A Broken Trust
Herbert Samuel, Zionism and the Palestinians
1920-1925
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Foreword by Walid Khalidi
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Flyleaf
Herbert Samuel was the first British high commissioner in Mandatory Palestine (1920-1925) and only the second Jew after Disraeli to have reached high office in the British government. He has been generally regarded by traditional British historians as an impartial administrator in the emerging conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Zionists in the period after the First World War.

In this carefully documented work, Sahar Huneidi contests this claim. She argues that most of the measures Samuel took during his tenure in Palestine - in the political, economic and administrative spheres - were designed to prepare the ground not simply for the ‘Jewish national home’ promised in both the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate for Palestine, but also for a fully-fledged Jewish state. Using a wide range of primary sources, both English and Arabic, published and unpublished, Huneidi charts Samuel's career in Palestine against the complex background of British policy in the region, the Zionist movement at its inception and the emergent Palestinian Arab nationalist movement.

Huneidi's revisionist history of the first years of the Palestine Mandate provides many fresh insights into the intractable history of conflict between European Jewish settlers and Palestinians. It will prove crucial reading to specialists in the Middle East, International Relations and British diplomatic history as well as to general readers interested in the Arab-Israeli confrontation.

Sahar Huneidi is an editor and historian who lives in London and Kuwait. She was director of publications at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters in Kuwait (1987-1998).