyya wa al-ʿahd*, 197.

59. He hosted them near his stately home of Qasr Jasir, located near Rachel's tomb.

60. Jawhariyya estimated that the Hebron procession took four hours to pass from Birkat al-Sultan to Jaffa Gate, a distance of a half-kilometer. 49.

61. The flag of the youth was shared between the Zayid and Qarjouli family, notables from the Bab Hutta neighborhood of the Old City. Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 57. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 176–177.

62. Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine*, 345–346.

63. Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 59. Although Jawhariyya used terms such as *qawmi* and *watani* (nationalist) to describe the festival and the anthems and chants, he wrote his memoirs after World War I, during a time of greater nationalist consciousness. 59, 62.

64. Lees, *Jerusalem Illustrated*, 21.

65. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 48.

66. MacAloon, "Olympic Games," 243.

67. Pierre de Coubertin, cited in MacAloon, "Olympic Games," 245.

68. For the governor's headquarters, the *Saray*, see Ben-Arieh, *Old City*, 158–160. For descriptions of these sacred banners, see Tamari, "Two Ottoman Ceremonial Banners," 319. Both the Dajani and Qutb families carried these banners in the processions. Al-Dabbagh, *Biladuna Filastin* 2:149–150n1.

69. Clayton, Brig. General, Chief Political Officer, Egyptian Expeditionary Force, to General Headquarters, Egyptian Expeditionary Force, dated 2 May 1918, FO 371/3391/92045 (TNA). This report documents the first year the celebrations were held under British rule in 1918, which upheld the late Ottoman itinerary.

70. Smith, *To Take Place*, 104–110.

71. Pappé, "Politics of Notables," 167–168; Abu-Manneh, "Husaynis." For the mufti's authority, see Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining*, 54.

72. Al-Shaykh Hasan al-ʿAttar (d. 1834) visited the shrine in the early nineteenth century and was escorted by ʿAbd al-Salam al-Husayni (*naqib al-ashraf* 1800–1834, d. 1850). He made no mention of the mufti. ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 68–69.

73. Abu-Manneh, "Husaynis," 94.

74. The house is also known as House of the Mufti (*dar al-mufti*) and as House of the Flag (*dar al-bayraq*). It is located on the ʿAqabat al-Takiyya Road, which leads to the Bab al-Nazir Gate. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 197.

75. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 187. See also Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 47; Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 176. The other side of the banner read "*la ilaha illa llah*" (There is no god but God). Tamari, "Two Ottoman Ceremonial Banners," 319.

76. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival."

77. Tamari and Nassar, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 57. For the youth participation, see Wilson, *Peasant Life*, 24; Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 176.

78. Blyth, *When We Lived*, 297–298.

79. The day was also known as *jumʿat al-nazla* (Friday of descent). The pilgrims exited the Old City of Jerusalem through the Bab al-Asbat, also known as Bab Sitti Mariam (Gate of Our Lady Mary), as well as St. Stephen's Gate. The northeastern egress of the Haram al-Sharif was also called Bab al-Asbat.

80. The Qlibu and Bazbaza also had positions at the shrine, known as servants of the prophet (*khuddam al-nabi*). Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 204; Tamari, "Two Ottoman Banners," 318n9.

81. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 176; Tamari, "Two Ottoman Banners," 318n9. The Moses banner was also known as the "Banner of the Mufti of Jerusalem." Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 57. As Vera Tamari notes, inconsistencies in the ritual participants and their roles, though, may be a result of the competition among the elite to be associated with such a public and prestigious ceremony.

82. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 201.

83. Smith, *Eastern Pilgrims*, 252. She visited the city in 1868. A half-century later, Elihu Grant offered a similar description. *People of Palestine*, 120.

84. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 48; Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 57–58. For the role of the governor in the *mulid* of al-Sayyid Badawi, see Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*, 99.

85. For the authority of the *qadi* above the mufti before World War I, see Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 57n60.

86. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 46.

87. The festival became known as *ʿid al-shamshiyya* (festival of the umbrellas) because of the presence of many umbrellas.

88. There is some dispute over the nature of this band. Tewfik Canaan claims it was an Ottoman military band; Yair Wallach, that it was the Jerusalem municipal band. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 196; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 197.

89. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 175–177. Bliss observed that the banners were placed in a pair of saddlebags for the rest of the journey. *Religions of Modern Syria*, 269. Most pilgrims marched only to a flag set up a little beyond the Church of Gethsemane, with smaller numbers marching to the tomb. Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine and Syria*, 102.

90. The observation of Jurji Habib Hananya in *al-Quds al-Sharif*, 17 November 1908, cited in Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 77.

91. Bliss, *Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine*, 269. Jawhariyya mentioned how the mayor of Jerusalem, Husayn Effendi al-Husayni, accompanied him at the shrine,

but there is no account saying that the mayor assumed any official duties. Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 61.

92. Masters, *Arabs of the Ottoman Empire*, 105; Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*, 32–62.

93. Bliss, *Religions of Modern Syria*, 268.

94. "Nebi Musa Festival," 186.

95. Grant, *People of Palestine*, 120. For a similar example at the Nabi Salih festival, see Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 179.

96. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 74 and 84–87. Emphasis in the original.

97. Qayati, *Nafhat al-Basham*, 95. See also Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 62.

98. This was also known as *zaffat al-bayraq*. The word *zaffa*, used in processions, reflects its celebratory nature, since it also means "betrothal ceremony." Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 29.

99. The banners were preserved at the al-Aqsa mosque and the banner of the prophet David was returned to its shrine outside the city's southern walls. Mukhlis, "Kaifa wa matta," 180.

100. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 190–192; Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 47.

101. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 214; Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 62–63.

102. Geertz, "Centres, Kings, and Charisma," 152.

103. Bruner, "Introduction," 3; Yang, *Gifts, Favors*, 231; Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 14.

104. Jerusalem's municipal council recognized the city's new status and moved the municipal building to the area outside the Jaffa Gate, a burgeoning neighborhood attracting European consulates and modern development. Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 5, 58–60.

105. Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 19.

106. Maurice Bloch examines the new rituals founded by King Andrianampoinimerina (d. 1810) of the Merina tribe. *From Blessings to Violence*, 113–156.

107. Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 248.

108. Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 151; Porath, *Emergence*, 1–9; Gerber, *Remember and Imagining*, 7; Schölch, *Palestine in Transformation*, 16; Tamari, *Great War*, 27–34; Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine," 9–10.

109. Tamari, *Great War*, 27 and more generally 27–34; Gerber, "Palestine and Other Territorial Concepts." Haim Gerber refers to Nabi Musa as a "national holiday." *Remembering and Imagining*, 7. Alexander Schölch refers to the festival as a "Palestinian Pilgrimage."

110. Blyth, *When We Lived*, 296. Estelle Blyth lived in Jerusalem with her father George F. P. Blyth when he served as Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem from 1887 to 1914.

111. "The Role of the Palestinian Peasantry," 176.

112. Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*.

113. Smith, *Imagining Religion*, 63 and 91–101.

114. Ibid., 63.

115. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 167.

116. *Stirring Times*, 2:223; Zurcone, *Sufi Pilgrims*.

117. Muwashahat are songs of Andalusian origin that use classical Arabic poetry and complex rhythmic patterns sung by a chorus and a soloist. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 296, 47.

118. De Jong, "Sufi Orders."

119. Ibid., 161.

120. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 74; De Jong, "Orders of Holy Men," 34.

121. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 177n132.

122. Bliss, *Religions of Modern Syria*, 240, cited in De Jong, "Sufi Orders," 173.

123. Green, *Sufism*, 187–214. Western discourses of Islam are linked to a Western epistemology that distinguished the "mystical" from the "rational" that was also applied to non-Christian religions (e.g., Hinduism) as well as Christian denominations (e.g., Catholicism, Orthodox). King, *Orientalism and Religion*; Fitzgerald, *Religion and the Secular*.

124. Barthes, *Mythologies*, 16.

125. For the importance of the bodily experience in Sufism, see Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*.

126. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 176–177 (1915) and 351–352 (1905).

127. Baldensperger, *Immovable East*, 265; Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 188; Blyth, *When We Lived*, 298. Rituals where Sufis inserted skewers were known as *darb al-shish* and swords as *darb al-sayf*. For their connection to achieving a mystical state (*hal*, pl. *ahwal*), see Pinto, "Sufi Ritual."

128. Breen, *Diary of My Life*, 503.

129. Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, 248–249.

130. Arjana, *Pilgrimage in Islam*, 28.

131. Tewfik Canaan dismissed the estimate Samuel Curtis gave of fifteen thousand attending the festival. *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 207; Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 163. Masterman and Macalister offer a lower number of seven thousand. "Occasional Papers," 176.

132. For Christian pilgrimage, see Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem: New City;* Schölch, "Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century."

133. Schölch, "Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century," 228–230.

134. Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine*, 345.

135. Finn, *Stirring Times*, 2:223. See also Thomas, *Two Years in Palestine*, 345.

136. Finn's reference is to the crowds at the 1855 pilgrimage.

137. Blyth, *When We Lived*, 296.

138. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*; Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 190; Klein, "Joint Jewish and Muslim Holy Places," 5; Friedland and Hecht, "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage," 98.

139. Tamari also interprets the construction of the minaret in the late fifteenth century as an "anti-Jewish and anti-Christian . . . visual symbol." "Maqam Nabi Musa,"

177–181. For an example of a shrine Baybars sponsored that possessed a true military purpose, see Taragan, "Tomb of Sayyidna ʿAli," 92.

140. Byrne, "Nazi Festival."

141. Bruner and Gorfain, "Dialogic Narration."

142. Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 91 and 90–112.

143. Russia and Britain governed most of the world's Muslim population. Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 2; Slight, *British Empire*, 1.

144. For a revival of a memory of the Crusades, see Hillenbrand, *Crusades*, 593. Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining*, 7, 44, and 71–72; Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 29–31.

145. Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining*, 73.

146. Klaus Volken, who witnessed the celebrations in the late 1870s, suggested the Husaynis recruited the festival to demonstrate public opposition to the "excessive intervention" of European consuls in Jerusalem. Cited in Pappé, *Rise and Fall*, 95.

147. Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem: Old City*, 96–97, 119, and 133. The Khan al-Ahmar was at one time the Laura of St. Euthymius (d. 473) located fourteen kilometers east of the Nabi Musa shrine.

148. Finn makes no mention of the governor's role during the ceremonies between 1853 and 1856. In fact, in 1855, the governor greeted the arrival of the duke and duchess of Brabant (later king and queen of Belgium) to Jerusalem just as the pilgrims were arriving to celebrate Nabi Musa. Finn, *Stirring Times*, 2:220–222.

149. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 299–300; Mukhlis, "*Kaifa wa matta*," 176.

150. Aubin-Boltanski, "Salah al-Din." ʿAli al-Harawi (d. 1215) did not mention the shrine having a connection to Saladin, despite serving as Saladin's emissary and his son's advisor. Meri, "Harawi," 313.

151. Document No. 148, *JS* 409, no. 730, 33, date 21 Rabiʿ II 1331 (29–30 March 1913) (Arab Studies Society Library, Jerusalem).

152. April 17, 1919, *Yawmiyat*, 3:127.

153. McDougall, *History and Culture*, 150.

154. Fishman, *Jews and Palestinians*, 109. For more on what was known as the "Haram al-Sharif Incident," see 107–126.

155. Ze'evi, *Ottoman Century*, 80–81.

156. Macalister and Masterman, "Occasional Papers," 177.

157. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 48.

158. Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*; Freas, *Muslim-Christian Relations*, 187–192. Elizabeth Finn described peasants as having "reverence" for the sultan as caliph. "Fellaheen of Palestine," 35.

159. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 188. In 1876 Ottoman authorities prohibited pilgrims from carrying weapons during the festival. Büssow, *Hamidian Palestine*, 519.

160. Smith, *Narrative of a Modern Pilgrimage*, 325.

161. Hartmann, "Nebi Musa," 201; Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 184.

162. Tamari, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 52. See also the account of the former British-era Palestine government official Sami Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, 299–300.

163. Quoted in Klein, *Lives in Common*, 50.

164. Quoted in Klein, "Joint Jewish and Muslim," 7.

165. Davis, *Society and Culture*, 188; Jarman, *Material Conflicts*. Currently, Israeli Jews conduct an annual "Jerusalem Day" parade to provoke the city's Muslim residents.

166. For conflicts before World War I, see Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, 248; Lazar, *Hebron Stories*, 116. Subhi Ghusha claimed there were few scuffles between Muslims and Christians at the festival worth mentioning. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 187. For fights between Christian denominations during Easter, see Finn, *Stirring Times*, 2:457; Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 183, 192.

167. Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining Palestine*, 73.

168. Mayeur-Jaouen, "What Do Egypt's Copts and Muslims Share?" 163; Bowman, "Identification and Identity." While Louis Fishman makes an interesting argument that Palestine's Jews participated in these celebrations to elevate their political voice, he could have further examined how this participation emerged organically as part of Jerusalem's civic culture. *Jews and Palestinians*, 58.

169. Works that challenge the simple binaries of "Arab" and "Jew" in late Ottoman Palestine include Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*; Ben-Bassat, "Rethinking the Concept"; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*; Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*; Klein, *Lives in Common*; Wallach, "Rethinking the Yishuv"; Dalachanis and Lemire, *Ordinary Jerusalem*; Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*. For a review of this literature, see Klein, "Twenty-First-Century."

170. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 83. See also Nassar, "Wasif Jawharriyeh Collection."

171. Tamari and Nassar, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniya*, 68–70; Meri, *Cult of Saints*; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*; Schick, *Palestinian Life*; Bowman, "Sharing and Exclusion."

172. Jawhariyya, *al-Quds al-ʿUthmaniyya*, 54–56, cited in Tamari, *Great War*, 58–59.

173. Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining Palestine*, 73.

174. Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 183.

175. Bell, *Ritual Perspectives*, 82–83.

176. Geertz, *Negara*, 13.

177. London municipal officials attempted to "contain" and impose their order over the Notting Hill Festival. Cohen, *Masquerade Politics*, 62–78.

178. McDougall, *History and Culture*, 149.

179. Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 20.

CHAPTER 3: BRITISH COLONIALISM ATTENDS THE FESTIVAL

1. Storrs was first appointed as military governor of Jerusalem in 1917, and then as civil governor of Jerusalem and Judea in 1921. For the Catholic Church's involvement in Jerusalem, see Zanini, "Vatican Diplomacy."

2. "Political Report February," 1922, PD 1:223.

3. McCrackan, *New Palestine*, 81.

4. Ranger, "Invention of Tradition," 227.

5. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, 122.

6. Slight, *British Empire*; Kane, *Russian Pilgrimage*.

7. Motadel, ed., *Islam and the European Empires*, 851–853.

8. British rule in Palestine formally began on December 11, 1917. The British Mandate did not go into effect until September 29, 1923. *Survey of Palestine*, I:4–11.

9. The Palestine government refers to the civilian government that began with the appointment of High Commissioner Herbert Samuel in June 1920.

10. The Jewish community in Palestine prior to 1948 referred to itself as the Yishuv (Hebrew, "settlement"), distinguishing the "old Yishuv" of the pre-Zionist Jewish immigration and the "new Yishuv" consisting mainly of European Zionist immigrants to Palestine.

11. Edwin Samuel, High Commissioner Herbert Samuel's son, boasted of these close ties in his *Lifetime in Jerusalem*, 38. Sahar Huneidi outlines the close ties the Zionists forged with Samuel in *Broken Trust*.

12. Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 37. For the economic development of Jewish settlers, see Metzer, *Divided Economy of Palestine*.

13. Shamir, *Colonies of Law*; Likhovski, *Law and Identity*; Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem*, 208–219; Bunton, "Inventing the Status Quo"; Ghandour, *Discourse on Domination*, 42–82; Schneider, *Mandatory Separation*; Furas, *Educating Palestine*; Kabha, *Palestinian Press*; Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*; Meiton, *Electrical Palestine*; Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 112–146; Harouvi, *Palestine Investigated*; Wagner, *Statecraft by Stealth*.

14. Renton, *Zionist Masquerade*, 13–16. For the connections between the conceptions of race and nation, see Weitz, *Century of Genocide*, 16–52; Banton, *Racial Theories*.

15. Hopkins, "Islam and Resistance"; Robinson, "British Empire and the Muslim World," 398.

16. The British incorporated the status quo into articles 13 and 14 of the Mandate and applied it to Christian, Muslim, and Jewish holy sites. *Survey of Palestine* I:16.

17. For this discussion, see Taylor, *Secular Age*; Fitzgerald, *Religion and the Secular*.

18. Schneider, *Mandatory Separation*, 140–141. Emphasis in the original.

19. Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 3.

20. Sanders, *Ritual Politics*.

21. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

22. Cohen, "Representing Authority," 196.

23. Bloch, *From Blessing to Violence*, 157–195.

24. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*, 118–119.

25. "The Nebi Musa Pilgrimage," dated 2 May 1918, from Chief Political Officer, Egyptian Expeditionary Force to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, FO 371/3391/92045 (TNA). Henceforth "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage."

26. Bar-Yosef, *Holy Land in English Culture*, 4. Nancy Stockdale argues how British women missionaries interpreted the Bible in ways that legitimized Britain's imperial project in the Holy Land. *Colonial Encounters*.

27. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 5, 71, 339.

28. Stoller, "Embodying Colonial Memories," 637.

29. The film is incorrectly entitled *The Nabi Nusa Festival*, IWM 45. Thanks to Yair Wallach for informing me about it.

30. Ibid. See also Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 187.

31. "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage."

32. For further discussion on the interplay of sacred objects and ritual space, see Moors, "Popularizing Islam," 276; Grimes, "Jonathan Z. Smith's Theory."

33. The film identifies them as the Egyptian First Battalion, the Egyptian First Regiment, and the Indian Army, 58th Vaughn's Rifles. *Nabi Nusa Festival*. In April 1920 there were 13,174 Indian troops in Palestine. Salih, *al-Quwat al-ʿAskariyya*, 89.

34. "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage."

35. Ibid.

36. Ranger, "Invention of Tradition," 227.

37. Thompson, *Colonial Citizen*, 1–3.

38. Geertz, *Negara*, 120.

39. Storrs, *Orientations*, 385; Storrs, *Memoirs*, 346.

40. Storrs, *Orientations*, 385–386.

41. Smith, *Imagining Religion*, 91. For the ceremony generally, see 90–101.

42. Storrs, *Orientations*, 386; Storrs, *Memoirs*, 347; *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, 27 March 1920, Box 3, Folder 2. Storrs also adopted the moniker "Oriental Storrs," a reference supposedly to his ability to deceive, which Edwin Samuel suggested was an Oriental quality. Samuel, *Lifetime in Jerusalem*, 52.

43. Storrs, *Orientations*, 386, and *Memoirs*, 347. The reference Storrs made to the discontent that erupted earlier is to the 1920 Nabi Musa riots.

44. Al-Hut, *Sittun ʿAmman*, 138. ʿAjaj Nuwayhid served as an SMC official and helped found the Istiqlal (Independence) Party.

45. Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 93. Emphasis in the original.

46. Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*, ix.

47. McCrackan, *New Palestine*, 81–84, 301. Even Storrs's Pro-Jerusalem Society included the heads of the various religious communities as members. El-Eini, *Mandated Landscapes*, 43–104; Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem*, 208–209.

48. "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage."

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., 4.

51. Klein, *Lives in Common*, 50.

52. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 238.

53. Klein, *Lives in Common*, 50.

54. For those who accompanied him at the 1923 and 1924 festivals, see *Palestine Diary*, 45, 119.

55. *Filastin*, April 26, 1921. For the conflict over the use of Hebrew in Palestine, see Halperin, *Babel in Zion*, 99–141.

56. *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, 8 April 1922. For a photo of Storrs greeting the mufti at the 1918 festival, see Q 12794 (IWM).

57. *JA*, 11 April 1930, and *Filastin*, 12 April 1930.

58. "Nebi Musa and the Holy Week," DDC, Jerusalem, April 13, 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

59. Holliday, *Letters from Jerusalem*, 141.

60. Graves, *Palestine*, 96.

61. As Roberto Mazza suggests, designating the unrest as a "riot" inflected British impressions of the events as conducted by "irrational mobs" intent on disrupting public order. "Transforming the Holy City," 186.

62. 17 April 1919, *Yawmiyat*, 3:127. Emphasis added. As discussed in the following chapters, the festival celebrated in Jerusalem is different from its celebrations at the shrine.

63. Ghuri, *Filastin ʿAbra Sittin ʿAman*, 36; al-Hut, *Mudhakkirat*, 137.

64. "Report of the Court of Inquiry convened by Order of HE the High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief," 58, 130–131, July 1, 1920, FO 371/5121/E9379 (TNA) and WO 32/9616/208854 (TNA). Henceforth Palin Report. The commission was led by Major General P. C. Palin and included two other members of the military.

65. For these Arab militia attacks, see Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*, 84–95; Muslih, *Origins of Palestinian Nationalism*, 150.

66. Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 201–202. The Syrian National Congress crowned Faysal as king on March 7, 1920.

67. Western Easter Sunday was celebrated April 4; Eastern churches commemorated Palm Sunday on April 4 and Easter one week later, on April 11. Passover was celebrated from April 3 to April 9. For a calendar of events, see Storrs, March 27, 1920, *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, Box 3, Folder 2, document 1.

68. Segev, *One Palestine Complete*, 140. Richard Meinertzhagen was from a wealthy British family of German descent. Segev describes him as "at once a great anti-Semite and a great Zionist" (95).

69. Whittingham, *Home of Fadeless Splendour*, 213.

70. One Zionist intelligence report estimated a crowd of sixty thousand to seventy thousand. Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 68.

71. Whittingham, *Home of Fadeless Splendour*, 217.

72. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 136.

73. *al-Nafaʾis al-ʿAsriyya*, 15 September 1920; al-Kayyali, *Palestine*, 76.

74. Palin Report, 62; al-Hut, *al-Qiyadat*, 121.

75. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 136. See also "Disturbances of April 4th," April 18, 1920, FO 371/5118/3474 (TNA).

76. Segev, *One Palestine Complete*, 128, 135.

77. "Disturbances of April 4th."

78. Ghuri, *Filastin ʿAbra Sittin ʿAman*, 44, 52; *al-Nafaʾis al-ʿAsariyya*, 15 September 1920. Mayor Musa Kazim reiterated these accusations. Whittingham, *Home of Fadeless Splendour*, 140.

79. See the testimony of the Palestinian Arab Police officers recorded in the *Palestine Weekly*, 14 June 1920, 18 June 1920, and 9 July 1920. For accounts of British police, see Horne, *A Job Well Done*, 29–33.

80. Khalil Baydas, arrested for delivering a speech at the festival, claimed the speeches did not touch upon the subject of Zionism, though this is unlikely. *Al-Nafaʾis al-ʿAsariyya*, 15 September 1920. For similar claims, see *al-Quds al-Sharif*, 20 April 1920. For other accounts of what was said, see Porath, *Emergence*, 98; *Times*, 9, 13, and 18 April 1920.

81. Palin Report, 63–64.

82. Ibid., 63.

83. Emile Ghuri claimed he heard gunfire. *Filastin ʿAbra Sittin ʿAman*, 52.

84. "Higgins Collection: Nebi Musa Riot," 2008/059/001 (Bristol's Free Museums and Historic House), http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/details.php?irn=228527. Michael Higgins, who filmed the procession, served with the Palestine police. Thanks to Roberto Mazza for notifying me about this film.

85. *Yawmiyat*, 3:213–214.

86. "Disturbances of April 4th." Those arrested included Amin al-Husayni, ʿArif al-ʿArif, and Jabotinsky. The British tried more than two hundred people, thirty-nine Jews and the rest Arab. When Herbert Samuel arrived in Palestine as the first high commissioner, he immediately granted amnesty to all those who were convicted.

87. Palin Report, 74.

88. The Arab members of the police force had been accused of siding with their fellow Arabs or had desisted from suppressing the riot. "Letter from A. Scott," dated April 9, 1920, FO 371/5117/2927 (TNA). See also Salih, *al-Quwat al-ʿAskariyya*, 90–95 and 183–185.

89. Palin Report, 74; "Holy Riots in Jerusalem," Adamson File, GB/65 (MEC).

90. "Holy Riots in Jerusalem."

91. Palin Report, 75–77.

92. Monk, *Aesthetic Occupation*, 80–83.

93. Weisgal, *Letters and Papers*, 333–339. See also Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 96. Meinertzhagen accused his comrades in Palestine of permitting a pogrom and allowing the riots to occur. See his *Middle East Diary*, 79–84. The Palin Report reproached him for making these accusations and depicted him as an "agent" overly favorable to Zionism and espousing "anti-Arab bias" (44–46).

94. Wasserstein, "Patterns of Communal Conflict," 611–612, and *Divided Jerusalem*, 102–103; Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 95; Pearlman, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 11–12; Elpeleg, *Grand Mufti*, 6.

95. Kayyali, *Palestine*, 70–75; Darwaza, *al-Qadiyya al-Filastiniyya*, 37; Hut, *al-Qiyadat*, 120, 211–212.

96. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 189; Muhsin, *Filastin*, 38; al-ʿUmar, *Mudhakkirat*, 16; Jarrar, *al-Hajj Amin*, 56.

97. Salih, *al-Quwat al-ʿAskariyya*, 90, 183.

98. *Al-Nafaʾis al-ʿAsriyya*, 15 September 1920; *al-Quds al-Sharif*, 13 April 1920; *al-Nafir*, 13 April 1920; Ghuri, *Filastin ʿAbra Sittin ʿAman*, 44; Sakakini, *Yawmiyat*, 3:213; Hut, *Mudhakirrat*, 122, and *al-Qiyadat*, 212.

99. Palin Report, 53. The report, which Segev suspects Chaim Weizmann was responsible for suppressing, was never published. *One Palestine Complete*, 141.

100. Johnson, *Islam and the Politics of Meaning*, 20–21; Porath, *Emergence of the Palestinian*, 98; Wagner, *Statecraft*, 53.

101. Fitzgerald, "Religion."

102. Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*; Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*; Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*; Likhovski, *Law and Identity*, 37–38. For sectarianism in the modern Middle East, see Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism* and *Age of Coexistence*.

103. Mazza, "Transforming the Holy City," 183 and 186, and *Jerusalem*, 165–182.

104. Wagner, *Statecraft*, 53.

105. For this terminology, see Gribetz, "To the Arab Hebrew"; Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 136.

106. Benvenisti and Tamari quoted in Mazza, "Transforming the Holy City," 186.

107. Davis, *Society and Culture*, 153.

108. Targeting Jewish sites should not suggest that a crowd is organized and motivated by a leadership, as Paul Brass uses the term. *Riots and Pogroms*, 21–26, cited in Mazza, *Jerusalem*, 173.

109. Wagner, *Statecraft*, 53–55. For Zionist sources, see Roberts, *Islam*, 84n8. The Palin Report described the violence as spontaneous (58).

110. Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 172–175.

111. Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 236. Emphasis in the original.

112. For example, see Lesch, "Palin Commission Report"; Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 97.

113. Said, *Orientalism*, 20.

114. Allen, *History of False Hope*, 3–4.

115. Robinson, "British Empire," 405–406; Bayly, "Racial Reading."

116. Palin Report, 59.

117. Storrs, *Memoirs*, 347.

118. Storrs, *Orientations*, 304. Storrs even disparaged the festival as a "blameless (if rather pointless) event, consisting of a week's hot sticky holiday by the Dead Sea." *Memoirs*, 347.

119. Fawcett, *Easter in Palestine*, 148.

120. Hyamson, *Palestine under the Mandate*, 193.

121. Renton, *Zionist Masquerade*, 13–16.

122. Bar-Yosef and Valman, *"The Jew" in Late Victorian and Edwardian Culture*.

123. Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 176.

124. Alex Winder argues that the British responded to the 1929 violence by solidifying sectarianism, promoting segregation between Jews and non-Jews, and eventually introducing partition. "'Western Wall' Riots."

125. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xiii.

126. "Letter from Col. Meinertzhagen," 4 April 1920, FO 371/5118/3928 (TNA).

127. "Report from Chief Administrator Palestine," 19 April 1920, FO 371/5118/3501 (TNA).

128. A cable from General Headquarters on 22 April 1920 announced these new instructions. Palin Report, 1.

129. "Conclusions," 69. Storrs responded to criticism of his handling of the riot in an eight-page letter to Herbert Samuel. *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, August 18, 1920, Box 3, Folder 2. He blamed the violence on his subordinates and poor staffing in the police. *Memoirs*, 347.

130. Palin Report, 9–20.

131. Ibid., 9 and 19.

132. Storrs, *Orientations*, 348.

133. Ibid., 11.

134. Palin Report, 15.

135. Ibid., 80.

136. Ibid., 78–80.

137. Bentwich, *If I Forget Thee*, 167.

138. *Times*, 12 May 1920. Barnes was a former Labour member of the War Cabinet.

139. Palin Report, 25.

140. Ibid., 79.

141. Ibid. 14, 29–31.

142. Ibid., 21. Chaim Weizmann expressed a similar sentiment in Versailles at the 1919 peace conference. Segev, *One Palestine Complete*, 117.

143. *Times*, 9 April 1920.

144. Article 4 of the Mandate. For examples of these close relationships, see Segev, *One Palestine Complete*, 89–91; Renton, *Zionist Masquerade*; Huneidi, *Broken Trust*.

145. Palin Report, appendix D.

146. Ibid., 33. Vladimir Nabokov translated it as, "This beast is very mean: in fact it will fight back, when it is attacked." *New York Review of Books*, July 15, 1965. See also Laurens, *Question de Palestine*, 1:525. American pastor Harry Fosdick assessed that the Arab knowledge of Jewish advancement made "Arabs afraid and angry and Jews confident and aggressive." *Pilgrimage to Palestine*, 281.

147. Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 51. For criticism of the pretense of Western "objectivity," see Allen, *History of False Hope*.

148. Poliakov, *History of Anti-Semitism*, 4:198–207; Rubenstein, *Communist Movement*, 93–101.

149. Banko, "Keeping Out," 1158.

150. Interim Report of Palin Enquiry, 7 May 1920, 5 FO 371/5119/E610 (TNA).

151. Palin Report, 12–13, 29, 39–40.

152. *Illustrated Sunday Herald*, 8 February 1920. Churchill was convinced that a Jewish presence in Palestine would "thwart communistic aims." Quoted in Rubenstein, *Communist Movement*, 98.

153. Sir Alfred Mond was a politician and prominent supporter of Zionism. Lionel Walter Rothschild (1868–1937) was a British banker and zoologist from the international Rothschild financial dynasty and a Labour MP. He composed a draft of the Balfour Declaration that Arthur Balfour later addressed to him.

154. *Times*, 12 May 1920. Note that this is yet another animal metaphor.

155. Palin Report, 80.

156. Ibid., 8, no. 11.

157. Civil administration began on 1 July 1920. For Samuel's support for Zionism, see Huneidi, *Broken Trust*.

158. *Times*, 23 April 1920.

159. Ibid., 12 and 14 May 1920.

160. Ibid., 15 May 1920.

161. Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 86.

162. "Churchill White Paper," *Survey of Palestine*, 2:946.

163. These offers, however, did little to alter British rule or its support for the Balfour Declaration. Wasserstein, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 125, cited in Roberts, *Islam under the British Mandate*, 87–89.

164. *Sittun ʿAmman*, 137. For this figure, see Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*; Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*.

165. *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, 1920, Box 3, Folder 1, 3–4.

166. Letter from Herbert Samuel to Winston Churchill, 30 April 1921, CO 733/2/24586 (TNA). For the participation of these bands, see *Filastin*, 26 April 1921; *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

167. Letter from Samuel to Churchill, 30 April 1921.

168. "The Police Ordinance of February 1921," *Official Gazette*, 15 March 1921.

169. Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence*, 1. Steven Wagner described it as a "Simultaneous Anglo-Zionist cooperation." *Statecraft Stealth*, 1. Lauren Banko adds that British colonialism in Palestine imitated a "regime of surveillance and bio-social profiling" to expel "undesirables" from the country. "Keeping Out," 1154.

170. Letter from Herbert Samuel, 30 April 1921, CO 733/2/24586 (TNA).

171. Churchill memo, December 16, 1920, quoted in Slight, *British Empire*, 1n1.

172. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 196–197. Canaan contends it was a military band. *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 197.

173. Report on the Nebi Musa Pilgrimage for April 1922, CO 733/21 (TNA).

174. For example, see *Palestine Post*, 7 April 1933 and 30 March 1934; *Palestine Bulletin*, 25 April 1932.

175. *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 8 April 1922; *JA*, 2 April 1932 and 21 April 1935.

176. *JA*, 24 April 1932.

177. Lord Plumer did not attend ceremonies at Raʾs al-ʿAmud in 1926. *Palestine Bulletin*, 26 April 1926.

178. Ottoman troops attended only to maintain security.

179. *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

180. *Filastin*, 26 April 1921; Historical Photographs of the Middle East, Bowman, H. E., fiche 11-605 (MEC).

181. *JA*, 26 April 1932; *Palestine Post*, 10 April 1933 and 22 April 1935. For the Citadel of David (Burj Daud), see Landau, *Abdul-Hamid's Palestine*, 43.

182. In 1935 Ruhi Bey ʿAbd al-Hadi attended along with the governor. *Palestine Post*, 22 April 1935.

183. After these ceremonies, though, Wauchope reaffirmed his imperial loyalties by joining a distinguished list of British guests for lunch. "Social and Personal," ibid., 10 April 1943.

184. Kisch, *Palestine Diary*, 45, 119, 179.

185. Amin Husayni took the opportunity to curtail British participation when Edward Keith-Roach replaced Ronald Storrs as governor of Jerusalem in 1926. Jawhariyya suggested that the Muslim community realized the "grave mistake" it had committed by allowing the Nabi Musa banner to be presented to a "foreign colonist." In the Ottoman period, the governor (*mutasarrif*) of Jerusalem was a Muslim. The mufti took advantage of the transition by assigning SMC members to hand the pilgrims the sacred Moses banner. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 191–192.

186. Geertz, *Negara*, 136–137.

187. Huneidi, *Broken Trust*.

188. Hyamson, *Palestine: A Policy*, 147. The Jewish population increased from 57,000 in 1919 to 320,000 in 1935. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 64.

189. Marshall, "Ornamentalism."

CHAPTER 4: ARAB ELITE DISCOURSES AT THE FESTIVAL

1. Some 4,500 people accompanied the Nablus procession, and 9,000 watched in 1931. "Festivals," CID, Palestine Police, Jerusalem, 4 May 1931, B/30 /31 (ISA). *Filastin* estimated 50,000 spectators on 15 April 1930 and 25,000 on 30 April 1932.

2. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikihina*, 183.

3. Storrs, *Orientation*, 385; Letter from Samuel, 30 April 1920, 3, CO 733/2/24586 (TNA).

4. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*.

5. Lincoln, *Discourses and the Construction of Society*, 4.

6. For the elite during the Mandate era, see al-Hut, "Palestinian Political Elite"; Lesch, *Arab Politics*.

7. Turner, *Ritual Process*, 96, and *Forest of Symbols*, 93–111.

8. For discussion of factionalism, see Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine*; Lesch, *Arab Politics*.

9. For Kamil's conciliatory attitude to the British generally, see Porath, *Emergence*, 187–188.

10. Storrs requested the participation of the First Yorkshire Regimental Band. Letter from Storrs, March 27, 1920, *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, Box III, Folder II, 1; Letter from 8th Brigade, April 1, 1920, 3.

11. Letter from Husayni, April 1, 1920, *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, Box III, Folder II, 2.

12. Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 66–68.

13. Porath, *Emergence*, 186–187; Pappé, *Rise and Fall*, 168; Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining*, 54.

14. Porath, *Emergence*, 187–188.

15. Letter from Storrs to HQ, O.E.T.A., April 3, 1920, 1. *Papers of Ronald Storrs*, Box III, Folder II.

16. In his testimony to the Palin Court, Storrs recalled that the mufti "begged" him for Britain's inclusion of a musical band. *Palestine Weekly*, 25 June 1920.

17. Kamil and Amin shared the same father, the former mufti of Jerusalem, Tahir al-Husayni.

18. Ghuri, *Filastin Abra Sittin ʿAman*, 46; Muhsin, *Filastin wa Samahat al-Mufti*, 33–35; Jarrar, *al-Hajj Amin*, 56; ʿUbaydi, *Safahat min Hayat*, 26–27.

19. Pearlman, *Mufti of Jerusalem*; 11–12; Elpeleg, *Grand Mufti*, 6.

20. Pearlman, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, x.

21. Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 104. Kamil passed away on March 31, 1921. Amin did not adopt the title the British had bestowed on Kamil, *mufti al-akbar*. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 27.

22. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 26.

23. *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

24. For these supporters at the shrine, see ibid., 2 May 1921.

25. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*; Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 96–117.

26. Personal communication, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 12 March 2005.

27. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 87–88.

28. Elpeleg, *Grand Mufti*, 13. For further on the SMC's ability to dissuade violence and maintain order, see Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 6 and 96–117.

29. Emile Ghuri claimed that Arab leaders intended to convert festivals into nationalist events. *Filastin ʿAbra Sittin ʿAman*, 46.

30. Krämer, *History of Palestine*, 266.

31. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 28 April 1930; Yazbak, "Muslim Festival," 185; Kayyali, *Palestine*, 142.

32. "Police Situation Reports," 5 January 1934, FO 371/17878/E649 (TNA); "Police Situation Reports," 15 January 1934, FO /371/17878/897 (TNA). See also Bourmaud, "Political and Religious Dynamics."

33. "Palestine Police Summary Reports," Jerusalem, 21 July 1933, FO/371/16926/4461 (TNA).

34. "Periodical Appreciation Summary, 1935," 27 June 1935, FO 371/18957/154 (TNA).

35. For discussion of civic religion, see chapter 2. For examples of Egyptian *mulids* instructing pilgrims on proper practices, see Schielke, *Perils of Joy*; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*.

36. Kamil al-Husayni testimony to the Palin Court. *Palestine Weekly*, 25 June 1920.

37. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 25 April 1927.

38. Fawcett, *Easter in Palestine*, 154–155.

39. Also known as Bab al-Majlisi (Gate of the [Supreme Muslim] Council).

40. 18 April 1927.

41. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 26.

42. Haider, *Origins of the Shiʿa*; Halevei, *Muhammad's Grave*, 143–164; Jarman, *Material Conflict*.

43. Rugh, *Letters from Palestine*, 96.

44. Katinka attended from 1929 to 1936. For Katinka's involvement in the hotel, see Klein, *Lives in Common*, 83–85.

45. For these SMC officials greeting the pilgrims, see *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 3 May 1926; *Filastin*, 5 April 1931. The Nablus pilgrims gathered here before they marched into the city.

46. Anderson, "From Petition to Confrontation," 132.

47. *Filastin*, 5 April 1931.

48. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 30 March 1934. For Jabiri, see Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate*.

49. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 48, 65.

50. "Secret Political Resume," 15 May 1924, PD 1:41–42; "Political Reports for April 1924," High Commissioner, CO /733/68/26359 (TNA).

51. Geertz, *Negara*, 110.

52. Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*; Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*.

53. For Opposition attacks against the mufti, see Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 54–66; Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians*, 69.

54. Musa Kazim supported the Nashashibi plan to have the government take control of *waqf* funds and the Shariah courts, which had been under the control of the SMC. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 109.

55. Barkat, "Jerusalem Fellah," 8; Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 74.

56. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 95.

57. Quoted in Anderson, "From Petition to Confrontation," 3.

58. The British, however, matched an increase in the number of pilgrims with a commensurate increase of police and military forces. *Al-Zahur*, 19 April 1930.

59. For this group, see chapter 5. Henceforth YMMA. Phillipe Bourmaud suggests that pilgrims in Haifa and Acre were less likely to attend Nabi Musa because of the great distance from Jerusalem; instead, they developed the *Mawlid al-Nabi* ceremonies as a surrogate Islamic-national festival. "Political and Religious Dynamics."

60. *Filastin*, 4 April 1931; "Festivals," CID, Jerusalem, 4 May 1931, B/30 /31 (ISA).

61. *Palestine Post*, 7 March 1934.

62. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 2 April 1934.

63. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

64. *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 24 April 1937.

65. Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses*, 7 and 85.

66. *Filastin*, 4 April 1931.

67. Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses*, 1–2.

68. Habermas, *Structural Transformation*.

69. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics*, 10–11; Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 80.

70. Weldon Matthews argues that the Istiqlal were the first Arab group to successfully introduce the tactics of mass mobilization. *Confronting an Empire*. Rena Barakat argues the violence in 1929 represented an example of the mass mobilization of a newly politicized peasant population. "Jerusalem Fellah." For discussion of the Arab press after 1908 engaging in an expanded public sphere, see Dierauff, *Translating Late Ottoman Modernity*.

71. Polak-Springer, "Religiosity," 2.

72. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 2 April 1934 and 28 April 1927.

73. *Al-Yarmuk*, 3 May 1926.

74. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 28 April 1927.

75. *Filastin*, 19 April 1930.

76. "Ibrahim Dakkak Remembered," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 66 (Summer 2016): 8.

77. Davies, "A Oes Heddch?" 142.

78. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*, 246, 251, 260–286.

79. "Al-Baqara" refers to the second chapter in the *Qurʾan*, a chapter revered in the Islamic tradition. Islamic tradition also refers to *al-ʿashara al-mubashshurun bi-l-jinna* (The Ten of Glad Tidings of Paradise) as those who are promised paradise. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 191.

80. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932. There is little information about this payment or other financial incentives for pilgrims to chant in honor of the mufti.

81. Budeiri, "Palestinians," 196.

82. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932.

83. For the Missionary Conference, see Kayyali, *Taʾrikh Filastin*, 227–228.

84. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 9 April 1928. For protests in Hebron against the conference before pilgrims embarked on their march to Jerusalem, see ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 125.

85. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 204.

86. Swedenburg, "Role of the Palestinian Peasantry," 176.

87. Edwin Samuel related the episode of visiting an Arab village; were it not for sharing a meal with the peasantry, many would not have eaten meat that month. *Lifetime in Jerusalem*, 71.

88. One qintar equals 100 ratl. One ratl is approximately 2.5 kilograms. Luke and Keith-Roach, *Handbook of Palestine*, 126.

89. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 204–206; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 44; ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 184.

90. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 40.

91. Dietler, "Feasts and Commensal Politics," 91.

92. "Ottoman Reform." See also Friedland and Hecht, "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage," 94.

93. Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*.

94. The Palestine pound (jiniya) was equivalent to the British pound. One thousand mil were equivalent to one jiniya.

95. Khayat, "Waqfs in Palestine and Israel," 228; Mukhlis, "Kaifa wa Mata," 180.

96. Tender of Mustafa and Muhammad Jabsha, Jerusalem, 1933, "Aʿyad wa-l-matbakh al-maqam al-Nabi Musa," 13/33/3, 10/1/60, 7 (ADA).

97. Interview, Jerusalem, 19 July 1999.

98. Tender of Mustafa and Muhammad Jabsha.

99. Other expenses included the fee for a prayer-caller, a Qurʾan reciter and renting a car to transport dignitaries. "Al-mabaligh al-masrufa min waqf al-Nabi Musa," 13/42/3/1/20 (ADA).

100. The total expenses were 611 jinaya. "Shuʾun ziyara," 1945, 13/45/2/45 (ADA).

101. *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

102. *Filastin*, 8 April 1931.

103. The Husayni salon overlooked the courtyard where all the activities were visible. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 207.

104. See chapter 1.

105. Dietler, "Theorizing the Feast," 78.

106. *Filastin*, 28 April 1932.

107. Seikaly, *Men of Capital*, 13, 22–25. See also Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine*, 52–58. For a growth of a consumer culture, see Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*.

108. For the tobacco industry, see Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies*.

109. Yazbak, "Muslim Festivals," 170, 189.

110. *Lisan al-ʿArab*, 10 May 1924.

111. *Filastin*, 4 April 1931.

112. This advertisement began to appear regularly in the *Palestine Post* in the 1940s, see 15 April 1943.

113. For this discussion, see Jean and John Comaroff, "Introduction," *Modernity and Its Malcontents*, xxx.

114. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 58, 96; Khayat, "Waqfs in Palestine and Israel," 96.

115. There is little information about "subsidies." There are oblique references that the SMC provided payments to encourage pilgrims to attend or chant in Amin's honor. "Military Intelligence Summaries," Jerusalem, April 22, 1938, CO 732/81/91 (TNA); *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932; *Palestine Post*, 16 April 1943. As discussed in the following chapters, peasants needed little prompting to attend the ceremonies. "Periodical Appreciation Summary," April 20, 1935, FO/371/18957 (TNA).

116. Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 181–182; Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 229–231.

117. "Report on the Political Situation in Palestine," 13 April 1923, CO/20342, PD 1:484–486.

118. PD 1:490–491.

119. "Report on the Nebi Musa pilgrimage April 1922," 10 May 1922, CO 733/24535 (TNA). Amin proved so eager to impress Samuel that he invited him and his family to a Passover luncheon prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. "Political Report for April 1921," 9 May 1921, CO 733/24596 (TNA).

120. The British report does not clarify to which group "Nadi" refers. It is unclear if it refers to the Arab Club (Nadi al-ʿArabi). The AE also authorized village shaykhs to collect two piasters from every adult each month. "Political Report," 4 August 1922, CO/40732, PD 1:249.

121. "Report on the Political Situation," PD 1:490–491. The report did not include the original Arabic supplement.

122. "Appendix J," PD 1:512.

123. This could refer to the village and town contingents (s. *mawkib*) of the procession.

124. "Appendix J," PD 1:512.

125. *Official Gazette*, 15 December 1920.

126. Foucault, "Truth and Power," *Foucault Reader*, 61.

127. Appendix J, PD 1:512.

128. Asad, "Idea of Anthropology," 106.

129. For this factional rivalry, see Hassassian, *Palestine*.

130. "Report for the Political Situation," 14 December 1923, Appendix A, PD 1:73.

131. "Police Summary," 14 May 1924, FO/371/10102/737 (TNA).

132. "Military Intelligence Summaries," 22 April 1938, CO 732/81/91 (TNA).

133. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*. For the subaltern, see Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*.

134. "Police Summary Report," 14 May 1924, FO/371/10102/737 (TNA); "Political Report," 25 May 1925, PD 2:167; "Police Summary," 26 April 1934, FO/371/1878/271 (TNA); Porath, *Emergence*, 234.

135. "Police Summary Report," 14 May 1924.

136. *Palestine Post*, 7 April 1933.

137. Ibid., 29 March 1934.

138. "Political Report," 25 May 1925, PD 2:167; *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932; Porath, *Emergence*, 234.

139. Al-*Yarmuk*, 3 May 1926.

140. *Filastin*, 23 April 1932.

141. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 199.

142. Cohen, *Army of Shadows*; Hughes, *Britain's Pacification*, 253–306.

143. *New York Times*, 6 April 1931; "Periodical Appreciation," 1935, FO/371/16926/2417 (TNA).

144. "Weekly Summary of Intelligence," 26 February 1937, FO/371/20824/1456 (PRO). For further on Faiz Haddad, see *Palestine Post*, 23 April 1937; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 166; Kalkas, "Revolt of 1936," 246–247.

145. *Palestine Post*, 23 April 1937.

146. Ibid., 8 April 1936.

147. Ibid., 12 April 1936.

148. Hebronites resented the control the SMC exercised over endowed properties and their revenues in the Hebron region. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 233.

149. "Festivals," CID, Palestine Police, Jerusalem, 4 May 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

150. "Nebi Musa and the Holy Week," DDC, Jerusalem, 13 April 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

151. "Police Summary," 15 April 1933, FO/371/16926/2417 (TNA).

152. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 6 May 1929. See also *Filastin*, 4 April 1931. Raghib's successor also began to invite foreign consuls to attend. *Al-Difaʿ*, 5 April 1936.

153. *Filastin*, 23 April 1932; *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, 31 March 1934.

154. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 18 April 1927; 9 April 1928; 6 May 1929.

155. Gelvin, "Was There a Mandate Period?" 420.

156. Hanssen and Weiss, *Arabic Thought beyond the Liberal Age*; Dieruff, *Translating Late Ottoman Modernity*, 78–115.

157. Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*; Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*; Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers of Tomorrow*; Furas, *Educating Palestine*; Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 99–106; Davis, "Ottoman Jerusalem."

158. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*, 17.

159. Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 75. As Wilson Jacob argues, Egypt's notables espoused an "effendi masculinity" that was culturally bourgeoisie "between and betwixt the West and the East." *Working Out Egypt*, 5. For girls' education as a site of conflict between Arab, Islamic, and Western identities, see Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers of Tomorrow*; Othman, *Negotiating Palestinian Womanhood*; Jad, "Rereading the British Mandate."

160. For works about modernist Islam, see Hourani, *Arabic Thought*; Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*; Commins, *Islamic Reform*.

161. Seikaly, *Men of Capital*, 16. Amin al-Husayni had studied at the institution the Islamist reformer Rashid Rida (d. 1935) founded. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 9.

162. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 226–229.

163. Dawn, "Origins of Arab Nationalism."

164. Freas, *Muslim-Christian Relations*, 27 and 19–32 generally. For a critique of the term "Salafi," see Lauziere, *Making of Salafism*.

165. *Bayan* (1922–1923), 7; Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 226. For similar modernist themes, see "Report on the Work of the SMC for the Year 1340–1341 *hijra* (1922–1923)," 17 May 1923, CO 733/24/26756 (TNA); *Bayan* (1923–1924), 22, 28–30; *Bayan* (1925), 11.

166. *Bayan* (1922–1923), 18. See also Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 234.

167. *Lisan al-ʿArab*, 28 March 1923.

168. *Filastin*, 3 April 1923. No information about this council appears after 1923.

169. For these two figures, see Nuwayhid, *Rijal min Filastin*, 17–20.

170. *Filastin*, 3 April 1923. Yasin is described as a shaykh in Nuwayhid, *Rijal min Filastin*, 368.

171. Seikaly, *Men of Capital*, 38.

172. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 14; Pappé, *Rise and Fall*, 169.

173. Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*; Commins, *Islamic Reform*; Lauziere, *Making of Salafism*, 1–59.

174. For critics of Egyptian *mulids*, see Schielke, "Hegemonic Encounters" and *Perils of Joy*, 111–151; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Pèlerinages d'Égypte*, 301–344.

175. Lauziere, *Making of Salafism*, 44.

176. Deringil, *Well-Protected Domains*; Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 9–23; Weismann, *Taste of Modernity*, 273–304; Freas, *Muslim-Christian Relations*, 187–192.

177. Commins, *Islamic Reform*, 116–123.

178. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* published five articles about the Moses festival on 28 April 1932. The newspaper mostly covered the regional Nabi Rubin and Nabi Saleh festivals.

179. For al-Qalqili, see ʿAbd al-Hadi, *Palestinian Personalities*.

180. See the articles published on 28 March 1932 and 11 April 1932 in *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. A pamphlet, *Bayan al-Radd*, published in 1924 in Jerusalem, lodged similar criticisms against the SMC for exploiting the festival for its own political aims. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 231.

181. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 58–63; Nafi, "Shayk ʿIzz al-Din," 191–194.

182. These events included the announcement of the dates of the festival (*al-munadi*) at the Islamic court, the blessing of the banners at Raʾs al-ʿAmud, and the ceremonies at the Haram al-Sharif.

183. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 59.

184. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*, 42–43; Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians*, 6–7.

185. Robson, *Colonialism and Christianity*, 26.

186. Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians*, 20 and 38–39.

187. See the testimony of the commandant of the Hebron Police, Muhammad Hijazi, *Palestine Weekly*, 18 June 1920 and 28 May 1920.

188. Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians*, 43.

189. "Report on the Political Situation," March 1923, PD 1:490.

190. Ghuri, *Filastin ʿabr Sittin ʿAm*, 44–53; Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, 299–300.

191. *Filastin*, 16 April 1930.

192. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 2 April 1934.

193. Friedland and Hecht, "Power of Place," 347.

194. "Political Report," April 1925, PD 1:167. The "Holy Fire" (*Sabt al-nur*) ceremony commemorated Jesus's resurrection and was celebrated on the Saturday before Orthodox Easter Sunday.

195. Personal communications, 12 February 2015.

196. Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence*, 117.

197. For these restrictions, see "Political Report for March 1921," PD 1:68; "Political Situation in Palestine, November 1923," PD 1:727; Chief Secretary, "Secret Political Resume for Jerusalem-Jaffa District for period March 1st to April 9th," 1925, CO/733/92 (TNA).

198. Rodman, "Empowering Place," 641.

199. Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 55.

200. See chapter 2 for these ceremonies.

201. *Filastin*, 22 April 1921.

202. Ibid., 11 April 1930.

203. Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence*, 32, 38, and especially 27–61.

204. *Filastin*, 17 April 1935. Thanks to Yair Wallach for clarifying these names.

205. Ibid., 4 April 1931.

206. Ibid., 21 April 1935.

207. Skorupski, *Symbol and Theory*, 84.

208. *Palestine Bulletin*, 7 April 1931.

209. Rofel, *Other Modernities*, 20, quoted in Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*, 29.

210. Miescher, Mitchell, and Shibusawa, "Introduction," 2.

211. Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 24.

212. Nashashibi's first wife was Christian who spoke French and was a prominent Jerusalem hostess. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 112, 142; Samuel, *Lifetime in Jerusalem*, 57.

213. *Palestine Bulletin*, April 14, 1930. The *Palestine Post* described "large crowds of spectators [that] filled the special stands." 21 April 1935.

214. Graham-Brown, *Palestinians and Their Society*, 140.

215. See Salim Tamari's observation of these variety of fashions captured in one photo of late Ottoman Jerusalem. *Great War*, 54–57.

216. *Palestine Post*, 22 April 1935.

217. For photos of mostly rural pilgrims attending Nabi Musa, see Graham-Brown, *Palestinians and Their Society*, 76, 138; Borghini, *Travelogue 1927*, 21.

218. Ahmed, *Women and Gender*, 244; Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 34.

219. Gole, *Forbidden Modern*, 1–4. For the debate Palestinians had about the veil during the Mandate years, see Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 63–92.

220. Chehabi, "Dress Codes."

221. Quoted in Apter, "On Imperial Spectacle," 576.

222. Ibid., 576–582.

223. Ibid., 576.

224. Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers of Tomorrow*, 4; Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*; Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*, 140–148.

225. Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 64.

226. Jad, "From Salons to Popular Committees."

227. Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 154. See also Najmabadi, "Crafting an Educated Housewife"; Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 113.

228. Fleischmann, *Nation and Its "New" Women*, 64.

229. For example, the SMC and Amin issued public pronouncements condemning the practice of nonveiling. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 252.

230. Friedland and Hecht, "Nebi Musa Pilgrimage," 109.

231. Even the word *bayan* possessed religious resonance, since it appears widely in Islamic scholarship. Von Grunebaum, "Bayan."

232. *Bayt al-Maqdis*, 18 April 1921.

233. *Filastin*, 13 April 1930.

234. *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, 24 April 1937. For further on the SMC's ability to dissuade violence and maintain order, see Roberts, *Islam under the Palestine Mandate*, 6, and 96–117.

235. *Filastin*, 22 April 1932.

236. The Husaynis owned *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*. The Nashashibi family sponsored the anti-Husayni journals *Filastin*, *al-Difaʿ*, *Mirʾat al-Sharq*, and *al-Nafir*. Kabah, *Palestinian Press*; Najjar, "Arabic Press and Nationalism," 70–127.

237. 8 April 1922.

238. I was unable to locate this hadith in any of the canonical collections.

239. 18 April 1935.

240. Foster, "Arabness."

241. *Mir'at al-Sharq*, 24 April 1937.

242. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 11 April 1932.

243. These conditions were later dropped on the stipulation that nothing would disturb public security. *Filastin*, 4 April 1931.

244. *Filastin*, April 4, 1931.

245. Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 31.

246. "Supplement to *al-Sabah*," 29 March 1923, PD 1:512. For a similar example of supporters of the Arab government in Syria promoting "civilized" demonstrations, see Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*, 263–264.

247. *Mir'at al-Sharq*, 8 April 1922.

248. "Moslem Religious Affairs: Nebi Musa Wakf," 22 April 1923 POL/121/U (ISA).

249. For the AE bulletin, see "Political Report for the month of April 1923," PD 1:518–519; for the *La Palestine* article, see 535.

250. *Mir'at al-Sharq*, 11 April 1936.

251. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 229. British anxieties over rousing Arab opposition even led to the British avoiding making public statements or issuing policy as the festival approached (233).

252. "Protest Letters," 17 May 1920, FO 371/5114/7016 (ISA).

253. Arabs opposed this proposal because it would have granted them only ten out of the twenty-three positions, even though they constituted close to 90 percent of the population. Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 179–197.

254. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 232.

CHAPTER 5: NATIONALIST YOUTH ACTIVITY AT THE FESTIVAL

1. *Official Gazette*, 15 March 1921.

2. Samuel, *A Lifetime in Jerusalem*, 59. For further restrictions on public ceremonies, see "Police Ordinance," Part VI, *Official Gazette*, 1 April 1926; "Criminal Law," 25 October 1929; "Enactment of the Criminal Law," 29 December 1932; "Criminal Code Ordinance, 1936," 14 January 1936, Suppl., 1:399. As Steven Wagner argues, British intelligence gathering in Palestine was relevant to security, communal relations, and administration. *Statecraft*, 3.

3. Motadel, *Islam and the European Empires*.

4. "Nebi Musa and Holy Week," DDC, Jerusalem, 13 April 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

5. "Pilgrimage and Cultural Fracture," 137.

6. Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 14.

7. Ryan, "The American Parade," 133.

8. Suleiman, *Arabic Language and National Identity*, 113–161.

9. Khoury, *Syria and the French*, 626–627. See also Khoury, "The Paradoxical in Arab Nationalism," 273–287; Watenpaugh, "Scouting," 258.

10. *Winning Lebanon*, 2–13.

11. Dawn, "Formation of Pan-Arab Ideology," 68; Simon, *Iraq between the Wars*.

12. Gershoni, "Emergence of Pan-Nationalism."

13. Anderson, "From Petition to Confrontation," 73–74.

14. Baun, *Winning Lebanon*, 2–13.

15. In fact, many of the founders of the leading youth party, Istiqlal, were of an older generation of "veteran nationalists" who held posts in the SMC. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, chapter 2; Wagner, *Statecraft*, 110.

16. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 73. For the positions these youth filled in the ranks of the government as junior-grade civil servants, see 46–47, 56–62, 73.

17. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, chapters 6 and 7.

18. Baun, *Winning Lebanon*, 5.

19. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 2. For the growth of a public sphere in other Arab countries, see Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*, 134–166; Bashkin, *Other Iraq*, 42–49; Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties*.

20. Najjar, "Arabic Press"; Ayalon, *Reading Palestine*; Kabha, *Palestinian Press*; Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers*; Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem*.

21. Quote dated to 1935. Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 111.

22. Joffe, "Legislating the Family," 208.

23. "Political Report," 25 March 1933, FO 371/16926/1369 (PRO).

24. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 45.

25. "Periodical Appreciation," 4 December 1935, No. 18/35, CSO, FO 371/20018 (TNA).

26. Wagner, *Statecraft*, 123. For Wagner's argument, see 108–113. But Wagner neglects to account for the many attempts the mufti made to dampen the growth of youth groups, particularly the Istiqlal Party. The author also claims that SMC's "finances were instrumental to the organization of youth movements throughout the country" and cites Shaykh Qassam as an example of these connections, because he served as a marriage registrar for the SMC (113). Not only did the two conflict over strategy of confronting the British, but there is also little evidence that the mufti employed Qassam to organize against the British. As Mark Sanagan argues, Shaykh Qassam's service as a marriage registrar is more complicated than merely being "an elaborate plan to recruit for jihad." *Lightning through the Clouds*, 74.

27. Bourmaud, "Political and Religious"; Freas, *Muslim Christian Relations*.

28. For discussion of the "public sphere," see pp. 74–75.

29. Butsch, *Citizen Audience*, 11, 26.

30. For challenges to public control of space, see Mitchell, "End of Public Space?"; Ryan, "American Parade"; Keith and Pile, "Introduction."

31. "Festivals," CID, Palestine Police, May 4, 1931, B/30/31 (ISA); *Times*, 10 April 1922, 4 April 1923, and 23 May 1924.

32. The speeches were given to the public prosecutor. *Palestine Weekly*, 28 May 1920.

33. *Official Gazette*, 15 December 1920.

34. Ibid., 15 March 1921.

35. "Order by the Deputy Commissioner, Jerusalem Division," 13/29/8,26/55 (ADA).

36. "Festivals," CID, Palestine Police, 4 May 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

37. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932.

38. For an overview of these popular songs, see Fitch, *Daughter of Abd Salam*; Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions*, I and II; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 125–193; Finn, *Stirring Times*, 2:2–3.

39. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 208.

40. *Yawmiyat*, 17 April 1919, 3:128–131.

41. "'Disturbances in Jerusalem . . . ,' Col. Meinertzhagen (Cairo)," 30 April 1920, FO 371/5118/3928E (TNA).

42. "La taftakar ya ʿAli" (Do not speculate O, Ali!) became "La taftakar ya Faysal" (Do not speculate O, Faysal!). Sakakini, *Yawmiyat*, 3:127.

43. "Majallat Rawdat al-Maʿarif."

44. Ortner, "On Key Symbols," 1339–1342.

45. Tim Semmerling applies this approach to study postcards Israelis and Palestinians designed for tourists. *Israeli and Palestinian Postcards*.

46. Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 49–74; Suleiman, *Arabic Language*, 140–142.

47. Emphasis in the original. Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," 167. Brubaker questions scholarship that uncritically accepts the existence of primordial ethnic identities.

48. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24. The letter *dad* is unique to Arabic in the Semitic languages; thus, Arabs were known as *ahl al-dad*, the people of the letter *dad*. "Ghassan" refers to the Ghassanid Arab tribe of southern Arabia. "ʿAdnan" refers to the Ishmaelite tribe of northern and western Arabia, whose ancestor ʿAdnan was the descendant of Abraham's son Ishmael.

49. ʿAbidi, "Min Taʾrikhina," 186. For the role of Arabic as a cultural unifier, see Suleiman, *Arabic Language*, 113–161.

50. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24. Boghdan referred to the Ottoman name for Moldova (Boğdan Iflak).

51. Ibn Saʿud conquered the Nejd in 1921, then led a fight to control the Hijaz from 1921 to 1926. Tétuan was the capital of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco from 1913 to 1956 and part of the lands ʿAbd al-Krim attempted to liberate during the Rif War in those same years.

52. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 191.

53. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

54. The author could be related to Muhammad Ali al-Tahir, who was close to the Istiqlalists and Nablus-born. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 84.

55. *Filastin*, 8 April 1931.

56. For etymological studies of *qawm* and *watan*, see Haim, "Islam," 280–307; Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 98–101.

57. Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 22–24.

58. For this romantic form of nationalism in Iraq, see Simon, *Iraq between the Wars*.

59. Muslih, *Origins of Palestinian Nationalism*. In addition, ʿArif al-ʿArif founded the newspaper *Suriya al-Janubiyya* (Southern Syria). Laila Parsons argues that the Arab nationalist commander Fawzi al-Qawuqji, who fought in Palestine during the 1936 revolt, issued public communiqués (*bayan*) that stressed Palestine's indivisibility from Syria. "Rebels without Borders."

60. Al-Kayyali, *Taʾrikh Filastin*, 162.

61. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 4.

62. *Palestine Bulletin*, 26 April 1926.

63. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 25.

64. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 28 April 1927. For a similar version, see Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 191; *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932.

65. For works on Palestinian identity before World War I, see Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*; Gerber, *Remembering and Imagining*, 42–79, and "Zionism, Orientalism"; Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine"; Beška and Foster, "Origins of the Term 'Palestinian.'" Louis Fishman refers to a local patriotism as "Palestinianism," with a clear understanding of Palestine as separate from Syria. *Jews and Palestinians*.

66. The SMC used religious language to refer to Palestine, such as *umma*. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 223–224.

67. Meir Litvak adds that the emphasis on the regional, Arab dimension of the Palestinian people also appeared in the documents and official statements the national movement produced during the Mandate period. "Palestinian Past," 27.

68. Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism," 28. Gerber adds that before WWI Arabs referred to the land they inhabited as Palestine, not southern Syria. For works that restrict support for Palestine as southern Syria to the brief period of Faysal's reign in Syria, see Porath, *Emergence*, 70–122; Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 162–175.

69. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24–25.

70. *Al-Zahur*, April 19, 1930.

71. "Information on the Events of Nabi Musa," 13 April 1930, CZA J/1-310, cited in Anderson, *From Petition to Confrontation*, 134.

72. *Filastin*, 12 April 1930.

73. Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*; Budeiri, "Palestinians."

74. Gershoni and Jankowski, "Introduction," xxiv-xxv.

75. Ortner, "On Key Symbols," 1340.

76. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 25.

77. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 28 April 1927.

78. Seikaly, *Men of Capital*, 21.

79. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24–25.

80. Abidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 181–186.

81. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, April 28, 1927.

82. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24; ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 185; another chant also used the word *luwuth* for lion (186).

83. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 185.

84. Rugh, *Letters from Palestine*, 96.

85. Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24.

86. The *Haaretz* article was quoted in *Filastin*, 15 April 1930.

87. The commission concluded that a "fundamental cause" of the riots could be attributed to Arab fear that Jewish immigration and land purchases will one day displace Arabs. Shaw Commission, 163–164.

88. *Palestine Bulletin*, 7 April 1931.

89. *Filastin*, 8 April 1931.

90. *Palestine Bulletin*, 25 April 1932; ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 186; Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24.

91. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 186. For a similar version, see Abu Gharbiyya, *Fi Khidamm*, 24.

92. *Palestine Bulletin*, 25 April 1932.

93. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 253–254. For the mufti's rebuffing Qassam's call for revolt, see Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 67. The British imprisoned Akram Zuʿaytir for calling for jihad in the press. Kabha, "Between Local Palestinian and Pan-Arab."

94. Kalkas, "Revolt of 1936," 241.

95. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, chapter 6. Amin dismissed calls for noncooperation as "entrapment" (180). His supporters in the press mocked the youth movement as naïve and idealistic for making such appeals. Kabha, *Palestinian Press*, 88.

96. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 192.

97. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 112.

98. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 179–180, 221; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 112–118.

99. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 21 April 1935. The two signatories were Salim Husayn al-Agha and Hafiz ʿUthman al-Agha.

100. Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence*, 303.

101. "Palestine Police," 2 June 1933, FO 16926/3260 (TNA).

102. Schneider, *Mandatory Separation*; Furas, *Educating Palestine*; Brownson, "Colonialism, Nationalism"; El-Eini, *Mandated Landscapes*, 43–104; Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem*, 208–219.

For this curriculum in other Arab countries, see Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism*, 49–74.

103. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 56.

104. Schneider, *Mandatory Separation*, 129–159; Kabha, "Between Local Palestinian and Pan-Arab." The two would later be deported for their role in supporting the Arab Revolt.

105. Baun, *Winning Lebanon*, 3. For Darwaza's activities, see Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*.

106. PD 1:251. For Zuʿaytar's antisectarian views, see Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 138.

107. The *Haaretz* report appeared in *Filastin*, 12 April 1930. Barghuthi taught in Jerusalem from 1933–1948. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 133–149.

108. *Filastin*, 15 April 1930.

109. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 15 April 1930.

110. Zuʿaytar, *Min Mudhakkirat*, I:141–142. Zuʿaytar appeared at other Prophet Moses celebrations, leading the Nablus pilgrims during the 1932 festival. *Filastin*, 22 April 1932.

111. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 15 April 1930.

112. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 121–127.

113. Zuʿaytar was sentenced under the Prevention of Crimes Ordinance to internal exile in Nablus, confinement to his home after dark, and a £P 5 security bond. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 70.

114. *Filastin*, 4 April 1931.

115. Seikaly, *Haifa*, 240–241. See also Swedenburg, "Role of the Palestinian Peasantry," 182–186.

116. *Filastin*, 5 April 1931.

117. Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*; Anderson, "From Petition to Confrontation," 254–343.

118. Watenpaugh, "Scouting"; Baun, *Winning Lebanon*; Krais, "Muscular Muslims."

119. Degani, "They Were Prepared." By 1936, there were more than one hundred official Scout troops, with 3,344 members and 808 Arab and Jewish girls in the Girl Guides. *Survey of Palestine*, II:662.

120. Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society*, 18. For the goals that the founder of the Boy Scouts, Robert Baden-Powell, envisioned, see his *Scouting for Boys*.

121. Block and Proctor, *Scouting Frontiers*.

122. Brownson, "Colonialism, Nationalism," 18. While Arab Christian and Muslim youth joined the PBSA, Jewish youth only joined Zionist organizations. Degani, "They Were Prepared," 7–8; Bar-Yosef, "Fighting Pioneer Youth," 45. For anti-Jewish slogans Christian Scouts chanted during Easter, see Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine*, 30; Fosdick, *Pilgrimage to Palestine*, 263.

123. The High Commissioner served as the honorary president of scouting in Palestine, while Bowman served as president of the Baden-Powell Scouting program in Palestine. *Survey of Palestine*, II:662. For Qassam's role in dissociation, see Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 107; Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 88–89.

124. Bar-Yosef, "Fighting Pioneer Youth," 45–46. For a similar response, see Rugh, *Letters from Palestine*, 52.

125. Brownson, "Nationalism, Colonialism," 18.

126. "Boy Scout Movement in Palestine," CID, Jerusalem, March 1938, 2 (2/5/1/28 ISA), 1–2. I am grateful to Arnon Degani for providing me a copy of this document. Degani, "They Were Prepared," 8; "Political Report," 15 January 1934, FO 371/17878/897 (TNA); Hodgkin, *Letters from Palestine*, 82.

127. "Boy Scout Movement in Palestine," 4.

128. *Supplement to Survey of Palestine*, 141–142. For examples of Arabs forming military units under the guise of Scout troops and sports clubs, see Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 130–134.

129. "Police Situation Reports," 26 April 1934, FO 371 17878/3240 (TNA).

130. "Boy Scout Movement in Palestine," 2.

131. "Palestine Police," 15 April 1933, FO 371/16926/2417 (TNA); "Palestine Police," 2 June 1933, FO 16926/3260 (TNA). See also High Commissioner Wauchope's concerns about the Arab Scouts. "Letter from High Commissioner," 24 December 1937, CO 733/356/15/E/4/37 (TNA).

132. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 22 April 1932.

133. Ibid., 30 April 1932.

134. Ibid., 1 April 1934.

135. Ibid., 21 April 1935.

136. Ibid.

137. *Al-Difaʿ*, 18 April 1935, 29 April 1935.

138. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 9 April 1928, 21 April 1935.

139. Krais, "Muscular Muslims," 568.

140. Zarcone, *Sufi Pilgrims*, 89.

141. *Al-Difaʿ*, 10 July 1934, cited in Kabha, *Palestinian Press*, 109.

142. Khalid b. al-Walid participated with the Prophet Muhammad in the conquest of Mecca in 8 *h*. Abi 'Ubayda al-Jarrah was given supreme command of Syria around the year 634 CE.

143. Baun, *Winning Lebanon*, 3. Algerian youth named their troops in honor of venerated Islamic scholars who represented "the enlightened tradition of Islamic culture." Krais, "Muscular Muslims," 569.

144. Arab nationalists hoped Iraq and King Faysal would lead the campaign for Arab independence and Arab unity. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 128.

145. Ibid., 183.

146. The *Qurʾan* enjoins believers to "roam the land" (19:20). Degani, "They Were Prepared," 22.

147. Bashkin, *Other Iraq*; Baun, *Winning Lebanon*; Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians*.

148. Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 165.

149. Tamari, "Foreword," xiii.

150. Krais, "Muscular Muslims," 570.

151. Sorek, "Sports Column," 610.

152. "Police Report," 22 April 1933," FO 371/16926/2417 (TNA).

153. Ibid. For the arrival of Scouts from Egypt and Lebanon at other events, see "Weekly Appreciation," 7 October 1933, FO 371/16926/6637 (TNA); Degani, "They Were Prepared," 8.

154. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 15 April 1930.

155. "Boy Scout Movement in Palestine," 1–4.

156. Degani, "They Were Prepared," 9; Tibawi, *Arab Education*, 203. This ordinance was repeated in 1936. Bar-Yosef, "Fighting Pioneer Youth," 46.

157. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 188.

158. "Periodical Appreciation," No. 1/36, 22 January 1936, CSO, FO/371/20018 (TNA); Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 121–125.

159. "Periodical Appreciation," No. 1/36, dated 22 January 1936, CSO, FO/371/20018 (TNA).

160. Porath, *Palestinian Arabs*, 76.

161. "Political Appreciation," 18 February 1936, No. 2/36 CSO, FO 371/20018 (TNA).

162. Porath describes *Futuwwa* as a type of "armed milia." *Palestinian Arab*, 258. However, this group was not registered as an anti-British organization, only as anti-Zionist. *Supplement Survey of Palestine*, 142.

163. "Periodical Appreciation," 1 April 1936, No. 7/36 (CSO) FO 371/20018 (TNA).

164. "Weekly Summary," 26 February 1937, FO 371/20824/1456 (TNA).

165. *Popular Culture*, 149. The popular valorization of the brigand "Abu Jilda" in the early 1930s is an example of how Palestinians reflected popular notions of anti-colonialism and criticism of elites. Winder, "Abu Jilda."

166. Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 3.

167. Provence, *Last Ottoman Generation*.

168. Halabi, "Liminal Loyalties."

169. Halabi, "Symbols of Hegemony."

170. *Times*, 11 April 1922.

171. Ibid., 30 April 1929.

172. Ibn Saʿud had recently defeated the rebellious Ikhwan forces at the Battle of Sabilla on 29 March 1929. Thanks to Weldon Matthews for notifying me about this event.

173. Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*, 9. Emphasis in the original.

174. "Political Report, Jerusalem," 30 August 1933, FO 371/16926/5564 (TNA); Matthews, *Confronting an Empire*, 153 and 162; Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 56.

175. "Political Report, Jerusalem," 30 August 1933, FO 371/16926/5564 (TNA).

176. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932.

177. *Palestine Post*, 3 April 1936.

178. *Al-Quds*, 19 April 1935.

179. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 15 April 1930.

180. Krämer, *History of Palestine*, 267.

181. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932.

182. Bellah, "Civil Religion."

183. *Palestinian Commemoration*.

184. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 15 April 1930.

185. Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, 38–40.

186. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932.

187. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 126; Kalkas, "Revolt of 1936."

188. *Al-Difaʿ*, 6 April 1936. Activists infused Qassam with an Arab identity at his funeral, draping him and his comrades in the flags of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, the only independent Arab countries. Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 1.

189. *Palestine Post*, 23 April 1937.

1. For discussion of this memory, see Saʾdi and Abu-Lughod, *Nakba*; Ben Ze'ev, *Remembering Palestine*; Davis, *Palestinian Village Histories*.

2. Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 93. Emphasis in the original. See also Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 18.

3. Mulder, *Shrines of the ʿAlids*, 8.

4. Abercrombie and Longhurst, *Audiences*, 44.

5. Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine," 6. For further criticism of a Palestinian historiography that privileges a dominant hegemonic nationalist narrative over the experiences of rural people, see Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt*; Davis, *Palestinian Villages*; Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*.

6. Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 93. Emphasis in the original.

7. The *Times* estimated in 1922 that anti-Zionist communist groups did not exceed three hundred members. 4 April 1922, 7. In 1946, membership reached six thousand. *Supplement to the Survey of Palestine*, 149.

8. For this group's founding, see Greenstein, *Zionism and Its Discontents*, 50–63.

9. For its ideology, see Rubenstein, *Communist Movement*, 147–160. The party slogan by 1930 was "Arabization plus Bolshevization" (219).

10. For this reconciliation, see Franzén, "Communism versus Zionism."

11. Quoted in Swedenburg, "Role of the Palestinian Peasantry," 187. For Arab membership, see Budeiri, *Palestine Communist Party*, 26.

12. Jacobson and Naor, *Oriental Neighbors*; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 13.

13. Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies*, 9. See also Bernstein, *Constructing Boundaries*; Shafir, *Land, Labor*.

14. *Filastin*, 13 April 1930.

15. Budeiri, *Palestinian Communist Party*, 8.

16. Bunton, *Colonial Land*, 3–4; Stein, *Land Question*.

17. Najjar, "Arabic Press and Nationalism," 70–127.

18. Kabha, *Palestinian Press*, 3.

19. *Filastin*, 13 April 1930.

20. Polak-Springer, "Religiosity," 9.

21. *Filastin*, 13 April 1930.

22. Ibid., 23 April 1932.

23. Ibid., 7 April 1931.

24. A brief list of these arrests includes the *New York Times*, 31 March 1930, and 6 April 1931; *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 24 April 1932; *Palestine Post*, 30 March 1934 and 3 April 1936. For Zionist support of arresting anti-Zionists Jews, see *Times*, 4 April 1922. For British efforts to expel Jewish communists, see Banko, "Keeping Out the 'Undesirables.'"

25. Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 13. ʿAjaj Nuwayhid, the Palestine Broadcast Service controller of Arabic programs, attempted to strengthen the bonds between Muslim and Christian Palestinians through radio programs. Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*, 136–140.

26. Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*, 235.

27. *Filastin*, 13 April 1930.

28. Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan*, 93–94; Granott, *Land System*, 180–183.

29. Granott, *Land System*, 164.

30. *Survey of Palestine*, 1:147, 150.

31. Nadan, *Palestinian Peasant Economy*, 261–298; Kamen, *Little Common Ground*, 135–143. Haim Gerber argues that private ownership in the mountainous areas was more common and that the *musha'* collective land tenure system did not exist in the plains area. *Social Origins*, 77–78.

32. Reudy, "Dynamics of Land Alienation," 122. For rural solidarity before World War I, see Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan*, 94. This solidarity was also nonsectarian. Kark and Oren-Nordheim, *Jerusalem and Its Environs*, 229.

33. Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt*, 22. For construction of nostalgic memories of peasant life in Palestine, see Ben Ze'ev, *Remembering Palestine*, 2; Sa'di and Abu-Lughod, *Nakba*.

34. Miller, *Government and Society*, 8–9.

35. Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 33; Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 64. One dunam is between 900 and 1,000 square meters. Luke and Keith-Roach, *Handbook of Palestine*, 126.

36. Taqqu, "Peasants into Workmen," 262. See also Yazbak, "From Poverty to Revolt," 108.

37. Anderson, "Will the Real Palestinian," 21.

38. For recent scholarship that doubts a Palestinian identity existed before 1948, see Litvak, "Introduction," and "Palestinian Past."

39. *Effendi* was a title used to label the politically powerful and wealthy Arab urban notables (*a'yan*) of the Ottoman period.

40. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

41. *Times*, 6 May 1921; Government Office, Jerusalem, 24 June 1927, CO 733/142/10/44602 (PRO).

42. These letters were reported in the *Palestine Post*, 18 June 1920. The Abu Ghush family was identified with the Hizb al-Zira'i (Agricultural Party), a group known as being friendly toward the British and funded by the Zionists. Hassassian, *Palestine*, 61.

43. The journal *Bayt al-Maqdis* issued a public rebuttal on 16 June 1920, which the *Palestine Post* cited on 25 June 1920.

44. Smith, *To Take Place*, 109.

45. *Al-Jami'a al-'Arabiyya*, 28 April 1927, 15 April 1930, and 2 April 1934; *Filastin*, 19 April 1930.

46. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 145. Gudrun Krämer adds that the processions were notable for their beating of drums, singing, and chanting, serving, in a way, as a substitute for a Palestinian national anthem. *History of Palestine*, 267.

47. The commission claimed that Arab peasants and villagers were likely "more politically minded than many of the people of Europe," 129.

48. *Filastin*, 19 April 1930.

49. Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt*, xxvii.

50. Doumani, "My Grandmother," 6. Moreover, Rochelle Davis describes the village books Palestinian refugees of 1948 published of their destroyed villages as "collective autobiographies." *Palestinian Villages*, 71.

51. *Palestine Post*, 12 April 1936.

52. *Jerusalem and I*, 49. Palestinians adopted the flag of the World War I Arab Revolt as their national flag. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 208–211.

53. Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 158.

54. Ibid., 63–88, 145.

55. Budeiri, "Palestinians,"198.

56. Miller, *Rural Society*, 21. See also Sanagan, *Lightning through the Clouds*, 103.

57. Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33, 38–39.

58. Mitchell, "End of Public Space," 115 and note 6. Emphasis in the original. Abigail Jacobson applies Mitchell's ideas to late Ottoman Jerusalem. *From Empire to Empire*, 55–60.

59. Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion*, 126, 135.

60. Keith and Pile, "Introduction," 6.

61. Baytuniyya is located three kilometers west of Ramallah and fourteen kilometers north of Jerusalem.

62. "Nebi Musa and the Holy Week," DDC, Jerusalem, 13 April 1931, B/30/31 (ISA).

63. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 201. For his discussion of this episode, 201–202.

64. *Filastin*, 8 April 1931.

65. ʿAyn Karim is a short distance west of Jerusalem. One of the *mukhtar*'s duties was to "keep the peace." Luke and Keith-Roach, *Handbook of Palestine*, 135–136.

66. "Report on Nebi Musa," DDC, Jerusalem, 13 April 1931, B/30/31 (ISA); *Palestine Bulletin*, 12 April 1931.

67. Lawrence, "Public Space, Political Space."

68. For schedules of the festival, see "Nebi Musa and Holy Week 1931–1936," General Secretary Office, B/30/31 (ISA).

69. Barakat, "Jerusalem Fellah," 9, 12; Tamari, "City and its Rural Hinterland," 77–78. For examples of rural people increasingly adopting urban cultural practices see Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 99–106.

70. Ayalon, *Reading Palestine*; Wallach, *City in Fragments*.

71. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 202, 204, 208.

72. *Al-JamiIʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 16 April 1928; Ayalon, *Reading Palestine*, 74.

73. Wallach, *City in Fragments*, 201.

74. Shepherd, *Ploughing Sand*, 42.

75. Keith-Roach, *Pasha of Jerusalem*, 160. For perlocutionary force, see Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*, 117.

76. For family, neighborhood, and youth banners, see Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 190–203; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 173.

77. Yusuf al-Hakim, a Jerusalem judge in 1910, referred to these banners as "*raya*." *Suriyya wa al-ʿAhd*, 197.

78. *Filastin*, 24 April 1932. The 1932 festivities began on Friday, April 22. He invoked Article 13 of the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine, which obliged Britain to protect worship at holy places and secure the freedom of religious practices.

79. Miller, *Government and Society*, 54–62. "Public Notice: Mukhatrs" outlined the *mukhtar*'s duties and remuneration by taking a percentage of the tithes they collected. *Official Gazette*, 1 December 1919.

80. Miller, *Government and Society*, 21–23.

81. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932.

82. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932; *New York Times*, 26 April 1932.

83. *Filastin*, 26 April 1932. For the "purposeful demonization" of the *fallah* by the police, see Barkat, "Jerusalem Fellah," 13–15.

84. Mai Seikaly argues that those in the legal profession wished to maintain a good working relationship with the colonial state. *Haifa*, 223.

85. *New York Times*, 26 April 1932.

86. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, 17, quoted in Comaroff, *Body of Power*, 196.

87. Porath, *Emergence*, 39, 307. For contemporary accounts of this political consciousness and collective reading practices, see "Shaw Commission," 129–130; Najjar, "Arabic Press," 64, 80–93; Kabha, *Palestinian Press*, 18; Ayalon, *Reading Palestine*, 131–153. Aside from a reading public, new "listening communities" formed around the radio. Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem Calling*, 33. Gerber criticizes scholarship that disputes Mandate-era Palestinian villagers' possessing a nationalist consciousness as a product of an Orientalist approach to studying Palestinian history. Gerber, "Zionism, Orientalism."

88. Banko, *Invention of Palestinian Citizenship*, 157–160. Even in the late Ottoman period, villagers petitioned Ottoman authorities to protest their grievances. Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan*.

89. Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt*, 78–80; Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 19–25. Mahmoud Yazbak identifies rural economic distress as the leading factor driving the revolt. "From Poverty to Revolt."

90. *Filastin*, April 28, 1932.

91. Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass*, 41.

92. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, 53.

93. McCarthy, *Population of Palestine*, 76–77. For the different tribes that participated, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 198 and 204; *Times*, May 22, 1922; Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 176.

94. In addition, even at shrine festivals that stressed a strong communal identity, such as for Shiʿa Muslims at Nabi Yushaʿ in northeast Palestine, fights broke out among young men from different villages. Abou-Hodeib, "Sanctity across the Border," 389.

95. "Report of the Nebi Musa pilgrimage April 1922," 10 May 1922, CO 733/24595 (TNA).

96. *Filastin*, 23 April 1932; *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 24 April 1932; *al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 April 1932.

97. For the police report, see *Filastin*, 23 April 1932.

98. *Al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 24 April 1932. Subsequent details come from this account.

99. *Filastin*, 28 April 1932.

100. Jarman, *Material Conflicts*; Haider, *Origins of the Shi'a*.

101. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 182.

102. Asali, *Mawsim*, 126.

103. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*,191–192.

104. Stoddard, "Defining and Classifying," 53.

105. See p. 101.

106. *Official Gazette*, 1 January 1921.

107. Ibid., 15 March 1921.

108. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 189.

109. *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

110. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 189.

111. Ibid.; *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921.

112. This gate is also known as Bab al-Nazir.

113. *Palestine Post*, 30 April 1937. The Faysal Gate is a local name for the northern entrance to the Haram al-Sharif, adjacent to the road leading from St. Stephen's Gate.

114. Ibid., 30 April 1937; *al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya*, 30 April 1937, which also contains the police report on the disturbance.

115. Keith-Roach, *Pasha of Jerusalem*, 160.

116. *Times*, 22 May 1922; *Filastin*, 26 April 1932. For a photo of Storrs at the shrine, see Bowman, H. E., fiche 11-605 (MEC).

117. "Report on the Nebi Musa pilgrimage April 1922," 10 May 1922, CO 733/21/24595 (PRO).

118. *Jamiʿa al-Islamiyya*, 30 April 1937.

119. *Palestine Post*, 30 April 1937.

120. Hjortshoj, "Shi'i Identity," 301.

121. Meri, *Cult of Saints*,1–22.

122. Sayigh, "Palestinian Camp Women," 42. See also Ben-Ze'evi, *Remembering Palestine*, 86; Stein and Swedenburg, "Popular Culture," 5 and 8–10.

123. The distance from Jerusalem to the shrine is approximately 21 kilometers; from Nablus to Jerusalem, 48 kilometers; from Hebron to Jerusalem, 27 kilometers; from Jaffa to Jerusalem, 48 kilometers.

124. Loti, *Jerusalem*, 124–125. From Jerusalem, pilgrims walked the Gethsemane Road to Raʾs al-ʿAmud, to the village of ʿAzariyya, then to Khan al-Ahmar, finally reaching the shrine. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 193.

125. Qayati, *Nafhat al-Basham*, 183.

126. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 211–212.

127. Al-ʿArif, *Taʾrikh al-Quds*, 189.

128. Ibid., 199; McCowan, "Muslim Shrines in Palestine," 66–68.

129. During Ottoman times, ceremonial canon shots were fired as pilgrims marched from al-Raʾi to the Moses shrine.

130. Hiring a mule from Raʾs al-ʿAmud to the shrine cost twenty-five qirsh and took four hours to complete. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 184. One qirsh was the equivalent to a hundredth of a Palestine pound. The Nablus municipality later hired buses to transport pilgrims to Jerusalem (182). For an image of more than a dozen buses parked outside the shrine, see *Huna al-Quds*, 29 March 1942.

131. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 192, 195–197; ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 183–184; Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 174–175.

132. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 173. The authorities of the shrine charged vendors a fee to sell their goods, as high as 30 qirsh, proving too steep for some. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 April 1932.

133. For the goods sold at the shrine and the children's games, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 207–209; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 195–197.

134. *Miʾat al-Sharq*, 26 April 1921; Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 179; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 210–212.

135. *Times*, 22 May 1922.

136. For shrines in the modern period before 1948, see Petersen, *Bones of Contention*; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*; Schick, *Palestinian Life*.

137. *Survey of Western Palestine*, 258 quoted in Conder, "Moslem Mukams," 258.

138. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 2. He examined 235 shrines personally and retrieved information about another 348 (vi). In comparison, Shukri ʿArraf documents a higher number throughout the Mandate period. *Tabaqat*, 1:12, 58, 94, 168, 284.

139. In some Muslim countries, authorities post signs at shrines warning visitors against committing improper acts of worship. Procházka-Eisl and Procházka, *Plain of Saints*, 337. For restrictions at Egyptian mulids, see Schielke, "On Snacks and Saints," 121, 125.

140. Chambert-Loir and Guillot, "Introduction," 8.

141. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 251. Samuli Schielke describes contemporary Egyptians mulids as a "carnivalesque utopian festival" and a "cheerful, grotesque popular Utopia of freedom and equality." "On Snacks and Saints," 119.

142. Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 95. Turjman admired Qasim Amin (d. 1908), who advocated greater rights for women (43).

143. Shami, *Hebron Stories*, 144–145, quoted in Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 161. For a discussion of Shami, see Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 150–166.

144. For SMC attempts at segregation, see file 91, 13/47/3,5/1/60, April 17, 1947 (ADA).

145. Weinsinck, "Nadjis"; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 95.

146. Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions*, 2:160–161. People believed the land of the Nabi Musa shrine would shake when pilgrims committed adultery. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 95. For historical examples of these beliefs, see ʿUlaymi, *al-Uns al-Jalil*, 101; Nabulsi, *al-Hadra al-Unsiyya*, 123.

147. Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil*, 7.

148. Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 7.

149. Ibid., 14–16.

150. Jamal, "Review," 123.

151. Torab, *Performing Islam*, 23; Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*, 6.

152. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 161.

153. Ortner, *High Religion*, 196. See also Gerholm, "On Ritual"; Hughes-Freeland, *Ritual, Performance, Media*.

154. *Survey of Western Palestine: Special Papers on Topography, Archaeology, Manners and Customs, Etc.* (1882), 325, quoted in Bowman, "Popular Palestinian Practices," 72. Emphasis in the original.

155. Abu-Rabia, Bar-Zvi, and Kressel, *Charm of Graves*, 7. Meron Benvenisti estimates that the number of mosques in villages from which Arabs fled during the 1948 War approached 140, suggesting that mosques were not located in at least half of the villages. *Sacred Landscape*, 287.

156. See the observation of Abdullah Lutfiyya of the Ramallah-area village of Baytin in the mid-1950s. *Baytin*, 23. Rema Hammami adds that the village mosque was not a place for women. "Between Heaven and Earth," 79. See also Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 23–33.

157. Frantzman and Bar, "Mapping Muslim Sacred Tombs," 100–101. Canaan concluded that in a survey of a small group of villages 63 percent of the maqams were in public cemeteries. *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 31.

158. De Jong, "Sufi Orders," 156.

159. Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*; Abu-Rabia, Bar-Zvi, and Kressel, *Charm of Graves*, 7.

160. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 102–103.

161. Ibid., 5.

162. Dafni, "Typology and the Worship," 7; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 46–84; Curtis, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 75–79.

163. Petersen, "Preliminary Report," 98 and 112. Moreover, twenty-nine of the fifty-two new villages founded between 1922 and 1931 were established on the ruins of a sheikh's tomb or a shrine. Frantzman, "Arab Settlement," 213 and 257.

164. For the sacredness of stones and caves, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 42–46, 77–84; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 117–125, 130.

165. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 31.

166. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 203.

167. Dafni, "Rituals, Ceremonies," 6–11. See also Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 91–94.

168. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 30.

169. Talmon-Heller, "Graves, Relics," 603; Meri, *Cult of Saints*, 169.

170. Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 164–167.

171. The date fell fourteen days before Good Friday of the Orthodox church. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 217. See also Barghuthi, *al-Marahil*, 56. Curtiss also described ziyaras to local shrines as "picnics." *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 167.

172. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 237n1.

173. This was held during the last Thursday of the Nabi Musa festival. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 82–83; Barghuthi, *al-Marahil*, 56.

174. For examples of Islamic rituals led by women, see Aghaie, *Women of Karbala*; Pemberton, *Women Mystics*.

175. Procházka-Eisl and Procházka, *Plain of Saints*, 346.

176. Located two kilometers west of Majdal, this festival was held three days before Orthodox Good Friday. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 64–67.

177. Grossman, *Rural Process-Pattern*, 77, 165.

178. Kimmerling and Migdal, *Palestinians*, 18; Nadan, *Palestinian Peasant Economy*, 198.

179. Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 14. Ruth Kark and Michal Oren-Nordheim describes the Middle Eastern village as an "agglomerate of *hamulas*." *Jerusalem and Its Environs*, 277.

180. Reilly, "Peasantry of Late Ottoman," 90.

181. Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 21. The Ottomans even organized tax collection at the village level through each hamula. Johnson, *Islam*, 11–12.

182. Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 21.

183. Lutfiyya, *Baytin*, 175.

184. Tucker, "Ties That Bound," 249–250.

185. Sered, *Priestess, Mother, Sacred Sister*, 5. Even if women are practicing in ways distinct from men, this should not suggest that they defy orthodox beliefs. Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*.

186. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 51–56, 80–81. The threat of a husband's marrying a second wife always accompanied the distress of a woman unable to produce a male child. Lutfiyya, *Baytin*, 161; Fitch, *Daughter of Abd Salam*, 47. Polygamy, though, was "the exception, not the rule," in the village of Baytin. For women visiting the mulid of al-Sayyid al-Badawi to treat infertility, see Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*, 123–128. Today, as women discover medical fertilization methods or learn that men can be infertile, fewer women visit a shrine to resolve infertility. Procházka-Eisl and Procházka, *Plain of Saints*, 187.

187. Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 78–81.

188. Sered, *Priestess, Mother, Sacred Sister*, 73.

189. Abu-Zahra, *Pure and Powerful*, 92–93.

190. Bowman, "Sharing and Exclusion," 46; Laird, "Boundaries and *Baraka*"; Sered, "Rachel's Tomb," 7. Nurit Stadler and Nimrod Luz refer to these shrines as "womb tombs." "Veneration of Womb Tombs."

191. Blyth, *When We Lived in Jerusalem*, 297.

192. *Al-Zahur*, 19 April 1930.

193. Tamari and Nassar, *Storyteller of Jerusalem*, 48–49.

194. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslims Shrines," 147.

195. Bliss, *Religions of Modern Syria*, 268–269; *Times*, 22 May 1922, 9. For an image of rags hung at a sacred tree, see Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 91.

196. Canaan, Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries, 113; Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 158; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 195.

197. Fitch, *Daughter of Abd Salam*, 60–63.

198. Chambert-Loir, "Saints and Ancestors," 132–140. As the works in *Corps et le Sacré* demonstrate, the body of the revered figure is both the "manifestation and source of *baraka*." Mayeur-Jaouen, "Introduction," 22.

199. Ortner, *High Religion*, 199.

200. Kugle, *Sufis and Saints' Bodies*, 7.

201. Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing," 449.

202. Schielke, "On Snacks and Saints," 125 and 128.

203. A brief list includes Ahmed, *Women and Gender*; Mahmoud, *Politics of Piety*; Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*; and Najmabadi, *Professing Selves*.

204. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 195.

205. "The Vengeance of the Fathers," in Shami, *Hebron Stories*.

206. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 April 1932.

207. "Nebi Musa," 199. For a brief biography of these writers, see Schick, *Palestinian Life*, 5–8.

208. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 213.

209. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 177. Rooms reserved for sleeping were the only space, other than the mosque, that segregated men and women.

210. Ibid., 168.

211. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 195.

212. Kisch, *Palestine Diary*, 1:40.

213. "Nebi Musa," 199.

214. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 199.

215. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 207–208 and 213. Most visitors to the shrine were predominantly peasants and Bedouin. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 186; Luke and Keith-Roach, *Handbook of Palestine*, 130.

216. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 64; Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion*, 163.

217. Tamari, *Year of the Locust*, 121–122.

218. "Muslim Festival," 187. Tamari describes the atmosphere at Nabi Rubin as "secular," "licentious," and "libidinous." *Mountain against the Sea*, 22–35. The mulid of al-Sayyid al-Badawi of Tanta, Egypt, had the reputation of having prostitutes present at the ceremonies. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*, 91–99.

219. Shaarawi, *Harem Years*, 53.

220. Ahmed, *Women and Gender*, 152.

221. Bliss, *Religions of Modern Syria*, 284.

222. Baldensperger, "The Immovable East," 24. See also Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, 253; Curtiss, "Researches in Syria," 91; Fitch, *Daughter of Abd Salam*, 35.

223. Barghuthi, *Marahil*, 30–31.

224. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 206 (emphasis added). For discussion of differences in veiling styles and habits in rural and urban communities, see Jad, "From Salons," 126; Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 183. For images of these differences, see Khalidi, *Before Their Diaspora*, 101.

225. "Nebi Musa," 200.

226. *Letters from Jerusalem*, 22–23.

227. *Palestine Post*, 3 April 1936.

228. The last festival he attended was in 1946. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 192.

229. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 172.

230. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 31. For the festival generally, see Yazbak, "Muslim Festival."

231. Hammami, "Between Heaven and Earth," 115. For this festival and shrine, see Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 112, 215, 299.

232. Sayigh, *Palestinians*, 16. The "individual idiosyncrasies" Rochelle Davis found in the collections of memorial books Palestinians collected of their pre-Nakba villages attests to the centrality of village life. *Palestinian Village*, 71.

233. "Venerating," 118.

234. For these instruments, see Baldensperger, "Orders of Holy Men," 25.

235. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 199; Kahle, "Customs at the Muslims Shrines," 173.

236. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 March 1932. For the banning of *dhikr* ceremonies after 1917, see De Jong, "Sufi Orders," 178.

237. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 209; Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 177; ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 184.

238. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 177.

239. Ibid., 178. For its ban in Egypt, see Hatina, "Religious Culture Contested."

240. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 197–198.

241. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 209. For its description and questionable methods of maintaining a sanitary procedure, see Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 179.

242. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 177.

243. Hakim, *Suriyya*, 197; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 194.

244. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikina*, 181–182.

245. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 169–172; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 209–210.

246. Weigert, *My Life with the Palestinians*, 41–45.

247. ʿAbidi, *Min Taʾrikhina*, 182.

248. Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 12. See also Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem*, 190.

249. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion*, 135–136.

250. For example, see Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous*, 77–78.

251. Turner, *Dramas*, 166–228, and *Ritual Process*, 131–165.

252. Turner, *Forest of Symbols*, 93–111 and 131–165 and *Ritual Process*, 96.

253. Turner, "Ritual, Tribal and Catholic," 504.

254. The mufti could enforce proper behavior in the rare moments when a man and woman were discovered in socially prohibited circumstances. Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions*, 2:161.

255. Ramzy, "Singing Heaven on Earth," 378. See also Schielke, "On Snacks and Saints."

256. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 206 and 210–213; Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 193–195; Hartmann, "Nebi Musa," 199–200.

257. *Yawmiyat*, 17 April 1919, 3:128.

258. Goodrich-Freer, *Inner Jerusalem*, 254, 261.

259. For variations in peasant dress, see Klein, "Life, Habits, and Customs," 2:298–299; Bir Zeit University Museum, http://museum.birzeit.edu/collections/palestinian-costumes.

260. Chehabi, "Dress Codes for Men."

261. Stoddard, "Defining and Classifying," 46. The Nabi Rubin festival was an example of this ambiguous space, attracting religious pilgrims and many "tourists," including non-Muslims. Yazbak, "Muslim Festival"; Klein, *Lives in Common*, 88–89.

262. Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 209.

263. Hartmann, "Nebi Musa," 200.

264. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 174.

265. Spoer, "Nebi Musa Festival," 190.

266. Kahle, "Customs at the Muslim Shrines," 175.

267. For these celebrations, see Reiter, *Contesting Holy Places*, 232–233; Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries*, 151.

CHAPTER 7: THE FESTIVAL'S DENOUEMENT, 1938–1948

1. A brief list of these collections includes Khalidi, *Before Their Diaspora*; Graham-Brown, *Palestinians and Their Society*; Nassar, *Photographing Jerusalem*; Eric and Edith Matson Photographic Collection, Library of Congress.

2. Nassar, "Wasif Jaharriyeh Collection," 387.

3. Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses*; Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*.

4. Nassar, "Emergence of Photography," 18.

5. Sontag, *On Photography*, 3.

6. Ibid., 128.

7. For an overview of the revolt, see Kalkas, "Revolt of 1936"; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*; Kelly, *Crime of Nationalism*.

8. The AHC demanded that the British prohibit Jewish immigration, halt the transfer of Arab land to Jews, and establish representative government. It also called for the nonpayment of taxes. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 166.

9. Peel Report, 98, 101–102.

10. Ibid., 98 and 101. For this repression, see Hughes, *Britain's Pacification*.

11. In 1938 the British abandoned the partition recommendation.

12. For Amin's role in the revolt, see Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 192–195 and 233–239; Kalkas, "Revolt of 1936," 241.

13. Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 234–239; Cohen, *Army of Shadows*.

14. "Military Intelligence Summary, March 1938," CO 732/81/9 (TNA). For British reconfiguring the SMC after 1937, see Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 255–257.

15. Hughes, *Britain's Pacification*, chapter 6.

16. Khalidi, "Palestinians and 1948," 27. Five thousand Arabs were killed and ten thousand wounded, with 5,679 detained in 1939. Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 107.

17. Khalidi, *Iron Cage*, 113.

18. *Palestine Post*, 10 April 1938.

19. This suggestion was quickly dismissed. "DC, Jerusalem," 2 May 1940, CO 733/420/22 (TNA).

20. *Palestine Post*, 18 April 1938.

21. For accounts of the 1938 festival, see: al-*Difaʿ*, 15, 17, 18, 21, and 22 April; *Palestine Post*, 15–19 and 24 April.

22. *Palestine Post*, 24 April 1938. For expanded British control over Islamic institutions, see *Official Gazette*, Supplement 2, 259, 20 March 1937.

23. "Military Intelligence, Jerusalem," 3 June 1938 and 22 April 1938, CO 732/81/91 (TNA).

24. "Military Intelligence, Jerusalem," April 22, 1938.

25. "Fortnightly Report," Jerusalem, 16 April 1939, PD 4:166.

26. "DC, Jerusalem," 5 May 1939, CO 733/398/10 (TNA).

27. *Palestine Post*, 31 March 1939 and 2 April 1939.

28. "DC, Jerusalem," 5 May 1939 and 3 April 1939, CO 733/398/10 (TNA).

29. *Al-Difaʿ*, 6 April 1939.

30. "DC, Jerusalem," 3 April 1940 and 1 March 1940, CO 733/420/22 (TNA).

31. "DC, Jerusalem," 17 April 1940 and "Fortnightly Report," DC, Jerusalem, 2 May 1940, CO/733/420/22 (TNA); *Palestine Post*, 14 April 1940.

32. The British imposed similar restrictions at Nabi Salih. "DC, Lydda," 4 May 1940, CO 733/420/22 (TNA).

33. "Moslem Feast Nebi Musa," GB 165-0177, Brian Gibbs Collection (1947), 32 (MEC). See also the calendar for the 1947 celebrations, "Status Quo in the Holy Places," GB 165-0231 Pollock Collection (MEC).

34. Only the band of the Muslim orphanage participated. *Filastin*, 10 April 1943 and 21 April 1945.

35. Schielke, *Perils of Joy*; Mayeur-Jaouen, *Mulid*.

36. See chapter 3.

37. Dietler, "Theorizing Feast," 71–72.

38. "DC, Jerusalem," 2 May 1940, CO733/420/22 (TNA). "Fortnightly Report," Jerusalem, 17 April 1940, *PD* 5:373 and 378.

39. "DC, Samaria District," 3 May 1940, CO 733/420/22 (TNA); "DC, Jerusalem," 17 April 1940, CO 733/420/22 (TNA); *Palestine Post*, 14 April 1940.

40. For a photo of two British officials at the Haram, see *Palestine Post*, 19 April 1943. For this participation, see *al-Difaʿ*: 11, 13, and 18 April 1941; 29 March 1942; 2 April 1942; 23 April 1943; 14, 15, and 16 April 1946. "Fortnightly Report," Jerusalem: 10 April 1944, PD 7:431 and 16 April 1947, 1, PD 9:284.

41. *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 28 April 1940.

42. Pierce and Rao, *Discipline*.

43. "Letter from Amin Abdul Hadi, SMC to Chief Secretary of Jerusalem," 7 May 1945, B/13/45, General Secretary's Office (ISA).

44. For example, *Palestine Post*, 16 and 18 April 1943.

45. Ibid., 29 March 1942.

46. "DC, Jerusalem," 8 April 1942, CO 733/439/16 (TNA).

47. Ghusha, *Shamsuna*, 194 and 203.

48. Article reprinted in ʿAsali, *Mawsim*, 181.

49. *Huna al-Quds*, 29 March 1942, and reprinted in *al-Wahda*, 13 April 1946.

50. *Al-Muntada*, 1 June 1945. Bayan al-Hut claims the festival lost its "religious and public" character after 1937. *Al-Qiyadat*, 213. Writing in the early 1970s, Emile Ghuri claimed it was unlikely a younger generation of Palestinians were familiar with the festival. *Filastin ʿAbra*, 36.

51. Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 256.

52. Jamil Husayni represented the Husayni family at the festival. *al-Muntada*, 1 June 1945; al-Hut, *Qiyadat*, 213.

53. *Palestine Post*, 16 April 1941.

54. Ibid.; *al-Difaʿ* and *Palestine Post*, March 29, 1942.

55. Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Politics*.

56. Tamari, *Mountain against the Sea*, 22–35.

57. Radai, *Palestinians in Jerusalem and Jaffa*.

58. *Palestine Post*, 9 April 1944.

59. For an image of buses parked outside the shrine, see *Huna al-Quds*, 29 March 1942.

60. *Palestine Post*, 16 April 1944.

61. Ibid., 8 and 10 April 1947.

62. "Weekly Reports," Jerusalem, 25 April 1948, PD 9:56. The organizers planned to conduct the festival earlier than Orthodox Easter scheduled for the end of April. *Filastin*, 6 April 1948.

63. *Palestine Post*, 11 April 1948.

CONCLUSION

1. Sallnow, "Pilgrimage," 143.

2. For Jordanian administration of Islamic affairs in the West Bank, see Kupferschmidt, *Supreme Muslim Council*, 257–258; Katz, *Jordanian Jerusalem*. For rituals highlighting Jordan's Arab and Islamic identity, see Podeh, *Politics of National Liberation*, 168–206; Katz, *Jordanian Jerusalem*, 53.

3. *Palestine Post*, 15 April 1949.

4. "Risala min maʾmur al-awqaf al-Quds," 22 March 1950, and "Risala min khamsa mutawalli," 20 March 1950, in *Mawsim al-Nabi Musa*, 13/48/3, 5/1/60 (ADA).

5. For the continuation of Easter ceremonies in Jerusalem, see *al-Difaʿ*, 7 April 1955 and 10 April 1955.

6. "Risala min thalathah mutawalli," 28 March 1951, in *Mawsim al-Nabi Musa*, 13/48/3, 39/1/60 (ADA).

7. "Risala min al-awqaf," 26 March 1953, in ibid.

8. "Risala min maʾmur al-awqaf," 3 June 1953, in ibid.

9. "Monthly Situation Report April 1953," PD 10:600; Podeh, *Politics of National Celebrations*, 176–178.

10. See the pamphlet *Maqam al-Nabi Musa, Haiʿah Tanshit al-Siyaha fi Muhafazat Ariha* (ADA), 33.

11. Murrar, *Mawsim al-Nabi Musa*, 68.

12. "Letter from *muraqib al-awqaf al-ʿam* to *mudir al-awqaf al-ʿam*," 16 May 1954, *Mawsim al-Nabi Musa*, 13/48/3, 5/1/60 (ADA).

13. For the Israeli endeavor to subvert an Islamic and Arab identity in Jerusalem, see Benvenisti, *City of Stone*, 1–49; the articles in Breger, *Holy Places*, 13; Reiter, *Contested Holy Places*; Dumper, *Politics of Sacred Space*.

14. Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscape*, 272–273.

15. Breger, *Holy Places*, 13.

16. Benvenisti, *City of Stone*, 1–49. See also Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscapes*.

17. Petersen, *Bones of Contention*, 123–140.

18. Ibid., 137.

19. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 17.

20. *Maqam al-Nabi Musa*, 1996 (ADA).

21. Zilberman, "Renewal of the Pilgrimage," 107.

22. "Aʿyad fi mawsim al-Nabi Musa," 0/87/3, 25/1/60 (ADA).

23. The festival followed the traditional calendar. It was held on April 17, 1987, and Easter in the Orthodox calendar fell on April 19.

24. Zilberman, "Renewal of the Pilgrimage," 107.

25. *Maqam al-Nabi Musa*, 1996 (ADA).

26. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 1.

27. Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 4. Emphasis in the original.

28. Hammami, "Gender, *Nakba*, and Nation"; Davis, *Palestinian Village*.

29. *Al-Quds*, 14 April 1998.

30. "Idea of an Anthropology," 20–21. Italics in the original. For the PA's efforts to convert other Islamic sites into nationalist events, see Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention." For Palestinians imbuing religious sites with nationalist meaning, see Bowman, "Nationalizing the Sacred"; Laird, "Boundaries and *Baraka*."

31. Zilberman, "Renewal of the Pilgrimage."

32. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 2, 38.

33. Bourdieu, "Symbolic Power."

34. Hroub, "Salafi Formations in Palestine."

35. *Al-Quds*, April 14, 1998.

36. *Maqam al-Nabi Musa*, 6, 1998 (ADA). For additional coverage of the festival, see *al-Quds*, 7 April 2001 and 11 April 2015; *Amin*, 7 April 2007.

37. Morinis, *Sacred Journeys*, 16, cited in Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 7. Nurit Stadler argues that the Palestinian Christian veneration at the tomb of Mary in Jerusalem establishes rituals of reclaiming the land. "Land."

38. Gaza Jericho Agreement of May 4, 1994, appendix II (Civil Affairs), art. II, section B, article 15 (Religious Affairs), no. 7.

39. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 20.

40. Ibid., 19. The PA has also encouraged their Palestinian territorial claims to the land around the shrine through the 2012 nomination of the al-Bariyya zone for UNESCO World Heritage status.

41. Some years, the dignitaries included the late Faysal al-Husayni of the Orient House (Bayt al-Sharq).

42. In the past, Israel has arrested and detained him on the charge of incitement. In 2004 the PA Ministry of Culture awarded him the Jerusalem Prize.

43. Recently, PA officials have stretched the meaning of the *maqam* as a site for public, civil celebration by promoting it as a tourist attraction. In Christmas 2020, they permitted a performance by a Palestinian DJ playing techno beats to be filmed. Local youth, however, were offended at what they charged was the desecration of this holy site, inciting them to storm the maqam and destroy furniture. *Times of Israel*, 28 December 2020. The event was held in the courtyard, where the PA has held other nonreligious events.

44. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 4–7.

45. "Ithtifal mawsim al-Nabi Musa, 2014."

46. Hasan al-Raʾ is southwest of the shrine, and the shrine of ʿAysha is southeast. Aubin Boltanski, "Réinvention," 12, 17.

47. One banner is preserved at the museum at the Haram al-Sharif. V. Tamari, "Two Ottoman Ceremonial Banners."

48. Aubin-Boltanski, "Réinvention," 28.

49. Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 2–3.

50. "Al-Mawsim al-Shaʿbiyya al-Filastaniyya," found in the section "Culture" and the subsection "Folklore and Popular Heritage," https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?idh9015.

51. Personal communication with Emma Aubin-Boltanski, 12 June 2001.

52. For Turkish media covering the festival and the strong support it elicits for President Erdogan, see *Daily Sabah*, 16 April 2014.

53. For this restoration work, see www.tika.gov.tr/tr/haber/nebi_musa_makami_kulliyesinde_restorasyon_calismalarina_baslandi-5348.

54. Thanks to Abd al-Latif Bolat for this information.

55. *Al-Quds*, 9 April 2014.

56. A pamphlet states that it was founded in 2000 by "elites of Jerusalem" to follow "moral and national belief" in response to rising drug addiction, "professionally" treating and rehabilitating addicts.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADA Abu Dis Archives
CID Criminal Investigation Department
DC District Commissioner
DDC Deputy District Commissioner
JS Jerusalem *Sijill*
PD *Political Diaries*, ed. Jarman
SMC Supreme Muslim Council

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Bait al-Sharq (Orient House), Jerusalem
Ihyaʾ al-Turath wa-l-Buhuth al-Islamiyya, Abu Dis, Palestine (ADA)
Imperial War Museum, London (IWM)
Israel State Archives, Jerusalem (ISA)
Middle East Center, St. Anthony's College Library, Oxford University (MEC)
The National Archives of the UK, London (TNA)
    CO Colonial Office
    FO Foreign Office
    WO War Office
Pembroke College, Cambridge Library (Papers of Ronald Storrs)

NEWSPAPERS

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al-Difaʿ
Filastin

Huna al-Quds
Illustrated Sunday Herald
al-Jamiʿa al-ʿArabiyya
al-Jamiʿa al-Islamiyya
Mirʿat al-Sharq
al-Muntada
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