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978-0-521-66976-4 - International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941-1960

Azza Salama Layton

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International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States, 1941–1960

In the period following World War II, the federal government devoted more time and attention to civil rights reform and legislation than it had since the end of Reconstruction in 1876. Despite the impressive literature that analyzes the modern civil rights movement, its connection to American foreign policy during and after the war remains largely unexplored. Focusing on this gap, Professor Layton shows that the revolutionary changes in world politics created by the war also created new opportunities and pressure points for reforming U.S. race policies. The Holocaust, the dismantling of colonial empires, the Cold War, and the establishment of the United Nations all contributed to a new receptivity to civil rights reform in both the executive and judicial branches of the federal government. And, as Professor Layton describes, civil rights leaders quickly recognized the opportunities presented by the new international environment and were able to use them in exerting their own pressure to enact domestic policy reforms.

Azza Salama Layton is assistant professor in the Political Science Department at DePaul University. Her articles have appeared in the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* and *Proteus*.

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AZZA SALAMA LAYTON

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**For my parents Kamal and Mona Salama
and
my son Matthew**

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Acknowledgments

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