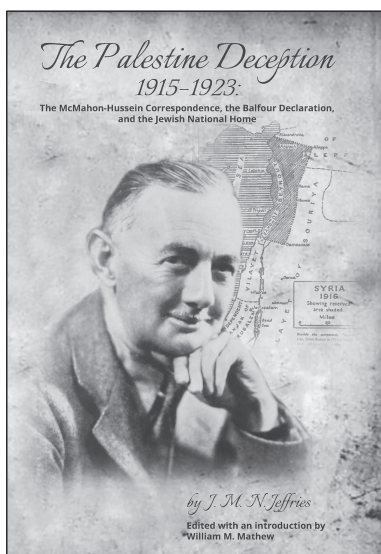


elements of the very same colonial epistemic these scholars critically resist. While some of these scholars have attempted to avoid such interpellations, *Visual Occupations* exemplifies the predominance of their analytical disconnection between schematics of violence and the formidable influence of the pains of violence on the very same schematics.

Given the ever-radicalizing reality of separation in which these epistemic stances have taken hold, *Visual Occupations'* contribution to scholarly knowledge rests then on more than its innovative study of the visual in colonialism and resistance to it, or its inspiring analyses of visual fields in Israel/Palestine. As Hochberg notes about traumatized Israeli soldiers' refusal/inability to witness others' pain, "failure to abide by ethical spectatorship standards . . . serves as the starting point for an exchange, limited and antagonistic as it may [be]" (p. 110). Hochberg's tour de force comprises a cautionary message to scholars of Israel/Palestine to urgently assess—reflexively, carefully, and persistently—their own relations of distance/closeness to violence in the field.

Omri Grinberg is a doctoral candidate in anthropology and Jewish studies at the University of Toronto. He was a Vanier Fellow from 2014–17 and holds an MA from the Cultural Studies Program at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



The Palestine Deception, 1915–1923: The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Balfour Declaration, and the Jewish National Home, by J. M. N. Jeffries. Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2014. 175 pages. \$14.95 paper, \$9.99 e-book.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL R. FISCHBACH

The book under review is at once *about* history and, as editor and honorary research fellow at the University of East Anglia William M. Mathew notes in the introduction, a *part of* history. It constitutes a collection of articles published in early 1923 by journalist J. M. N. Jeffries in the British newspaper *Daily Mail*. These stemmed from his several-months-long residence in Palestine on assignment for the widely circulated newspaper. In these articles, Jeffries sarcastically excoriated the British government for what he felt were its deceptive, illegal, and profligate policies in Palestine in the early years of British rule in the country. Not only was Jeffries's oeuvre part of the early opposition to those policies on the part of British citizens and politicians, it also provided the British public (and the world) with the first-ever public disclosures of documents such as the then secret McMahon-Hussein Correspondence. Jeffries and his articles, then, became part of the historical record of the tragic saga of British rule in Palestine even at that early date.

Jeffries clearly was anti-Zionist and sympathetic to Palestine's Arabs, and in fact went on to become a member of the pro-Arab Palestine Information Center in Britain in the late 1930s. Not

surprisingly, his articles then contain his candid and quite sharp analysis of what he considered British double-dealing and Zionist arrogance in Palestine. One of the most significant aspects of Jeffries's investigations was the fact that their author had access to documents that at that time had not yet been issued publicly or at least were not widely circulated. These included excerpts from Zionist publications, British reports and internal correspondence, and perhaps most significantly, the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence of 1915–16. The latter comprised letters between Sir Henry McMahon, British high commissioner in Egypt, and Sharif Hussein bin Ali, Ottoman governor of Mecca. In those letters, McMahon promised the sharif that an independent Arab state in the Fertile Crescent would be established should he fight alongside the Allies by leading an Arab revolt against the Ottomans during World War I. McMahon took pains to note that such an Arab state would not include the area west of “the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo” (p. 57) in northern Ottoman Syria—that is, today's Lebanon—inasmuch as the French had interests there. Jeffries stressed Britain's linguistic perfidy in later trying to justify why it was excluding Palestine, a country lying well to the south of those districts, from the area of the promised Arab state. The reason, of course, was that Britain in December 1917 had issued the Balfour Declaration promising the Zionist movement that Palestine would serve as the location for creation of a “Jewish national home.” Jeffries's revelation of Britain's disingenuous creation of a nonexistent *wilaya* (province) of Damascus, and its explanation that McMahon had meant the areas lying to the west of this fictitious *wilaya* when he wrote of the “the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo,” is now well-known to historians, but was new in 1923 and became blockbuster news in Britain.

The book also highlights the sometimes confused and contradictory attitudes and policies of various players in Britain's military government in Palestine during 1918–19 and the subsequent civil administration established in 1920. Jeffries also discussed what he and others saw as the high-handed attitudes of Chaim Weizmann and the Zionist Commission, which arrived in Palestine in 1918 to coordinate Zionist desires with British authorities in light of Britain's commitments in the Balfour Declaration. Among other things he cites Zionists' lobbying to dismiss certain Britons considered antithetical to their cause, and Zionist insistence that Britain make Hebrew an official language of Palestine despite the fact that practically no one in Palestine at the time, even Jews, could speak the language. Jeffries also took issue with British expenditures in the country and concurrently contended that Zionist promises that the Jewish community there would be self-sufficient were demonstrably false. He also pointed out both how more Jews were immigrating into Palestine than were officially allowed because of the practically nonexistent British border controls, and noted as well the rather high rate of Jewish emigration *out of* Palestine, neither of which was widely known to the British public at that time (and neither of which Zionist officials cared to admit publicly).

The Palestine Deception is an important historical source not only because it reprints Jeffries's original articles but because it offers a piercing piece of investigative journalism revealing that it was not just Arabs who were aware early on of the failings of British rule in Palestine and of the machinations of Zionist officials.

Michael R. Fischbach is professor of history at Randolph-Macon College.
