

## Research Notes: Non-Alignment Networks in the Global South; The Hoover Institute Archive

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The formation of diasporic communities with heritage roots in the Arabic-speaking Eastern Mediterranean is garnering increasing attention from scholars across a number of disciplines who are pushing the tired geographic boundaries leftover from a Cold War age of area studies. Academic studies of these communities in Latin America, while lagging in quantity behind their North American counterparts, are also beginning to proliferate. While this growing body of scholarship is successfully documenting the early twentieth century migratory flows that connected the *Mashriq* to the Americas, the World War II and postwar era remain much less studied periods. In the case of the South American region of this diaspora, the dearth of Cold War era *Mahjar* historiography is acute even in regions with large populations who can trace their roots back to the Levant – such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. In the process of finishing my doctoral dissertation, this gap in the literature began to stand out to me, and spurred me to formulate a second project that would be temporally grounded in this era. As a Silas Palmer Fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institute, I was able to initiate the research for this project in May 2015.

Through working with archival materials housed at the Hoover Institute collections, I have begun to develop a project that addresses the relationships between Levantine states and prominent Latin American military governments in the post-World War II era. My current manuscript project on Argentine *Mahjar* communities from the late nineteenth century through WWII inspired me to expand upon my previous work on Middle Eastern-Latin American networks, but with an additional comparative dimension. Using Peru and Argentina as case studies, I have begun to track “South-South” relationships between Peru, Argentina, and the *Mashriq* during an era marked by the non-alignment movements that proliferated in the Global south. My preliminary research has already uncovered instances of Syrians living in the diaspora in South America who acted as interlocutors, unofficial citizen diplomats, and couriers of correspondence between prominent political figures in Latin America and the *Mashriq*. I have also located unpublished academic texts, and personal correspondence, that speak to the backlash of fear that these potential “South-South” relationships evoked, in particular, in the writings of U.S. academics and government officials, who especially worried about the possibility of a “Latin American Nasser” during the years of Syria and Egypt’s union as the United Arab Republic. The rise in charismatic, personalistic leaders in both Latin America and the Arabic-speaking Eastern Mediterranean in the wake of WWII was an important factor that led U.S. academics and policy-makers to be concerned that these figureheads would spark a wave of anti-U.S. sentiment among general populations ranging from Latin Americans to people in the Middle East and North Africa.

Syrian Studies scholars interested in conducting research at the Hoover Institute Archives have the option of accessing a digital catalogue of the Institute’s archival holdings, including a number of searchable digitized indices within specific document collections. One particularly interesting collection is the “Hoover Institution Library Pamphlet Collection,” which includes close to 60,000 pamphlets relating to twentieth-century political, social, and economic issues around the world. Those who are interested can also apply for a range of funding opportunities that cater to scholars at varying stages of their academic career. Grants for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, postdocs, and independent scholars can all apply for research support in the form of either a Silas Palmer Fellowship, or the U.S. Scholar Research Support Program. International students, faculty, and independent scholars have the option of applying for a grant from the International Scholar Research Support Program.

For more information, visit the Hoover Institution homepage at: <http://www.hoover.org>

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