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“THE AMERICAN PEOPLE KNOW SO LITTLE”: THE
PALESTINE ARAB REFUGEE OFFICE AND THE
CHALLENGES OF ANTI-ORIENTALISM IN THE UNITED
STATES, 1955–1962

Abstract

This paper explores the activities of the New York-based Palestine Arab Refugee Office (PARO), the first unofficial Palestinian-led organization that defended Palestinian self-determination in the United States following the establishment of Israel. Based mainly on the private papers of PARO public-relations officer Sami Hadawi, the memoirs and writings of PARO president Dr. Izzat Tannous, as well as rare PARO publications (such as its monthly newsletter), it examines how this small, two-person operation attempted to culturally decolonize US state and society, and thus Palestinians in the process.



INTRODUCTION

In an address given at the national convention of the American Federation of Ramallah on 7 August 1961 in Birmingham, Alabama, Dr. Izzat Tannous shared his personal story of dispossession and forced migration during the establishment of Israel in 1948.¹ He also, in the process, offered his indigenous perspective on Palestinian affairs, US-Middle East relations, and the role of the United States in the world. Tannous and many other Palestinians largely blamed Washington, especially former US president Harry Truman, for their ongoing tragedy, commonly referred to as the *Nakba* (“Disaster” or “Catastrophe” in Arabic).² In the name of humanitarianism, Tannous lamented, Truman recognized the new state of Israel upon creation. Contrapuntally, Palestinians like him were discredited, ignored, or forgotten. Unbeknownst to many Americans, exiled Palestinians became objects of greater inhumane treatment.³

Palestinians thereafter, in different ways, places, and times, invoked myriad strategies to reposition themselves within—rather than outside—national and global affairs. Some simply used their feet to return to their dispossessed properties.⁴ Others, like Yasser Arafat's Fatah and George Habash's Arab Nationalist Movement, rejected the "myth of 'international conscience,'" which relied on the idea that the United States and the world would one day realize the humanitarian oxymoron of endorsing Zionism at the expense of Palestinians and rectify it. Convinced that they could not rely on the West to help them, they picked up arms and called for Palestinian liberation by violent means.⁵ Meanwhile, in the mid-to-late 1950s, moderates like Tannous and the famous Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish kept faith in the West, rejected militarism, and sought to overcome politico-cultural isolation.⁶ Diverse strategies aside, all realized that the internationalization of Palestine prior to the *Nakba* and the Palestinian refusal to participate in the 1947 United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) had exacerbated the marginalization of Palestinian voices, bodies, and rights from both the international system and many national public spheres, especially the United States'. Henceforth, both politically and culturally, self-representation became a driving force behind the process of Palestinian decolonization. In the wake of 1948, the decentered Palestinian national movement and its ensuing revolution devoted itself to "a proof of existence" — a want and will to self-affirm the Palestinian presence in Israel/Palestine, Arab states, and the world, among equals.⁷

Tannous understood that most Americans were grossly misinformed about Palestinians and their decade-long humanitarian plight, but remained faithful that perceptions and policies would shift once Palestinian perspectives and injustices became mainstream in the United States. Zionist (mis)representations and US (mis)perceptions of the "Holy Land," he knew, undermined Palestinians. US-Palestine relations, after Israel's emergence, were made more invisible to the mainstream US public sphere. Little trace of Palestinian existence trickled into US purviews, let alone calculations. A cultural politic of exclusion and erasure resulted in popular ignorance, exacerbating a Palestinian segregation from US society and politics. In most cases, Americans further internalized the preexisting "trope of Palestinian nonexistence."⁸ When discussed, which was rare, Palestinians were generally contrasted in an antagonistic way to Israelis as to disfavor them.⁹ Their perceived relational inferiority to Israelis, Jews, and Westerners more broadly in US imaginations sanctioned dislocation

from ancestral lands and statelessness in the Middle East. Palestinian peoples, as a result, were both nationless and nameless. Instead of being known as Palestinians and associated with the nation of Palestine, they were unknown and distorted as culpable, backward “Arab refugees,” thus devoid of proper representation.¹⁰

As the director of the New York-based Palestine Arab Refugee Office (PARO), Tannous warned his audience in Birmingham against the powerful tendency to see Palestinians in this way. “Low moral standards,” he affirmed, “destroy nations.” Political and cultural discrimination toward Palestinians plagued Americans and their government; decolonization and its global processes to erase imperial inequalities had the capacity of serving as the United States’ Achilles’ heel. Continued failures to defend the universality of human dignity and support Palestinian self-determination damned US prestige in the global Cold War. As “the leader of the Democratic World,” he proclaimed that the United States was uniquely situated “and under heavy responsibility” to right Palestinians. “The age of Colonialism is ended and the United States must drive the last nail in its coffin.” In closing, Tannous tried to unsettle his listeners: “Are you, and I am addressing the American people, are you going to live up to your revolutionary traditions? Are you going to help us, we the Arab people . . . to be really democratic?” In other words, would Americans join Palestinians and other decolonial peoples in their efforts to abrogate international hierarchy and its powerful cultural foundations? “You have the answer,” he asserted, “not we!!”¹¹

This article examines how the Palestine Arab Refugee Office (1955–1962) sought to reorient US perceptions in order to change policy vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict to better favor Palestinian refugees.¹² Concurrently, it unearths the anti-Orientalist challenges that Tannous’s PARO faced when trying to decolonize US ways of seeing Palestinians and its sociopolitical by-products. Long before the Palestinian-American public intellectual and leading anti-Orientalist in the United States Edward Said became world renowned, Palestinians, Arabs, and other colonized peoples experienced and targeted Orientalism as a detrimental “style of thought” that engendered nefarious bodies of knowledge, imperial actions and structures, as well as human inequality in the world.¹³ As Said himself explained, many before him recognized this kind of imperial thinking and attempted “to change the public consciousness in which Palestine had no presence at all.”¹⁴ Although essentially overlooked or forgotten like many others,

Tannous and his PARO associate Sami Hadawi were two such figures that confronted the Palestinian "crisis of representation" head on.¹⁵

Tannous, Hadawi, and other moderate Palestinian members of the *Nakba* generation that rejected revolutionary violence concluded that to decolonize themselves, they also needed to part the imperial curtain of silence and invalidate two of its relational pillars: the politics of difference and indifference.¹⁶ Americans, they felt needed to both be concerned about Palestinians and see them as not being inferior in order to enact decolonial change.¹⁷ Despite being grossly under-resourced and outnumbered by Israeli and Zionist public relations efforts (known as *hasbara*, or "explanation" in Hebrew),¹⁸ Tannous and Hadawi "wrote back" to represent Palestinian ideas and narratives against the grain in the United States.¹⁹ Their anti-Orientalism represented an intervention against a worldly tradition, whereby non-Palestinians misrepresented Palestine to the severe detriment of Palestinians.²⁰ Against competing Zionist and Arab myths circulating in the 1950s,²¹ the PARO worked within its meager means to identify, position, and humanize Palestinians as spokesmen for themselves within US imaginations.

Whereas scholars widely acknowledge that the formation of imperial culture was imperative to empire building,²² this article's big-picture significance lies in its examination of the strategies and challenges that a little-known Palestinian group faced when seeking to de-form imperial culture and its messy interconnected shades in the United States.²³ Decolonization's postcolonial critique, as Robert Young aptly explains, "is designed to undo the ideological heritage not only on decolonized countries, but also in the West itself."²⁴ The PARO, shorthandedness and shortcomings aside, attempted to push Americans to decolonize with Palestinians, at the same time, for the sake of everyone.²⁵ Tannous and Hadawi's anti-Orientalism confronted both Orientalism and "its dark side," Occidentalism—albeit in an uncalibrated way and not always successfully within the complex domain of US imperial culture. Occidentalism, as Saree Makdisi puts it, "is the extension and necessary continuation of [Orientalism]." In this case, it refers to the ways in which Americans perceived themselves as being superior within an asymmetrical relationship to Palestinians. Rather than simply meaning Oriental representations of the Occident,²⁶ Occidentalism is best understood as an "imperial malady" in which taxonomies of difference favorably structure perceptions of the West within fluid hierarchies of inequality in the world. Anti-Orientalism, as a method of decolonization, seeks to

redress sociopolitical relations by denaturalizing Western imperialism's representational systems through the simultaneous unsettling of Orientalism, Occidentalism, and their convergences.²⁷

Born in Nablus, Palestine, in 1896, Izzat Tannous earned a degree in medicine from the Syrian Protestant College—now the American University of Beirut (AUB)—and, shortly thereafter, opened his own practice in the eastern section of the Old City of Jerusalem. Tannous quickly joined the nationalist political scene. Following the 1936 uprising in Palestine—a three-sided conflict between Palestinian nationalists, Zionist Jews, and mandatory Britain over the questions of land, immigration, and national independence—he was appointed as the director of the Palestine National Fund and elected as an executive member of the Arab Higher Committee (AHC), the national organization that represented Palestinians in British Palestine at the time. Shortly thereafter, he also served as the director of the newly established Arab Centre, the AHC's information branch, until its forced closure in 1940. Following World War II, Tannous was instrumental in the creation of the Arab League's Arab Office in London, which served the same purpose as the Arab Centre, as well as the establishment of parallel branches in both Jerusalem and Washington.²⁸

Palestinian efforts to make themselves heard after World War II fell prey to Zionist imperial culture and US Orientalism. Generally speaking, the English-speaking world's expanding empathy for Jewish victimhood during and immediately following the Holocaust overpowered Tannous's information initiative. To the tragic detriment of Palestinians, Western audiences interpreted the internationalized question of Palestine almost exclusively from the perspective of Zionism. Zionists in the world stymied the travels of Palestinian nationalist narratives of anti-imperialism and injustice with their own politicized "humanitarian narratives" of rightful return.²⁹ Such cultural displacement engendered "Palestinian Arab silence in the Western 'marketplace of ideas';"³⁰ from there, it sanctioned the creation of the state of Israel, empowered the Zionist settler-colonial project, and set back Palestinian decolonization.

Tannous, alongside many other Palestinians, suffered as a result. During the initial stages of the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948–1949, his home was "seized and plundered by Zionists." Unlike all other members of the Arab Higher Committee, Tannous "remained on the spot" in war-torn Israel/Palestine as long as possible. Following the

first Arab-Israeli armistice, he joined his exiled family in Beirut, Lebanon.³¹

Tannous's forced relocation, dispossession, and statelessness did not mollify his commitment to Palestinian decolonization; rather, it magnified his devotion to the moderate politics of self-representation. Once established in Beirut, he served as the inaugural director of the Palestine Arab Office (1950-?), which represented Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and sought to uphold their human rights, particularly the right to maintain their property in Israel. Tannous also remained dedicated to the globalization of marginalized Palestinian perspectives. As it became increasingly clear from his view in Beirut, the United Nations' recently launched Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC) and its mediation efforts between Israelis, Palestinians, and neighboring Arabs were lost in no-man's-land. The Palestinian nationalist vowed to defend the "neglected" refugees in New York City and tapped into his pre-*Nakba* diplomatic experience to make that happen. In an address to members of the UN shortly after the creation of Palestine Arab Office in Beirut, Tannous declared that "the refugees are spokesmen for themselves; they do not recognize any spokesman on their behalf, Arab or non-Arab, unless he abides by their views and demands." Collectively, they "insist[ed] on their right of self-determination" and affirmed that it would "be more conducive to quick and stable solutions, if the Refugees themselves be contacted and consulted," not vice versa.³² While in the United States, Tannous also petitioned Congress and the Truman White House – the latter of which labeled his telegrams as "propaganda" – "to aid" Palestinian refugees "in returning to their homes and holdings in Palestine."³³

Aware of US State Department opposition to Zionism,³⁴ Tannous strategically connected with concerned US officials. Once back in Beirut, the Palestinian nationalist worked with Edwin Locke, a key member of the United Nations Reliefs and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and special representative to the US State Department. Often meeting in his home near the AUB hospital in Hamra, Tannous insisted that Locke hear the voices of the refugees themselves and that that was key to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Ensuing intercultural encounters, facilitated by Tannous's Palestine Arab Office, with exiled Palestinians in refugee camps, caves, and mud huts across Lebanon, Egyptian-administered Gaza, and the Jordanian West Bank left a profound impression on Locke. Alongside Tannous, the refugees overwhelmingly held the US government responsible for their

suffering and demanded that it incorporate “humanitarian reasoning” in its approach vis-à-vis Palestinians.³⁵ In an op-ed addressed to Locke, a refugee in Beirut openly asked: “Do you want us to die coercively and gloomily, or do you want to humiliate our prestige and dignity?” In trying to “organize compassion,”³⁶ many urged Locke to open his eyes to their plight, listen to what they had to say, and relay their stories and experiences “to the American people.”³⁷ Palestinian refugees demanded that US citizens and their government rectify their personal and national predicaments.

Locke, after such moving experiences, positioned himself with Palestinians, publicly critiquing Washington’s Middle East policy and support of Zionism. In a speech at the Cénacle libanais, attended by leading local figures and diplomats in Beirut, the US representative spoke “directly to the Arab and American people.” Both New York and Washington needed to drastically change their positions as they worsened the plight of Palestinian refugees. The United States ought to “furnish unmistakable, tangible evidence to the entire Near East of American good will and ability to perform, in an area where empty promises are an old story.” In his opinion, there was still hope for Arab-US relations, but “If we do not soon back up our words with significant action, we lost our last chance . . . to hold the good will of peaceful [Arabs].” US secretary of state Dean Acheson immediately recalled the special representative to Washington, likely to reprimand him for deviating from the United States’ official line of impartiality in the Arab-Israeli imbroglio.³⁸ To the great disappointment of Palestinians, Locke then resigned. Thenceforth, in a personal letter, Beirut-based refugee leaders Faris Sirhan, Ibrahim Kaddoura, and Kamil el-Qadi lamented to Locke that “[US] politicians do not listen to our wisdom.”³⁹

Refusing to accept Washington’s indifference toward Palestinian perspectives, Tannous soon returned to New York; this time, to lay the foundations for a strictly Palestinian information office—albeit with a heavy dependence upon Arab support—that would challenge mainstream US (mis)perceptions. Tannous’s anti-Orientalist mandate, it is important to briefly note, was indirectly part of a broader Arab-led, transnational network to combat anti-Arab prejudices in the United States after the *Nakba*. During the early 1950s, many Beirut-based public intellectuals—like the leading Arab intellectual Constantine Zurayk, AUB professor Nabih Faris, and media tycoon Kamel Mrowa—appealed to Americans in English, while simultaneously flooding the Arab public sphere with calls for a cultural initiative to overturn US “attitude,” which favored Zionism and Israel

to the detriment of Arab decolonization.⁴⁰ Farid Kozma, the president of the Lebanese Press Syndicate, publicly avowed that "Americans need to be told" about their anti-Arab prejudices. The Arab League set up the Arab Information Center in New York in 1955 to facilitate the flow of "Arab points of view," particularly on matters relating to Palestine.⁴¹ Arab Americans, like Khalil Totah and Frank Maria, continued their anti-Orientalist activism, which preceded 1948.⁴² And Arab students in the United States founded the Organization of Arab Students in 1952 to enhance mutual understanding between US and Arab cultures.⁴³

The Palestine Arab Refugee Office took shape after Yemen named Tannous as its special representative to the United Nations – a position that allowed him to hold temporary legal residency in the United States as a diplomat.⁴⁴ From there, Tannous obtained financial backing from Iraq (10,000 dinars per year, or \$28,000), became its permanent special representative to the UN, recruited a disgruntled Palestinian UN employee Hadawi (also an exiled East Jerusalemite) to serve as the PARO's associate director, and registered the office with the US Department of Justice, as required by the Foreign Registration Act of 1938. By the end of 1955, the two-person PARO was up and running.⁴⁵

Tannous carefully chose the office's name to support the Palestinian national movement, while stressing the dire situation of its constituents.⁴⁶ Palestinians, the name implied, were indeed refugees. Notwithstanding Israel's conquest and occupation of Palestinian lands, the PARO sought to "unstranger" Palestine and reposition both it and its peoples, together, within US imaginations.⁴⁷ And Palestinians, it asserted, existed despite their exiled and refugee statuses. Officially describing itself as a "political organ run by Palestine Arab refugees on a voluntary basis," the Palestine Arab Refugee Office intervened in the US public sphere by asserting its "power of self-representation" and relative distinctiveness from broader Arab anti-Orientalist initiatives.⁴⁸ Instead of being the official representative of Palestinians in the United States, it "constitute[d] one of the means through which an interpretation of their views and demands [could] be conveyed to an outside world which seems to be ignorant of what [wa]s taking place in the Middle East." Three of the PARO's key objectives were "(1) to bring the American people, the Government and members of Congress a better understanding of the Palestine problem in general and the refugee problem is particular . . . (2) To seek equality and justice for the Moslem and Christian (Arab) inhabitants who are now living in the

Israeli-occupied territory of Palestine,” and “(3) to fight racial and religious discrimination in the territory that was once the Holy Land.” Inspired by the biblical passage John 8:32, the Palestinian office’s motto—which was placed in the top right-hand corner of its monthly newsletter, the *Palestinian Arab Refugee*—was: “Ye Shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you Free.”⁴⁹

Unlike all other existing Arab anti-Orientalist groups and their efforts in the mid-1950s, the PARO was Palestinian-driven and centered. Its distinct anti-Orientalist quest to disseminate the “Truth” about its nation represented a principle mandate: the cultural decolonization of the United States. Tannous and Hadawi sought to challenge the politics of both indifference and difference in order to restructure the United States’ humanitarian reasoning toward Israelis, Palestinians, and their twined relationships. Zionist-informed settler-colonial prejudices infused US state and society in a way that degraded, and thus silenced, indigenous Palestinians. As Hadawi later opined, “the American people know so little” about Palestinians. Tannous echoed this conviction, explaining to Beirut’s *Daily Star*: “For over fifty years the Zionist propaganda machine was working on the Americans, and the American people thoroughly sympathized with the Zionist cause for they know nothing of the Arab side of the question,” let alone that of Palestine.

Both Tannous and Hadawi understood that the odds were not in their favor; unlike the nascent pro-Israel lobby,⁵⁰ direct influence on the mainframe of US foreign policy was beyond their reach. Hadawi noted in his privately published memoirs:

I recall our first day in [our three-room office—located on the corner of 42nd street and 2nd avenue, one block away from the UN headquarters]—when I remarked with some anguish: “Here we are two Palestinians trying to fight the formidable machine of world Zionism with \$28,000 a year. I wonder what our prospect will be!”

The religious Tannous optimistically reassured his colleague: “We have right on our side, and I am sure God will not forsake us.”⁵¹ Overpowered and outsourced, the PARO knew full well that the task at hand was a daunting one; it was a situation like that of a Palestinian David versus an Israeli Goliath, contrary to Zionist mythmaking. Both men realized that the Palestinian decolonization of the United States

would be a multigenerational process. But according to Tannous and Hadawi, it was their nationalist duty to get that moderate, Palestinian-led process started in the United States in the wake of the *Nakba*.

One of the PARO's first activities was to expand its network in the United States by forging linkages with US-based non-state actors critical of Zionism and devoted to changing US perceptions and policies toward Israel/Palestine, as well as the Middle East more broadly. Alongside the League of Arab States' Arab Information Office, Dorothy Thompson and Garland Hopkins's CIA-funded American Friends of the Middle East (AFME) and Rabbi Elmer Berger's American Council for Judaism (ACJ) served as the PARO's strongest allies.⁵² The two-person operation utilized newly minted connections with Arab Americans and non-Arab Americans alike to embark on numerous information initiatives, such as speaking engagements, petitioning US president Dwight Eisenhower and members of Congress, writing and distributing pamphlets, and publishing a monthly newsletter. Tannous and Hadawi also spent considerable time monitoring the US press, often penning letters to the editor of the *New York Times* in response to material prejudicial to Palestinian refugees and in defense of their right of return.⁵³

In its early stages, the Palestine Arab Refugee Office unearthed a connecting thread between Palestinians and Americans: religion. The application of a nascent Christian human rights logic served as an inclusive way for the PARO to try to overpower perceived racial differences, organize compassion for *Nakba* sufferers, and unify Americans and Palestinians in US imaginations.⁵⁴ Both Palestinian representatives self-identified as devout Christians. As such, they targeted "those [Americans] who call[ed] themselves Evangelical Christians and Fundamentalists," in the hope that this key strand of US public opinion would influence a policy change in Washington. These conservatives, in Hadawi's opinion, "misintpret[ed] Holy Scriptures to fit the ambitions and policies of political Zionism for personal gain."⁵⁵ Since the creation of Israel, Zionists capitalized on a religious revival in the United States to further interconnect Zionism with Americanism under the umbrella of an imagined Western Judeo-Christian civilization. Christians and Jews were increasingly perceived as partners. Like Americans, Israelis were imagined as "prophets, warriors, and simple folk like those in Bible stories."⁵⁶ For these Americans who interpreted the Old Testament in a literal way, the Bible divinely recognized Israeli-Jewish settler colonists as the "chosen peoples" in the Holy Land to the blatant detriment of most indigenous

Palestinians, let alone Arab Jews. This perceived fact, according to the PARO, (mis)guided US perceptions and subsequent foreign relations toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. As Tannous later explained in a PARO pamphlet, US support for Israel morally betrayed the core modern Christian principles of religious tolerance and human dignity: "Zionism [wa]s not Judaism."⁵⁷

The "moral backbone" that an imagined Western Judeo-Christian civilization provided US Christians in the 1950s, alongside implicit associations inferred by Zionists between the nation-states of the United States and Israel, deeply troubled Tannous and Hadawi.⁵⁸ In their minds, the combination amorally and racially excluded Palestinian Christians. Both men rejected the Christian West's "benevolent supremacy,"⁵⁹ which disparaged Palestinian Arabs, and refused to "believe that the 'Divine Promise' . . . applie[d] to those who have renounced Christ to the exclusion of those who have accepted him." They simply regarded this "as unprincipled and inhuman."⁶⁰ Before an audience at the Carnegie International Endowment Center in New York City, the PARO director deplored the fact that "I cannot go home because I am not a Jew." Israel's Law of Return, passed in July 1950, codified an exclusive system of discriminatory citizenship based on religious identification and undergirded by racial prejudice.⁶¹ Tannous explained:

I happen to be a Christian Arab of Christian parents born in Palestine. My home is in Jerusalem where I lived all my life. I am not permitted to go home by the Israelis, not because I declared war on any country, but for the single reason that I was not born a Jew. While American Jews, Austrian Jews and even Arab Jews can go and occupy my home today, I cannot do so because I am a Christian. The Jewish faith is the only visa to go and live in Israel today.⁶²

Within the first year of its establishment, the PARO made it a top priority to publicly challenge the prejudiced notion that the Bible baptized Jews as the only "chosen people" to inhabit the Holy Land, as it consequentially had the effect of erasing Palestinian indigeneity.⁶³ This Zionist narrative, perpetuated most effectively by the literature of biblical fiction,⁶⁴ surpassed the Palestinian Arab's moral claim and historical relation to the land of Israel/Palestine. Dialectically, the idea of Jews as the sole "chosen people" dispossessed Palestinian

indigenous belongings. One of the Palestinian information office's first pamphlets rejected "the claim to fulfill scripture by the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine." Penned by Alfred Guillaume, a professor of Old Testament studies at the University of London, the PARO pamphlet opened by outlining that "to a superficial reader it well might seem that a divine promise to give a land to a particular people made some four thousand years ago and often repeated constituted that people owners of that land by divine right." The Zionist claim that was "the Jewish title to Palestine," Guillaume insisted, sorely required demystification.

Through a careful examination of familiar biblical passages, the PARO-published text refuted two fundamental (mis)interpretations at the core of US religious revivals in the 1950s: The Bible promised Palestine solely to the Jews and that this "divine promise" was indefinite. It concluded that God's initial affirmation to Abraham, in which the latter was promised the land of Canaan, should be read as including all the descendants of Abraham's son, Ishmael, thus incorporating Christians and Muslims. The pamphlet explained, "in the time of Isaac and Jacob[,] the promise was narrowed to their descendants, though not in such a way as to exclude explicitly their Arab brethren." According to Guillaume, it was "well known that many Arabs accompanied Moses and Joshua into Palestine when the country was partially occupied." The descendants of Abraham, furthermore, fulfilled the prophecies of the return from Babylonian exodus during the late Archaic period in the Eastern Mediterranean. Once completed, the "divine promise" could not be resuscitated either in the distant past or the present. Ultimately, "within the canonical literature of the Old Testament there is no prophecy of a second return after the return from the Babylonian exile."⁶⁵ The United States' moral support for Zionism, founded significantly on the (mis)readings of religious teachings, was consequently flawed. US Christian consciences, the PARO inferred, were misguided.

Tannous and Hadawi juxtaposed the PARO's demystification of the "divine promise" with critiques of Zionist mythmaking in the United States and the so-called superiority of Israel in relation to Palestinians. As far as Palestinian refugees were concerned, they did not leave the Holy Land of their own accord; rather, Christians and Muslims were "expelled" by force. Israel, as a result, "was based on religious discrimination." This was further evidenced by the blatant mistreatment of Palestinians that chose to live in Israel. In another pamphlet, the PARO denounced Israel as a "discriminate state,"

remarking, "It is indeed strange how those people who have always complained of racial and religious persecutions have now become the persecutors." According to the Palestine Arab Refugee Office, "The Palestine dispute w[ould] only be solved when the Israelis" and global Zionism "cease[d] to be discriminate and be prejudicial" toward Palestinians. As a result, "The 'democracy' of a nation," like Israel, should be "judged not by [its] form of government . . . but by the manner and extent of freedom and security enjoyed by its people without distinction of race or religion."⁶⁶

The Palestine Arab Refugee Office equally determined that powerful, preexisting Orientalist knowledge contributed to the formations of US mind-sets and essentialized ideas of difference. Israel and global Zionism worked within the confines of Orientalism by giving "the wrong impression of what we Palestine Arabs are." Tannous and Hadawi recognized that a worldly imperial culture occupied the minds "of many honest persons regarding the Arab way of life. Romantic writers and film directors," Tannous explained, "[gave] the term 'Arab' a connotation which often was misleading." Stereotypical uses of "the word 'Arab' conjure[d] up a vision of picturesque, bearded nomads, plodding across the desert on camel caravans or racing over the sand in a tribal raid." Pejorative images often resulted in the disparagement of the Palestinians' voices and peoples. The PARO, therefore, felt the obligation to reorient US misunderstandings and explain: "What is an Arab[?]" Palestinians, avowed Tannous, were in many ways "much like the 'average American.'" Contrary to beliefs that implied Palestinian primitiveness,⁶⁷ they were farmers, physicians, lawyers, clergymen, dentists, businessmen, and merchants. Far from being exceptionally disconnected from the world, "many homes had steam heat, electric refrigeration, and pressure cookers." Palestinians even had radios, Tannous asserted. "In the main, we dressed like Americans, saw American films, [and] read American books and magazines." Inconsistent with Orientalism's binary logic, Palestinians and Americans shared more similarities than differences.⁶⁸

The PARO's biggest anti-Orientalist challenge, however, was not Orientalism in isolation; rather, it was navigating the relational configuration between Orientalism and Occidentalism, notably the ways in which Americans perceived themselves as remarkable in relation to the hardship realities of Palestinian refugeeness. Within the confines of US-Palestine relations at this time, the PARO's necessity of stressing Palestinian victimhood and "a certain kind of helplessness as

a refugee characteristic" dialectically required it to project Americans in a magnanimous paternalistic way.⁶⁹ This particular humanitarian framework, which aimed to facilitate a US intervention in favor of Palestinians, had the adverse effect of reifying Orientalism's asymmetries. Unstrangering Palestinian daily lives in the US public sphere in the immediate wake of the *Nakba* had the consequence of further consolidating imagined cultural differences—anchored within an Orientalist *mentalité* most aggressively perpetuated by global Zionism—when the PARO attempted to bring Palestinians and Americans closer together. Tannous and Hadawi's efforts to humanize Palestinians, therefore, concurrently dehumanized them.⁷⁰

In its attempt to present the *Nakba* to US Christian audiences and beyond, the Palestine Arab Refugee Office unavoidably invoked a popular image of refugeeness that reified a kind of Palestinian inferiority in relation to Americans, as well as Israel, Ashkenazi Jews, and an imagined white, Western Judeo-Christian civilization more broadly. When the PARO represented Palestinians in the United States, the main takeaway for Americans was predominantly that of Palestinian helpless victimhood. As Hadawi recalled in his memoir, Palestinian suffering "ha[d] always been suppressed by the Zionist-controlled media of information."⁷¹ The PARO shared "the story of the Palestine tragedy" to an ill-informed US public sphere, "from its true perspective"—or, as Edward Said famously phrased it roughly two decades later, "from the standpoint of its victims." The Palestinian information office firmly believed that Zionist imperial culture silenced Palestinian sufferings and injustices within US society and politics. "By distorting facts and often giving wrong information," Tannous explained in the "Foreword" section of a reprinted PARO pamphlet, Zionists "were able to win American sympathy to such an extent to make the American people participate with them in uprooting a whole nation from its homeland and replacing it with militant [settler colonialists] from all parts of the world."⁷²

The PARO hoped that the entry of Palestinian refugees into US imaginations would scuttle Zionist narratives, subsequently altering US perceptions and policies. When the visualization of Palestinian suffering did demonstrate Palestinian existences to Americans, it did so at a price. The PARO's Americanization of the *Nakba* reduced Palestinians into "pure victims" in the US public sphere and rarely anything more.⁷³ This image of sufferer was most adequately perpetuated through humanitarian photography. PARO-disseminated pictures sought to link the undignified status of refugees to the state of

Israel and qualify Palestinians as deserving of a US humanitarian intervention.⁷⁴ Materials included large pictures that unearthed the hardships of exile and dispossession. “New” images of an “Arab refugee family ‘at home’ in a cave,” the desecration of a Christian cemetery, and “Israeli atrocities on Christmas Eve, 1952, of Sharafat village near Jerusalem,” for example, gained entry into the US public sphere. Humanitarian photographs revealed how orderly, Sunday-dressed Palestinian men, women, and children were confined to tent cities; innocent, “civilized,” modern-looking Palestinians were “homeless and destitute.”⁷⁵

It was precisely when the PARO represented Palestinian refugeeeness, in an attempt to organize US humanitarian consciences, that it also fortified US Occidentalism. When addressing the relationship between Palestinians and Americans, the PARO reified the myth of “exceptional American humanitarianism,” which “allowed for an expression of an American colonial paternalism without the brutality of foreign rule.”⁷⁶ Despite its support of Zionism and the creation of Israel, Tannous and Hadawi affirmed that the United States was somehow different than imperial powers in the Middle East, past and present.⁷⁷ The PARO relayed the Palestinian refugee perspective to Americans that, before the *Nakba*, the United States “was not a colonial power with colonial ambitions, seeking the domination and exploitation of the Arab peoples and Arab territories.... Not only did the United States Government encourage this ‘gross injustice,’” contended the Palestinian office, “but it relentlessly maintained it in spite of the loud cries and the great suffering.” Filled with bitterness, Palestinians insisted that “the good name and unparalleled prestige[,] which the American people have so deservedly enjoyed for the last hundred years,” had “dropped to a very low level. The American,” in decolonial Palestinian imaginations, “ha[d] become unpopular and he [wa]s looked upon with suspicion.”⁷⁸

Ergo, the PARO encouraged Americans and their government to atone for their mistakes in Israel/Palestine through the myth of US exceptionalism. Prior to the beginning of the *Nakba*, it explained, many Palestinians believed that the United States represented the right to self-determination and universal equality. In accordance with Washington’s invented anti-imperial tradition, the Palestinian office claimed that the United States served as the global umpire of the post-1945 international system; it was the “champion of Four Freedoms” and the vanguard of decolonization in the world;⁷⁹ “there was no country in the world which enjoyed the good name of the United

States."⁸⁰ In the name of liberal democracy, therefore, Tannous and Hadawi called upon Americans to get their government to intervene against Israel. Those Palestinians that chose to live in Israel—a state that promoted itself as “only democracy in the Middle East”—should not be “second-class citizens.” “To lead the Democratic World,” urged the director of the PARO, “the United States [wa]s under a unique responsibility which need[ed] more than the atom bomb. It need[ed] the highest moral principles to adhere to. It need[ed] to have its constitution, not only in the White House and not only in the Congress building, but in the heart of every American citizen.” The time was now to restore the Arab-US friendship to its pre-*Nakba*, imagined glory days. Through the PARO, Palestinians expressed hope that the United States would return to its imagined exceptional ways.⁸¹

What is more, the PARO’s use of US exceptionalism clashed with its idea of Palestinian indigeneity in a way that structurally undermined its decolonial efforts. Tannous’s affirmation in a letter to the US Congress, amid numerous others, that “the lands of Palestine, individually and collectively, belong to the indigenous population” signified the Palestinian community’s connection to and relation with the ancestral land of Palestine; it complemented the PARO’s contention that Jews were not the exclusive chosen people of the Bible. Tannous’s anti-Orientalism, though, failed to connect US Occidentalism and its relation to Palestinians to the global structure of settler colonialism and its US branch in North America.⁸² Consequently, it indirectly fortified US Occidentalism, the erasure of indigenous peoples in US imaginations, and the developing special relationship between Americans and Israelis.⁸³ This shortcoming mythologized US perceptions and policies vis-à-vis Israel, Zionism, and Palestinians as being in themselves exceptional to US identity, diplomacy, and empire. By fracturing US Occidentalism in the Middle East from the United States’ North American context, the ways in which the PARO asserted Palestinian indigeneity distanced US imperial ways of seeing and being from its national container, reified US exceptionalism, and informed—rather than de-formed—the United States’ own settler colonialism and imperialism more broadly.

Despite its earnest dedication to decolonizing the United States’ relationship to Palestinians, the Palestine Arab Refugee Office in New York City soon fell prey to Arab politics in the Middle East and North Africa. Whereas Arab governments continued to theoretically support parallel versions of transnational anti-Orientalism and the Palestinian cause in the world, the Arab League and many of its members opted to

throw their lot behind the resurrected Arab Higher Committee and centralize all Arab propaganda initiatives under the aegis of the Arab League's Information Committee. The Iraqi government, in mid-1958, notified Tannous and Hadawi that their funding would be cut, leaving the former out of work. Hadawi, in turn, accepted the Arab League's offer that he serve as the director of public relations for its Arab Information Centre in New York.⁸⁴ Tannous was thus left alone to represent the PARO.

Despite its director's best efforts, the Palestinian office's presence would not be same. Issues of the *Palestine Arab Refugee* and letters to the *New York Times* became sporadic, as public relations in the United States, Middle East, and United Nations overwhelmed the now one-man operation. Ultimately, the Palestine Arab Refugee Office closed its doors in 1962. Tannous, nonetheless, continued his political activism in the United States by opening an information office for the newly established Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1965 and serving as its inaugural director.⁸⁵

The Palestine Arab Refugee Office, as this article reveals, played an important and timely role in laying anti-Orientalist foundations for subsequent Palestinians, like Edward Said, to represent themselves and try to change US perceptions and policies. As Palestinians, Dr. Izzat Tannous and Sami Hadawi undertook the daunting task of Americanizing the *Nakba*, humanizing Palestinian refugees, and decolonizing the relationship between Palestinians and Americans all at once. Thanks in part to their efforts, a Palestinian-led and organized process of decolonization enacted itself in the United States after the *Nakba*. During trying times, the PARO continued to unearth and promote Palestinian narratives so that they could be heard and felt, in an attempt to challenge global Orientalism and Zionism. By exercising the power of self-representation in an era known for neighboring Arab states' dominance of the Palestinian issue in global affairs, the Palestinian office took the so-called lost voices of Palestinian refugees out of exile—or as Said lamented much later, out of “peripherality, isolation, and silence.”⁸⁶ Empathetic Americans, thereafter, were more aptly positioned to connect with Palestinians and recognize them as being both a central actor in the Arab-Israeli conflict and existing in the world.

To the best of its abilities, means, and understandings of Orientalism's complex inner workings at the time, the PARO sought to

strategically popularize an image of Palestinian refugees that it thought could and would reorient US consciences away from Zionism. Tannous and Hadawi tactically oriented their anti-Orientalist efforts toward Americans because they believed that the United States was the best positioned—in part because of its imagined relationship with Israelis and Jews more broadly—to liberate Palestine and its peoples. As they tried to explain, Palestinian refugees were not solely pure victims in need of relief; they were also an indigenous people who had voices and nationalist aspirations. Like displaced Jews after World War II, Palestinians deserved human dignity, above and beyond perceived divine promises, liberal humanitarianisms, and imperial machinations. As their Palestinian anti-Orientalist scion eloquently proclaimed forty years after the establishment of the PARO, "facts never speak for themselves. They must be articulated, disseminated, reiterated, and recirculated. We must take seriously the enormous impact of preparing minds and hearts with facts and figures, with information that counteracts the pernicious falsifications about Palestinians."⁸⁷ Tannous and Hadawi did, albeit problematically and in the best way they thought possible. And they tried to ensure that Americans did too at a crucial historical moment.

Overcome by challenges, the PARO fell well short of reorienting US perceptions and the United States' relationship to Palestinians. Much like later years, "the terms of the debate" in the United States when it came to Palestinians in the late 1950s and early 1960s remained "impoverished"; most Americans simply knew Palestinians "only as refugees," and, as Said lamented roughly two decades after the PARO's demise, "reduced us to the barely tolerated status of a nuisance."⁸⁸ US Occidentalism, perpetuated by the PARO's anti-Orientalism, maintained Orientalism's asymmetries between Palestinians and Americans. The PARO image of Palestinian refugees contributed to the myth of US exceptionalism in a way that kept both peoples unequal in US imaginations. Put differently, the PARO's message surely moved a group of Americans, but not enough to change their perceptions of themselves and their paternalistic relationship with Palestinians.

Ultimately, anti-Orientalist challenges notwithstanding, it is important to recognize that the short-lived and short-staffed PARO contributed to the global politics of Palestinian self-representation. Its story reveals that Palestinians continued their decolonial struggles in the immediate aftermath of the *Nakba*. Tannous and Hadawi adapted to their changed political order and were able to channel their efforts

toward the United States, however modestly. Palestinians, contrary to the PARO's overarching image of its people, were more than helpless victims and nationless refugees. As it affirmed to Americans via its name and cause, indigenous Palestinians existed and remained connected to the land of Palestine. Palestinians, it made clear to those that listened, could and did speak for themselves. And they wanted to return to their homeland. This imperfect, forgotten offensive represented an initial step in the process of Palestinian decolonization of the United States and, in relation, a hoped US decolonization of Palestine after the *Nakba*.

NOTES

¹ The American Federation of Ramallah united exiles from the community of Ramallah, Palestine. It held its first national convention in 1959. Pamela E. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left: Activists, Allies, and Their Fight against Imperialism and Racism, 1960s–1980s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 25.

² Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 269–70; and Constantine Zurayk, *The Meaning of the Disaster* (Beirut: Khayat's, 1956).

³ Izzat Tannous, *The Christian West and the Arab World* (New York: Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 1961), 10–12.

⁴ Shira Robinson, *Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of Israel's Liberal Settler State* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 68–82.

⁵ *Haykal al-bina' al-thawri* (The Palestinian National Liberation Movement, c. 1958), translated by *The Palestinian Revolution*, 2016 (accessed on 2 November 2017).

2016, <http://learnpalestine.politics.ox.ac.uk/uploads/sources/588d709cc0cd4.pdf>; Paul Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15–16; Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 21–26; and Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for the State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 83–91.

⁶ Maha Nassar, *Brothers Apart: Palestinian Citizens of Israel and the Arab World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017), 121–23.

⁷ Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁸ Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 178.

⁹ For examples, see Matthew Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918–1967* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Amy Kaplan, "Zionism as Anticolonialism: The Case of *Exodus*," *American Literary History* 25, no. 4 (2013): 870–95; and Michelle Mart, *Eye on Israel: How America Came to View Israel as an Ally* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

For an exception, see Melani McAlister, "One Black Allah: The Middle East in the Cultural Politics of African American Liberation, 1955–1979," *American Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1999): 622–56.

¹⁰ See Kathleen Christison, *Perceptions of Palestine: Their Influence on Middle East Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Lawrence Davidson, *America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001); Peter Grose, *Israel in the Mind of America* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1983); Peter Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: US Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Donald Neff, *Fallen Pillars: US Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945* (Washington: Institute of Palestine Studies, 1995); and Michael Suleiman, "Palestine and Palestinians in the Mind of America," in *US Policy on Palestine: From Wilson to Clinton*, ed. Michael Suleiman (Normal, IL: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1995), 9–26.

¹¹ Tannous, *The Christian West and the Arab World*, 10–12.

¹² On US Orientalism, see Jacob Rama Berman, *American Arabesque: Arabs, Islam, and the 19th Century Imaginary* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Jack Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2001); and Karine Walther, *Sacred Interests: The United States and the Islamic World, 1821–1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

¹³ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978), 2. On critiques of imperial culture before Said's publication of *Orientalism*, see Anouar Abdel-Malek, "Orientalism in Crisis," *Diogenes* 44 (1963): 103–40; Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000); W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Soul of White Folks," *Independent* 69 (8 August 1910): 339–42; Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008); Wm. Elliot Griffis, "A Literary Legend: 'The Oriental,'" *Journal of Race Development* 3, no. 1 (1912): 65–69; Abdallah Laroui, *L'idéologie arabe contemporaine: Essai critique* (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1967); Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (New York: Orion Press, 1965); Benoy Kumar Sarkar, "The Futurism of Young Asia," *International Journal of Ethics* 28, no. 4 (1918): 521–41; and A. L. Tibawi, "English-Speaking Orientalists: A Critique of Their

Approach to Islam and Arab Nationalism," *Muslim World* 53, no. 4 (1963): 185–204.

¹⁴ Edward Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969–1994* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), xvi.

¹⁵ Hamid Dabashi, *Can Non-Europeans Think?* (London: Zed Books, 2015), 16–17.

Edward Said wrote an introductory note on the inside flap of the book cover for Izzat Tannous's memoir, *The Palestinians: A Detailed Documented Eyewitness History of Palestine under British Mandate* (New York: I.G.T. Company, 1988). This book was originally published in Arabic in 1982. Izzat Tannous, *Al-Filastīnīyūn: Maḍīn majīd wa-mustaqbal bahir* (Beirut: Markaz al-Abhath, 1982).

A personalized copy of Tannous's English version sits in the Edward Said Reading Room in Columbia University's Butler Library, which contains a combination of personal books from both Said's home and university office. In it, Tannous inscribe

My dear Edward. I have great pleasure in presenting to you a copy of *The Palestinians* in appreciation of your great efforts toward giving the people of the United States and the world, a clearer understanding of the Palestine tragedy. Happily, your efforts have not gone in vain. Your writings and television appearances have been truly effective a phenomenon that made you the select of the United States Government. You have deservedly won the admiration and gratitude of all your countrymen of whom I am one.

Izzat Tannous. New York, NY. April 17, 1988.

¹⁶ See Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012); Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 22; Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 32; and Howard Winant, *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

¹⁷ For more on the humanitarian dilemma from the perspectives of sufferers, see Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 14.

¹⁸ In 1954, with Israeli aid and active involvement, the American Zionist Council of Public Affairs was created with an \$50,000 annual budget. For more, see Giora Goodman, "'Operation Exodus': Israeli Government Involvement in the Production of Otto Preminger's film *Exodus* (1960)," *Journal of Israeli History* 33, no. 2 (2014): 209–29; Peter Hahn, "The United States and Israel in the Eisenhower Era: The 'Special Relationship'"

Revisited," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, ed. Kathryn Statler and Andrew Johns (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 225–44; Doug Rossinow, "'The Edge of the Abyss': The Origins of the Israel Lobby, 1949–1954," *Modern American History* 1, no. 1 (2018): 23–43; and Edward Tivnan, *The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

¹⁹ Salman Rushdie, "The Empire Writes Back with a Vengeance," *The Times* (3 July 1982): 8.

²⁰ Hamid Dabashi, *Post-Orientalism: Knowledge and Power in Time of Terror* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 91.

²¹ Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 191–92.

²² Start with Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds. *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

²³ For more on how the Global South, especially its migrant communities, attempted to overturn popular perceptions and government policies in the United States, see Hani Bawardi, *The Making of Arab Americans: From Syrian Nationalism to US Citizenship* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); Wail Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Richard Kim, *The Quest for Statehood: Korean Immigrant Nationalism and US Sovereignty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Alan McPherson, *The Invaded: How Latin Americans and Their Allies Fought and Ended US Occupations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Seema Sohi, *Echoes of Mutiny: Race, Surveillance, and Indian Anticolonialism in North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth-Century New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013); and Salim Yaqub, *Imperfect Strangers: Americans, Arabs, and US-Middle East Relations in the 1970s* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

²⁴ Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 65.

²⁵ For an excellent recent discussion on the imagined popular tension between the United States and decolonization, see H. Reuben Neptune, "The Irony of Un-American Historiography: Daniel J. Boorstin and the Rediscovery of a US Archive of Decolonization," *American Historical Review* 120, no. 3 (2015): 933–50.

²⁶ Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 5, 10; and James G. Carrier,

"Introduction," in James G. Carrier, ed. *Occidentalism: Images of the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 28.

²⁷ Fernando Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geographical Categories," *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (1996): 51–87; Saree Makdisi, *Making England Western: Occidentalism, Race, and Imperial Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 10.

²⁸ Michael Fischbach, *Records of Dispossession: Palestinian Refugee Property and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 246; and Rory Miller, "The Other Side of the Coin: Arab Propaganda and the Battle against Zionism in London, 1937–48," *Israeli Affairs* 5, no. 4 (1999): 200, 208.

²⁹ Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard Brown, "Introduction," in *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy*, ed. Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard Brown (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 19–20.

³⁰ Said, *The Question of Palestine*, 58.

³¹ Sami Hadawi, *The Story of My Life: Memories and Reflections* (Amman: n.p., 1996), 171–72, 299.

³² *Palestine Arab Refugee*, no. 5 (July 1956): 3; Fischbach, *Records of Dispossession*, 221, 223; and Izzat Tannous, *Warning from the Palestine Arabs: A Memoranda* (Beirut: Palestine Arab Office, 1951), 3–4.

³³ Telegram, 31 July 1951, Izzat Tannous to Harry Truman, papers of Harry S. Truman, OF 514, box 1524, Harry S. Truman Library [henceforth, HSTL]; telegram, 14 February 1951, Izzat Tannous to Harry Truman, papers of Harry S. Truman, OF 514, box 1524, HSTL; telegram, n.d., Izzat Tannous to Harry Truman, papers of Harry S. Truman, general file, box 72, HSTL; and telegram, 27 December 1951, Izzat Tannous to Harry Truman, papers of Harry S. Truman, OF 514, box 1524, HSTL.

³⁴ Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East*, 99–111; and Ussama Makdisi, *Faith Misplaced: The Broken Promise of US-Arab Relations, 1820–2003* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2010), 223.

³⁵ Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 18.

³⁶ Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone*, 4.

³⁷ Memorandum, 2 September 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; report, 13 September 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; newspaper clipping from *Al-hayat*, 1 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; report, 28 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; report, 31 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; and Edwin Locke to Sabir Amawi, 3 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL.

³⁸ Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East*, 129–32.

³⁹ Speech, 5 December, Report, 28 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; "US Envoy to Near East Resigns," 13 December 1952, *New York Times*, 5; Edwin Locke to Sabir Amawi, 16 December 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; letter, Permanent Palestine Office to Locke, n.d., papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; and "When Will the West Learn?," 21 December 1952, *Daily Star*, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL.

⁴⁰ 8 July 1952, *Daily Star*, 2; Nabih Faris, *The Image of America in the Middle East* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1951); and Constantine Zurayk, "The National and International Relations of the Arab States," in *Near Eastern Culture and Society: A Symposium on the Meeting of East and West*, ed. T. Cuyler (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 223.

⁴¹ *Mideast Mirror* 7, no. 24 (5 November 1955): 22; "Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as Amended, for the Calendar Year of 1955," n.d., 10 (available online); *Arab World* 11, no. 6 (Sept. 1965): 15; *Al-ahram* newspaper article, 21 September 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL; and "When Will the West Learn?"

⁴² Bawardi, *The Making of Arab Americans*, 286–91; and Paul Garrett and Kathleen Purpura, *Frank Maria: A Search for Justice and Peace in the Middle East* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007), 94–136.

⁴³ Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left*, 50–53.

⁴⁴ Edwin Locke to Sabir Amawi, 3 October 1952, papers of Edward A. Locke Jr., box 4, HSTL.

⁴⁵ "Biographical Sketch – Sami Hadawi," n.d., papers of Sami Hadawi, MG31 D141, vol. 1, Library and Archives Canada [LAC]; "Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as Amended, for the Calendar Year of 1955," n.d., 10 (<https://www.justice.gov/nsd-fara/page/file/991936/download>); and Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, x, 299–301, 304–5.

⁴⁶ On the politics of naming, see Julie Peteet, "Words as Interventions: Naming the Palestine-Israel Conflict," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (2005): 153–72.

⁴⁷ On the humanitarian task of "unstrangering," see Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone*, 19.

⁴⁸ Dabashi, *Post-Orientalism*, xii.

⁴⁹ "Biographical Sketch – Sami Hadawi"; Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 299–301, 304–5; Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, i; and *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, no. 1 (March 1956): 7.

⁵⁰ Doug Rossinow, "'The Edge of the Abyss.'"

⁵¹ *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, no. 5 (July 1956): 3; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, no. 12 (May 1957): 1; and Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 301–2. For more on the Zionist *hasbara* in the United States, see Peter Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: US Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945–1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

⁵² Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 302, 305, 308; and Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 35. AFME's connections to the CIA were uncovered in 1967 and, historiographically, are now well-known. For more on AFME and the ACJ, see Jack Ross, *Rabbi Outcast: Elmer Berger and American Jewish Anti-Zionism* (New York: Potomac Books, 2011); and Hugh Wilford, "American Friends of the Middle East: The CIA, US Citizens, and the Secret Battle for American Public Opinion in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947–1967," *Journal of American Studies* 51, no. 1 (2017): 93–116.

⁵³ For example, see Izzat Tannous, "Resettling Arab Refugees, 29 July 1955, *New York Times*, 16; Izzat Tannous, "Injustice to Arabs Charged," 15 November 1955, *New York Times*, 32; Letter, Izzat Tannous to Members of Congress, 6 March 1956, name file, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library [DDEL]; letter, Izzat Tannous to Dwight Eisenhower, 21 March 1957, name file, DDEL; and Sami Hadawi, "Israeli Law Protested," 2 April 1958, *New York Times*, 30.

⁵⁴ Samuel Moyn, *Christian Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 24.

⁵⁵ Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 250.

⁵⁶ Mart, *Eye on Israel*, 86.

⁵⁷ For how human dignity is a religiously framed concept, see Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone*, 21; and Moyn, *Christian Human Rights*, 7. Tannous, *The Christian West and the Arab World*, 8, 10.

⁵⁸ Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, and the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 36; and Kevin Schultz, *Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 73–74.

⁵⁹ Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 55–67.

⁶⁰ Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 302–3, 305, 308; and Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 35.

⁶¹ Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 97–100.

⁶² Izzat Tannous, *Towards a Better Understanding Between the Arab World and the United States* (New York: Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 1956), 8.

⁶³ Francesca Merlan, "Indigeneity: Global and Local," *Current Anthropology* 50, no. 3 (2009): 303–33.

⁶⁴ Mart, *Eye on Israel*, 100.

- ⁶⁵ Alfred Guillaume, *Zionists and the Bible: A Criticism of the Claim that the Establishment of an Independent Jewish State in Palestine is Prophesied in Holy Scripture* (New York: Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 1956), 3–6.
- ⁶⁶ Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 24; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, no. 5 (July 1956): 2; Izzat Tannous, *Persecution of the Arabs in Israel: Facts that Every American Should Know about the Tragedy in the Holy Land* (New York: Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 1956), i; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, no. 4 (June 1956): 1; letter, Izzat Tannous to Members of Congress, 6 March 1956, name file, DDEL; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 1, 12 (May 1957): 1.
- ⁶⁷ Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 53–55.
- ⁶⁸ Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 1.
- ⁶⁹ Liisa Malkki, "Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization," *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 3 (1996): 388.
- ⁷⁰ Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone*, 21; and Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 12–14.
- ⁷¹ Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 250.
- ⁷² Said, *The Question of Palestine*, 56; and Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, ii.
- ⁷³ Malkki, "Speechless Emissaries," 378.
- ⁷⁴ Mark Philip Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 20, 239; Carolyn Dean, "Atrocity Photography, Dignity, and Human Vulnerability," *Humanity* 6, no. 2 (2015): 239–40; Heide Fehrenbach and David Rodigno, "Introduction," in *Humanitarian Photography: A History*, ed. Heide Fehrenbach and David Rodigno (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 4, 10.
- ⁷⁵ Tannous, *The Christian West and the Arab World*, 11; Tannous, *Towards a Better Understanding*, 10; Izzat Tannous, *The Policy That Invited Soviet Russia to the Middle East* (New York: Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 1958); and Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 10, 13, 17, 21.
- ⁷⁶ Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stone*, 56, 96.
- ⁷⁷ For more on US exceptionalism, see Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006); and Daniel Rodgers, "American Exceptionalism Revisited," *Raritan Review* 24, no. 4 (2004): 21–47.
- ⁷⁸ Tannous, *Tension and Peace in the Middle East*, 18.
- ⁷⁹ For more on the idea of the United States as umpire in the world, see Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *American Umpire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).
- ⁸⁰ Tannous, *Towards a Better Understanding*, 14.

⁸¹ Tannous, *Towards a Better Understanding*; Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 311; and letter, Izzat Tannous to members of Congress, 6 March 1956, name file, DDEL.

⁸² Walter Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁸³ Kaplan, "Zionism as Anticolonialism;" and Mart, *Eye on Israel*.

⁸⁴ Sami Hadawi, *Israel and the Arab Minority* (New York: Arab Information Center, 1959).

⁸⁵ "Summary of World Broadcasts," 10 March 1960, RG 25, vol. 7061, file 7631-B-40, pt. 3.2, LAC; Hadawi, *The Story of My Life*, 319-22; "Biographical Sketch—Sami Hadawi"; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 15 (Nov. 1958): 2; *Palestine Arab Refugee* 28 (Sept. 1961); Beirut to Ottawa, 19 October 1964, RG 25, vol. 9058, file 20-4-3, pt. 1, LAC; Izzat Tannous to James Peters, 2 May 1967, papers of James Peters, MG 30 D201, vol. 3, LAC; and press release, 28 November 1967, RG 25, vol. 13439, file 25-3-2-ARAB-ISR-1, pt. 14; LAC.

⁸⁶ Said, *Politics of Dispossession*, 18.

⁸⁷ Edward Said, "Projecting Jerusalem," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 1 (1995): 13.

⁸⁸ Said, *The Question of Palestine*, xl.