

Colonial Land Policies in Palestine 1917-1936



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MARTIN BUNTON



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In this book, Martin Bunton focuses on the way in which the Palestine Mandate was part of a broader British imperial administration - a fact often masked by Jewish immigration and land purchase in Palestine. His meticulous research reveals clear links to colonial practice in India, Sudan, and Cyprus amongst other places. He argues that land officials' views on sound land management were derived from their own experiences of rural England, and that this was far more influential on the shaping of land policies than the promise of a Jewish National Home. Bunton reveals how the British were intent on preserving the status quo of Ottoman land law, which (when few Britons could read Ottoman or were well grounded in its legal codes) led to a series of translations, interpretations, and hence new applications of land law. The sense of importance the British attributed to their work surveying and registering properties and transactions, is captured in the efforts of British officials to microfilm all of their records at the height of the Second World War. Despite this however, land policies remained in flux.

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