‘Little Orphans of Jerusalem’: The American Colony’s Christian Herald Orphanage in Photographs and Negatives

Abigail Jacobson

Marie Aboud, eight, is a little maid of the Greek Orthodox Church. Her father, George Aboud, is paralyzed from shell-shock, and her mother, Wardy/Wandy, is dead. Marie’s family came from the mountains of Ajalon in northeastern Palestine. Some Moslems wanted to take Marie from her helpless father by force, which meant to make her somebody’s concubine. To avoid this he sent her to Jerusalem to a distant relative of her mother’s. This person is very poor and unable to feed her own family of three children. Marie is stunted and thin, but bright and lovable. (Fig. 2.1)¹

This brief description of little Marie is one of 33 descriptions of girls, aged 3–15, that appear in the Record Book of girls who received support through the American Colony Christian Herald Orphanage in Jerusalem (1918 to 1923, estimated dates). The pages of the Record Book are organised uniformly, give a sense of a catalogue or an index of the orphans and already hints to the power dynamics involved in this institution, as discussed below. On the right-hand corner is the girl’s portrait photograph with a brief biographic outline including her name, religion, family history if known, place of residence before joining the Orphanage and a description of her character. In some cases, such

¹ Bertha Spafford Vester and Christian Herald Orphanage, *Record Book listing girls receiving support through the Christian Herald Orphanage, as supervised by the American Colony*. Library of Congress, American Colony Collection, Manuscript/Mixed Material. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mamcol.092/>, 5. (Hereafter: Record Book). The Record Book and the Album are both preserved by the Library of Congress as part of the American Colony Collection. The American Colony Archive in Jerusalem holds the negatives of the photographs, as well as vast collections on the different activities and endeavours of the American Colony.

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Patron
Mrs. John Dross. Box 21. Belle Vernon. Pa.

Received
\$ 20. - through Ch. H.
Nov 12/21 \$ 20 through Ch. H.

Through Ch. H. \$ 5.00

Sent-
Aug.
Aug 5/21 letter & photo of Marie.
Aug 13/21 letter of thanks.
Dec 8/21 P.C. for Xmas.
Jan 5/22 sent letter of thanks \$ 22.
Acknowledged Sept. 22. from
about closing Orphanage &
sent Mrs. Freeman's address.
Dec. 30/1921.

Sent \$ 10.00 through Mrs. Freeman.
Summer 1923.
Letter to Mrs. Freeman which
accompanied the above check. it Jan 30 - 1923.

Aug.
Aug 5/21 letter & photo of Marie.
Aug 13/21 letter of thanks.
Dec 8/21 P.C. for Xmas.
Jan 5/22 sent letter of thanks \$ 22.
Acknowledged Sept. 22. from
about closing Orphanage &
sent Mrs. Freeman's address.
Dec. 30/1921.

Acknowledged, letter, Oct 23/23
Mrs. Freeman acknowledged
it Jan 30 - 1923.

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No. 6.
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FIGURE 2.1 'No. 3: Marie Aboud'. Part of Christian Herald Orphanage Record Book, 5.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

as in the case of 10 years old Salfeetie, listed as number 17 in the Book, this description also includes the destiny that awaited the girl had she not been sent to the Orphanage, again suggesting the close link between the moral mission and institutional power: '[t]here was nothing for such a child but to roam the streets and learn all kinds of wickedness, had not the Orphanage opened its loving gates'.²

The Record Book with the girls' biographical descriptions joins another visual source that can teach us something about this institution: an annotated Photographic Album dedicated to the Christian Herald Orphanage, documenting life in the Orphanage. The Album consists of photographic prints, featuring trips and excursions held by the Orphanage, daily life and activities of the girls and staff, celebrations and, again, individual photographic portraits of the girls.³ The Record Book and Photograph Album of the Orphanage offer us an opportunity to bring back to life this somewhat forgotten venture, one of a number of orphanages and welfare institutions in post-World War I Jerusalem (and Palestine). These records enable us to ask many questions, both about the history of the Orphanage and the girls who stayed there, but also about photography as site of investigation and documentation. Specifically, this chapter will critically address the connections between the medium of photography and the acts of humanitarianism, as playing out in the case of the Orphanage.

As suggested by Issam Nassar, photographs should be regarded as visual documents which cannot be separated from the historical context and circumstances in which they were produced.⁴ This chapter, then, aims at uncovering the history of the Orphanage within the overall activities organised by the American Colony, as well as the social life of the images included in these albums.⁵ What is the main narrative that the Album and Book wish to portray and to whom? What can they teach us about the institution, the people behind the camera and their intended audience? Was there any significance in the way the albums were organised, the taxonomy of the images and the staging of the girls in the photographs? Who was excluded from the albums? And how is the Orphanage connected to its surrounded socio-political and urban

2 Ibid., 21.

3 Unknown, American Colony in Jerusalem, and Christian Herald Orphanage. Photograph Album, Christian Herald Orphanage. Palestine, 1919. Unpublished Album, Library of Congress, American Colony Collection Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mamcol.091/>. (Hereafter: Album).

4 Issam Nassar, *Photographing Jerusalem: The Image of the City in Nineteenth Century Photography* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1997), 24–26.

5 Stephen Sheehi, *The Arab Imago: A Social History of Portrait Photography, 1860–1910* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 55.

context of post-World War I Jerusalem, the early years of British colonial rule and to the grand project of humanitarian aid and relief efforts during this period?

1 Establishing the Context: The American Colony in Jerusalem

The American Colony Christian Herald Orphanage in Jerusalem opened in 1918 and closed in 1922 or 1923. The Orphanage, as its name indicates, was operated by the American Colony in Jerusalem, in conjunction with the *Christian Herald* newspaper, which was in charge of the financial support and the contributions for the Orphanage.⁶ The nature of cooperation between the New York-based newspaper, which used photographs in order to promote humanitarian aid projects around the world, and the American Colony in Jerusalem will be discussed below. In order to fully contextualise the activities and nature of the Orphanage, then, it is essential to first understand its host institution, the American Colony in Jerusalem.

Established in 1881 by a group of 17 Americans from Chicago and 2 British citizens, the American Colony was led by Horatio Gates Spafford and Anna T. Spafford. Driven by Evangelical Protestant motivations and explaining their pilgrimage from Chicago to the Holy Land in spiritual and messianic terms, the founding group was joined in 1896 by a group of 77 Swedes and Swedish-Americans and 28 Anglo-Americans, who were influenced by the ideas and charisma of Anna Spafford as the Colony's leader. By 1900 the Colony consisted of around 150 people, mostly Swedes and Americans, as well as others coming from Britain, Canada, Denmark, India and Lebanon, among other places.⁷

During its almost 70 years of existence, the American Colony was a prominent religious, creative, educational and commercial institution in Jerusalem. It developed business enterprises, ran philanthropic and humanitarian projects (the Christian Herald Orphanage being one of them) and developed a commercial photography department, a guest house and a store. It became

6 In her memoir, Bertha Spafford Vester, the daughter of the founders of the American Colony and one of its leading figures, mentions that it was Major Theodore Waters, the assistant editor of the *Christian Herald* and a major in the Red Cross, who first suggested that the newspaper would offer support for the work done by the American Colony in Jerusalem. Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem: An American Family in the Holy Land 1881–1949* (Jerusalem: Ariel Publishing House, 1992), 297.

7 Ruth Kark, "Post Civil War American Communes: A Millenarian Utopian Commune Linking Chicago and Nös, Sweden to Jerusalem," *Communal Societies* 15 (1995): 75–114.

a meeting place and a centre for tourists, explorers, ethnographers, diplomats, political leaders, religious figures, artists and scholars.

Unlike the *Christian Herald* newspaper, which, as will be discussed below, held missionary aspirations and used the language of the mission as part of the act of contributing money to the Orphanage, the American Colony was not a missionary institution. As such, one way of understanding its activities and existence is to place it within the context of nineteenth-century American Evangelical Protestantism and American religious communes, which were often utopian and premillennialist in nature.⁸ Within the context of American Studies, another perspective is that offered by Milette Shamir, who argues that the American Colony is an example of a wider cultural desire within American national discourse and analyses the connection between the 'motherly' character of the Colony, as manifested also in its charity work, and the Protestant American imaginary of the Holy Land.⁹

The American Colony was known for its matriarchal nature, under the dominant leadership of the founding 'mother' Anna Spafford and, later, her daughter Bertha Spafford Vester. Bertha, who became the leader of the Colony after the passing of Anna in 1923, was one of the second generation of Colony members who assumed leadership roles in the early 1900's.¹⁰ Bertha was a prominent figure in running the Orphanage as well as the liaison between the donors and the Orphanage. She is featured in some of the photographs of the Orphanage, together with several teachers who were members of the Colony, mainly Ruth Whiting and Hulda Larsson Beaumont. Other members of the American Colony featured in the Orphanage's photographs were Ernest Forrest Beaumont, Hulda's husband, who was the Colony's dentist and a self-taught artist, draftsman, surveyor, city engineer and archaeologist.¹¹ In addition to Colony members, other teachers were employed at the Orphanage, such as a certain Milly Jacobs who appears several times in the Orphanage's records.

The charity work carried out by the Colony members is central for understanding its unique position in the city and the region as a whole, as well as in

8 Yaakov Ariel and Ruth Kark, "Messianism, Holiness, Charisma and Community: The American-Swedish Colony in Jerusalem, 1881–1933," *Church History* 65 (1996): 641–658.

9 Milette Shamir, "'Our Jerusalem': Americans in the Holy Land and Protestant Narratives of National Entitlement," *American Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (2003): 29–60.

10 For some of the main account of the American Colony see Helga Dudman and Ruth Kark, *The American Colony: Scenes from a Jerusalem Saga* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1998); Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *American Priestess: The Extraordinary Story of Anna Spafford and the American Colony in Jerusalem* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 2008); Odd Karsten Tveit, *Anna's House: A Story from Stavanger to Jerusalem* (Oslo: Cappelen, 2000).

11 Jack Green, "From Chicago to Jerusalem (and Back Again): The Untold Story of E.F. Beaumont," *The Oriental Institute News and Notes* 227 (2015): 15–19.

the context of the Orphanage. Different projects began in the Colony's early years and were especially important during the crisis of World War I and its aftermath. Aiming to extend support to women and children in need, the Colony established medical clinics, soup kitchens, schools and workshops to support girls and women, as well as a hospital. The Christian Herald Orphanage, then, was one aid project among several organised by the American Colony. These projects started during World War I, continued throughout the British Mandate in Palestine with one, the Spafford Children Centre, that continues to operate since 1925 to the present day. Most of these institutions served all those in need, regardless of ethnic and national background and, as mentioned above, had no missionary aspirations. The Christian Herald Orphanage, discussed here, is unique in this sense.

Another major enterprise carried out by the American Colony which is relevant for discussion of the Orphanage is the American Colony Photo Department (ACPD). The ACPD's photographers documented landscape, people and all major events of the time, creating one of the largest visual archives of Middle East history. Established in 1898, the ACPD operated until 1930 under the leadership of Swedish Lewis Larsson, together with Olof, Lars and Nils Lind, Jamil and Najib Albina, Eric and Edith Matson and John D. Whiting. As demonstrated also by Rachel Lev's contribution to this volume, the work of the Photo Department included thematic photographic albums, panoramic photographs, aerial photography, motion pictures, postcards, souvenirs, glass-lantern slides and travel albums. The photographers guided tourists, archaeologists, ethnographers, fellow photographers, scholars, pilgrims and explorers through Palestine and the region and served as interpreters of the region's history, culture, geography and current realities.¹² Even though there is no clear indication that the ACPD's photographers were responsible for the Orphanage's Photograph Album, the fact that the original negatives of this

12 On the work of the American Colony Photography Department see, for example: Barbara Bair, "The American Colony Photography Department: Western Consumption and "Insider" Commercial Photography," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 44 (2010): 28–38; Rachel Lev, "Visionaries and Creators: Members and Creative Ventures of the American Colony in Jerusalem, 1881–1948" (Exhibition Catalogue) (Jerusalem: American Colony Archive Collection, 2014); Dov Gavish, "The American Colony and its Photographers," in *Zev Vilnay's Jubilee Volume: Essays on the History, Archaeology, and Lore of the Holy Land, Presented to Zev Vilnay*, ed. Ely Schiller (Jerusalem: Ariel Publishing House, 1987) (in Hebrew). To use Michèle Hannoosh's suggestion, it is important to understand the ACPD's photographic experience, both within the local and regional context of the Levant. See Michèle Hannoosh, "Practices of Photography: Circulation and Mobility in the Nineteenth-Century Mediterranean," *History of Photography* 40:1 (2016): 3–27.

Album are kept at the American Colony Archive Collection suggests that this is indeed the case. As such, this Album joins other visual records of the ACPD and should be analysed keeping this context in mind. It is this Album and the narrative that it entails to which we now turn.

2 Narrating the Orphanage: The Photograph Album

The black leather-bound Photograph Album featuring the Christian Herald Orphanage comprises 97 black-and-white photographic prints, of which 46 are individual portrait photographs of the Orphanage girls. Most of the photographs are titled in black ink handwriting below the photographs including the Orphanage girls' names below their individual portraits. The Orphanage Record Book is organised alphabetically and lists the girls with clippings of their portrait and biographical notes at the top of each entry.

The visual narration of the Album comprises three parts. The first, from pages 1 to 17, features high quality black-and-white and sepia photographs, presenting daily life in the Orphanage. Most of the first part consists of two photographs per page, organised one below the other. Pages 13 to 17 consist of between one and five photographs per page. The second part spans pages 18 to 23. It features individual portraits of the Orphanage girls. An assembly of 13 loose photographs (not pasted in) constitute the third part of the Album. These photographs were scanned by the Library of Congress and appear on their website as complementary visual narration of the first part, featuring mainly snapshots of events, picnics, trips, birthdays, play time and holidays where girls and staff are shown together. Captions of these photographs are handwritten in pencil on the back of the photograph. It may well be that the visual editing of the third part was completed after the Album was already arranged.

The Album narrates the Orphanage's daily life, including outdoor activities and trips, indoor activities, events and celebrations. They are mostly group photographs. The first page presents the location and the main actors, opening with two photographs, organised vertically: the top one is entitled 'Christian Herald Orphanage Conducted by the American Colony' showing the front façade of the Orphanage building. Below it is a photograph entitled 'Playground of the Orphanage', showing girls playing in front of the Orphanage building. In both pictures the building and playground are isolated from their surrounding environment, without any clear indication of their exact location (Fig. 2.2). The next page (page 2) displays two group photographs, one above the other: 'Sir Arthur [Chief Administrator in Palestine] and Lady Money during a visit

FIGURE 2.2 'Christian Herald Orphanage Conducted by the American Colony' and 'Playground of the Orphanage'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 1.

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

FIGURE 2.3 'Sir Arthur and Lady Money during a visit to the Orphanage' and 'Untitled'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 2.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

to the Orphanage' is displayed at top and, at the bottom, a group photograph of the girls and their teachers from the American Colony in Jerusalem (among them Bertha Vester and Ruth Whiting are seen standing on the left next to the girls), in a beautiful garden at the entrance to the building. In the far distant upper middle right of the photograph one can see the Augusta Victoria Stiftung (Foundation) with its tower, located on the north-east side of Mount of Olives. (Fig. 2.3). Already, by examining these two first pages, one can capture two very different photographic languages: a snapshot of playful girls, running barefoot and swinging on the swing set, versus a well-staged scene in which the girls are well-dressed, all wearing white cottons dresses and facing the camera. These two photographic languages of the Album, the seemingly un-staged scenes versus the staged ones, will reappear in different sections throughout the Album, conveying both a joyful, free ambience as well as a disciplined one. Both of them portray a rather distanced, not personal, image of the girls.¹³

As we continue turning the pages of the Album, we uncover parts of the daily routine of the girls. For example, photographs on page 4 consist of interior scenes of classrooms, the top one (captioned, 'One of the classes. Milly Jacob teacher') showing girls sitting in front of writing desks and a small bell placed on the teacher's desk. The lower photograph is titled 'Kindergarten', where ten girls are sitting around a large wooden table, with a convertible blackboard at the background with the letters A and O written on it, suggesting that the girls are learning the alphabet (Fig. 2.4). The photograph on page 5, captioned 'Recess', features another scene from the school-life of the Orphanage: the girls are sitting barefoot on the floor, facing the camera, seemingly playing, some holding dolls and toys. Photographs on page 6, 'Sewing Class with Ruth Whiting as the teacher' (top image) and another where the girls are 'Learning how to mend and Darn', (bottom image) take place outdoors; later we witness a gardening lesson in a blooming garden, where the girls seem very busy and happy.

The girls are also documented on laundry day and are seen hanging the laundry in front of the building. A cooking class is then featured, followed by three pictures of them in the dining room. What is interesting about the meal pictures is the way the table is set: each girl has a plate and cup, maybe with a spoon, with a glass of water. In the middle of the tables stand small vases with flowers, possibly wild flowers picked in the garden or on one of the excursions (which are featured later in the Album). The last photograph of this series – 'daily routine' – shows the girls washing the dishes.¹⁴ Some of these images are

¹³ Photograph Album, 1–2.

¹⁴ Photograph Album, 3–12.

FIGURE 2.4 'One of the Classes' and 'Kindergarten'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 4.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

similar to those mentioned by Okkenhaug in her paper on the Swedish School in Jerusalem. As can be seen, both institutions highlighted the domestic training of the girls and their outdoors activities in their photographs as part of their fundraising efforts.

This part seems to take the viewer of the Album through the very daily routine and the main components of the education that is provided by the Orphanage, namely both in-class learning and more practical training aspect of the girls' education: cooking, sewing and darning. This fits nicely into the discourse of scientific domesticity that dominated women's education during the early twentieth century, which viewed women's role as primarily located in the domestic sphere. The tasks that the girls learn also had moral dimensions to them. Laundry, for example, may have reflected the spiritual, as well as physical virtue of cleanliness.¹⁵

The photographs in the third part of the Album feature mostly outdoor activities, such as excursions taking place in 1920–1921, mainly to Ein Karem (and a few to Hebron), where we see the girls play, swing and enjoy picnics. Interestingly, there are no photographs of the girls traveling to any of the religious sites, which are located very close geographically to the Orphanage. Judging from the images, the excursions were only for the purpose of fun and play. Other photographs of this section show the girls playing with snowballs in front of the Orphanage building in the winter of 1920. One of the interesting photographs in this part shows three horse-wagons on their way to 'Ain Karim,' (Ein Karem). The first wagon covers most of the photographic space, thus constituting the central image: it is packed with some 30 cheerful girls looking at the camera. The second wagon appears to be the teachers' carriage and the third is outside the photographic frame. The girls on the wagon seem playful and excited and the two horsemen seem pleased as well. It seems that

15 See Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 155–158; Ela Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers of Tomorrow: Education and Islam in Mandate Palestine* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), mainly 134–167; Omnia Shakry, "Schooling Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Cairo: AUC Press, 1998), 126–170. On girls' education and domesticity within the context of Quaker missionary education in Palestine see Enaya Hammad Othman, *Negotiating Palestinian Womanhood: Encounters between Palestinian Women and American Missionaries, 1880s–1940's* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016). On the symbolism of girls' domestic tasks in a different context see Linda Mahood and Barbara Littlewood, "The 'Vicious' Girl and the 'Street-Corner' Boy: Sexuality and the Gendered Delinquent in the Scottish Child-Saving Movement, 1850–1940," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 4:4 (1994): 560–564.

one of the girls is holding the horse whip (Fig. 2.5).¹⁶ This image alludes to the social connections and hierarchy between the girls and their teachers. The excursions and outdoor play were important in perceptions of hygiene and schooling – claiming that children (and adults) needed sunlight, fresh air and movement in order for them to become healthy and strong, and to overcome the poor physical condition of many children, especially underscored in the context of the Orphanage.¹⁷

The Album also features various celebrations held at the Orphanage. There are two identical photographs taken during Christmas 1919, on page 3 and towards the end of the Album on page 32. The latter's quality is much better as the photograph is very sharp.¹⁸ The picture shows the girls, dressed nicely and wearing shoes (some other pictures show many of them barefoot), one of them, possibly a Muslim girl, with a headscarf, with their teachers (Ruth Whiting being one of them) and possibly again General Arthur Money at the back, standing in front of a large, well-decorated Christmas Tree. The photograph is taken in a well-decorated room with large curtains. One of the striking features of this photograph is the fact that each of the girls is holding what seems to be a Christmas present: mostly, they hold dolls, though the one standing in the middle of the front row, who looks like a boy and wears trousers, is holding a wooden carriage. Other than one of the girls, who is smiling and seems to be leaning towards one of the teachers, all the girls and teachers seem to be very serious (Fig. 2.6).¹⁹ With the presents and the tree, this photograph alludes to a family-like Christmas atmosphere, which may send a message to the donors abroad, hinting at the way the girls are treated in the Orphanage. Other celebrations that we see in the Album are a birthday party held outdoors, with a table again decorated with flowers²⁰ and another lunch party which is described as 'Easter lunch for Mohammadan girls'.²¹ Both the Christmas and Easter photographs are odd, considering the fact that many of the girls in

16 Photograph Album, 28.

17 On the connection between hygiene, physical education and nationalism in the process of Muslim girls' education in mandatory Palestine see Greenberg, *Preparing the Mothers*, 138–150. On hygiene education and the process of nation-building within the Jewish community see Dafna Hirsch, *Banu Lekan Lehavi et haMa'arav: Hanchalat Higiena uBniyat Tarbut Bahevra Hayehudit Bitkufat Hamnadat* (Sede Boqer: The Ben Gurion Research Institute, 2014) (in Hebrew). On domestic management and its influence on men and women in Mandatory Palestine see Sherene Seikaly, *Men of Capital: Scarcity and Economy in Mandate Palestine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), mainly 53–76.

18 Photograph Album, 3, 32.

19 Photograph Album, 32.

20 Photograph Album, 40.

21 Photograph Album, 48–49.

FIGURE 2.5 'Untitled'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 28.
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

FIGURE 2.6 'Christmas 1918, C.H. Orphanage'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 32.
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

the Orphanage were Muslim. This raises some questions regarding what may be the missionary agenda of the Orphanage and the possible connection between the project of proselytisation and humanitarian aid, as will be discussed below.

Another set of interesting photographs appear on page 11 and 50 of the Album. The photographs show a commencement ceremony in an outdoor setting (as the caption of one of them indicates), where guests are seen seated under a large tent which is partly made of an American flag. In the lower photograph a British flag is seen on the right-hand side.²² The girls perform drills in front of the audience, facing the camera and then lining up (the caption reads: 'Drill'). The photograph on page 50, taken from the upper floor of an adjacent building, shows the girls dancing in circles, probably as part of a performance to the audience.

The audience is composed of well-dressed men and women, sitting on chairs, one of the men patting a small dog next to him.²³ The photographs may have been taken during one of the 4th of July celebrations, hence the American flag that serves as a cover from the sun. (Fig. 2.7) These are the only album pages displaying national symbols. The girls are obviously there to entertain the guests, who may be dignitaries and officials from the British administration, representatives of the American consulate, as well as guests of the American Colony and the sponsoring *Christian Herald* newspaper. The physical setting of this ceremony, and the clothing of the men and women, is similar to a typical colonial photograph, embodying in it the power relations and hierarchies of colonial society. Here, as in many of the other photographs discussed, the role of the photograph in representing social dynamics, social relations and possibly an ideological act, is clear. It also hints at the central role of the American Colony in the city, and possibly to the position of the US during the early years of British colonial role in Palestine.²⁴

Throughout the Album we hardly see any men in the photographs. Most of the images feature the girls and their teachers. The men who appear are either officers or officials with few exceptions, one of which is Mr Ernest Forrest Beaumont, the Colony and Orphanage dentist and possibly one of

22 Photograph Album, 11.

23 Photograph Album, 50.

24 Sheehi, *The Arab Imago*, xxviii. In this context it is worth mentioning the stormy relations between the Colony and the American Consulate in Jerusalem, especially in the late nineteenth century during the terms of two consuls, Selah Merrill and Edwin Wallace, due to their suspicion of the Colony's messianic beliefs and communal nature. See more on this in Ariel and Kark, "Messianism, Holiness, Charisma and Community: The American-Swedish Colony in Jerusalem, 1881–1933", 653–654.

FIGURE 2.7 *Untitled*. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 50.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

the administrators, who is seen in several photographs, including one taken in his dentistry office (Fig. 2.8). The dentistry image may allude to the importance placed in the Orphanage on the girls' health and hygiene. It also raises the question of whether oral hygiene may have been a privilege during these years. Another exception is a man seen in some of the photographs, who may be the Orphanage's butler. The Album is hence a clear representation of gender dynamics and reflects the hierarchical colonial division, in which the men featured are in a position of power and authority over the girls. The feminine role is either that of the care-givers (teachers) or the indigenous girls in need of care and support. The central place of women in the Album also goes very much in line with the female-dominated atmosphere of the American Colony and the strong role that the Colony women played within it.

The photographers of the Album are unidentified. However, the original negatives of the Album are held at the American Colony Archive Collection, which suggests that the ACPD produced this Album as well. Exploring the negatives, one can learn about the production process of the Album, as well as the selection of the photographs included in it. The negatives show that some of the photographs were not included in the Album at all. In other cases, photographs were included in part or with some editing work done to them. Such is the case of the Christmas photograph, discussed above (Fig. 2.6). Comparing

FIGURE 2.8 Upper photograph: 'Dentistry'. Part of the Christian Herald Orphanage Photograph Album, 12. Ernest Forrest Beaumont's wife, Hulda Larsson Beaumont, was one of the Orphanage teachers. See: Green, 'From Chicago to Jerusalem.'
IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

this photograph to its negative one can clearly see that the two are different. On the left-hand side of the negative there is a blurry image of a girl and a woman, both unidentified, who were not included in the photograph that appeared in the Album. Instead of them, the photograph's corner is folded. (Fig. 2.9) One can only speculate why the original image was edited before included in the final Album, due to the poorer quality of the negative.

The Orphanage Album, then, captures the daily life and routine of the girls, as well as exposes us to their indoor and outdoor activities. The Album was not supposed to be sold or circulated. Its sole purpose was to present the Orphanage to the donors and to highlight its main activities and features in order to raise funds. In this, it is similar to the function of photographs that is discussed in Okkenhaug's article, regarding the Swedish School. The selection of photographs and the high-quality of print suggests that much work and talent was also put into the photography, the production and the organisation of the Album.

The main actors in the narrative presented in the Album are the girls, whose portraits appear on pages 18–23.²⁵ Unlike the small face portraits that are featured in the Record Book album, these photographs show almost a full body image of each girl, in more or less the alphabetical order featured in the Orphanage Record Book. The names of each of the girls are handwritten in black ink under the photographs. The girls are all facing the camera, with serious expressions, and are all wearing more or less the same cotton dress. Most of the portraits were probably taken in a studio, with a dark background; only a few were taken outside. The girls' names are the only indicators to their ethno-religious identity as Muslims and Christians. Not only are they disconnected from the scenery presented in the rest of the Album, they are also dislocated from space and represent a neutral identity.²⁶ The story of the girls, though, is revealed when looking at the next record available, to which we now turn.

25 Photograph Album, 18–23.

26 Wendy M.K. Shaw, "The Ottoman in Ottoman Photography: Producing Identity through its Negation," in *The Indigenous Lens? Early Photography in the Near and Middle East*, eds. Markus Ritter and Staci G. Scheiwiller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 189.

FIGURE 2.9 *Christmas at the Christian Herald Orphanage, 1918.* Part of 'Members and Activities of the American Colony and Aid Projects', Negative Collection, series 24_13, American Colony Archive, Jerusalem. (Hereafter: Negative Collection).

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN COLONY ARCHIVE

3 Orphans and Patrons: The Christian Herald Orphanage Record Book

The black leather-bound 55-page sequential Record Book is entitled: *Christian Herald Orphanage, conducted by the American Colony, List of Children*.²⁷ Reading through the Record Book it is clear that this is much more than simply a list of girls hosted at the Orphanage, but rather more of a social profile of the girls and their donors, a record of correspondence regarding the money donated to the Orphanage. The pages of the Book feature the name of each girl and a small clipping of a facial portrait, alongside a clipping consisting of a short explanation of the girl's background and her donor's name and address, followed by a handwritten record of the money donated on her behalf from

27 The Record Book was originally organized alphabetically, with the alphabetical letters replaced with handwritten numbers. These numbers may indicate the order of the girls' attendance at the Orphanage.

her 'patron' to the Orphanage. A newspaper clipping on the first page of the Record Book, entitled 'Little Orphans of Jerusalem: A Wonderful Opportunity of Service is Offered,' explains the rationale of the Album and its purpose:

The Christian Herald today presents to its readers an opportunity for service that will gladden many hearts. In past years, they have been the special patrons of thousands of children in India and China, of hundreds in Japan and of a number in Africa ... Now, the way is open to them to become the godfathers and godmothers of little orphan waifs in Jerusalem, the land which of all the world holds the most sacred memories of childhood. There are some thirty-six of these little folks in the Christian Herald Orphanage in Jerusalem – all girls – in whose behalf we appeal to your love and sympathy. [...]

Here is an opportunity for Sunday School classes, Epworth Leagues, Christian Endeavour Branches, Baptist Young People's organizations, Ladies' Aid Societies and kindred bodies to take up the support of a Palestine orphan. Their little protégé will be trained and taught to write to her benefactors at regular intervals, and the latter will thus be put in personal communication with the children of their adoption. Individual members, too, will be welcomed as patrons. There could be no nicer opportunity for getting into personal touch with a little Jerusalem child and influencing her whole future life. [...]

This is a kind of missionary work that lies closer to the heart than any other, because it links the patron to the protégé in a union that grown more and more interesting every year. The cost of support, which includes shelter, clothing, tuition and food, is estimated at \$130.00 a year – equal to \$2.50 a week, or almost 35 cents a day. This, in view of the importance of the work and the great results to be attained, is a very modest figure and one which cannot be considered burdensome. [...]²⁸

The Record Book, then, compliments the Album, discussed above, and also may shed some light on its purpose. Unlike the Album, the Record Book does not include photographs, other than those small portrait clippings which were cut out of the full-body photographs. Each page is divided into two columns, a left one entitled 'received' and a right one entitled 'sent'. The left column lists the exact dates in which contributions were sent to the girls (referred to as 'protégé'), and the right one indicates what the girls sent to the donor

28 "Little Orphans of Jerusalem: A Wonderful Opportunity of Service is Offered," Record Book, 1. The original article appeared at *The Christian Herald*, January 29, 1921.

(referred to as 'patron'). It seems that the correspondence with the donors was made on behalf of the girls, possibly by Bertha Vester herself. Hence, there was no direct link between the girls and the donors. The audience of the Album and the Record Book seems to be the same: the donors among the readers of the *Christian Herald* newspaper, and possibly also among the supporters of the American Colony. Both can be seen as part of the effort to show 'where the money goes to'.

In his analysis of Ottoman portrait photography, Stephen Sheehi discusses the question of repetition of certain patterns within the portraits he investigates, which represent and enact the ideals of Ottoman modernity.²⁹ In the case of the Record Book, the pages all contain the same elements, create some repetition and a sense that all the girls are similar to each other. The organisation of the Record Book gives a sense of a catalogue of the girls and does not provide any agency to the girls themselves. It overshadows their identities, the stories of their parents, families and background. The short, and usually tragic, life-story of the girls is revealed only when looking more carefully at the newspaper clipping attached to the girls' images.³⁰

This feeling of a catalogue is enhanced when reading the original article from which this piece is taken, published in *The Christian Herald* newspaper on 29th January, 1921. This two-page article presents the stories of all the girls living in the Orphanage. Around the article itself are all the portraits of the girls, with their consecutive numbers, for easy recognition (Fig. 2.10).³¹ Two years earlier, on 14th June, 1919, a similar article with children's photographs entitled 'Hear these fifteen little pleaders' appeared in the newspaper, this time referring to an orphanage in China. This display of children in need, then, was not unique only to the Jerusalem Orphanage, but was the way the *Christian Herald* was trying to convince its readers to contribute to charity institutions and welfare projects around the world.³²

Who, then, are the girls who found refuge in the *Christian Herald Orphanage*? From the short profiles of the girls one can learn something about the traumas and effects of the Great War on them and their families. The girls are of Greek Orthodox, Protestant and Muslim backgrounds. Before joining the Orphanage, they mostly lived in Jerusalem, but some also came originally from Mesopotamia, Hebron, the mountains of Ajloun and Greece. This hints at the population movement of the post-war period. One or both of their parents

29 Sheehi, *The Arab Imago*, 14–20.

30 The girls' destiny after the orphanage was closed (between 1922–1923) remains unknown.

31 *The Christian Herald*, January 29, 1921.

32 *Ibid.*, June 14, 1919.

FIGURE 2.10 Little Orphans of Jerusalem, 1921. *The Christian Herald*, 29th January, 1921

either died or were injured during the war. Some died due to diseases, such as typhus and tuberculosis, some during their work in the labour battalions and one died of snake bite. The father of Fareedy Elias (no. 4), George, for example, deserted his family and travelled to South America, leaving her mother behind to support their two children. Some of the girls were first adopted by relatives or other families, who were usually unable to continue taking care of them and hence sent them to the Orphanage. The girls did not seem to have any pre-existing links with the American Colony.

Some girls, such as Asma Wahabie (no. 36, p. 44), suffer from trachoma, malnutrition or are handicapped. Asma Najla Aish, age 6, for example, is described as partly crippled, and also was 'threatened by tuberculosis, but shows no signs of it now'.³³ In some cases, we can learn about the tragic journeys of some of the girls before they reached the Orphanage. Marie Elias (no. 20), for example, is described as the eight year old daughter of a school teacher of the church missionary society in Gaza, who was forced to leave with his family to al-Salt due to the Ottomans' suspicion that he worked with the British. After the British occupation, and following the mother's death, the father returned to Jerusalem with his daughters, but was unable to support them. His three daughters, described as 'bright, nice girls', are held at the Orphanage. Nellie Elias, one of the sisters (no. 22), has her patron's photograph next to hers (p. 29).

The Orphanage's contribution to the lives of the girls is clear. In some cases, the girls were rescued from 'going to the wrong' or from hunger. In others, the American Colony played a different role. Such was the case of Guldusta Bada, age 10, who, as written next to her portrait, 'is pretty and was asked for in-marriage. The American Colony prevented this and will insist on retaining her until she is of marriageable age'.³⁴ These descriptions are indicative of the value system of the American Colony and the Orphanage it managed, of the way the Colony perceived its mission, as well as that of the newspaper readership. This language and spirit of protection also go hand in hand with notions from a different context, that of late Victorian England and the Child Protection Movement. The mission of the 'children savers', as they were called, were both to remove children at risk from their families and, at the same time, to protect society at large from their potentially bad influence. In relation to girls, the mission was to protect the girls from being corrupted

33 Asma Najla Aish, Record Book, 8 no. 6.

34 Guldusta Bada, Record Book, 15 no. 12.

and turning into prostitutes, and at the same time to protect the society from corruption and disease.³⁵

What can we learn about the relations between the donors and the girls? The girls' voice is not heard in this narrative. It seems that there was no direct correspondence between the girls and their donors, as all correspondence went through the American Colony and the Orphanage. From the right-hand ('sent') column of the girls' pages we learn about the thank-you letters that were sent on behalf of the girls to her respective patron, including a postcard for Christmas that was sent by all girls on 8th December, 1921. Sometimes pictures of the girls were sent to the donors as well. We also learn that at the end of December 1922 many of the donors received a letter indicating that the Orphanage was about to close (even though correspondence documented in the Record Book continued in some cases into 1923). There are some cases in which donors sent not only money, however. Mrs J. Edward Davis from Maryland, who supported the 9 year old Evelina Izrak, reported in 1923 about a financial crisis she went through, but wrote that despite her difficulties, she crocheted a luncheon set and sold it for \$23, and sent the money to the Orphanage.³⁶ In February 1922, Mrs Cramer from Warren, Pennsylvania, sent a gold brooch to Naheel Katooha, 8 years old. A year later the Orphanage contacted Mrs Cramer and suggested that she send funds to the Orphanage, not only to the girl she was supporting.³⁷ It seems that at least some of the donors were involved in the girls' lives and upbringing, possibly after the closing of the Orphanage. In a letter sent to Bertha Vester, attached to the Record Book and dated February 1927, one of the donors enquires about the girl she was in touch with, hoping that she will continue developing and go on to train at nursing school as she desired.³⁸ The period at the Orphanage and the American Colony, then, may have served as a point of departure for some girls' future development.³⁹

The Record Book teaches us not only about the girls, but also about their 'patrons', the donors who supported them. Who are the donors, and, more importantly, what is the connection between the *Christian Herald* newspaper and the Jerusalem-based Orphanage?

35 See on this, for example: Barbara Littlewood and Linda Mahood, "Prostitutes, Magdalenes and Wayward Girls: Dangerous Sexualities of Working-Class Women in Victorian Scotland," *Gender & History* 3, no. 2 (1991): 166; Mahood, "The 'Vicious' Girl," 549–578.

36 Evelina Izrak, Record Book, 3 no. 1.

37 Naheel Katooha, Record Book, 18 no. 13.

38 Letter from Ellis Jones to Bertha Vester, Feb. 22, 1927, Record Book, 22–24.

39 Unfortunately, I was unable to track any of the girls after they left the Orphanage. Any suggestion about their future is therefore only a speculation.

4 Pictorial Humanitarianism: *The Christian Herald* Newspaper and the American Colony

The *Christian Herald* was a New York-based weekly magazine, a pioneer of pictorial journalism, which used photographic technologies in order to publicise humanitarian crisis in the United States and around the world. Louis Klopsch, who served as its editor from 1890 until his death in 1910, convinced the newspaper's readers to open their hearts, hands, and purses, in order to feed the hungry, send or carry aid to the sick and to spread the Gospel message everywhere.⁴⁰ The newspaper became the most widely-read religious newspaper in the world. As a channel for relief and charity campaigns it was responsible for raising millions of dollars to aid people suffering around the world.⁴¹ Unlike some of the well-known charitable foundations, such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the *Christian Herald* newspaper represented a grass-roots effort to practice American evangelical ideals and translate them into the practice of humanitarian work, using the tools of the popular religious media.⁴² By the turn of the century, the *Christian Herald* had almost a quarter million subscribers, with its readers coming from all around the United States, as well as from other countries.⁴³ Using the language and ideas of evangelical benevolence, the *Christian Herald* was engaged in hundreds of campaigns to collect donations for various humanitarian causes, stretching geographically from Mexico to China and from Turkey to Russia. By 1910, the newspapers' subscribers had donated more than \$3.3 million for domestic and international crises.⁴⁴

The connection between the newspaper and the Orphanage in Jerusalem was made through the American Colony. The *Christian Herald* had published several articles about the American Colony, in which the newspaper's enthusiasm about the Christian organisation within the grim realities of Jerusalem in particular, and the Levant in general, was very clear. In an article accompanied by photographs, published in the newspaper on February 1919, the writer Wilbur Williams describes his visit and stay at the American Colony, writing that:

40 Heather D. Curtis, *Holy Humanitarianism: American Evangelicals and Global Aid* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 2. The *Christian Herald* was founded originally in Britain in 1876 by Reverend Michael Baxter, and purchased in 1890 by Thomas De Witt Talmage and Louis Klopsch. *Ibid.*, 7–8.

41 *Ibid.*, 3.

42 *Ibid.*, 5.

43 *Ibid.*, 9.

44 *Ibid.*, 11.

By this time we were exceedingly interested in the history of the American Colony, and marvelled at the sturdy sinews of Christian fortitude which can endure persecutions patiently and meekly and free of hatred, when nurtured by sustaining faith.⁴⁵

Later that year, on 19th April, 1919, the connection between the newspaper and the American Colony was demonstrated more clearly, through Bertha Vester's letter addressing the readers of the *Christian Herald*:

Can I describe to you the thrill of joy when I read that the generous readers of the Christian Herald were going to continue their beneficent assistance and keep our poor orphans in the Home they have learned to love? Nay, it is more than this; they will, by their Christmas gift, allow us to take more children into the Orphanage, who are pressing us to admit them into "God's House," as they call it. [...] It is with heartfelt gratitude that the American Colony sends these lines to the readers of the Christian Herald, for their generous contributions contained in the Christmas Chest, which will enable us to continue this very successful and necessary work of mothering these motherless, suffering little ones in the land of the Child Jesus.⁴⁶

Many of the children in the Orphanage were Muslims, continued Vester, who were exposed to the Christian ceremonies and atmosphere. According to her, 'the Mohammedans do not object to a change of religion if it is not a change of the 'outer garment' for gain; that they hate'. And indeed, the religious element is clearly addressed in Vester's letter, when she discusses the questions raised by the children at the Orphanage:

The new surroundings have brought the children new ideas. "Whence all this bounty? Who made the kind friends in America think of the poor little miserable, unattractive, dirty looking children in Jerusalem? Then we tell them of the Child who lived here and who gave his life to save us, and for his sake we remember to be kind to our less fortunate brothers and sisters, for he said that to "love our neighbor as ourselves fulfilled all the law and the prophets". Then they wished to pray and thank this

45 "The American Colony at Jerusalem," *The Christian Herald*, February 22, 1919, 210–212.

46 "Christian Herald Orphanage in the Holy Land," *The Christian Herald*, April 19, 1919, 450–451.

new Friend for all they had received. They did not forget their friends in America; they always ask me to send their love and gratitude to them.⁴⁷

On 27th December, 1919, Vester writes again in the newspaper with more news from the Orphanage. This time she updates that with the acceptance of General Arthur Money, the Chief Administrator of the southern district of British military rule (OETA-South), the name of the Orphanage would change to 'The Christian Herald Orphanage in the Holy Land, under the auspices of The American Colony'. But then, as she continues writing, a potential problem arose:

During his [General Money's] visit at the orphanage, I asked him further about the name, and he at that time gave us permission to use the name 'Christian Herald Orphanage' provided the children were all Christian. At present we have about half Mohammedan and half Christian children with us. General Money said there could be no objection brought if Mohammedans chose to bring their children to the Christian Herald Orphanage. They would have to take the consequences. This statement will prove to you, as it did to us, a great relief.⁴⁸

The importance given to the religious aspect is clear, then, as well as the embedded missionary element and the possibility of proselytisation of the girls. This may be why the girls, including the Muslim ones, participated in the Christmas celebration and Easter lunch, and why the Album featured those events as part of its activities. This did not go hand in hand with the mission of the American Colony, but Vester, who clearly needed the money (when the check of \$3000 arrived, the Orphanage had \$25 left in the account, she said) and the support for the institution, was willing to compromise on this issue. The concern about the influence of the mission on the Orphanage may also explain the absence of any Jewish girls from the Orphanage, despite the fact that they too were among the victims of the war and needed support as well.⁴⁹

47 Curtis, *Holy Humanitarianism*, 11.

48 "The Orphans of the Holy Land," *The Christian Herald*, December 27, 1919, 1335.

49 The number of Jewish orphans in Palestine, and mainly in Jerusalem, as a result of the war is estimated at around 4500. There were, however, several orphanages that had already operated within the Jewish community since the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, including the Diskin Orphanage, the Weingarten Orphanage, the Sephardi orphanage and others. The Joint Distribution Committee operated the "Orphanage Committee to the Land of Israel," which operated between 1919 to 1927 in Jerusalem and other cities and was in charge of supporting Jewish orphans in particular.

Charity was viewed as a mission uniting the believers.⁵⁰ Like other humanitarian projects and welfare efforts, in the United States and beyond, the newspaper used evangelical ideas, mixed with political projects and social agendas, in order to promote what was seen as cosmopolitan charity among the believers.⁵¹ The main motivation was the belief that the US had an obligation to support, and possibly educate, distant strangers as well as American citizens. The unique mechanism for this vast grassroots welfare and charitable project was what Heather D. Curtis calls Pictorial Humanitarianism, the power and influence offered by the illustrative magazine.⁵² Like other philanthropic projects carried out by the United States at the turn of the century, though, this project too was not benign or devoid of political interests and demonstration of power. In the words of Ian Tyrrell, 'giving was genuine, but never simple'.⁵³ What, then, is the connection between humanitarianism and photography, as played out in the case of the Orphanage?

5 Humanitarianism, Philanthropy and the Image

Discussing the history and development of modern humanitarianism in the Middle East, Keith Watenpaugh argues that the centre of humanitarianism is the project of *unstrangering* the object of humanitarianism. This process of unstrangering is derived not only from empathy towards the victim, but from the attempt to close the distance between the humanitarian subject ('patron') and the humanitarian object ('protégé').⁵⁴ In fact, as Denis Kennedy argues, there is an integral relationship between humanitarian relief and imagery.

See Ella Ayalon, "Mevakrot Yetomin Beyerushalayim," *Zmanim* 124 (2014): 72–83. In relation to photography and the concern about conversion, one may also remember the earlier conversion of Mendel John Diness, a Jew who converted to Christianity in 1849, and is considered by some to be the first professional photographer in Jerusalem. See Dror Wahrman, "Mendel Diness – Hazalam Hayerushalmi Hamikzo'i Harishon?" *Cathedra* 38 (1985): 104–120. Diness' conversion caused a major outcry within the Jewish community in mid-nineteenth century Jerusalem.

50 Curtis, *Holy Humanitarianism*, 47–49.

51 Ibid., 58, 64.

52 Ibid., 283–287.

53 Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 98. In his book Tyrrell discusses the creation of what he calls "America's Moral Empire", and examines the relationship between Protestant reformers' aspiration to create a more Christian and moral world, and the rise of American imperialism and colonialism.

54 Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 19, 34.

Because people are less likely to help distant strangers, the challenge facing humanitarian agencies, until today, is to bridge the distance between the victim and donor and attract support. This is done by the use of images and technology.⁵⁵ Hence, as Kennedy argues, selling pain and suffering is in fact central to humanitarian fundraising. This close connection brings with it a set of ethical dilemmas, such as the dignity of the victim, and the way that the victims in fact become depersonalised and abstract.⁵⁶

In this regard, the act of unstrangering operates in a way that is parallel to the process of 'biblification'. That is to say, a process of making legible that which is distant and removed from the immediacy of the photographic viewer. Biblified images presented Jerusalem in particular as an empty space, highlighted the presence of Jewish and Christian minorities who needed protection, treated the city as an iconic image and ignored the realities of the living city. Biblification, then, was another mean of discovering the (imagined) country and bringing it closer to the western audience.⁵⁷ In the case discussed in this article, though, it is not biblical images that are presented, but images of a philanthropic enterprise.

Photography played an integral part in the extension of American philanthropy abroad from the end of the nineteenth century, argues Curtis. This practice, also termed 'humanitarian photography', served to mobilise photography in the service of humanitarian initiatives across state boundaries.⁵⁸ The invention of the portable Kodak camera in 1888 enabled missionaries, aid workers, journalists and tourists to document humanitarian crises in remote places and publish the photographs in different venues, including popular periodicals.⁵⁹ The photographs were supposed to arouse sympathy for suffering strangers and to encourage compassion among the readers, which would later translate into financial assistance, as in the case of the Orphanage. This use of images, though, was often used for commercial purposes and for the

55 Denis Kennedy, "Selling the Distant Other: Humanitarianism and Imagery-Ethical Dilemmas of Humanitarian Action," *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance* (2009), accessed July 16, 2019, available online at: <http://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives411>.

56 *Ibid.*, 7.

57 Issam Nassar, "'Biblification' in the Service of Colonialism: Jerusalem in Nineteenth Century Photography," *Third Text* 20, nos 3/4: 317–326.

58 On Humanitarian Photography see Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno, "The Morality of Sight: Humanitarian Photography in History," in *Humanitarian Photography: a History*, eds. Heide Fehrenbach and Davide Rodogno (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1–4.

59 Heather D. Curtis, "Depicting distant suffering: Evangelicals and the politics of pictorial humanitarianism in the age of American empire," *Material Religion* 8, no. 2 (2015): 157–158.

creation of calls for humanitarian appeals which were based on 'spectacles of suffering'.⁶⁰

The case of the Christian Herald Orphanage serves as a demonstration of the process that Watenpaugh, Curtis, Fehrenbach, Rodogno and Kennedy describe, but offers a 'twist'. The photographs that are presented in both records, mediated by the *Christian Herald* newspaper, bring the girls closer to the hearts and minds of the newspaper's readership and create the hierarchy and relationship of a patron/protégé. They allow the donors to feel closer to the girl they support, to personalise her and to follow her development and growth by actually becoming her godparent. It is through the image, presented in the Photograph Album, and the ongoing communication with the girls, as documented in the Record Book, that the physical, as well as psychological, distance between Jerusalem and the United States is bridged. But it is also through the image that the girls are made less abstract and more personalised.

The relationship between the donor and the girl, reflected in the photographs and the newspaper, may also shed light on some of the motivations behind the act of charity and benevolence. What seems to be the religious agenda of the donors, as discussed above, is most probably not the only motivation for supporting the orphans. As Beth Baron, Keith Watenpaugh and Nazan Maksudyan, among others, show, the act and discourse of welfare is not benign or free of political agendas and motivations. Patrons, or sponsors, hope to enhance their social capital through supporting the needy and the orphans serve, in certain cases, as a fresh ground for a proselytising and modernising effort. Hence, the donors' motivations may be driven by social, religious, political and sometimes even economic motivations, and not only by a pure desire to save the children.⁶¹

The case of the *Christian Herald Orphanage*, then, demonstrates the close connection between the humanitarian project and the image, in the context of post-World War I Jerusalem. Regarding the question of context and location, the photographs play a double role here. On the one hand, they aim at bringing the orphans closer to the donors, by personalising them. On the other hand, they present what Shaw portrays as an 'identity dislocated from space' or context, as the girls' images are not positioned in any particular 'classical' Jerusalem scene, have no ethnic or national features and hence

60 Ibid., 159–160; Fehrenbach, "The Morality of Sight," 4.

61 See more on this in Beth Baron, "Orphans and Abandoned Children in Modern Egypt," in *Interpreting Welfare and Relief in the Middle East*, eds. Nefissa Naguib and Inger Marie Okkenhaug (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 33–34; Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), 10–11, 116.

their photographs, as well as their portraits, are not easily identified as being located in Jerusalem.⁶² In fact, with the dresses and their haircuts, the girls do not hold local markers at all and can be mistaken for girls living in any other place, for that matter. The images of the girls, then, are mediated through the photographs, to create a sense of a local-stranger for the American audience and present them as decent, clean and respectable. The role of the American Colony, as the institution running the Orphanage, is central here, as this institution is embedded within the social and political life of Jerusalem, as well as in its scenery. The humanitarian project is hence both general and contextualised, can take place anywhere and at the same time is deeply embedded in the history of Jerusalem and the American Colony. The two records that tell the history of the Orphanage, then, serve as much more than a pictorial evidence, but depict in them a multi-faceted story and complex political realities.

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62 Shaw, "The Ottoman in Ottoman Photography," 189.

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