

# The Birth and Death of Near East Foundation's Community Development

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You come in to snatch as many as you can from this terrible kind of start in life, to try to show them that there is another kind of world from this which they know, and that it is your joy to show them this world and train them to its thoughts and feelings.

Ida M. Tarbell on Relief Work in the Near East, 1924

Manifestations of Merle Curti's *American Philanthropy Abroad* following World War I continue to serve as a source for understanding the formulation of US foreign policy up to and beyond the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> US philanthropy's role throughout the world by the end of the Cold War was significant enough to become part of Joseph Nye's theory of "soft power," persuading others to do what you want without coercion. Accordingly, US ability to shape the preferences of other nations and territories came in the form of culture carried through churches, corporations, foundations, educational institutions, and organizations of civil society that aided American success in the Cold War.<sup>2</sup> While Nye has noted the limits of "soft power," questions regarding the "significance of foundations in US foreign policy" continue to be asked.<sup>3</sup> Answers illustrate that the largest philanthropic actors nurtured and constructed "state-like functions for a global order consciously built by corporate leaders," addressing "fundamental problems like poverty and development through better knowledge of their causes" as a primary goal. In actuality, however, they gave priority to "creating national and global networks of intellectuals committed to a Progressive-era state-building project for globalist ends."<sup>4</sup> To better understand the actors and explore the limits of these processes, it is necessary to continue the historical exploration of US philanthropy beyond the big foundations to smaller, less well-known actors, providing a more complete understanding of the types of US culture shared with the world.

My own research looks at the Near East Foundation (NEF) from 1930 to 1979, exploring the rural education programs carried out in the Near East.<sup>5</sup> Its predecessor, the Near East Relief (NER), provided assistance in former Ottoman territories after WWI. The epigraph above serves as an illustration of US sentiment towards the organization's work as its days of relief were almost phased out (like NER) and programs shifted to scientific philanthropy, addressing the underlying rural problems of poverty, pestilence, and ignorance.<sup>6</sup> The story of the NEF is one of survival and relevance where it began by drawing on ideas of domestic philanthropy such as the Jeanes Fund, the General Education Board, and the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease. These philanthropies' collective goals of education, health, and sanitation expansion into the US South formed the basic idea of reform. Additionally, the NEF drew on the Phelps-Stokes Fund's early expertise in transferring ideas of educating African Americans in the US South to expanding education in "primitive" situations in Africa.<sup>7</sup> Collectively, these US organizations became a model for how NEF reimagined "primitive" Near East villages from Greece to Persia and eventually throughout the eastern hemisphere.<sup>8</sup>

The Near East Foundation's story begins during the interwar period with its program "beyond relief" acting alongside other US articulations of soft power, including missionaries, educationalists, and modernizers. NEF's program of rural education continued into the Cold War, taking on new work and goals as part of a larger envisioned US education program in the Near East to win "hearts and minds." The community development schemes reveal an imagined frontier where poverty, pestilence, and ignorance reigned continuously as a way to co-op new nations into becoming the West's "Cold Warriors." In the process, NEF actors propagated civilizationist rhetoric where the region needed "civilization" for a better relationship with the US, the West, and the world. Thus, the NEF serves as a prism through which to view the US' changing role in the world from the interwar period into the Cold War.

The remainder of the research report is split into three sections. First, the report will address the Rockefeller Archive Center's (RAC) importance and limitations for researching the Near East Foundation. Second, the report will highlight NEF's

community development model and role in the Near East as outlined through early NEF publications and conferences. The report concludes by outlining NEF's pursuit of work from Lebanon to Iraq as a point of continuity and the ultimate death for NEF's community model in the early Cold War.

## **Encountering the Frontiers of the Rockefeller Archive Center through the Near East Foundation**

For my own research, the NER/NEF repository held at the Rockefeller Archive Center offers the largest single collection of Near East Foundation sources. The records begin in 1915 with Near East Relief post-WWI program files and conclude with NEF documents from 2005, although the Near East Foundation's work continues today. Beyond NER and NEF files at RAC are those of the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease and the General Education Board, offering the domestic backdrop to NEF's work. Parallel to NEF's work abroad are the archives of the International Health Board and the International Education Board. The Ford Foundation's archives are also located at RAC, overlapping with NEF's own files. The two foundations worked together on a few programs, with the Ford Foundation funding NEF programs. While these repositories have already been used to examine part of NEF's work, there is still the story of the Near East Foundation's survival that remains untold.<sup>9</sup>

Historical examinations of NEF have created a historiography that reifies US Christian interests in the Near East region, favoring the connections between US missionaries and the Ottoman Empire's Christian minorities that date back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> The focus more recently has led to examinations of NER's relief work among Christians during and after WWI, as it established popularity and profitability as a US voluntary agency operating in the region.<sup>11</sup> Historians Davide Rodogno and Keith Watenpaugh illustrate the transnational makeup and embodied ethos of American exceptionalism as NER transitioned "beyond relief"

to NEF's rural education. They however are mostly limited to the interwar period, warranting a critical examination of the NEF during the Cold War.

The Rockefeller Archive Center offers both depth and breadth for those researching 20<sup>th</sup>-century US philanthropy's biggest and smaller actors. Despite the vast offerings, researchers should approach RAC cautiously, as it also acts as a silo of information. An example illustrates this point. The NEF archives are largely void of mentioning the links between the NEF and Phelps-Dodge philanthropic community. In fact, the closest parallel to the NEF is another Phelps Dodge philanthropy, the Phelps-Stokes Fund, created by Cleveland H. Dodge, cofounder of the NER. This presents a limitation when trying to understand NEF's larger operating environment. While there are numerous references to the fund, one must look at other sources and repositories to better contextualize NEF's work. Accordingly, unless one keeps Ann Stoler's *Along the Archival Grain* in mind, NEF's repository at RAC can function as a cul-de-sac of propaganda, exceptionalizing the outcomes of US philanthropy and therefore the US.<sup>12</sup> In this example, RAC acts as a repository refracting a partial view of the intersection where vast sums of money were directed to address issues of an industrializing world. While the NEF exists on the periphery of this cosmology in terms of size, its persistence and placement continue to make it a relevant actor.

## **Frontiers of Education Welfare – Family, Community, and Continuity**

Expansion of the Dodge family's frontier illustrates how the Near East Foundation was able to locate and promote "the open door of opportunity in the Near East."<sup>13</sup> The biggest contribution to NEF's early success was the Phelps Dodge family's legacy in creating welfare institutions. The establishments were a combination of the Phelps Dodge family's success in the businesses of trade, railroads, and mining resulting in industrial business leadership. Second to the importance of the family business was a strong Protestant faith guiding welfare ideas in the

industrial city, western mining towns, and in US missionary settlements of the Near East.<sup>14</sup>

Near East Relief founder Cleveland Hoadley Dodge was the third generation (son of William Earle Dodge, Jr.) to be part of family's Phelps Dodge holdings in mercantilism, forestry, railroads, and mining. C.H. Dodge and his older sister Grace H. Dodge embodied evangelical Protestantism that, when combined with the family business, helped to establish US philanthropy from the city to the frontier. The Dodge siblings established settlement houses and Columbia Teachers College, supporting large urban populations in New York City where the Dodge family mostly resided. They also carried on from the generation before them by expanding the YMCA and YWCA. The same institutions were also spread to Phelps-Dodge company towns. The resulting welfare and education expansion gained notoriety from New York City to Southwest frontier mining towns.<sup>15</sup> As evangelical Christians, the Dodge family also avidly supported and contributed to US missionary activity resulting in extensive Near East interests.<sup>16</sup>

David Stuart Dodge served as the first Dodge missionary in the Near East, beginning Dodge family support of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and its evangelism to the minority Christian communities in the Near East. D.S. Dodge further served as a founder of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut (becoming the American University in Beirut after 1920), establishing a key connection for subsequent Dodge family welfare interests in the region. D.S. Dodge's niece and nephew Grace and Cleveland H. Dodge continued support, donating extensively to the creation of YMCA and YWCA chapters in the Near East region, as well as Robert College and American College for Girls in Istanbul, Marathon College in Athens, and the Thessaloniki Agricultural and Industrial School (later, the American Farm School). The First World War molded family interests in the region through Cleveland H. Dodge's powerful role in a US community of "sacred interests" that helped shape US postwar policy, focused on supporting Christians through welfare and political aims.<sup>17</sup>

The breakup of the Ottoman Empire after WWI and the League of Nations' Near East mandates afforded the Dodge families extended interests with an opportunity to spread their education beyond the cities. Accordingly, the Dodge family interacted with the Near East, first through the US Protestant community, and then engaged with the larger heterogenous region, by supporting education institutions representing a similar worldview.<sup>18</sup> C.H. Dodge's two sons embody the simultaneous reimagination of US and Near East frontiers following the war. The first, Cleveland Earl Dodge, followed his father to be part of Phelps Dodge's last frontier experience in southwest mining camps as the company designed, built, and ran community settlements around industrial copper mining in what became Arizona and New Mexico.<sup>19</sup> After the death of his father in 1926, C.E. Dodge became vice-president of Phelps Dodge holdings and chair of the Near East Relief as it transitioned to the Near East Foundation. C.E. Dodge's brother, Bayard Dodge, became the second generation of the Dodge family to be part the Syrian Protestant College, becoming the president in 1922. The university at the time was in a process of secularization and rebranding, having become the American University in Beirut (AUB) in 1920. During and following the World War I, the Dodges directed relief via their position at AUB and through NER, increasingly seeing the Near East in need of change.

Institutions such as American University in Beirut secularized, extending their education offerings to a large diverse region in need of knowledgeable citizens. That said, the region continued to serve as a geography where the missionaries and education institutions shared goals of a "civilized" community interacted with the heterogenous communities through a history as a once Christian-dominated geography. The forms of engagement included "civilizing," "uplifting," or "reconstructing" communities including Muslims, Turks, Arabs, Kurds, Bedouins, and Christians in the Near East.<sup>20</sup> When the Near East Foundation became a rural education organization in 1931, nearly a century after the first US missionaries arrived, it formalized, historicized, and proselytized a humanitarian relationship between US interests and the greater Near East.<sup>21</sup> Two important additions add historical accuracy. First, the rural education NEF offered was a differentiated approach to civilizing the region and its heterogenous communities. Second, NEF's work became increasingly guided by business

interest and US opposition to communist influence in the region. A more complete picture places the NEF among extended Dodge interests within the American Near East community, illustrating a plan with the village as a necessary step for civilizing the region, as a whole.

## **1932 Rural Life Conference in Perspective**

The Dodge family's extensive contributions to institutions of education in the Near East continued with NEF's 1932 conference, illustrating the foundation as another carefully crafted piece of a larger puzzle. The NEF's rural education plans fit into the larger role of US philanthropy's education architecture as a plan to the reconstruct village communities in the Near East from existing US education institutions. The design reflected domestic US education expansion in a few ways. To begin with, rural life programs operated through and from existing US education institutions, extending their work beyond the capitals and entrepôts. The Near East Foundation referenced US legislation as a model, specifically the Smith Lever (1914) and Smith Hughes (1917) Acts, which offered extension services from land grant colleges to rural US communities.<sup>22</sup> In the Near East, those US colleges granting bachelor's degrees such as AUB established rural life institutes for NEF's extension work in nearby villages. In provincial schools, NEF's vocational programs in agricultural, home economics (homemaking), health and sanitization, and education served as the main components of school curricula. The two approaches to vocational education visible at the conference promoted collective work as "a radiating center of useful influence in improving village life."<sup>23</sup> The intended result was that the cities of Athens, Istanbul, and Beirut became linked to their frontier areas of Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Anatolia, Cyprus, Syria, and Palestine through US influence. The process echoed US extension practices from universities to local communities.

The relationship between the Near East Foundation and US schools offering bachelor's degrees elucidates the differentiated education model. Before his death, Cleveland H. Dodge recommended that US education interests in the region associate. In 1928, Athens College, Greece; American College of Sofia,



Bulgaria; Robert College, Istanbul; the American College for Girls at Istanbul; the International College in Izmir, Smyrna; and the American University of Beirut, Syria formed the Near East College Association (NECA).<sup>24</sup> The association began by consolidating fundraising which often came from US donors like the Rockefeller Foundation, Dodge family, and later, the Ford Foundation. Then, NECA started an endowment drive for the group of schools creating financial stability for long-term planning. Finally, the association centralized the organization of school administration, cutting overhead costs. Collectively, the association replicated through incorporation a new frontier region of the US land grant college system. When NEF incorporated in 1930, the rural education program became part of NECA. The relationship between NECA and NEF was summed up in their *Twentieth Century Kind of Philanthropy* booklet inaugurating the foundation and establishing NEF's "open door to the near east."<sup>25</sup>

The Foundation-College arrangements or institutes of Rural Life are mutually helpful for they eliminate duplication of effort and overhead. The Colleges are concerned chiefly with the development of higher education in urban and professional fields. The Foundation is concerned with *non-institutional, mass education* to meet rural needs. The Foundation is establishing and supervising its own projects. The Colleges furnish a base of operations and advise with our leaders to determine the type of demonstrations needed and to select suitable locations. The Foundation's rural extension activities give college students experience in village welfare work, which is bringing a rural mindedness to the cause of rural progress.<sup>26</sup>

The comparison of NEF and NECA to the US education system has limitations when considering the Near East as an extension of the US education frontier as opposed to a separate model. First, during the interwar, the institutions in the NECA were still taught and administered predominantly by US educationalists and missionary staff. The native personnel in the institutions mostly received their formal higher education in the West. Second, the funding, boards of the schools and programs offered were also predominantly Western.<sup>27</sup> Finally, a clear difference existed in the model of education promoted at the Rural Life Conference where representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation and British

Mandate in Palestine served as the only interests beyond NEFs own “practical oriented” educationalists. The result illustrates continuity of US education models that competed with other foreign institutions and national education plans.

The combination of Protestantism and industrial business interests also played a large role in the differentiated education models. The 1932 conference at the Thessaloniki Agriculture and Industrial School in Thessaloniki, Greece served to make sure that all NEF’s actors and participating schools and institutes were adhering to the same programs. The choice to have the conference at this school was strategic. The school was started by Henry House, a US missionary who worked for the ABCFM throughout the Balkans, beginning in 1872. After three decades of experience in the region, House developed a plan to build a school based on “practical Christianity” for “practical education.”<sup>28</sup> House’s evangelical connections were extended by a steady flow of US pilgrims through the region. Through these connections and a trip to the US at the turn of the century, he was able to collect enough investors—Grace H. Dodge among them—to start the school in 1904. A stipulation that Grace Dodge placed on her donation to the Thessaloniki Agricultural and Industrial School was creation of a board to represent its interests. Accordingly, House set up a board that included Hampton Institute director Hollis Frissell and Leander Chamberlain, president of the US Evangelical Alliance and prominent member of the New York Colonization Society. The school’s history indicates that it was modeled on schools founded to teach African Americans following the US Civil War including Tuskegee, Penn, and Hampton Institutes. After House visited the Hampton Institute, he found the philosophy’s practical focus and grounding in moral religious instruction fit for Greece’s northeast frontier of Macedonia.<sup>29</sup> House’s daughter, Grace Bigelow House, following her upbringing in the Balkans, studied the Hampton Institute and then worked at the Penn School, offered advice and guidance to her father. One of the enduring legacies of the Dodge family in philanthropy was the business mindedness creating guidance and direction from collective thought. Barclay Acheson articulated this on behalf of NEF’s board at the conference noting,

The Near East Foundation Board of Directors is peculiarly constructed - it is a board composed of some wealthy men who have very direct interests here and a group of experts who are recognized leaders in their

fields in America and who in at most every case have been on the foreign field and studied the question. In this way we have a balanced board - it is interesting to have a group of technicians and wealthy men combined on a Board of Directors.<sup>30</sup>

The star of the conference was Thomas Jesse Jones who filled three roles. First, he served as a board member of the NEF, helping design the foundation's rural education program. Second, he was there as a member of the Thessaloniki Industrial and Agricultural School's board. Third, almost every presentation mentioned Jones' *Four Essentials of Education* as the model for schools and for NEF programs.<sup>31</sup> Jones' community-based goals presented in the book offered students a constraining vocational education. The curriculum presented four foci. It promoted "appreciation and use of environment" in agricultural work or other rural vocations. For women focus centered on keeping a good "home and household" in what would become home economics. A third focus on "health and sanitation" attempted to improve the quality of life through inoculation and preventative measure such as latrines. Finally, the curriculum offered "community recreation" through social-cultural activities.<sup>32</sup> Collectively, the program was an amalgamation of Jones' previous experience and work in the US putting forward the idea of teaching a "social consciousness" within a segregated geography. Jones' work among communities of Black Americans, autochthonous Americans in a segregated education system, worked to create homogenous communities in a segregated US teaching each of them differently.<sup>33</sup> Prior to joining NEF's educationalists, Jones had a position at the Phelps Stokes Fund, taking his idea abroad by promoting vocational education among Black Africans in British Colonial Africa.<sup>34</sup> As Jones began work with the NEF, he expanded the geographical scope of those needing uplift in *Essentials of Civilization*. Two decades after joining the NEF board, H.B. Allen, NEF education director in Macedonia, reflected on Jones's *Four Essentials of Education* as the prelude to Cold War community development programs.<sup>35</sup>

The Near East Foundation's ideas of rural reconstruction failed to remain static beyond the interwar period. They did continue to be centered on community development, however the scale shifted. During the interwar, individual villages

functioned as the focus and goal. During the Cold War, the village focus shifted to US industries in the region as loci around which to form industrial scale community planning. The death of NEF's village-level community development during the 1950s initiated new forms of community engagement directed by the nations it operated in and envisioned. The extension of work in Beirut to Syria and pursuit of an Iraq program illustrate the forces guiding the demise of NEF's village demonstration work.

## **Envisioning a New Frontiers beyond the Interwar Period**

The Mandate period in Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq left the Near East Foundation's programs to use the American University in Beirut as the base from which to extend programs in the Levant. Already by 1933, NEF's Laird Archer and AUB's Bayard Dodge discussed extension of the work being done in the Bakaa Valley and in Damascus to Iraq. AUB President Bayard Dodge felt that the work should be postponed until the funds existed to establish a program on a "large enough scale to do full justice to that country."<sup>36</sup> The size and complexity of Iraq compared to the other mandates posed formidable obstacles. The economic setting of worldwide depression necessitated that the NEF postpone an Iraq program until it could secure funding. Additionally, NEF actions beyond the AUB community were limited to cooperation with the French and British Mandate systems. NEF cooperation with the Mandate of Palestine presented further opportunities as Anglo-American institutions spread. Then when national territorial sovereignty was obtained in the post WWII period, the NEF looked to expand its roles.

The creation of Baghdad College in Iraq and Damascus College in Syria along with post-World War II independence presented the Near East Foundation with a dynamic situation.<sup>37</sup> The NEF's relationship with the Near East College Association continued promoting the Baghdad College in Iraq to relieve the pressure on the American University in Beirut. NECA documents promoted

Baghdad College as a “modern and especially technical education.” In addition, the college, like AUB and the proposed Damascus College, continued to fill “the urgent need for education” by reaching Christian minorities. The focus and concentration on Christians in the Near East by the NECA and NEF community illustrate continuity from NER’s relief work among the Assyrians of Iraq a generation earlier.<sup>38</sup> Continued appeal to potential donors came in the form of association to a Near East Christian community.<sup>39</sup> Until after WWII, NEF’s funding base still depended on small donations from the American evangelical community.<sup>40</sup>

The early postwar period was decisive for the Near East Foundation, as US roles in the region expanded. By April 1948, NEF became part of a coordinating committee combining the interests of NEF and NECA in education with US oil interests, for a shared and mutually beneficial Near East relationship.

It was the consensus that [Near East] government agencies alone...could not cope with the long range problems which must necessarily involve better education, more and better medical and sanitary facilities, mechanical and shop training for skilled and semi-skilled personnel, agricultural institutions and model farms, and other similar means for improving the standards of living of the common man generally throughout the Arabic-speaking countries.<sup>41</sup>

Members of the committee then established that a survey of British and American education interests in the Near East (excluding Greece) would enable planning for a federation of philanthropic and educational efforts. The program was conceived to create “minimal overlap and maximum benefit” where,

American and British interests have the most at stake. Of course, it is obvious that the security of the oil fields in the Near and Middle East for years to come is of paramount importance. All concerned were unanimous that without the oil from such areas European recovery cannot be fully accomplished owing to the paucity of other fuels.<sup>42</sup>

The coordinating committee effectively placed oil and its importance to securing European recovery as the new foundation of US education goals in the Middle East and as a source of NEF funding.

At the time of the coordinating committee's decision, the Near East Foundation's work in Syria was already primed for expansion with the interwar and early postwar programs in agriculture, education, and homemaking. NEF's Syria program funding shifted to US oil firms, including the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line (Tapline) and the Arabian American Oil Company. The US oil companies responsible for Tapline gained rights in Syria and Lebanon to transit petroleum from the oil fields of Iraq to Sidon, Lebanon. The Tapeline agreement and attachment of education resources to oil provided NEF with a potential road to Iraq. NEF began offering its services to Tapline in 1947, which continued funding NEF work until 1956.<sup>43</sup> NEF records indicate that Tapline was still being discussed as source of revenue for NEF work until the early 1960s. The programs and context, however, fell short of providing a village extension model that gained the support of both the local community and the Syrian government. The road to Iraq through Syria was also complicated by numerous changes in power including a US-led coup in 1949. The 1948 Israeli war of independence added further complexity, when NEF programs in Syria shifted to provide relief to Palestinian refugees. The result was a further strain on NEF work in Syria. Then, during the 1950s, work shifted to cooperative and agricultural credit. However, the nature of NEF's work drew obvious questions from the Syrian government, skeptical of the US.

Despite the setbacks in Syria, the possibility of work in Iraq served as a holy grail for the Near East Foundation. In 1951, the NEF submitted an application to the Iraqi government that would address "economic development" in Iraq.<sup>44</sup> The program plan began with a malaria campaign and then a gradually expanding program of rural development for five years. The plans cost started at \$800,000 for the first year and finished at just over \$1,000,000 in the final three years, as the malaria work was phased out. At the time, this was the NEF's largest design for work, both in scale and cost. The program was centered around demonstration in Dujaila, Iraq, where a land redistribution scheme was implemented by the Iraqi

government in 1945 to compete with the existing feudal system. NEF plans in rural development were still broken down into categories of agriculture demonstration, sanitation and health, adult education, and homemaking, the core of NEF demonstration work in Macedonia and the Levant during the 1930s. The Iraqi government rejected the proposal and in the same year, 1951, requested a fundamental education program through UNESCO. The Near East Foundation persisted in trying to obtain the Iraq contract, so it submitted the plan to the Ford Foundation for funding. This, too, was denied in 1954. The rejection came in part because the project did not begin with agricultural credit or was not tied to land resettlement plans. NEF's community development ideas centered on the village as the locus, while the Ford Foundation sought more extensive changes placing economic redistribution as the heart of the program. Lyle Hayden, NEF's foreign director, noted that NEF's approach to agricultural credit was that it should be "introduced after village people have begun to think for themselves and their individual and collective potentialities recognized by themselves."<sup>45</sup> The NEF's attempts at securing work in Iraq illustrate the power of larger exogenous actors as they shifted technical assistance away from the village to larger scale development models, forcing the NEF to change the nature of its work.

## Conclusion

The failure of the Iraq program illustrates the death of the community development model for the Near East Foundation and a new focus on other opportunities. Until the mid-1950s, NEF programs still emphasized the "essentials" of village demonstration work before expanding. Despite the death of NEF's community development, it continued as a popular model. US President Truman in 1948 already placed NEF's work as part of the flagship Point Four programs, and by 1954, the US government established a community development division in its budding foreign aid agency with 47 programs in 23 countries.<sup>46</sup> The nationalization of NEF's work in the nascent USAID, however, did not end NEF's activities. Despite the numerous rejections regarding the Iraq proposal, by 1955, H.B. Allen stopped in Iraq again for "exploratory purposes" at the insistence of US State Department Representative Clyde Dunn, still hoping for



the possibility of an Iraq program. The nature of NEF's work shifted to supporting US assistance during the Cold War and depended on revenues that largely came from petroleum revenues. NEF became an institution of "Cold Warriors" that emphasized US and national security over the local communities they once worked with.

The scale of the Near East Foundation's power is illustrated in the demise of the community development model where it succumbed to the role of larger actors. As an influencer though, the NEF remained important. Through the Dodge family's continued business interest diversification (mining to oil), during the interwar, they continued backing philanthropic interests in education programs that supported a greater US political economy, preaching democratic education while practicing development in support of dictatorships. US-Near East interests of evangelism and capitalism, helped lay regional groundwork for a policy of "hearts and minds." NEF program funding in the Cold War reflects the shift of doing business increasingly with autocratic governments. Cleveland E. Dodge served as president of the organization and chair of the board of trustees for 23 years, leaving the unmistakable mark of his leadership on the organization that he remained actively involved with until 1978. His nephew, David S. Dodge, took over as NEF chair in 1977, coming to the NEF after long careers with ARAMCO and the American University in Beirut.

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<sup>1</sup> Merle Eugene Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, Society and Philanthropy Series (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988), 259–526.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 1st ed (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), chap. 1: The Significance of Foundations in U.S. Foreign Policy.

<sup>4</sup> Parmar, 256–57.

<sup>5</sup> 1931 acts as a starting point given that is when the Near East Foundation incorporated to begin "rural education" work. 1979 marks the end of NEF's largest post WWII project in Iran due to the revolution. NEF continues work today with a still recognizable mission.

<sup>6</sup> Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 263–68, 606–10.

<sup>7</sup> Curti, 320.



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<sup>8</sup> Frank A. Ross, C. Luther Fry, and Elbridge Sibley, *The Near East and American Philanthropy, a Survey Conducted under the Guidance of the General Committee of the Near East Survey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929), 10, 14, 63, 176, 261, 285–86.

<sup>9</sup> Victor V. Nemchenok, “‘That So Fair a Thing Should Be So Frail’: The Ford Foundation and the Failure of Rural Development in Iran, 1953–1964,” *Middle East Journal* 63, no. 2 (2009): 261–84; Michael Limberg, “Abundant Life: U.S. Aid and Development in the Near East, 1919–1939” (Ph.D. dissertation, Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut, 2018), <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/dissertations/1798>; Nathan J. Citino, *Envisioning the Arab Future: Modernization in U.S.-Arab Relations, 1945–1967* (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/11358401>; Jennifer Abdella and Molly Sullivan, *A Lasting Impact: The Near East Foundation Celebrates a Century of Service* (Near East Foundation, 2015); Davide Rodogno, “Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief’s Humanitarian Operations, 1918–1929,” *Monde(s)* 2 (2014): 45–64; Davide Rodogno, “Non-State Actors’ Humanitarian Operations in the Aftermath of the First World War: The Case of the Near East Relief,” in *The Emergence of Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas and Practice from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Fabian Klose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 185–207; Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bt896>; Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*; Robert L. Daniel, *American Philanthropy in the Near East, 1820–1960* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1970).

<sup>11</sup> Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones*; Rodogno, “Beyond Relief: A Sketch of the Near East Relief’s Humanitarian Operations, 1918–1929”; Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810–1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971).

<sup>12</sup> Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Barclay Acheson, “Diary of Barclay Acheson,” May 4, 1927, 19, Near East Foundation records –(FA)406–, (RG)1–(S)12–(B)003–(F)27, Rockefeller Archive Center, 01.01.1927–29.4.1927.

<sup>14</sup> Phyllis B. Dodge, *Tales of the Phelps-Dodge Family: A Chronicle of Five Generations* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> Carlos A. Schwantes, *Vision & Enterprise: Exploring the History of Phelps Dodge Corporation* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Robert Vitalis, *America’s Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (London: Verso, 2009), 27–61.

<sup>17</sup> Karine V. Walther, *Sacred Interests: The United States and the Islamic World, 1821–1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

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- <sup>21</sup> James L. Barton, *Story of Near East Relief (1915-1930)* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000829309>.
- <sup>22</sup> "The Near East Foundation: A Twentieth Century Concept of Practical Philanthropy," Series 10: Publications, Papers and Printed Material, 1931, 5, Near East Foundation records -(FA)406-(RG)1-(S)10-(B)133, (F)NEF: A Twentieth Century Concept of Practical Philanthropy, Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>23</sup> "Annual Reports" (New York: Near East Foundation, April 1931), Near East Foundation records-(RG)1-(S)-(B)2-(F)Annual Reports 1931-4, Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>24</sup> This association began in 1928 at the direction of Cleveland H. Dodge (partial founder of NER and father of Cleveland E. Dodge, Board Chair and President of NEF) "An Adventure in International Understanding in Six World Capitals" (Near East College Association, Post 1945), Near East Foundation records -(FA)406-(RG)1-(S)1-(B)109-(F)AUB: An Adventure in International Understanding in Six World Capitals, Rockefeller Archive Center; Additionally interwar leadership of NECA is discussed in David M. Ment, "The American Role in Education in the Middle East: Ideology and Experiment, 1920-1940," in *History of Popular Education: Educating the People of the World.*, ed. Sjaak Braster, Frank Simon, and Ian Grosvenor (London: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 173-90, <http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1821359>.
- <sup>25</sup> Acheson, "Diary of Barclay Acheson," 19.
- <sup>26</sup> "The Near East Foundation: A Twentieth Century Concept of Practical Philanthropy."
- <sup>27</sup> Cyrus Schayegh, "The Interwar Germination of Development and Modernization Theory and Practice: Politics, Institution Building, and Knowledge Production between the Rockefeller Foundation and the American University of Beirut," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 41, no. 4 (2015): 649-84.
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- <sup>29</sup> Marder, 42-44.
- <sup>30</sup> Barclay Acheson's "Greetings from the Board of Directors presentation at Near East Foundation, "Rural Life Conference of the Near East Foundation in Cooperation with The Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute Cooperating," Addresses and Reports (Salonica and Athens: Near East Foundation, March 14, 1932), 14-18, Near East Foundation records-(RG)1-(S)1-(B)74-(F)Rural Life Conference, Rockefeller Archive Center.
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- <sup>32</sup> H.B. Allen's presentation, titled "Meeting the Four Essentials of Village Needs in Macedonia." at Near East Foundation, "Rural Life Conference of the Near East Foundation in Cooperation with The Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute Cooperating," 60.
- <sup>33</sup> Khalil Anthony Johnson Jr, "Problem Solver or 'Evil Genius': Thomas Jesse Jones and The Problem of Indian Administration," *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 5, no. 2 (2018): 37–69.
- <sup>34</sup> Jonathan Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad: American Teachers in the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*.
- <sup>35</sup> H.B. Allen, *Rural Reconstruction in Action, Experience in the Near and Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1953), 98–99.
- <sup>36</sup> Bayard Dodge, "Bayard Dodge to Laird Archer," August 1, 1933, Near East Foundation records -(FA)406-(RG)1-(S)1-(B)72, Rockefeller Archive Center.
- <sup>37</sup> "An Adventure in International Understanding in Six World Capitals," 12–13.
- <sup>38</sup> Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*, 13, 67, 83, 161–201.
- <sup>39</sup> "An Adventure in International Understanding in Six World Capitals," 12.
- <sup>40</sup> John J. Schwartz, *Modern American Philanthropy: A Personal Account*, Nonprofit Law, Finance, and Management Series (New York: Wiley, 1994), 20–31.
- <sup>41</sup> Members of the committee included: Mr . Barclay Acheson (Reader's Digest), Dr. Harold B. Allen (Near East Foundation), Jr. John Case (Socony Vacuum), Dr. Bayard Dodge (Near East College Assn.), Harold Hoskins (SONJ), Mr. E. C. Miller (Near East Foundation), Dr William Patton (Near East College Assn.), Dr. Lorrin A. Shepard (American Hospital of Istanbul) & Dr. I. Livingston Wright (Princeton University); C. W. Hamilton, "C. W. Hamilton to E. C. Bothwell," April 29, 1948, (C)Near East Foundation records-(FA)406-(RG)1-(S)1-(B)32-(F)Near East Coordinating Committee Material - H.B. Allen's Office, 1947-1948, Rockefeller Archive Center.
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