

# UC Santa Barbara

## Journal of Transnational American Studies

### Title

Performing Transnational Arab American Womanhood: Rosemary Hakim, US Orientalism, and Cold War Diplomacy

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9713d14n>

### Journal

Journal of Transnational American Studies, 7(1)

### Author

Koegeler-Abdi, Martina

### Publication Date

2016

### DOI

10.5070/T871027803

### Copyright Information

Copyright 2016 by the author(s). This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Peer reviewed

# Performing Transnational Arab American Womanhood: Rosemary Hakim, US Orientalism, and Cold War Diplomacy

---

MARTINA KOEGELER-ABDI

Detroit, Michigan  
January 14, 1955

H. E. Camille Chamoun  
President of the Republic of Lebanon  
Beirut, Lebanon

Dear Mr. President:

As Miss Lebanon-America I send you my warmest personal greetings.

It is indeed an honor and life-long thrill for me to be chosen [sic] Miss Lebanon-America for 1954–55 to represent the Lebanese youth of the United States and Canada as this is the first time that such a title has been bestowed upon anyone. As President of Lebanon I am sure you can be very proud not only of this distinction but also of your young people here who are very much Lebanese in an American way. You will be pleased, too, I am sure, to know how many of us speak (with pride) the language of our fathers and mothers and how much we love the music and dance. My own parents are Sheckry Maroun Hakim from Beirut and Rose Baddour . . . from Hammana and, because

of this, it has been my desire since I was a little girl to visit Lebanon. . . .

Sincerely,  
Mary Hakim  
Miss Lebanon-America  
1954–55

Rosemary Hakim won the first ever “Miss Lebanon-America” beauty pageant, organized by the Lebanon League of Progress and Al-Hoda Publications in the fall of 1954. Her victory at the pageant drastically changed her life and made her an official representative of the larger community of “the Lebanese youth of the United States and Canada.” The pageant was a multi-staged event with different competitions along the East Coast; its final was incorporated into a *mahrajan*, a Lebanese American community festival held in Providence, Rhode Island, on Labor Day. Hakim competed against two other finalists, winning a trophy and \$500.<sup>1</sup> Despite the limited availability of material about the pageant itself, the context of the *mahrajan* indicates the importance of the event for the promotion of the Lebanese American community, while the Mokarzel family’s sponsorship implies a specific Maronite-Lebanese nationalist agenda.<sup>2</sup> Such festivals often worked with orientalist stereotypes to favorably present themselves to the wider American public,<sup>3</sup> but the introduction of a beauty pageant into a *mahrajan* was a clear innovation in 1954. Beauty pageants in general functioned as a publically accepted performance of (white) women’s desirability and patriotism.<sup>4</sup> In the 1950s, various ethnic communities started to use the popularity of beauty pageants as platforms for self-fashioning, to contest racial Otherness, and to seek inclusion into American subjecthood. Representation via such beauty pageants offered opportunities to shape their image to the American public at large and communicated desired ideals and behaviors to the given community. The Miss Lebanon-America pageant was thus part of a range of “ethnic” beauty pageants that negotiated access to hegemonic American subjecthood via beauty culture during the 1950s.<sup>5</sup>

Hakim’s letter to President Chamoun, and further correspondence and newspaper reports found in the Rosemary Hakim Collection at the Arab American National Museum, show that she was not just a pawn of various national interests.<sup>6</sup> On the contrary, Hakim actively used her representative weight as Miss Lebanon-America to gain public visibility for herself and for the Lebanese American community in the US and in Lebanon. It was Hakim’s initiative and the strategic appeal to Lebanese ethnic pride in her letter that brought about the invitation to Lebanon. In response to this letter, the Lebanese tourism ministry invited her to an all-expenses-paid tour of Lebanon in the summer of 1955, which in turn supported the Lebanese government’s “homecoming year” agenda.<sup>7</sup> The early years of the Chamoun presidency were a

golden age for Lebanon after decades of Ottoman and later French-British occupation, and the president declared 1955 a “homecoming year” to promote more tourism from the Lebanese diaspora to the homeland.<sup>8</sup> Hakim’s timing thus placed her in the middle of Lebanese nation-building, while her role as Miss Lebanon-America in the US also contributed to community-building back home. Traditionally the Syrian-Lebanese communities in the US subsumed Lebanese heritage under “Syrian” as an umbrella label, but during and after the political upheavals of World War II a separate self-identification as Lebanese American became increasingly popular in the US.<sup>9</sup> The archive reflects how Hakim’s promotional duties for the Lebanese Detroit community were part of this development; for example, an article in the *Detroit Times* on November 23, 1954, details how she was the guest of honor in a celebration of the tenth anniversary of Lebanese independence held in Detroit.<sup>10</sup> This event testifies to Hakim’s role in the transnational politics of Lebanese nationalism in the mid-1950s US, while Hakim’s memoir reveals how her stay in Beirut served the homecoming-year agenda overseas by constantly endorsing commercial products, airlines, and Lebanese tourism. What is more, Hakim was so popular in Beirut and in the Lebanese press that the United States Information Service (USIS) noticed her and began to include her promotional activities in the incipient Cold War US cultural diplomacy efforts in Lebanon. And what is most remarkable about Hakim is that, despite all these interests that sought to instrumentalize the outcomes of the pageant, she managed to take control over the meaning and reach of her title, Miss Lebanon-America, in her transnational performance of Arab American womanhood.

In this essay, I aim to provide a fuller historical and discursive understanding of Hakim’s self-representation and of what I call her “adaptive agency,” her strategically selective performance of various, potentially contradictory, discursive positions to forge her own kind of Lebanese American womanhood as proudly Arab *and* American.<sup>11</sup> Her public fame as a beauty queen enabled this kind of self-representation but remained only a starting point. Bakirathi Mani locates the beauty pageant as an object or site that actively produces and challenges nationalist imagined communities.<sup>12</sup> In a transnational context—as in the case of Hakim traveling as Miss Lebanon-America to Beirut—contestants must then perform certain nationalist narratives that work on both sides of diaspora communities. In this respect, Hakim’s success story works as a tale of uplift for Lebanese Americans in the US and as a symbol of national prosperity in Lebanon. She advances from being a secretary at a flower seed company in Detroit to Miss Lebanon-America. On her travels she moves in Beirut’s high society, and on her return she starts work as a secretary again, but now based in New York for the Arab States delegation at the United Nations. Later she goes on to represent the Yemen delegation at the UN, and in the years after her summer in Beirut she also wrote an (unpublished) memoir, entitled “Arabian Antipodes,” about her experiences as Miss Lebanon-America.<sup>13</sup> Hakim’s memoir reflects her strategic engagement with the various hegemonic discourses that sought to regulate her status as beauty queen, and her narrative self-representation will be the main focus of this

essay. In the following sections, I draw mostly from chapters one to six of “Arabian Antipodes.” These chapters are the most complete. They describe Hakim’s transnational experiences during her visit to Beirut in her official capacity as Miss Lebanon-America, and I explore Hakim’s adaptive agency and its implication for her transnational performance of Arab American womanhood. The first part of the essay focuses on Hakim’s adaptation of US orientalist stereotypes and tropes in the romantic plotlines of her memoir; the second part analyzes Hakim’s role as a Lebanese American beauty queen in the emerging US Cold War diplomacy overseas. In all these different layers of adaptation, it is Hakim’s performance of Arab American womanhood that turns the ambivalent ethnic identity location of being Lebanese, Arab, and American into a position of advantage. She is proudly Lebanese, Arab, and American all at once, thereby challenging common narratives of Arab American ethnic invisibility in the 1950s.

### **Hakim’s Adaptive Agency and Arab American Self-Representation**

Foundational Arab American Studies scholars, such as Alixa Naff, have focused their research on early Syrian Lebanese American communities and primarily followed the line from immigration to assimilation. Naff concludes that by the 1950s Arab Americans “assimilated themselves out of existence.”<sup>14</sup> Recently, scholars such as Sarah Gualtieri and Hani Bawardi have begun to rewrite this common narrative of straightforward Arab American immigrant assimilation in the early phases of migration. Hakim’s strategic self-representation further challenges this assumption of ethnic invisibility and testifies to active transnational Arab American politics and identity negotiations. Gualtieri urges scholars to analyze the process of how early Syrian American communities “defined themselves as Syrian and American at the same time.”<sup>15</sup> Gualtieri sees such contradictory identity impulses not as an impediment to but rather as a foundational element of Arab American ethnic identity; they generate a constant process of “selection, adaptation and acculturation” (14). Fadda-Conrey further shows that this process of Arab American identity is inherently transnational, because it draws on the tension between “Arab” and “American” by constantly highlighting the multiple religious and ethnic affiliations entailed within those two national adjectives.<sup>16</sup> While Fadda-Conrey focuses on contemporary Arab American literature and Gualtieri on the early Syrian American communities, Hakim’s forgotten life and legacy are an important testimony to the transnational flows involved in the formation of a specifically Lebanese American community in the 1950s. What is more, Hakim’s self-representation requires us to analyze Arab American ethnic identity negotiations not just transnationally but intersectionally as well. Gendered and context-specific imaginations of womanhood are as important to her self-fashioning as a transnational negotiation of Lebanese ethno-nationalism and a sense of American benevolent superiority. If Hakim’s gendered position as beauty queen has contributed to her obscurity and absence from scholarship until now, her memoir offers an astoundingly

rich display of transnational American history through her private and intimate observations.

What can Hakim's selection and adaptation of hegemonic discourses in "Arabian Antipodes" tell us about her specific subject position as a Lebanese American woman in 1955? Her memoir blends a variety of genres and is written in a very informal, intimate manner. Hakim only briefly describes her official duties as Miss Lebanon-America. The bulk of the memoir is dedicated to recreating Hakim's emotions, judgments, opinions, and perceptions about her family's Arab side, Beirut's nightlife, and her observations of the region and its people. In doing so, Hakim blends eyewitness accounts that use orientalist conventions of travel writing about the Holy Land with sentimental plotlines that dominate and propel her narrative forward. For example, Hakim has a strong romantic interest in rich Muslim businessmen, and the potential love story with the Kuwaiti businessman Marzouk, echoing popular orientalist "sheik" tropes, takes a central place in these chapters. Her local family members are also important to her stay in Beirut. She does not include her American relatives in the memoir, but she describes her Lebanese aunt and uncle: "Getting acquainted with Aunt Adele and Uncle Najeeb was so interesting – more like reading a book than meeting relatives."<sup>17</sup> Such moments of disidentification with her local family are very subtle, but they reveal the transnational power differential in Hakim's position as a Lebanese American who, on the one hand, identifies with her Arab heritage and culture but also employs a US orientalist gaze when visiting her own relatives.

Hakim never mentions the particular "book" she has in mind, but the conceptualization of her relatives as "books," or narratives, replicates the orientalist position of knowing the East through literature, paintings, or research. I take her statement as indicative of the way she uses adaptive agency in writing her memoir: she makes deliberate references to circulating discourses and narratives that then also define Hakim's own subject position in presenting herself to potential American and Arab American audiences. Adaptations are generally literary or cultural products that reproduce narratives in different contexts or media—for example, the many adaptations of the *Arabian Nights* in Europe and the US. However, Linda Hutcheon stresses that adaptations are also processes. To consider adaptation as a process opens a window for individual authorial agency, the power to "pick and choose" those elements of hegemonic narratives that suit a given writer, director, or cultural producer.<sup>18</sup> By adding the political term "agency" to this process, we can conceptualize in more nuanced ways how Arab American cultural self-representation works in interaction with highly stereotyped, discursively complex reception environments such as the US. I do not use the term agency here in the simple binary of nonagency as oppression and agency as resistance, but in terms of functionality. Individual agency may challenge stereotypes, but it may equally reproduce them while enabling well-being or a relative increase in power within hegemonic systems.<sup>19</sup> This approach builds on existing research on self- and auto-orientalism among Arab American communities: that is, the ways Arab Americans themselves use orientalist

tropes.<sup>20</sup> The ethnic and gendered dimensions of adaptive agency involved in Hakim's self-representation include, but also exceed, such auto-orientalisms. To fully analyze her memoir, we have to expand our analytical approach to a broader view of how Hakim adapts multiple hegemonic discourses around her. Via adaptive agency, Arab American women like Hakim, who have the opportunity to take public authorial agency, can intervene in these circulations and create, or rather curate, their own adaptations. In short, this approach allows an intersectional analysis of how Arab American women negotiated positions of limited privilege within material-discursive frames, which themselves hinge on the circulation and adaptation of specific narratives that carry, for example, nationalisms, orientalisms, and gender ideals.

Transcultural adaptations and translations play an important role in the formation of Arab American cultural production at large. Wail Hassan and Jacob Berman pioneered research in this field, showing that the cultural translation of orientalist tropes was already an important element of early Arab American literature (that is, the Mahjar generation of the early twentieth century).<sup>21</sup> Hassan reminds us that such references do not just reproduce stereotypes, and that they may also offer an ambivalent form of public agency by "contesting the identity assigned by the dominant majority discourse while at the same time utilizing its sanctioned narrative procedures to enter into its regime of truth."<sup>22</sup> Hassan refers here to the orientalist regime of truth and the cultural translation by early Arab American writers from East to West. In Hakim's case, her adaptations, closely related to translation, capture a slightly different nuance, particularly in her use of gendered orientalisms and tropes of modern womanhood. The gendered orientalist tropes Hakim adapts are not imported or translated directly from the East, but she draws from the already established, domestic circulations of US orientalisms, such as harem fantasies or the sexual allure of virile desert sheik figures originating in the 1920s Hollywood adaptations of *The Sheik*.<sup>23</sup> For example, the threat of polygamy, echoing captivity narratives of American women caught in orientalist harems, remains present throughout the memoir, and Hakim even ends her memoir with a brief dream sequence about being abducted into a harem.<sup>24</sup> On her return from Beirut to New York, Hakim started seeing a Saudi prince, but after a few years in an on-off relationship she uses this dream, representing the threat of polygamy and forced veiling, to justify ending the relationship. Despite this rather abrupt ending, Hakim's representation of Muslim businessmen in Lebanon in the chapters about her stay in Beirut unsettles such typical orientalist stereotypes and asks us to reconsider the role of gender-specific adaptations and translations.

This is a crucial aspect so far underexamined in research on Arab American self-representation, which has mostly focused on the relationship between ethnic identity and self-representation only. Christina Civantos defines such processes of self-essentialization as "auto-Orientalism,"<sup>25</sup> which includes the citation of orientalist tropes, stereotypes, subject positions, or narrative conventions by Arab American authors. Her research focuses on Arab Argentine literature, but we find similar processes in the US context. Steven Salaita goes so far as to posit that the inherent

tension between orientalist audience expectations and self-representation is a defining element for Arab American cultural agents and producers in the US context.<sup>26</sup> Matthew Stiffler's research on the public outreach of the Antiochian church and other Christian Arab American communities further shows that what he calls "self-Orientalism" exceeds the literary into the cultural and the political.<sup>27</sup> His specific case study reveals that Arab American communities frequently used references to orientalist imaginations, such as the *Arabian Nights* narratives, to promote their businesses, churches, and food festivals to the wider American public. This exemplifies how closely the performance of Arab American ethnic identity for US audiences is intertwined with different kinds of orientalisms. Yet we have very little research about how gender impacts women's agency and cultural output in these translations and adaptations.<sup>28</sup>

In her comprehensive introduction to *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11*, Nadine Naber explores the enormous heterogeneity of Arab American ethnic identities and how such identity formations are framed by both anti-Arab racism and the privileges of racial ambiguity within the US racial-classification system.<sup>29</sup> Arab American history in the US was often shaped by particular crossroads between Arab Americans needs and popular US narratives, such as the image of the Middle East as a mythical Holy Land and the place of America's religious origin. These imaginations manifested themselves culturally in Holy Land images, travel writings, and even Holy Land panoramas touring the US in the nineteenth century<sup>30</sup>; however, they also offered a platform for early Arab migrants to the US, who were mostly Christian Syrian and Lebanese. These migrants managed to secure legal status as "Caucasian" based on their faith and national origins in what Americans perceived to be the Holy Land, the cradle of Christian faith. This successful legal aspiration placed Syrian and Lebanese Americans on the white side of the US color line, with significant privileges in the Jim Crow South.<sup>31</sup> But the power of narratives cuts both ways. Due to the increasingly negative orientalist sentiments toward Arabs in the twentieth century, Arab American communities remained in an ethnically ambivalent position. Naber summarizes this development as "the process by which state discourses . . . transformed 'the Arab' over time, from proximity to whiteness to a position of heightened Otherness" by the end of the twentieth century.<sup>32</sup> While the intensities of anti-Arab sentiments in the US may vary over time, orientalisms have continuously shaped public policies toward Arabs at home and abroad, and public policies have in turn shaped orientalisms. This interconnectedness of material and imagined realities turns the adaptation of hegemonic discourses into an important tool for claiming national belonging for Arab American communities. Hakim's self-representation reflects a particular historical moment in these fluctuations. A decade before the oil shock and renewed negative attention to the Middle East, US orientalisms toward Arabs were comparatively flexible in the 1950s.<sup>33</sup> Despite this flexibility Hakim must at once reconcile the relative privilege of proximity to "whiteness"—the ability to move as ethnically unmarked in



American society—with highly racialized orientalist representations of “Arabs” in US popular culture.

In Hakim’s case, her performance of Arab American womanhood allows her at times to leave ethnic ambivalence and orientalist reference frames behind; however, her self-representation also remains embedded in these dominant interpretative frames for Arab Americanness. For example, Hakim includes an auto-orientalist reference to the Holy Land to bolster her authorial credibility as a proud Lebanese/American narrator. Hassan shows that first-generation Arab American writers, such as Ameen Rihani and Kahlil Gibran, gained access to hegemonic US discourses by claiming authorial agency as Arab American native informants from the Holy Land.<sup>34</sup> Hakim uses the Holy Land trope for similar purposes. She dedicates a whole chapter to describing and performing her rapture at visiting holy Christian sites in Jerusalem,<sup>35</sup> which at once allows her to perform as native informant *and* as tourist partaking in the American fascination with the Holy Land—a double move to claim her Arab Christian heritage as essentially American. Furthermore, Hakim’s memoir also compares streets, shops, and houses in Beirut or other cities in the region to an imagined Holy Land scenery that resembles the “days of Christ,” even if geographically speaking the typical Holy Land would only be in Palestine. Her Holy Land references work within the imaginary-orientalist knowledge economy of the US, and Hakim evokes an orientalist sense of a timeless and unchanged past that she mediates for her intended American audience: “Here were streets crowded with the ancient dress of Arab men and women almost exactly as they were in the days of Christ. It is a common sight to see mysterious women heavily veiled from head to foot walking along side of other women wearing the latest fashion in sun back dresses” (5). The most interesting part of the quote, however, is that she not only draws on orientalist Holy Land nostalgia but also introduces the idea of “Arab modernity” in the shape of women’s dress on the street. Hakim’s gendered perspective sets her narrative approach apart and requires an intersectional analysis of her auto-orientalism. Hakim frequently expresses ethnic pride in Arabic language and Lebanese heritage, but she never explicitly refers to race. Rather her representations of “womanhoods” and intimate relationships imply ethno-racial and at times orientalist differences between the lines—in the example above, the contrast in women’s dress establishes the orientalist notions of Eastern backwardness and Western modernity even more forcefully than the Holy Land framework. What is more, as a beauty queen Hakim represents such modernity in her public, self-confidently attractive performance of womanhood in both the American and the Lebanese contexts. She thus most likely identified with the fashionable women in the “sun back dresses,” claiming these women in the street as a projection screen for a certain kind of Lebanese-Arab modernity that is compatible with her American views on womanhood.

These links become more evident in Hakim’s explicit focus on Muslim women as ethnic Others, which develops a highly ambivalent, gendered auto-orientalism. Her representations of Muslim women use the specter of Islam to place them outside of

what she perceives to be Arabness, while her representations of Muslim businessmen challenge her own binary logic in this respect. We need to turn our attention here to the multiple layers of self-representation enabled by Hakim's adaptive agency. US orientalism's gender and racialize "Arab women" in specific ways that differ from the usual orientalist stereotypes of Arab/Muslim men as either lazy, backward oil sheiks, or dangerous, oppressive terrorists. Amira Jarmakani points out that Arab American women have historically faced a pervasive set of orientalist stereotypes, usually revolving around harems and belly dancers as symbols of sexualized "Eastern" women or veils as symbols of oppression.<sup>36</sup> These images have defined imagined Arab womanhood in the US and played an important part in US popular culture in theaters, movies, and media. Hakim's oppositional self-definition as a white Christian Lebanese American woman, in contrast to "oppressed" Muslim women, seeks to stabilize her own "modern" Arab American womanhood in opposition to these orientalist frames: "Moslem women are seldom seen in the streets – and never after sundown. They are veiled and completely undistinguishable. – are these women happy, I wondered? How can they tolerate so much clothing in such humid weather? Are they content to be hidden behind veils all their lives?" (10b). Her description uses Muslim women as a foil against which Hakim can define her own performance of Arab American womanhood as superior, fashionable, publically active, and sexually desirable, all while placing herself outside orientalist stereotypes. This contrast demonstrates Hakim's adaptation of American imaginations about "Arab women," which however usually do not distinguish between Arab and Muslim women. The conflation of the notions of Arabness, Islam, and threat would significantly increase in the (then) near future and become so strong after 9/11 that Miriam Cooke coined a neologism to summarize the collapse of religion and gender in the image of the veiled woman: "themuslimwoman."<sup>37</sup> Hakim's descriptions already resonate with these neo-orientalist notions of the oppressed "muslimwoman." She not only pitches her Arab Americanness against "un-American" Islam, but she already foreshadows future orientalist perceptions of Arab racial Otherness in general. Hakim's gendered auto-orientalism thus unwittingly unsettles the stability of unmarked Arab Americanness that Hakim seeks to claim for her Christian Lebanese community on both sides of the Atlantic.

While Hakim draws a sharp contrast between herself and the Muslim women she observes, her representation of the Muslim men she meets in Beirut challenges this very logic of un-Arab/American Islam versus American Christian Arabness by justifying her romantic interest in Marzouk to her audience. Her choice of the title "Arabian Antipodes" is telling in this respect. It could refer to multiple reference points of Arab diversity in Hakim's memoir, such as the Lebanese diaspora communities on both sides of the Atlantic, or to the different religious and ethnic affiliations among Arabs, but it is also a direct allusion to Hakim and Marzouk as a romantic couple. They are both Arab, but Hakim is Maronite Lebanese and Marzouk is Muslim Kuwaiti. Even though the notion of an "antipode" implies the largest distance possible between two

places, “Arabian” functions here as a transnational umbrella that connects them. In Hakim’s description of her encounters with Marzouk, she gradually humanizes him, which challenges orientalist stereotypes of Muslim men being either oppressive or lazy sheiks. Hakim’s first encounter with Marzouk takes place on the plane ride to Lebanon, and she describes him as a “dark, oriental looking young man.”<sup>38</sup> Throughout the memoir, however, Hakim complicates this stereotypical image in an inner dialogue that quite literally performs a gradual discovery of Arab ethnic heterogeneity through her encounters with Marzouk in various nightclubs and hotel lobbies. The humanization begins with her realization that “Marzouk, like so many tourists in Beirut in the summer is from the country of Kuwait – the land of oil” (9). She starts to translate his Muslim Arabness to her potential American audience in more nuanced terms than monolithic orientalist East/West binaries usually allow. Marzouk is not an oil sheik, but it turns out that he is in the construction business in Kuwait, and that they share a subject position as tourists in Beirut’s cosmopolitan elite spaces.<sup>39</sup> “He was a millionaire, Tony said, in the building and contracting business there. Kuwait – I thought? Where is it? I have never heard of it? What nationality is it and what language is spoken there? Could it be that it is Arabic – but in a dialect – of course! that must be why I couldn’t understand him very well.”<sup>40</sup> Hakim speaks here first from an American point of view in that she dramatizes her discovery of all these facts as a complete surprise, while the realization that she and Marzouk share an Arabic heritage and language actually locates them both under the umbrella of Arab heterogeneity.

Despite their cultural connection, Hakim also speculates about the potential oriental Otherness in Marzouk: for example, his sheik-like social status in Beirut, his possible other wives, and his potential criminality:

It wasn’t until sometime later that I found out that the country of Kuwait is almost 100% Moslem, the men there allowed by their religion to have four wives. This, of course, is frowned upon by other religious sects, particularly in Lebanon. – the fog was lifting. But is Marzouk married? Am I given to understand that he is? . . . or is it that they just don’t want it known that he is Kuwaiti? It was difficult to understand how a man such as he could be judged and placed in such a position merely because of his religion. From the time spent with him, I found him to be as gentlemanly, good natured, educated and dignified as Europeans or Americans. . . . Perhaps if there were not so much mystery surrounding him – he would not loom so prominent in my mind. . . . What is everyone hiding? Does he already have four wives – is he of royal blood – is he wanted by the authorities – of [sic] Just what is it? (9)

Marzouk remains elusive and eventually disappears before they ever have a serious date, and Hakim's narrative thus has ample ground for speculation that allows her to draw on the sensationalist currency of orientalist stereotypes. At the same time, based on her actual experiences with Marzouk, Hakim humanizes him in Euro-American civilizational terms. She goes so far as to defend him personally against orientalist stereotypes, suggesting that he should not be judged based on his religion, even if this defense is mostly based on his upper-class position. It is striking that Hakim extends this humanization only to the Muslim Kuwaiti businessmen she meets, while ignoring the local Muslim Lebanese population. She just acknowledges those "Lebanese sects" that frown on polygamy, and thus she only marks certain Arab ethnic identities as compatible with American interests. Her journey to Beirut already functions in the context of budding global trade,<sup>41</sup> and her positive feelings toward Marzouk are strongly related to his success and power. Hakim, of course, precedes the advent of present-day neoliberal multiculturalism,<sup>42</sup> but her representations of Marzouk already begin to use the terms of what Mahmood Mamdani calls being a "good Muslim."<sup>43</sup> Mamdani asserts that contemporary representations of Muslims in the US usually run along the lines of them being either "good" and compatible with Western expectations or religious, backwards, and thus "bad Muslims." Hakim draws this good/bad binary selectively along the class and ethnic lines of Lebanon, while her gendered auto-orientalism directly opposes the bad Muslim women to the good Muslim businessmen to stabilize her own Arab American subject position in relation to them. Nevertheless, due to her romantic interest in Marzouk, Hakim still has to account for his Muslim Otherness, particularly because of the specter of his potential polygamy.

The mystery surrounding their relationship allows Hakim to again adapt popular American narratives and to change sides in the orientalist binary: to frame her fascination with Marzouk, she evokes some of the basic plot lines of the popular *Sheik* narratives. The image of the virile, rich desert sheik was one of the most popular orientalist tropes of the 1950s and harkens back to British and American harem writings, such as Edith Maude Hull's 1919 novel *The Sheik*, which was adapted for the big screen in 1921 and popularized the image of the sheik, embodied by Rudolph Valentino, in the US.<sup>44</sup> Such narratives usually involve an American or British woman traveling to the desert where she is either abducted by and/or falls in love with an oriental sheik. These "rape and rescue tropes" are an integral part of colonial fantasy designed to showcase the inferiority of the polygamous Islamic world as opposed to Christianity.<sup>45</sup> In *The Sheik*, it turns out the sheik is actually a European orphan, thus "biologically" white and able to exert restraint or exhibit respect toward the Anglo woman he abducted. Hakim's humanized representation of Marzouk is a clear refutation of such crude stereotypes, but in light of the American anxieties about romantic interracial relationships we have to note that Marzouk's disappearance in the narrative actually saves her from having to face the American racial imagination more directly. Indirectly, it is important to her self-representation as an American beauty

queen that she writes herself into the romantic subject position of the white Anglo woman traveling to the desert, falling in love with a sheik-like, mysterious, rich Muslim man. The stability and wide recognition of this particular subject position allows her to challenge orientalist perceptions and to embrace her status as a cultural Arab insider and American citizen with less friction. And rather than claiming to understand Islam herself, Hakim ventriloquizes “inside,” quasi-native information via the figure of a local Christian priest to explain the related histories and shared spiritual reference points of both Islam and Christianity.<sup>46</sup> In this way, Hakim is able to increase the American understanding of Islam and justify her own relations to Muslim men, but without associating herself too strongly with Islamic Otherness.

After Marzouk disappears, Hakim starts to spend time and flirt with other Muslim Kuwaiti tourists she meets in Beirut. On one occasion, she decides to approach and chat with a group of men hanging out at the beach (26). She uses such instances to define her personal view on her womanhood, claiming that she “relied upon the Asiatic impression that a certain amount of brashness is expected from Americans, particularly the American women” (29). This implied contrast places Hakim in what she perceives to be an ethnically unmarked, general kind of American womanhood. In fact, Hakim adapts here a specifically 1950s notion of bold, publically sexualized American women. Related to the post–World War II boom in beauty culture and the nationwide popularity of beauty pageants, Vicki Howard argues that the 1950s imagination of American womanhood began to accept sexual allure and desire outside wedlock as “normal” female characteristics for white middle-class women.<sup>47</sup> It is this recently normalized allure that Hakim incorporates in her performance of Arab American womanhood. What is more, Hakim extends these practices of “modern” womanhood as Americanness to include her Lebanese cousin Tony. Tony functions as her doppelgänger figure: “How lovely Toni is, I thought. Here is a cousin I’ve found on the other side of the world – a cousin as modern and fun loving as myself.”<sup>48</sup> The quality of fun-loving womanhood unites her Arab cousin and herself, thus claiming her Arab side of the family as equally modern, whose lives she recognizes as interchangeable with her own experience and thus by association as modern and American as herself.

In sum, Hakim’s account and self-representation are remarkable because most of her contemporaries in the American public tried to avoid such a direct and celebratory identification with their Arab heritage. The most prominent (mainly male) Arab American writers of her time, such as William Blatty in *Which Way to Mecca, Jack?* (1958) and Vance Bourjaily in *Confessions of a Spent Youth* (1960), sought to distance themselves in their writing from their ethnic roots.<sup>49</sup> They performed an ironic gaze on their Arab cultural heritage with an eye toward stabilizing their status as assimilated, white American citizens. Hakim also seeks to confirm her Americanness, but in her memoir she claims her Lebanese Arab heritage as an integral part of her American identity. Furthermore, Evelyn Shakir notes that female characters in early Arab American literature were almost exclusively mothers.<sup>50</sup> At this time Hakim’s proud and explicit self-fashioning as a modern and sexually desirable woman stands out and

testifies not only to the marginalized historical record of Arab American women's public agency but also to a different sense of what Arab Americanness meant to her.

### **Miss Lebanon-America and US Cold War Cultural Diplomacy**

Hakim's adaptive agency not only shapes her personal self-representation but also her interaction with the political context at large. She is so successful and popular in Lebanon that her presence catches the attention of the USIS in Beirut. Hakim's visit to Beirut thus propels her into US Cold War soft-power politics, which turns her stay into a cultural diplomacy tour based on the currency of her Lebanese heritage and her performance of Arab American womanhood in the service of American political interests. Hakim describes her daily routine and explicit cooperation with the USIS as follows: "As Miss Lebanon-America I had been interviewed almost every day since my arrival, and photographed and entertained. I was now working with the United States Information Service and the American Consulate in publicizing the gesture in the belief that it would strengthen relations between America and Lebanon."<sup>51</sup> This chance cooperation places Hakim in the midst of the United States' emerging imperial interests in the Middle East. US Cold War politics exported cultural productions to invite the decolonizing Third World nations to align themselves with the US, as a distinctly different and more understanding hegemonic power compared to the declining British Empire. While the US deployed cultural diplomacy all over the world, the Middle East became a central area for American foreign-policy interests due to a variety of colliding factors: the emerging Cold War with the Soviet Union, decolonization, the foundation of Israel, and (misguided) assumptions about oil shortages, all of which turned oil into a foreign-policy priority.<sup>52</sup> Caroline Attié points out that Lebanon in particular became a battleground over Anglo hegemony.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, despite their struggle for a competitive advantage in the region, the UK and the US still cooperated to maintain imperial power structures. Culture, including the construction of gendered differences, was one of the strategic avenues to maintain or impose imperial Anglo culture.<sup>54</sup> In 1954, President Eisenhower dedicated special funds for cultural and artistic fields, inspired by the success of the musical *Porgy and Bess* in countering Soviet charges of US racism.<sup>55</sup> Thus, American cultural sponsorship of intellectuals, events, and institutions overseas began "to inoculate the world against the contagion of Communism, and to ease the passage of American foreign policy interests abroad,"<sup>56</sup> resulting in a twin strategy of deploying military hard power and cultural soft power simultaneously.

The most prominent forms of cultural diplomacy were the State Department-sponsored jazz tours, which also came through Beirut in 1956.<sup>57</sup> However, soft power involved not only sending artists and intellectuals on tour but also exporting notions of an idealized "modern womanhood" to other parts of the world. A major example of the deployment of idealized womanhood as part of the twin strategy is the post-World War II US occupation of Japan. The US brought in not only military forces but

also a brand of modern American womanhood as part of their nation-building project. The US command specifically targeted Japanese women with icons, magazines, beauty pageants, and jobs geared toward establishing precedents of modern public womanhood. American policymakers envisioned distinctly gendered ideals as tools to establish a cultural hegemony during the Cold War that could contain communism abroad: “This idealized female was portrayed as a beautiful, cosmopolitan, and progressive individual who took an active role, not only in the home, but in society as well.”<sup>58</sup> Malia McAndrew’s description of export-brand, modern American womanhood fits very well with Hakim’s public performance as a traveling beauty queen in Beirut. In light of the program’s strategic deployment of idealized American womanhood, it was likely Hakim’s successful performance of “modern womanhood” that piqued the Beirut USIS office’s interest. Beyond orientalisms and nationalisms, it was thus also the convergence of US Cold War politics and 1950s notions of ideal American womanhood that opened a window of opportunity for Hakim’s transnational political agency as a beauty queen.

Hakim’s memoir only occasionally mentions her cooperation with the USIS, but the personal and the political become inseparable here. Her self-fashioning as an Arab American woman reveals a double cultural-diplomacy mission—for Lebanese nationalism as much as for American benevolent imperialism. In 1955 Lebanon, these two causes were still fairly aligned, while other states in the region favored Nasserism or Communism. The economic boom years allowed the Chamoun presidency to dampen ethnic tensions within the nation, but when Chamoun officially accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957—the doctrine that sought to contain the Soviet threat in the Middle East via economic support and, if necessary, military intervention—he moved the nation toward conflict. Muslim Lebanese considered his official allegiance with the US as breaking the national pact—the established power balance between Muslims and Christians in Lebanon since 1943.<sup>59</sup> From the American side, jazz tours and other measures of cultural diplomacy designed to establish benevolent supremacy were hardly peaceful either, given that they were frequently accompanied by CIA operations and other forms of intervention.<sup>60</sup> Hakim’s personal observations at times reveal these larger political tensions and her own relation to them. In one instance, on a family excursion to Tripoli, she proudly describes her private observation of the US Navy lying in the Tripoli harbor:

Entrance to Tripoli from Beirut is through the harbor made so well known through the United States Marines’ theme song. And there it was – stretching North lazily for miles – congested with rafts, small fishing boats deserted on this Sunday morning, a few yachts privately owned and the mammoth luxury lines. Here was the Tripoli Harbor unchanged by time proudly submitting the two contrasts of centuries. Anchored motionless in the waters just a short

way from gigantic luxury liners were several American war ships, which, too, on this hot Sunday morning seemed deserted and sleepy, but non the less, prepared for quick action.<sup>61</sup>

This description not only establishes orientalist binaries of Eastern laziness and Western superiority but also testifies to the growing military ties of Lebanon and the US in 1955, and eerily foreshadows the imminent US military occupation of Beirut in 1958. Hakim's observations thus inadvertently point to the military threat that underlies and complements her double role as Lebanese nationalist and US cultural diplomat. In this passage she is proud of the "timeless" Lebanese heritage, but she actually identifies with American military and cultural superiority. Her gaze is steeped in imperial and orientalist perceptions and she performs patriotic Americanness, adapting the earliest American orientalist discourses. She revels in discursive memories of the "shores of Tripoli" from the Marines' theme song, which actually refers to the earliest imperial engagements of the US overseas in the Middle East: the Barbary Wars of the early 1800s off the coast of Algeria, not Lebanon.<sup>62</sup> Hakim's adaptive agency picks here a US orientalist-nationalist foundational narrative and applies it, with pride, to her Lebanese setting. I am, however, less interested in her geographic mixing of various Tripolis than the fact that she uses US orientalist tropes to position herself as an American first and Lebanese second. The scene above runs along classic orientalist binaries that Hakim overlays in her descriptions of the boats and the harbor as stand-ins for people: the lazy Arab locked in an unchanging past, needing American guidance and protection in order to progress. The presence of luxury liners and American war ships represent the twin forces of capitalism and the military, as well as signaling temporal difference by representing modernity as opposed to the old harbor itself. These symbols of American prowess and military superiority, encapsulated in their ability for "quick action," would subsequently be demonstrated in the American invasion of Lebanon in 1958.

As cultural ambassador, Hakim promotes her sponsors and Lebanese tourism without any hesitation; however, traveling in the region to Jordan, Jerusalem, and Syria, she cannot help but notice the Palestinian cause: "the existing Palestine situation became more clear each day – also the danger. The resentment toward Americans by Arabs (because of financial and moral help to Israel) also became clear. It was slight – but definitely firm."<sup>63</sup> Her memoir, written for the American market, frames any reference that could be construed as overtly political so that it only shows her cooperation with the American government agencies in Beirut. She claims that the US Consulate and the USIS instructed her "as to what could be said and what could not (this was routine with important visiting celebrities from United States, I learned)" (10a), which implicitly acknowledges not only an ideological bias but forms of USIS censorship. At the same time, Hakim is clearly pleased to refer to herself as a "visiting celebrity," locating herself explicitly in the services of American cultural diplomacy



even though she resides in Beirut on the invitation of the Lebanese government. The specter of the Palestine–Israel conflict further amplifies these small moments of national ambiguity in Hakim’s affiliations, which shed light on the 1950s as a particular moment in the transnational history of Arab Americans.

The bulk of her memoir addresses romantic plots and her personal life, but Hakim chooses to include one episode where the press pushes Hakim to comment on the situation of Palestinians. Her memoir thus also contributes to our understanding of Arab American ethnic and community formation in relation to transnational politics. Many scholars (for example, Alixa Naff, Michael Suleiman, and Helen Hatab Samhan) attribute the formation of a pan-Arab American identity to the impact of the Arab–Israeli War of 1967 and the overwhelmingly one-sided US approach to the Israel–Palestine conflict during this war.<sup>64</sup> This watershed moment in 1967 and the subsequent biased media and political discourse against Palestinians specifically and Arabs more broadly brought the earlier, more assimilated immigrant generations in the US together with newcomers in a shared political concern. Bawardi argues, however, that the Palestinian cause already concerned Arab American communities much earlier, following the 1917 Balfour Declaration, and that before World War II the Syrian cause far overshadowed the Palestinian one as a diaspora politics issue.<sup>65</sup> The history of Arab American migration to the US is often divided into pre- and post–World War II phases, but some scholars have begun to categorize the time between 1948 and 1965 as a distinct phase marked by Palestinian refugees coming to America.<sup>66</sup> Gregory Orfalea estimates that about one-fourth of post-1948 Arab migrants to the US were Palestinians,<sup>67</sup> and until 1965 they dominated the second wave of migration. Hakim’s account supports Orfalea’s view that the plight of Palestinian refugees was a concern for Arab American communities during the 1950s. More than the fact that Hakim observes Palestinian dislocation during her travels, it is how she describes these moments in her memoir that reflects a sense of transnational Arab American solidarity before 1967:

Since I had traveled on Middle East Airlines and had seen several refugee camps there through the planning of Mr. Najar with the Middle East Airlines branch there, it was felt that a statement was in order. It was difficult to refuse to comment – however, a statement was given out saying that I had found Jordan and the Arab world in general progressing surprisingly well and the future looked bright. I recommended the middle [sic] Eastern part of the world to all tourists, and also their airlines. Although this was not in the nature of their request, it was accepted and appeared in the following day’s papers with pictures and story of my return to Lebanon. Later at the American Embassy it was felt

that such a statement was quite in line with my position as a tourist.”<sup>68</sup>

I quote this passage at length to show the drastic shift in her voice and tone, compared to the predominantly direct speech and chatty, oral form of the memoir. The use of the passive voice here obscures who exactly felt the need to comment on the refugee situation, but both the interest of the Lebanese press and the planning of Middle Eastern Airlines indicate the local importance and interest in what the American (and Lebanese American) beauty queen had to say. While Hakim remains in line with the expectations of the American embassy and her role in promoting business and tourism, her passive voice also reveals a passive resistance against the officially scripted response. Her expression of difficulty in responding, and the fact that she includes this episode in her account, discloses a conflicting sense of Americanness, one that cannot dismiss feelings of solidarity with Palestinians as a hallmark of Arab American ethnic identity. This final example brings us back to Gualtieri's and Fadda-Conrey's definition of Arab American identity as a process of negotiating national contradictions and transnational connections. Hakim's particular situation as representative of the Lebanese American communities in Beirut and her subject position as an American writing about Lebanon make any clear affiliation with either a nationalist Arab or a nationalist American category impossible. In the end, it is Hakim's strategic adaptations of various imagined womanhoods that allow her to negotiate and connect her Arab and American heritage into a transnational identity.

## **Conclusion**

Rosemary Hakim's stay as Miss Lebanon-America in Beirut was a resounding success and her public performance of Arab American womanhood served both national narratives of Lebanese modernity and American benevolent imperialism. She was loved by the Lebanese press and public, and appreciated by the Beirut branch of the USIS. On her return from Beirut to the US, Hakim wrote another letter to a president, though this time the recipient was not Chamoun but Eisenhower. Hakim assured Eisenhower that she had represented “the typical American girl of Lebanese descent” and that her treatment in Lebanon “couldn't have been more royal – unless it were for you. I was really very proud to be an American.”<sup>69</sup> Eisenhower never graced her letter with a response, but the contrast in style, tone, and her opposing pledges of national allegiance in the respective letters to Chamoun and Eisenhower may raise the question of whether Hakim's self-representation was merely opportunistic. In this essay, however, I have shown that Hakim's adaptive agency goes far beyond lip service and actually works productively with the tension between her American and Lebanese affiliations to shape her own performance of transnational Arab American womanhood. Her memoir, “Arabian Antipodes,” develops a multifaceted self-representation that strategically draws on various hegemonic discourses of her time,

including US orientalism and idealized standards of 1950s womanhood. Hakim's memoir and correspondence reveal how her adaptations allowed her to claim a subject position as an Arab *and* American woman, while her deliberate use of Lebanese nationalism and the Cold War context facilitated her transnational reach. Ultimately, Hakim's narrative reflects the centrality of intersectionality in Arab American self-representation. It was her performance of different womanhoods that stabilized her ambiguous ethnic position as a Lebanese American and developed a transnational frame of reference that connected her family and community across the Atlantic.

## Notes

I want to thank the staff at the Arab American National Museum, particularly Kirsten Terry and Matthew Stiffler, for their support during my archival research. I am also very grateful to Martyn Bone, Silvia Schaltermandl, Zeinab McHeimech, and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback on earlier drafts of this essay. Finally, I wish to acknowledge Joshua Sabih and Julia Gettle, who provided valuable input in discussions on Rosemary Hakim.

<sup>1</sup> See *Lebanese American Journal*, "Wins National Contest," newspaper clipping, 1955, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1, Arab American National Museum Archives, Dearborn, MI.

<sup>2</sup> For more on the specific history of Syrian and Lebanese nationalisms and the role of the Mokarzel family in the Lebanese American community, see Hani J. Bawardi, *The Making of Arab Americans: From Syrian Nationalism to U.S. Citizenship* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 23–33.

<sup>3</sup> See Matthew Jaber Stiffler, "Consuming Orientalism: Public Foodways of Arab American Christians," *Mashriq & Mahjar* 2, no. 2 (2014): 118.

<sup>4</sup> The most prominent pageant of them all was the Miss America pageant. It had been running locally as a tourist promotion in Atlantic City since 1924, and the first televised competition raised the pageant to a national symbol after 1954. From 1959 onwards, every state was represented. See A. R. Riverol, *Live from Atlantic City: The History of the Miss America Pageant Before, After, and in Spite of Television* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992), 50–56.

<sup>5</sup> See Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, "'Loveliest Daughter of Our Ancient Cathay!': Representations of Ethnic and Gender Identity in the Miss Chinatown U. S. A. Beauty Pageant," *Journal of Social History* 31, no. 1 (1997): 5–31; Malia McAndrew, "Beauty, Soft Power, and the Politics of Womanhood during the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952," *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 4 (2014): 83–107; and Malia McAndrew, "Japanese American Beauty Pageants and Minstrel Shows: The Performance of Gender and Race by Nisei

Youth during World War II,” *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 7, no. 1 (2014): 42–64.

<sup>6</sup> See Rosemary Hakim, letter to Lebanese President Camille Chamoun, January 14, 1955, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1.

<sup>7</sup> See Fouad Braidy, letter to Rosemary Hakim, February 23, 1955, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1; and Camille Chamoun, “Opening Address by His Excellency M. Camille N. Chamoun, President of the Lebanese Republic, On the Occasion of the ‘Homecoming Year’ 1955,” July 21, 1955, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1.

<sup>8</sup> See Caroline Attié, *Struggle in the Levant: Lebanon in the 1950s* (London: I. B. Tauris, in association with Centre for Lebanese Studies, 2004), 1–5.

<sup>9</sup> Bawardi, *Making of Arab Americans*, 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Detroit Times*, “11th Anniversary of Freedom: City Lebanese Fete Republic,” November 23, 1954, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1.

<sup>11</sup> I use the term “strategic” in my essay in a Spivakian sense. Spivak insists that there needs to be a minimalizable essence to negotiate difference in cultural representation, but she emphasizes that strategic essentialism is not part of creating fixed standpoints. Rather it is an attempt to keep essences fluid, that is, to strategically employ identity markers in a given situation without solidifying them into one normative subject position. Gayatri Spivak, with Ellen Rooney, “‘In a Word’: Interview,” in *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1997), 370.

<sup>12</sup> See Bakirathi Mani, “Beauty Queens: Gender, Ethnicity, and Transnational Modernities at the Miss India USA Pageant,” *positions* 14, no. 3 (2006): 743.

<sup>13</sup> Hakim attempted to publish her memoir with Brandt & Brandt in New York in 1960. Rosemary Hakim, letter to Brandt & Brandt Publishing House, September 28, 1960, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1. Though she did not manage to convince the publisher to take it on, the manuscript was intended for American and Arab American audiences and offers intriguing insight into her strategies of self-fashioning.

<sup>14</sup> Alixa Naff, “The Early Arab Immigrant Experience,” in *The Development of Arab-American Identity*, ed. Ernest McCarus (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 35.

<sup>15</sup> Sarah M. A. Gualtieri, *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 14.

<sup>16</sup> See Carol Fadda-Conrey, *Contemporary Arab-American Literature: Transnational Reconfigurations of Citizenship and Belonging* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 10–11.

- <sup>17</sup> Rosemary Hakim, "Arabian Antipodes" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1955–1959), Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, series 3, folder 1, p. 2, available online at <http://cdm16806.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p16806coll8/id/255/rec/1>.
- <sup>18</sup> See Linda Hutcheon with Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2013), 150.
- <sup>19</sup> See Serene J. Khader, "Must Theorising about Adaptive Preferences Deny Women's Agency?" *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 29, no. 4 (2012): 312.
- <sup>20</sup> See Christina Civantos, *Between Argentines and Arabs: Argentine Orientalism, Arab Immigrants, and the Writing of Identity* (Albany: State University of New York, 2006), 22.
- <sup>21</sup> See Jacob Rama Berman, *American Arabesque: Arabs, Islam, and the 19th-Century Imaginary* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).
- <sup>22</sup> Wail S. Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 80.
- <sup>23</sup> See Nadine Naber, "Introduction: Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formations," in *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, ed. Amaney Jamal and Nadine Naber (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 25; and Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 22–25.
- <sup>24</sup> Hakim, "Arabian Antipodes," 49.
- <sup>25</sup> Civantos, *Between Argentines and Arabs*, 22.
- <sup>26</sup> Steven Salaita, *Arab American Literary Fictions, Cultures, and Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 109.
- <sup>27</sup> Stiffler, "Consuming Orientalism," 111.
- <sup>28</sup> See Marilyn Booth, "Response to Wail Hassan," *American Literary History* 20, nos. 1–2 (2008): 282.
- <sup>29</sup> See Naber, "Introduction," 39.
- <sup>30</sup> See McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 13.
- <sup>31</sup> See Sarah Gualtieri, "Strange Fruit? Syrian Immigrants, Extralegal Violence and Racial Formation in the Jim Crow South," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2004): 76.
- <sup>32</sup> Naber, "Introduction," 39.
- <sup>33</sup> See McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 40–42.
- <sup>34</sup> See Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives*, 81–97.
- <sup>35</sup> Hakim, "Arabian Antipodes," 10a–22.

<sup>36</sup> See Amira Jarmakani, *Imagining Arab Womanhood: The Cultural Mythology of Veils, Harems, and Belly Dancers in the U.S.* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

<sup>37</sup> See Miriam Cooke, “Deploying the Muslimwoman,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 24, no. 1 (2008): 93.

<sup>38</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 1.

<sup>39</sup> Most of Hakim’s transnational and intercultural encounters happen in upper-class, cosmopolitan circles, emblematically represented by the luxury hotel scene in Beirut—the city was one of the central hubs in 1950s global business transactions. See Sara Fregonese, “Between a Refuge and a Battleground: Beirut’s Discrepant Cosmopolitanisms,” *Geographical Review* 102, no. 3 (2012): 316.

<sup>40</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 9.

<sup>41</sup> See Fregonese, “Between a Refuge,” 322.

<sup>42</sup> See Jodi Melamed, “Reading Tehran in *Lolita*: Making Racialized and Gendered Difference Work for Neoliberal Multiculturalism,” in *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, ed. Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 76–109.

<sup>43</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, “Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism,” *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 766.

<sup>44</sup> See McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 25–30; E. M. Hull, *The Sheik* (London: Everleigh Nash, 1919); and *The Sheik*, dir. George Melford (1921; Dallas, TX: Reel Media International, 2007), DVD.

<sup>45</sup> See Naber, “Introduction,” 25.

<sup>46</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 19.

<sup>47</sup> See Vicki Howard, “‘At the Curve Exchange’: Postwar Beauty Culture and Working Women at Maidenform,” *Enterprise & Society* 1, no. 3 (2000): 594–97.

<sup>48</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 7.

<sup>49</sup> William Peter Blatty, *Which Way to Mecca, Jack?* (New York: Bernard Geis Associates, 1958); and Vance Bourjaily, *Confessions of a Spent Youth* (New York: Dial Press, 1960).

<sup>50</sup> See Evelyn Shakir, “Arab Mothers, American Sons: Women in Arab-American Autobiographies,” *MELUS* 17, no. 3 (1991): 5–15; Evelyn Shakir, “Mother’s Milk: Women in Arab-American Autobiography,” *MELUS* 15, no. 4 (1988): 39–50; and Evelyn Shakir, “Pretending to Be Arab: Role-Playing in Vance Bourjaily’s ‘The Fractional Man,’” *MELUS* 9, no. 1 (1982): 7–21.

<sup>51</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 4.

<sup>52</sup> See McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 40–42.

- <sup>53</sup> Attié, *Struggle in the Levant*, 5.
- <sup>54</sup> See Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (London: Routledge, 1996), 9.
- <sup>55</sup> See Penny M. von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*, paperback ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 4.
- <sup>56</sup> Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999), 2.
- <sup>57</sup> See Eschen, *Satchmo*, 33–37.
- <sup>58</sup> McAndrew, “Beauty,” 85.
- <sup>59</sup> See Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 3–7.
- <sup>60</sup> See Eschen, *Satchmo*, 5.
- <sup>61</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 10.
- <sup>62</sup> See Malini Johar Schueller, *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790–1890* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 45.
- <sup>63</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 10b.
- <sup>64</sup> See Naff, “Early Arab Immigrant Experience”; Michael W. Suleiman, ed., *Arabs in America: Building a New Future* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); and Helen Hatab Samhan, “Not Quite White: Race Classification and the Arab-American Experience,” in Suleiman, *Arabs in America*, 209–26.
- <sup>65</sup> Bawardi, *Making of Arab Americans*, 5.
- <sup>66</sup> See Fadda-Conrey, *Contemporary Arab-American Literature*, 12.
- <sup>67</sup> Gregory Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2006), 152–53.
- <sup>68</sup> Hakim, “Arabian Antipodes,” 10a.
- <sup>69</sup> Rosemary Hakim, letter to US President Dwight D. Eisenhower, September 10, 1955, Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, box 2, series 4, folder 1.

### **Selected Bibliography**

Attié, Caroline. *Struggle in the Levant: Lebanon in the 1950s*. London: I. B. Tauris, in association with Centre for Lebanese Studies, 2004.

- Bawardi, Hani J. *The Making of Arab Americans: From Syrian Nationalism to U.S. Citizenship*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014.
- Berman, Jacob Rama. *American Arabesque: Arabs, Islam, and the 19th-Century Imaginary*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.
- Blatty, William Peter. *Which Way to Mecca, Jack?* New York: Bernard Geis Associates, 1958.
- Booth, Marilyn. "Response to Wail Hassan." *American Literary History* 20, nos. 1–2 (2008): 276–85.
- Bourjaily, Vance. *Confessions of a Spent Youth*. New York: Dial Press, 1960.
- Civantos, Christina. *Between Argentines and Arabs: Argentine Orientalism, Arab Immigrants, and the Writing of Identity*. Albany: State University of New York, 2006.
- Cooke, Miriam. "Deploying the Muslimwoman." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 24, no. 1 (2008): 91–99.
- Fadda-Conrey, Carol. *Contemporary Arab-American Literature: Transnational Reconfigurations of Citizenship and Belonging*. New York: New York University Press, 2014.
- Fregonese, Sara. "Between a Refuge and a Battleground: Beirut's Discrepant Cosmopolitanisms." *Geographical Review* 102, no. 3 (2012): 316–36.
- Gualtieri, Sarah M. A. *Between Arab and White: Race and Ethnicity in the Early Syrian American Diaspora*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- . "Strange Fruit? Syrian Immigrants, Extralegal Violence and Racial Formation in the Jim Crow South," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2004): 63–85.
- Hakim, Rosemary. "Arabian Antipodes." Unpublished manuscript, ca. 1955–1959. Rosemary Hakim Collection, 2011.07.00, series 3, folder 1, Arab American National Museum Archives, Dearborn, MI. Available online at <http://cdm16806.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p16806coll8/id/255/rec/1>.
- Hassan, Wail S. *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Howard, Vicki. "'At the Curve Exchange': Postwar Beauty Culture and Working Women at Maidenform." *Enterprise & Society* 1, no. 3 (2000): 591–618.
- Hull, E. M. *The Sheik*. London: Everleigh Nash, 1919.
- Hutcheon, Linda, with Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Jarmakani, Amira. *Imagining Arab Womanhood: The Cultural Mythology of Veils, Harems, and Belly Dancers in the U.S.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.



- Khader, Serene J. "Must Theorising about Adaptive Preferences Deny Women's Agency?" *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 29, no. 4 (2012): 302–17.
- Lewis, Reina. *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism." *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 766–75.
- Mani, Bakirathi. "Beauty Queens: Gender, Ethnicity, and Transnational Modernities at the Miss India USA Pageant." *positions* 14, no. 3 (2006): 717–47.
- McAlister, Melani. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East since 1945*. Rev. ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- McAndrew, Malia. "Beauty, Soft Power, and the Politics of Womanhood during the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952." *Journal of Women's History* 26, no. 4 (2014): 83–107.
- . "Japanese American Beauty Pageants and Minstrel Shows: The Performance of Gender and Race by Nisei Youth during World War II." *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 7, no. 1 (2014): 42–64.
- Melamed, Jodi. "Reading Tehran in *Lolita*: Making Racialized and Gendered Difference Work for Neoliberal Multiculturalism." In *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, ed. Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson, 76–109. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Naber, Nadine. "Introduction: Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formations." In *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, ed. Amaney Jamal and Nadine Naber, 1–45. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008.
- Naff, Alixa. "The Early Arab Immigrant Experience." In *The Development of Arab-American Identity*, ed. Ernest McCarus, 23–36. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
- Orfalea, Gregory. *The Arab Americans: A History*. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2006.
- Riverol, A. R. *Live from Atlantic City: The History of the Miss America Pageant Before, After, and in Spite of Television*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992.
- Rosemary Hakim Collection. 2011.07.00. Arab American National Museum Archives, Dearborn, MI.  
<http://cdm16806.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16806coll8>.
- Salaita, Steven. *Arab American Literary Fictions, Cultures, and Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

- Samhan, Helen Hatab. "Not Quite White: Race Classification and the Arab-American Experience." In *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, ed. Michael W. Suleiman, 209–26. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.
- Saunders, Frances Stonor. *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*. London: Granta Books, 1999.
- Schueller, Malini Johar. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790–1890*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001.
- Shakir, Evelyn. "Arab Mothers, American Sons: Women in Arab-American Autobiographies." *MELUS* 17, no. 3 (1991): 5–15.
- . "Mother's Milk: Women in Arab-American Autobiography." *MELUS* 15, no. 4 (1988): 39–50.
- . "Pretending to Be Arab: Role-Playing in Vance Bourjaily's 'The Fractional Man.'" *MELUS* 9, no. 1 (1982): 7–21.
- The Sheik*. DVD. Dir. George Melford. Dallas, TX: Reel Media International, 2007.
- Spivak, Gayatri, with Ellen Rooney. "In a Word': Interview." In *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. Linda Nicholson, 356–78. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Stiffler, Matthew Jaber. "Consuming Orientalism: Public Foodways of Arab American Christians." *Mashriq & Mahjar* 2, no. 2 (2014): 111–38.
- Suleiman, Michael W., ed. *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.
- Von Eschen, Penny M. *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*. Paperback ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun. "Loveliest Daughter of Our Ancient Cathay!': Representations of Ethnic and Gender Identity in the Miss Chinatown U. S. A. Beauty Pageant." *Journal of Social History* 31, no. 1 (1997): 5–31.
- Yaqub, Salim. *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.