



32nd Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture gathering with guest speaker Dr Roberto Mazza
10 June 2024, 6.00 pm (UK time)

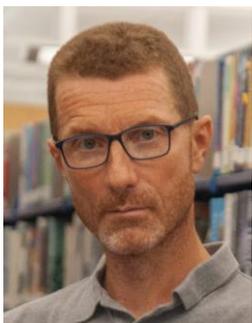
The Crucible of Jerusalem: Local Dynamics in Palestine During the Great War (1914-1918)

Centering on first-hand accounts, diaries and memoirs, this talk reconstructs the lived experiences of ordinary Palestinians in Jerusalem and surrounding areas during the tumultuous years of 1914-1918. Through the words of those who witnessed it first-hand, we will explore how World War I upended life in Palestine, disrupting long-established patterns and routines. The war brought immense hardships like food shortages, economic dislocation, and displacement, forcing Palestinians to adapt their daily lives radically. Yet it also reconfigured communal relations in complex ways, as wartime pressures both exacerbated tensions and fostered new solidarities across religious and ethnic lines.

Moreover, the talk will examine how Palestinians' encounters with the war increasingly shaped their sense of identity and budding national consciousness. As the dissolving Ottoman Empire gave way to British military occupation, some Palestinians began articulating incipient nationalist visions, questioning the imperial powers' intentions. Others clung to Ottomanism or Islamism as anchors of belonging. By centering Palestinian voices, we gain a textured understanding of how this global cataclysm was experienced locally and left an indelible imprint on Palestinian society.

Drawing from diaries, letters, memoirs and oral histories, the talk recovers perspectives often marginalized in conventional Eurocentric narratives of WWI. In doing so, it illuminates the complex interplay of upheaval, displacement, communal negotiation and evolving political consciousness that defined the Palestinian experience during this transformative period. The aim is to restore agency to ordinary Palestinians as they navigated one of the most disruptive events in modern Middle Eastern history.

Booking essential: <https://roberto-mazza-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>



Dr Roberto Mazza is currently a Visiting Lecturer at Northwestern University, the Executive Director of the Jerusalem Quarterly and host of the [Jerusalem Unplugged podcast](#).

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