

# The Little Persian Agent in Palestine:

## Husayn Ruhi, British Intelligence, and World War I

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In 1915, Husayn Ruhi was busily translating, with profound consequences, the Husayn-McMahon correspondence, a series of letters between the British High Commissioner in Egypt and Sharif Husayn, an Ottoman-Arab dynast and emir of Mecca. These letters centered on promises of a loosely-defined Arab kingdom that the British would recognize and grant to the Husayni family if that family led an anti-Ottoman uprising: the Arab revolt which took place in 1916.<sup>1</sup> Hired by Sir Ronald Storrs (Britain's Oriental Secretary, spy, and later governor of Jerusalem) as an agent and translator during the fomentation of the Arab Revolt, Ruhi plays a shadowy role, both in his capacity as an agent and as a figure in the archival record. He appears as a bit character in generally British-focused narratives of the Revolt, and intelligence during the First World War. T. E. Lawrence briefly refers to Ruhi as "more like a mandrake than a man" (perhaps in reference to his multiple wives and numerous children).<sup>2</sup> Storrs, who spent many more months with Ruhi, gave him the codename "the Persian Mystic" and described Ruhi as "a fair though not profound Arabist, and a better agent than scholar."<sup>3</sup> Ruhi himself, a petite spy, translator, poet, and textbook author spent decades working for British officials, diplomats, spies, and educationalists, including a fifteen-year stint in the Department of Education of the Mandate for Palestine.

The story of this extraordinary individual illustrates tactics of British espionage, the afterlife of an informant, the strange trends of government service in the Middle East during the interwar period, and the striking problem of nationality exposed by the division of the Ottoman Empire. Ruhi's work as an agent for the British government

during World War I was followed by decades in a different type of agency: as an inspector, writing reports on teachers and schools in Gaza and Jerusalem from 1920 through his retirement in 1935. His interactions with colleagues in the Mandate bureaucracy, as well as the British individuals who had hired him, point to the chameleon-like character of the man himself. Ruhi's career sheds light on the nature of British control and strategy during the First World War and Mandate period, while underscoring the incongruity between nationality, language, and citizenship in the region. This short biography follows, to the extent archival records allow, the life, work, and legacy of Husayn Ruhi, from his birth through his sons' careers as civil servants in Jordan.

## **Ruhi's Transnational Beginnings**

Husayn Ruhi was born in Egypt in the mid-1880s. His father, Haj Mulla 'Ali Tabrizi, a Persian Baha'i trader, was born in Tabriz. Tabrizi married an Egyptian woman. He died during a "teaching trip" in Diyarbakir, and was buried in Iraq.<sup>4</sup> Ruhi grew up in Persia after the death of his father, and received some schooling in Chicago as part of a Baha'i mission to that city, earning a license in the English language. Upon his return, Ruhi taught English in Cairo at a variety of schools, and published a bi-weekly magazine that promoted the Baha'i religion. He began to participate in theological debates at a young age, writing to a Baha'i scholar for biblical textual evidence of the coming of Muhammad in order to win an intellectual dispute with a priest.<sup>5</sup> By 1912, Ruhi had married two of the three wives he would marry (possibly simultaneously), and had fathered two of the twelve children he would raise.<sup>6</sup> Ruhi founded two schools in Egypt, one for boys and one for girls, which closed at the end of the First World War.<sup>7</sup> His eldest son, 'Ali Husayn Ruhi attended the boys' school before its closing.<sup>8</sup>

Ruhi's citizenship could be pinned down at any given point. However, his nationality and allegiances were difficult to define. Was he Egyptian or Persian? Ottoman or Persian? Palestinian or Egyptian? While Storrs viewed him as Persian, Ruhi's colleague Abdul Latif Tibawi, a fellow inspector of education in the Mandate for Palestine, defined him in passing as Arab, although in later works described Ruhi in more detail as an Egyptian "of Persian origin" and an "Arabic-speaking Persian."<sup>9</sup> Scholars have variously referred to Ruhi as Persian or, less commonly, Egyptian.<sup>10</sup> Ruhi's extant descriptions of himself, in reports to his British employers, tend, for rather obvious reasons, to focus on his abilities as a spy rather than his nationality or beliefs. It seems that his allegiance to his religion, and to his employers, remained paramount throughout his life.

As a multi-lingual, well-travelled religious minority, Ruhi occupied a shifting and liminal space in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century society. Perhaps a lack of attachment both to the Ottoman Empire and to the Arab community among whom Ruhi lived (and married) facilitated his career with different British administrations. Ronald Storrs preferred employing Baha'i individuals, believing them to be naturally suited to intelligence (one would presume due to their frequent need to keep their religion secret).<sup>11</sup> Ruhi's fitness for his post as an intelligence officer, from the point of view of

his employers, is clear. His expertise as a translator has proved more controversial. Re-centering the story of the Arab Revolt to focus on Ruhi allows for a ground-level appraisal of British intelligence tactics, particularly a certain level of amateurism and a reliance on outsiders, particularly religious minorities. Ruhi's career also underscores the importance of (relatively) local knowledge and individuals to the Revolt itself.

## **A Spy for the English**

From 1914 to 1920, Husayn Ruhi, and briefly his father-in-law, worked as agents for the British government across the Middle East. Ruhi's father-in-law, 'Ali or "Agent X," acted as a courier, taking letters from Storrs to Amir Abdallah in the Hijaz, promoting the British cause and reporting on the situation in Mecca and Jeddah.<sup>12</sup> Husayn Ruhi translated documents; wrote clandestine reports on the local situation in Cairo, Mecca, and Jeddah; carried messages and funds from the British to the Hijaz and back again; and generally contributed to the fomenting of the Arab Revolt. Ruhi's official title was "confidential secretary," working from 1914 to 1916 for Ronald Storrs, then British Oriental Secretary living in Cairo. From 1916 to 1918, Ruhi became the "confidential secretary to the British Agency Jeddah," under Colonel Cyril Wilson.<sup>13</sup> In transferring Ruhi's services, Storrs commended Ruhi to Wilson: "he is delivered over to you body and soul. He is to consider himself not only your eyes and ears, but also if necessary your hands and feet. He may even, should an especially unsavoury occasion present itself, be called upon to represent your nose."<sup>14</sup>

In addition to his work as the eyes, ears, hands, feet, and possibly nose of the British, Ruhi is best known for his translation of the Husayn-McMahon correspondence. Scholarship has focused on whether Ruhi's translation, and therefore Ruhi himself, bears some culpability for conflicting interpretations of the "Arab Kingdom" promised to Sharif Husayn by Sir Arthur Henry McMahon. Elie Kedourie in particular criticized Ruhi's Arabic as "shaky" with "grammatical mistakes" that indicated a lack of the necessarily facility to deal with the correspondence. Kedourie argues that certain mistranslations of difficult words led to confusion over the territory promised to Sharif Husayn.<sup>15</sup> Kedourie also attributes to Ruhi the "florid style" of McMahon's letters to Husayn, citing a British representative at Jeddah's statement that "Ruhi used to address the King (Hussein) with the most extravagant titles when he wanted anything out of him."<sup>16</sup> It seems that the Sharif returned the favor, as Ruhi's translation of one letter of the Sharif reads, "To our most ingenious, respectable and honourable [M]ister [S]torrs. Verily, I present to you my propensity and I ask for your health and rejoice."<sup>17</sup> Leaving aside the question of Ruhi's Arabic, his English indicates a lack of fluency. Ruhi's reports and his translations of Sharif Husayn's correspondence, written in pen, are replete with crossed out words and phrases, words inserted after having completed a line, misspelled words, and prepositions used incorrectly.

Moreover, Ruhi understandably tended to provide intelligence that would accentuate his own importance while pleasing his employers. In the Hijaz, Ruhi picked and chose

the information he related to Storrs and Wilson as well as T. E. Lawrence. Ruhi scouted out routes, wells, and tribes. One British captain noted Ruhi's invaluable services, lauding his ability to find information due to "his energy, unique knowledge of the workings of men of the stamp concerned in this conspiracy and his selection of agents."<sup>18</sup> The captain further praised Ruhi's dedication to his job, stating that "at great personal risk, underlying extreme discomfort and abuse, being imprisoned on several occasions he (Ruhi) traversed the whole [Suez] canal zone gaining information of the greatest value." Ruhi not only collected intelligence, he also offered "disconcerting suggestions" of tactics that could be employed against those who were not friendly to the Revolt or the British. Ruhi told Storrs to "take strict measures" to prevent Rashid Rida from travelling to the Hijaz and convincing the people to "ignore the English." Ruhi floated the idea of deporting Rida to Malta. Ruhi also wrote he could "easily" steal the cipher book of a supposedly defected Arab Ottoman officer in order to determine whether he was working against the British as well.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, Ruhi's informants claimed that rumors were flying through Jeddah that Ruhi was a "spy for the English" and that other individuals had asked that Ruhi not be allowed to stay in the area out of fear that he "can make all the people in Jedda love the English."<sup>20</sup>

In his own evaluation of his espionage abilities, Ruhi boasted to Storrs, "I am known here as an Alem or Mohammedan Theologian as I went into mosques and delivered lectures and interpreted some verses. . . . All of the great people here are my friends. I picked some of them whom I found really pro-English and they may be a great help to our work."<sup>21</sup> It is of course impossible to verify Ruhi's account of his own exploits. It is interesting that Ruhi sold himself as being able to pass as a Muslim scholar, despite the fact that he was Baha'i, and a somewhat lackluster academic overall. Ruhi's infiltration of Mecca and ability to preach in a mosque would also likely have appealed to British officials' overarching focus on religious affiliation as the primary motivating factor behind Middle Easterners' actions.<sup>22</sup> Ruhi further crowed to Storrs that he had earned Sharif Husayn's gratitude for rebutting an anti-Sharif lecture with his own "beautiful speech."<sup>23</sup> Ruhi claimed he closed his speech with "Long Live H. H. the Sharif + Amir of Mecca! Long live the Arabs! Long live the nation (underlined twice) who is assisting the Arabs in their very great cause!" Ruhi also pointedly wrote, "I know that H. H. is not on bad terms with your little Ruhi." Ruhi's reports indicate that he was attuned to what the British wanted to hear, thereby earning praise regardless of what he was actually able to accomplish in the field.

Ruhi complimented himself while criticizing his superiors, calling attention to their deficiencies in a way that best highlighted Ruhi's skillset. Accompanying T.E. Lawrence during his 1917 excursion to Jeddah, Ruhi derided Lawrence for his poor pronunciation of Arabic, offering a vocabulary list of colloquial expressions in order to help Lawrence pass for an Ottoman, if not an Arab.<sup>24</sup> Ruhi derided Arabs more than the English, upon whom he depended. Ruhi repeatedly wrote to Ronald Storrs during and after the success of the Arab Revolt with requests that he send an Englishman, either to help Ruhi with his missions or to govern. For example, a 1916 letter notes that an Englishman was desperately needed as "the Arabs are ignorant of organizing a government. . . . Please



Husayn Ruhi (second from left) with Emir Abdallah bin Husayn al-Hashimi (the first king of Transjordan). Photograph by Ronald Storrs, "Suleiman Qabil, Hussein Ruhi, Emir Abdulla Bin Husain al-Hashimi, Sheikh Abdullah Ba Naji at Jidda," October 1916, courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London.

send an Englishman to act as councillor [*sic*] here or otherwise everything will come to a bad end."<sup>25</sup>

Ruhi's motivations for working for the British, beyond his paycheck, remain obscure. However, in that same report to Ronald Storrs in which Ruhi boasted of his ability to charm the Sharif, and indeed pull the wool over the eyes of the citizens of Mecca, he begged Storrs to support his school, by convincing others to support it. Ruhi's passion for the school he had founded clearly increased his need for funds. He claimed the school could be propped up by Egyptian *awqaf*. Ruhi asserted that he would "live loyal to the British government" for his entire life, so long as they supported his school, claiming, "If my school will fall I will be the saddest fellow upon earth."<sup>26</sup>

Sadly, for Ruhi, both the boys and girls sections of the school he founded would close during the war, due to "force of circumstance."<sup>27</sup> But Ruhi was able to find new work in education: He maintained a certain loyalty to the British, and continued his tendency to inform, in his new post as an inspector of education in Mandate Palestine.

## Education and Intrigue in Mandate Palestine

In 1917, Hussein Ruhi was awarded 100 pounds in lieu of a title, which was feared would preclude him from ever working again secretly on behalf of the British government.<sup>28</sup> As Colonel Wilson's confidential secretary, Ruhi scouted out a site for a possible hostel for British pilgrims in Mecca and reported on the Wahhabi-Hashimite conflict, gathering intelligence, for example, on which groups were paying taxes or receiving payments from

either Sharif Husayn or Ibn Sa‘ud.<sup>29</sup> Ruhi also became the focus of some international ire: the French mission in the Hijaz complained that Ruhi was spying on them.<sup>30</sup>

Ruhi apparently ceased his work in espionage in 1919.<sup>31</sup> He received the titles of Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire (CIE) and Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).<sup>32</sup> In March of 1920, he became an inspector with the Department of Education in Jerusalem.<sup>33</sup> This former servant of the British government, whose English was derided as was his colloquial Arabic, thus joined the varied ranks of the newly minted employees of the Mandate for Palestine’s Department of Education. Ruhi’s unique career demonstrates the variety of experiences government educators’ possessed, but also points to the complications of post-Ottoman nationality.<sup>34</sup> Although Ruhi, like many others, was now a citizen of Palestine, the category of Palestinian nationality – and, to some degree, nationality itself as a way of defining identity – ill fitted him, due to his languages, birthplace, family, and religion.

As Tibawi wrote in his study of government education in the Mandate for Palestine, the varied backgrounds of the educational inspectors, including Ruhi, illuminated the “cultural history of the country during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>35</sup> Due to a lack of educated individuals, and an eclectic set of educational experiences during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, civil servants in Mandate Palestine had an incredibly broad set of qualifications. Ruhi, the “former intelligence officer” was not completely out of place, as he joined the ranks of individuals who lacked university degrees, studied at Ottoman and missionary schools, and found themselves with a new citizenship that belied their Ottoman-era backgrounds.

In returning to the profession of education, Ruhi also authored Arabic language textbooks specifically focused on Palestine for use in its government schools. Ruhi’s texts illustrate his unique perspective and perhaps a desire to pander to British preferences, as the books concentrate on the specific territory of Palestine, as opposed to either Greater Syria or the Arab world, and include Jewish as well as Arab narratives. His history of Palestine, *al-Mukhtasar fi al-ta’rikh*, printed in 1922, listed its most important sources as the Qur’an and other holy books, contemporary American and Middle Eastern works of history and literature, as well as Titus Flavius Josephus’s writings.<sup>36</sup> Ruhi’s history begins with the story of Abraham and ends with Ibrahim Pasha. It also contains a surprisingly positive portrayal of certain aspects of Jewish history in the region, describing the Maccabees, for example, as a family of patriotic heroes.<sup>37</sup> Ruhi’s geography of Palestine (*al-Mukhtasar fi Jughrafiyat Filastin*) was written up briefly in *al-Muqtataf*, which noted that the book included the political, natural, and administrative geography of Palestine as well as more than twenty maps.<sup>38</sup> This work begins with a Muslim blessing (*bismillah al-rahman al-rahim*) and includes a discussion of Palestine’s Jewish colonies and an overview of its educational system, as well as a somewhat pointed drill that required students to calculate the meager proportion of Palestine’s inhabitants attending school at all. Husayn Ruhi even drew some of the book’s maps himself.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, in another unique turn, this Arabic language geography was published by the London Jews Society, a British missionary society geared toward converting Jews to Christianity and encouraging Jews’ resettling in Palestine.

One of course wonders where he found the time to write two textbooks while working as an inspector of education, having just transitioned from espionage, and having newly married a third wife, who would bear five children from 1921 to 1929.<sup>40</sup> On top of all of this, Ruhi also wrote poetry. One of his poems, entitled “quarrelling, the pinnacle of evil” (*al-khisa ra’s al-mafasid*) appeared in the journal of the Teachers College (later the Arab College of Jerusalem) in 1922. The poem takes the form of a parable, describing two thieves and their ill-fated theft of a donkey. The poem uses simple but archaic language, perhaps because of its pedagogical mission, or perhaps due to Ruhi’s grasp of the Arabic language.<sup>41</sup>

In the Mandate, Ruhi’s presence was in some ways an affront to his peers. One Palestinian academic derided Ruhi as simply Ronald Storrs’s “protégé,” whose appointment in the education department was incongruous at best.<sup>42</sup> Khalil al-Sakakini, who also worked as an inspector in the Mandate Department of Education and authored grammar textbooks, held up Ruhi as an example of problems with the department as a whole. In a somewhat lengthy series of complaints to his son, Sakakini listed individuals employed by the British administration in Palestine whom he thought were undeserving of their salaries and status, specifically including Husayn Ruhi.<sup>43</sup> Sakakini viewed himself as a true educator, and local, whereas Ruhi was a former intelligence official and a foreigner, with comparatively lackluster educational qualifications. Sakakini further complained that the department promoted the unworthy and ignored his own innovation, stating that it was therefore unsurprising that the favored employees of the administration included “the spy, the corrupt, the alcoholic, the deceitful, the nosy.”<sup>44</sup> The spy likely refers to Ruhi, particularly as he had recently received a promotion while Sakakini ranked below him, despite his superior credentials and talents.<sup>45</sup>

As an inspector of education, Ruhi evaluated teachers on their performance in the classroom, but seems to have persisted in conducting intrigues, maintaining his primary loyalty to the British government and presenting himself as a privileged intermediary on its behalf, sometimes at the expense of his relationships with other Palestinians. In one incident, the headmaster of the boys’ school in Khan Yunis accused Ruhi of receiving a can of honey as a gift or bribe from one of the teachers. The unnamed author of the report on Ruhi, and the various individuals involved in this case, noted Ruhi’s past working



Husayn Ruhi, *Mukhtasar fi jughrafiyat Filastin* [Geography of Palestine] (Jerusalem: L. J. S. Printing Press, 1923). Photograph by the author.

for Colonel Wilson, McMahon, and his continued relationship with Ronald Storrs, then governor of Jerusalem. The report emphasized Ruhi's integrity and virtue, asserting that the headmaster's claim was a false one. It does not, however, indicate particularly positive relationships between Ruhi the inspector, those he inspected, and Palestinian society as a whole.<sup>46</sup> In another incident in 1934, the *Palestine Post* noted, "Police are said to be investigating the information given by Hussein Eff. Ruhi, inspector of education, to the effect that persons in Hebron have hired well-known brigands to murder certain persons."<sup>47</sup> Ruhi appears to have been passing on intelligence to the police regarding local violence and intrigue, underscoring his commitment to the Mandate government, and his continued tendency toward espionage.

## The Afterlife of a Spy

Husayn Ruhi retired from service in the Mandate for Palestine in 1935. He returned to Cairo where he founded a school, as he had before his service with the British. Ruhi died in 1960.<sup>48</sup> Ruhi remains best remembered for his translations and reports. Yet, his preference for British-backed governments continued in the careers of two of his sons. 'Ali Husayn Ruhi and Hasan Husayn Ruhi followed their father's example working as educators and government officials in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. 'Ali taught in Transjordan from 1928 to 1945. He composed several mathematics and science textbooks used by Arabic-speaking students throughout the region, specifically in the government schools of Transjordan and Palestine.<sup>49</sup> 'Ali seems to have also renounced his father's faith, or at least hidden it, as he defined himself as Muslim on his application to teach in Transjordan.<sup>50</sup> 'Ali was promoted to the Income Tax Department in 1945, while he also served in the retinue of King Abdallah of Jordan.<sup>51</sup> 'Ali even warranted a mention in *Life* magazine when he was called upon to play chess in place of the king, who had been challenged by an American chess aficionado.<sup>52</sup> While making less of an international splash than his brother, the chess master and member of Abdallah's royal diwan, Hasan also served as an educator in Transjordan from 1929 to 1938 when he was transferred to the Department of Lands and Surveys.<sup>53</sup>

Husayn Ruhi's journey from education to espionage and back is hardly characteristic of educators or ethnic or religious minorities in the Middle East. However, his story raises (although does not answer) a number of questions and issues connecting to schooling, governance, and intelligence in the twentieth-century Middle East. By choosing Ruhi, a Baha'i of unclear nationality, the British presumed, to some degree correctly, that they could command a greater sway over Ruhi's loyalties than those of other Egyptians, Persians, or Palestinians. Ruhi's employment as an inspector of education demonstrates the variety of individuals working for the Mandate government, while also showing how these disparate backgrounds and qualifications contributed to divisions within the Mandate bureaucracy. Though marginal or ambiguous in origins, status, and role, Ruhi was central to a range of key events. The issue of his nationality, particularly in the absence of his own declarations on the subject, remains contested. In an interesting

postscript, however, Ruhi's geography textbook was re-issued by a Palestinian cultural organization in 2016 in a celebration of Palestinian history and heritage.<sup>54</sup> In a sense, the publication of this textbook claims Ruhi's text as Palestinian, regardless of its author's more nebulous identity.

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#### Endnotes

- 1 See Elie Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and Its Interpretations, 1914–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- 2 T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Penguin Classics, 2000), 66.
- 3 Ronald Storrs, *Orientalisms* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1943), 154, 179; Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, 100.
- 4 Graham Hassall, "Pilgrimage," in *Ambassador at the Court: The Life and Photography of Effie Baker* (published online at *Bahá'i Library Online*, 1999), online at [bahai-library.com/hassall\\_ambassador\\_court\\_baker&chapter=6](http://bahai-library.com/hassall_ambassador_court_baker&chapter=6), accessed 11 December 2015; Husayn Ruhi and Salah Jarrar, *Min watha'iq al-thawra al-'Arabiyya al-kubra: al-rihla al-rabi'a* (Amman: n.p., 1997), 1.
- 5 Abu al-Fadl Gulpayigani and Juan Ricardo Cole, *Miracles and Metaphors* (Los Angeles: Kalimat Press, 1981), 61.
- 6 Ruhi and Jarrar, *Min watha'iq al-thawra*, 6.
- 7 Ali Ruhi, "Obituary: Husayn Ruhi," *The Bahá'í World: An International Record* 13, no. B (1960): 938–39.
- 8 "Ali Hussein Ruhi," Personnel File, the Ministry of Education of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan (hereafter MOE), Employee Number 29.
- 9 Abdul Latif Tibawi, *Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine: A Study of Three Decades of British Administration* (London: Luzac, 1956), 31, Abdul Latif Tibawi, *Arabic and Islamic Garland: Historical, Educational, and Literary Papers Presented to Abdul-Latif Tibawi*. (London: Islamic Cultural Centre, 1977), 29; Abdul Latif Tibawi, *Anglo-Arab Relations and the Question of Palestine, 1914–1921* (London: Luzac, 1978), 69.
- 10 See, for example: Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Random House, 2010), 28; Ian Frederick William Beckett, *The Making of the First World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Mahmud Abidi, "The Arab College, Jerusalem," *Islamic Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1975): 23.
- 11 Storrs noted that the "leading Persian of Jeddah, a Bahai," not only protected British agents, but also supplied the British with information himself. Ronald Storrs, "Hejaz Events, Excerpt from Diary," 27 September 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy, 1904–1950: The Papers of Sir Ronald Storrs (1881–1956) from Pembroke College, Cambridge* (Marlborough, Wiltshire [England]: Adam Matthew Publications, 1999), Reel 5, Section II, Box 4. Storrs also employed a Baha'i doctor, asserting that this doctor, "being of Ruhi's spiritual persuasion – can be trusted to keep you well and intimately informed on professional and non-professional matters." Letter from Ronald Storrs to Colonel Wilson, 1 August 1916. *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
- 12 Ronald Storrs, *The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Storrs* (New York: Putnam, 1937), 164–66.
- 13 Sg. Reginald Singate, "To the Secretary of the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Simla November 28 1917," India Office Records, British Library (hereafter BL) IOR/L/PS/11/129, P 5015/1917.
- 14 Storrs, *Memoirs*, 179.
- 15 Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, 100–1.
- 16 Lt.-Col. Vickery, 1919 quoted in Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, 101.
- 17 Letter from Sharif Hussein to Ronald Storrs, translated by Husayn Ruhi, 16 August 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
- 18 Captain Bray to Lieutenant Colonel Wilson, "Recommendation on behalf of Hussein Ruhi Effendi, Confidential Secretary to the British Agency, Jeddah," 1917, BL IOR/L/PS/11/129.
- 19 Storrs, *Orientalisms*, 192, 220.
- 20 Letter from Ruhi to Ronald Storrs, 17 July 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
- 21 Letter from Ruhi to Ronald Storrs, 6 August 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
- 22 Noah Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine: Communalism and*

- Nationalism, 1917–1948* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 25–26.
- 23 Letter from Ruhi to Ronald Storrs, 6 August 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
  - 24 Storrs, *Memoirs*, 466.
  - 25 Letter from Ruhi to Ronald Storrs, 21 June 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
  - 26 Letter from Ruhi to Ronald Storrs, 21 June 1916, *Middle East Politics and Diplomacy*, Reel 5, Section II, Box 4.
  - 27 Ali Ruhi, “Obituary: Husayn Ruhi,” 938.
  - 28 Sg. Reginald Singate, “To the Secretary of the Government of India, Foreign and Political Department, Simla,” 28 November 1917, BL IOR/L/PS/11/129.
  - 29 Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916–1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 17, 210.
  - 30 Robin Bidwell, “The Brémond Mission to the Hijaz, 1916–17: A Study in Inter-Allied Co-operation,” in *Arabian and Islamic Studies: Articles Presented to R. B. Serjeant on the Occasion of His Retirement from the Sir Thomas Adam’s Chair of Arabic at the University of Cambridge*, ed. Robin Leonard Bidwell, G. Rex Smith, and R. B. Serjeant (London: Longman, 1983), 189.
  - 31 John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865–1936* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); Joshua Teitelbaum, “Pilgrimage Politics: The Hajj and Saudi-Hashemite Rivalry, 1916–1925,” in *The Hashemites in the Modern Arab World: Essays in Honour of the Late Professor Uriel Dann*, ed. Asher Susser, Aryeh Shmuelevitz, and Uriel Dann (London: Frank Cass, 1995), 64.
  - 32 *The Palestine Government Gazette*, 16 April 1920, in the National Archives (United Kingdom), Colonial Office (CO) 742/1.
  - 33 Government of Palestine, *Civil Service List (Staff List of the Government of Palestine) 1939* (Jerusalem: Government Printing Press, 1939).
  - 34 For additional information on teachers in Mandate Palestine, see: Hilary Falb Kalisman, “Schooling the State: Educators in Iraq, Palestine, and Transjordan c. 1890–c. 1960” (PhD diss., University of California Berkeley, 2015); and Hilary Falb Kalisman, “Bursary Scholars at the American University of Beirut: Living and Practising Arab Unity,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 4 (2015): 599–617.
  - 35 Tibawi, *Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine*, 31.
  - 36 Husayn Ruhi, *al-Mukhtasar fi al-ta’rikh* (Jerusalem: Matba’at al-sabah, 1922).
  - 37 John Harte, *Contesting the Past in Mandate Palestine: History Teaching for Palestinian Arabs Under British Rule, 1917–1948* (PhD diss., University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2009), 188; Ruhi, *al-Mukhtasar fi al-ta’rikh*, 40.
  - 38 *Al-Muqataf* 5, vol. 64 (May 1924): 573.
  - 39 Husayn Ruhi, *al-Mukhtasar fi jughrafiyat Filastin* (Jerusalem: L.J.S. Printing Press, 1923), 4, 17, 38, 41.
  - 40 Ruhi and Jarrar, *Min watha’iq al-thawra*, 6.
  - 41 *Majallat Dar al-Mu’alimin* 3, no. 7 (April 1922).
  - 42 Abidi, “The Arab College, Jerusalem,” 23.
  - 43 Letter from Khalil al-Sakakini to Sari al-Sakakini, 6 October 1931, in Khalil al-Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat Khalil al-Sakakini: yawmiyyat, rasa’il wa ta’ammulat, al-kitab al-rabi’: bayna al-ab wa al-ibn, rasail Khalil ila Sari fi Amrika, 1931–1932, al-juz’ al-awwal* [The Diaries of Khalil al-Sakakini: Diaries, Letters, and Reflections, Book Four: Between Father and Son, Khalil’s Letters to Sari in America, 1931–1932, Part One], ed. Akram Musallam (Ramallah: Khalil al-Sakakini Cultural Center, 2003), 60.
  - 44 January 31, 1932. Letter from Khalil al-Sakakini to Sari al-Sakakini, 31 January 1932, in Sakakini, *Yawmiyyat*, 159–160.
  - 45 Government of Palestine, *Civil Service List (Staff List of the Government of Palestine), 1934* (Jerusalem: Government Printing Office, 1934).
  - 46 “Awni Abdul Hadi: Bribery,” 1924, in Israel State Archives 157/11-P.
  - 47 “In Several Lines,” *Palestine Post*, 22 February 1934, 4.
  - 48 Ruhi and Jarrar, *Min watha’iq al-thawra*, 15.
  - 49 “Two Books on the Solutions of Problems in Physics and Geometry by Ali Hussein Ruhi, BA 1928,” *al-Kulliya* 17, no. 3 (1 Feb. 1931): 66.
  - 50 Jordanian Teachers Ministry of Education database, employee number 29.
  - 51 Ruhi and Jarrar, *Min watha’iq al-thawra*, 15.
  - 52 Hal Armstrong, “International Chess” (Letter to the Editor), *Life*, 22 October 1945, 8, 11.
  - 53 MOE, Employee No. 176; Ruhi and Jarrar, *Min watha’iq al-thawra*, 15.
  - 54 The Mutakafuloon organization reprinted two thousand copies of Ruhi’s textbook in order to promote Palestinian national consciousness. See Mutakafuloon, 3 April 2016, in Facebook [Community], online at [www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1056271874446543&id=742503099156757](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1056271874446543&id=742503099156757) (retrieved 4 May 2016).