

Introduction

The “History of the Future”

“[I]t is only the history of the future which can resolve the basic question of what kind of modernity the Middle East is to have.”

– U.S. Ambassador to Egypt John Badeau, May 26, 1962¹

“[Developing] peoples are now firmly determined to compensate for the past and catch up with the future under circumstances of rapid progress.”

– Egyptian President Gamal ‘Abd al-Nasser, July 9, 1962²

This book examines modernization as a theme in U.S. relations with the Arab Middle East between the end of World War II and the June 1967 Arab–Israeli War. It analyzes not only economic development policies, but also the ideas elites used to explain social change. Rather than being fundamentally divided by culture, I argue, Americans and Arabs contended over the aims and meanings of modernization within a shared set of widely held concepts from the postwar era about how societies advance. This study also focuses attention on the dialogue between regional and global influences in the politics of postwar Arab modernization. As the two quotations that open this introduction indicate, officials situated Arab development within both a Middle Eastern and a universal framework. On one hand, Arab countries experienced movements for social progress as part of a distinct regional history encompassing past Ottoman imperial reforms, a modern renaissance in Arabic letters and thought, European colonialism and anticolonialism, and the struggle against Zionism. On the other hand, those same countries joined a world of decolonizing states after 1945 engaged in the universal pursuit of economic development on the basis of competing ideological

¹ Paper by Badeau, “Prospects and Problems in United States–UAR Relations,” May 26, 1962, folder: Egypt (UAR), box 215, Policy Planning Council, Subject Files, 1954–1962, RG 59, NARA.

² Brubeck to Bundy, July 11, 1962, with speech attached, folder: UAR General 7/62–8/62, box 168A, NSF, JFKL.

prescriptions. As part of the third world, Arab states became a focus of the global Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Some Arab leaders associated their governments with other Afro-Asian and nonaligned countries, and many implemented policies administered by international experts in areas such as industry, agriculture, housing, and population control. The politics of modernizing the Arab world therefore synthesized regional factors including the Ottoman legacy, competition among Arab anticolonial movements, and rivalries between Arab regimes, with global factors such as Cold War ideological conflict, third world solidarity, and technological advances. This book studies the different ways in which Arabs and Americans defined regional underdevelopment in historical terms, as well as their alternative strategies for helping the Arab Middle East “to compensate for the past and catch up with the future,” as Nasser put it.

A regional emphasis in the study of international development provides a much-needed complement to the prevailing globalism of Cold War studies. In *The Global Cold War*, historian Odd Arne Westad featured the superpowers’ struggle to “prove the universal applicability of their ideologies” by persuading the leaders of newly independent states to adopt either a capitalist or a communist development strategy.³ Westad’s *tour de force* not only refocused Cold War studies outside of Europe, but also established a model for writing global history in which the superpowers, states from their respective blocs, and elites from developing countries interacted on the world stage. Global history has thrived recently by helping scholars to understand the phenomena that created the modern world, including capitalism, empires, migrations, and anticolonialism.⁴ This approach has influenced historians such as Guy Laron, Paul Thomas Chamberlin, Craig Daigle, and Roham Alvandi, who usefully place the Middle East into a global context.⁵ Framing development as part of the Cold War’s global clash of modernities portrays

³ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 4.

⁴ See C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World: 1780–1914* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); *A World Connecting: 1870–1945* (A History of the World), ed. Emily S. Rosenberg, et al. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2012); Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); and Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Knopf, 2014).

⁵ See Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis: Postwar Development Diplomacy and the Struggle over Third World Industrialization, 1945–1956* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013); Paul Thomas 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); Craig Daigle, *The Limits of Détente: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Arab–Israeli Conflict, 1969–1973* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press,

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it as a universal problem and highlights connections among third world countries.

A global perspective employed by itself, however, carries certain disadvantages. First, emphasizing the superpowers’ clashing modernities tends to neglect regional and religious ideologies – such as Arab nationalism and Islamism – and to marginalize their importance in a historical narrative dominated by Washington and Moscow. Westad compares such ideologies to Marxism using the collective term “nativist,” but concedes that “[t]he Marxist and nativist labels used here are of course only crude and imprecise pointers to movements that emerged on different continents and among widely varying cultures.”⁶ As a consequence, Islamists are not well integrated into postwar international history and are abruptly introduced into accounts of the 1970s and ’80s, when they confronted the superpowers in Iran and Afghanistan.⁷ As will be shown, however, Islamists participated in postwar modernization debates and were subject to the same global trends that affected secular reformers. Second, presenting third world countries as equivalent objects of superpower competition neglects how varied experiences with European colonialism and anticolonialism prior to 1945 influenced the postwar politics of development. In the case of the Arab Middle East, the Ottoman legacy also held significance for the empire’s successor states into the late twentieth century. By emphasizing distinctions among Arab countries and between the Arab Middle East and other third world regions, this book joins recent criticism by scholars such as Heonik Kwon and Masuda Hajimu questioning whether the Cold War can plausibly be described as a unified global event or as a “single, encompassing geopolitical order.”⁸ Third, Cold War globalism corresponds to the official American account of communism as a total threat. It therefore legitimizes a global response and accepts the need for a *grand* strategy. Chamberlin observes that the proliferation of global revolutionary movements during the 1960s “suggested that American fears of the domino theory were perhaps not entirely off base.”⁹ While a global perspective is essential for understanding postwar development, disaggregating the third world offers a critical approach to analyzing American power by exposing gaps between sweeping U.S. doctrines and the diverse circumstances faced by postcolonial societies.

2012); and Roham Alvandi, *Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The United States and Iran in the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 82.

⁷ See, for example, Amin Saikal, “Islamism, the Iranian Revolution, and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan,” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 3 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3:112–34.

⁸ Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 7. See also Masuda Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

⁹ Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive*, 27.

Numerous scholars have analyzed how the Cold War combined with regional struggles for decolonization and economic progress. Those who have provided the most historically rich accounts work in regional languages and literatures to understand the reciprocal influences of Cold War development formulas and regional politics. They examine encounters between U.S. policies and experts on one hand, and the ideas and historical experiences of their third world counterparts on the other. These encounters often produced results that were not entirely consistent with the objectives of any single actor, in which the outcome emerged instead from a collision of ideas, historical circumstances, and power relations. In his two-volume history of the Korean War, Bruce Cumings described the intersection between competing U.S. foreign policy agendas in postwar Asia and the history of Korean struggles first against Japanese colonialism and then against control by other powers.¹⁰ Gregg Brazinsky built on Cumings' approach by examining how South Korea's colonial experience, and the ideas of Buddhism and Confucianism, influenced its postwar campaigns of modernization and state-building.¹¹ David Biggs places Cold War development in the Mekong Delta within a long-term historical context that encompasses precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods of Vietnamese history.¹² In Latin America, Greg Grandin similarly interprets Cold War-era violence in terms of a century-long conflict between Guatemalan elites and indigenous peoples.¹³ Historians studying other parts of the globe have therefore demonstrated the value of combining regional and Cold War histories, and in some cases decenter the Cold War by examining relations between third world regions.¹⁴

¹⁰ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981, 1990). For indications of Cumings' influence, see Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis*; and Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.–Indonesian Relations, 1960–1968* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 40.

¹¹ Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

¹² David A. Biggs, *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010). For an account that emphasizes South Vietnam's distinct religious and social politics, see Jessica M. Chapman, *Cauldron of Resistance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and 1950s Southern Vietnam* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

¹³ Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). See also Thomas C. Field Jr., "Ideology as Strategy: Military-Led Modernization and the Origins of the Alliance for Progress in Bolivia," *Diplomatic History* 36 (January 2012): 147–83; and Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937–1962* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). For a regional history of the Cold War in Latin America, see Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

¹⁴ See Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); and Zach Levey, *Israel in Africa, 1956–1976* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff /Republic Of Letters, 2012).

This historical literature has helped to inspire the present study. It uses modernization to reinterpret postwar U.S.–Arab relations beyond conventional accounts of the Arab–Israeli conflict. By the end of World War II, American Arabists had already lost debates within the policy establishment about whether the United States would support Zionism. Pro-Zionist voices in Congress and the White House overruled objections from some State Department and Pentagon figures to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Meanwhile, individuals such as intelligence officer William A. Eddy (1896–1962), and institutions such as the American University of Beirut, embodied a transition in the U.S. campaign to uplift the Middle East from that of a religious mission in the Holy Land to one of secular modernization. As a result, Americans came to see the region’s distinctive importance in terms of oil interests at the same time that it became part of a global third world. American perceptions of Arab societies shifted as the older, Orientalist tradition of studying Islamic civilization textually met the latest social science approaches concerned with universal problems of development. After Israel’s establishment in 1948, a new generation of Middle East experts and petroleum industry figures worked “within the constraints” created by the evolving U.S. relationship with Israel to incorporate Arab countries into Cold War strategy, protect oil interests, and promote economic progress.¹⁵ Doing so presented them with difficulties given the obstacle Israel posed to U.S.–Arab cooperation. Although clashes between competing development policies served as one expression of the conflict over Zionism, and a focus on development never really succeeded in transcending it, the theme of modernization also reveals that U.S. relations with the Arab world encompassed more than just battles over Israel. The efforts of Americans concerned with modernizing the Middle East brought them into contact not only with the region’s past, but also with Arab elites who authored their own agendas against the global backdrop of decolonization and the Cold War.

This book uses the official archives of the United States and Great Britain, numerous private manuscripts, postwar development literature, and a wide range of Arabic-language materials to examine how Americans and Arabs contested the meaning of modernization in a variety of settings. It explains U.S. officials’ conflicts over development strategy toward the Arab world

¹⁵ Matthew F. Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918–1967* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 237. See also Hugh Wilford, *America’s Great Game: The CIA’s Secret Arabists and the Shaping of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 54–65; and Parker T. Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 41–42. On U.S. missionaries, see Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); and Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010).

and the ways in which contrasting readings of regional history informed their competing policies. Among Arab leaders, it considers conflicts between secular revolutionary modernizing agendas, such as those of Nasser and Iraqi prime minister ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim, and those of non-revolutionaries such as Jordan’s King Husayn. This study also incorporates Islamists such as Egyptian Sayyid Qutb as well as communists and Palestinian *fiḍa’iyyin* into its account of postwar Arab development. This book explores Cold War and third world influences on Arab modernization debates and on the policies of individual Arab countries. But it also places those debates within a regional context. Area studies, in the Middle East as in other regions, have been criticized as a creation of the U.S. national security state and as beholden to its agenda of sowing capitalist development across the post-colonial world.¹⁶ Nevertheless, there are compelling historical reasons for studying Arab modernization in a regional setting. Recent scholarship has portrayed development policies on the part of some Arab governments as attempts to counter encroachment on their sovereignty by other Arab states.¹⁷ Additional reasons include the Ottoman legacy, the history of anti-colonialism and anti-Zionism, the implications of oil development, and the ideal of pan-Arab unity. Such factors argue against subsuming the politics of Arab modernization entirely within the global Cold War. At the same time, regional factors confronted postwar modernizers with the fundamental problem of how to translate development formulas into distinctive contexts. Understanding this issue requires greater attention to regional particularities and their relationship to universalizing ideologies. This book therefore investigates postwar Arab history and its intersections with American power at multiple registers, inserting regionalism as an intermediate frame of reference between the nation-state (diplomatic historians’ traditional focus) and the world.

Studying encounters between American modernizers and their Arab contemporaries yields important criticisms of the U.S. foreign policy literature about modernization. As historian Nick Cullather has written, that literature analyzes “modernization” as a set of ideas belonging to the Cold War era. Recent scholarship “puts the framework inside the frame,” he explains,

¹⁶ See Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 126–28; Bruce Cumings, “Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies During and After the Cold War,” in *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences During the Cold War*, ed. Christopher Simpson (New York: The New Press, 1998), 159–88; and Mark T. Berger, “Decolonisation, Modernisation and Nation-Building: Political Development Theory and the Appeal of Communism in Southeast Asia, 1945–1975,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34 (October 2003): 421–48.

¹⁷ See Cyrus Schayegh, “1958 Reconsidered: State Formation and the Cold War in the Early Postcolonial Arab Middle East,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45 (August 2013): 421–43.

“and treats development *as* history.”¹⁸ These studies have concentrated not simply on policies intended to promote development – improving poor economies with respect to growth, productivity, and other measures – but also on the ideas that constituted modernization theory, the social science framework that influenced American strategy. Historian Michael Latham offers the best summary of modernization theory’s basic assumptions:

(1) “[T]raditional” and “modern” societies are separated by a sharp dichotomy; (2) economic, political, and social changes are integrated and interdependent; (3) development tends to proceed toward the modern state along a common, linear path; and (4) the progress of developing societies can be dramatically accelerated through contact with developed ones.¹⁹

According to Latham, modernization theory provided an academic rationale for the Vietnam War and other U.S. interventions in the third world by updating the American exceptionalist ideology of Manifest Destiny. Other historians have described modernization theory as the overseas edition of twentieth-century American liberalism. Nils Gilman associates it with Talcott Parsons’s structural-functionalist sociology. Modernization theory derived its optimistic account of social progress from postwar America, Gilman notes, and rested on assumptions of political consensus and elite dominance. It provided “a high-concept version of Americanism” promising “materialism without class conflict” and “democracy without disobedience.”²⁰ Both Gilman and Latham interpret Cold War modernization as a discourse of power and criticize its proponents for promising to remake third world societies according to an idealized image of the United States.²¹ David Ekbladh describes American development projects as the export of the New Deal liberalism embodied in the Tennessee Valley Authority.²² These scholars trace modernization in U.S. foreign policy to the history of domestic American reforms.

But defining modernization as a set of ideas formulated in the United States and exported abroad constitutes its own form of American

¹⁸ Nick Cullather, “Modernization Theory,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 214.

¹⁹ Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and “Nation Building” in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 4.

²⁰ Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Postwar America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 13.

²¹ For an earlier version of this argument, see Irene L. Gendzier, *Managing Political Change: Social Scientists and the Third World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985).

²² David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). For a larger discussion, see Nathan J. Citino, “Modernization and Development,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the Cold War*, ed. Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Craig Daigle (New York: Routledge, 2014), 118–30.

exceptionalism. Many postwar Arab elites shared the assumptions that Latham attributes to American modernizers. For instance, Nasser's statement cited earlier assumes that developing countries would progress along a common, linear path. The Egyptian president justified a disastrous military campaign in Yemen, also known as "Nasser's Vietnam," by arguing that intervention on the part of a more advanced country could help to accelerate the progress of a backward one. This book offers numerous examples of Arab modernizers – nationalists, Islamists, and communists – who objected to U.S. foreign policy but who described social change using ideas similar to those American cold warriors employed. A more interesting story remains to be told about how elites engaged in political conflict through a shared language of structure and change, society and development. These concepts circulated globally after 1945, when thousands of Arabs and others from the third world studied in Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union, and the United Nations defined common standards for measuring development.²³ In this debate, American claims about the exemplary character of U.S. development were judged by postcolonial elites in light of their own societies' historical experiences. Moreover, it is problematic to claim that American ideas about modernization were created wholly out of domestic liberalism. Development strategies cannot be fully understood apart from American engagements with Middle Eastern and other peoples, because those strategies were made and remade at the points of contact. American liberalism also took on varied meanings when it encountered other reform legacies across the third world, such as the inheritance of the nineteenth-century Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms in the old empire's Arab successor states.

Any reinterpretation of U.S.–Arab relations cannot ignore the preponderant global power the United States wielded after World War II. In the Middle East, America's military strength was reinforced by that of its ally Great Britain, which, despite conflict over Suez, participated in coordinated Anglo-American military interventions during 1958. Officials in Washington frequently resorted to covert operations to bring about desired political changes in Middle Eastern countries.²⁴ The United States also exerted formal and informal economic power, including huge investments in oil. It held a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, granting it leverage over UN policies toward the Arab–Israeli conflict. The United States contributed more funding to international development agencies such as the World Bank, and thereby exercised more authority over them, than any other country. Private American philanthropies such as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations helped to set third world development agendas. Arab and American elites

²³ See UN Department of Economic Affairs, *Measures for the Economic Development of Under-Developed Countries* (New York: UN Department of Economic Affairs, 1951).

²⁴ See Douglas Little, "Mission Impossible: The CIA and the Cult of Covert Action in the Middle East," *Diplomatic History* 28 (November 2004): 663–701.

therefore conducted their debates over modernizing the Middle East on decidedly unequal terms. Yet for all of its might, the United States was at best only partially successful in imposing its vision of the future on Arab and other third world countries. Explaining why requires an understanding of how American power intersected with distinct regional circumstances. Through its examination of those intersections in the Arab world, this study combines Middle East regional history with the history of Cold War-era U.S. foreign policy.

Analyzing U.S. policies from the perspective of Middle Eastern history represents a departure from recent trends in American foreign relations. Douglas Little, Melani McAlister, Michelle Mart, and Matthew F. Jacobs have emphasized American cultural perceptions of the Middle East.²⁵ Their critical interpretations reveal that cultural stereotypes, rather than strictly rational, strategic considerations, helped to define U.S. approaches to the region. These scholars have adapted the insights of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* to the study of U.S. foreign policy. Said’s influential work described a European cultural discourse about Middle Eastern peoples that portrayed them as the opposite and inferior “Other” to Western civilization.²⁶ In following Said, however, the U.S. scholarship shares some of *Orientalism*’s limitations. Just as Said portrayed Orientalism as a closed Western discourse, recent works about American foreign policy have turned inward to examine U.S. images of the Middle East and the network of American experts who influenced policy. This inward focus has come at the expense of understanding American and Arab perceptions of one another as being mutually constituted. Cultural images of other societies as “modern” or “backward” were the products of particular encounters, which must be studied from both Arab and American perspectives. As historian Ussama Makdisi writes: “It is one thing to criticize American representations of foreign cultures; it is an entirely different matter to study American engagements with them.”²⁷ Another problem is that neither Said nor those he inspired convincingly explains how Americans reconciled the cultural essentialism about the Middle East that they inherited from European Orientalism with the universal claims of their global development model. As will be seen, various American officials and experts attempted to show how U.S. modernization formulas could solve unique regional problems. They used their knowledge of the Middle East to argue

²⁵ Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, Rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Michelle Mart, *Eye on Israel: How America Came to View Israel as an Ally* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 2006); and Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East*.

²⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

²⁷ Ussama Makdisi, “After Said: The Limits and Possibilities of a Critical Scholarship of U.S.–Arab Relations,” *Diplomatic History* 38 (June 2014): 659.

that U.S. policies could overcome the particular historical circumstances of its underdevelopment. Evaluating their arguments requires some familiarity with Middle East historiography. This is necessary to identify how the interpretations on which those arguments were based have since been challenged. It also makes it possible to detect when Americans applied their expertise selectively to serve the needs of U.S. strategy.

In seeking to relate the regional to the global, this study is consistent with recent scholarship on the modern Middle East. Several important works have attempted to break out of an area studies model and challenge assumptions of regional exceptionalism by incorporating the Middle East into global history.²⁸ This book considers how American development strategies and the superpower rivalry combined with patterns in Arab history. It also examines the ways in which Arab elites sought to appropriate the ideas of Cold War modernization and use the promise of development for their own political advantage. Studies of earlier periods in Middle Eastern history offer some guidance about how to understand this dynamic. In *Ottoman Brothers*, for example, Michelle U. Campos examines the responses of different groups living in Palestine to the 1908 revolution in Istanbul that reinstated the Ottoman constitution.²⁹ Central to her study is analyzing different interpretations of political liberalism within Palestine and the contested idea of “liberty [*hurriya*]” among Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Through competing invocations of “liberty,” members of these groups sought to reform the empire’s community-based conception of rights and to redefine Ottoman citizenship. Conflicts over the meaning of *hurriya* were ultimately struggles to determine who would benefit from the revolution. Arab modernizers from half a century later similarly contended over the meaning of such universal terms as “development [*tanmiya*],” “progress [*taqaddum*],” and “modernization [*ta’sir* or *tajdid*].” After 1945, debates about modernization became the language of political conflict. Perhaps the postwar era’s most important analogue to “liberty” was the term “system [*nizam*].”³⁰ Arab officials and intellectuals applied this term not only to capitalism and communism, but also to Islamist and other models for regional development that they preferred to either of the superpowers’ prescriptions. The term *system* stands, in the first place, for the set of assumptions shared

²⁸ See, for instance, Robert Vitalis, *America’s Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); and Ilham Khuri-Makdissi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

²⁹ Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

³⁰ Other common postwar Arabic terms used for discussing development policies and that denote a systematic understanding of society include “model [*namudhaj*],” “program [*bar-namaj* or *minhaj*],” and “method [*uslub*].”