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“INDIAN LADY TOURISTS KILLED AT JERICHO”:
TOURISM, PILGRIMAGE, AND SOUTH-SOUTH RELATIONS
IN INTERWAR PALESTINE

Abstract

In press coverage of the 1927 earthquake in Palestine, frequent mention is made of the deaths of three women at the Winter Palace Hotel in Jericho. That the three were from British-occupied India apparently rendered them unusual enough to be noted by a journalist, whose observation was reproduced around the world. This article draws on newspapers, official documents, and secondary literature on the hajj, tourism, and the British Empire to consider the history of South Asian travelers to Palestine and relationships between colonialism and travel in the interwar period.

One of the three women was Lady Abdul Rauf, the wife of a retired high court judge and veteran Indian Muslim nationalist campaigner, Sir Syed Abdul Rauf. The couple had departed Bombay in April 1927 for the hajj to Mecca and Medina but extended their trip to include Jericho. This was not unusual; the Indian Hospice in the Old City of Jerusalem in fact attests to a long history of Indian visitors to Palestine. This paper, however, locates the ill-fated presence of Lady Abdul Rauf and her companions in the changing nature of Indian travel in the region, as religious pilgrimage to Jerusalem combined with politics and tourism, and as changing infrastructures of capitalism and colonialism shifted how Indian visitors experienced Palestine.

خلاصة

في التغطية الصحفية لزلزال عام 1927 في فلسطين، تم تكرار ذكر وفاة ثلاث نساء في فندق وينتر بالاس في أريحا. ومن الواضح أن كون الثلاثة من الهند، التي كانت في وقتها تحت الاحتلال البريطاني، مَيِّزَهَن عن غيرهن بالنسبة لأحد الصحفيين. وبالتالي تم نشر ملاحظته في جميع أنحاء العالم. تعتمد هذه المقالة على الصحف والوثائق الرسمية والأدبيات الثانوية حول الحج والسياحة والإمبراطورية البريطانية للنظر في تاريخ المسافرين من جنوب آسيا إلى فلسطين والعلاقات بين الاستعمار والسفر في فترة ما بين الحربين العالميتين.

كانت إحدى النساء الثلاث هي السيدة عبد الرؤوف، زوجة قاضي المحكمة العليا المتقاعد والناشط القومي الإسلامي الهندي المخضرم، السير سيد عبد الرؤوف. كان الزوجان قد غادرا بومباي في أبريل نيسان 1927 لأداء فريضة الحج في مكة والمدينة، لكنهما مددا رحلتهما لتشمل أريحا. لم يكن هذا

غير عادي. وفي الواقع تشهد التكية الهندية في البلدة القديمة بالقدس على تاريخ طويل من الزوار الهنود إلى فلسطين. ومع ذلك، تموضع هذه الورقة الوجود المشؤوم للسيدة عبد الرؤوف ورفاقها في الطبيعة المتغيرة للسفر الهندي في المنطقة، حيث اقترن الحج الديني إلى القدس بالسياحة والسياسة، وحيث أدت البنية التحتية المتغيرة للرأسمالية والاستعمار إلى تغيير تجربة الزوار الهنود مع فلسطين.



INTRODUCTION

When news of the earthquake, which had hit Palestine and Transjordan on the afternoon of 11 July 1927, flashed around the world, one story received unusual amounts of newspaper coverage. Although the majority of the 287 killed in the quake were in Nablus, Jerusalem, and al-Salt, many international newspapers reported the deaths of several women at the Winter Palace Hotel in Jericho. What seems to have attracted attention was the fact that the women were Indian; they remain unnamed in all the reports, but the most complete identification describes them as “Three women from India . . . The wife of Sir Said Abdul Raouf, her companion and the wife of Mohamed Massaan.”¹ It is striking that this description, from a newspaper published in New York, appeared only two days after the earthquake, suggesting that the story must have been present in some of the first newswires to spread information on the disaster. Heading in the opposite direction around the world, an edition of the *Times of India*, bearing the same date stamp of 13 July, carried the same story: “The hotel at Jericho collapsed and three Indian lady tourists were killed.”²

Why should the deaths of Lady Abdul Rauf and her fellow travelers have attracted such apparently disproportionate coverage?³ This article takes this question as a starting point to consider the assumptions often made in Anglophone histories about the nature of travel in Ottoman and British Mandate-ruled Palestine and the wider Levant. By challenging these preconceptions, it attempts to inscribe travel by South Asians—in this instance, primarily subjects of British-ruled India during the colonial period—as an important but understudied aspect of travel to and in Palestine, and as a quotidian presence in Levantine life. To do so, I sketch examples of the kinds of

experiences and journeys that brought Indians to Palestine,⁴ and identify some broad themes, with particular reference to colonialism, the rise of tourism, and the sociotechnical changes which are often seen as inherently bound up with modernity. Specifically, I argue that Indian examples are useful in unsettling the dichotomy between tourist and pilgrim. These terms are often used to denote travelers in Palestine in ways which are weighted with assumptions and prejudices about modernity, religion, and race. In his examination of colonial discourses on the hajj, Michael Christopher Low makes a similar point when he notes: "As opposed to the European tourist, trader, or soldier, pilgrims, migrants, the poor, and non-Europeans were classified as dangerous"⁵—or, as Lady Abdul Rauf's example highlights, strange and out-of-place.

In fact, far from being anomalous, the Abdul Raufs' presence in Jericho was, as I argue, part of a continuous, if varying, presence of people from South Asia in the Levant, but one which was undergoing significant changes at the time of their fatal visit. South Asian Muslims had been traveling and trading to the Arabic-speaking world for centuries before 1927; this has been demonstrated in the current burgeoning research on those cultural circuits of the Indian Ocean which linked East Africa, southern Arabia, and South and Southeast Asia via the transportation of ideas, beliefs, and knowledge as well as objects. It is also evident in literature on the hajj pilgrimage and the ways in which Islamic religious travel to the Arabian Peninsula was entangled with questions of colonialism, power, health, and race. Much of this work, however, focuses on areas bordering directly on the Indian Ocean, or on Mecca and Medina as the main destinations for hajj pilgrims, although it was not uncommon for such visitors to visit Levantine cities such as Jerusalem, Aleppo, or Damascus. Travelers to Jerusalem are more prominent in histories of Sufi networks and *zawiyas*, which brought pilgrims from Central and South Asia to the Mamluk and Ottoman Levant. Traces of these visitors remain in the forms of lodges and hostels which still maintain their regional associations into the present day; the *zāwiyat al-Hunūd* (Indian Hospice) is discussed below, while other examples include the Uzbek and Afghan lodges.⁶ Much of this scholarship, however, focuses on the medieval, early modern, and Ottoman periods, when most (or all) of the regions involved were under some form of Islamic rule. This article, on the other hand, considers some of the impacts of the changing mechanics of such journeys, and the shifting composition of South Asian visitors, that followed occupation by European colonial

powers—not only of India during the nineteenth century but, more specifically, of the Levant after World War I and the imposition of British and French Mandatory rule over Greater Syria by the League of Nations. The nature of long-distance travel had been changing since the introduction of steamships between India and the Mediterranean in the nineteenth century, stopping in ports such as Aden and Jeddah before transiting the Suez Canal for destinations including Alexandria. The political significance of such travel is highlighted by the fact that Indian Muslim nationalists in the years immediately before World War I considered setting up a steamship line to carry hajj pilgrims and break the British shipping monopoly between India and Arabia.⁷ Palestine also gained rail connections from the Hijaz under the Ottomans, via spurs from the main Hijaz railway to Haifa, and from Egypt to Jaffa and then Jerusalem under British rule. But the end of the Ottoman Empire and the advent of European colonialism also brought about new forms of colonial mobility for Muslim South Asian subjects of the British, including military service and manual work for the imperial armies and establishing transnational business networks, while Zionism also began attracting Indian Jews to Palestine. Even anticolonial movements in both South Asia and the Arab world created paths along which Indians—both living and dead—found their way to Palestine. The archival record for the Indian presence in Mandatory Palestine is necessarily fragmentary and widespread; in addition, this article is part of a wider project that was heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and a discussion of the sources used thus provides an opportunity to consider the challenges of transnational historical research and the pros and cons of document digitization. The Palestinian archive itself has been—as many scholars have explored—shattered, dispersed, and sometimes destroyed by the impacts of British and then Israeli colonialism.⁸ Records from the British administration in Palestine used for this article are divided between the British National Archives at Kew and the Israel National Archive, which has digitized substantial numbers of documents over recent years making research for this article possible during the Covid-19 pandemic. As colonial archives, both collections are partial and distorted; the British holdings often lack documents deemed by officials at the end of the Mandate unworthy of being shipped to the metropole, and subject to both restriction and destruction by colonial regimes protecting themselves.⁹ The National Archives of India were also accessed via the major digitization project Abhilekh-Patal but are similarly subject to the sorting, preservation, and disclosure issues presented by the records of any nation state.¹⁰ There are undoubtedly

additional sources to be found in a variety of South Asian languages, including travelogues by Muslim visitors to the Levant, that are beyond the linguistic skills of this author.

Other sources included Palestinian (Arabic) and international newspapers, alongside memoirs and personal accounts written by Palestinians and other residents during the Mandate period, primarily in Arabic and English. However, the sparse presence of South Asians in life-writings by Palestinians and in the Arabic press is, at first glance, striking, but on further consideration perhaps not so surprising. It is also rare to find explicit mentions of communities that we know to be present in Jerusalem and other parts of Ottoman Palestine, such as African Palestinians or the North Africans of the Maghrebi Quarter, destroyed by Israeli troops in June 1967. Like members of these groups, South Asian visitors were likely subsumed under categories such as pilgrim and Muslim, or considered by their profession or where and with whom they stayed, rather than in terms of race and nationality. Like these communities, their presence might sometimes be more accurately traced through personal and place names such as Hindi and Maghrebi, and through local microhistories, reflecting the fact that Palestinians encountering people from India likely had a different way of "seeing" them than through the categories applied in colonial documentation.

SOUTH ASIAN TRAVEL IN THE LEVANT UNDER ISLAMIC RULE

A substantial body of literature already exists on travel from South Asia to the Arabic-speaking world in the early modern and modern periods. The most prominent subsection of this field are the many works that have emerged in recent years on hajj pilgrimages to the Arabian Peninsula. These intersect with the growing literature on the Indian Ocean as a place of cultural interactions and cross-fertilization, via circuits of trade, religious knowledge, and other forms of mobility between South and Southeast Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, and East Africa. The former has given rise to rich discussions of the changes which the hajj process underwent in interaction with colonialism. These focus especially on the British Empire in India, and on regimes of hygiene and disease control, which combined with colonial fears of Islamic extremism and the possibility that hajj travelers would be infected or carry infection, either literally as cases of cholera and other "tropical" diseases, or metaphorically as radical or insurrectionary ideas.¹¹ The second body of literature focuses on the Indian Ocean as a space of cultural and economic circulation which predated European

colonialism and, indeed, incorporated and helped to shape the early stages of imperial enterprises such as Portuguese settlements in India. Much of this literature focuses on complexity and richness, with Middle Eastern travelers—Arabs, Jews, Armenians, or Persians—appearing in nodes and networks stretching from Singapore to Zanzibar, and vice versa.¹² In a very small way, this article is inspired by the call from some authors within this literature to pay closer attention to the hinterlands of the Indian Ocean world—the inland regions linked to the sea by routes of trade and pilgrimage.¹³

From these two perspectives, the Levant as a travel destination appears very different—both conceptually and geographically—from much of the literature on tourism in Palestine. The Levant area is framed not as the eastern end of a Mediterranean world with its movements and exchanges, but as the westernmost point of a vast and diverse space of mobile people for which Jerusalem and the other holy places of Palestine maintained the lure of sacredness despite also being *al-Aqsa* (the furthest). Throughout the medieval and early modern periods, occasional Indian Muslim travelers did extend their journeys as far as Palestine, generally in addition to visiting Mecca and Medina. These journeys appear in travel accounts, mainly by South Asian Muslim writers, while Indian individuals are noted in accounts penned by Levantine chroniclers; in the nineteenth century travelogues by South Asian Muslims, written in Urdu and other regional languages, start to appear in significant numbers,¹⁴ similar to the parallel emergence of “Holy Land” travel texts by European and North American authors.

The most concrete illustration of Indian arrivals, however, is the existence of an Islamic pilgrim hospice, not dissimilar to the better-known Christian hostels for Armenian, Austrian, and other communities or to the Islamic pilgrim establishments associated with specific communities and regions, such as the Uzbek and Afghan lodges, and which were part of networks across the Islamic world.¹⁵ While the hospice’s origins are unclear, it appears to be linked to Indian Sufi *zawiyas* established as early as the thirteenth century, and to have coalesced into a single base for Indian travelers by the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁶ After World War I, however, the hospice took on an implicitly political turn, when leaders of the All-India Muslim League decided that maintaining an Indian presence in Jerusalem was an important part of their project.¹⁷ This was partly in response to pressure from the Palestinian Supreme Muslim Council, which believed that the hospice represented a useful piece of propaganda against the Zionist

position enshrined in the British Mandate.¹⁸ A member of the Khilafat movement,¹⁹ Nazir Ansari, was dispatched to Palestine in 1924 as caretaker of the hospice and remained there for the rest of his life, passing on the role to his son and grandsons.²⁰ Under Ansari, the hospice provided a focal point for Indians in Palestine—including Commonwealth troops serving there as well as civilian residents and visitors—and a headquarters for the Palestine Indian Association. At the same time, the hospice was also embedded in the wider communities and networks, including its local neighborhood in the Old City of Jerusalem and the local Red Cross Society.²¹ The Indian Hospice thus highlights the way in which a longstanding South Asian presence in Palestine underwent changes in nature and meaning with the arrival of formal British colonialism in the region after World War I.

Another example of the way in which South Asian travelers during the Ottoman period became established features of the Levantine landscape can be found in the Indian community of the village of Beit Sawa, now a suburb of Damascus. It is not clear when they came to Syria or how they coalesced into an identified settlement, although it seems likely that some, or even most, arrived in connection to the hajj. It was not uncommon, before solvency regulations were introduced by the British, for Indian pilgrims to run out of funds on the hajj and be unable to return;²² although most of these pilgrims either found work or became destitute in the Arabian Peninsula, Damascus' status as a major node on the route between Istanbul and the Haramayn (Mecca and Medina, the main cities of the hajj) perhaps drew some north. Indeed, reports from the British consulate mention the presence in the 1870s of women in Damascus who stated that they originated from the Punjab but had been sold into slavery and traded along the hajj routes.²³ Another possibility is that some of these villagers—although not, presumably, those seeking British consular help—were amongst those Indian Muslims who fell foul of colonial authorities at home and fled to the Ottoman Empire.²⁴

Under Ottoman rule, disputes arose over whether and how many of these Beit Sawa Indians were British subjects and thus exempt under the capitulations from Ottoman legal jurisdiction;²⁵ legal wrangles over their status continued into the Mandate period, when consulate staff complained that regular calls by the Indians to protect them from the French authorities—whether in quotidian legal matters or from government bombardment in the 1925–27 Syrian Uprising—was causing tensions between the British representatives and their

fellow Mandatory power.²⁶ One British solution to a reported rise in poverty amongst the Beit Sawa Indian community was to pressure them to “return” to India, despite the fact that consular officials themselves admitted that they had been “established in Syria for several generations To a very great extent they have lost touch with their homes in India, and many of them speak only Arabic.”²⁷ Taking matters into their own hands, some of the community, presumably using their British Indian subject status, moved to Iraq and Palestine, especially those who had been dependent on the irrigation canals in Ghouta for their farming; much of this agricultural infrastructure had been destroyed by the French during the uprising, leaving the area’s inhabitants unable to grow their accustomed crops.²⁸ Whatever their origins, the Beit Sawa Indians came from a very different class of traveler than Sir Syed Abdul Rauf and his wife, who occupied a senior position in colonial society and were sufficiently affluent to stay in a new hotel like the Winter Palace, clearly aimed at European tourists or the elite of Mandate Palestinian society.

With the radically reduced travel times that came with steamships and railways in the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of South Asians who came to the Arabic-speaking world and who could add more destinations to their itineraries greatly increased, and as more settled—and established themselves in businesses such as shipping—the denser the networks in which new arrivals could embed themselves.²⁹ Again, the main focus of existing scholarship has been the hajj, for which estimated numbers show massive increases from the 1890s onwards. Figures quoted by Michael Christopher Low, for instance, show pilgrims from South Asia rising from approximately 5–7,000 in the mid-1800s, to 10,000 in the 1880s, 20,000 by 1893, and perhaps exceeding 100,000 in the years immediately preceding World War I. In addition to technological developments, the infrastructures of empire also changed and, in some cases, forced, inspired, or facilitated movement by people acting as political exiles, refugees, or labor migrants. However, the majority of existing literature on travel and travelers in Palestine in the later decades of the Ottoman Empire and the period of British Mandatory rule in Palestine focuses on European or North American—largely Christian or Jewish—individuals. There are solid reasons for this. Firstly, the overlapping politics of European imperialism and Zionist immigration mean that travelers from these two areas are unavoidably bound up with issues such as Orientalized and bibliified images of Palestinian people, questions of power and empire, and the present-

day political situation. Secondly, technological developments such as steamships and railways, and social changes such as the rise in capitalist settings of the ideas of vacations and tourism, resulted in massive increases in the numbers of Christian and Jewish pilgrims and tourists which had significant implications for European, especially British, culture, society, and politics. The academic literature surrounding this latter phenomenon has thus addressed issues such as the nature of and difference between tourism and pilgrimage, and the growth of infrastructures deemed necessary for mass Euro-American tourism such as hotels, tourist agencies, and a guidebook industry.³⁰

Implicit, and sometime explicit, in this literature is the assumption that these developments are somehow separate from non-Western, non-Christian, or non-Jewish travel to Palestine, particularly Islamic pilgrimage and visitors from Africa and Asia.³¹ I would suggest that underlying many of the discussions is a tacit assumption that the visitors being talked about are white and that they exist in a category associated with modernity and thus differentiated from religious pilgrimage (Russian pilgrims, it must be said, occupy a somewhat liminal space in this schema, in common with Orientalist attitudes to peoples from Eastern Europe and further afield from Northwestern Europe or North America). Furthermore, travelers from Asia and Africa, if they are mentioned, are often implicitly or explicitly classed as pilgrims, and their activities in and connections with Palestine are confined to Islamic religious circuits and institutions. In terms of numerical weight, some of these assumptions may well be true. But relying solely on numbers is, I argue, an error which obscures a long history of South Asian travel to Palestine which, while often consisting of or intimately linked to pilgrimage, is over-simplified and, indeed, exoticized and Orientalized by relegation to this single term. Steamships and railways had immense impacts on South Asian as well as European and North American people and experiences, and the other trappings of travel that came with them—such as guidebooks and phrasebooks—were not the exclusive preserve of European languages. Guidebooks to a range of destinations (although not, to the best of my knowledge, Palestine) were issued by Indian publishing houses,³² while the commercial potential of travelers to Arabic-speaking countries is reflected in the existence of colloquial Arabic phrasebooks in languages such as Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu.³³

INDIANS IN THE MANDATORY LEVANT

Despite the surprise with which papers around the world met the news

of Indian tourists in Jericho, by the 1920s it is possible to detect an array of Indian presence across the Levant which both builds on and differs from those of the Ottoman and earlier periods. These represented a broad range of social classes, motives for travel, and relationships to colonialism, and the signs they have left in the historical record include colonial archives, the media, and the built environment. These signs rarely, however, include the voices of Indian travelers themselves, whose subjective experiences are absent from the official correspondence, policy documents, and border regulations that helped to shape their encounter with the Levant.

Amongst the most poignant markers of Indian presence are the sections of the Commonwealth War Cemeteries in Gaza, Deir al-Balah, Ramla, Jerusalem, Tulkarem, and Haifa dedicated to South Asian soldiers killed in World War I. As noted on the individual web pages for each cemetery, Indian soldiers were originally commemorated collectively with nameless monuments, in contrast to the individual gravestones or lists of names on memorials to the British dead. New monuments, bearing the names of South Asians known to have been buried at the sites, have been added between 2001 and 2014.³⁴ It is perhaps more widely known that huge numbers of soldiers from what was then British-ruled India (now both India and Pakistan, with many soldiers coming from regions of the latter) fought in Iraq, where the campaign was initially commanded from Delhi, but substantial numbers also served in the Palestine campaign and were stationed in Palestine during the Mandate period.³⁵ For Palestinians themselves in the wake of World War I, South Asian soldiers must have been a regular sight, especially in the neighborhood of military bases such as Sarafand, or around government buildings in Jerusalem and regional governorates; in 1922, for example, British military correspondence discusses the stationing of “2 Indian Infantry Battalions, 1 Indian Cavalry Regiment [and] 1 Indian Pack Battery” in Palestine, which could have amounted to over 4,000 men.³⁶ That the conditions for Indian recruits were different—presumably poorer—than those for white soldiers is, however, apparent from correspondence over leisure facilities for Indian troops. That this provision was separate from existing leisure space suggests that Indian soldiers were segregated from white troops, while the existence of letters refusing funds but mentioning grants for other troops seems to show that South Asians were expected to put up with sparser facilities.³⁷

For Indian soldiers, a posting in Palestine may have had many different meanings. Most were recruited from among Sikh and Islamic

communities in the regions such as the Punjab, whose inhabitants were viewed by the British authorities through the lens of "martial races," peoples who were deemed to be fitted for warfare by both their physical ("racial") and cultural backgrounds.³⁸ For Muslim soldiers, being in Bayt al-Maqdis must have had spiritual resonance, although – especially in the early years of the Mandate – this may have been complicated by mixed feelings towards the defeat of the Ottoman caliph by Britain and its allies during World War I.

But fighting men were not the only Indians to be found in the imperial army in Palestine: throughout the Mandate period, Indians were also employed as laborers (possibly replacing the Egyptian Labour Corps in the wake of the Egyptian revolution in 1919 and the nominal independence that followed it). Applications for work visas and other documents, now in the Israeli national archives, show that a significant number of South Asians applied, via contractors who were usually themselves also Indian, to come to Palestine to work for the British army, mainly at Sarafand. Some of these apparently settled in the region, judging by the request for a visa from Hamida Begum Abdul Rashid, who applied for permission to join her husband who was based at the British army camp at Sarafand,³⁹ and it seems likely that at least some married locally and remained, or took Palestinian spouses back to India with them.

TRAVELING TO PALESTINE

The documents submitted by subjects of British India seeking entry into Palestine for shorter periods of work and travel than those in military employment present an image of a broad range of interests and incentives as well as social classes and backgrounds. As is evident from British records now in the Israeli national archives, Indian Jews also applied to come to Palestine, encouraged by the Zionist message or drawn by family, work, or religion. There is a rich and underexamined history to be written of the relationship between Indian Jews and Palestine,⁴⁰ but the specificity of their position – in both India and Palestine – often makes their trajectories and experiences very different from those of Hindu and Muslim South Asians; therefore, I will not examine them as a specific group in this article.

Indian Jews, Punjabi soldiers, and military laborers, however, belong to the categories of travelers to Palestine who were seeking to settle in the country for a longer term or permanently. Those who, like

Syed Abdul Rauf and his party, were planning only short visits by traveling around well-known sites, seem to have been less common, but they did exist. At the grandest end of the scale are figures such as the Nawab of Rampur, who spent a couple of days in Jerusalem in 1934. Rumored by the Anglophone press to be one of the richest rulers of a semi-independent princely state in India, the itinerary of the Nawab and his wife, the Begum of Rampur, graced the society column of the *Palestine Post*. The couple, as well as senior members of their substantial entourage, were guests at a lunch hosted by Sir John Hathorn Hall,⁴¹ the chief secretary of the Mandate administration, along with Ruhi Bey Abdul-Hadi, chief Arab officer to the British government and one of the less politically activist members of his well-known family.⁴² The Nawab's involvement with the Islamic networks of the Indian national movement did not prevent him from using the luxurious King David Hotel rather than the struggling Palace Hotel, owned by the Supreme Muslim Council,⁴³ as a base during his sojourn in Jerusalem and excursion to the shrine of Nabi Musa, the Dead Sea, and Jericho.⁴⁴ Despite not opting for their hospitality, during the visit, the Nawab did announce a donation of 15,000 rupees (around \$5,680 at the time, or over \$120,000 today) to the Supreme Muslim Council for the upkeep of the al-Aqsa Mosque "and other waqf properties."⁴⁵

On a more practical level, long-extant merchant networks, especially involving the Armenian, Jewish, and Parsee communities in India, and evolving markets for luxury products in the twentieth century, combined to draw Indian commercial travelers to Palestine. These travelers arrived on business visas and were primarily there to engage in trade, but they must have stayed in hotels alongside other travelers and perhaps took in tourist sites in between commercial dealings. In June 1947, for instance, we find Mazur and Paldico Ltd., a diamond trading company based in Jaffa,⁴⁶ in correspondence with the Department of Migration over a visa application for a Mr. Shantilal Motilal Mehta of Bombay. In contrast with the often-scant paperwork associated with individual entry applications, this commercial process accrued an archive folder of telegrams (for which the Mandate administration charged applicants extra) and letters stressing the "extreme urgency" and need to hasten the permit. Mazur and Paldico added extra evidence to their application form, stressing the value of the diamond industry to Palestine, especially "following the resumption of the pre-war Belgian diamond industry with which the Palestine diamond industry is keenly endeavouring to compete," and the comments of government officials on the documents in the folder

back up their claims.⁴⁷ The three-month visa allocated to Mehta, and the anticipated month-long stay mentioned in the paperwork, suggest ample time for business purposes, so it might be supposed that he also did some sightseeing. Mehta's firm is reported by Mazur and Paldico as having already traded with them for several years, so we might build on this case to imagine a small number of Indian businessmen with strong links in Palestine, perhaps originally brokered via Jewish Indians but later making repeat visits and establishing personal relationships with residents of Mandatory Palestine.

Mehta was not an isolated case; indeed, in the same month, another Tel Aviv diamond polisher, Albert Alcalay, applied for a visa for Ratilal Jasani of a well-known firm, Anandlal Becharlal, whose case he pressed in similar terms to Mazur and Paldico's expressions of urgency for Shantilal Mehta's visa. Jasani was said to have been "in constant commercial relations with Palestine . . . for many years" and Alcalay presented letters of recommendation from two banks and two diamond export associations in support of their request.⁴⁸ A month later, Ratilal Jasani's brother, Raman, also wrote to Alcalay, informing him that they had opened a branch of the company in Burma, asking if Tel Aviv could supply polished diamonds of certain qualities, and again asking him to arrange an urgent visa from the Palestine government, to be cabled to the British Embassy at Antwerp, another major node in the global diamond trade.⁴⁹ Such relations were not always fruitful for all concerned; the colonial archive also contains complaints from merchants and corporations in both countries, in the diamond trade and other industries from incidents when deals went sour or misunderstandings occurred. But Indian commercial travelers, and successful commercial relations with the Palestinian economy, were certainly a feature of the business landscape of Mandate Palestine.

SHARED STRUGGLES AND ELITE NETWORKS

While many Indian travelers to Palestine were following routes bound up with colonialism—such as soldiers, laborers, or more high-status workers—links between the two segments of the British Empire were also forged by resistance, including delegations such as that mentioned above, sent by the Supreme Muslim Council in 1923 to solicit funds and support from Indian Muslims and campaigners for liberation from British colonialism, or Indian delegates to the World Islamic Congress held in Jerusalem in 1931. In some respects, these relationships built upon Ottoman-era links between Palestine and India, hinted at by the continuity of the Indian Hospice. But, as Omar Khalidi notes, during

the Mandate period, wealthy Indian princes and aristocrats who historically “were always conscious of their membership in trans-Indian, pan-Islamic world”⁵⁰ endowed numerous new awqaf in Jerusalem, acts which took on new political weight in the new political circumstances of British rule in the Levant and critiques of British colonialism which were now shared between India and Palestine.⁵¹ On a more clandestine level, the circulation of Islamic activist tracts written in India and distributed in Palestine and in French-ruled Syria was a cause of concern to the British government, with discussions on curbing it from reaching cabinet level.⁵² While it is important to note that the significance of Palestine and Jerusalem as religious and anticolonial causes varied considerably according to the priorities of individual Muslims, and that events in India often took precedence over those in Palestine, the idea that Jerusalem should remain under Islamic rule was among the core beliefs of many Muslim Indian nationalists and pan-Islamists.⁵³ Equally, not all Indian Muslim nationalists were opposed to the British Empire, and thus, for some, Jerusalem may have remained a purely religious symbol.⁵⁴

Thinking about this relationship in terms of a physical Indian presence in Palestine, a corporeal example of the entanglement of Indian Muslim nationalists into the networks and narratives of Palestinian politics was the burial on the Haram al-Sharif of Muhammed Ali Jouhar, a leading figure in the Khilafat movement during World War I and in the establishment of the All-India Muslim League (Jouhar was also well known to Syed Abdul Rauf, in these and other capacities, as we shall shortly see). Muhammad Ali, whose health had been seriously damaged by the denial of medical treatment for his diabetes when he was imprisoned by the British in India, died in London in January 1931. Within a week of his death, the announcement was made that Muhammad Ali would be buried in Jerusalem, as the result of a flurry of telegrams between Amin al-Husayni and Muhammad’s brother Shaukat Ali. The initiative seemingly came from Hajj Amin, who had been cultivating links with Indian Muslim nationalists since just after the First World War, both for their financial clout and in order to focus the attention of India’s huge Islamic population on Jerusalem as both a sacred site and a victim of British occupation.⁵⁵ Despite their role in the opposition to colonial rule in India, which saw them interned without trial in 1918, the Ali brothers had a close relationship to the British state, which cultivated separate Islamic groups as a means of splitting resistance to colonialism in India. Sir John Chancellor, High Commissioner in Palestine in early 1931, was

thus ordered by London to facilitate the burial,⁵⁶ which saw crowds of over 20,000 Palestinians (assumed by journalists to be Muslims) lining the route and following the coffin.⁵⁷ The main beneficiary of this display of funerary pageantry was certainly Amin al-Husayni in his competition with rival nationalist groups in Palestine, as well as the British in their quest to divert attention from colonial misrule, but the material presence of the grave of a widely popular Indian Muslim leader also helped to inscribe the relationship on the soil of Palestine, as well as in the more ethereal realms of words and ideas. Like the hundreds, if not thousands, of Indian war graves spread across present-day Israel and Palestine, and the hospice in Jerusalem's Old City, Muhammad Ali's grave created a concrete link between the countries which could be read in multiple ways by Indians and Palestinians of different persuasions.

Such links also emerge in more everyday and private ways. In 1945-46 the Indian scholar M. L. Roy Choudhury spent a year as a lecturer in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Cairo University, funded by a travel fellowship endowed by the lawyer and politician Sir Rashbehari Ghosh (1845-1921). During his sojourn in Egypt, Choudhury undertook a journey through Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and the Arabian Peninsula during which he visited the Palestinian doctor, ethnographer, and nationalist Tawfik Canaan.⁵⁸ Choudhury was a historian of Mughal India and of Persian cultural and religious influences in India (amongst others, he authored a volume on the "Golden Age" Islamic scientist Abu Rayhan al-Biruni), and the volume in which he recounts his meeting with Canaan and their conversation on the hardships imposed by British rule in both Palestine and India is a modern-day continuation of his historical studies—namely, an attempt to inform Indians about wider Arab politics, culture, and society in contemporary Egypt. The book, partly authored by Choudhury and with contributions from Jawaharlal Nehru alongside former Wafd prime minister of Egypt Mustafa Nahas Pasha, leading Egyptian feminist Huda Sha'arawi, and a range of local scholars, is explicitly billed as an effort to build bridges between the Middle East and India in the interests both of anti-imperial struggle and of wider knowledge and understanding independent of European powers.⁵⁹ So, while earlier Indian Muslim visitors to Palestine had Mecca and Jeddah as their main aims and were inspired by religious devotion, Choudhury embarked on his travels in the Levant from a Cairene base and was impelled by a combined thirst for knowledge and to build understanding and networks across peoples linked not just by Islamic

culture and history, but also by their shared experiences of British colonialism and their struggles against it.

THE MANY DEATHS OF LADY ABDUL RAUF

The sad death of Lady Abdul Rauf and her companion in the ruins of the Winter Palace in the earthquake of July 1927 draws together many of the themes sketched above. On the one hand, she and her husband were visiting Palestine as an extension of their hajj, as many Indians had done before them. Like hundreds of thousands of others, they had embarked by sea from Bombay, although their berths on the SS *Dara* were no doubt much more comfortable than those occupied by many of their compatriots. Indeed, there were 1,432 pilgrims on the *Dara* on 26 April 1927, “consisting of 1,169 males, 241 females, 9 boys and 6 girls,”⁶⁰ and conditions on hajj ships were a recurrent source of scandal in British-ruled India. The Abdul Raufs were described by the Indian press as traveling in a “party of nineteen” which included another “high official from northern India” and was seen off at from the disinfection shed at Bombay by well-known figures from the Islamic wing of the Indian nationalist movement, including Khilafat veterans Shaukat Ali (brother of Muhammad Ali Jouhar, whose burial within the Haram al-Sharif is mentioned above) and Shoaib Qureshi.⁶¹ That the Abdul Raufs and several others—presumably members of the group of nineteen—then chose to travel from the Haramayn to Palestine was less usual, but the voyage still placed them in a long tradition of Indian pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Jericho, however, has very little religious significance for Muslims (unless we extend the borders to include the Maqam of Nabi Musa around seven miles away); this part of their tour departs from the long-standing religious practices with which most literature on South Asian travel to the Arabic-speaking world is concerned and appears instead to have entered the realms of that most modern of activities—tourism. They went to a site of historical and scenic interest, and they stayed in a very new and “modern” hotel aimed squarely at European and elite Palestinian guests.

Like Muhammad Ali, the Khilafat leader discussed above, Syed Abdul Rauf, his career, and his political convictions embodied many of the contradictions of elite nationalism and of Indian Muslim relations with the British authorities. In 1927, he was a recently retired judge of the high court in Lahore,⁶² having spent a long career working with or in the Indian legal system, mainly in Allahabad,⁶³ under British rule. He had considerable social and professional status within the Raj, as

seen in the prominent place his departure for the hajj took in the *Times of India* but also, for many years prior, in the regularity with which his name and activities appear in newspaper reports on Indian politics and society, often alongside the likes of Gandhi, Jinnah, and Motilal, and later Jawaharlal Nehru.⁶⁴ As well as a judge and thus member of the national establishment, he was also a longstanding member of the Indian national and Islamic movements. He had been drawn into politics via his senior colleagues on the Allahabad bar in the 1880s,⁶⁵ in his early years flirted with the Congress Party, and in the first two decades of the twentieth century engaged in a range of political activities which included some that focused on India's Muslims and others which explicitly or implicitly crossed religious lines. The latter included attendance, especially prior to World War I, at several high-profile independence conferences and the vice presidency of a United Provinces Political Association which also brought together Hindus and Muslims.⁶⁶ He also, however, worked with and helped to found organizations resistant to cooperation with Hindus or specific to the Muslim community, including a boarding house for Muslim students in Allahabad, the Aligarh university project, the Khilafat movement, the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association, and the Muslim League,⁶⁷ and he remained embedded in elite Muslim nationalist circles which linked urban professionals with rural landowners.⁶⁸ In 1906, he was also one of the thirty-five members of the Minto Deputation, a delegation to the viceroy, Lord Minto, asking for greater political representation for Muslims in India.⁶⁹ And yet in 1918, he courted widespread controversy – and hostility from fellow Indian nationalists – when along with fellow Allahabad lawyer Benjamin Lindsay he accepted the role of reporting to the government on the legality and conditions of the internment of Khilafat leaders Shaukat and Muhammad Ali.⁷⁰ Not unlike many of the elite men of the Palestinian national movement, Syed Abdul Rauf's personal and political life story is one in which commitment to self-determination and indigenous rights exists closely bound up with the colonial state and its structures of power and domination.

The most detailed account of the collapse of the Winter Palace and the deaths of Lady Abdul Rauf, her maid, and her friend highlights the complex colonial and cultural place that the couple inhabited. Douglas Duff, an officer in the Palestine police, claimed in his 1953 memoir of his years in Palestine to have been dispatched to Jericho on the afternoon of the earthquake due to reports that "some eminent visitors" had been trapped in a damaged hotel.⁷¹ Duff reports that he

reached the Winter Palace to find “a deeply distressed Indian, a retired Justice of the Supreme Court, a K.C.I.E.” surrounded by men from Jericho who were refusing to help remove the remains of the collapsed hotel until paid from the “leather shoulder-satchel, literally stuffed with gold sovereigns,” which the “Muslim Indian knight” was offering to those who might help to save his wife from the ruins. In this version of events, which places heavy emphasis on the class differences between Abdul Rauf and the Palestinian men surrounding him, and ignores any notion of commonalities such as religion, Duff started to attack the local men with a hide whip to force them to start digging and, if they stopped for any reason, compelled them to resume with further blows of the whip and his fists.⁷² Eventually the bodies of the two women are uncovered and, according to Duff:

[Abdul Rauf] ran towards me as I freed her from the dust and the fallen masonry. He fell prone beside her, his eyes streaming with tears.

“Please carry her yourself, British officer,” he begged, looking at me. “Carry her, sir, for I do not want her to be touched by any of these common men. Cover her face. She would be grieved if she knew that her features were exposed to the mob when she could no longer protect herself.” I have seen many tragedies before and since that afternoon in Jericho, but I have never felt worse than I did while I carried that poor, dusty, crumpled, shattered body of an old Indian woman to the shelter of the bougainvillea-covered summer-house in the hotel garden.⁷³

To the best of my knowledge, no other account exists to confirm or deny Duff’s details. His predilection for purple prose and self-aggrandizement means that we can assume some level of exaggeration; certainly, Syed Abdul Rauf was not a “Supreme Court” judge and Duff upgrades his honorific from Knight Bachelor to Knight Commander of the Indian Empire (“K.C.I.E.”). It is also highly unlikely that Abdul Rauf would have been carrying a satchel of gold sovereigns, at lunch or any other time (but, like many of Duff’s other descriptions of Arabs and other people not from northwest Europe, it does fit neatly into Orientalist stereotypes). Some contemporary news stories back up the idea that Abdul Rauf and his friend were indeed in a separate location from their wives because the latter practiced strict veiling, so he may have wished her face not to be on public display even after death, but

the attitude to "common men" attributed to him by Duff, writing a quarter-century later, looks suspiciously similar to Duff's own abundantly expressed class attitudes from elsewhere in the book.⁷⁴

Thinking about the death of Lady Abdul Rauf, it is hard not be reminded of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's famous account of what she terms "widow sacrifice," in which she suggests the complete obscuring of the subjectivities of Indian women by multiple layers of colonial and patriarchal silencing.⁷⁵ At the moment of her death, Lady Abdul Rauf is rendered nameless in news reports that flash around the world. A day or two later, like Spivak's "grotesquely mistranscribed" widows' names,⁷⁶ she appears again, in various spellings but always as "Sir Abdul Raouf's" Lady.⁷⁷ Indeed, after months of searching, I still do not know her own name. And, at the moment of her death, she and her husband – who despite the obsequious references to markers of social status is rendered equally nameless in Duff's account – become signs by which a violent, prejudiced former police officer can shore up his racist imaginaries of working-class and peasant Palestinians. Duff's description of the weeping judge asking the white policeman to take his wife out of the sight of the massed Palestinian men clearing the rubble of the hotel is the ultimate expression of the colonial fantasy "white men saving brown women from brown men,"⁷⁸ whilst simultaneously rendering Abdul Rauf, the other "brown man" of the triangle, weak, emasculated, and dependent on white colonial power. Would Duff have been so keen to aid the bereaved husband if he had known of the latter's decades of activity in the Indian nationalist movement? Or would he have relished the opportunity to show off the colonizer's strength over that of the colonized, however much of an elite social and professional status the latter may have attained?

THE INDIAN TRAVELER IN MANDATORY PALESTINE

In the end, almost all we know for sure of Lady Abdul Rauf is that she died when part of the newly constructed Winter Palace Hotel in Jericho collapsed in an earthquake on the afternoon of 11 July 1927. Beyond that, like many women of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, of whatever nationality, her archival presence solely exists as the shadow of a politically active, professionally successful husband. But the provocations raised by the circumstances of her death open up a range of questions and draw together a number of threads, which force us to confront assumptions and stereotypes about the presence of people from British-colonized India in British-colonized Palestine. This article is just a starting point, a selection of examples, and possible

strands for future investigation. But, as the many types and trajectories of Indian travelers to and in Palestine show, there is scope for a wide range of investigations, whether of economic relations, south-south solidarity in the face of British colonialism, extensions to the main hajj which take in the Levant (with implications for understandings of the role of Jerusalem and Palestine in Islamic thought), or the expansion of studies of pilgrimage in Palestine to include Muslims alongside the more commonly treated Christians and Jews.

Furthermore, I argue that considering the place and experiences of Indian travelers in Palestine pushes us to rethink some of the entrenched narratives of the growing literature on tourism in the Levant, with its Eurocentric foci. Yes, the huge growth in the numbers of visitors to Palestine from the late nineteenth century on and after the First World War was bound up with sociotechnical changes such as steamships, railways, guidebooks, and travel agents. However, these developments did not apply solely to European and North American travelers; these new infrastructures and sources of knowledge and encounter also applied to other peoples and other parts of the world, albeit often intimately bound up with structures of colonialism.

NOTES

¹ "Over One Hundred Dead in Palestine Earthquake," *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, 13 July 1927, 4.

² "Earthquake in Jerusalem—Numerous Deaths—Indian Lady Tourists Killed at Jericho," *Times of India*, 13 July 1927, 9.

³ Sir Syed Abdul Rauf's name is transliterated in multiple ways in the Indian press, government documents, and the secondary literature (mainly Syed/Saiyid/Sayyid Abdul/Abdur Rauf/Raouf/Raouf). I have opted for the version which appears used most frequently in documents closely related to him and, thus, over which he may have had some influence regarding the spelling.

⁴ In this article, Indians are defined broadly as inhabitants of British-ruled South Asia, all of which was designated as India in travel documents, as well as in press coverage. This definition thus includes individuals coming from what, after 1947, would be considered Pakistan and East Pakistan, later Bangladesh.

⁵ Michael Christopher Low, *Imperial Mecca: Ottoman Arabia and the Indian Ocean Hajj* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 153.

⁶ Thierry Zarcone, *Sufi Pilgrims from Central Asia and India in Jerusalem* (Kyoto: Center for Islamic Area Studies at Kyoto University, 2009).

⁷ Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 36.

⁸ The daughter of Palestine doctor and ethnographer Tawfik Canaan wrote, for instance, that "Mother and father would go daily to the top of the Wall of Jerusalem to look at their home. They witnessed it being ransacked, together with the wonderful priceless library and manuscripts, which mother guarded jealously and with great pride." Quoted in Khaled Nashef, "Tawfik Canaan: His Life and Works," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 16 (2002): 24. Broader discussions of the acquisition of both personal and institutional archives by Israel in 1948 and after, as well as its impact, can be found in Gish Amit, "Salvage or Plunder? Israel's 'Collection' of Private Palestinian Libraries in West Jerusalem," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 4 (Summer 2011): 6–23; Ariella Azoulay, "Photographic Conditions: Looting, Archives, and the Figure of the 'Infiltrator,'" *Jerusalem Quarterly* 61 (Winter 2015): 6–22; Hannah Mermelstein, "Overdue Books: Returning Palestine's 'Abandoned Property' of 1948," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 47 (Autumn 2011): 46–64.

⁹ *Displaced Archives*, edited by James Lowry, contains several useful case studies and comparative chapters on the damage or removal of archives by colonial states. Lowry, ed., *Displaced Archives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017). One of the most high-profile discussions of the removal and destruction of colonial archives in recent years has been admission by the British government in 2011 that it was illegally holding large numbers of documents that had been removed from thirty-seven former colonies at the time they became independent, between the late 1940s and the 1970s. This fact emerged as a result of research conducted by historians, including David Anderson and Caroline Elkins, for a legal case which resulted in a £20 million payment to former Mau Mau detainees who had been tortured by British officials. David M. Anderson, "Guilty Secrets: Deceit, Denial, and the Discovery of Kenya's 'Migrated Archive,'" *History Workshop Journal* 80 (Autumn 2015): 142–60; Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005).

¹⁰ Abilekh-Patal: Portal for Access to Archives and Learning, <https://www.abhilekh-patal.in/jspui/>

¹¹ See, for example, Umar Ryad, ed., *The Hajj and Europe in the Age of Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Low, *Imperial Mecca*; John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj: 1865–1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

¹² See, for example, Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, eds., *Oceanic Islam: Muslim Universalism and European Imperialism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020); Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: the Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Sara Keller, *Knowledge and the Indian Ocean: Intangible Networks of Western India and Beyond* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Linda

Boxberger, *On the Edge of Empire: Hadhramawt, Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s–1930s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); Laila Fawaz and Christopher Bayly, eds., *Modernity and Culture from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Scott Kugle, *Hajj to the Heart: Sufi Journeys across the Indian Ocean* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

¹³ See, for example, Philip Gooding, *On the Frontiers of the Indian Ocean World: A History of Lake Tanganyika, c.1830–1890* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 3–23; Beatrice Nicolini and Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya, *Land and Maritime Empires in the Indian Ocean* (Milan: Educatt, 2017).

¹⁴ Ayesha Jalal, “Muslim Universalist Aspirations: Intimacies between the Indus-Gangetic Plain and the Indian Ocean,” in *Oceanic Islam: Muslim Universalism and European Imperialism*, eds. Ayesha Jalal and Sugata Bose (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 28.

¹⁵ Zarcone, *Sufi Pilgrims from Central Asia*; Alexandre Papas, Thomas Welsford, and Thierry Zarcone, eds., *Central Asian Pilgrims: Hajj Routes and Pious Visits between Central Asia and the Hijaz* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2012), 14, 35, 48–50, 110, 113.

¹⁶ Omar Khalidi, “Indian Muslims and Palestinian Awqaf,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 40 (2009): 53–54.

¹⁷ Established in 1906, the All-India Muslim League was intended to provide a political voice to India’s large Islamic minority, after Muslims involved in nationalist groups such as the Congress Party objected to Hindu domination in terms of both personnel and agenda.

¹⁸ Navtej Sarna, *Indians at Herod’s Gate: A Jerusalem Tale* (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2014), 38.

¹⁹ The Khilafat movement emerged in British-ruled India due to fears at the beginning of World War I that Indian soldiers would be expected to fight the Ottoman Empire, the sultan of which was still also regarded as the caliph of all Sunni Muslims. The movement saw itself as an expression of solidarity with fellow Muslims, but also as sign of cooperation with Indian Hindus in campaigning for Indian independence.

²⁰ Khalidi, “Indian Muslims,” 53–54.

²¹ Secretary of the Palestine Indian Association to the High Commissioner, 23 March 1941, “Palestine Indian Association,” D65 109/11, Israel State Archives (ISA).

²² Low, *Imperial Mecca*, 209–16.

²³ I am indebted to Till Grallert for sharing this example with me, found during his research in the British National Archives at Kew.

²⁴ Seemi Alavi, “‘Fugitive Mullahs and Outlawed Fanatics’: Indian Muslims in Nineteenth Century Trans-Asiatic Imperial Rivalries,” *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 6 (2011): 1337–82.

²⁵ Alavi, “Fugitive Mullahs and Outlawed Fanatics.”

²⁶ “Protection: Beit Sawa Indians: French Attitudes towards Village,” 1926–27, FO 684.4, British National Archives, Kew (BNA).

²⁷ Damascus to Secretary of State for Persian Affairs, London, 27 June 1927, FO 684/4, BNA.

²⁸ Louis Allday, “Destitute Indian Women in 1930s Damascus,” *Untold Lives* (blog), British Library, 8 June 2018, <https://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2018/06/destitute-indian-women-in-1930s-damascus.html>.

²⁹ Ulrike Freitag notes, for example, that by the mid-nineteenth century, steamships traveling into and out of Jeddah were run by Indian entrepreneurs as well as Europeans, and that both were resented by local boatmen. Freitag, *A History of Jeddah: The Gate to Mecca in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 58.

³⁰ See, e.g. Kobi Cohen-Hattab and Noam Shoval, *Tourism, Religion and Pilgrimage in Jerusalem* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015) and a plethora of other works by Cohen-Hattab; Jasmin Daam, “Palestinian Past, Zionist Future: Vocabularies of Tourism in Mandate Palestine,” *Contemporary Levant*, published ahead of print (June 2023); Sarah Irving, “‘This is Palestine’: History and Modernity in Guidebooks to Mandate Palestine,” *Contemporary Levant* 4,1 (2019): 64–74; Daniella Ohad Smith, “Hotel Design in British Mandate Palestine: Modernism and the Zionist Vision,” *Journal of Israeli History* 29,1 (2010): 99–123.

³¹ The main way in which assumptions about visitors to Palestine emerge is that of omission; despite encompassing titles, the actual subjects of many articles are almost entirely of European origins, whether Christian or Jewish. For example, see Cohen-Hattab and Shoval, *Tourism, Religion and Pilgrimage in Jerusalem*; Serena Di Napi and Arturo Marzano, eds., “Travels to the ‘Holy Land’: Perceptions, Representations and Narratives,” special issue, *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* 6 (2013); Thomas Wright, ed., *Early Travels in Palestine* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008).

³² Aparajita Mukhopadhyay, “Colonised Gaze?: Guidebooks and Journeying in Colonial India,” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 37, no. 4 (2014): 656–69.

³³ Rachel Mairs, “Singara Devi Chenapa – Mersha Chinnappa: Investigating a Female Author of a Military Arabic Phrasebook,” in *Women in the History of Language Learning and Teaching*, eds. Sabine Doff, Giovanni Iamartino, and Rachel Mairs (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, forthcoming).

³⁴ “Deir El Belah War Cemetery,” Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), website, accessed 31 May 2022, <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/71200/deir-el-belah-war-cemetery/>; “Jerusalem Indian War Cemetery,” CWGC, <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery->

[details/72111/jerusalem-indian-war-cemetery/](https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/72107/haifa-indian-cemetery/); “Haifa Indian Cemetery,” CWGC, <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/72107/haifa-indian-cemetery/>; “Tul Karm War Cemetery,” CWGC, <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/4007282/tul-karm-war-cemetery/>; “Gaza War Cemetery,” CWGC, <https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/71701/gaza-war-cemetery/>.

³⁵ Alan Axelrod and Michael Dubowe, *Mercenaries: A Guide to Private Armies and Private Military Companies* (Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 2014), 70.

³⁶ Under-Secretary of State, India Office to Air Ministry, 25 January 1922, Palestine-India Correspondence, CO 733/32, p. 45, BNA.

³⁷ “Grants for Recreational Purposes to Indian Troops,” series Palestine 1922, vol. 12, CO 733/29, fol. 374–89, bound volume, BNA.

³⁸ Omar Khalidi, “Ethnic Group Recruitment in the Indian Army: The Contrasting Cases of Sikhs, Muslims, Gurkhas and Others,” *Pacific Affairs* 74, no. 4 (2001–2002): 530; Kate Imy, *Faithful Fighters: Identity and Power in the British Indian Army* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019).

³⁹ “Famida [*sic*] Begum and Mohamed [*sic*] Shamim, wife/son of Abdul Rashid,” 1945–47, 2282/020, ISA.

⁴⁰ Existing work includes Joan G. Roland, *Jews in British India: Identity in a Colonial Era* (Waltham, MA: Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry, 1989); selections of Sarah Abrevaya Stein’s copious work on the Sephardic diaspora, including “Protected Persons?: The Baghdadi Jewish Diaspora, the British State, and the Persistence of Empire,” *American Historical Review* 116, no. 1 (2011): 80–108; and specialized studies such as Suparna Bhattacharya, “Women in Sport: The Parsis and Jews in Twentieth-Century India,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 21, no. 3–4 (2004): 502–29.

⁴¹ “Social and Personal: Chief Secretary’s House,” *Palestine Post*, 24 October 1934, 5.

⁴² Bernard Wasserstein, “Clipping the Claws of the Colonisers: Arab Officials in the Government of Palestine, 1917–48,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 13, no. 2 (1977): 186–87.

⁴³ Daam, “Palestinian Past, Zionist Future”: 1–2 <https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2023.2221086>.

⁴⁴ “Moslem Indian Prince Here,” *Palestine Post*, 22 October 1934, 5.

⁴⁵ “Social and Personal,” *Palestine Post*, 28 October 1934, 5.

⁴⁶ David De Vries, *Diamonds and War: State, Capital, and Labor in British-Ruled Palestine* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 259, 261.

⁴⁷ “Shantilal Motilal Mehta,” 2317/137, ISA.

⁴⁸ “Jasani, Ratilal B.,” 2318/086, ISA.

⁴⁹ "Raman N. Jasani," 2321/053, ISA.

⁵⁰ Khalidi, "Indian Muslims," 52.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁵² "Indian Islamic Propaganda in Palestine and Syria," *Palestine 1921*, vol. 12, CO 733/12, pp. 83–87, bound volume, BNA.

⁵³ Ian Henderson Douglas, *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), 178.

⁵⁴ Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*, 10, 14.

⁵⁵ Maoz Azaryahu and Yitzhak Reiter, "The Geopolitics of Interment: An Inquiry into the Burial of Muhammad Ali in Jerusalem, 1931," *Israel Studies* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 33–37.

⁵⁶ Azaryahu and Reiter, "The Geopolitics of Interment," 37.

⁵⁷ "21,000 at Funeral of Muhammad Ali," *New York Times*, 24 January 1931, 9.

⁵⁸ Canaan is named as "Dr. Canon" in the book but can clearly be identified from his description as "an Arab by birth, a Christian by religion, a German by education, and cosmopolitan by conviction," as well as from Choudhury's observations of his interlocutor as a leader amongst Palestinian nationalists, recently released from British prison, well-informed on the many problems of British rule in India, and as a talented pianist who resorted to the instrument to hide his tears at Choudhury's accounts of Indian women and children starving to death during the recent Bengal famine. M. L. Roy Choudhury, *Egypt in 1945* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1946), xv–xvii.

⁵⁹ Despite its imperial associations, Choudhury's book uses English as a lingua franca, highlighting the complex ways in which imposed infrastructures (whether of travel, bureaucracy or language) were subverted by colonized peoples.

⁶⁰ "Pilgrims for Jeddah," *Times of India*, 27 April 1927, 5.

⁶¹ "Pilgrims for Jeddah."

⁶² "Retirement of the Hon`ble Mr. Justice Abdur Rauf of the Lahore High Court, and the appointment of Mr. A. Campbell, I.C.S. in the Resultant Vacancy. Appointment of Kunwar Kalip Singh, Bar-at-Law as an Additional Judge of the Lahore High Court," PR_000001179817, National Archives of India (NAI), accessible online, last updated 24 August 2023, <https://www.abhilekh-patal.in/>; "Appointment of Mr. Saiyid Muhammad Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur, Barrister-at-Law, to Act as a Judge of the Allahabad High Court, Vice the Hon`ble Mr. Justice Muhammad Rafiq, Granted Furlough," PR_000001171039, NAI; "Local and Provincial," *Tribune*, 14 March 1919, 6.

⁶³ High Court of Judicature at Allahabad, "List of Former Hon`ble Judges, Arranged According to Date of Appointment, 1900–1990," Allahabad High

Court, website, accessed 1 June 2022,

<https://www.allahabadhighcourt.in/Judges/ex-judges/ex-judge1900-1990.htm>; "Meeting of Ghazipur Mahomedans," *Leader*, 8 March 1918, 4; "Welcome from Bar and Vakils' Association," *Leader*, 6 March 1918, 5.

⁶⁴ "Joint Khilafat Conference," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7 June 1920, page illegible; "City and Provinces," *Indian People*, 7 February 1907, 2; "The Kayasth Pathshala," *Indian People*, 8 April 1909, 3; "The Hindu-Mahomedan Conference at Allahabad," *Leader*, 3 January 1911, 6; "Mahomedan Boarding House, M.C. College, Allahabad," *Leader*, 2 May 1911, 2; "Sanatana Dharm College," *Tribune*, 11 November 1922, 3.

⁶⁵ C. A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880–1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 133.

⁶⁶ Bayly, *Local Roots*, 139, 172; "The Hindu Mahomedan Conference," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2 January 1911, page illegible.

⁶⁷ "All-India Moslem League: Resolutions and Amendments," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 1 January 1914, 5; "Local and Provincial," *Indian People*, 1 April 1909, 3; "The Moslem League Meeting at Lucknow," *Tribune*, 28 July 1909, 6; "Mahomedan Students," *Pioneer*, 11 November 1890, 7.

⁶⁸ Bayly, *Local Roots*, 173, 221.

⁶⁹ Muzaffar Husain, Anil Kumar, B. D. Usmani, and Pramod Gupta, *History of Indian Nation: Post-Independence India* (New Delhi: KK Publications, 2014), 43; "The Mahomedan Deputation to the Viceroy," *Indian People*, 4 October 1906, 4.

⁷⁰ "Case against Ali Brothers," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20 December 1918, page illegible; "The Case of the Ali Brothers," *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22 October 1922, 2.

⁷¹ Douglas Duff, *Bailing with a Teaspoon* (London: John Long, 1953), 154.

⁷² Duff, *Bailing with a Teaspoon*, 154–56. Duff's book is replete with repellently gleeful descriptions of meting out violence to both Arabs and Jews; these are probably to some extent exaggerated. See Seán William Gannon, "Black-and-Tan Tendencies: Policing Insurgency in the Palestine Mandate, 1922–1948," in *Unconventional Warfare from Antiquity to the Present Day*, eds. Brian Hughes and Fergus Robson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 71. Other firsthand accounts of forcing reluctant Palestinians to dig earthquake rubble also exist. British soldiers and police were quick to attribute this to idleness and lack of care for their fellows, but we might question whether an appreciation of the dangers of unprepared, unplanned disturbance of collapsed buildings might also have played a part.

⁷³ Duff, *Bailing with a Teaspoon*, 156.

⁷⁴ Duff's ideas of class, race and gender are, at times, surprisingly complex, but it is possible to make some generalizations, including a respect for titles (sir, knight, etc.) which borders on the obsequious, versus descriptions of

working-class men, sex workers, and other subaltern groups as dirty, corrupt, unwashed, and unintelligent.

⁷⁵ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 66-111.

⁷⁶ Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 93.

⁷⁷ "Wife of Sir Abdul Raouf Dead," *Bombay Chronicle*, 14 July 1927, 7.

⁷⁸ Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 93.