

An Honest Broker? The American Consul in Jerusalem, Otis A. Glazebrook (1914–20)

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Abstract

U.S. humanitarian activity in Jerusalem, and Palestine as a whole, from the early nineteenth century onward challenges the traditional view that the United States played a relatively marginal role in the region until the end of World War II. This article argues that American aid, initially understood as a religious duty of individuals, was transformed into an organized form of aid that served as a form of soft power in the region. The agency of U.S. consul Otis Glazebrook is under scrutiny in this article and its analysis shows the fundamental role he played in this shift. Individual aid was superseded by institutional help and the shift was embodied in the aid and relief sent to the Jews. Eventually U.S. institutional aid during the war paved the way for formal support for Zionism and the notion that only Jews (and especially American Jews, who thought of themselves as agents of innovation) could lead Palestine into modernity. While Glazebrook was arguably not a supporter of political Zionism, his agency led America and Zionism to meet each other and initiate a lasting relationship.

Keywords

Jerusalem; American consul; First World War; Zionism; humanitarianism; relief; American Colony.

U.S. humanitarian activity in Jerusalem, and Palestine as a whole, from the early nineteenth century onward challenges the traditional view that the United States played a relatively marginal role in the region

until the end of World War II. Prior to World War I, however, the link between the United States and Palestine was one that mainly depended upon individuals rather than institutions.¹ Americans viewed Palestine and Jerusalem through a biblical lens, and American Christian settlers grew in numbers, coming to Jerusalem in response to messianic expectations.² However, U.S. missionaries in Jerusalem never gained the prominence they did in Lebanon and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. This shaped the official U.S. government role in Palestine: U.S. consuls, though they served individuals and even communities that had moved to Jerusalem for religious reasons, were not much concerned with missionaries per se.³ The U.S. consulate in Jerusalem was thus less active than other states' diplomatic institutions in Palestine.⁴ Given the relative unimportance of the position from a diplomatic perspective, U.S. consuls were for the most part entrepreneurs or scholars who saw their appointment as a way to advance their personal business.⁵

Consular activity did, however, still shape relations in Palestine. U.S. consuls were responsible for maintaining the records of U.S. citizens and protecting nationals residing within the consular jurisdiction of Jerusalem, including American protégés. The consul also registered the births, marriages, and deaths of U.S. citizens, issued passports, and provided a large range of services, such as supplying U.S. companies with business reports. Consuls also performed legal functions such as handling claims filed in the United States against U.S. citizens residing in Jerusalem.⁶ Since many of the U.S. consuls were ordained Protestant clergymen, missionaries and Christian settlers were, unsurprisingly, the most important recipients of consular help, although pilgrims and tourists visiting the Holy Land frequently became beneficiaries as well.⁷

Relations between Jewish communities in Palestine and U.S. officials were strained during the Ottoman period, in part because the United States was associated with missionary activity that included, as part of its objectives, the conversion of Jews to Christianity. The general failure of this project, however, eased relations between U.S. consuls and Jewish communities. (Indeed, the first U.S. consul to Jerusalem, Warder Cresson, appointed in May 1844, went the other direction, converting to Judaism and establishing a Jewish agricultural colony near Jerusalem.)⁸ Several Jewish communities in Palestine claimed U.S. protection, particularly in Jerusalem, Safad, and Tiberias, and under capitulatory rights U.S. consuls often granted citizenship or protection to non-American Jews.⁹ American Jews attempted to establish a community, or *kolel*, for Jews from the American diaspora in Jerusalem in 1879. However, it was not until 1896 that the Kolel America Tiferet Yerushalayim (the American Congregation Pride of Jerusalem) was officially established, leading to a reorganization of the substantial *halukka* funds received from the United States.¹⁰

The humanitarian crisis created by World War I altered this state of affairs. U.S. institutional aid during the war paved the way for formal support for Zionism and the notion that only Jews (and especially American Jews, who thought of themselves as agents of innovation) could lead Palestine into modernity.¹¹ After the war, U.S. involvement in the region became more institutionalized and more organized,

ultimately taking the form of a strong American paternalism without the cruelty of a colonial occupation.¹² The U.S. consul in Jerusalem during World War I, Otis Glazebrook, played – perhaps unwittingly, but effectively – a central role in these fundamental shifts. Glazebrook, a retired pastor, became U.S. consul in 1914. He had hoped to spend his remaining years quietly in the Holy Land, but the outbreak of World War I unexpectedly thrust him into a crucial, active role in managing the crises that beset that region.

Glazebrook's activity, as U.S. consul and as an American Christian, illuminate a bond forged between the United States and the Holy Land through its Jewish communities.¹³ Glazebrook's appointment represented a shift toward the formalization of what had previously been merely personal bonds between individuals in the United States and the Holy Land. At the outbreak of the war, this relationship could have developed in a number of directions, but the war and the work of the Zionist Organization in Britain and the United States not only resulted in the Balfour Declaration, but also drove the relationship between the United States and the Holy Land toward an American-Jewish entente that would solidify over the following decades.¹⁴ Although several historians of late Ottoman and early British Palestine have discussed the U.S. consul's involvement in the distribution of aid to local Jewish communities, his role as an intercommunal and intracommunal broker has been generally overlooked.¹⁵ The most detailed examination of Glazebrook's role, written by Frank Manuel in 1949, paints Glazebrook as a colorless diplomat, naïve and somewhat anti-Zionist. Though Manuel does mention Glazebrook's enormous labor on behalf of Palestine's Jewish community, he suggests that the consul was not acting on his own initiative, but was compelled by the U.S. government.¹⁶ Evidence from the archives of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity and the U.S. National Archives, however, illuminate Glazebrook's role in shifting the U.S. role toward an institutionalized support of Palestine's Jewish community couched in humanitarian terms, and thus offering a new chronology of the United States' support for Zionism that recognizes World War I, rather than World War II, as the foundational moment in this support.¹⁷

The United States, the Ottoman Empire, and Palestine

Relations between the United States and the Middle East date back to the early years of the republic. Before World War I, however, Ottoman Palestine held no great importance for most Americans.¹⁸ Many knew of Palestine as the biblical Holy Land. For a smaller group, it was a supplier of and potential market for commercial goods. At the beginning of the twentieth century, U.S. president William Howard Taft inaugurated an aggressive trade policy known as “dollar diplomacy,” which made the Ottoman Empire a more palatable market. By the outbreak of World War I, exports to the United States accounted for 23 percent of total Ottoman exports – it is, however, hard to determine exports from Palestine, specifically – though the Ottoman Empire accounted for less than 1 percent of annual U.S. exports.¹⁹ Compared with German, British, French, Russian, and Italian investments, however, U.S. trade remained negligible.²⁰

Some Americans have had some personal interactions with inhabitants of Ottoman Palestine. At the turn of the nineteenth century, many Palestinians migrated to the United States for short periods – seeking money and avoiding military service – while Jewish communities in Palestine had begun to receive charitable support from Jewish-American institutions and were experiencing the first benefits of small but significant American investments in Palestine. But most Americans would have found it nearly impossible to find Palestine on a map.²¹

The activities of American missionaries in the Middle East may have been the most significant element in bilateral Ottoman–U.S. relations.²² Having failed to convert the region’s inhabitants, American missionaries turned to improving the temporal conditions of the population through education and medical care. They opened educational and charitable institutions as an alternative way to establish their presence and influence. These became a source of competition with Ottoman institutions and other educational enterprises and played a significant role in the development of the *nahda* (the Arab cultural awakening), thus serving as a source of tension between the United States and the Ottoman Empire.²³

Perhaps even more importantly, these missionaries shaped U.S. perceptions of the Ottoman Empire. Edward Earle, a professor at Columbia University, asserted in 1929 that “for almost a century, American public opinion concerning the Near East was formed by the missionaries. If American opinion has been uninformed, misinformed, and prejudiced, the missionaries are largely to blame.”²⁴ By the outbreak of World War I, American prejudices against Arab Muslims and even Arab Christians had already become widespread due to missionary activity at the end of the nineteenth century. In the 1890s, missionary reports on the “Armenian troubles” exaggerated the number of casualties and the level of material destruction. Muslim deaths were never reported, reinforcing the image of the “ignorant, ruthless, unspeakable, and terrible Turks.”²⁵ Public outrage over the oppression of Armenian Christians and other minorities, including Jews, led to the portrayal of Turks as brutal agents of persecution and produced a more generalized antipathy toward Islam and Muslims.²⁶

Missionaries also provided unprecedented humanitarian relief to the Christian population of the Ottoman Empire during World War I.²⁷ Humanitarian assistance, however, was not neutral, and Enver Pasha considered them as adversaries who were trying to divide the population of the empire.²⁸ The war also brought on new understandings of humanitarianism. Keith David Watenpaugh argues that nineteenth-century humanitarianism sought to alleviate the suffering of others in obedience to moral and religious duty, often – as with U.S. Protestants – in hopes of converting the recipients of aid.²⁹ The humanitarianism ushered in by World War I, on the other hand, was envisioned as a permanent, institutional, neutral, and secular institution created to address and understand the roots of human suffering.³⁰ Glazebrook’s consular career spanned these two periods and we can see in his approach a blend of these two kinds of humanitarianism, making his career as a humanitarian actor particularly valuable as a window into this transition.

Otis Glazebrook's Biography

Otis Allan Glazebrook was born on 13 October 1845 in Richmond, Virginia, to Larkin Glazebrook, a prominent social and financial leader, and America Henley Bullington.³¹ At fifteen, Glazebrook entered Randolph Macon College while preparing to become a cadet at West Point. With the outbreak of the U.S. Civil War in 1861, he secured an appointment as a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute, during which time he served as a corporal in the Confederate army and fought in the Battle of New Market in 1864. Demoralized and troubled by his war experiences, he established a youth organization at the end of the hostilities, the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, aiming to reunite the North and South in brotherhood. After Glazebrook graduated from VMI in June 1865, he decided to go into the legal profession. The following year, he married Virginia Calvert Key Smith, and in 1867, their first son was born. Shortly afterward, Glazebrook entered the ministry in the Episcopal Church, and they left for Alexandria, Virginia, where he studied at the Virginia Episcopal Seminary.

As a pastor, he served first in Virginia, then Baltimore, and later New Jersey. In 1885, Glazebrook was appointed rector of St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and also served as chaplain of the 3rd New Jersey Regiment. At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, he was recalled into army service, though it is not clear whether he saw military action.³² As a Freemason, Glazebrook also served as the chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Masons of New Jersey and similar organizations, eventually receiving the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. In his exceptional, diverse career, Glazebrook remained the leader of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, which continued its expansion nationwide, until his appointment as U.S. consul in Jerusalem in 1914.

In 1906, his wife Virginia died and although his personal attachment to his land and work changed, he kept serving as the rector of St. John's in Elizabeth until 1912. Upon retirement in 1914, Glazebrook was selected for diplomatic service by his friend, U.S. president Woodrow Wilson. The scant sources available suggests that their friendship developed through church and academic activities in New Jersey. Wilson became the president of Princeton University in 1902, and also belonged to the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, which espoused values of humanitarianism and brotherhood in common with Alpha Tau Omega.³³ Glazebrook supported Wilson's candidacy for governor of New Jersey in 1910 and then president in 1912. In February 1914, Truman appointed Glazebrook, then sixty-nine years old, as U.S. consul to Jerusalem; by April, he was in Jerusalem.³⁴ The new job was a dream come true for the former pastor. Glazebrook saw it as a partial retirement from parochial service that would allow him to indulge in biblical studies while protecting U.S. interests.³⁵ He even remarried in Jerusalem, wedding Emmaline Rumford, an American.

The quiet life Glazebrook had envisioned was soon complicated by the outbreak of war in Europe and Ottoman entry on the side of the Central Powers. In Jerusalem, Glazebrook was responsible for caring for the small American community in Palestine, but as time went on he extended his protection over citizens of other

countries (Palestinian Muslims did not represent a major concern for Glazebrook) and played a major role in aiding various religious communities in the city, particularly the Jewish community.³⁶ In May 1917, with the United States' entry into World War I and the rupture of diplomatic relations between the U.S. government and the Ottomans, Glazebrook left Palestine. After a relatively short period back in the United States, Glazebrook returned to Jerusalem in December 1918, where he remained for two more years.



Figure 1. U.S. consul Otis A. Glazebrook (center, wearing top hat) in Jerusalem with his staff. Virginia Military Institute Archives, Photographic Collection 0003693, online at ([digitalcollections.vmi.edu](http://digitalcollections.vmi.edu/bit.ly/2GWGXWG)) bit.ly/2GWGXWG (accessed 27 September 2020).

At the end of 1920, at the age of seventy-five, Glazebrook accepted a new diplomatic appointment in Nice, France, where he served as U.S. consul until 1929, guarding the interests of American tourists and businessmen travelling throughout southern France. In 1930, Emmaline died and Glazebrook's health began to deteriorate, and his son Otis Glazebrook, Jr., decided he should return to the United States. Glazebrook fell gravely ill on the return voyage, and died at sea on 26 April 1931, a few hours before reaching New York.³⁷

Consular Activity during the War

U.S. consuls wrote annual and special reports on local government issues, the population, and the economy, and thus, from his appointment as consul in 1914 until he left in 1917, Glazebrook reported with great detail on the events taking place in Palestine. These included political developments, the effects of the war, and the socioeconomic crisis that afflicted the different communities living in Jerusalem. Glazebrook was also in the position of managing multiple relationships: with other foreign communities and governments in Palestine, with the U.S. government in Istanbul and Washington, with the Ottoman government, with the U.S. business community, and with the various efforts to provide humanitarian aid and relief to Jerusalem's population.

With the outbreak of the war, Glazebrook was charged, as representative of a neutral party, with the protection of the interests and the property of England, France, Italy, Russia, Belgium, and Switzerland. Glazebrook noted: "Not only are their archives in my possession, but their consulates, cathedrals, institutional home and hospitals. Complications are constantly arising in the responsibility of their subjects still in and near Jerusalem."³⁸ In an August 1915 report to the State Department, Glazebrook clarified the magnitude of his mission:

My duties have not only involved diplomacy, judicature, philanthropy, and great personal risks, but also that for which I have thought I was the least qualified, the management of finance and practical banking. . . . At times I have had the responsibility of more gold in cash than all the banks in this section put together.³⁹

Given the particular sensitivity, and added responsibility, of Glazebrook's position, it is unsurprising that he coordinated closely with other U.S. officials. In particular, Glazebrook kept U.S. ambassador to Constantinople Henry Morgenthau, Sr., actively informed of developments in Palestine. The U.S. consul consistently sent detailed reports to his superior in Constantinople on a variety of subjects, despite Ottoman censorship.⁴⁰ Glazebrook and Morgenthau both closely monitored the evolving conditions of Jews in the Ottoman Empire and in Palestine specifically. They pressured Ottoman authorities, reminding them that many Jews were Ottoman citizens. In early 1915, Morgenthau wrote to remind Glazebrook of his friendship with Cemal Pasha

and instructed the consul to keep pressuring the Ottoman general to protect the Jewish community in Palestine.⁴¹ Relations with local Ottoman authorities were complex but mutually respectful. Zeki Bey, then the military commander of Jerusalem, described Glazebrook as “not only a consul of man’s appointment, but of God’s, a perfect gentleman and the ideal diplomat,”⁴² while Glazebrook gushed that he had “received much kindness here at the hands of the people in general and the officials in particular with whom I have managed to establish influential and close relations.”⁴³

Throughout the war, Glazebrook also sought to maintain his normal consular role, dealing with U.S. citizens outside and within Palestine. U.S. companies requested information about business opportunities in the region, and Glazebrook’s responses are revealing of the circumstances of Jerusalem in the final days of Ottoman rule. In September 1916, the American Film Company, considering expanding its distribution in Palestine, asked Glazebrook about the number of cinemas, the types of pictures typically shown, public reception of these films, ticket prices, and the duties paid to the local administration.⁴⁴ Thus, for example, we know that there was one cinema in the city, managed by Samuel Feige. It was open only on Saturdays; showed mainly short films from Germany and the occasional American film; and the average audience was three hundred people, with three different classes of tickets sold.⁴⁵ As mentioned above, U.S. trade with Palestine had been minimal, and it remained difficult during the war. Glazebrook attributed this to “the long credits granted by European competitors and the great distance that separates [the U.S. from Palestine], as well as the lack of direct steamship connection that has been the greatest drawback.”⁴⁶ In the same letter, though, Glazebrook looked optimistically to the future and pushed American businesses to engage further in Palestinian trade.

Economic opportunity is less evident in Glazebrook’s reports than economic crisis, however. On 17 November 1914, Glazebrook reported on a discouraging trend: the increasing cost of living in Jerusalem.⁴⁷ The following year’s report was more dramatic as prices continued to rise, not only due to the war but also to the infamous locust invasion in the summer 1915 “which ravaged everything that was green.”⁴⁸ The population of Jerusalem, in particular, was relatively precarious even before the war, as it included a relatively large number of individuals – including elderly residents who came to live out their remaining days in the Holy Land – who were dependent on charity. The U.S. consular report for 1913, for example, described “the strange spectacle” of the city’s population growing despite the fact that Jerusalem had no “developed commerce nor an industry worthy of the name to attract its immigrants . . . with the result that the population without work exists principally on charity, which is sent from all parts of the world.”⁴⁹ The wartime conditions exacerbated the vulnerability of this population.

Glazebrook reported on the charitable services provided by foreigners, including Americans, to the local population, including the Jewish community. Glazebrook described, for example, the activities of Nathan Straus, an American Jew who operated a soup kitchen, a workroom, and a health bureau in Jerusalem, mainly serving the local Jewish community.⁵⁰ But under the wartime conditions, those in need increasingly

turned to official actors as well. In an informal report, Glazebrook noted that the “consulate is besieged from early morning to late at night for all varieties of requests. The staff is kept constantly active.”⁵¹ Indeed, the U.S. consulate became a hub for distributing services to U.S. citizens and others. Glazebrook took evident pride in this role, writing, “American relief is wonderful in its assistance to the destitute of the Holy Land.”⁵² At this point, the primary motivation for U.S. aid was humanitarian rather than political. Nonetheless, a link between religion, philanthropy, and power was forged – one that would have lasting influence.⁵³ In a report of 1915 on the situation of Jerusalem during the war and with a particular focus on the Jews in the city, Glazebrook stated: “It is the unquestioned belief of the entire community that the Food Relief accomplished an unprecedented good, materially and morally, not only relieving extreme bodily want, but creating a feeling of good will and fellowship manifested in a spirit of friendly reciprocity never before existing in this city and consular district.”⁵⁴

Glazebrook was directly involved in the distribution of food and aid to the religious communities of Palestine. At the start of 1915, Glazebrook, along with Captain Benton C. Decker of the USS *Tennessee*, petitioned Ambassador Morgenthau to ship food and aid from the United States to the Jewish community in Palestine and Jewish refugees in Alexandria, Egypt. This request was met, and in May 1915, the USS *Vulcan* eventually unloaded its food cargo in Palestine and distribution began to both Jewish and non-Jewish communities.⁵⁵ Each community had its own distribution committee; Glazebrook sat on the Jewish community’s Va’ad ha-Makolet (Food Committee) and received information on the other committees in Jerusalem.⁵⁶ In their excellent discussions of the wartime distribution of food and aid, Abigail Jacobson and Caitlin Carenen document the extent of Glazebrook’s involvement in the distribution of aid to the Jews of Palestine, as well as his role as mediator among the various Jewish communities.⁵⁷ Effectively Glazebrook came to use a form of soft power or “welfare politics” dictated by his personal interest in the Jews, the support he received from his superiors – in particular Henry Morgenthau U.S. Ambassador in Constantinople, and his deep Christian faith. Despite this role, the question of Glazebrook’s views of Palestine’s Jews, and especially of Zionism, remain a matter of some contest.

Glazebrook and Zionism

In the past decade, a number of Israeli bloggers have expressed a new interest in Otis Glazebrook. For the most part, they have focused their attention on a photograph taken by the American Colony photography department, now part of the Matson Collection at the U.S. Library of Congress, which allegedly shows Glazebrook actively participating in an anti-Zionist demonstration.⁵⁸ It is hard, if not impossible, to identify the consul among the crowd in the image, but the caption suggests he was being lifted up on the shoulders of Arab demonstrators. Some recent commentators also seem ready to echo Manuel’s claim that Glazebrook was an anti-Zionist who

feared Zionism's potential to provoke conflict between Zionists and Arabs, as well as the spread of Bolshevism in Palestine by Russian Jews. Yet no evidence is brought forward by any of these authors.



Figure 2. “Anti-Zionist demonstration before the U.S. consulate, carrying Dr. Glazebrook on their shoulders, 27 February 1920.” Library of Congress LC-DIG-ppmsca-13291-00128 (digital file from original, page 44, no. 128), online at (loc.gov) bit.ly/3iQjX93 (accessed 27 September 2020).

Yet identifying Glazebrook as “anti-Zionist” obscures more than it illuminates. Instead, it might be argued that Glazebrook supported a *type* of Zionism that centered around religious and humanitarian attempts to alleviate the suffering of Jews.⁵⁹ In a 1915 report, Glazebrook drew no distinction between Zionists and the other Jews in Palestine and stated that the destruction of the Zionist movement would deal a major blow to the religious aspirations of Jews throughout the world. Paradoxically, this position convinced secular labor Zionists that the consul was an anti-Zionist.⁶⁰ Glazebrook understood the Zionist movement as the interest in reviving the Hebrew language, and he attributed to this no political aspirations.⁶¹ Glazebrook saw Zionism as a humanitarian movement with no political goals, at least not while the war continued, and claimed that Zionists had done nothing to indicate either intent or expectation of establishing a Jewish government.⁶² Instead, he expressed to a Jewish audience his readiness “to do for you anything in my power” because of the universally admirable

qualities he saw in Jewish mutual support, which in his words represented “the common characteristic and common aspiration of the peoples of the earth, nowhere more conspicuously seen than among the Hebrews of the Holy City: brotherhood and love of men.”⁶³ Political Zionism – in the form of supporting the establishment of a Jewish entity in Palestine based on the work of pioneers – was not in keeping with the goals of the Protestant diplomacy or missionary work that Glazebrook embraced.⁶⁴ Looking at the support provided to the Jews throughout the war, however, we can see how U.S. involvement in Palestine grew due to the influence of the Jewish American and European Zionist organizations.⁶⁵

Prior to the outbreak of World War I, the attitude of the U.S. State Department was unfriendly to Zionism and the increasing Jewish population in Palestine.⁶⁶ Yet the general U.S. view of Palestine was undergoing a shift in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Scholars of America–Holy Land studies have suggested that Americans in this period began to see the Holy Land through the prism of their own history, in which Zion was understood to be the land of their “fathers.”⁶⁷ For Americans like Wilson and Glazebrook, the land of the Bible was a sort of idyllic alternative to the modern United States, an echo of preindustrial America.⁶⁸ American Christians in the Holy Land were expected to be lifted out of their ordinary lives. The affinity of American Jews for the Holy Land was also linked to their American environment: both were promised lands.⁶⁹ With the appointment of Morgenthau as U.S. ambassador in Constantinople, U.S. interests and humanitarian interests in the Jews of Palestine converged.⁷⁰ Morgenthau, Jewish but not a Zionist, nevertheless expressed concern for his coreligionists and saw the relief of Palestine’s Jews as an American responsibility.

Michael Oren has argued that the United States treated the suffering of Ottoman Jews the same as the suffering of Armenians, but there were notable differences: American Jews were able to support their coreligionists through the remittance of money; and Ottoman Jews had not been subjected to racial policies meant to annihilate an entire population, as in the case of the Armenians.⁷¹ In spring 1917, Cemal Pasha ordered the evacuation of Jaffa. Many thought this policy targeted Jaffa’s Jewish community, as German Jewish and Austrian Jewish residents were “invited” to leave, while other German and Austrian nationals were allowed to remain if they chose.⁷² About nine thousand Jewish residents were relocated: many left for nearby colonies and others moved to the Jewish colonies in upper Galilee. Claims that Palestine’s Jewish community stood on the verge of annihilation, however, reached Europe and, more importantly, the United States, receiving little scrutiny because of their accordance with prevailing negative views of the Ottomans. The incident received diplomatic attention: the Spanish consul, the Conde de Ballobar, investigated the matter and the British invited Glazebrook to write a report.⁷³ Before leaving Jerusalem in May 1917, after diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and the United States were severed, Glazebrook stated that “acts of violence said to have been committed against the Jewish population of Jaffa are grossly exaggerated.”⁷⁴ All sources available note that Glazebrook petitioned Ottoman authorities to protect the Jews in Palestine. His

personal friendship with Cemal Pasha, which had served Glazebrook so well in the past, seems to have helped in this case, too.

During the war, American Zionism existed in two main factions: those like U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who argued for more direct intervention with explicitly political goals in mind, and others like Morgenthau who wanted to avoid political commitments. Wilson's election allowed Brandeis to urge the U.S. government to take a more active role in support of political Zionism, tipping the balance in its favor. Wilson's support of the Balfour Declaration gave Zionists powerful leverage to influence American Jews and convert to political Zionism those who did not yet support the movement.⁷⁵ Glazebrook and missionaries in general supported the principle of self-determination, but not ethnic nationalism. Political Zionism was perceived as a potentially separatist nationalism that was both secular and incompatible with Christian objectives in the region, making it a threat to interethnic and interreligious coexistence.⁷⁶ This ideological shift *within* American Zionism had a significant impact on the U.S. role in Palestine. In a January 1925 interview with an American newspaper, Glazebrook spoke highly of the newly appointed British high commissioner in Palestine, Herbert Samuel, but refused to discuss Zionism.⁷⁷ This refusal should not be read as antipathy for Zionism, but as evidence of the emerging distance between the Jews with and for whom Glazebrook endeavored in Palestine, and the Zionists who were, by the war's end, imbued with political aspirations expressed in and emboldened by the Balfour Declaration.

Glazebrook represented those who, motivated by personal religious beliefs, considered it their duty to help Jews in recognition of a conviction that the Jews were part of a divine plan to redeem humanity. Scholars' and bloggers' description of Glazebrook's politics as anti-Zionist indicates a misreading of the latter's position but also a reduction of Zionism to its purely political dimension, effectively eliding its cultural and humanitarian variants. Glazebrook's postwar reports show that he was concerned with the new brand of political Zionism introduced in Palestine, and openly supported by the U.S. government. A growing awareness and concern with the emerging Arab-Zionist conflict, though, clearly does not equate to anti-Zionism.

Conclusion

As Keith David Watenpaugh has argued, charitable actors in the early twentieth century practiced two predominant forms of humanitarianism.⁷⁸ The first urged support of the needy by appealing to a sense of ethical and religious duty. The second came to have a symbiotic relationship with colonialism. Abigail Jacobson reached similar conclusions specific to Palestine, arguing that the politics of welfare linked humanitarianism and political power, creating a lasting legacy still visible in Israel today.⁷⁹ As U.S. consul in Jerusalem during a crucial period – of local upheaval, regional transition, and global transformation – Otis Glazebrook played an important role in the transition from welfare humanitarianism to the institutional use of welfare

as a tool of political action and soft power, laying a foundation for American political dominance in Palestine and the broader Middle East in subsequent decades.

The U.S. financial aid administered by Glazebrook helped to consolidate the Zionist movement, and institutionalized U.S. support for it, by making a clear choice to support one community in Palestine – the Zionists – over others. In time, this gave the United States a unique position of power and influence in Palestine.⁸⁰ For the Zionist movement, wartime developments consolidated the support of American Zionists, while Britain's endorsement embodied in the Balfour Declaration cemented the primacy of political Zionism. Although Glazebrook seems to have been largely forgotten or, if he is recalled at all, remembered as an enemy of Zionism, Zionists should consider Glazebrook an ally, if not one of their own.

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Endnotes

- 1 Eli Lederhendler, "Foreword: America and Zion," in *America and Zion: Essays and Papers in Memory of Moshe Davis*, ed. Eli Lederhendler and Jonathan D. Sarna (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 12.
- 2 According to Lawrence Davidson, the American perception of Palestine was theocratized: a biblical land for biblical people. Lawrence Davidson, *America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 9. The American Colony in Jerusalem is a prominent example of U.S. Christians' settlement in Palestine. See: Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American Priestess: The Extraordinary Story of Anna Spafford and the American Colony in Jerusalem* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); Helga Dudman and Ruth Kark, *The American Colony: Scenes From a Jerusalem Saga* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1998); Eric Dinsmore Matsson, *The American Colony of Jerusalem: A Brief Outline* (Menton, France: E. D. Matsson, 1992); Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem* (New York: Doubleday, 1950); and Millette Shamir, "'Our Jerusalem': Americans in the Holy Land and Protestant Narratives of National Entitlement," *American Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (March 2003): 29–60.
- 3 Ruth Kark, *American Consuls in the Holy Land, 1832–1914* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1994), 214.
- 4 In 1856, the United States formally established a Palestine consular district and John Warren Gorham opened the first consulate inside the city walls. At the end of the nineteenth century, the consulate moved outside the walls, first to a building on the Street of the Prophets and later on Mamilla Street. Frank E. Manuel, *The Realities of American-Palestine Relations* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1949), 12; Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the 19th Century: The Old City* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 280.
- 5 For example, Selah Merrill, who served thrice as U.S. consul in Jerusalem (1882–85, 1891–94, 1898–1907), was a businessman but also an archeologist who worked for the American Palestine Exploration Society. See Kark, *American Consuls*, 51; and Shalom Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and American Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 208–27.
- 6 Kark, *American Consuls*, 281.
- 7 Goldman, *God's Sacred Tongue*, 213.
- 8 Manuel, *Realities*, 10–11.
- 9 Moshe Davis, *America and the Holy Land* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 24.
- 10 Kark, *American Consuls*, 229.
- 11 See Jacob Norris, *Land of Progress: Palestine in the Age of Colonial Development, 1905–1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

- 12 Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 56. See Abbas Amanat and Magnus Bernhardsson argue that the “disinterested benevolence” of American missionaries in the nineteenth century was slowly replaced after World War I by a “benevolent hegemony.” The hope of recasting the Middle East in the American image remained, however. Abbas Amanat and Magnus T. Bernhardsson, eds., *U.S.–Middle East Historical Encounters: A Critical Survey* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2007).
- 13 This bond today is largely represented by Evangelicals or Christian Zionists. While Glazebrook and contemporary Christian Zionists may share certain doctrines and expectations – anticipating the Second Coming of Jesus through the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, for example – they differ significantly with regard to the extent of U.S. intervention and support for the Jews.
- 14 The relationship between Zionists in Britain and the United States, on the one hand, and Jewish communities in Palestine was complex and at the same time one of interdependence. The war allowed Zionists to shape their relationship with local communities through aid (monetary and otherwise). Scholars like Abigail Jacobson and Michelle Campos have demonstrated how Zionists eventually emerged as representatives of local Jewish communities in Palestine. See: Abigail Jacobson, “American ‘Welfare Politics’: American Involvement in Jerusalem during World War I,” *Israel Studies* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 56–76; and Michelle Campos, *Ottoman Brothers. Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford University Press, 2010).
- 15 Abigail Jacobson in particular has argued that the politics of welfare established by American missionaries, led in Jerusalem by the American Colony and Otis Glazebrook, should be located within the larger context of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship. See Jacobson, “American ‘Welfare Politics’”; and Albert Lucas, “American Jewish Relief in the World War,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 79 (September 1918): 221–28.
- 16 See Manuel, *Realities*, ch. 4 (119–59). Despite a thorough bibliography, Manuel – a historian who taught at Brandeis and New York University, among other institutions – does not list the primary sources he used in his account, and his portrayal of Glazebrook seems to have sprung from political claims rather than historical research. Manuel’s work shows the lack of reliable research on U.S.–Palestine relations in the transitional period from Ottoman to British rule. On Manuel’s biography, see online at ([lts.brandeis.edu](http://lts.brandeis.edu/bit.ly/317bAzP)) bit.ly/317bAzP (accessed 22 January 2014).
- 17 A significant literature highlights the unbalanced role played by the United States in favor of Israel since the 1950s. See, for example: Charles Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford-St. Martin’s, 2013); Ian J. Bickerton and Clara L. Klausner, *A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010); Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Naseer Aruri, *Dishonest Broker: The U.S. Role in Israel and Palestine* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003); and Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020). Abigail Jacobson, however, argues that the war played a major role in the growing involvement of the United States in Palestine. See Abigail Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire: Jerusalem between Ottoman and British Rule* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 44–47.
- 18 Rashid Khalidi argues that, until 1917, the United States held only modest cultural, educational, and missionary interest in the Middle East. Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America’s Perilous Path in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 118–19. See also Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 356–57.
- 19 Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1870–1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 38.
- 20 Kark, *American Consuls*, 68–74.
- 21 Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 10–11.
- 22 Several important works deal with the emergence and development of missionary activity in the Middle East, its failure to

- convert locals to Christianity, and its role in fostering nationalistic ideas throughout the region. See, for example: Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy*; and Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon, *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousands Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).
- 23 A. Patrick, "A Secular Reformation."
 - 24 Edward Mead Earle, "American Missions in the Near East," *Foreign Affairs* 7, no. 3 (April 1929): 398–417.
 - 25 Justin McCarthy, "Missionaries and the American Image of the Turks," in *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Mustafa Aydin and Çağrı Erhan (London: Routledge, 2004), 26–48, quote at 29.
 - 26 McCarthy, "Missionaries and the American Image"; Roberto Mazza, ed., *Jerusalem in World War One: The Palestine Diary of a European Consul* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 20.
 - 27 Tejirian and Simon, *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion*, 173.
 - 28 Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 91.
 - 29 Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*, 4–5. The "politics of welfare" that Abigail Jacobson describes resemble the prewar humanitarianism of Watenpugh's formulation. Though I believe there are some relevant differences between "politics of welfare" and "humanitarianism," in this article I used each term according to the sources quoted.
 - 30 A clear and full articulation of this later humanitarianism (which borrowed from earlier American missionary and humanitarian traditions) is U.S. president Harry Truman's Point Four Program. See Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East*, 79; *Department of State Bulletin*, 30 January 1949, 123.
 - 31 Biographical information about Otis Glazebrook is available at the Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. A brief biographical sketch can also be found in Kark, *American Consuls*, 333–34. Other information on Glazebrook was gathered by Charles L. Allen, "Founder Glazebrook Dies at Sea," *The Palm* 51, no. 3 (June 1931): 201–4.
 - 32 It has only been reported that he was in a camp for a month awaiting orders to go to Cuba.
 - 33 Phi Kappa Psi recently removed Wilson's name from the biennial "leadership school" that coincides with district council meetings, signaling an effort to "reinforce Phi [Kappa] Psi's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to making the brotherhood a safe and welcoming place for all." See Drake DelosSantons, "Phi Kappa Psi Responds to Controversy over President Woodrow Wilson," 30 June 2020 (updated 22 July 2020), online at (phikappapsi.com) bit.ly/33XDDU1 (accessed 28 July 2020). It would be interesting to see if ATO rethinks the role of individuals like Glazebrook.
 - 34 On 2 February 1914, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan informed Glazebrook that "the President desired him to accept the appointment as U.S. consul to Jerusalem." Glazebrook was officially commissioned as consul on 18 February. ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Letter from the Department of State, 27 February 1914.
 - 35 Allen, "Founder Glazebrook," 202.
 - 36 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 46.
 - 37 Several press clippings report the news of Glazebrook's death. ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1.
 - 38 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 1 July 1915, Jerusalem.
 - 39 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Glazebrook to State Department, 7 August 1915. His concerns in this respect were shared by his Spanish equivalent, Antonio de la Cierva y Lewita, the Conde de Ballobar, who suffered several attacks of nervous exhaustion by 1918 due to the added burden. Mazza, *Jerusalem in World War One*, 194.
 - 40 U.S. Naval Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Consular Post, vol. 73, Glazebrook to Morgenthau, 11 February 1915, Jerusalem.
 - 41 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 70A, Morgenthau to Glazebrook, 30 March 1915, Istanbul.
 - 42 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, "The Moslem Estimate of Dr. Glazebrook."
 - 43 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Glazebrook to State Department, 7 August 1915.

- 44 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 81, American Film Company to Glazebrook, 12 September 1916, New York.
- 45 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 81, Glazebrook to American Film Company, 9 December 1916, Jerusalem.
- 46 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 90, Glazebrook to the Philadelphia Foreign Trade Corporation, 10 March 1920, Jerusalem.
- 47 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69A, Glazebrook to State Department, 17 November 1914, Jerusalem.
- 48 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 73, Glazebrook to State Department, 3 November 1915, Jerusalem.
- 49 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69, Commerce and Industries Report, 13 March 1914, Jerusalem.
- 50 NARA, Consular Post, vol. 69A, Glazebrook to American Embassy in Istanbul, 2 October 1915, Jerusalem.
- 51 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 1 January 1915, Jerusalem.
- 52 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, Chronicle of consular activity, 18 January 1915, Jerusalem.
- 53 This combination would become particularly significant after 1948, when the United States supplanted Britain's as the most influential foreign power. See Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics,'" 68–70.
- 54 NARA, Consular Post, RG 84, vol. 72, Otis Glazebrook to the State Department, "Increase in Cost of Living Caused by War," 3 November 1915
- 55 Manuel, *Realities*, 140–42.
- 56 Jacobson, *From Empire to Empire*, 46. See also NARA, Consular Post, vol. 72, Glazebrook to Morgenthau, 29 May 1915, Jerusalem.
- 57 See: Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics'"; and Caitlin Carenen, "Zionism and American Jewish Relief Efforts in Palestine during World War I," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 69, no. 2 (2017): 1–30.
- 58 See, for example: Yisrael Medad, "It's All Rocks and Riots," *Israel, Jews, and Judaism* (blog), 26 February 2012, online at (israeljewishjudaism.blogspot.com) bit.ly/2175zwc (accessed 31 August 2020); "U.S. Diplomat Opposed the Zionist Idea in 1920," *Israel's History – A Picture a Day* (blog), 2 August 2011, online at www.israeldailypicture.com/2011/08/us-diplomat-opposed-zionist-idea-in.html (accessed 31 August 2020 via web.archive.org); "U.S. Diplomat Opposed the Zionist Idea in 1920," *America and Palestine's Jews: Photographic History of American Involvement in the Holy Land 1850–1948* (blog), 1 December 2013, online at (ameicainpalestine.blogspot.com) bit.ly/371Fg5k (accessed 31 August 2020); and Jack Schwartzwald, "The King-Crane Report of 1919 and 'the People Immediately Concerned,'" *Jewish Magazine* (October/November 2012), online at www.jewishmag.com/169mag/king-crane-report/king-crane-report.htm (accessed 31 August 2020).
- 59 At the beginning of the twentieth century, Zionism was an ideology defined in different ways according to politics and religion: Political Zionism as established by Theodor Herzl aimed at the creation of a Jewish entity; Labor Zionism, while seeking the creation of a Jewish state, also promoted the idea of class struggle and redemption of the land; and cultural Zionism as founded by Ahad Ha'am focused on Jewish culture and history, but not necessarily the creation of a Jewish state. Christian Zionists, too, supported political Zionism with the purpose to establish a Jewish entity in Palestine in order to foster the Second Coming of Jesus.
- 60 NARA, Consular Post (microfilm) Roll 43, Report on the Conditions in Palestine with Reference to Zionism, Alexandria, Egypt, 10 February 1915, 13.
- 61 Alter Levin wrote an article on *HaSheourt*, a Hebrew daily published in Jerusalem, stating: "Dr. Glazebrook is a sincere friend of the Jews, understands their national grief and is appreciative of their glorious past and spiritual aspirations." ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. While this is indirect evidence, it is clear that Glazebrook was understood as someone who supported the Jews from a perspective of cultural Zionism but not in terms of political goals. It is also important to recall that Glazebrook was founder of Alpha Tau Omega, which espoused reconciliation – a principle at odds with political Zionism.
- 62 NARA, Consular Post (microfilm) Roll 43, Report on the Conditions in Palestine with Reference to Zionism, Alexandria, Egypt, 10 February 1915, 13–14.
- 63 Extract from the daily Hebrew papers of Jerusalem, in ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1. According to Alter Levin,

- who reported this quote in his capacity as correspondent for the American Chamber of Commerce for the Levant, Glazebrook delivered these words during a visit to a synagogue (though the exact place and date are not given).
- 64 Michael Brown, *The Israeli-American Connection: Its Roots in the Yishuv, 1914–1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1996), 31; and Kieser, *Nearest East*, 93.
- 65 The inhabitants of the region, with some exceptions, preferred U.S. intervention in the region rather than British or French rule. See Andrew Patrick, *America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative: The King-Crane Commission of 1919* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015).
- 66 Manuel, *The Realities of American-Palestine Relations*, 115.
- 67 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 18.
- 68 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 12.
- 69 Lederhendler, "Foreword," 15.
- 70 Manuel, *Realities*, 116.
- 71 Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 359. As the recent work of Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi shows, it is naïve (or disingenuous) to argue that Jews and Armenians were treated in the same way. See Benny Morris and Dror Ze'evi, *The Thirty-Year Genocide: Turkey's Destruction of Its Christian Minorities, 1894–1924* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).
- 72 Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 347–48.
- 73 Mazza, *Jerusalem in World War One*, 20–21.
- 74 See the copy of a note from the Dutch Foreign Office to Balfour, 10 August 1917, The Hague, found in the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Foreign Office 371/3055.
- 75 Manuel, *Realities*, 162–79; James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade: The Birth of the Anglo-Zionist Alliance, 1914–1918* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 143–48.
- 76 Kieser, *Nearest East*, 108–9.
- 77 ATO Archives, Series no. 41/93/2, Box 1, "Turks Not So Bad, Minister Asserts," January 1925.
- 78 Keith David Watenpugh, "The League of Nations Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920–1927," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (December 2010): 1315–39. See also Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*, 1–29.
- 79 Jacobson, "American 'Welfare Politics,'" 70–71.
- 80 Though it is beyond the scope of this article, the King-Crane Commission, had its recommendations been acted upon, could have significantly shifted the role of the United States in the region, and in Palestine specifically. On the King-Crane Commission, see Patrick, *America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative*.