

# “The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century”:

## The Beilis Affair in *Filastin* Newspaper

Emanuel Beška

The accusation that Jews perpetrate ritual murder appeared for the first time in England in the twelfth century and subsequently spread to continental Europe. It was claimed that Judaism demanded the blood of young Christians for certain rituals, especially for the preparation of matzo bread for Passover. In the Russian Empire this accusation appeared much later, only after the triple partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had taken place in the last three decades of the eighteenth century. There were very few Jews in Russia prior to the partitions. However, due to the three successive annexations, Russia acquired territories with significant Jewish populations, becoming the country with the largest Jewish population in the world. Blood libel and host desecration were the most frequent accusations directed at Jews in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; however, from the seventeenth century the latter was on a steady decline.<sup>1</sup> The turn of the twentieth century witnessed a revival of blood libel in Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and other Central and Eastern European countries.<sup>2</sup> However, the Middle East, Western Europe and the United States were also prone to various anti-Jewish hysterias in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as shown by the Damascus affair (1840), which occurred in Ottoman Syria; the Dreyfus affair (1894) in France; and the lynching of Leo Frank (1915) in the United States.

### The Beilis Affair

On 20 March 1911,<sup>3</sup> the body of a murdered thirteen-year-old boy, Andrei Iushchinskii, was found in a cave in the Lukianovka district of Kiev. The victim, who had been missing for eight days, had received about fifty stab wounds (most likely with an awl) and had

lost a lot of blood. Initially, suspicion fell on his mother, Aleksandra Prikhodko, and his stepfather, who were reportedly mistreating him. However, the focus of the investigation soon shifted to a more likely perpetrator, Vera V. Cheberiak, the mother of Andrei's friend Zhenia, who was the leader of a criminal ring called Troika. The motive behind the murder could have been their worries about Andrei's intention to report them and their illegal pursuits to the police or their belief that he had already done so.

Under pressure from the Black Hundreds, right-wing organizations with a strong anti-Semitic inclination who supported the autocracy and opposed the loosening of restrictions imposed on Jews over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and with help from various echelons of the state bureaucracy, including the central government (the minister of justice, I. G. Shcheglovitov), the original line of investigation was abandoned. Two police detectives responsible for the investigation of the case were replaced one after the other, suspicion was directed at the Jewish community, and the crime was classified as a ritual murder.<sup>4</sup>

On 22 July 1911, Menachem Mendel Beilis, the superintendent of the Zaytsev brickworks and father of five, was detained. The brickworks were located in the immediate vicinity of Vera Cheberiak's apartment, and Andrei was last seen to be playing on their premises. In January 1912, charges were officially brought against Beilis and the trial date was set for May. However, the charges were withdrawn because of weak evidence, and it was necessary to prepare a new case. In the end, the indictment was divided into two parts. The more important part was concerned with the question of whether a ritual murder had taken place, and the other part dealt with whether Beilis was the perpetrator of this felony. The trial took place between 25 September and 28 October 1913, and the jury declared its decision in the early hours of 29 October. The prosecution, which was aware of the flimsy evidence, dubious witnesses (many of whom were alcoholics), and unreliable testimonies, concentrated on proving the ritual motivation behind the murder. The jurors decided by a majority of seven to five that a ritual murder had indeed taken place. However, there was a hung jury concerning the guilt of Beilis, and under Russian law in such cases the verdict was not guilty.<sup>5</sup> The Russian authorities neither appealed the verdict nor continued investigating the murder.

The Beilis affair became a subject of great interest within the Russian Empire and internationally. The hearings were attended by Russian and international journalists. After his release, thousands of visitors came to Beilis's house every day. However, he suffered from health problems and had lost his job, and his future prospects to secure a livelihood in his native country seemed rather gloomy. Further, he started receiving death threats from the Black Hundreds. Though he wished to carry on as before in Kiev, this became increasingly impossible. At the instigation of a special committee consisting of three patrons,<sup>6</sup> he decided to leave Russia and move to Palestine. Beilis expressed his desire to settle in a house and work on a farm in Palestine. His supporters assured him that he had nothing to fear, since he would be provided with everything he needed in the future.

His journey was widely publicized, and huge crowds met him at all stops along the way. Beilis spent a month in Trieste to recuperate before boarding a ship to Jaffa.<sup>7</sup> However, the promises of support proved to be empty. Moreover, after the First World

War broke out, he was cut off from the money he had left in Europe. In 1921, he visited the United States to raise money for a farmstead in Palestine. There he was struck by the news of the suicide of his eldest son, Pinchas, who had been traumatized by the affair and disillusioned by the humiliatingly meagre support his father had received in America.<sup>8</sup> Thereafter, the whole family moved to the United States and Beilis, despite his longing for Palestine, continued to live in New York until his death in 1934.<sup>9</sup>

## ***Filastin* Responds**

The Jaffa-based newspaper *Filastin* published three front-page articles dealing with the Beilis affair in consecutive issues at the end of October 1913, when the trial in Kiev was taking place.<sup>10</sup> The first, titled “The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa,” appeared on 22 October (9 October according to the Julian calendar).<sup>11</sup> The second article, titled “The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century,” was published three days later, and shared the front page with a piece that had the same title as the earlier article, “The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa.”<sup>12</sup> The second piece (“The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century”) was an editorial feature covering more than two columns and signed by the editor-in-chief, Yusuf al-‘Isa; however, it seems that Yusuf al-‘Isa also wrote the other articles which, though not signed, he mentions having authored in his signed editorial. Though by that time *Filastin* had already become unambiguously anti-Zionist, it unequivocally and vehemently condemned the ritual murder accusation as well as the Beilis trial.

This analysis shall shed light on *Filastin*’s reasons for defending not only Beilis but also Judaism and Jews from this slander. I argue that the enthusiasm of the newspaper’s editors for knowledge and science influenced their attitude toward this issue.<sup>13</sup> Further, *Filastin*’s coverage of this issue is an indicator of the objectivity of the newspaper and its stance toward the Jewish community. Moreover, the newspaper’s handling of this case confirms its strict and conscious differentiation between Jews and Zionists.<sup>14</sup> Yusuf al-‘Isa begins “The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century” with the following words: “The twentieth century has [witnessed] many disgraces in spite of the maturity it has reached in science and development!”<sup>15</sup> He proceeds: “We refer to the case of the Israelite Beilis,<sup>16</sup> accused of killing a Christian youth to use his blood in a religious ritual as they allege, and who is now being prosecuted in the Russian city of Kiev; civilization and humanity are being prosecuted along with him, just as the Bishops of England said in their protest.”<sup>17</sup>

Yusuf al-‘Isa does not mince his words, stating clearly and unanimously his thoughts on blood libel in general and the Beilis trial in particular. His determined modernist outlook, reliance on reason and logical thinking, strong faith in progress and science, and his antipathy to ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism did not allow for wavering or ambivalence. He writes: “We said in the previous issue and repeat that their accusing the Jews of shedding blood to perform religious ritual is a fabrication with regard to those who believe it; an abomination with regard to those who spread it; and a disgrace to the twentieth century, during which, if minds are not liberated from the shackles of ignorance, God will never liberate them.”<sup>18</sup>



The front page of *Filastin* from 22 October 1913, featuring the article “Sada mas’al Beilis fi Yafa” (The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa). Image courtesy of the author, scanned from the collection of Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha’iq al-Qawmiyya, Cairo.

Though *Filastin* had initially been neutral toward Zionism and opened its pages both to its proponents and opponents,<sup>19</sup> by the time of the Beilis trial, *Filastin* had already become a clearly anti-Zionist periodical. Yusuf al-‘Isa refers to this explicitly:

Everyone who follows this newspaper writes knows that we have spared no effort in criticizing the Israelites as a people [*umma*]<sup>20</sup> isolated from the rest of the peoples, and in the fight against those among them we call Zionists as a group setting its sights on our physical destruction and our moral subjugation in this Palestinian land [*hadhihi al-bu‘‘a al-Filastiniyya*]. But God does not allow us to sacrifice the truth on the altar of purpose or to pass in silence over the rebuttal of falsehood and slander even if it concerns our adversary.<sup>21</sup>

Using this affair against the Zionists is thus cast as shameful and absolutely unacceptable. Nor was the alternative of keeping silent vis-à-vis such a case of oppression and injustice seen as acceptable. Yusuf al-‘Isa also makes a clear distinction between Jews as a religious group and Zionists.

Yusuf al-‘Isa also combines knowledge of the basic tenets of Judaism with logical reasoning to demonstrate the ridiculousness of the blood libel accusation:

We highly esteem the Jews as adherents of a religion sent down from heaven. A sound mind does not accept they would commit such an atrocity . . . a religion that has forbidden to its followers [the meat of] strangled [animals] and the blood of birds and animals permitted to all people is too sublime to order the shedding of blood of a human being for a religious cause, even if that human being is an irredeemable infidel in the eyes of those professing this religion.<sup>22</sup>

Yusuf al-‘Isa does not deny the possibility that there might be murderers and fanatics among the Jews, as there were among the followers of other creeds. However, the religion itself is not to blame: “to say that the worship of it [Judaism] cannot be performed without the drinking of human blood, this is insanity.”<sup>23</sup>

Whereas “The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century” primarily discusses the affair and blood libel in general terms, the articles titled “The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa” focus on the repercussions of the trial in Palestine; the affair itself is only a secondary subject. The first of these articles begins by touching upon the ritual murder accusation in general and the imprisonment of Beilis in Russia and his trial: “In many places the belief that Jews every year drain off the blood of a Christian boy to use it in unleavened bread still prevails, and this belief is still at its strongest in Russia. Twenty-six months ago a man named Beilis was accused of doing the same thing with a poor Christian boy, extracting his blood.”<sup>24</sup>

Yusuf al-‘Isa then proceeds to discuss the responses of both the Russian press and population, noting that in both arenas, the issue was a matter of disagreement, with expressions of both support and outrage with regard to the accusation of ritual murder. In response to the trial: “Jewish workers went on strike, and many intended to carry out demonstrations against the Israelites. . . . But the Jews in Russia have obligated themselves not to celebrate a festival or attend a gathering until the sentence is pronounced on the accused, in whose innocence they believe.”<sup>25</sup>

The boycott of cultural events also found followers among the Jewish immigrant community in Palestine. *Filastin* describes how a concert which took place on the previous weekend at the Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium in Tel Aviv was interrupted by a group of Zionists: “During the concert a Russian Zionist speaker from the Workers’ party stood up and criticized the organizers of this concert and the weakness of their national sentiment [*da’fshu ‘urihim al-jinsi*], and demanded that they cancel [the concert] out of grief over their accused brother Beilis.”<sup>26</sup> The audience refused, and the Workers’ party representative left together with a group of his supporters. Subsequently they started to make noise outside the hall, and in this manner they interrupted the concert and forced



The front page of *Filastin* from 25 October 1913, featuring the editorial signed by Yusuf al-‘Isa, “Ma’arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin” (The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century), as well as “Sada mas’alat Beilis fi Yafa” (The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa). Image courtesy of the author, scanned from the collection of Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha’iq al-Qawmiyya, Cairo.

the organizers to postpone it. This caused a considerable embarrassment because a large audience, including the deputy *qa'immaqam* of Jaffa, was in attendance.<sup>27</sup> Remarkably, *Filastin* considered this to be a positive example of Jewish “solidarity, unity, and national awareness,” and recommended its readers to learn from it and from other similar occurrences.<sup>28</sup>

As becomes clear in *Filastin*'s follow-up article on the Beilis affair's reverberations in Palestine, others did not view the demonstration in such rosy terms. When the Russian consul was informed that one of the Jewish employees of the Russian post service had participated in the disturbance at the concert, the employee was called upon to respond to this allegation. Later, when it was established that the employee had indeed been among those responsible for this incident, he was offered the choice of two options:

between dismissal and deportation, and apologizing by inviting all those who were at the Tel Aviv concert to a similar concert which the consul will attend, and then standing up and delivering a speech and apologizing so that everyone can hear it. In addition to that, [he will be required to] publish an article in all Hebrew newspapers that are published in Jerusalem.<sup>29</sup>

*Filastin* conducted an interview with the Russian consul in order to find out more about these events.<sup>30</sup> Beyond the interruption of the concert, Russian Jews had put up posters announcing a demonstration to protest the Beilis trial and the Russian government on 21 October. The Russian consulate learned about these plans from the posters and banned Russian subjects from attending the demonstration. Jewish employees of the consulate tried to dissuade people from going into the synagogue that was supposed to be the starting point of the demonstration. Though some people were deterred from attending and the Russian consul claimed that only “a small group, the majority of them youth” did not heed his directive, reportedly about five hundred Jews gathered in al-Manshiyya synagogue, where they listened to several speeches.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, the Russian consulate, in cooperation with the local authorities, succeeded in preventing the demonstration from moving from the synagogue into the streets. These measures angered the participants of the synagogue protest, and that night some of them went to the house of one of the consulate's employees, *al-Khawaja* Fujil, in Tel Aviv, which they attacked with stones, smashing his windows. By the time the police arrived on the scene, the perpetrators had dispersed and no one was apprehended.<sup>32</sup>

*Filastin* returned to the Beilis trial in November 1913. On 12 November (30 October according to the Eastern calendar), only one day after the jury in Kiev pronounced the final judgement, the paper informed the public about the exoneration, drawing on leaflets distributed in Jaffa the previous day.<sup>33</sup>

## After the Trial

At the beginning of the following year, *Filastin* started to inform its readers about the recent fortunes of Menachem Beilis on a semi-regular basis. It is possible that the editors of *Filastin* had once again become interested in Beilis's circumstances once it had become known that he was coming to Palestine. At the beginning of January 1914, it published a short piece mentioning Beilis's acquittal and added that he "will soon come to Palestine and will work on a farm which Baron Alfred [de] Rothschild has put at his disposal."<sup>34</sup> Three weeks later, another short notice mentioned that on 16 January Beilis had set out on the journey from Kiev to Palestine.<sup>35</sup> At the end of January, based on information in the Jerusalem newspaper *The Truth*,<sup>36</sup> *Filastin* reported that "there are great preparations in . . . [Jerusalem], Jaffa, and in the settlements to celebrate the arrival of Beilis from Russia."<sup>37</sup> On 29 January, Jewish crowds gathered in Jaffa, but awaited his arrival in vain.<sup>38</sup>

Another long article appeared in mid-February 1914, covering Beilis's arrival in Palestine and the overwhelming welcome he had received in the port of Jaffa.<sup>39</sup> In it, Yusuf al-'Isa alluded to his editorial from the previous year and reiterated his position vis-à-vis the blood libel. Below this piece there appeared another article submitted by a Samaritan lawyer from al-Salt. In the foreword to this column, the editors introduce the author as Jabali Effendi al-Samiri and add that his article concurs with what they had written about the blood libel. The author first discusses the long-standing animosity between Jews and Samaritans and their religious polemics. He then writes about his apparent interest in analyzing the arguments of both sides and searching for the truth. At the time of the Beilis affair, al-Samiri writes, he could not find any evidence that Jews were using human blood. On the contrary, their scriptures prohibited the consumption of blood and therefore they avoided it completely.<sup>40</sup> Beilis's relationship with Rothschild was the subject of another article in the same edition of the paper.<sup>41</sup>

In the next issue, *Filastin* carried an interview with Beilis conducted in Tel Aviv by the representative of the Beirut daily *Lisan al-Hal*, 'Aziz 'Arida.<sup>42</sup> The subtitle of the article claimed that it was the "first interview [with Beilis] by an Arabic newspaper." At the beginning of their conversation, 'Aziz 'Arida informed Beilis that "progressive Palestinian youth, whichever religious creed they belong to, were touched by what happened to you and did not believe what you had been accused of."<sup>43</sup> The author describes Beilis as "very intelligent and thoughtful," but Beilis declined to speak about his ordeal, claiming that he had given exclusive rights on his story for the duration of half a year to a newspaper based in New York.<sup>44</sup>

The writings of *Filastin* on blood libel and the Beilis affair were consistent throughout 1913 and 1914. Its articles, whether authored by the editors or by contributors, unequivocally rejected the accusation and voiced support for Beilis, Judaism, and Jews in this respect. In April 1914, after printing an article warning of the Zionist threat and promising to continue the fight against it, publication of *Filastin* was temporarily suspended and its owner and managing director 'Isa al-'Isa was prosecuted for having published "an article against the Jews [*al-Musawiyyun*]."<sup>45</sup> At the trial, 'Isa al-'Isa pointed

to the newspaper's coverage of the Beilis affair as part of a larger body of evidence proving its respect for the Jews and Judaism:

In the article for which we are now tried there is not to be found any mention of Jews [*al-Musawiyyun*] at all, and in our writings since the founding of the paper until now we have not engaged in the disparagement or falsification of their faith or their race because . . . we highly esteem their religion. We have often defended it because it is one of the three revealed religions; many times we have rebutted what it was accused of, and our writings on the blood accusation in the well-known Beilis affair are evidence of that.<sup>46</sup>

The Beilis affair is one of many examples showing the dangerous consequences of fanaticism coupled with hatred and ignorance in conjunction with political interests and manipulation by the media. It also shows how fragile and insecure the position of minorities can become, especially at times of radical social, economic, and political changes like those taking place in Russia after the 1905 Revolution. On the other hand, the coverage of the trial and its context by *Filastin* is also a demonstration of the strong character of its editors and especially its editor-in-chief. Despite his openly anti-Zionist stance, Yusuf al-'Isa unflinchingly defended Judaism, the Jewish community, and Beilis as an individual against the accusation of blood libel and unequivocally condemned what he called "the disgrace of the twentieth century."

*Emanuel Beška received his PhD in 2008 from the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. He is a research fellow at the Institute of Oriental Studies at Slovak Academy of Sciences and his forthcoming monograph is titled The Filastin Newspaper and Zionism before the First World War (1911–1914). The research underlying this paper was supported by the grant agency APVV (project number APVV-15-0030).*

#### Endnotes

- 1 Robert Weinberg, *Blood Libel in Late Imperial Russia: The Ritual Murder Trial of Mendel Beilis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 4–9.
- 2 Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, 7.
- 3 All dates concerning the affair in this subchapter are given according to the Julian calendar.
- 4 It is noteworthy that the two autopsies that were performed on the victim did not provide any supportive proof for the ritual murder accusation. Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, 19.
- 5 Beilis was not very religious. He did not observe the Sabbath, and therefore the possibility that he might have committed a religiously driven murder was even more absurd. Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, 34, 61.
- 6 The committee was formed after Beilis's acquittal and its members were Dr. Bikhovsky, Rabbi Aronson, and Joseph Marsak. Jay Beilis, Jeremy Simcha Garber, and Mark S. Stein, eds., *Blood Libel: The Life and Memory of Mendel Beilis* (Chicago: Beilis Publishing, 2011), 188.
- 7 In his memoirs, Beilis incorrectly mentions Haifa instead of Jaffa as their destination in Palestine. Beilis, Garber, and Stein, *Blood Libel*, 198.
- 8 Pinchas was detained together with his father in July 1911 and spent two days in custody. He was only nine years old at the time. Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, 37; Beilis, Garber, and Stein, *Blood Libel*, 222–23.
- 9 Weinberg, *Blood Libel*, 1–69; Beilis, Garber, and Stein, *Blood Libel*.
- 10 *Filastin* newspaper was established in Jaffa by 'Isa al-'Isa (owner and managing director) and his cousin Yusuf al-'Isa (editor-in-chief) at the beginning of 1911 and in the pre-World War I period was published twice a week. For more on *Filastin*, see Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National*

- Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 126–27; Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 91–104; Salim Tamari, “Issa al-Issa’s Unorthodox Orthodoxy: Banned in Jerusalem, Permitted in Jaffa,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 59 (2014): 16–36; Evelin Dierauff, “Global Migration into Late Ottoman Jaffa as Reflected in the Arab-Palestinian Newspaper *Filastin* (1911–1913),” in *A Global Middle East: Mobility, Materiality, and Culture in the Modern Age, 1880–1940*, ed. Liat Kozma, Cyrus Schayegh, and Avner Wishnitzer (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 165–174; Samuel Dolbee and Shay Hazkani, “‘Impossible Is Not Ottoman’: Menashe Meirovitch, ‘Isa al-‘Isa, and Imperial Citizenship in Palestine,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 2 (2015): 241–262; Emanuel Beška, *The Filastin Newspaper and Zionism before the First World War (1911–1914)* (forthcoming). Other Arabic periodicals – *al-Muqtaṭaf* in 1903 and *al-Hilal* in 1910–1911 – had dealt briefly with the ritual murder accusation. In both cases the authors defended Judaism and Jews from this libel. The argument in *al-Hilal* is similar to Yusuf al-‘Isa’s reasoning. See Jonathan Marc Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 159–161.
- 11 “Sada mas’alat Beilis fi Yafa” [The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa], *Filastin*, 22 October 1913, 1. The same issue contains a translation into Arabic of a prayer composed by rabbis: “Salat ‘Beilis’” [Beilis’s Prayer], *Filastin*, 22 October 1913, 2.
  - 12 Yusuf al-‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin” [The Disgrace of the Twentieth Century], *Filastin*, 25 October 1913, 1; “Sada mas’alat Beilis fi Yafa” [The Reverberations of the Beilis Affair in Jaffa], *Filastin*, 25 October 1913, 1.
  - 13 Their endorsement of modernism is discussed in Dolbee and Hazkani, “Impossible Is Not Ottoman,” and Dierauff, “Global Migration.”
  - 14 There are many other examples of this differentiation, for example: “Laysa kull Isra’ili sahyuniyyan” [Not Every Israelite Is a Zionist], *Filastin*, 24 June 1914, 5.
  - 15 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.”
  - 16 Yusuf al-‘Isa seems to use the words “Jew” [*Yahudi*, pl. *Yahud*] and “Israelite” [*Isra’ili*, pl. *Isra’iliyyun*] interchangeably. When quoting from *Filastin*, I have chosen to translate the words distinctly so as to indicate the usage in the original.
  - 17 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.” The protest mentioned was published as “Appendix A, Protest against the Blood Libel in Russia: British Protest,” in *The American Jewish Yearbook 5675: September 21, 1914, to September 8, 1915*, ed. Herman Bernstein (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1914), 65. In addition to bishops, the protest was signed by other dignitaries, officials, and professors. It reads, in part: “The question is one of humanity, civilization and truth. The ‘Blood Accusation’ is a relic of the days of Witchcraft and Blood Magic, a cruel and utterly baseless libel on Judaism, an insult to Western Culture and a dishonor to the Churches in whose name it has been falsely formulated by ignorant fanatics. Religious minorities other than the Jews, such as the early Christians, the Quakers, and Christian Missionaries in China, have been victimized by it.”
  - 18 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.”
  - 19 Beška, *Filastin Newspaper*; Neville J. Mandel, *The Arabs and Zionism before World War I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 128; Dierauff, “Global Migration,” 166.
  - 20 During the first two and a half years of *Filastin*’s existence, the editors differentiated between “Israelites” (used to denote Jews as adherents of Judaism) and “Jews” (used in racial and national terms); however, at this particular time their perception was undergoing a change.
  - 21 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.”
  - 22 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.” It is possible that Yusuf al-‘Isa came across Shimon Moyal’s book *al-Talmud: Asluhu wa tasalsuluhu wa adabuhu* [The Talmud: Its Origin, Transmission, and Ethics]. This introduction to Talmud which was published in 1909 was intended for Arab audience. However, in his defense of the Jews against the blood libel Yusuf al-‘Isa did not include Moyal’s argument of “the impermissibility of human sacrifices in Jewish law.” Jonathan Marc Gribetz, “An Arabic-Zionist Talmud: Shimon Moyal’s At-Talmud,” *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* 17, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 3–5. For more details on Moyal’s book, see Gribetz, “An Arabic-Zionist Talmud,” 1–30; Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors*, 198–221.
  - 23 ‘Isa, “Ma‘arrat al-qarn al-‘ishrin.”
  - 24 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 22 October 1913.
  - 25 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 22 October 1913.
  - 26 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 22 October 1913. This incident is also briefly depicted by the German consul in Jaffa. It was a concert organized by the music school. Brode to von Bethmann-Hollweg, Jaffa, 24 November 1913, A III/24 A, AA K 176 478/484 O, in Mordechai Eliav, *Die Juden Palästinas in der deutschen Politik* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1973), 342.
  - 27 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 22 October 1913.
  - 28 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 22 October 1913.
  - 29 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 25 October 1913.
  - 30 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 25 October 1913. The German consul probably alludes to this case in his November 1913 report. See: Brode to von Bethmann-Hollweg, Jaffa, 24 November 1913, A III/24 A, AA K 176 478/484 O, in Eliav, *Die Juden Palästinas*, 344–45.

- 31 “Ihtijaj wa mudhahara” [Protest and Demonstration], *Filastin*, 22 October 1913, 3; “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 25 October 1913.
- 32 “Sada mas’alat Beilis,” 25 October 1913. Eight months later, an incident resembling the disruption of the concert in Tel Aviv occurred. This time it was not related to the Beilis trial and can be considered an after-effect of the War of the Languages (der Sprachenkampf) – a term denoting the Zionist struggle to impose Hebrew as the sole language of instruction at the Technikum (Technion) in Haifa and the schools run by the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden (Benevolent Society of the German Jews). One particular incident involved a theatrical performance in Yiddish. Zionist activists covered walls in Jaffa with posters in which they discouraged Jews from attending this event, which they considered to be directed against the Hebrew language. A demonstration was held outside the performance and one demonstrator entered the theatre and poured a malodorous chemical substance on the floor. After the police removed him, demonstrators pelted the building with stones and were only dispersed when the police began shooting in the air. On *Filastin*’s coverage of this affair, see: “Laysa kull Isra’ili sahyuniyyan”, *Filastin*, 330-33, 24 June 1914, 5. On the War of the Languages, see: Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997 [1977]), 172; Eliav, *Die Juden Palästinas*, 337–365; Mordechai Eliav and Barbara Häider, *Österreich und das Heilige Land. Ausgewählte Konsulatsdokumente aus Jerusalem, 1849–1917* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), 505–7, 511–14; Mordechai Eliav, *Britain and the Holy Land, 1838–1914* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997), 397–98. Some pressure of this kind had been already previously exerted not only on the Hilfsverein schools, but also on the French-language Alliance schools and the Eveline de Rothschild School for Girls. P. J. C. McGregor to Sir L. Mallet. No. 464, 1914/No. 16140, Jerusalem, 15 March 1914, in Albert M. Hyamson, *The British Consulate in Jerusalem in Relation to the Jews of Palestine, 1838–1914: Part II, 1862–1914* (London: Edward Goldston, 1941), 583–84; Walid al-Khalidi, “Kitab al-Siyunizm aw al-mas’ala al-sahyuniyya li Muhammad Ruhi al-Khalidi al-mutawaffi sanat 1913” [The Book “Zionism and the Zionist Question” by Muhammad Ruhi al-Khalidi, d. 1913] in *Studia Palaestina: Studies in Honor of Constantine K. Zurayk*, ed. Hisham Nashshab (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1988), 77; and Walid Khalidi, unpublished notes, e-mail correspondence with Professor Walid Khalidi, 28 October 2006. I would like to thank Professor Khalidi, who readily offered part of his unpublished notes regarding schools belonging to the Alliance and several Jewish settlements in Palestine.
- 33 “Tabri’at Beilis” [Beilis’s Acquittal], *Filastin*, 12 November 1913, 3.
- 34 “Akhbar shatta” [Various News], *Filastin*, 3 January 1914, 2. The report from Dr. Brode, the German consul in Jaffa, also mentions that Beilis was supposed to receive funding for buying a farmstead either from Rothschild or from Jews from Kiev. Brode to von Bethmann-Hollweg. A III/18, AA/K – 176 662/63, Jaffa, 16 February 1914, in Eliav, *Die Juden Palästinas*, 366.
- 35 “Akhbar shatta.”
- 36 *The Truth* was an English-language weekly newspaper based in Jerusalem and later in Alexandria that was published from 1912 to 1915 by Solomon Feingold. See Roberto Mazza, *Jerusalem: From the Ottomans to the British* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 234; Roberto Mazza, unpublished notes, e-mail correspondence with Roberto Mazza, 16 June 2016.
- 37 “Beilis fi Filastin” [Beilis in Palestine], *Filastin*, 31 January 1914, 3.
- 38 “Beilis fi Filastin.”
- 39 “Beilis fi Yafa” [Beilis in Jaffa] *Filastin*, 14 February 1914, 1–2.
- 40 Jabali al-Samiri, “Bayan al-haqiqa” [The Manifestation of the Truth], *Filastin*, 14 February 1914, 1.
- 41 “Beilis wa Rothschild fi Filastin” [Beilis and Rothschild in Palestine], *Filastin*, 14 February 1914, 3.
- 42 “Hadith ma’a Beilis (awwal hadith li jarida ‘Arabiyya)” [Interview with Beilis (First Interview with an Arabic Newspaper)], *Filastin*, 18 February 1914, 2. On *Lisan al-Hal*, see: Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 134–37.
- 43 “Hadith ma’a Beilis.”
- 44 “Hadith ma’a Beilis.”
- 45 “Muhakamat jaridat Filastin” [The Trial of *Filastin* Newspaper], *Filastin*, 6 June 1914, 7. For the offending article, see: “Nasiha” [Advice], *Filastin*, 4 April 1914, 3.
- 46 “Al-jalsa al-ula. Difa” [The First Session: Defence], *Filastin*, 6 June 1914, 7–8.