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Robert Douglas: American Missionary in the Cold War Middle East

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ROBERT DOUGLAS: AMERICAN MISSIONARY IN THE COLD WAR MIDDLE EAST

By

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ABSTRACT

Robert Douglas was a Church of Christ missionary to Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon during the 1960s. This introduced him to the post-colonial context of these countries. He and his family lived as foreigners and independent missionaries, interacting with the American oil industry in Libya, Egyptian and Arab nationalism, and the impact of the Cold War on the Arab World. Although Douglas did not notice the Cold War around him, it impacted his time there in important ways. The United States and the Soviet Union struggled to gain influence over the young countries in which he resided. In Libya he came in as a preacher to the American and British oil workers in Benghazi, but desired to be a missionary to the Libyans. In Egypt he and his family came in as tourists but created a steady congregation of converts through missionary efforts. Both actions were illegal, due to laws in Libya and Egypt, and these laws led to the retraction of his and his family's visas in both countries. He then made his way to Lebanon where he, alongside other independent missionaries within his network, constructed a missionary school for recent converts. The Six Days' War led to his leaving Lebanon and returning to the United States. Upon his return, he attended Fuller Seminary and the University of Southern California and became regarded as an expert in Muslim-aimed evangelism among American evangelicals. His career challenges standard missionary narratives through his independent missionary activities, highlights American understandings and misconceptions of Islam, and the reality of the Cold War in the Middle East. All of this makes his journey into a historical narrative to challenge and address the larger macrohistories of American Christian missionaries abroad.

INTRODUCTION

As 1965 ended, Egyptian authorities revoked the tourist visas of Robert "Bob" Douglas, his wife June, and their children, eight-year-old son Paul and five-year-old daughter Rebecca. This pushed them out of Gamal Abdel Nasser-ruled Egypt, forcing them to relocate. As an American citizen, the natural reaction would be to head back to the States. Instead, they moved to Beirut, Lebanon and, alongside their network of independent missionaries, set up a training school for Arab Christian church leaders.[1] This was but one of many times that he and his family would move throughout his life. His travels would take him from Oklahoma to North Africa and the Middle East before returning to the States and continuing his education at Fuller Seminary and the University of Southern California. He would then work at Pepperdine University before moving to Illinois to teach at Lincoln Christian Seminary. In 2008, he would retire to Dallas, Texas.[2]

Douglas was born near the end of the Great Depression, on Tuesday April 16, 1935, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Methodist parents. Douglas remained Methodist until his conversion to the Church of Christ, another Protestant Christian denomination, in June of 1952, while dating his future wife, June Harris. His life and his faith led him to earn his B.A. and M.A. in 1957 from Abilene Christian College in Abilene, Texas. He then became an evangelist in Lawton, Oklahoma at the Sixth and Arlington Church of Christ, before his life took a global turn.[3] After reading an article on the Church of Christ missionary efforts in Libya, he moved to

[1] Jack Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," *Lectureship Books*, 1968, 33.
[2] Robert C. Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae," After 2009.
[3] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33.

Benghazi, Libya, then Cairo, Egypt, and then to Beirut, Lebanon as a missionary, independent of a larger governing missionary body.[4]

In the Arab world, Douglas was surrounded by a new world and language. While he hoped to remain in Libya as a missionary for Christ, it was not to be. By the time he returned to the States, he had lived under Idris al-Sanusi of Libya, Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and the rising tensions of Lebanon and Israel leading up to the Six Day's War.[5] He had a front-row seat to American policy and the circumstances of foreign contact in the Middle East. According to him, the Cold War did not really influence his time there.[6] However, through his explanation of his time abroad, it seemed to affect the way people viewed his presence within their countries, especially in Nasser-ruled Egypt. He also interacted with some of the facets of Cold War diplomacy, such as the handling of his visas by the various nations, and through the presence of Soviet and American efforts in the Middle East. He could even see some of the effects of the great power conflict culminate in the Six Days' War. In other words, the Cold War was all around him though he failed to acknowledge it.

A critical characteristic of Douglas's time was his being one of the earliest missionaries from his unorganized denomination to serve in a Muslim-dominated region of the world. Instead of depending on a larger missionary organization, he had to depend on his network of fellow independent missionaries in the region. Together they would create the Middle East Bible

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[4] Bob Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), interview by Evertt Huffard, January 1, 1971, https://scholarworks.harding.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=missions-history, Ann Cowan Dixon Archives and Special Collections; Bob Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), interview by Evertt Huffard, January 1, 1971, https://scholarworks.harding.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=missions-history, Ann Cowan Dixon Archives and Special Collections; Robert Douglas, Oral History Interview at Dallas International University with Robert Douglas Concerning His Missions' Efforts in Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon, interview by William Riley Parker, Video, November 2, 2018.

[5] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

[6] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

Training School in Beirut, Lebanon. This creation is a moment of unification for a denomination that was, and is, made up of independent churches. Douglas himself noted the consequences of lacking a larger supporting organization.[7] If the denomination had been organized, it is likely that his time in the Middle East would have been much more uniform.

From his humble beginnings in Oklahoma City, Douglas would become regarded as an expert in Muslim proselytizing within evangelical Christian networks, earning a Masters' and Ph.D. to further his missionary expertise.[8] He would even serve as the Director of the Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies.[9] His level of expertise would hint at a level of missionary success. However, he had minimal success in both Egypt and Libya. Lebanon's Middle East Bible Training College was his only recognizable success.[10] However, the expertise he gained during his missions' work created an individual who would speak across the United States as an expert on Muslim missions' work whose driving desire was to break the traditional mold of "less than happy interaction" between Christians and Muslims.[11]

Problems with an Orientalized Subject

Some of the problems that arise through the retelling stories such as Douglas's are highlighted by historian Laila Parsons. Essentializing the individuals and their surroundings can easily come across as reifying the Orientalist narrative and causing the author to become a type

[7] Robert Christy Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary in the Church of Christ: Illustrated by a Case Study of Black Civil Rights" (Ph. D., University of Southern California, 1980); Robert C. Douglas, *The Exercise of Informal Power Within the Church of Christ: Black Civil Rights, Muted Justice, and Denominational Politics* (Lewiston, NY, Queenston, Ontario, and Lampeter, Wales: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008).
[8] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[9] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[10] Evertt Huffard, "Lebanon Report" (Canton, Ohio: Market Avenue Church of Christ, July 29, 1974), 1, Harding School of Theology Archives.
[11] Robert C. Douglas, "Strategic Components in a Proposed Experimental Approach to Evangelization of Muslims" (M.A., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1977), 1.

of "neo-Orientalist."[12] Furthermore, with Douglas having a Western view of the Middle East, it is impossible to escape some of his generalizations and essentializing moments in his recollections. This must be rectified by criticism of his words and the recognition of the overarching presence of colonialist powers and their created dynamics.

Furthermore, since this work is focusing on the use of memory and recollection of the past, it is also necessary to acknowledge the critique of literary criticism that Parsons recognized. All the sources from Douglas are ego documents and must be critiqued as products of his own recollection and memory. They are also products of a highly educated individual who trained for years in religion, and not history. Instead, they are productions of his religiosity and are inherently dichotomous, pitting his Christianity against Islam.

Beyond these critiques, this work fits Parsons' statements regarding the three categories of historical analysis. Douglas makes specific reference to these colonial, modern, and nationalistic natures of each of the nations he lived in.[13] From "traditional" Libya to nationalist Egypt and modern Lebanon, each with its own colonial past, much of his time is framed within Parsons' categories.[14] According to Melani McAlister, discussions of modernity and modernization had been coming into evangelical missionary language during the 1960s.[15] The way Douglas responds to these trends in the Middle East historiography contributes to the understanding of some of the Arab countries' steps away from their colonial pasts. His

[12] Laila Parsons, "Micro-Narrative and the Historiography of the Modern Middle East: Historiography of the Modern Middle East," *History Compass* 9, no. 1 (January 2011): 86.
[13] Parsons "Micro-Narrative and the Historiography of the Modern Middle East", 85.
[14] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[15] Melani McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders: A Global History of American Evangelicals* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 198.

interactions with new Arab governments in the post-colonial context are interesting, since he was a member of their colonial past, being a Western Christian in Muslim national majorities.

Allusions to the concepts of nationalism, colonialism, and modernity are part of the post-colonial trend of recent scholarship of the Arab world, which directly correlates with Laila Parsons' critique of the lack of more personal histories of the Middle East.[16] Parson's own monograph, *The Commander*, is placed within the same colonial, post-colonial, and Arab nationalistic context that Douglas discusses during his missionary efforts.[17] Her analysis of Fawzi al-Qawuqji is a great example of using an individual's life and history to break down some of the problems she identifies in her earlier critique of more personal histories of the Middle East.[18]

The Main Sources

I will be analyzing two 1971 interviews from Harding University's Living History of Missions, a series of four interviews which I personally carried out with Dr. Douglas in November of 2018, a lecture by Douglas at the 1968 Bible Lecture Series at Abilene Christian College, and a few missionary statements as Douglas's primary sources.[19] These sources allow the reader to understand what Douglas personally believed he was doing and what he was able to experience firsthand. While some of the statements are verifiable, others, such as his Libyan visa situation, must be taken at face value using his own account.

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[16] Parsons, "Micro-Narrative and the Historiography of the Modern Middle East," 84–96.
[17] Laila Parsons, *The Commander: Fawzi Al-Qawuqji Ad the Fight for Arab Independence, 1914-1948* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2016), p. xii-xiv.
[18] Parsons, "Micro-Narrative and the Historiography of the Modern Middle East"; Parsons, *The Commander*.
[19] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon); Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt); Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text."; At the time of the interviews, Harding University was known as Harding College. This name change is also true of Abilene Christian College, since it is now name Abilene Christian University.

Harding's interviews with Douglas mainly address his view of the local Christian population in Egypt and his later work in Lebanon, but he does briefly mention his one year in Libya.[20] The later interviews, which I carried out, attempted to address wider trends, specifically the Cold War background. Historians should approach sources like personal interviews and presentations with apprehension, since they are ego-documents, as they contain his answers to questions regarding his personal experience and actions in the Middle East. Furthermore, since the later interviews took place long after the events they describe, Douglas likely filtered his memories through the context of the Cold War and the terrorist attacks of September 11, instead of recalling them directly from his time abroad. Furthermore, as a missionary, his religious justification of his actions and his disagreements with other religious creeds tint his answers, but this does not necessarily lessen their value.

I carried out the later interview with Dr. Douglas in Dallas, Texas on November 2-3, 2018. Many of my questions were developed beforehand, while some I organically constructed when interesting points arose in Douglas's responses. These questions are included in this work's Appendix. The interview was separated into four recorded sections ranging from forty minutes to an hour and a half, with the first two having been transcribed and the latter two having been time-stamped for reference to certain questions. Dr. Douglas understood that he was free to answer the questions at length and to allow his mind to lead him where it may. This allowed for a stream of consciousness style of answer. I would not attempt to rein in his responses in any way, only going to the next question when he either went silent or would acknowledge he was done with his thought. While his answers were sometimes rather short, he

[20] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt); Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon).

would often give long answers with small stories built in, such as the revocation of his visa in Libya. The information gleaned from his answers allowed for a clearer timeline of his travels or general overviews of his work. However, there were various issues with some of the information gathered: specifically, much of his discussion did not mention his missionary work.

Silences in His Narrative

Since this interview took place roughly fifty years after the events discussed, it is likely that Douglas forgot much of his time in the Middle East. However, there were sometimes moments of unique clarity. He was able to recall the names of the communities in which he lived, certain vivid memories of travel, and even some smaller common things. He could remember the experience of getting a cheap tailored suit in an Egyptian market but could not remember the name of friends that he knew.[21] Often, it seems as if he was able to recall either experiences that he did not have in the States or moments of high emotional stress.

It is noteworthy that his answers regarding his work in Libya and Egypt were rather vague. He was more restricted in his work there, due to the laws or restrictions against proselytization, but it still does not dismiss the larger question of why he did not relate his efforts in those countries. A possibility is that he could have a sense of failure that led to his "forgetting" of many of the more mission-oriented moments of his travels. According to Douglas, his biggest failure in Libya was not disguising his proselytizing interactions with Libyans that led to his expulsion. In Egypt, his biggest failure was their eventual removal from Egypt and their leaving the house churches he had established there. In Lebanon, it was the

[21] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

failure to establish a solid congregation in the country itself and the eventual collapse of the Bible Training School due to the Lebanese Civil War.[22]

These failures were among his most vivid memories of his time in Libya and Egypt, while his failures in Lebanon were different. In Lebanon, his failures were long drawn out realizations, like the failure to create a congregation, or he was not present for them, as in the closing of the school.[23] In Libya, his failure to handle his missionary activities discreetly enough led directly to his eventual expulsion. Thus, it is possible to view his silence towards his activities in Libya as a silence of regret or guilt surrounding expulsion. This failure seems to have further led to his desire to remove himself from the Christian populations in Egypt, fearing that his association with them could cause problems.[24]

However, he addresses his time in Egypt a lot more. His recollection of the house churches, the laws surrounding his work, the specific community in which he lived, and the visits that he made to his friends were all clearly defined. Abandoning the house churches was not a thing that likely constricted his discussion of them, since he did acknowledge his later correspondence with many of the individuals there.[25] Instead, the reason that much of his narrative is not fleshed out in Egypt is due largely to the lack of secondary material surrounding his time there. There was no other missionary from his denomination located there and no lasting group still tied directly to the States, unlike the Lebanese Training School. Instead, the local believers there became independently functioning and did not require him.

[22] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[23] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[24] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[25] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

This changed in Lebanon. His work in Lebanon is clearly discussed. It seems to have set the stage for much of his later work. His experience there is the earliest example of administrative experience on his CV, which would seem to give it a level of importance on his rather extensive list of experience. Before his founding of the School, the only things that remain on his CV are his BA and MA degrees from Abilene Christian College and his Minister position at a Church of Christ Church in Oklahoma.[26] After the Training School, he served in five other administrative positions in various organizations.[27] It is likely that he often had to recall experience from being the President of the Middle East Bible Training School whenever he worked in the later positions, thus keeping these memories more easily recallable. The other areas of work in Libya and Egypt, while still important to him, likely did not have the same lasting impact as his work as the School President, thus making them more easily forgotten and harder to recall.

Beyond just being the earliest administrative experience, the people he met in Lebanon, such as Carl Matheny, Evertt Huffard, and some of the students at the School, would maintain contact with Douglas for many years after his return stateside.[28] This made the memories of his time in Lebanon more present. While the Egyptian churches maintained contact with him, some of the students from the School eventually immigrated the United States and reconnected directly with Douglas. Evertt Huffard, and his son, both researched Muslim-Christian interactions, just like Douglas, for most of their careers and were in contact with him as well.[29] Seeing individuals

[26] Douglas, “Curriculum Vitae.”
[27] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae.”
[28] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[29] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Douglas, “Curriculum Vitae”; Evertt W. Huffard, “Evertt W. Huffard, PhD, Credentials,” 2018, https://hst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Evertt-W.-Huffard-Bio-2018.pdf; “Dr. Evertt Lee Huffard, 1924-2004,” History of the Restoration Movement, accessed February 3, 2019, http://www.therestorationmovement.com/_states/tennessee/huffard,evertt.htm.

from that time in his life likely made these memories even more present than his administrative experience. This kind of connection was never alluded to with the other two locations and thus made Lebanon easier to recall than Libya and Egypt. Beyond his memory, his time in Lebanon is easier to address due to the sources from the School. The Harding School of Theology retained many of the newsletters from the School after Evertt Huffard took over as President. Some of the student biographies addressed in these newsletters make personal allusions to Douglas as part of their conversion or student experience. These sources fill in some of the smaller silences in Douglas's Lebanese narrative. Altogether, Douglas's time in Lebanon is easier to address due to the resources available, his easier ability to recall the information, and the lack of a clear moment of failure.

Moments of Transitions

Douglas's story also highlights his moments of transition between sites and how he had to adjust to the differences of Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon. These moments of transition are understood in oral history as differing from the day-to-day triviality of life and work. The importance of these transitional times altered his long-term plans, whereas the day-to-day missionary work was what he had expected to carry out from the start. For example, his time in Libya is not clearly depicted until his Visa was revoked by the Libyan government, which led to his leaving the country.[30] While Douglas's missions work was not trivial to him, these moments of transition stand out in his mind as unexpected and unplanned moments that drastically altered his families lives. As is expected, the human mind does not easily recall information the farther removed an individual is from the moment in recall. However, they do often understand the

[30] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

significance of certain events or transitions upon their life more clearly, due to their own recollection and thought on their past.[31]

Alongside these personal sources, the US State Department and National Security Council produced multiple documents about the region. While Douglas himself is a source on the ground and outside of the international political sphere, these sources paint a background of political, economic, and military ventures directed toward United States' Cold War foreign policy. While Douglas would not have known about these discussions, letters, memorandums, reports, or actions, aside from what he heard on the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Voice of America, they made much of his trip possible.[32] Without the relationships these American individuals and their administrations had with Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon, Douglas would have been unable to move there and proselytize without significant interference, due to national reservations on foreign influence and proselytizing.

Douglas's Christianity and Islam

Often, within Christianity, Christian-Muslim relations are explained as one "correct" religious group versus a religious "other." While this is to be expected with Douglas's experience as a Christian missionary, I recognize that this trend is a problematic one in historical analysis. His answers regarding Muslims show an individual discussing a religious "other" in a competitive mindset regarding "saving the lost" of the world.[33] While the later interviews show a compassion and fondness of his interactions with individual Muslims, the Abilene lecture series, which took place during the latter years of his mission work, shows a belief in Islam being

[31] Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 39.
[32] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[33] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 37–38.

the "most militant belief in the world," and some very specific negative claims regarding Muslim religious beliefs.[34] Compounding this with some of his interviews, he directly relates the traditional versus modern sense of the nations and peoples he interacted with.[35] This comparative dichotomy lends to issues surrounding his recognition of the local cultures. He clearly delineates the three national cultures and seems to essentialize them when compared to one another. These essentializations are problematic, since it is impossible to classify an entire country as "traditional" or "modern" when discussing it from a purely religious standpoint.

Islam is a religion that is often compared to Western Christianity and Western thought. As such, many within the religion feel the need to either defend their religion or integrate and modernize Muslim theories and scholarship.[36] Douglas's claims show his sense of the Muslim World around him with various levels of comparative "modernity" between his various countries and the West. Furthermore, anytime he discussed the transition between religions, Muslim-to-Christian conversion was discussed as largely problematic both socially and economically, due to familial and public stigmatism and distaste towards the converted individual. This largely stems from his belief in the community-based orientation of Islam. If an individual left Islam to join another religion, they would be viewed as a "betrayer" who was turning his back on his "family or collective." Douglas points to this sense of group identity as a unique facet of Muslim ideology, one that differs from Judaism and Christianity.[37] While his discussion of this group

[34] Pope et al., 36.
[35] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[36] Geoffrey Nash, Kathleen Kerr-Koch, and Sarah E. Hackett, eds., *Postcolonialism and Islam: Theory, Literature, Culture, Society and Film*, Routledge Islamic Studies Series (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 42.
[37] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

identity is not inherently negative, it further paints his comparative nature between his accepted monotheisms and Islam.[38]

This Orientalizing view also informs Douglas's place in the oft-discussed topic of missionaries as part of a civilizing mission. Douglas's efforts to reach the populations of Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon with his "gospel" highlights the concern over what he would consider their backwards beliefs.[39] His Abilene lectures allude to Islam being opposed to the modern world. This would line up with what Makdisi describes as the characterization of "Islam and the unevangelized Orient as inherently unfit for modern life" and which put "Christianity and Islam" in a "historic struggle."[40] This struggle is one that Douglas clearly points to in his Abilene lecture. Placing himself within this struggle then likely justified his disobeying anti-proselytizing laws in Libya and then breaking the international Treaty of Montreaux by being a missionary in Egypt. This seems to denote a sense of moral superiority in this global struggle, since he would break the laws of other nations to attempt to save the souls of Muslims, all while not attempting to proselytize to other Christian denominations like the Copts. However, it is interesting to note that, aside from entering the country under false pretenses, Douglas made conscious attempts not to break the law, specifically the legal restrictions in Egypt regarding group meetings. He stated that "We were not violating the law," while still violating the Treaty of Montreaux.[41]

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[38] Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018; by "accepted monotheisms," I mean that Judaism and Christianity were monotheisms that Douglas would, religiously, have accepted as canon to his religious belief. Alternatively, Islam, which had formed after his own religion and that he viewed as a threat to his own belief system, was not to be "accepted".
[39] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[40] Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 13.
[41] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

This moral high-ground recalls the work of Beth Baron who notes that the effort of proselytizing, instead of being a "service provider", meant that a missionary was on a civilizing mission.[42] The only "services" that Douglas provided were English correspondence courses to help Arabic-speakers in their English language skills and the educational services he offered to recently converted individuals who would then further the missionary work but on a local level. Aside from these, his journey appears to function much like Evertt Huffard, Carl Matheny, and Bob Hare, other missionaries in his denomination. Each relied on support from independent churches back in the States while trying their best to construct steady congregations in their vicinities. His ability to justify his illegal or questionable actions by bringing backwards Muslims to a better way of life through conversion, recalling the discussion of Makdisi and Baron, places Douglas clearly in a Christian civilizing mission.

Makdisi addresses the portrayal of American missionaries as representatives of imperialism. Makdisi directly addresses imperial and colonial activity attached to American missionary work in the Middle East.[43] Douglas discusses the outcomes of this imperialism and colonialism in his lecture in Abilene and his work in Libya and Lebanon. Like Makdisi, Douglas points to critiques of missionaries seeing non-Christian nations as "nonwhite" and Christian ones as "white."[44] However, this discussion of "whiteness" is not the same when Douglas discusses it. His referencing of the whitening of these nations is directly referencing the biblical John 4:35 of fields being "white already to harvest."[45] So while this biblical allusion could be construed as

[42] Beth Baron, *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014), 194.
[43] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 172.
[44] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 7.
[45] Reverend C.I. Schofield, ed., *Holy Bible*, Schofield Study Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909), 1119.

racial, it is more likely a discussion of the receptiveness of the mission field and the darkness of Christian sin, due to his reference of the biblical verse. Nevertheless, this reference is directly attached to ideas of imperialism, colonialism, and moral superiority. Douglas's sees the fields being "white unto harvest," only because of the "influence of colonial powers," and their "preaching of what they believed to be true," i.e. Christianity.[46]

Douglas's language surrounding missionaries as agents of change and "whitening" aligns directly with Makdisi's similar discussion. Specifically, Makdisi's analysis of colonizer versus colonized, the way that missionaries subverted native culture, and how native culture was "redeemed and represented by nationalist leaders," speaks to Douglas's concern over the decolonizing aspect of the post-imperial world and his concern over the "whitened" harvest.[47] Whereas Makdisi's missionaries were concerned over the "moral and spiritual decay of America," Douglas was more concerned over the state of global Christianity.[48] This concern is highlighted when he stated that "Each year some additional area of the world's surface goes under, pulled down by the powers of darkness."[49] Makdisi would see the description of being "pulled down by…darkness," as just another example of the "classic missionary," and their viewing of a Christian West and Muslim East.[50] Thus, his discussion is strongly tied to the traditional missionary "civilizing mission".

These types of beliefs make Douglas's views heavily laden with comparison between Christianity and Islam, which is to be expected from an individual who largely focused on

[46] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 40.
[47] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 9.
[48] Makdisi, 58.
[49] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 37.
[50] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 7; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 37.

ministering to Muslims as a Christian missionary. These views are to be accepted and recognized as a researcher, dealing with personal recollections, writings, and beliefs, especially when the subject's identity differs from that of the populace he discusses.

"Independent" Versus "Organized" Missionaries

An important part of Douglas's move was his denomination's lack of a larger governing organization. During his interviews, he only mentions the support of one church, and nothing more.[51] This lack of organized missionary activity is likely what led him carry out the activities that he did, especially in Libya and Egypt. Organized missionaries were often attached to the "service provider" mentality of missionary work.[52] Organizations like the Assemblies of God and the Southern Baptist Convention had doubled their missionary efforts after World War II, thus increasing the reach and global impact of their organizations and their countries.[53] Organizations like these had long-standing traditions of "service" focused missions work, like orphanages, medical missions, or "nursing or agricultural training".[54] Douglas, however, did none of those things. His work focused almost entirely on proselytizing, without the added benefit of these more expensive types of missionary activity. His only examples of "service" work were his correspondence courses in Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon, which only succeeded in Egypt until its translation into Arabic, and his Training School in Lebanon, which would have been impossible without the help of other missionaries in his congregation.[55] Without the larger organizations to back him, he was dependent on funding from his local congregation, as in

[51] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[52] Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*, 194.
[53] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 19.
[54] McAlister, 197; Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 172; Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*, 33.
[55] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

Libya, support from individual churches back in the States, or on the combined efforts of other missionaries.[56]

One thing that connects all missionaries was their feeling of a civilizing mission towards those they were trying to reach. Each of them, organized or not, had a sense of moral superiority over the local populations. They often viewed themselves as culturally advanced beyond the locals, specifically in treatment of women or consumption of alcohol.[57] Furthermore, their "service" work often made them feel as if they were rescuing locals from a backwards or lost world.[58] Specifically their desire to work towards the "salvation" of non-Christians was part of their attempt to transplant their own beliefs and cultures in those who were less fortunate.[59]

Often, missionaries in these larger organizations were cleared through tedious applications processes that would entail giving them evangelism work experience.[60] Some organized missionaries had the chance at total immersion in the Arabic language, something that Douglas wishes he would have done.[61] Sometimes, organizations would open "special training schools" for future missionaries, to prepare them for their work ahead.[62] Douglas's experience differed. He went straight to Libya, with no preparation or training. There were no formal expectations of him from a larger organization. He raised support among the churches he knew, got his passport, and headed overseas to carry out his work.[63]

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[56] Douglas.
[57] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 35.
[58] Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*, 46; McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 30–52.
[59] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 61; McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 35.
[60] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 197.
[61] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 85–96; Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[62] Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*, 56.
[63] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

This is very different from most missionaries discussed by other historians. Ussama Makdisi's *Artillery of Heaven* discusses the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions as a leading association of missions' support during the 19th century.[64] Beth Baron's *The Orphan Scandal* points to multiple organizations supporting missions' work as main actors in her narrative. These include the Board of Foreign Missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Assemblies of God Mission, and the Egypt General Mission during the early 20th century.[65] McAlister's *Kingdom of God Has No Borders* references twenty-six different governing or missionary organizations.[66] To compare denominations, Douglas's denomination, which numbered over one and half million in 1990, is not mentioned by Baron, Makdisi, or McAlister.[67] In 1990, The Assemblies of God was roughly the same size and were a much younger denomination, yet they are cited by Baron and McAlister as major parts of the Middle East missionary historiography.[68] With McAlister's work continuing into the twenty-first century, one would expect that she would mention both the Church of Christ and the Assemblies of God since they were of equal size and sent out missionaries to the Middle East, but she does not. I posit that historians' silence towards the Church of Christ is due to their lack of a larger governing or archival body.

Douglas's time would have varied if he had been part of a larger organization. For example, the Southern Baptist Convention had missionaries serving in the Middle East, such as

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[64] Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*.
[65] Beth Baron, *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. xix.
[66] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders,* p. xi-xii.
[67] Bobby Ross Jr, "165,000 Fewer Souls in the Pews: Five Questions to Consider," *The Christian Chronicle*, March 2, 2015, sec. Inside Story, https://christianchronicle.org/165-000-fewer-souls-in-the-pews-five-questions-to-consider/.
[68] Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*; McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*; "Major Worship Service Attendance 1978 through 2017," Statistics (General Secretary's Office: Assemblies of God, June 18, 2018); "About the AG," Assemblies of God, accessed April 20, 2019, https://ag.org/About/About-the-AG.

David and Maxine King in Lebanon. David had a similar education background to Douglas but had an extensive resume of working in "several churches" before his missionary journey began. The Kings were then appointed by the SBC's Foreign Mission Board to a professorship at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut. This supported him while he still received support from the Mission Board.[69] These differences are unavoidable. Due to the SBC support, King was able to gain employment, serve as a missionary, and maintain residence there through the Six Days War and the Lebanese Civil War.[70]

This is a very different narrative from Douglas's. Douglas had only one job working in a church before he began his time abroad. His only support came from the small independent churches. He was not appointed to his position as missionary and was not given formal employment, excluding his brief minister position in Libya. He also did not have the extensive network offered by a larger organization to allow his work to continue through international crises.[71] Compared to King, Douglas's work was highly unorganized and almost entirely dependent upon the circumstances where lived.

Besides this difference, the Kings had a central repository for their manuscripts and documents. The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, the central repository for most Southern Baptist work, holds their entire collection.[72] Douglas directly addressed this issue in his dissertation at the University of Southern California. Due to the "lack of a central repository of documents," the Church of Christ was stricken from the analyses of historians and

[69] Taffey Hall, "David King- Baptists in the Middle East Collection," December 2011, 2, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, http://www.sbhla.org/downloads/900.pdf.
[70] Hall, 2.
[71] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[72] "Information," Southern Baptist Historical Library & Archives, accessed March 2, 2019, http://www.sbhla.org/info.htm.

the historical narratives of Christian history in the United States.[73] Harding University has attempted to fill this gap by acquiring as much of the missionary material that it can. Through its interviews and its School of Theology's archives, I was able to access material from other missionaries, such as Evertt Huffard. However, compared to the material and resources accessible from a more organized denominational archives, their sources are miniscule.

Besides the decentralized nature of the Church of Christ, Douglas critiques the reluctance of secular scholars to discuss the more recent history of religious denominations beyond that of the 19th century.[74] Douglas pointed to the "suspicion of secular higher education, especially the social sciences," and the dominance of focus on church doctrine and fellowship as a reason for the lack of histories from within the Church of Christ itself.[75] The stories of these smaller missionaries are no less impressive than those of missionaries from the larger organizations used by Baron and Makdisi. While the Church of Christ missionaries were not part of a governing body, they were still able to reach places throughout Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia.[76]

What makes Douglas's work different from both organized and unorganized missionaries is his constant movement. While most missionaries, like the Kings, the Hares, and the Huffards, would stay in one location for extended periods of time, Douglas moved to three different

[73] Robert Christy Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary in the Church of Christ: Illustrated by a Case Study of Black Civil Rights" (Ph. D., University of Southern California, 1980), 4.
[74] Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary," 5.
[75] Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary," 5.
[76] See, "Living History of Missions | | Harding University," accessed February 2, 2019, https://scholarworks.harding.edu/missions-history/. As one of the only organizations that made an effort to record many of these efforts, Harding's Living History of Missions retains multiple oral history interviews from the 1970s from missionaries from all across the globe. Many of these individuals served abroad during the 1950s and 60s and then recorded these interviews upon their return. These interviews are invaluable pieces of evidence that offer narratives that have not been told and that allow for a great opportunity to break the mold of larger organizational and structural narrative. Beyond the structural bodies of the larger denominations, these oral history interviews give first-hand accounts of how American Christians lived abroad during the Cold War.

countries within six years.[77] This makes Douglas a very small minority in the long-term service missionary community.[78] Among the fifty-one Church of Christ missionaries interviewed by Harding University's Living History of Missions, Douglas was one of two who was interviewed for their time in more than one country.[79] This is the primary difference between Douglas and other independent missionaries. His constant movement allowed him to interact with a wider range of experiences, nations, cultures, and historical moments than would have been possible had he stayed in one location.

Missionaries within organizational structures are the ones who receive most attention from researchers. This is due to larger organizations' archival capabilities, large amount of source production, extensive resources, and the ease of research that a single repository allows. Douglas, on the other hand, left a very thin trail of paperwork beyond his education. His time in the Middle East is mentioned through others' newsletters or subsumed to a sentence or two in his biographical sketches at conferences or in teaching credentials. Beyond those mentions, the Harding University interviews and my own are the only points of discussion available. If he had been part of a larger organization, it is likely that his paper trail and mission narrative would have been better preserved.

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[77] Hall, "David King"; "Dr. Evertt Lee Huffard, 1924-2004"; Bob Hare, Interview of Bob Hare, interview by Winfred Wright, June 5, 1970, https://scholarworks.harding.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1030&context=missions-history, Ann Cowan Dixon Archives and Special Collections; Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; the Kings and Hares were both abroad for twenty years in Lebanon and Austria/Germany, respectively. The Huffards were in Jordan for eight years before moving to Lebanon for four years, before the Lebanese Civil War forced them out.

[78] While long-term missionaries often remain in the same location for extended periods of time, short-term missionaries might visit multiple locations in the span of a few years. McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders,* 195-212.

[79] "Living History of Missions | | Harding University."

FROM TEXAS TO LIBYA

Figure 1-Image of Robert Douglas, circa 1968. Reprinted from Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33.

Four years after graduating with his M.A. from Abilene Christian College, Bob Douglas decided to move to Benghazi, Libya. After serving at the Sixth and Arlington Church of Christ for nearly four years, he and his wife decided to uproot their family, including a one-year old daughter, and move across the globe.[80] His and his wife's personal conviction towards missionary work led them to go abroad to serve their Lord.[81] Without formal training in the Arabic language or on living in the Middle East, except for reading an article on Libya missions' activities from the *Christian Chronicle* journal, the Douglases began their move to Libya.[82]

They arrived in Benghazi in January of 1961. Although there was no organization to assign or recognize his placement in Libya, it did not go unnoted. Lawrence Taylor, the pastor at the Church of Christ in Wheelus Air Force Base, made note of the Douglases' decision to work

[80] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33.
[81] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[82] Douglas; although I searched for the article from the *Christian Chronicle,* I was unable to acquire it.

there and the excitement of having "a neighbor preacher in Libya," although Douglas would be "650 miles away," in Benghazi.[83] The region was predominantly Muslim and there were, according to Douglas, "no Libyans who would have considered themselves Christians." The only presence of Christians were Italian Catholics in Tripoli and Benghazi, the military personnel at Wheelus, and the international oil workers to whom Douglas was attached.[84] Douglas knew of Wheelus Air Base and some small British detachments, left over from World War II, but these groups were rarely noticed outside of their locales.[85] As part of his support system, Douglas expected $600 dollars of weekly support from American congregations to fund his correspondence course and any other missions opportunities that presented themselves. As a minister to at least twelve oil workers in Benghazi, he expected a $125 weekly stipend for their housing and traveling expenses. [86]

Since Libya's independence in 1951, the United States had shown a keen interest in using Libya as a means of promoting American support for the "national aspirations of African peoples," specifically with the placing of Wheelus Air Base as part of an agreement with the Libyan government in 1954.[87] The United States had created the base under good relations with the new nation, which was trying to find its place on the international scene. However, the Libyan people brought Wheelus into question in the years leading up to Douglas's arrival, and it

[83] Lawrence E. Taylor, "Tripoli Newsletter" (Tripoli, Libya: Church of Christ, November 1, 1960), Harding School of Theology Archives.
[84] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[85] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[86] Taylor, "Tripoli Newsletter"; while this amount of money is rather large, it is not uncommon for churches in the States to sponsor missionaries with large amounts of money. Today this is often done to purchase land for a local church, construct a church building, support a growing congregation, carry out local missions efforts, and to support the missionary and his families' needs.
[87] Jason Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices: US Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Formation of the Third World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 37.

was, according to Douglas, the most visible American presence in the country.[88] This extension of power had received criticism because of the possibility of US military action "against Libya" or "Soviet fire…in event of war." The United States made efforts to lay aside these reservations with public statements concerning the base's intentions and justification for US intervention.[89] Although the US State Department was able to direct the Cold War conversation away from the base and relieve Libyan fears, this extension of United States global power is just another example of the proto-imperialism of the United States during the Cold War.

Once there, Douglas advertised Bible correspondence courses in English newspapers in Egypt, including the *Egyptian Gazette*.[90] Increased global connectivity allowed Douglas to pursue his own personal mission to allow Christianity to "see 'unto the ends of the world'," and to widen his vision beyond Libya.[91] The Douglas's received between 250 and 300 enrollments into the courses, but many did not complete it.[92] This international network would play a continued role in his work.

The American presence in Libya had grown substantially in the past year due to a one hundred-million-dollar investment by American oil companies to expand their operations following the discovery of a new oil reserve. This economic influence from the United States increased Libya's reliance on foreign money.[93] The United States' relationship with the oil

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[88] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[89] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961–1963, Volume XXI, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), Document 92, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v21/d92.
[90] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 1.
[91] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 39–40; for more information regarding global connectiveness within primarily Muslim regions, see: James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).
[92] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 1.
[93] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1958–1960, Arab-Israeli Dispute; United Arab Republic; North Africa, Volume XIII, eds. Suzanne Coffman and Charles Sampson (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1992), Document 339, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v13/d339.

producing countries of the Middle East had become more important with the rising demand for oil. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson went so far as to paint the Middle East as more familiar than imagined by most Americans, thus attempting to assuage their concerns of these "distant or different" nations.[94] This new oil discovery made Wheelus Air Base and Libya a beneficial target for United States public diplomacy and thus continued efforts at a closer relationship with the nation. Furthermore, it gave the United States the opportunity to create an extractive industry in Libya which would lead to a continued effort by the United States to impress their power in the nation, as it did in other nations, notable Iran.[95] To grow this relationship, Secretary of State Rusk made it very clear to President Kennedy that he wanted to allow the Crown Prince of Libya, Hasan al-Rida al-Sanusi, to visit the United States to "reinforce the favorable disposition towards the United States," held by the Libyan Crown Prince. He framed this desire for a "favorable disposition" within a concern of Libyan "financial independence," which would lessen the need for American intervention.[96]

This meeting also coincided with an increased demand for United States aircraft by the Libyan Air Force. The Cold War arms race and the international demand for aircraft made this demand highly controversial. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara highlighted the Libyan inclusion in this arms race with a letter to the Libyan Minister of Defense, Belkhair. In this letter, McNamara showed reservations about providing the Libyan government with military vehicles and aircraft. While sending two T-33 jet airplanes to the Libyans, once their pilots

[94] Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*, Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007), 265.
[95] Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*, 13–14, 266.
[96] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961–1963, Volume XXI, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), Document 94, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v21/d94.

trained in the States, McNamara stated that he would only allow for more equipment sales if the Libyan military could be re-examined by British and American officials.[97] Refusing to sell weapons, shows the United States' fear of an imbalance of power in the region and of losing Libyan dependence on American intervention. This is another example of American neo-colonialist efforts being played out on the global scale during the Cold War. Despite the American military presence in Wheelus, the arms dealings with the Libyan government, and the economic influence in the region, the American population in Libya remained small.

The small American population in Benghazi became Bob Douglas's main constituents in his missions work in Libya.[98] Most of the conversions he fostered were among this group. He was "able to baptize 12 or 15… foreign people… mostly Americans." The only local Muslim convert that he remembered was due to one of the oil industry's engineers, and not necessarily Douglas's own efforts.[99] Compounding this small religious community with his lack of Arabic language skill, Douglas largely concentrated on individuals with some proficiency in English, which eliminated a large part of the population.[100] His failure to create a stable constituency and the lack of converts in his work in Libya was a cause of concern. While the oil workers were his cover for being in the country, he had hoped to reach the Muslim population as well.[101]

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[97] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961–1963, Volume XXI, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), Document 95, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v21/d95; For further information on the United States' part in Cold War aircraft development, especially the American-British competition of sales, see Jeffrey Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007).
[98] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[99] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 1.
[100] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[101] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

Although he largely focused on the American and British populations, his efforts at networking and proselytizing outside of those populations did not go unnoticed. There was a Libyan military officer who, according to Douglas, was tracking any individuals who were in Libya for any reasons other than working for the oil companies. This officer intercepted a letter from Douglas to a man in Derna, who was interested in Christianity and had been corresponding with Douglas about this. The officer raised concerns over Douglas's work, which led to his visa being revoked, since it was illegal to proselytize. This brought his future in Libya into question. During this time, his father-in-law had passed away back in the states. His wife and children then returned home to attend the funeral and wait out the coming struggle.[102]

After this, Douglas did not cease his missions' work and wrote back home about his issues with the officer and the Libyan laws against proselytizing. A member of his support group in the States spoke to a United States Congressman from Texas who was able to get Douglas a hearing between the US Embassy and the Libyan courts regarding his visa status. After this hearing was over, Douglas and his family renewed their visa status and were granted extended stay. However, the oil workers who they were serving began to return home, due to the completion of their contracts. Alongside the loss of their American contacts, they noticed their Libyan contacts were avoiding them, which they suspected was due to the Libyan officials intimidating their contacts into no longer associating with them.[103] Because of this, Douglas began questioning their missionary future in Libya and considered the possibility of moving to another country to continue their work.

[102] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[103] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

GOING TO EGYPT

While Douglas and his family had hoped to stay in Benghazi, this option was no longer on the table. Thus, in late 1962 or early 1963, not wanting to give up their missionary calling, they moved to the internationally mixed middle-class community of al-Ma'adi, Cairo and began to minister to the local population there.[104] Once in Cairo, Douglas came to terms with how "Arabized" the nation had become since the 1952 Revolution, which Douglas incorrectly dated to 1953.[105] His description of the area as "Arabized" seems to hint at a distaste for the overthrow of colonial power.[106] The rise of Abdel Nassar in subsequent years led many to label his control as the reason for the rise of Communism in the area, and brought him the labels of "Hitler of the Nile" and "fanatic Arab nationalist," the last of which Nassar claimed to be, minus the fanatic.[107]

Melani McAlister, in her book *Epic Encounters*, discusses Nasser as an advocate of Asian and African nationalism during the 1950s and 60s.[108] Neglecting far-reaching anticolonial movements, such as that presented at the Bandung conference, Douglas only sensed the Egyptian national movement and its fear of being part of either side of the Cold War. This aligns with McAlister's later analysis of Nasser and his disagreements with other Arab nations, thus breaking apart what had been a rather united Arab front to Israel. However, McAlister later

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[104] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon); Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt); Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33; this date is not particularly sure. Dr. Douglas failed to take note of this date of transition in his earlier interviews and could not remember them particularly well in his later ones with myself. However, combining his responses in the interviews with his brief biography in the lecture series from Abilene, it is possible to gain a rough estimate of late 1962 or early 1963.

[105] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 2.

[106] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), 2; Gamal Abdel Nassar, "Where I Stand and Why," *LIFE Magazine*, July 20, 1959, 96, According to Abdel Nassar himself, the Revolution was dated to 1952, whereas his rise to power was in 1953. It is possible that Douglas's misdating was due to his understanding of the Revolution as the rise of Nassar.

[107] Nassar, "Where I Stand and Why," 96.

[108] Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, Second (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA, and London, England: University of California Press, 2005), 90.

points to Nasser's removing UN troops from the Suez zone to prove his resolution for Arab nationalism to Syria and Jordan.[109] While it is unarguable that Arab nationalism caused much of what happened, Douglas's statements seem to agree with McAlister's. Nasser made these movements out of a desire to prove himself as the leader of Arab nationalism. However, it seems that he was more reluctant to do so than originally thought. As Douglas would seem to believe, Nasser was more concerned about keeping himself out of the Cold War and keeping Egypt safe than focusing on things outside of his nation.

The American distaste towards Nasser was due to his refusal to "join Western alliances." The subsequent undermining and punishment of Nasser nourished his ability to monopolize the Arab leadership in the region and to rely on traditional rivalries against Israel and Western intervention.[110] This sense of increased Egyptian and pan-Arab nationalism gave Gamal Abdel Nasser the chance to showcase his charismatic leadership and thus his desire for neutrality in the Cold War.[111] This neutrality was not always clear, however, with Nasser retaining a complicated, sometimes favorable, relationship with the Soviet Union. Nikiti Kruschev even inaugurated the High Dam in 1964 and gave Egypt one million Egyptian pounds for "industrial projects."[112] Douglas was not concerned with this level of contest, since, according to him, the "tension between Egypt and the West and the alignment between Egypt and the Soviet Union did not spill over in a practical everyday way."[113] Douglas's concern over Egypt as "Arabized" compounded Nasser's rise to power with the support of the Muslim Brotherhood and his

[109] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 110.
[110] Yezid Sayigh and Avi Shlaim, eds., *The Cold War and the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 33.
[111] Sayigh and Shlaim, *Cold War and the Middle East,* 51.
[112] Joel Gordon, *Nasser: Hero of the Arab Nation*, Makers of the Muslim World (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006), 87.
[113] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

subsequent jailing of much of their power structure.[114] Instead of highlighting a concern over Islam, Douglas's main concerns were Nasser's secret police as a threat to his work.[115]

Luckily, for Douglas, he and his family built a steady contingency of contacts in al-Ma'adi through the English correspondence courses Douglas had begun during their later time in Libya. Advertising in *Al-Ahram* and the *Egyptian Gazette*, Douglas had received some interest while in Libya, but once moving to Cairo, he received around 300 inquiries from various Arabs about engaging in the course. However, only around sixty percent continued beyond the first correspondence. While serving in Egypt, the course would rise to a membership of 1,300.[116] This course was largely based on materials that Douglas had brought with him from the States that had borne some success in other missions fields.[117] His hope was that it would give him the base for much of his work, while allowing him to reach more people across a larger area. Many of the Douglases' closest relationships in Egypt would come from this course, and they would often travel across the city to visit with these contacts and minister to them.[118]

Douglas's time in Egypt, was "governed…by the Treaty of Montreaux".[119] This agreement made Egypt responsible for all foreigners and minorities within the country.[120] It gave rise to national sentiment and self-determination that would continue to impact Egypt's foreign policy. This agreement mainly concerned larger missionary organizations. This made many of the smaller organizations, or those without an organization, such as Douglas, ineffective

[114] Gordon, *Nasser*, 80.
[115] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[116] "The Arab World," 15th Annual Worlds Missions Workshop (Searcy, Arkansas: Harding College, November 1974), 3, Harding School of Theology Archives.
[117] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[118] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[119] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 2.
[120] M. W. Daly, ed., *The Cambridge History of Egypt: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, vol. II (Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 295.

in their efforts in Egypt. The negotiations of 1937 surrounding Egyptian independence efforts did not include small denominations such as Douglas's Church of Christ. As such, the Treaty of Montreaux, which abolished the capitulations in Egypt, only allowed the same number of missionaries per denomination that had been present at the time of the agreement by restricting them to their "existing staff."[121] The only denominations included in the preliminary list proposed by the combined Egyptian and American Legation were the Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Apostolic Church of God, Seventh-Day Adventist, the Evangelical Church, and the Church of God denominations.[122] Since there were no Church of Christ missionaries included in the agreement, the Egyptian government would not allow Douglas and his family to come in as official missionaries. However, this did not discourage him from entering Egypt. As Douglas put it, "when God shuts a door, He always opens a window."[123]

Following this belief, he and his family entered Egypt as tourists, which limited much of their efforts to clandestine functioning as missionaries. They were not able to establish an official church because of this, and instead, they had to work with personal relationships and conversations.[124] Unlike Libya, in Egypt there was a local Christian denomination, the Copts, who had a steady long-term presence.[125] However, Douglas did not attempt to interact with

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[121] "Abolition of Capitulations in Egypt," May 8, 1937, https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000003-0411.pdf.
[122] *Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers*, 1937, Volume II, The British Commonwealth, Europe, Near East and Africa, ed. Bernard G. Noble, E.R. Perkins, and Gustave A. Nuermberger (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), Document 493, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1937v02/d493; It is unsure what the differences between the Apostolic Church of God and the Church of God denominations had, but it was apparently enough to require a separation of them within international law. It is also unclear what denomination the Evangelical Church was associated with. If Douglas's assumption was correct, then it is what became the national Egyptian Evangelical Church, which closely aligned with the Protestant Presbyterian denomination.
[123] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 43.
[124] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 2–3.
[125] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 1.

these Christians on a steady basis. Instead, he was able to build a small constituency of believers with around thirty Muslims becoming Christians.[126]

Douglas feared compromising the Copt's position in Egyptian society. Paul Sedra argues against the tradition of viewing *dhimmis* in Egypt as constant victims, largely because it reifies a sectarian and an Orientalist mindset.[127] Instead of the historical trend of viewing the Middle East as a monolithic Muslim entity, Sedra attempts to cast the Copts as historical actors in their own right. Viewing them, he claims, as a more discursive religion with ebbs and flows of their religious tradition, instead of perpetual victims or symbols of an "other," allows for a clearer picture of their history within the modern Middle East.[128] Douglas's experience fits within the paradigm that Sedra posits. Instead of viewing the Copts as a religious minority without agency, Douglas points to them as a group whose religious actions had previously caused problems for other religious minorities, specifically Protestant Christians.[129] When discussing how his efforts as a missionary were hampered by government issues with proselytizing Muslims, Douglas directly drew a relation between the legal standing of the Copts, and the toleration of the Egyptian government towards the Coptic existence. While this might seem as if the Copts were again victimized due to this "toleration," some Copts acted against this, and proselytized towards Muslims, but got "into trouble."[130] Sedra's argument is then proven in Douglas's words. While the Copts were victims in some instances, they often functioned as members of a society and worked within the proven standard of the societal norms.

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[126] "The Arab World," 3.
[127] Paul Sedra, "Writing the History of the Modern Copts: From Victims and Symbols to Actors," *History Compass* 7, no. 3 (May 2009): 1049.
[128] Sedra, "Writing the History of the Modern Copts," pp. 1050, 1060.
[129] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[130] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

Egypt's desire for freedom from international influence is noted by Douglas as he tried to allow Egyptian Christians to develop on their own without his intervention. This kept them from being viewed as "a threat."[131] He feared that if he got too heavily involved with the local Christian populations that it could be detrimental to them, due to drawing unneeded attention through foreign involvement. This would give the impression of the congregation as a "foreign institution" and that "duplicity" was involved.[132] Fearing that Nasser's secret police would hunt down those that were close to him, Douglas only held services at the homes of those who asked him to do so. This would allow them to acknowledge and accept the risk involved, since it was dangerous to be associated with an American who the Egyptian government could see as part of the CIA using a "religious front" as his cover.[133] This fear, much like his role as a tourist, limited his expression of missionary desires.

While the Douglases were there, Egypt was rising as one of the premier symbols for these Pan-national movements. As a crux between Africa and the Middle East, they were associated as leaders of both the Pan-Arab and Pan-African movements, with Nasser promoting both in a rather aggressive manner. This placed Egypt in the interesting position of claiming the African movement while maintaining itself as the part of the United Arab Republic. This unique position did not escape missionaries to the region, with some pointing out that Egypt "served as a crossroads," for much of the region.[134] Throughout the fall of 1963, Nasser placed Egypt within the Pan-African movement as one of its more powerful members, alongside Ghana's Nkrumah.

[131] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4.
[132] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4.
[133] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4; Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018.
[134] "The Arab World," 3.

Both nations feared the effects of Western "imperialism and neo-colonialism" on their nations and the Pan-African movement.[135]

Beyond the African movement, Nasser laid claim to the Pan-Arab movement. He had constructed this foundation in efforts to lead a movement of "neutrality" in the Cold War while also organizing opposition to Western alliance systems in the Middle East, such as the Baghdad Pact.[136] As the President of the United Arab Republic, he was a leader in the Arab pro-Palestinian efforts, having called for a 1963 Arab summit in support of the Palestinian refugee crisis, gaining support from Jordan, Yemen, and Lebanon. As a major player of the anti-Zionist movement, his actions played specifically against American pro-Israeli themes in policy.[137] However, Douglas's considered Nasser an Egypt trying to remain outside of the wide-reaching international sphere of Cold War competition. The Egypt that he saw was pointed, not at Pan-Arab or Pan-African feelings, but instead towards a focus as its own nation.

Even Nasser held to this view. Often, it seems as if he was hesitant to involve Egypt in true international politics, outside of his symbolic position as one of the leaders of the Pan-Arab and Pan-African movements. He would even draw "verbal challenges from his neighbors" to hold to his statements as the leader of the Pan-Arab movement, specifically to challenge Israel's attempts at carving out power in the region.[138]

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[135] Reuter, "Nkrumah Slams Western Press," *The Egyptian Gazette*, November 12, 1963, Center for Research Libraries, p. 1.
[136] Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*, 166.
[137] Men, "Nasser Calls for Arab Summit on Palestine Issue: Proposal Wins Quick Support," *The Egyptian Gazette*, December 24, 1963, 1, Center for Research Libraries; David A. Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), 131.
[138] Gordon, *Nasser*, 84.

Nassar feared that any alignment with Western nations could bring back colonialism and imperialism to the people of Egypt.[139] This distrust of Western influence is rather interesting however, since Egypt's primary source of food during the 1960s was the Food for Peace program from the United States, supplying $300 million of support, and since the USSR had been assisting in the industrialization of the Egyptian economy.[140] However, this support did not detract from the United States seeing Nasser's Egypt as a "disruptive" force in the "North Africa littoral," and tying him to the Soviet Communist bloc.[141]

The tying of Egypt and Nasser to Communism is a point that Douglas saw as part of the stressed relationship between the United States and Egypt. Douglas argued that the United States seemed to "push" Nasser "into the arms of the Russians," by refusing to work with him because of Egypt's socialism and the assumption that this inherently tied them to Russia.[142] Primarily, Douglas points to the American fear of Egypt's nationalizing of private companies as part of the American distaste for Egyptian socialism. Nasser had nationalized multiple facets of Egypt's economy, including some missionary hospitals and the Suez Canal.[143] However, he did not nationalize the entire economy, instead allowing capitalism to continue functioning in certain parts of the economy.[144] This, alongside Douglas's statements, makes Nasser's efforts appear as

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[139] Nassar, "Where I Stand and Why," 100.
[140] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 81; Daly, *The Cambridge History of Egypt: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century*, II:355.
[141] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961–1963, Volume XXI, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), Document 5, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v21/d5; Throughout much of the early 1960s, the United States largely focused on the Moroccan-Algerian conflict going on in Northwest Africa. Therefore, while Egypt had a lot of American attention, largely due to Nasser, it was not discussed as much Morocco and Algeria under the Kennedy Administration.
[142] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[143] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Men, "Nationalisation Extended to 278 More Companies: Private Sector Prospecting, Mining Contracts Cancelled," *The Egyptian Gazette*, August 13, 1963, Center for Research Libraries; Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*, 185.
[144] Gordon, *Nasser*, 71.

trying to find the correct balance of capitalism and socialism for his country, instead of completely devoting to one form.

Nasser's fear of Western intervention in his country heightened his level of "paranoia".[145] Oftentimes, Nasser would attempt to divert attention away from challenging voices by either silencing them, as Douglas put it, or by launching investigations and then refocusing efforts on reconstructing support for his regime.[146] His fear of challengers shows a level of concern over his own support base, which is further shown by the constant thread of riots and protests that many of his citizens carried out. This "paranoia" would then plague Douglas's efforts, specifically when trying to hold church-like gatherings.[147]

As mentioned earlier, Douglas was in Egypt as a tourist. Thus, he was unable to acquire an official church building. Instead, most of the meetings were held at homes of Christian believers that Douglas knew. However, the owner of the house had to personally invite each person who attended, instead of the typical invitation by word of mouth. Often, according to Douglas, the homeowner would have to feel comfortable enough to host a meeting, out of concern of police infiltration into the group. This law, requiring the homeowner to invite each person personally, was required by the government to dissuade and prevent large organizations of Communists from gathering together and possibly contributing to a coup.[148] This would prevent Douglas from finding a steady location for his work, since Egyptians would often be hesitant to open their home to these services.

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[145] Sayigh and Shlaim, The Cold War and the Middle East, 30.
[146] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 170.
[147] Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018.
[148] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

At this time, according to Douglas, one out of every three Egyptians had fed information to Nasser's secret police.[149] From the beginning, this created a rather stressful situation for Douglas's efforts. He would later recall that throughout his time in Egypt, there was a constant stress involved with his work. Whenever the family had to leave the country, there was a moment of relaxation as they left, due to the overbearing sense of fear attached to the possibility of secret police intervention. As Douglas put it, as they would fly or sail out of the country, he would always breathe a sigh of relief as the pressure of secrecy was left behind in Egypt.[150] The maximum time allowed for tourist visas forced them to rotate in and out of the country on a regular basis. When their tourist visas would run out, they would then travel to Lebanon or Cyprus until they were able to reapply for the Egyptian tourist visas. This was an attempt to remove them from being easy targets for charges of espionage or of being seen as part of international "intrigue or political maneuvering."[151]

Interestingly, Douglas was relatively silent about his time outside of Egypt, aside from acknowledging that, when in Lebanon, they visited with the Matheny missionary family.[152] As he stated, there was always a moment of relaxation as they left Egypt.[153] This relaxation likely made his time outside of Egypt not feel like part of his missionary journey, and, instead, made them feel like "vacation trips between tourist visas" in Egypt.[154]

Not long after their initial arrival in Egypt, President Kennedy's assassination sent Lyndon Johnson to the forefront of governing the United States' foreign policy and he became

[149] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[150] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[151] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4; Nassar, "Where I Stand and Why," 97.
[152] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[153] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[154] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

the image of America to the Egyptian press.[155] Johnson's administration coincided with an increased level of Chinese influence in Africa, and thus brought on more stress within regional politics beyond Russian communist intervention and Nasser's nationalist tendencies. Nasser and his administration welcomed this Chinese influence with open arms, and even requested their admission into the United Nations at a banquet for the visiting Chinese Prime Minister in December 1963.[156]

Fear of losing African votes in the United Nations to this "Chicom" influence was horrifying to Washington and constituted its increased desire to prevent another "Bandung"-type "Afro-Asian conference."[157] This unifying movement of Third-World nations in "solidarity and progress" tried to remove the overarching power of former colonizers and instead focus on a "nascent neutralism," during the Cold War.[158] Just as Nasser desired avoid Russian or United States' influence, other nations, including China, did not desire to be reined in by US or USSR Cold War power. This move to a post-colonial Third World independence limited Douglas's effort due to Egyptian fear of American, and Soviet, clandestine activity.

Compounding this fear with the recent founding of the Organization for African Unity (OAU), the Johnson administration feared that their strength on the continent was waning in the face of an opposing united front. With the 1964 OAU Cairo conference, the United States feared that they could lose their nuclear transit rights if the conference set up Africa as a nuclear free

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[155] Reuter and A.P., "U.S. Ex-Marine Is Held for Kennedy Killing," *The Egyptian Gazette*, November 24, 1963, Center for Research Libraries.
[156] Men, AP, UPI, and Reuter, "Chou-En-Lai Arrives in Cairo on 7-Day State Visit: 'Chinese-U.A.R. Friendship as Eternal as the Nile,'" *The Egyptian Gazette*, December 15, 1963, Center for Research Libraries; MEN, "Nasser Urges UN Seat for China," *The Egyptian Gazette*, December 15, 1963, Center for Research Libraries.
[157] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1999), Document 181, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d181.
[158] Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, 140.

zone, thus hampering the United States' efforts in the region with ship and plane-board nuclear munitions.[159] Nassar then utilized the American Civil Rights Act of 1964 to support Pan-Africanism in the OAU conference, citing it as one of the "promising signs" towards the end of South African and Rhodesian violence and discrimination.[160] This further shows signs of a detachment from colonial power, using the United States' actions to call for a stronger movement towards total independence and political motivation. The United States, however, continued to view Nasser as a power-hungry individual who hoped to "dominate the Arab world", but who did not have the capability and support to do so.[161]

Throughout his time in Egypt, Douglas and his family had agreeable interactions with the local populace. However, he only mentions a single individual, Francis Fahen, by name in his interviews regarding Egypt.[162] This singular name is another example of a silence in Douglas's narrative. While names of individuals are easily forgotten, Douglas continued contact with some of the Egyptian house churches long after he left. Failing to acknowledge the name of a single other person is hard to explain. This name is mentioned in the earlier Harding interview when asked if there "a preacher in Cairo", during which Douglas indicated that Fahen was one of the earliest converts.[163] In my own interview with Douglas, he does not mention a single name in Egypt.[164] Without another name mentioned, it must be concluded that Fahen held a special place

[159] *Foreign Relations of the United States,* 1964–1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1999), Document 185, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d185.
[160] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XXIV, Africa, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1999), Document 187, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v24/d187.
[161] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 5, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v21/d5.
[162] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4.
[163] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4.
[164] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

in Douglas's mind. This is likely because of Fahen's position within the house-churches, since he was a local pastor and secondary education teacher who supported himself by teaching while also leading a congregation of worshippers.[165] As a local convert who was leading other Egyptians in Christian worship, Fahen was a prime candidate for Douglas's success story to the Harding interviewer. Without an individual like Fahen, Douglas's time there would have remained a near failure.

Beyond Fahen, the Douglas's maintained a network of friends in al-Ma'adi. It was not uncommon for Douglas's family to attend birthday parties of Egyptian children from Paul's American school or Rebecca's Egyptian preschool. Of course, these were also governed under the same guidelines as Bob's church gatherings, and so the Douglas's were personally invited by the families to these parties. When not visiting friends, ministering, or spending time at various gatherings, Douglas and his family could visit the local markets or could go to the Ma'adi club to take advantage of its social networks, swimming pool, horse riding areas, or tennis courts.[166] With most Middle Eastern clubs being a location of community interaction, Douglas and his family became acquainted with their local community, even while being considered tourists.

With his positive interactions with the Muslim community in al-Ma'adi, Douglas stated that he disapproved of many of the Western misunderstandings of Muslims and the people of Egypt. He stated that the locals were "very gracious, very hospitable, very warm-hearted people," when he met them and that they never demonstrated hostility towards his religious sentiments. Instead, they would discuss religion in-depth and ask "legitimate" questions. If they

[165] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 4.
[166] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

did not want to meet with him anymore, they would just no longer be available and would be too busy to meet.[167]

While he met and got to know the people of Cairo, the Douglas family applied for residency, but the Egyptian authorities quickly denied them. For three years, they were able to carry on their work and establish two or three house churches. Even after they left, these churches would continue, and Douglas would remain in contact with them for many years after his return to the States.[168]

In the fall of 1965, the authorities noticed the repeated renewal of tourist visas, their work came to an end.[169] The Egyptian government canceled their tourist visas and gave them a limited time to leave Egypt.[170] Bob and June had previously decided that if they ever left Egypt that they would move to a neighboring country and continue their missionary journey. After contemplating this decision in the little time they had, they decided on Lebanon, since they had contacts there, it was easily accessible, and it did not have such stringent laws governing missionaries and their actions.[171] While some of his fellow missionaries would later point to a change in American-Egyptian political relations as the reason that the Douglases left Egypt, Bob fails to acknowledge this in his interviews, and instead points to the visa issues.[172] However, the American intentions in Egypt did shift in the mid-1960s, due to a failure of Egypt to fit the needs of American "expanding regional interests," for the Middle East.[173] Thus, it is entirely possible that this did contribute to the Egyptian realization of Douglas's visa history. As they left Egypt

[167] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 3.
[168] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[169] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), 1.
[170] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[171] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt).
[172] "The Arab World," 3; Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[173] Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 125.

in September of 1965, they made their way to Lebanon and continued to set up opportunities to carry on "work for the Lord."[174] Breathing a final sigh of relief, Douglas began what would become his most lasting impact in the Middle East.[175]

[174] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), 1; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33.
[175] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

STARTING NEW IN LEBANON

Figure 2-Carl Matheny is second from left, while Douglas is fourth from left. The remaining individuals are students from the training school. Reprinted from Lane Cubstead, Carl Matheny, and Evertt Huffard, "Bible Land News" (Beirut, Lebanon: Middle East Bible Training School, Quarter 1967), 1.

Once in Lebanon, Bob worked alongside another missionary, Carl Matheny, and founded the Middle East Bible Training School in Baabda, Lebanon with support from other missionaries in the Middle East and their combined funds. It drew students from Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, and Jordan, among others.[176] His students came on the sponsorships of other missionaries located in the Middle East and would earn training on how to govern and lead their own local churches, thus further planting the Church of Christ's foundation in the region. [177] These students were young men who would meet Church of Christ missionaries, become converts, and then desire to train further in their faith.

For example, Shafiq Haddad was a young Catholic bank worker from Madaba, Jordan who visited a summer camp at the Training School in 1968. During his time there, he met with Bob Douglas and was encouraged to return to the School as a student, which he did in October of

[176] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), 1; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33; Cubstead, Matheny, and Huffard, "Bible Land News," 1.
[177] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.

that year. He was baptized two months later and hoped to plant a church in Madaba upon return from his later studies at the Arab University.[178] He is but one example of the wide range of individuals who made up the Training School during its tenure in Lebanon.

LOOKING AT A MAP OF THE MIDDLE EAST are four of the American couples now serving the Lord as missionaries in the Middle East. They were together in Beirut, Lebanon, January 24 as the Dale Randolphs of Chattanooga, Tenn., arrived to begin the work in Amman, Jordan. Left to right : Evertt and Elsie Huffard, Jerusalem, Jordan; Betty Lou and Carl Matheny, Beirut ; Elleen and Dale Randolph; and June and Robert Douglas, Beirut. The other couple working in the Middle East, the Dick Biggs, were not present.

Figure 3- This image shows all known Church of Christ missionaries who were in the Middle East at this time, excepting the Biggs. This makes a clear image of the personal relationships that made up much of the effort there and how integral each family was in the construction of a steady constituency for the Middle East Bible Training School. Without the personal connections that these individuals had with one another, it is highly probable that the school would not have been created. Reprinted from Lane Cubstead, Carl Matheny, and Evertt Huffard, "Bible Land News" (Beirut, Lebanon: Middle East Bible Training School, Quarter 1967), 4, Harding School of Theology Archives.

Instead of focusing on proselytizing, Douglas's Lebanese effort addressed the need for the education of local converts, primarily to educate them on how to lead a church congregation of their own. Funded mostly through the combined efforts of Douglas's network of independent missionaries, the school functioned as a seminary for native-born pastors. The Training School, being between 12 and 30 students large, was likely "dwarfed" by more organized efforts, like the

[178] Malcom George, "Lebanon Report" (Canton, Ohio: Market Avenue Church of Christ, November 23, 1970), Harding School of Theology Archives.

American University in Beirut.[179] Regardless, Douglas and his compatriots spent a lot of time on the project, with Douglas eventually devoting "the whole of his time there."[180] Although a heavily organized missionary effort like this is expected of larger bodies, this one was constructed by independent missionaries who sent the converts to the School were individuals who Douglas personally knew and who had been in correspondence with him.[181] Instead of having the financial support of groups like the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board, Douglas and his associates had to pool their resources together and draw on more funds from the independent Church of Christ churches back in the States to run the School.[182] While larger organizations are able to support short-term missions trips among their members, some supporting long-term missionaries in their efforts, and some even appointing successors to some large-scale efforts or positions, the Church of Christ is unable to do so.[183] However, without the organizational capabilities of sending short-term groups or appointing other missionaries to support it, the Training School closed with its assets being sold to support local churches and thus ending an eight-year independent effort.[184]

While they did focus largely on their educational efforts at the Training School, Matheny and Douglas teamed up with other missionaries in the region, such as Evertt Huffard in Jordan, to solidify a steady congregation in the region. They created a congregation in Mosul and Baghdad, Iraq, while visiting members of the School's correspondence course.[185] In Lebanon, Douglas made friends with other non-missionary Americans. The most interesting of these was

[179] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 3; Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven*, 209.
[180] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon, 2.
[181] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[182] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[183] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 196; Hall, "David King," 2.
[184] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Huffard, "Lebanon Report."
[185] Cubstead, Matheny, and Huffard, "Bible Land News."

the leader of the local United States Information Agency center in Beirut.[186] Since the 1950s, the USIA had attempted to combat Nasserite Pan-Arab and Soviet influence in the Middle East.[187] Douglas failed to note this friendship as one that was a direct result of the Cold War.[188]

While Douglas had described Egypt as opposed to colonialism, he makes Lebanon seem to be the greatest of the Arab nations. He made this assumption from the larger Christian population, the Maronites and Lebanon's capitalist economy.[189] However, their standard of living did "not compare to that of the United States," but they were the only one of the nations he visited to not force out Western educational systems.[190] He seems to be stating that of the national backwaters of the Middle East, Lebanon was the best backwater. Although Lebanon was the most developed of the three nations he visited, in his mind, it was still not comparable to the United States, and thus needed his educational effort to come out of its backwardness.

This developmental dichotomy was prevalent in the Cold War and in missionary efforts. At the time, there was the "Free World", the USSR and their aligned nations, and then the remainder of the globe, which was considered post-colonial "others."[191] This belief is one of a linear development of modernism, one which Douglas's comments agree with.[192] Both sides, the "Free World" and the USSR, were courting these remaining countries, including Lebanon, to join their side of the Cold War. Even the United States' Central Intelligence Agency discussed

[186] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[187] Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, 93–104.
[188] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[189] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[190] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon), 2.
[191] Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 264.
[192] Gilman, 104–6.

this remaining group, titled the "Third World", in discussions on modernity, as easily swayed by economic support and development assistance.[193]

A notable example of this is the United States Information Agency. The presence of the men Douglas came to know are physical manifestations of the American efforts to fight for public opinion and to counter the Soviet's "new push in the Middle East," in 1964 and '65.[194] This renewed fear made the USIA's job even more prevalent, due to the already divided nature of the country.[195] In the mid-1960s, Lebanon remained non-aligned in the Cold War. However, it began drifting towards better relations with Nassar and Pan-Arab tendencies, even refusing to join any "alliances against Egypt and Syria."[196]

In a leadup to events that would eventually force the Douglas family out of their Lebanon, Lebanon became more aligned with the other Arab nations and steadily distanced from United States' influence. This made Lebanon part of the CIA's analysis of the possibility of an Arab-Israeli conflict.[197] While the United States had not been concerned with Lebanon in 1966, by early 1967, it had to contend with an increase of instability in Lebanon and new Soviet interest in the economic and industrial sectors. The Soviets had begun offering a trade agreement for Lebanese fruits, construction of twenty consumer goods factories with a promise

[193] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 8, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v21/d8.
[194] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 14, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v21/d14.
[195] Sayigh and Shlaim, *The Cold War and the Middle East*, 77.
[196] Sayigh and Shlaim, *The Cold War and the Middle East*, 91.
[197] *Foreign Relations of the United States,* 1964–1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964–1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 284, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d284.

for purchase of the goods, and investments in hydroelectric and subway efforts.[198] The Soviets were also in the process of increasing arms sales in the Middle East. Naturally, this caused a U.S. response with increased arms control efforts and more attempts at non-proliferation agreements.[199]

While the Americans did not believe that the Soviet Union desired open conflict in the Middle East, they knew that the USSR would back the Arab countries if it did come to violence.[200] However, since both sides did not desire this, the American Embassy in Moscow met with Soviet Foreign Affairs Minister Andrei Gromyko to discuss the situation. Both sides expressed a desire for peace in the Middle East but expressed support for their traditional allies in the region. The Russians showed distaste towards Israel's "unfriendly policy" towards its Arab neighbors while the United States held "special relations with Israel."[201]

Although the Christian Right rose largely in the 1970s, recognizing Israel as a special place of concern for Christians was nothing new. Many Christians felt connected to Israel as a nation and positive feelings towards Zionism.[202] Melani McAlister points to this as a foundational element of the Christian Right. However, Douglas, does not address Israel, or even Jews, during his interviews or his lecture, excepting reference to the Six Days' War or in

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[198] *Foreign Relations of the United States,* 1964–1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964–1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 408, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d408.
[199] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XVIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964–1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 415, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d415.
[200] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967, Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), Document 16, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d16.
[201] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), Document 41, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d41.
[202] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 169.

scriptural quotes.[203] According to McAlister, the rise of Christian media had increased the attachment to a privileged Israel and its past, while representing Israel as a "Jewish David facing an Arab Goliath."[204] Again, this is not seen in Douglas's statements. I posit that his religiosity took precedence over his concern towards Israeli politics and McAlister's idea of a Jewish connection between American Christians and Israel. This is supported by Douglas's lack of addressing Israel in his 1968 Abilene lecture, his 1971 Harding interviews, or his 2018 Dallas interview. This is not to say that Douglas should have discussed Israel in-depth, but one would expect a religious scholar to have addressed it if it was so important to his faith.

Another portion of McAlister's argument surrounds Israel as a location of the Christian Armageddon. She addresses the rise of Arab oil power as part of some Christians' belief in the coming of this biblical ending. She addresses what many Christians believed would happen in the Middle East before the coming of the Antichrist. A Jewish return to Israel, a Middle Eastern peacemaker, and a struggle with the Soviet Union were all important parts of the Christian New Right's belief in the coming future.[205] This is oddly not addressed by Douglas, especially considering his discussion on the second "coming of Christ," in his Abilene lecture. He does not reference Jerusalem, Israel, or the Middle East in the lecture.[206] This would seem rather inconsistent with what McAlister posits as an important part of Christian ideology and belief.

With the increase in the anti-Israeli tensions came an uptick in the language used to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict. Secretary of State Dean Rusk sent a telegram to the American

[203] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 37.
[204] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 163.
[205] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 165, 169.
[206] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36–37.

ambassadors in the Middle East discussing the Arab nations' "Holy War" ideology combined with Israel's "apocalyptic psychology."[207] This "apocalyptic psychology," placed in this context, easily resounds with the Cold War and its nuclear ramifications. Once the Six Days War broke out on June 5, 1967, the timbre of all discussion changed. The Cold War was playing out in the region, with the Soviet Union and the United States backing opposite sides.[208] Secretary Rusk requested all nations, including Lebanon, to protect American citizens.[209] Douglas's family and the Mathenys left Lebanon, along with all United States citizens not on diplomatic missions. These were American efforts to protect their citizens from unrest in the region.[210] A few years after Douglas's return to the States, Evertt Huffard, mentioned earlier, would take over the school, directing it after 1970, and maintaining its work until his return to the States in 1974, when it was then closed.[211]

[207] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), Document 141, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d141; This language echoes rather nicely with Dr. Douglas's later lecture at Abilene Christian College.
[208] James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 174–75.
[209] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964–1968, Volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967, ed. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 2004), Document 162, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d162.
[210] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[211] "The Arab World," 5.

TO THE UNITED STATES THEY WENT

While it had seemed like the Douglas family had been in Lebanon to stay, by 1968, they made their way back to Abilene, Texas, with Bob working at College Church from 1969 to 1975.[212] In his time abroad, he was an example of what President Eisenhower had desired Americans abroad to be during the earlier days of the War in 1953. He did not fear the Cold War around him, since he largely dismissed most of his time there as removed from the conflict. Instead, he lived "in the fear of God only."[213]

The remainder of his career was lived out as wholly devoted to his evangelical roots and his mission-oriented thought. In a 1975 statement to the local Abilene newspaper, he stated that his family was planning on moving to Pasadena, California, where he planned to gain his doctorate at Fuller Seminary and work his way back into missions work.[214] He also gave guest lectures, including the one at Abilene Christian College referenced throughout this work.[215] These lectures were just the beginning of what would become Douglas's nationwide effort to educate the evangelical Christian population on what missionary work was supposed to look like and how Christians should deal with other religions, primarily Islam.

In his Abilene lecture, his continued relationship with the Middle East and Islam was prevalent. The primary talking point surrounding Islam was his argument that the Muslim population in America was solely made up of "Cassius Clay and the Black Muslims."[216] There

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[212] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text"; "Abilene Reporter-News from Abilene, Texas on March 31, 1975 · Page 34," *Newspapers.Com*, accessed April 18, 2018, http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/47666231/.
[213] Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 145.
[214] "Abilene Reporter-News from Abilene, Texas on March 31, 1975 · Page 34."
[215] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 33–50.
[216] Pope et al., 36.

is an inherent Orientalizing aspect to this part of his lecture. He directly states that Islam was the "most militant religion in the world today." He also addresses the very active missionary activity of Islam, sending out around "four thousand missionaries."[217]

According to Melani McAlister, Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) and Malcolm X were two of the more prominent faces of Islam in the United States.[218] With Malcolm X having been assassinated three years prior, Douglas refers to the population of American Muslims as "unknown," aside from "Cassius Clay and the Black Moslems."[219] Due to the rise of the "Black Muslim" phenomenon in the United States and its connection to the Nation of Islam, I argue that Douglas was referring to the Nation of Islam in his lecture when he said "Black Moslems".[220] This phenomenon, and its reaction to the Nation of Islam, brought forth books like Lincoln's *Black Muslims in America*, which was published in 1961 and made waves discussing the status of Islam within the United States, specifically relating to the Nation of Islam.[221] Like Douglas's statement, Lincoln's book articulates a racial dynamic to Islam in the United States. However, Lincoln attaches an aggressive version of black nationalism with Islam and makes continuous connection between violence, racism, and removes the actual tenets of religiosity from Islam.[222] Douglas and Lincoln's assumption of the militancy of Islam would not have felt off-base to many of Douglas's listeners at Abilene Christian.[223] The Nation of Islam's belief in the black superiority over whites had, and has, been "vehemently and consistently rejected by mainstream

[217] Pope et al., 36.
[218] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 91.
[219] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[220] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 100; Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[221] C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*, Third Edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan and Trenton, New Jersey: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company and Africa World Press, Inc., 1961).
[222] Lincoln, 204–10.
[223] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.

Muslims".[224] However, it is not too much of a stretch to accept that if the "Black Muslim" phenomenon was the first or only experience with Islam that Douglas's listeners had, they may have shouted a few "Amens" to his words.[225]

His misunderstanding of Islam and some of its beliefs is also rather intriguing. It would be expected that a former missionary to the Middle East who continued to specialize in Islam would have more clearly understood Islam than what he shows in this lecture. For example, he makes a clear statement that Islam eliminated the concept of sin and personal responsibility.[226] However, this is not correct at all. The Quran shows a rather strong sense of sin. According to Fazlur Rahman, Muslim sin is one of personal injustice and the "basic weakness of man" which leads to his/her "self-destructive selfishness."[227] Douglas seems to reference sin within a particularly Christian milieu without acknowledging that Muslims had a similar understanding of the ramifications of immoral actions. When compared to his later statements regarding "sin" and how what is "morally 'right'" is part of one's cultural perception and not necessarily true to every person across the globe, it is easy to note his change in tone. Therefore, in the context of Islam, while his earlier statements assumed a lack of sin as a Muslim concept, his belief changed once he took the difference in cultural understandings of sin into account. Instead of Islam not having a concept of sin, they did not have the same understanding of sin as some Christians.[228] This difference in his views on Muslim sin is one that can be attributed to his further research on

[224] "Nation of Islam," Southern Poverty Law Center, accessed February 1, 2019, https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/nation-islam.
[225] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 100.
[226] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[227] Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, Second (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 25.
[228] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 59.

Islam during his research for his MA thesis, but it is still an interesting belief after having served abroad as a missionary for so long.

Furthermore, it is interesting that Douglas discusses Communism and Islam in the same section, as "false, sinister ideologies," which threatened America.[229] As a former missionary to the Middle East who later researched and taught Islam, it should be obvious to him that they are rather different, one being a religious and the other a political ideology. Douglas himself even discussed the feelings of Nasser towards Communism and the feelings of Islam as a recognized state religion in both Libya and Egypt.[230] In this explanation, he classified them as political and religious, respectively. Therefore, that begs the question of why he discussed them within the same breath. The only relationship that he shows between the two is their far-reaching beliefs. He points out that Communism controlled "one-third of the earth's people," while Islam was followed by "two-fifths of Africa and one-fifth of Asia."[231] Comparing Douglas's statements to Lincoln's *Black Muslims*, it is interesting that Douglas matches Communism and Islam not a sentence apart. Lincoln states that the Nation of Islam saw "communism as a white ideology," with whom it did not want to be associated.[232] Thus, it further does not make sense that Douglas discussed these ideologies in this way.

The only way that this connection makes sense is to view it within the context of a Christian American within the 1960s. As an American, Communism was the main threat to Douglas's way of life. The Cold War and its ramifications were all around him, including the

[229] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[230] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[231] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[232] Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*, 18–19.

Vietnam War.[233] Furthermore, Communism was often connected to atheism, as is evidenced in a book on *Getting to Know the Soviet Union* from 1959, which was then reprinted in 1964. If one was to be religious in the Soviet Union, one was then not allowed into the Communist Party and would be removed from privileged opportunities for one's self and family.[234] This belief is what make Douglas's statements understandable. With Lincoln's statements on the Nation of Islam compounded with Communism, both belief systems were viewed as threats by some of the American public, specifically the evangelical Christians of which Douglas was part.

As a Christian, Islam was another instance of monotheism in the United States and was a threat to the traditional Christian values that Douglas and many of his listeners would have held. To Douglas, "Islam in America often," appeared as "a kind of unitarianism," due to the common trend among some Muslims to "minimize the differences," and to point to the worship of "the same God."[235] Furthermore, the acceptance of Abraham as a common "grand example of faith," and the traditionally accepted religious founder of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, makes these religions related in their traditions and doctrine, as well as their discussion of prophets and religious foundational elements.[236] These kinds of statements made Islam a direct threat to Christianity as a similar religion that was accepting of much of their beliefs, while still desiring to convert new believers. Some similarities that Douglas outlined in his later work were the similarities between Muhammed and John the Baptist, Muhammed and Moses, and the God of Islam and Judaism.[237] These similarities are some that American Christians could misunderstand as a further threat to their own beliefs. Both Communism and Islam were threats to the

[233] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 42.
[234] John A. Wallace, *Getting to Know the Soviet Union*, 2nd ed. (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1964), 58–59.
[235] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 21.
[236] Douglas, 66–67.
[237] Douglas, 35–37.

traditional American Christian economic and religious way of life and are thereby included by Douglas as main things threatening the United States. With both "ideologies" relating to religious beliefs that differed from Douglas's own, they were specifically threatening to his way of life.[238]

Douglas's concern for Muslim missionary work led him to gain his M.A. in missiology from Fuller Theological Seminary in 1977. This thesis, compounded with his missions work in the Middle East, specifically Lebanon, is what I believe led to his being considered an expert in Muslim evangelism. The title was "Strategic Components in a Proposed Experimental Approach to Evangelization of Muslims," and it intended to construct and lay out possible new ways of reaching Muslims with Christian mission efforts. In it, Douglas points to the character of Jesus as the main point of contention between Christianity and Islam and the primary factor holding Muslims from converting. This is largely due to the complex "Christology…developed over many centuries" by Christians, which makes it even harder to construct a method of reaching Muslims with Christianity.[239] This large effort to build this structure of Muslim evangelism is the last major educational work that Douglas put towards Muslim efforts, since his PhD diverged drastically from this type of work. Therefore, it must be assumed that this research and "alternative approaches," for reaching the "Muslim diaspora," are what led to his positioning as an expert in Muslim evangelism and his continued work within missions' efforts towards Muslims in the United States and abroad.[240]

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[238] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[239] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 30–33; It is also interesting that his thesis was retained at the Billy Graham Library, giving some hint at the possible importance of Douglas's thesis to some in the evangelical movement.
[240] Douglas, 130.

After receiving his MA, Douglas attended the University of Southern California and received a Ph.D. in Religion and Social Ethics in 1980.[241] This Ph.D. seems to drift greatly from his status as an evangelical expert on Islam. Instead of focusing on Islam, Douglas focused on informal power within the Church of Christ, in specific reference to the lack of a governing body. He analyzed this as a study on how decisions were made without a central governing structure. Instead, he posited, decisions on core beliefs and actions were made through renowned preachers, journal editors, and the religious colleges associated with the Church of Christ.[242] Interestingly, the case study attached to this work is what is especially unique among his public statements. Turned into a book in 2008, the case study attached to his dissertation regarded the Civil Rights movement in the late 1950s and 1960s. He carried out interviews with leaders within the Church of Christ and discussed civil rights with these leaders.[243] Within the Church of Christ, the African-American leaders were rather vocal about their desire and struggle for equality. One of the African-American leaders within the Church, Roosevelt Wells, stated that color was "entrenched in the church," and thus accused the Church of Christ of a history of racism.[244] Unlike Douglas's earlier statements towards the Nation of Islam's civil rights actions, Douglas does not address these individuals with a negative connotation. Instead of being a threat towards the status quo of the United States' religious heritage, Douglas paints them as oppressed by the Church of Christ power structure, while trying to rectify the wrongs that they faced.[245]

[241] Robert C. Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae," After 2009; Unsure of the creation date due to Dr. Douglas having forgotten when he created the CV. Dr. Douglas gave it to me during his interview on November 3, 2018.
[242] Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary," 37–38.
[243] Douglas, "Power, Its Locus and Function in Defining Social Commentary,"16–26.
[244] Douglas, *The Exercise of Informal Power*, 75.
[245] Douglas, *The Exercise of Informal Power*, 141.

With this in mind, it is possible to view his earlier statements not in racial terms, as Lincoln's portrayal of the Nation of Islam did, but in the religious ideologies of Christianity versus Islam.

For the remainder of his career, Douglas seems to have attempted to work against the common misunderstanding of Islam in evangelical Christianity. In his MA thesis at Fuller Seminary, he stated "that people who are most prejudiced toward a minority group," are those who "know little about the object of their prejudice, or possess information which is highly inaccurate."[246] Without a central Church of Christ governing body through which to pursue his career, he spent it combatting this prejudice through efforts to educate all evangelicals about Islam and the people who follow it, and he began focusing on training missionaries to better reach Muslims.

After teaching various missions focused courses at Pepperdine University, he began focusing solely on missions training, becoming the Vice President of the Mission Training and Resource Center in Pasadena, California. This led him to becoming the Executive Director of the Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies in 1986, directing it until 1994.[247] The Zwemer Institute, now known as the Zwemer Center, is a nondenominational training organization that focuses entirely on how to reach Muslims around the globe. It is named after an influential "pioneer missionary to the Muslim world."[248] Douglas would give sermons around the United States to bring this desire to fruition.[249] Without his own denomination having organized avenues for his work, he had to find ways to carry out his Christian faith. To continue this effort,

[246] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 12.
[247] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[248] Don McCurry, "A Brief History of the Zwemer Center for Muslim Studies," Zwemer Center for Muslim Studies, accessed March 13, 2019, http://www.zwemercenter.com/items/brief-history-of-the-zwemer-center/.
[249] Robert C. Douglas, *Muslim Awareness* (Calvary Memorial Church, Oak Park, IL, 1987), https://nickvoss.wordpress.com/2012/04/08/radio-vault-1987-dr-robert-c-douglas-muslim-awareness/.

he even lectured and served on other interdenominational groups, such as the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Muslim Evangelism Task Force and Missionary Learning Center and at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary.[250]

After serving in these capacities for many years, he relocated to Lincoln, IL in 1994 and worked at the Lincoln Christian Seminary for many years as a Professor of Intercultural Studies with specific focus on teaching methods of reaching Muslims.[251] He served briefly as the Director for the Seminary's Chicago Center for Urban Mission from 1998-2000, but eventually returned solely to teaching. After working there for fourteen years, he retired to Dallas, Texas in 2008. However, his retirement was not a quiet one. He became a Consultant for Muslim Ministry at Pioneer Bible Translators in 2009, as well as becoming the Director for the Abraham Center at the Global Institute for Applied Linguistics.[252]

While his time in the Middle East ended, his desire for education and missionary work continues until the present day. From his small beginnings in Oklahoma City to his foundation of a religious training school in Beirut, Bob Douglas traversed the Middle East and back while never really understanding the magnitude of the environment through which he traveled. While claiming that the Cold War did not affect his time abroad, his time was heavily impacted by it.[253] He was able remain oblivious of the surrounding nature of the Cold War because he was a white American in "Third World" Middle East countries. As an outsider who did not understand the language, Douglas was able to escape the reality of the Cold War in the Middle East. Having the

[250] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[251] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae".
[252] Douglas; The Global Institute for Applied Linguistics is now known as Dallas International University. This is the location where the interview that I carried out with Dr. Douglas took place in 2018.
[253] Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018.

ability to enter a country for that length of time without knowledge of the language is something that many would not have had the ability, money, or luxury to do. Because of this, he did not receive his news or any real information from the local papers. In Libya and Egypt, he did interact with some of the major regional papers, but he never stated that he read them himself.[254] This isolated him both from the outside realities and the surrounding struggles of the countries he was inside.

Plus, being an American abroad gave him certain benefits in these nations unavailable to non-Americans. In Libya, he was able to to go in and proselytize and use American and British oil workers as his way past the law against proselytizing. He was then able to utilize connections back in the States to fight against his visa being revoked.[255] This would have been impossible if he was not from a Western power. If Libya had not been so dependent upon the United States and their military support, and if Al-Sanusi had not been propped up by colonial powers, then it is unlikely that he would have gotten away with what he did.[256] Furthermore, Douglas's being white also assisted his travel. In the throes of the American Civil Rights movement, an African-American getting into a visa struggle with international powers would have caused a bigger issue for the homefront in the States. It could have made headlines and been made into a rallying cry for stateside struggles against equal rights. Instead, it is only mentioned by Douglas and nowhere else. So, while he was influenced by his whiteness and his Americanness in positive ways, these things cushioned him from the larger ramifications of being in a post-colonial country in the middle of the Cold War.

[254] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 1; Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018.
[255] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[256] Douglas, Oral History Interview November 2-3, 2018.

Unlike his time in Libya, Douglas's time in Egypt was instead tainted by his foreign identity. The need to bounce back and forth on tourist visas was due to laws put forth by the Treaty of Montreaux. Instead of being able to go in under the guise of some other position, as he did in Libya, he had to go in as a tourist, which heavily restricted his work there. Due to the Montreaux Agreement, other American religious organizations were given the opportunity to do what Douglas wished he could.[257] In this case, his religious affiliation made him less privileged and made it more difficult to carry out his own work because of their lack of representation. It could also be argued that if the Church of Christ had been included in the Abolition of Capitulations in 1937, Douglas might not have been able to travel to Egypt as a missionary anyways, since it would be highly unlikely that there would have been a slot open within the restricted number allowed by the Egyptian government. If this were the case, then Douglas would have been privileged, but not able to exercise that privilege.

In Lebanon, it is not as obvious in what ways he was able to take advantage of his identities. Douglas, and many others, viewed Lebanon, and Beirut specifically, as a type of beacon of European civilization in the Middle East.[258] With its cosmopolitan-style city life, many westerners viewed it as the "model for the interlacing of Europe and the 'Orient'."[259] This cosmopolitan style of living made Lebanon the perfect opportunity for Douglas to create his longest-lasting effort, the Middle East Bible Training College. This opportunity was only possible through Douglas's connections from his days in college. Thus, his education level largely influenced his work abroad in Lebanon. Instead of being in fear from Russian actions, as the United States was, Douglas's obliviousness encouraged him to travel even further and with

[257] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt), 2; Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[258] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[259] Gelvin and Green, *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, 220.

greater ease than had been possible elsewhere. Traveling to Syria and Iraq for extended missions opportunities could be considered rather reckless for an individual abroad during a time of crisis, but Douglas did so anyways.[260]

Douglas's eyes and ears were blinded to the larger setting of the Cold War from his focus on his religious work. In Libya, he was so focused on how to reach Muslims for Christ that he failed to pay much attention to the Air Base and its context of American military presence. In Egypt, he was too worried about upsetting the local Christians' balance with the state to notice the true importance of the nationalist movements around him. In Lebanon, he was so concerned with constructing his Training School and reaching Muslims beyond Lebanon that he did not truly understand what the presence of the USIA meant and how much the Arab-Israeli Conflict meant to the larger scale of the Cold War in the Middle East.[261]

If he had been in Europe, for example, this obliviousness would likely not have been an option. Instead, it would have been obvious to him that the Cold War was around him. Another missionary from the same group, Bob Hare, was in Germany at the time. In his interview, it was clearly stated that he did work beyond the "Iron Curtain," and thus felt a direct connection to the Cold War.[262] Bob Hare was unable to miss the Cold War context for his work, and as another independent missionary, is an example of the common trend for these missionaries.

However, Douglas was not a witness to these everyday reminders of the Cold War. Instead, he was in what could be considered the side show to the major Cold War showdown taking place in Europe. Furthermore, some European countries, like France, encouraged

[260] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[261] Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Lebanon); Douglas, Interview of Bob Douglas (Egypt); Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[262] Hare, Interview of Bob Hare, 1–2.

American tourism to their countries to increase American public support for their alliance with the States.[263] Arab countries, like Libya, did not attempt to frame themselves as a tourist destination, while Egypt seemingly desired to resist becoming involved in this global struggle. While the European moments in the Cold War were removed by distance from Douglas, the United States' actions in Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon coincided with critical moments in Douglas's travels. The Cold War made Douglas's 1960s fraught with constant moving because of international state dynamics and the problematic situation of being an American abroad in the Middle East's fluctuating geography. His assumption of the lack of Cold War impact was highly misplaced.[264]

Although his career as a missionary was finished, his efforts came at a time of great American questioning of what the Middle East, the Arab World, and Islam meant. Douglas's continued efforts in teaching other missionaries and becoming an expert in Islam and proselytizing to Muslims for the Church of Christ and various Christian religious organizations became the crux of the rest of his career. From teaching in California and Illinois to heading the Zwemer Institute, his career progressed towards that of a distinguished academic. His expertise coincided with the rise of evangelical concern in the 1980s and 90s over what became known as the "10/40 Window" of the Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu world, a term coined in Manila in 1989 at the second International Congress on World Evangelization, which Douglas attended.[265] It was even important enough to Douglas to make it into one of his later publications.[266]

[263] Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 109–10.
[264] Douglas, Oral History Interview, November 2-3, 2018.
[265] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 144; Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[266] Robert C Douglas, "Ongoing Strategy Debate in Muslim Missions," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 11 (April 1994): 69.

However, Douglas seems to have preemptively made note of this rising concern of Islam. His work in the 1980s and 90s, hoping to address the "total impasse" that many Christians felt about reaching Muslims, coincides almost perfectly with this new evangelical focus.[267] This new focus on Muslim regions of the world likely boosted Douglas's stature within the evangelical community and propelled his career. From 1988 until 2006, Douglas carried out short-term work in Kenya, Korea, Indonesia, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, the Philippines, Burma, and India.[268] He went from being an Adjunct Professor and the Vice President of a small missions training center in the early 80s, to becoming the Executive Director of the Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies in 1986 and giving lectures around the nation on Muslim missions work, thus launching his recognition as an expert on Muslims and leading to his position as the Director of the Central Asia Study Center in Istanbul in 1991.[269] Even after his eventual retirement from Lincoln Seminary in Illinois in 2008, he continued to work in Muslim-focused work as a Consultant for Muslim Ministry for the Pioneer Bible Translators and as a Faculty member and Director for the Abraham Center in Dallas, Texas.[270] He still resides there, continuing to impact the faculty and student body of the Global Institute for Applied Linguistics.

[267] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 1.
[268] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[269] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae."
[270] Douglas, "Curriculum Vitae.".

CONCLUSION

At his core, Douglas wanted to educate evangelicals about Islam. His level of education, combined with his time abroad, made him a prime candidate for becoming a focal figure for this education. Although his efforts in Libya had largely failed, in Egypt had continued minimally, and in Lebanon had closed a few years after he left, he was considered an expert in Muslim evangelism, serving in multiple positions of that nature during his career. It coincided with what McAlister argued was a rising recognition by the evangelical Christian community of a growing number of Muslims in the world and the increasing sense of global change.[271] Douglas and the evangelical community's anti-Communist rhetoric, with what Gilman argued was anti-Communist United States modernity, drastically altered the United States' world view.[272]

There was a new desire for knowledge on the Islam and the Middle East, because of Palestine's First Intifada, the increased relevance of political Islam with the 1978 Iranian revolution, and the continued impression of extractive neo-colonial efforts of the West and capitalism, as outlined by Vitalis and Mitchell.[273] Until this point, the creation of Israel had been the primary political motivator of evangelicals for their recognition of the Middle East.[274] The fading of Cold War language gave way to that of the "new world order," with America as its guidepost.[275] All these moments laid the groundwork for what would cause Islam and the Middle East to become the new target of fear. Instead of the Soviets as the scapegoat of

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[271] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 144–46.
[272] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 199; Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36.
[273] Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 294–95; Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*, Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Societies and Cultures (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2007), 13-14, 218–19.
[274] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 4.
[275] McAlister, 144–47.

American paranoia, Arabs and Muslims as the focal point of angst became a commonplace association.[276] According to Douglas, this was due to a lack of Christian missionary efforts towards Muslims and forgetting that they were a reachable group of the "Great Commission". Instead, God was bringing Christians back to their evangelizing roots through Islam's increased global presence.[277] He believed that Muslims went from being a largely misunderstood and "forgotten people," to becoming a misused buzzword in modern politics.[278] According to McAlister, this kind of rhetoric gained further popularity in the 1990s, with Sudan, bin Laden, and Hamas being viewed in the "US evangelical consciousness" as targeting the "persecuted body" of global Christianity.[279]

In 1987, Douglas acknowledged the Muslim terrorist stereotype during a sermon to an Illinois congregation that would be visiting a mosque the next day.[280] During the 1980s, Islam and Muslims were viewed as a "threat by Christians" who viewed Muslims as violent individuals, much like Douglas had previously.[281] Many preachers accepted this stereotype and used it as part of a rhetoric of Protestant-American exceptionalism. Douglas disagreed. Having a Muslim neighbor was something that brought fear to many Americans because of the Muslim stereotype as terrorists, but, Douglas points out, a police officer's funeral in Ireland was bombed by an Irish terrorist that very same morning. He argues that Americans were not afraid of having an Irish neighbor, although at the time there were more terrorist attacks by the Irish than by Muslims. Thus, Douglas posited, the terms Muslim and terrorist should not be inherently

[276] This became a common belief and was then further used by Samuel Huntington in his book *The Clash of Civilizations* as a political understanding of the world; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1996).
[277] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[278] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[279] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 177.
[280] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[281] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 150.

connected and that "it is not so," that "all Arabs and Muslims are terrorists and vice versa."[282] This did not take away from the impingement of the "Muslim world" on America and the threat of Islam, but he believed that America had "engendered" much of the distaste in the Middle East.[283] This engenderment of distaste was part of a long history of American efforts in the region. Beth Baron's orphan scandals, McAlister's "dollar diplomacy", and Vitalis's kingdom of oil and Mossadegh crisis are just parts of the construction of this distaste.[284]

In his sermon, however, can also be seen the collision of Muslim and Christian efforts at evangelizing the United States. He draws a direct line of contention between the two faiths as battling for the souls of America, but, unlike his previous concern with Muslim militancy, this new threat was one of a peaceful coexistence that could draw more adherents to Islam than to Christianity.[285] As a religion believing in "an eternal God and a divinely appointed purpose," Islam was the closest thing to Christianity in the United States.[286] This similarity is a long-held belief of Islam as "an outgrowth of Christianity and as a Christian heresy," which Douglas also acknowledged.[287] He even stated that Muslims held missions conferences specifically for discussing evangelism in the United States.[288] This threatened Christianity's monopoly on the United States' faith market and had many Christians concerned. Douglas tapped into this just

[282] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[283] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[284] Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*; McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 30; Vitalis, *America's Kingdom,* 217, 246-248.
[285] Pope et al., "1968: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text," 36; Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[286] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[287] Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018), 192; Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.
[288] Douglas, *Muslim Awareness*.

before the large-scale acknowledgement in 1989 of the threat of Islam on the global scales of faith.[289]

His words in 1987 are still relevant to the world today. Many Christian Americans take the stereotype of Muslims as terrorists as an understood fact and view them as part of a global conflict of faiths. This has already made its way into the historiography of United States-Middle East relations, via Melani McAlister, as a movement against Muslims within the present-day United States.[290] Douglas's sermon calls for understanding another's faith as if it was one's own. Western Christians often understand Islam according to their personal understanding of what Christianity means to them, but, as Dr. Douglas pointed out in his MA Thesis, being religious varies from religion to religion. Thus, it is impossible to understand another's religious feelings without first recognizing that one's own faith relationship might look significantly different from another's.[291] The Middle East has often been considered a religious, economic, and political backwater in which the world powers must intervene to prolong peace and progress, because religion prevents progress.[292] Much like the period in which Douglas traveled, today there is a lot of political flux in the region due to continued Western intervention. The destruction of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq by American forces is just one small example. The old dichotomy of Russia and the United States continues to play itself out in places like Syria, just without the classic Cold War frame. With the new environment of the Middle East, instead of a Six Days' War creating the grounds for Hezbollah and the rise of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the weakness of Assad gave rise to ISIL and a new breed of political

[289] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 144.
[290] McAlister, 288.
[291] Douglas, "Evangelization of Muslims," 58–59.
[292] Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, 248.

Islam that is far removed from the world in which Douglas traveled. The combined importance of the Middle East and the evangelical voting block in the United States today makes Douglas's desired education ever more important. Without educating Americans about Islam, it can be expected that they will continue to maintain a "global climate" of hostility towards Muslims.[293]

[293] McAlister, *The Kingdom of God Has No Borders*, 290.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE NOVEMBER 2-3, 2018 INTERVIEW

1. What kind of preparation did you take when you decided to go on your missionary activities?
2. Did you have any reservations when you decided to start your missionary activities?
3. Can you explain your time in Libya?
4. So, you lived in Benghazi? How and why did you decide to live there?
5. What were your children's reaction to traveling abroad?
6. How did the local population receive your missionary efforts?
7. How did you receive your news? Did you keep up with news back in the United States?
8. What caused you to leave Libya and move to Egypt?
9. How long were you in Libya?
10. I know from your previous interviews that you had reservations about associating with the Christian populations in Egypt. What reservations were those? And why did you have them?
11. Did you and your wife make friends in Egypt?
12. What caused you to move to Lebanon?
13. What did the Middle East Bible Training School entail?
14. Do you remember the community that Middle East Bible Training School was in?
15. Outside of the training school and your time there what else did you do in Lebanon? Were there events you and your family would typically go to on a yearly basis like festivals or anything like that?
16. What papers did you read in Lebanon?
17. What eventually caused you to leave Lebanon and return to the US?
18. What kind of effect did the Six Day's War impact your work in Lebanon?
19. Was there any group in Lebanon, be it Shia, Sunni, Maronite, etc. that was more receptive of your efforts in Lebanon?
20. Did it seem as if there were often other factors that influenced the conversions, outside of purely religious reasons?

21. What were the main differences between the three places, Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon?
22. How did it feel to be an American Protestant in those countries?
23. How did the missionaries within your network impact your efforts there?
24. While you were in Lebanon, for what purposes did you travel to Syria and Iraq?
25. Were you able to maintain contact with your contacts in Egypt and Lebanon?
26. Who would you have considered yourself closest with during your time in the various countries?
27. Did you come into a lot of contact with the United States Information Agency?
28. What sort of formalities or paperwork did you have to carry out whenever you entered or left Libya, Egypt, or Lebanon?
29. What were some of the bigger successes and failures of your missions' work?
30. Can you explain your children's school situation during your time in Lebanon?
31. What community did you live in in Lebanon?
32. When you had to buy groceries or other purchases, where would you go?
33. How did your lack of Arabic pan out across your travels?
34. Was it often a trend of missionaries at the time to go abroad without any background in the local language?
35. What role did women play in your activities?
36. What were the main cultural differences between Libya, Egypt, and Lebanon?
37. Did there seem to be a connection between a person's status and their religious identity?
38. Who took care of the orphans?
39. Who ran the orphanages?
40. Were there still minority protections from outside governments?
41. To what degree did people have a sense of religious liberty?
42. Did you every have to deal with any organized Muslim groups?
43. To what degree did Nasser influence the culture of Egypt?
44. What kind of impact did the Cold War have on your missionary efforts?
45. Can you explain some more about the Zwemer Institute?
46. Did you know a man named Charles Tabor? If so, what can you tell me about him?
47. Did you ever notice a trend of converts reverting to their previous faiths?

48. Can you explain your experience with the clan system?

49. What was the main thing people identified with?

50. Did any of populations have a sense of suspicion towards your presence or missionary efforts?

51. In Libya, did you have to rely on translators?

52. By the time you got to Lebanon, were you still relying on translators, or were you fluent enough on your own?

53. In Egypt, did you have a translator that you often used? Did they consider themselves part of your work? What kind of relationship was formed?

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