

tinians call the 1936 revolt against British colonial rule. I was particularly interested in how elderly males who fought in that rebellion remembered this significant event in their past, and in the place of that memory in Palestinian national history. The rebellion, which erupted in April of 1936 and ended in the summer of 1939, was *the* major anti-colonial insurgency of the century in Palestine — until the current *intifada*. It pitted a poorly-armed and tiny population against the military might of the world's greatest colonial power, which was also backed by Zionist forces trained and armed by the British. Beginning in April 1936 with a general strike in favor of national independence and an end to Zionist colonization, the revolt rapidly assumed the character of an armed insurrection, prosecuted by bands of peasant fighters operating in the countryside, and with enthusiastic support from the mass of the population. Although the revolt ultimately failed to win its objectives, it did confound the British colonial machine and tie down as many as 20,000 British troops for over three years. It now stands as an heroic symbol of struggle in Palestinian nationalist iconography. I chose to study this insurrection in part because I was intrigued by the fact that, despite the revolt's continuing symbolic importance as the first massive Palestinian mobilization on a national scale, Palestinian accounts tend to play down its subaltern character and to represent it as a national struggle that united the entire population without regard to class, sectarian, or regional differences.

I quickly learned that, in the mid-1980s, it was impossible to understand Palestinian memory under occupation solely on its own terms, and that its "truth" does not rest just in "the field." Only by taking into account the pressures of Israeli military occupation on Palestinian identity and the West's ideological disfiguration of Palestinian history could I begin to make sense of the gaps and silences, the romanticizations and embellishments, that pervaded the recollections of revolt veterans. In a real sense, how Palestinians "over there" remember their past and how they think of their own history have a great deal to do with how they are "remembered" or imaged "here" in the West. One of the most potent, and damaging, ways in which Palestinians are represented is through the image of terrorism, an image so pervasive that it seems to be "an almost Platonic essence inherent in all Palestinians and Muslims" (Said 1988: 52).

Soon after my return from the "field," I found an example of how that image works through its opposite in an advertisement, in the