

Ruth Kark

# American Consuls in the Holy Land

1832-1914



This volume deals with an eventful period in the modern history of Palestine. It provides new insights into the role of the U.S. consuls in the Ottoman Middle East in the special context of the Holy Land. The motivations and functioning of the American consuls in Jerusalem, and of the consular agents in Jaffa and Haifa, are analyzed as part of the U.S. diplomatic and consular activity throughout the world, and of Western involvement in the Ottoman Empire and in Palestine during the century preceding World War I. The processes of cultural, demographic, economic, environmental, and settlement change—sometimes at the expense of the local population—and the contribution of the U.S. consuls and American settlers, both Christian and Jewish, to development and modernization of Palestine are discussed.

Based on primary archival sources located in America, Europe, and Israel, such facets as the role of consuls regarding the use—and at times abuse—of extraterritorial privileges, the influence of the European powers, Western religious and cultural penetration, control of land and land purchase, non-Muslim settlement, judicial systems, and technological innovations are considered from American, Ottoman and local viewpoints. The atmosphere of place and time is evoked by case studies, biographical sketches of the consuls, and an abundance of old photographs and maps.



"Ruth Kark's new volume is a landmark contribution to Holy Land Studies. Impeccable in detail, it is comprehensive in scope with profuse visual documentation. A model of distinctive scholarship."

Prof. Moshe Davis  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

"Culled from various archives, this book summarizes and synthesizes important material on the history of Palestine. The book offers researchers and students a wealth of new information and opens avenues to the understanding of nineteenth century Palestine."

Prof. Israel Bartal  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Cover: Consular staff in the garden of the American consulate in Jerusalem on the eve of World War I. The consulate is in the same location (in Agron Street) to this day. Courtesy of the Silver Print Collection, Jerusalem.

Seal of the United States consulate, Jerusalem, in the 1870's.



Ruth Kark of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has written and edited books and numerous articles on the historical geography of Palestine and Israel. Her research interests include the study of concepts of land, land use, patterns of land ownership in Palestine in the 19th and 20th centuries, urban and rural settlement processes, and Western influences on the Holy Land. Professor Kark is the author of *Frontier Jewish Settlement in the Negev, 1880-1948*; *Jaffa - A City in Evolution, 1799-1917*; *Jerusalem Neighborhoods: Planning and By-Laws, 1855-1930*; *Sephardi Entrepreneurs in Eretz Israel: The Amzalak Family, 1816-1918*; and editor of *The Land That Became Israel: Studies in Historical Geography* and *The Redemption of the Land of Eretz Israel: Ideology and Practice*.

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