

# A History of Palestine

---

FROM THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST  
TO THE FOUNDING  
OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

*Gudrun Krämer*

Translated by Graham Harman and Gudrun Krämer

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS  
PRINCETON AND OXFORD

First published in Germany under the title *Geschichte Palästinas: Von der osmanischen Eroberung bis zur Gründung des Staates Israel*  
© Verlag C.H. Beck oHG, München 2002

English translation © 2008 by Princeton University Press

Published by Princeton University Press, 41 William Street, Princeton,  
New Jersey 08540

In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 6 Oxford Street,  
Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1TW

press.princeton.edu

All Rights Reserved

Third printing, and first paperback printing, 2011  
Paperback ISBN 978-0-691-15007-9

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HAS CATALOGED THE CLOTH EDITION  
OF THIS BOOK AS FOLLOWS

Krämer, Gudrun.

[Geschichte Palästinas. English]

A history of Palestine : from the Ottoman conquest to the founding of the state of  
Israel / by Gudrun Krämer ; translated by Graham Harman and Gudrun Krämer.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-691-11897-0 (cloth : alk. paper) 1. Palestine—History—1799–1917.

2. Palestine—History—1917–1948. I. Title.

DS125.K7313 2008

956.94'034—dc22 2007023938

British Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available

The translation of this work was supported by a grant from the Goethe-Institut that is  
funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

This book has been composed in Sabon

Printed on acid-free paper. ∞

Printed in the United States of America

3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4

## CONTENTS

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	vii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xiii
CHAPTER ONE Names and Borders ✓	1
CHAPTER TWO The Holiness of the “Holy Land”	18
CHAPTER THREE Contrasts: Palestine, 1750–1840	37
CHAPTER FOUR The Age of Reform, 1840–1914	71
CHAPTER FIVE Evolving Nationalisms: Zionism and Arabism, ✓ 1880–1914	101
CHAPTER SIX “A Land without a People for a People without a Land”? Population, Settlement, and Cultivation, 1800–1914	128
CHAPTER SEVEN World War I and the British Mandate	139
CHAPTER EIGHT Double Standard, or Dual Obligation	164
CHAPTER NINE “Two Peoples in One Land”	188
CHAPTER TEN The Mufti and the Wailing Wall ✓	216
CHAPTER ELEVEN From Unrest to Uprising	238
CHAPTER TWELVE The Arab Uprising, 1936–39	264
CHAPTER THIRTEEN Triumph and Catastrophe: From World War II to the State of Israel	296
<i>Bibliography</i>	325
<i>Index</i>	343

## Chapter Ten

## THE MUFTI AND THE WAILING WALL

ARAB RESISTANCE TO THE BRITISH MANDATE and the Zionist enterprise took various forms, and was not from the beginning expressed in religious or nationalist terms. In the late 1920s, however, a gradual Islamization took place, as clearly discernible in the unrest of September 1928 and August 1929. In parallel, religious figures and institutions emerged as spokesmen of the Palestinian people, or at least of its Muslim part. And yet, not all political demands and activities took on a religious hue. The riots of May 1921 showed no specifically Islamic overtones, and the same held true for a number of later clashes. Positions were often ambiguous and therefore could be interpreted in different ways; they could change over time and be combined in various ways. Individual groups and figures were in touch with one another. For that reason, political camps were as a rule not sharply defined, and much was still in flux.

We do not know all that much about how Islam was actually lived and practiced in Mandate Palestine.<sup>1</sup> It would seem that belief in God as such was for most Muslims (as for most Christians) a given, something not to be questioned, but at the same not something to deeply think about. At the turn of the century, there were about three hundred mosques and shrines of saints in the later Mandate area. Religious festivals were popular, from the birthday of the Prophet to the various birthdays of a saint (*mawlid* or *mawsim*). An annual average of two hundred to five hundred Muslims made the pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*). The merchant-cum-scholar best known from Shi'i Iran also existed in Sunni Palestine, and the link between mosque and bazaar, representing the fusion of the commercial with the religious ethos, could be witnessed among the Nablus traders and soap manufacturers of the nineteenth century. Yet, there was no significant movement of reform and renewal among the Palestinian '*ulama*', whose contribution to intellectual life in the country was rather limited. The abolition of the caliphate in the Turkish Republic in 1924 found no strong echo in Palestine. In the twentieth century, Islam first gained wider notice in the shape of *political* Islam.

<sup>1</sup> Canaan (1927); Kupferschmidt (1987), ch. 10, esp. pp. 222–29; Benvenisti (2000), ch. 7; see also chapter 3 above.

In many parts of the Muslim world, Islam played a key role in the anticolonial struggle—not just Islam as a religion with its specific set of beliefs and practices, but also its representatives and institutions, first and foremost the religious scholars and (some of) the Sufi brotherhoods (who were not as clearly distinct from one another as is often believed). In the nineteenth century, jihad movements were active in many parts of the Muslim world, fighting to liberate their country or community from foreign occupation in the name of Islam.<sup>2</sup> In certain cases, the anticolonial struggle took a nationalist flavor from the very beginning. In Syria, for instance, Arab resistance against foreign occupation and the French Mandate invoked a “national jihad” (*jihad watani*, with *watani* referring to the homeland, *watan*, not the nation). Not only in Iran, but also in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, mosques (and churches) were often the point from which political gatherings or demonstrations started and to which they returned, and the national cause was sometimes presented as “the cause of Islam.” In Mandate Palestine, religious authorities ranging from muftis to simple village preachers played a greater role in politics and society than one would suppose from the nationalist literature that tended to belittle their role.<sup>3</sup>

Several elements should be distinguished when studying the gradual Islamization of Arab politics in Palestine: the role of religious officeholders and dignitaries in the Muslim community; the figure of the Mufti of Jerusalem, al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini, and the role of the Supreme Muslim Council; the function of the Nabi Musa festival; and finally, the significance of the Haram al-Sharif, with the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque, as concrete symbols of the national and/or the Islamic cause.

## HAJJ AMIN AL-HUSAINI, MUFTI OF JERUSALEM

The rise and fall of the Mufti of Jerusalem, al-Hajj Muhammad Amin al-Husaini (1895?–1974), has been the subject of intense debate, scholarly as well as public.<sup>4</sup> His involvement with National Socialism has been especially controversial, and for many observers it was enough to place him in permanent discredit. In the present context, however, it is his significance for Palestinian politics and society in the Mandate era

<sup>2</sup> R. Peters (1996). For Syria, cf. Gelvin (1998), pp. 32–33, 186–88.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Porath (1974), pp. 41–42, 152–54; Salih (1989), pp. 117–22, 203–204. For biographies, cf. Manna<sup>c</sup> (1998).

<sup>4</sup> For his involvement with National Socialism, cf. Höpp (1999) and Höpp (ed.) 2001; Gensicke (1988); Elpeleg (1993); Krämer (2006). His memoirs (*mudhakkirat*) are of limited value in this context.

that matters: Amin al-Husaini succeeded in transforming the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem into *the* symbol of collective resistance against Zionist designs, thereby giving a religious coloring to its various expressions, and making the Palestinian cause known well beyond Palestine itself.

In March 1921 the incumbent mufti of Jerusalem, Kamil Effendi al-Husaini, died. British High Commissioner Herbert Samuel (who had only been in office for a few months) recommended Kamil's younger half-brother Muhammad Amin as his successor. Although Amin lacked formal qualifications for the office, the young man had much to recommend him: He belonged to one of the "great families," he already enjoyed some popularity, and from an early age he displayed political talent. The Husainis traced their ancestry to Husain b. Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (hence "al-Husaini"), and from this lineage derived considerable prestige. One ancestor is said to have come from a small village near Jerusalem and to have settled in the city around 1380. Since at least the mid-eighteenth century, the Husainis belonged to the most prominent families of Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup> Origin, education, and wealth (consisting largely in landed property) predestined them for high office in the Ottoman religious and administrative hierarchy. Already in the early seventeenth century, a Husaini held the office of Hanafi mufti of Jerusalem—a fairly high-ranking position in the Ottoman religious hierarchy even if the city and its subprovince were of little political significance at the time. In the eighteenth century, other family members occupied the respected position of shaikh of the Haram and chief of the descendants of the Prophet (*naqib al-ashraf*). Though these positions later went to members of other families such as the Alami, Jarallah, Budairi, and Khalidi, with the Khalidis frequently holding the office of *kadi* of Jerusalem, the Husainis were able to once again rise to social preeminence among the Jerusalem notables in the late eighteenth century. Some served in the religious hierarchy, while others joined the ranks of the administration. Since 1856 they held the office of mufti of Jerusalem uninterrupted. Several family members served as mayors of Jerusalem or sat in the Ottoman Parliament. Under the British occupation, Musa Kazim al-Husaini served as mayor of Jerusalem until being dismissed from office following the unrest of April 1920, when he was replaced by his rival Raghīb al-Nashashibi. Like his father and grandfather before him, Kamil al-Husaini served as mufti of his native city.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For the Husaini family, cf. Manna' (1998); Mattar (1988), pp. 6–7; Porath (1974), pp. 184–87. It should be emphasized that the name signaled descent from Muhammad's grandson al-Husain, or the claim thereto; not all Husainis belonged to the same family, no matter how extended. The Husainis in Gaza, for instance, were apparently not related to their namesakes in Jerusalem.

Born in 1895 or 1896, Muhammad Amin al-Husaini was a mere twenty-six years old when his elder half-brother died. He already had an interesting career behind him that showed him to be a man of political talent.<sup>6</sup> As the son of the incumbent mufti of Jerusalem, Tahir al-Husaini (d. 1908), Muhammad Amin was from early on groomed for the tasks of a religious officeholder. Yet in terms of education he was essentially an effendi, wearing the tarbush (*fez*), as was typical of the Ottoman bureaucracy, the social elite, and middle class, not a scholar educated in Islamic law and the religious sciences. Amin first donned the turban of the religious scholar in 1921 while preparing to succeed his brother in office. The honorary title of "*hajj(i)*" by which he was commonly addressed in Arabic, was earned by a pilgrimage to Mecca he made in 1913 in the company of his pious mother, Zainab. Amin attended a Qur'anic school (*kuttab*), an Ottoman secondary school (*riish-diyye*), and the secondary school of the Catholic Frères in Jerusalem—a remarkable course of studies, but not atypical for his time and milieu. Beginning in 1912 he studied briefly at al-Azhar University in Cairo and at the Dar al-Da'wa wa-l-Irshad, then under the direction of Rashid Rida, the student of Muhammad Abduh and prominent Salafiyya reformer. Yet by 1913 he had already returned to Jerusalem and, shortly after, transferred to the military academy in Istanbul, where the outbreak of World War I interrupted his education once again—this time for good.

Amin entered the Ottoman army as an officer, serving far from the front in Anatolia. Around 1916, however, he joined an Arab secret society that advocated Arab rights as well as greater autonomy within the Empire. These political interests were not altogether new: His father had chaired a committee of Jerusalem notables established in 1897 to keep a watch on land sales to Jews, so that Amin must have been acquainted from early on with the "Zionist danger." During his time in Cairo he had already taken part in founding an anti-Zionist association of Palestinian students. While still an officer in the Ottoman army, he severed his allegiance to the sultan. In 1917, during sick leave in Jerusalem, he was recruited by the British for the troops of Emir Faisal. Serving first as their recruiting officer in the British-occupied parts of Palestine, he then fought against the Ottomans in the territories east of the Jordan. Returning to Jerusalem after the war, he was elected president of the Arab Club (*al-nadi al-arabi*), which at that time advocated union with Syria. Unlike most members of his social class, Amin al-Husaini ventured beyond the urban milieu and endeavored to enlist the peasantry

<sup>6</sup> Mattar (1988), pp. 7–21; Khalidi (1997), ch. 4; for his role in the Nabi Musa riots, see above, chapter 9. See also *Peel Report* (1937), pp. 176–81.

in the Arab cause, the struggle against Zionism, and unity with Syria. In 1920 he took part in a series of demonstrations against the Balfour Declaration and on behalf of King Faisal. The British military authorities accused him of having given a "provocative" speech during the unrest of April 1920 and sentenced him to ten years in prison. He was able to flee to Damascus, however, and, following the collapse of the Arab government under Faisal, managed to escape into Transjordan. He was pardoned in August 1920 by the high commissioner and returned to Jerusalem a few months later.

What, then, recommended Amin al-Husaini for the office of mufti of Jerusalem, in spite of his obvious lack of proper qualification? Above all, the British hoped to cultivate him as a promising young man from an elite family who in the tense atmosphere of the early Mandate years could credibly defend a policy of "reason and moderation" against all forms of "extremism," a policy that would ultimately serve British interests.<sup>7</sup> In the election for the office of mufti held in April 1921, Amin al-Husaini finished only fourth, behind respected scholars from equally good families (Husam Jarallah, Khalil al-Khalidi, Musa al-Budairi). At that point, petitions in his favor started pouring in from throughout the country, organized not just by the Arab Club and the Husaini family eager to secure the position for one of their own, but also by Christian congregations and notables—a clear indication of the prestige enjoyed by his family and of his standing as a national figure. The opposition of Raghib al-Nashashibi, incumbent mayor of Jerusalem and bitter enemy of the Husainis, proved fruitless. Shortly after the riots of May 1921, the British notified Amin al-Husaini of his appointment. Unlike his deceased older brother, he did not officially receive the title of "Grand Mufti" (*al-mufti al-akbar*) but was appointed mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine (*mufti al-quds wa-l-diyar al-filistiniyya*). Yet from an early date, the more important-sounding title of "Grand Mufti" caught on and became attached to his name, at least in Western sources.

#### THE SUPREME MUSLIM COUNCIL

In his new position Amin al-Husaini benefited from the fact that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, he was no longer subordinate to the

<sup>7</sup> Porath (1974), ch. 4; Mattar (1988), pp. 21–27; also Monk (2002), pp. 52–56. Even before the death of his brother, Amin al-Husaini prepared for his succession by exchanging his tarbush for a turban and allowing his beard to grow; Monk (2002), pp. 22–23, and al-Hut (1981), pp. 203–204. Kamil al-Husaini (who succeeded his father in 1908) had done much to maintain calm following the entry of the British. The British showed their gratitude by granting him the title of "Grand Mufti," previously unknown in Palestine

religious and judicial hierarchy in Istanbul, whether the *sheih ül-islam* as head of the Ottoman religious hierarchy (*ilmîyye*), or the ministers of justice and of *awqaf*. This gave him immediate control over the local Sharia courts and religious endowments. Yet it was only the creation of a Supreme Muslim Council under his chairmanship that confirmed al-Husaini's status as head of the Muslim community, allowing him to emerge as the dominant figure in Palestinian Arab politics.<sup>8</sup> For most of the time, British Mandate authorities pursued a policy of nonintervention in the religious affairs of the local population, especially the Muslim majority. The presence of millions of Muslim subjects in various parts of the British Empire (first and foremost India), as well as the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate Treaty suggested as much. To this end, the British decided in December 1921 to establish a Supreme Muslim Sharia Council (SMC, *al-majlis al-shar'i al-islami al-a'la*) to administer the religious affairs of the Muslim population, in large part independently of the Mandate administration. (A similar body formed by Austria-Hungary in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 may have served as their model here.) Shortly thereafter, in January 1922, Amin al-Husaini was named its chairman with the newly created title of "head of the religious scholars" (*ra'is al-'ulama'*). As subsequent years were to show, the Supreme Muslim Council, which strictly speaking represented the local Muslim community only, remained the only spokesman of the Arab population recognized by the Mandate authorities, which accorded it a status similar to the Jewish Agency in the latter's representation of Jewish interests in the country. The Arab Christians remained without an officially recognized mouthpiece.

Legally speaking, the Supreme Muslim Council was tied to the Mandate administration. The judges and other employees of the Sharia courts were appointed by the SMC, but paid with public funds, while the far more numerous personnel of the religious endowments were financed by these endowments themselves. This gave the Supreme Muslim Council control over considerable funds and a high degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the British. To demonstrate its distance from the Mandate administration, the SMC established its headquarters within the precincts of the Haram al-Sharif.<sup>9</sup> In his capacity as chairman, Amin al-Husaini

(presumably in imitation of the situation in Egypt, where there was a "national mufti," *mufti al-diyar al-misriyya*). In a break with precedent, they simultaneously appointed him *kadi* of the district of Jerusalem, and thus gave him control over both the Sharia courts in charge of personal status matters, and the administration of the Islamic religious endowments. Following the flight of the Mufti in 1937, the office remained vacant until 1948.

<sup>8</sup> Kupferschmidt (1987), chs. 1 and 3, esp. pp. 13, 26, 31ff.; Porath (1974), pp. 194–207; Mattar (1988), pp. 27–32; also *Peel Report* (1937), pp. 174–81.

<sup>9</sup> Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 26–28, 58–63, 139–44, 227. On the schools (*rawdat al-*

controlled the religious endowments and related institutions (which included several schools and a small institute of higher education, a hospital, a library, a small museum, and a number of scholarships) as well as the Sharia courts. He also controlled access to all religious posts and offices in the Palestinian Muslim community. The SMC ran an orphanage for approximately 170 to 250 children. Operating under the motto "knowledge and work" (*al-'ilm wa-l-'amal*), it was connected with a vocational school that also ran a print shop. This print shop, as well as a private newspaper (*al-Jami'a al-'Arabiyya*), proved extremely useful in spreading the views of the SMC. In short, the Mufti had considerable personal and financial means at his disposal, as well as an extensive patronage network. The religious endowments, which the SMC controlled as the legal successor to the Ottoman Waqf Ministry, were of prime importance here.<sup>10</sup> Predictably, control over the *awqaf* also led to repeated conflict within the Muslim community, as the SMC was accused by the Mufti's opponents of illegally diverting some of the income of local endowments to Jerusalem. Although the British more than once considered withdrawing control over the *awqaf* from the SMC, this never happened. Instead, in 1932 they redefined income drawn from agricultural endowments to the SMC's advantage, a move aimed primarily at securing the good conduct of the Mufti.

Provided with these resources, Amin al-Husaini set out to promote Jerusalem as a holy city of Islam. Its most distinguished sites had visibly decayed over the past centuries of Ottoman rule, and were damaged anew in a severe earthquake in 1927.<sup>11</sup> As one would expect, work began with the renovation of the Haram al-Sharif including the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque, an endeavor that attracted great attention in the Muslim world, particularly in the Hijaz and in India. The Mufti pursued a deliberate strategy of internationalizing the Palestine issue, which eventually bore fruit in the 1930s. In late August 1928, the restoration of al-Aqsa Mosque was celebrated with great ceremony, and work was completed in 1929. At the same time a small museum of Islamic art and a library for Islamic religious literature were opened on the premises of the Haram. Religious sites and institutions in other parts of Palestine were restored and renovated, too. The SMC also devoted itself to the Nabi Musa festival and other religious events, which in the spirit of Salafiyya reform were successively "cleansed" of "unorthodox"

*ma'arif* in Jerusalem and *kulliyat al-najah al-wataniyya* in Nablus) and the orphanage, see also Tibawi (1956), pp. 59–60; Salih (1989), pp. 153–54; al-Hut (1981), p. 208.

<sup>10</sup> On the *awqaf*, cf. Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 66–77; Reiter (1996), chs. 1 and 2.

<sup>11</sup> Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 129, 188, 237–40; Mattar (1988), pp. 29–30; Reiter (1996), p. 163.

practices and increasingly adapted to serve national causes.<sup>12</sup> Still, there were no further political incidents after 1921.

#### THE MUFTI AND THE "OPPOSITION"

In his first years in office, Amin al-Husaini focused on consolidating his position against his Arab critics and rivals. These were found not only among the Nashashibis and their supporters, but also in certain cities and areas of Palestine, above all in the north. Among contemporaries they were known simply as "the opposition," whatever their base of power or individual interests.<sup>13</sup> The Nashashibis had entered relatively late into the ranks of the Jerusalem elite, and frequently competed for posts with the Husainis and other families. Often enough, such competition took the form of a zero-sum game, with the gain of one family entailing losses for the other. So when Musa Kazim was removed from his position as mayor of Jerusalem, he was replaced by Raghīb al-Nashashibi (who in 1934 was forced to yield this post to Husain al-Khalidi who then joined the Husaini camp). As a result, the Nashashibis, or at least some of their prominent members, drew closer to the British, while the Husainis distanced themselves more strongly (but not completely) from the Mandate authorities. The Mufti also had critics and rivals among the 'ulama', preventing him from totally dominating the field of religion. Given these conflicts, it was perhaps not surprising that the rivals should accuse each other of collaborating with the enemy. And in fact, there are indications that the opponents of Amin al-Husaini received material or other support from the Zionists. These rivalries also had repercussions beyond the narrow confines of Palestinian politics. Hashemite ambitions for regional dominance were of crucial importance here, as represented by Abdallah b. al-Husain, the (decidedly pro-British) emir of Transjordan. The Supreme Muslim Council belonged to the small number of Muslim institutions that, in 1924, recognized Abdallah's father Husain b. Ali as caliph. The Nashashibis, too, maintained

<sup>12</sup> Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 232–36; Porath (1974), pp. 101, 205ff.; al-Hut (1981), pp. 211–13; Salih (1989), pp. 152–54; Friedland/Hecht (1996), pp. 99–100, 108–109. With the outbreak of the Arab uprising in 1936, the significance of the pilgrimage to the shrine of Nabi Musa steadily decreased, especially after the flight of the Mufti in October 1937. The Hashemites had no interest in promoting an independent religious center in and around Jerusalem. Not until early 1987 were pilgrims again allowed to visit the shrine by the Jerusalem Awqaf Administration (controlled by Jordan). This should perhaps be seen in connection with the so-called Jordanian solution as envisioned by the Israeli-Jordanian agreement of 1986.

<sup>13</sup> Porath (1974), ch. 5; Porath (1977), pp. 61ff.; Wasserstein (1978), pp. 217–18; Nashashibi (1990). For Haifa, see Seikaly (1998), pp. 153–54, 185ff.

contacts in the Arab world outside of Palestine, including Emir Abdallah himself.<sup>14</sup>

Contrary to his later reputation, the Mufti started office by cultivating good relations with the British. Despite his policy of Islamizing Arab politics and by the same token politicizing religion, there were no further bloody incidents during the Nabi Musa festival or other religious events after he assumed office. On the whole, Palestine seemed calm and peaceful. With the exception of an impressive strike during the visit of Lord Balfour (who had arrived as guest of honor for the opening of the Hebrew University in March 1925), hardly any resistance against the Mandate or the Zionists was recorded. Even plain criminality seemed largely under control; Bedouin incursions were repelled, and in general the land was "pacified." Before departing Palestine, the high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, expressed his satisfaction with the situation:

The spirit of lawlessness has ceased; the atmosphere is no longer electric; there have been no more raids from Trans-Jordan; all the brigands have been hunted down and either shot, executed or imprisoned. . . . For some time past Palestine has been the most peaceful country of any in the Middle East.<sup>15</sup>

Though the Jewish population continued to grow very fast, from 93,000 in 1922 to 154,000 in 1927, and Jewish-owned land increased to around 1 million dunam, Zionism seemed to many Arab Palestinians to have been weakened, if not altogether finished. Significantly, they tended to pay more attention to Jewish immigration than to Jewish land purchases, which continued quietly but steadily, and had far greater mid- to long-term effects on the Arab population than the immigration of a few thousand European Jews. Immigration of course has always been easier to register than the continual expansion and densification of Jewish settlement. In the mid-1920s the Nashashibis took a daring turn away from their previous attitude of noncooperation, and openly endorsed Arab participation in elections and political advisory bodies; in 1927 the Arab Executive Committee followed suit. In June 1928 the Seventh Palestinian Congress proposed elections for a Legislative Council, an initiative supported by the British high commissioner. The outbreak of new unrest in September 1928, followed by the serious riots of August 1929, brought the process to a temporary halt. In early 1935

<sup>14</sup> For the Hashemite connection, see Porath (1977), pp. 72–75; Wilson (1987); Shlaim (1990); Gelber (1997); for Husain's recognition as caliph, see also Porath (1974), pp. 160–61; Kramer (1986), ch. 8, and below, note 34.

<sup>15</sup> Cited from *Peel Report* (1937), p. 187. For what follows, see also Porath (1974), ch. 6; Porath (1977), pp. 20ff. Naor (1998), p. 134, shows the black flags raised by Arab demonstrators against Lord Balfour's visit on the occasion of the inauguration of the Hebrew University in 1925.

British Parliament turned down the proposal of creating a Legislative Council representing the local population, contributing to the outbreak of the Arab uprising in 1936.

#### ESCALATION AT THE WAILING WALL: 1928

The riots of 1928 and 1929 broke out at the Wailing Wall, one of the sites holy to both Jews and Muslims, though in quite different ways. The "Wailing Wall" (in Hebrew *ha-kotel ha-ma'aravi*, Western Wall), a 28-meter-long part of the enclosure wall of the Temple of Herod, became a symbol of the religious claims (and complaints) of Jews and Muslims.<sup>16</sup> To the Jews it was holy as the last remnant of the Temple, while the Muslims regarded it as the outer limit of the "holy district" (*al-haram al-sharif*), to which, according to pious legend, Muhammad had tethered his mount, Buraq, during his night journey and ascent to heaven; hence also the Arabic name for this part of wall: *al-buraq al-sharif*. Shortly after the battle of Hittin (1187), Saladin's son and successor converted the adjacent zone into a *waqf* for the benefit of Maghrebi pilgrims and scholars (also known in Jerusalem as Moghrabis), who had taken up residence there; the largest *waqf* was named after an important mystic, Abu Madyan Shu'aib, who had died in Tlemcen in 1197. In 1922 supervision of the Abu Madyan *waqf* passed from the Ottoman Waqf Ministry to the Supreme Muslim Council. We will not understand the ensuing events if we forget that, for centuries, only a narrow alley separated this sensitive site from the neighboring residential area. Incidentally this fact lends some credibility to reports that the residents of the Moghrabi Quarter threw their garbage at the Wailing Wall—a further link in a chain of narratives reaching back to the time of the Muslim conquest that relate the degradation of the sacred Temple area and its later cleansing of garbage and waste (photographs from the late nineteenth century period show no waste in front of the Wall, though). The open square in front of the Western Wall was created only in 1967, when after their conquest of the Old City the Israelis tore down the Moghrabi Quarter. Hence, events unfolded in the narrowest possible space, adding fuel to the existing tension.

The level of latent tension present at this site can be gathered from a report by Nahum Goldmann on his first trip to Palestine, undertaken in 1914 when he was eighteen years old:

<sup>16</sup> Porath (1974), ch. 7, esp. pp. 260, 272. On the Abu Madyan *waqf* and other "Maghrebi" endowments in Jerusalem, see Reiter (1996), pp. 55, 137; Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 104, 110, 118. Elmendorf (1912), table 83; Gidal (1982); Ben-Arieh (1984), esp. pp.



Figure 12. Jews praying at the Wailing Wall. At the left edge of the photo is the wall that bordered the narrow alleyway before the Wailing Wall until it was torn down by the Israelis in 1967. Anonymous photograph, c. 1900.

The great wall all of a sudden became for me the symbol of our eternal existence . . . and these stones appeared to me to announce the promise of our eternal future: like them, which none is able to remove, which endured despite all destructions through the centuries, so too will their people exist to all eternity. . . .

As I stand sunk in these thoughts, sensing an inward calm, my soul once again filled with consolation and hope and faith, there suddenly rings out behind me the offensive, grunting cry of a donkey. In great shock, I turn

371, 373, or Osman (1999), pp. 98–99, 108, have good photographs of the narrow space before the Wailing Wall.

around to see an Arab driving two donkeys through the alleyway. In the first moment I was seized with such rage that I could have struck this stupid, hulking fellow dead to the ground.

After brief consideration, he thought better of it:

The alley is a public passage, and it is ridiculous to request such tender consideration of this barbarian that he should make a detour in order to spare those who are praying. We are guilty, we Jews. What kind of a people are we, that we are able to endure such things?<sup>17</sup>

In the course of the nineteenth century, the Western Wall had been gradually elevated among wider Jewish circles to a site of commemoration and particular sanctity, which was popularized in many forms. The Jewish national movement invested it with national significance. As early as 1836, Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, one of the forerunners of Zionism, had suggested to Baron Meyer Anselm Rothschild in Frankfurt that he purchase the Temple Mount and all of Palestine from Muhammad Ali, whose troops occupied the country at the time.<sup>18</sup> In response to repeated clashes, demands, and accusations, the Ottoman authorities attempted in 1840 to establish the rights of both parties. These were set down in 1911 by the Jerusalem district council as the “status quo,” which the British were obliged to preserve under Article 13 of the Mandate Treaty, expressly guaranteeing the immunity of the Muslim holy sites. Both before and after 1918, several attempts were made to acquire the Wall by purchase or to exchange it for a different endowment property, which was difficult but not entirely impossible under Islamic law.<sup>19</sup>

Among Muslims these endeavors prompted the fear that the Jews planned to rebuild the Temple—a manifestation of the old topos of threat to the holy sites, which had previously been part of the Jewish repertory. The fears were fanned by rumors: Already in the early 1920s reports were spreading that pictures had been discovered in Jerusalem showing al-Aqsa Mosque or the Dome of the Rock crowned by a Star of David, or the crown of Zion, or a Zionist flag. References by Zionist leaders and their European sympathizers to the Zionist endeavor as tantamount to rebuilding the Temple, when taken literally rather than metaphorically, appeared to point in the same direction.<sup>20</sup> And pictures and

<sup>17</sup> Nahum Goldmann, *Erez Israel. Reisebriefe aus Palästina 1914. Rückblick nach sieben Jahren* (Darmstadt 1982), pp. 27–28, cited from Kaiser (1992), pp. 149–50.

<sup>18</sup> For Kalischer, cf. Salmon (2002), pp. 20–21, and chapter 5 above.

<sup>19</sup> Under Ottoman rule, the status quo safeguarding religious rights and sites originally only concerned Christian not Jewish ones; cf. Stoyanovsky (1928), pp. 292ff.; Wasserstein (1978), pp. 109, 224; for the Temple Mount and the Wailing Wall, see also Porath (1974), pp. 258–62; Ben-Arieh (1984), pp. 141–54, 308–14, and 371–75.

<sup>20</sup> For conflicting accounts, cf. Porath (1974), pp. 206–207, 262–64, 366; Kupfer-





Figure 13. Postcard from Jerusalem, late nineteenth century. The card signals the reconstruction of the Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount. The Temple, the floral decorations, and the Wailing Wall are shown in color, while al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and their environs are left in gray. (Source: Mordecai Naor, *Eretz Israel*. Cologne 1998, p. 97.)

postcards did exist showing a reconstructed Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount, be it next to al-Aqsa Mosque or the Dome of the Rock or in their place, as did city maps indicating the site of the Jewish Temple. What mattered beyond all disagreement over the exact details was that people widely believed that a Jewish conspiracy was at work to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and to rebuild the Jewish Temple in their place—and the Mufti was studiously promoting this as a concern of the Muslim community at large.

On September 24, 1928, the Jewish Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), first clashes occurred after Jewish worshippers had brought a portable screen before the Western Wall in order to separate men and women during prayer.<sup>21</sup> This contravened not just established custom but the

schmidt (1987), pp. 237–38; Mattar (1988), pp. 25, 40–42; Segev (2000), p. 305; for a labored analysis of the meanings of (re)presentation, see Monk (2002), chs. 6 and 7; fortunately, he also shows a number of the incriminating images.

<sup>21</sup> With certain variations in detail, see Porath (1974), ch. 7; Segev (2000), ch. 13; Mattar (1988), ch. 3; also al-Hut (1981), pp. 220–21, 231–33; Salih (1989), pp. 179–85; Kolinsky (1993), ch. 3, esp. pp. 160–62. See also *Peel Report* (1937), pp. 65–68. A contemporary Jewish caricature depicts the scene as British soldiers remove the chairs and benches; cf. Naor (1998), p. 151. In May 1931 an international commission of inquiry

status quo as established in 1911. The Temple district was at that time under renovation: August had seen celebrations at the conclusion of the first phase of work, and the Muslim public in Palestine and beyond was reawakened to the sanctity of the site. Hence, the British forcibly removed the screen as well as the chairs and benches that had been brought with it, despite passionate resistance of the Jewish worshippers. Just how sensitive the British considered the situation to be can be seen from the fact that in November 1928, the colonial secretary personally confirmed the Ottoman status quo before British Parliament. On November 19, 1928, it was set down in an official policy statement. The events, which had taken place on the holiest day of the Jewish year, at the holiest place of Judaism, provoked strong reactions even among nonreligious Jews. Leading spokesmen including the Vaad Leumi demanded that the British Mandate government not only protect the rights of Jewish believers, but that they buy or even expropriate the Abu Madyan *waqf*, including the Western Wall. These appeals were preceded by attempts to create facts on the ground through the sale or exchange of property in the immediate vicinity of the wall. The issue was discussed at the Zionist Congress in July and August 1929. Joseph Klausner, a leading (if controversial) historian and sympathizer of Vladimir Jabotinsky's Revisionist movement, founded a Committee for the Defense of the Western Wall. A nationalist newspaper even urged that the Temple be rebuilt.

In the meantime, the Muslims did not remain inactive. Already in the final days of September 1928, they decided to create a Committee for the Defense of the Noble Buraq Wall (*lajnat al-difa' 'an al-buraq al-sharif*). In early November 1928 a General Muslim Congress met in Jerusalem with the Mufti as acting chair.<sup>22</sup> Numbering almost seven hundred participants from all over Palestine and neighboring Arab countries, the Congress resolved to create a Society for the Protection of al-Aqsa Mosque and the Islamic Holy Sites (*jam'iyyat hirasat al-masjid al-aqsa wa-l-amakin al-islamiyya al-muqaddasa*). The resolutions stressed the exclusive right of Muslims to the Noble Buraq/Wailing Wall as a "holy Islamic site." They were prepared to grant the Jews the right

presented their report, which confirmed Muslim ownership of the Wall and the Abu Madyan *waqf*, as well as the right of Jews to hold prayer there. They were allowed to continue bringing lamps, a washbasin, and a container of Torah scrolls, as well as a stand and a table for their prayer books and scrolls. However, they were not permitted to bring chairs, benches, dividing walls, curtains, or rugs, as they were liable to give the impression of permanence (or, as the Muslim side put it, to transform the square into a synagogue); see al-Hut (1981), pp. 231–33; Kolinsky (1993), pp. 160–62.

<sup>22</sup> Monk (2002), chs. 6 and 7; for restoration work in the late Ottoman and Mandate periods, see also Tütüncü (2006), pp. 109ff.

to visit the Wall, but not to bring with them any solid or mobile objects—whether it be books, Torah scrolls, candles, stools, chairs, or barriers. This reflected the fear that the Jews might not only transform the area in front of the Wailing Wall into a site of prayer, but that beginning with the Wailing Wall they would lay claim to the entire Temple Mount, so as to replace the Muslim holy sites with the rebuilt Temple. From 1929 onward, the Supreme Muslim Council intensified construction work on the Haram al-Sharif in order to demonstrate their exclusive claims to the Temple Mount. The appointment of a person to make the daily call to prayer, and the performance of Sufi rites (*dhikr*) directly next to the Wailing Wall served the same purpose. Not without reason, Jewish believers felt disturbed in their prayer.

#### AUGUST 1929

Tensions escalated in the summer of 1929.<sup>23</sup> Against the wishes of the Jewish authorities, who sought to avoid further clashes and appealed to the Jewish population for calm, a large demonstration took place in Tel Aviv on August 14, the eve of the Ninth of Av (Tish'a be-Av), the fast day when Jews commemorate the destruction of the Temple. On August 15, about three hundred revisionist youths marched with raised flags to the Western Wall, where they sang the “Hatikvah” and reclaimed the Wall for the Jews (“The Wall is ours.”). Allegedly, a few of them also insulted the Prophet, Islam, and the Muslim community at large; according to the same rumors, some of them turned violent. On the following day, a Friday, the Muslims celebrated the birthday of the Prophet (*mawlid* or *mawsim al-nabi*). During Friday prayer, appeals were made that Muslims defend the holy sites allegedly under threat from the Jews. In response to these appeals, about two thousand Muslims marched to the Wailing Wall shouting “God is great,” “the Wall is ours,” and “death to the Jews.” Upon reaching the Wall, they burned the scraps of paper containing the wishes and prayers traditionally stuck by Jews into its cracks. Another incident showed how tense the situation had become by that time: An Arab hit a Jewish boy who had accidentally kicked a soccer ball into an Arab woman’s vegetable garden. When the frightened woman started to scream, the man rushed to her defense. The boy died of his injuries, and Jewish residents took revenge by stabbing an Arab

<sup>23</sup> Differing accounts in Mattar (1988), pp. 45–49; Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 80, 82, 235, 239; Kolinsky (1993), pp. 42–70 (detailed but biased); Segev (2000), pp. 309–27; also al-Hut (1981), pp. 221–24; al-Asali (1991a), pp. 124–36; Salih (1989), pp. 185–91. For Haifa, see Seikaly (1998), pp. 208–209. Naor (1998), pp. 156–58, shows photos and caricatures.



Figure 14. The faithful at the Dome of the Rock. Anonymous photograph, c. 1900.

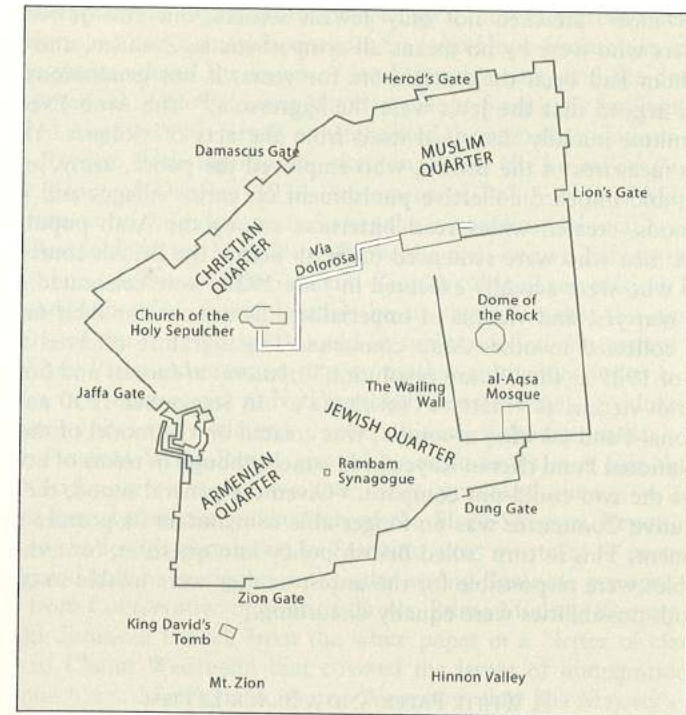
youth. The burial of the Jewish boy was marked by anti-British and anti-Arab protests.

One week later (on August 23, 1929), rumors that Jews planned an attack on al-Aqsa Mosque and had already killed a number of Arabs, led to an explosion of violence. Apparently goaded by militant preachers and activists, thousands of Muslims from the city and the neighboring villages came to Friday prayer on the Temple Mount. Many of them were armed with sticks and clubs, some with knives and daggers, a few with rifles and pistols (in the clashes of the next few days, even swords were used). Notified by the British police commander, the Mufti hurried to al-Aqsa Mosque, but was unable to calm the situation. At about the same time, several Arabs were murdered in the Jewish neighborhood of

Mea Shearim. Violence escalated. An undefined Arab “mob,” which also included a few Christians, marched beyond the city walls and entered several Jewish neighborhoods; in the Yemin Moshe quarter they encountered armed resistance. News of these events spread like wildfire. After hearing reports that Arabs had been murdered in Jerusalem and that the Haram was in danger, Muslims attacked the Jewish quarter in Hebron, killing and raping men, women, and children, and looting Jewish property. Most of their victims were members of the old Yishuv, few of whom sympathized with political Zionism, though many were close to the ideals of religious Zionism. What appears to have caused alarm among the Arab populace was the establishment in 1924 of an Orthodox yeshiva that quickly attracted large numbers of students from Europe and the United States (some 265 in 1929), who again were mostly non-Zionist or even anti-Zionist, but who with their Western clothes and habits looked like Zionists to local Arabs. Shocking as the assaults were, they were not a pogrom (the persecution of Jews carried out under government auspices); the majority of Jews in Hebron were saved by their Arab neighbors.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, a number of kibbutzim were attacked and six of them completely destroyed. British police barracks in Nablus were similarly attacked, where the angry crowd sought to obtain the same weapons that the Jews already seemed to possess. In Jerusalem, Haifa, and other places, a Jewish “mob” avenged itself on the Arabs, killing men, women, and children, and lynching passersby; in Jaffa, an imam and six other people were murdered in a mosque, and the mosque itself was burned to the ground. In Jerusalem the Ukasha shrine in the Jewish Zikhron Moshe neighborhood was severely damaged. One week after Hebron, the Jewish community of Safed, still the most important center of the old Yishuv, was attacked and at least six of its members killed.

During the weeklong violence, at least 250 people (133 Jews and 116 Arabs) were killed and another 570 injured. It would seem that most of the Jewish casualties were killed or injured by Arabs, whereas the majority of the Arabs fell victim to British countermeasures. The Jewish community in Hebron was evacuated; a minority returned in 1930–31, only to be evacuated again in April 1936, shortly before the outbreak of the Arab strike and revolt. In the following days, many Jewish shopkeepers, merchants, and businessmen abandoned their businesses in mixed areas and resettled in purely Jewish neighborhoods, whether outside the Old

<sup>24</sup> Segev (2000), ch. 14, esp. pp. 314–26; Wagner (2002), esp. pp. 24ff., and ch. 6. The Slobodka Yeshiva (originally located in the Slobodka district of the Lithuanian city of Kovno) was part of the pietist Musar movement, founded in the 1840s in Lithuania to counter secular influences, including Jewish Enlightenment (Haskala), and later, socialism



Map 6. The Quarters of Jerusalem

City in the case of Jerusalem, or in Tel Aviv in the case of Jaffa, reinforcing the spatial and social separation of Jews and Arabs. The Zionist organizations adapted their strategies of land purchase and settlement to the changed conditions, and in the following years concentrated on plots of land that were located in strategically favorable positions, not isolated and for that reason more easily defended against attacks.<sup>25</sup>

While many Jews had been protected by their Muslim or Christian neighbors, the effects of the violence were nonetheless devastating. Both before and afterward, landlessness and a rural exodus were identified as the primary causes of Arab hostility toward Jewish immigrants. Yet the

and Zionism; for a brief introduction, see Mendes-Flohr/Reinharz (eds.) (1995), pp. 396–38.

<sup>25</sup> K. Stein (1984), pp. 174ff.; for reactions among the Jewish community, see also Shapira (1992), ch. 5. On spatial segregation, see chapter 9 above.

Arab “mob” attacked not only Jewish settlers, but also Jewish city dwellers who were by no means all sympathetic to Zionism, and many of whom had been their neighbors for years, if not generations. The Mufti argued that the Jews were the aggressors.<sup>26</sup> The Arab Executive Committee initially distanced itself from the acts of violence. Yet the harsh measures of the British, who employed the police, army, and air force, and imposed collective punishment on entire villages and neighborhoods, created widespread bitterness among the Arab population. Those men who were sentenced to death before the British courts, and those who were actually executed in June 1930, were celebrated as heroes, martyrs, and victims of imperialism. Donations for their families were collected in other Arab countries. The literature referred to the riots of 1929 as the “Buraq revolution” (*thawrat al-buraq*) and honored its Arab victims as “martyrs” (*shuhada*).<sup>27</sup> In September 1930 an Arab National Fund (*sunduq al-umma*) was created on the model of the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet le-Israel), though in terms of achievements the two could not compare.<sup>28</sup> Given the general mood, the Arab Executive Committee was no longer able to maintain its posture of detachment. This in turn called British policy into question, for either the notables were responsible for the unrest or they were unable to control it. Both possibilities were equally disturbing.

#### A WHITE PAPER AND A BLACK LETTER

In this situation, the British employed the tried and true method of setting up a commission of inquiry. Under the leadership of Sir Walter Shaw, it prepared a thorough report published in March 1930 that recommended (much to the dismay of the incumbent Labor government of Ramsay MacDonald) a strict limitation on land sales and Jewish immigration.<sup>29</sup> MacDonald was unhappy not only for political reasons, but for economic ones as well. The British mandates and colonies were meant to be financially self-supporting, and from a financial point of view, a substantial Jewish presence in Palestine seemed advantageous, given that the Yishuv made a greater contribution to tax revenues than the Arabs (though rising conflict between Jews and Arabs also caused

<sup>26</sup> Wasserstein (1978), p. 234.

<sup>27</sup> *Peel Report* (1937), p. 189; Kolinsky (1993), pp. 84–91; Y. Miller (1985), pp. 8–9. For an Islamist interpretation, see al-Asali (1991a), pp. 163–65.

<sup>28</sup> Porath (1977), pp. 16–69, 39ff.; Reiter (1996), pp. 190–91; al-Asali (1991a); Nadan (2006), pp. 13, 287.

<sup>29</sup> *Peel Report* (1937), pp. 68–78; K. Stein (1984), pp. 80–114; Kolinsky (1993), chs. 4, 7, and 8.

increasingly higher expenditures on security).<sup>30</sup> It was therefore resolved to constitute a new commission under Sir John Hope-Simpson to investigate in greater detail the issues of land, immigration, and the development potential of the Palestine Mandate. Hope-Simpson’s findings, published in August 1930, largely substantiated the recommendations of the Shaw Report. Both reports left their mark on the so-called Passfield White Paper of October 1930 (Statement of Policy of His Majesty’s Government on Palestine, named after the incumbent Colonial Secretary Lord Passfield, formerly Sydney Webb, the well-known Fabian thinker and author—and one of the few anti-Zionist colonial secretaries). It recommended that Jewish immigration be suspended so that the standard of living of the Arab peasants could be maintained at the current level. The White Paper’s contention that no further cultivable land was available for new immigrants proved especially controversial—evaluation of soil quality was and remained a political issue of the first rank.

The Passfield White Paper, greeted by most Arabs as a sign that the British had returned to fairness and justice, provoked outrage in Zionist circles. Even before the publication of the Hope-Simpson Report, large parts of the Jewish population in Palestine went on strike to protest the anticipated halt to immigration.<sup>31</sup> Under strong domestic pressure, especially from Conservative opposition circles, Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald distanced himself from the white paper in a “letter of clarification” to Chaim Weizmann that covered the issues of immigration and land purchases. MacDonald assured Weizmann that His Majesty’s Government viewed the Mandate not only as an obligation toward the population of Palestine, but also toward the Jews in the world at large. Among Arabs the letter quickly became known as the “Black Letter.” A few years later the Peel Commission summarized the problem in remarkable fashion:

In this stark contradiction between Arab aspirations and British obligations lay and had always lain the one insurmountable crux. The rate of Jewish immigration might rise or fall, Jewish land-purchase might be extended or restricted, “Black Letters” might follow on “White Papers”, but all these factors, though they were certainly important, were only subsidiary factors. They might add fuel to the flames or dampen them down. But the Mandate itself, of which these other factors were only applications or interpretations, had lighted the fire; and the Mandate itself, however applied or interpreted, was bound to keep it burning—

<sup>30</sup> In 1928 Jews made up 17 percent of the total population but contributed 44 percent to the tax revenue; K. Stein (1984), p. 87; also *Survey of Palestine* (1946), pp. 570–80.

<sup>31</sup> K. Stein (1984), pp. 93ff., 115–32.

except on the old original assumption that the two races could and would learn to live and work together.<sup>32</sup>

There was little evidence of this at the time, and in the British view it was the Arabs who lacked the decisive will to cooperate or reach an understanding with the Jews.

In view of mounting tensions and repeated outbreaks of violence, a pattern of British behavior began to form. It held until the late 1930s, and then changed not so much through local developments as through the need to confront European fascism, which threatened to have an impact in the Arab world as well.<sup>33</sup> The basic features were as follows: Arab disaffection with the British Mandate administration in general, and Jewish immigration in particular, would lead to outbreaks of violence, carried out mostly by peasants and the urban poor, and leading to injuries and deaths among Jews (and not only Zionist Jews, who in many cases did not hesitate to retaliate). Whenever the level of violence rose too high to be controlled by the available means, London would set up a commission of inquiry. The commission would quickly determine that Arab disaffection was essentially politically motivated, and that the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate based upon it were completely unacceptable to the Arabs. In the best tradition of British fair play, the commission would then make suggestions designed to address Arab grievances without damaging the spirit and letter of the Mandate Treaty, including the Balfour Declaration. But what could "fairness" mean when faced with the irreconcilable commitments to both parties and their exclusive claims? This phase would be followed by a period of intense lobbying in London, in which the Zionists (or more generally the Jews) were better positioned due to their easy access to British decision makers. The word "appeasement" was used frequently, referring to concessions not to be offered to the Arabs. Following lively debate in Parliament, a white paper would be published that in some instances (Shaw, Hope-Simpson, or Peel) would follow the recommendations of the commission of inquiry. The Arabs would regularly reject the white paper, while the Zionists would adopt a flexible attitude accepting something less than their ultimate demands. The Arabs could not afford such flexibility, since this would have signified recognition of the Mandate including the Balfour Declaration. Rather, they called for the unconditional recognition of their claims. As the strategy of rejection was not based on effective leverage either locally or in London, Washington, or Geneva, it was no match to Zionist strategies that in spite of the irritation they might occasionally cause, were on the whole much more sophisticated and effective.

<sup>32</sup> *Peel Report* (1937), pp. 76–77.

<sup>33</sup> Verdery (1971), pp. 275–76.

#### INTERNATIONALIZING THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE

The Mufti emerged from the unrest of 1928–29 as the hero and leader of Arab Palestine who succeeded in awakening interest in the Palestinian cause not just in the surrounding countries, but as far as Iran and India. This was doubly important, for it also made the influential India Office aware of the Palestine issue. A precedent was set when the leader of the Indian Khilafat (caliphate) movement, Muhammad Ali, brother of the well-known Muslim writer and activist Shawkat Ali, was buried on the grounds of al-Aqsa Mosque following his death in January 1931.<sup>34</sup> In June 1931, Husain b. Ali was buried there, the former sharif of Mecca, king of the Hijaz and "all Arab lands," who in 1924 had had himself proclaimed caliph (though few were prepared to recognize his claim). Al-Haram al-Sharif appeared to be developing into a kind of "pan-Islamic pantheon." In December 1931 the Mufti convened a General Islamic Congress in Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> Funded mainly by the Supreme Muslim Council, the conference attracted around 145 participants from numerous Muslim countries, among them such prominent figures as Shawkat Ali representing the Indian Khilafat movement, Rashid Rida, Shakib Arslan, and the Indian poet and reformer Mohammed Iqbal. Only Kemalist Turkey and Saudi Arabia sent no representatives. Not everyone was happy with the meeting, though: Some Muslim leaders feared that the caliphate issue would be brought up once again, as was indeed the aim of Shawkat Ali. The plan to create an Islamic university in Jerusalem, as envisioned in the final resolution, met with little sympathy at al-Azhar University in Cairo; lack of funds assured that such an institution could not be created. The participants called for a boycott of Jewish products, the promotion of agricultural enterprises in Palestine, and other measures to strengthen the Arab economic sector. For the time being, however, these appeals remained without practical effect.

<sup>34</sup> Kupferschmidt (1987), p. 194. See also Nafi (1998), pp. 95–103; Mattar (1988), pp. 56–57. Ayyad (1999), pp. 98ff., reports on first international contacts in 1921. Husain "accepted" the title of caliph in March 1924 from a gathering of loyal adherents. However, he was not recognized as such by the majority of Muslims, including the Indian Khilafat movement. In Palestine itself there were also protests. Among the few exceptions was the Supreme Muslim Council, who hoped for Husain's support in their dealings with Great Britain. In view of strong resistance, Husain gave up the title in June 1924; see Porath (1974), pp. 160–61; Kramer (1986), ch. 8. For the Khilafat movement, see Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam. Ideology and Organization* (Oxford 1994), and Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans & Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden 1997).

<sup>35</sup> Kramer (1986), chs. 8 and 11, esp. pp. 123–41; Kupferschmidt (1987), pp. 209–18; Mattar (1988), pp. 58–65; Salih (1989), pp. 205–16. Al-Tha'alibi (1988) provides a detailed account of the General Islamic Congress.