Kinship relations connected individuals and households to the world beyond their villages or towns.\(^1\) Marriage and migration networks might provide a clue to Palestinian identity in the late Ottoman period, that is, to the question of what ‘Palestine’ meant in terms of everyday experience. The following is based on census data of the Hamidian period, which have been analysed in Chapter Two of this study.

Most Palestinians married spouses from their own village or city or from the immediate neighbourhood, and only a few found marriage partners from further afield. Exceptions to this rule occurred when ethnic and confessional groups within the cities had strong trans-regional ties. This was especially the case among non-Muslim religious communities and some local Muslim elite families and Ottoman administrators. As a rule, the marriage ties of the Muslim majority population were largely confined to the District of Jerusalem. A sizable proportion of the in-migrants had been born in the Nablus region. This helps to explain the repeated calls of Jerusalemite notables for Nablus to be annexed to their district.\(^2\) In contrast, only very few individuals in the sample had migrated to the District from the northern District of Acre. This, in turn, helps explain the weakness of transportation and communication links between the Jerusalem District and northern Palestine.

A map showing the areas covered by the marriage and migration networks of the Muslim inhabitants of two villages, one neighbourhood of Gaza and two neighbourhoods of Jerusalem (altogether about 5,500 persons), provides an indication of what ‘Palestine’ as a social space may have meant for many inhabitants of the Jerusalem District (Map 9.1). The area covered by marriage and migration ties comprises the fertile regions of the coastal plain and the central highlands up to

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\(^1\) Miller, *From Village to Nation*, 72.
\(^2\) See pp. 53, 55–56, above.
Map 9.1. Palestine as a Social Space: Areas Covered by Marriage and Migration Networks of the Muslim Inhabitants of Dayr Ghassāna, al-Qaṣṭīna, the Zaytūn neighbourhood of Gaza, and the Sa’diyā and Shaykh Jarrāḥ Neighbourhoods of Jerusalem (5,574 persons).

Source: Ottoman census of 1887 and 1905.

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