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Armenian Review

ARTICLES

The Emergence and Acceptance of Armenia as a Legitimate Missionary Field

THOMAS OTAKAR KUTVIRT

7-32

Coping With Massive Stressful Life Event: The Impact of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 on the Present Day Health and Morale of a Group of Women Survivors

ZAROUHI SARKISIAN

33-44

THE GÜNEY FILE:

An Interview with Yilmaz Güney

SIYAMEND OTHMAN

45-49

Biographical Notes, Filmography, Published Books

THE KURDISH INSTITUTE

50-57

Statement of Yilmaz Güney to the Permanent Peoples'
Tribunal: Session on the Genocide of the Armenians

YILMAZ GÜNEY

58-59

FORUM

Toynbee, Turks, and Armenians

LILLIAN ETMEKJIAN

61-65

A Correspondence Between Marmaduke Pickhall and the Armenian Bureau of London

E. V. GULBEKIAN

67-70

BOOK REVIEWS

John Anthony, *Collecting Greek Coins*

BY LEVON A. SARYAN

71-73

Thomas J. Samuelian and Michael E. Stone, eds., *Medieval Armenian Culture*

BY LEVON AVDOYAN

74-77

Arménie 1900; Scenes et Portraits. Photographies Arménienne; Ermakof

BY PASCAL TCHAKMAKIAN

77-79

Jack Nusan Porter, *Genocide and Human Rights — A Global Anthology*

BY JASON W. CLAY

79-82

D.M. Thomas, *Ararat*

BY MARY ARSHAGOUNI

83-85

COMMUNICATIONS

87-90

Cover: Yilmaz Güney, design by Tatul Sonentz-Papazian

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The Emergence and Acceptance of Armenia as a Legitimate American Missionary Field

Thomas Otakar Kutvirt

THE STORY of American Protestant missionary activity among the Armenian people of the Ottoman Empire commenced inauspiciously in 1820 when two pioneer explorer-missionaries arrived in the Levant, almost totally ignorant of the existence of an Armenian nation. The two were agents of the first and greatest of American foreign missionary societies, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (hereafter ABCFM or Board), which already had some experiences working among pagan groups but never among non-Protestant Christian peoples such as those who lived in the Eastern Mediterranean region. The Board's missionaries soon became interested in "the spiritual and moral degeneration of the Armenian Apostolic Church and began laboring to bring about an acceptance of the simple and basic tenets of Protestantism. Gradually the direction and substance of the policies of the missionaries evolved, ultimately leading to the formation of a Protestant Armenian Church in 1846.

None of the standard histories of mission work in Western Asia trace the precedents and factors which led to the establishment of a mission to the Armenians. Rufus Anderson's official history of the Board's work among Oriental Christian churches is a narrative that begins with the actual founding of the missions to Western Asia and does not reveal or speculate upon their origins.¹ Abdul Tibani is the only contemporary historian to use the Board's archival material and to address

¹Rufus Anderson, *History of the Missions of the ABCFM to the Oriental Churches*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1872).

the development of the concept of a mission to the Levant; his primary interest was Syria-Lebanon. He believes that the Board gave the idea of a mission to Palestine (which eventually split into several constituent missions, including one to the Armenians of Constantinople) "authoritative support" since at least 1815, though he does not trace this support or substantiate the claim.²

In fact, at the outset of its labors in 1810, the Board did not think that Western Asia was a legitimate object of missionary attention. Gradually the Board's interest would shift toward that region in response to powerful letters written by the first American missionaries to India. There appears to be little evidence that the Board was officially concerned with Palestine before 1818, when it made quite suddenly its startling decision to initiate a mission in the Levant. And of all the ethnic groups in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Armenians were recommended most encouragingly by the explorer-missionaries for several years until William Goodell was formally instructed to work in Constantinople among the Armenians. The Armenian mission soon proved to be the most successful of the Board's stations, in Western Asia. The missionaries, once in Constantinople, had as one of the main pillars of their policy the explicit desire not to create a Protestant out of the existing Armenian Apostolic Church. Only in 1844, two years before the actual split took place, did the missionaries finally embark on a policy designed explicitly to establish a new Church.

RELIGIOUS SETTING IN AMERICA

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, great religious revivals intensified feelings in the United States to a feverish pitch.³ After the Revolutionary War, America's energies were directed toward ensuring the success of its great political experiment and notions such as secularism, deism, and rationalism carried the day. All the while religion languished unnoticed. Suddenly, a concerted effort by the religious community to combat the pressing threats caught fire and spread throughout the states re-establishing religion to its former influential intellectual and moral position.

The emergence and development of the ideas underlying American foreign missionary activities paralleled the gradual modification and transformation of the strict, grim, arbitrary, and indifferent Calvinistic theology into an emotional and militant system of benevolence.

²Abdul Latif Tibawi, *American Interest in Syria 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work* (Oxford, 1966), p. 12.

³The materials consulted for the revivals include: O.W. Elsbree, *Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America 1790-1815* (Williamsport, 1928); Frank Hugh Foster, *A Genetic History of the New England Philosophy*, (Chicago, 1907); William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America* (New York, 1930); and Williston Walker, *Ten New England Leaders* (New York, 1901).

Samuel Hopkins seized Jonathan Edward's earlier thesis of "benevolence" and developed it to its logical extreme, arguing that the greatest amount of happiness to the greatest number of people should be the goal of all Christians. Concern for each and every soul, especially heathen souls that had never heard the power and truth of the Gospel, emerged as the theology of the day.

Distinct from its southern and western Baptist-Methodist counterpart, the Congregational-Presbyterian revivals of New England were fashioned and perpetuated by an educated clergy and had a sophisticated appeal. The New England revival spawned in its wake educational institutions, religious periodicals, and philanthropic organizations of all types, temperance societies, abolition societies, as well as missionary societies. Initially, the missionary societies concentrated on the conversion of the Native Americans. It was only a matter of time, though, before Americans would emulate their English cousins and look beyond their borders for distant lands in which to spread the Gospel.

FROM INDIA TO LEVANT

Four young men from the Andover Theological Seminary addressed an ardent appeal to the Congregational Churches' General Association at its annual session at Bradford Massachusetts on June 27, 1810, publicly revealing for the first time their hope of proselytizing the masses of non-Christian overseas. Their appeal surprised many in America who saw much work to be done among the Native Americans.⁴ In the form of a petition they asked the Association:

Whether with their present views and feelings, they ought to renounce the object of missions, as either visionary or impractical; if not, whether they ought to direct attention to the Eastern or Western world; whether they may expect patronage and support, from a Missionary Society in this country, or must commit themselves to the direction of European society; and what preparatory measures they ought to take, previous to the actual engagement.⁵

With little more than overwhelming faith and greater hope the Association appointed a Board of Commissioners. The Association charged the Board with the duty of gathering the facts on which to

⁴The Board explained that although "on our continent, there are millions of men 'sitting in darkness and in the region of death' . . . the attempts which have been made to evangelize the aboriginal tribes of North America, have been attended with so many discouragements, and South America is yet in so unpromising a state, that the opinion very generally prevalent is, that for the pagans on this continent but little can immediately be done . . . (Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting, September 1811, in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston, 1834), p. 18.

⁵Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the ABCFM, *First Ten Annual Reports*, p. 9.

build a coherent and workable organization which would direct American foreign missionary activities. The Board first met in Farmington, Connecticut on September 5, 1810.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was in essence a structure superimposed over the churches of New England that would act as a centralized, interdenominational body with strictly limited functions of collecting and dispersing funds. At the first meeting the commissioners voted that the four students should "pursue their studies til further information relative to the missionary field be obtained, and the finances of the institution will justify the appointment."⁶

In the face of greater problems of organization, finance, and policy making, the scope of the young Board's activities was variously and imprecisely defined in a number of its official documents. The Act of Incorporation passed by the Massachusetts legislature in 1812 stated the object of the ABCFM as "propagating the Gospel in heathen lands."⁷ The Constitution of the Board stated that the object of its missionaries was to "devise, adopt, and prosecute ways and means for propagating the Gospel among those who are destitute of the knowledge of Christianity."⁸ In other documents of the same period, the framers of the Board's indentity substituted "unevangelized lands" for "heathen lands."⁹ The two phrases appear to have had identical and interchangeable meanings at first, both implying that the nation or people in question had never heard the Gospel preached and therefore were non-Christian. Later Rufus Anderson, writing the official history of the work of the Board in the Orient, would claim that "the Board has ever acted in the belief that its labors should not be restricted to pagan nations. The word 'heathen' in the preamble of its charter, is descriptive and not restrictive. . . ."¹⁰

While the term "heathen" may have never indeed been restrictive, much of the Board's early history revolved around its effort to define its role in the world and find the proper groups to receive attention. During a fifteen year period between 1810 an 1825 the expression "unevangelized" slowly evolved in meaning until it became synonomous with "un-Protestant," slowly thereby encompassing the

⁶Thomas C. Richards, *Samuel J. Mills* (Boston, 1906), p. 71.

⁷Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the ABCFM, *First Ten Annual Reports*, p. 11.

⁸*Panoplist*, 4 (1810): p. 181.

⁹See "Address to the Christian Public" in the *Panoplist*, 4 (1810): p. 183; see also "Laws and Regulations of the ABCFM" as related in *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years* (Boston, 1851), p. 77.

¹⁰Rufus Anderson, *History of the Missions of ABCFM to the Oriental Churches*, 2 vols., (Boston, 1872), 1: viii.

large mass of Oriental Christian peoples the early pioneer missionaries found so ridden with superstition and faulty doctrines.¹¹

The groups first approached were non-Christian pagans. Only after receiving reports from its missionaries and those of other countries did the Board gradually accept the idea of sending a formal mission to labor among "non-evangelized" Christians. Ever mindful of the Biblical command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," the Board and its missionaries could legitimately one day transfer attention from the heathen to those peoples who neglected the primitive, simple truths of the gospel.

The Board groped for a station to which to send its first missionaries and quite naturally looked to England, whose traditional leadership in religious and intellectual affairs was little diminished since the Revolutionary War. Adoniram Judson, one of the four original petitioners, was commissioned to go to England to:

determine whether any and what arrangements can be made for a concert of measures in relation to Missions, between the ABCFM and the London Missionary Society, and obtain ample and correct information relating to the missionary fields, the requisite preparations for missionary services, the most eligible methods of executing missions, and generally to what ever may be conducive to missionary interests.¹²

These instructions reflect the very fluid state of thought about foreign missions in the minds of those men entrusted to send American missionaries abroad. But still, even without any working knowledge of how to best go about this activity, the British example, well known to the Americans, suggested that America's first efforts be made in the "Eastern world, especially Hindoostan, the Malayan Archipelago and the Bermah Empire."¹³ Though unwilling to accept the American Board as an affiliate, the London Missionary Society at first encouraged their American counterparts to follow them to India and offered to pay the salaries of the first group of American missionaries.¹⁴ Yet from the start, the proposed India Mission met some hesitation on both sides of the Atlantic. Jonas Roberts in England warned his friend Rev. Robert Ralston in the United States,

Should Mr. Johnson and his brethren from Andover go out to India under the patronage of the Mass. Board of Commissioners, it may be probably

¹¹The meaning of "unevangelical" slowly changed from meaning "not being familiar with the Gospel" to "not being of the general theological party or school as the missionaries." *A New English Dictionary*, (Oxford, 1897) edited by James A.H. Murray, defined "Evangelical" in meaning 2B as: "From the eighteenth century applied to that school of Protestants which maintain that the essence of the Gospel consists in the doctrine of salvation by faith in the atoning death of Christ, and denies that either good works or the sacraments have any saving efficacy."

¹²Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting, *First Ten Annual Reports*, pp. 16-17.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 21.

thought advisable to direct their labors to those quarters which are **not** under the control of the British government, as China or the Birmah Empire, where they will not be subject to interruption in case the unhappy differences should end in hostilities [War of 1812] indeed from political considerations alone they might be liable to interruption in British India, even if friendship be revived.¹⁵

The instructions given on February 7, 1812 to the "Missionaries to the East," Samuel Nott, Samuel Newell, Gordon Hall, and Judson, reflected Roberts' concern about overlapping missionary fields. From India, the missionaries were to "proceed to Birmah" and there establish an American station.¹⁶ Explaining their choice of location as well as revealing their views of proper missionary fields, the Board in its "Annual Address" of November 10, 1812 stated, "It is also worthy of consideration, that the Board are not confined in their operations to any part of the world; but may direct their attention to Africa, North or South America, or the Isles of the Seas, as well as to Asia."¹⁷ While aiming at Burma as their specific field of labor, it was understood that the first missionaries would be in effect explorers, sending back notice of any promising fields as yet unknown to Americans. They did so eagerly, compelled "both by duty and inclination."¹⁸

Once the Board sent out its first missionaries, it no longer had to rely on second-hand British information of the often inaccurate history and travel books. Instead, the Board used the reports of its own men to formulate its policy. Newell provides the first indication that any Americans were thinking about Western Asia as a missionary field, when he reflected in his journal on July 15, 1812, a few days after arriving in India, that "the countries of Western Asia, viz. Persia, Arabia, Turkey, were generally represented as inaccessible to Christian missionaries, on account of the peculiar intolerance of the Mohametan superstition."¹⁹ He would later urge the Board to ignore the common assertion that Muslim lands are too dangerous for missionary work.

The pioneer missionaries were denied access to India by the British, as a result of the War of 1812, and for a year were occupied with fighting an order which would have sent them to England as prisoners of war. Unable to establish a mission in India or leave India for Burma, they nevertheless were allowed to travel about India and remained on good terms with English missionaries, who readily divulged their experiences and opinions based on long familiarity with the Orient. During their travels around India, Nott, Hall, and Newell wrote in a

¹⁵Letter dated January 27, 1812, ABC Archives: 10 vol. 1 No. 8.

¹⁶ABC Archives: 8.1 vol. 4 No. 1, p. 4.

¹⁷*Panoplist*, 6 (1812): p. 252.

¹⁸Letter of July 6, 1816 from Hall's and Newell's journal, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol. 1 No. 64.

¹⁹Entry dated July 15, 1812, from Newell's journal, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol. 3 No. 3.

joint letter that of all the places thus far visited, "Cochin is in our view the most eligible, especially for the missionaries of the Board. The number of Syrian Christians and Catholic Christians, and the number of Jews and Heathens . . . unite in giving Cochin a peculiar importance."²⁰ The Syrian Christians had immigrated hundreds of years before to Cochin, but had maintained their religion. The Americans were horrified at its "depravity" and "untruthfulness." They suggested that several missionaries might profitably be sent to labor among these people as well as the Jews and heathens, which challenged the Board to extend its scope of activity beyond work exclusively among pagans.

Newell was more ambitious in his suggestions, probably reflecting the British views first proposed by Buchanan and Martyn.²¹ Because of the difficulties the British government had placed in the way of missionary activity in India, he wrote from Ceylon on December 20, 1813 that he was "wavering between two places, Ceylon and Bussora at the head of the Persian Gulf."²² Basra caught Newell's eye because:

in the whole of Western Asia containing a population of 40-50 millions, there is not one Protestant missionary . . . Bussora is a commercial town, the great emporium of Western Asia, through which the merchandise of the East is distributed to Persia, Arabia, and Turkey . . . [paths that lead to all the] numerous bodies of Christians of different sects, scattered through these countries, who have sunk into the grossest darkness for want of instruction, but who would gladly receive the Bible.²³

He concludes that "a mission to Western Asia would be all our own; and it would be free from the objections which I stated to establishing our mission in British India."²⁴

He later expanded his ideas in 1814 in a paper entitled "A Brief View of the Present State of the Eastern World in Relation to Missionary Exertions." In the paper he tries to shift the Board's attention to a region encompassing "all countries lying on the river Indus, the country of the Turks, . . . Persia, Armenia, Arabia, the Turkish provinces on the Tigris-Euphrates, Syria, Palestine and Asia Minor."²⁵ In answer to the widely held notions of the inaccessibility of Muslim lands he states:

two things are certain; First, that the Roman Catholic missionaries have made their way thro'all these countries and have established churches and convents in them . . . Secondly, there are in all of these countries

²⁰Letter of October 4, 1814 to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol. 1 No. 52.

²¹Claudius Buchanan and Henry Martyn, *English missionaries and explorers working in India*.

²²Letter of December 20, 1813 from Ceylon to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol. 3 No. 31, p. 13.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁵An undated paper written sometime during 1814 and based on internal contextual evidence, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol.3 No. 20, p. 7.

great numbers of Christians of various denominations who are allowed the free exercise of their religion.²⁶

He then proposed the rationale that the ABCFM will soon adopt to explain their work among the Oriental Christians: "May we not hope that these ancient and venerable churches, which have been preserved for us for so many ages in the midst of their enemies, are destined . . . one day to effect the downfall of the Mahometan religion."²⁷ Throughout this document, Newell was primarily interested in Persia. He makes no mention of Jerusalem and no emotional appeal to retake the lost Holy Land. Newell's vantage point was of course India and the nearest attractive spot to the west was Persia. At this point he merely mentions Armenians in passing and knows only of those Armenians "within the limits of the Persian Empire."²⁸

The ABCFM was officially silent on the various proposals of the Bombay Mission. One can not overemphasize the novelty of Newell's thoughts. Prior to 1814 there was no reference to Western Asia — Turkey, Persia, or Palestine — in any of the sermons of the day, in the private correspondence of the Board's members, or in the official missionary organ, the *Panoplist*.²⁹ Though Islam, along with Roman Catholicism, was considered the greatest enemy of the Gospel, unfamiliarity with the entire Ottoman Empire meant that the Board never seriously considered a mission there until more information had been gathered.³⁰

The next group of missionaries sent to the East, also destined for Bombay, was vaguely instructed to "avail yourselves of the best information respecting not only that Island [Ceylon] but also the neighboring Peninsula, and the unevangelized other parts of the East." But the instructions did not refer to any of the past communications.³¹ This silence annoyed the Bombay Mission. They sent off a joint letter on July 6, 1816 in which they repeated their suggestions — "We have already written of considerable length about Western Asia. There we see a field vast in extent, urgent in its claims, encouraging in its pro-

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁹There was actually one obscure reference in the *Panoplist*, 8 (1813), pp. 377-378, entitled "An Extract of a Letter from a Zealous Greek Merchant to a Friend in Malta," dated Feb. 8, 1812, which stated "I have been . . . in many parts of Turkey, Syria and Armenia . . . on my business . . . Notwithstanding, the people of these parts of Asia are readily disposed to receive the true religion. Oh that there were someone to make it known to them."

³⁰For instance, see "An Address to the Christian Public" in *Panoplist* 6 (1811): p. 244.

³¹Instructions to Richards, Warren, Meigs, Bardwell, and Poor, October 14, 1815, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol, p. 33.

spects, and almost untouched by missionary hands."³² Finally the corresponding secretary of the Board, Samuel Worcester, acknowledged the previous communications. He wrote, "In regard to Persia, Egypt, or any other part of Western Asia, we have been thinking with great interest; . . . first [we must] strengthen the stations already occupied and then to establish new ones as we shall find ourselves able."³³ The Board at this point found itself hard pressed by the expensive task of nurturing several young stations — to the Native Americans, to the Sandwich Islands, as well as to India. Thus, it could not immediately fulfill Newell's and Hall's designs, even if it had given them serious thought.³⁴

Early in 1817 Newell and Hall sent the Board their most ambitious document to date, whose title — "The Conversion of the World or the Claims of Six Hundred Million of the Human Race Who are Destitute of the Gospel and the ability of the Churches, Within Thirty Years, to Satisfy their Claims and Still Live in Possession of their Ease, their Comforts and an Increase of their Abundance" — reveals the thrust of its message. As did the previous communications from the two, it defined areas still without Protestant missionaries that were "interesting and worthy of immediate attention of the Christian public."³⁵ They still agitated for an immediate Persian mission and concluded with a totally novel suggestion:

If, therefore we dare not yet venture to send a mission into Persia and attempt directly to convert the Mahometans let a number of missionaries be sent into Armenia where there is ample scope for missionary labors among those who already profess the Christian religion, but know not what it is.³⁶

They had in fact developed such a high regard for the Armenians living in India that they singled out the Armenian nation as agents and companions in the missionary quest for heathen converts:

The Armenian church may be rendered an important instrument in the work of evangelizing the Western Part of Asia — from Armenia the word of life would naturally advance into Persia, Mesopotumia, Syria,

³²Letter of July 6, 1816 from Hall and Newell at Bombay to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.1.1 vol. No. 64.

³³Letter of June 23, 1817 from the Board to Hall, Newell, Bardwell, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol. 1, p. 111.

³⁴The Board was involved in extensive operations in three separate general areas — the East (India), the Sandwich Islands, and the American Indian territories. In 1820 when the first two Americans began laboring in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Board had already sent out 108 other agents in the previous ten years and had 49 women and 47 men evangelizing at various time stations at that, including 25 in India, 17 in the Sandwich Islands, and 44 in the Indian Territories. *Eleventh Annual Report*, September 1820, pp. 69-70.

³⁵Manuscript, ABC Archives: vol. 36, p. 47. This manuscript was published by the Board in 1818 at Andover.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 57

Palestine, Arabia and Asia Minor; and thus, without a crusade, the Church of Christ would regain her dominion over those lost regions where the light of divine truth first dawned on the world, where the savior was born and the standard of the cross was first planted.³⁷

The response of the Board was quick and curt, addressing itself only to the impossible plea for more money and missionaries to help convert the six hundred million heathens and ignoring their suggestions of new fields.³⁸ The Board decided, however, to publish the document, used it to stir up popularity for missions, and hoped to have it "perused by every professed Christian in the United States."³⁹

The Board's interest in Western Asia continued to be unknown outside the small circle of the Board's executive committee, also known as the Prudential Committee. Pliny Fisk, one of two recently accepted missionaries who was destined to establish the Palestine Mission within fourteen months, pondered his fate and again exhibited the public's general unawareness of Western Asia:

To what part of the heathen world shall I direct my attentions? The American Board have two general fields, one in Asia and the other in our Western wilderness. Perhaps some other field may soon be selected. The South Sea Islands, and South America have been thought of.⁴⁰

Levi Parsons, soon to be Fisk's companion in Palestine, reacted with excitement to Newell's and Hall's published journals:

Thursday last, Nov[ember] *Panoplist* was put in my hand, and for the first time I read the journal of our Brethren at Bombay, with regard to a mission to Persia. . . . Brother, what shall we do? Shall we present ourselves to the Board for the mission?⁴¹

Meanwhile the Board, as late as June 1818, appeared to have been thinking officially in terms of Persia as a location for a mission in Western Asia. They intimated this interest in a letter to India.⁴² After a meeting of the Prudential Committee at Andover on September 24, 1818, Parsons and Fisk were requested "to prepare as soon as convenient for a mission to Western Asia."⁴³ But the Board, ignoring all of the Bombay Mission's voluminous correspondence on the subject of

³⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 56-57

³⁸Letter of October 1, 1817 from the Board to Hall, Newell, and Bardwell, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol. 2, p. 111.

³⁹Letter of November 20, 1818 from Jeremiah Evarts to Rev. Henry Hallock, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol 2., p. 212.

⁴⁰Alvin Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M., Late Missionary to Palestine*, [Boston, 1828], p. 231.

⁴¹Letter of January 20, 1818 from Parsons to Fisk, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 45.

⁴²Letter of June 11, 1818 from the Board to Warren, Richard, Poor, and Meigs, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol.3, p. 75.

⁴³Entry in Parson's journal of September 24, 1818 as quoted by Daniel O. Morton, *Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons*, [Pult, 1824] p. 187.

missionary fields, chose Jerusalem, not Persia, as the primary objective of Parsons and Fisk.

The Board acted with little documentation or information as to the advisability of a mission to Jerusalem. Persia was the logical choice for the new mission — it was well explored, highly recommended, and the king was known to be receptive to Christian missionaries.⁴⁴ But the Board, acutely aware that it had to devise "means . . . to keep the Christian community from shrinking over the great cause of missions,"⁴⁵ realized that remote and unknown Persia would not fire the imagination nor the generosity of the public to the same extent a Palestine Mission would, for the Holy Land was an area with which all Christians were well acquainted and they could easily get emotionally involved in any labors there. The Board's almost momentary decision was described by Fisk's biographer:

A communication from a missionary at Madras, published in the London Missionary Register for 1818, and published in some of the religious journals of New England, was one of the first documents, in which facts were developed that suggested the expediency of establishing a mission in Jerusalem. About the same time, a letter from Smyrna stated, on good authority, that the missionaries would be tolerated in the Turkish empire.⁴⁶

The British once again showed their American counterparts the path to follow. Rev. William Jowett, later to become the guide and instructor of the fledgling American mission to Palestine, in 1814 "engaged himself under the Society [Church Missionary Society] to act as Literary Representative in Malta and the Levant."⁴⁷ It would be over a year before Jowett finally arrived at Malta and close to three years before he began journeying from Malta to the surrounding regions to gather information.⁴⁸ But, in 1814, the British felt excited enough to issue the plea: "Other clergymen, it may be hoped, will follow the example. In Palestine, in Asia Minor, and in other places, the Society would gladly make attempts of a similar nature."⁴⁹ The members of the ABCFM no doubt learned of Jowett's projected trip at that time and added that piece of information to their widening storehouse of facts and ideas.

Jowett's primary focus was North Africa and his secondary focus was

⁴⁴See "Conversion of the World," ABC Archives: vol. 36.

⁴⁵Letter of October 1, 1817 from the Board to Hall, Newell, and Bardwell, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol. 2, p. 111.

⁴⁶Bond, pp. iii-iv.

⁴⁷"Report of the Committee" delivered May 3, 1814 in *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society of Africa and the East*, 1813-1815, 4:312.

⁴⁸See William Jowett, *Christian Research in the Mediterranean from 1815-1820 in Furtherance of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1822).

⁴⁹*Proceedings*, 4: p.313.

Greece. Consequently, he made no mention of the Holy Land as a possible mission site until after the Board had reached its decision. But an extensive series of letters between Jowett and Charles Williamson, the chaplain to the British Consul at Smyrna, was published throughout 1818 in the Church Missionary Society's *Missionary Register*. The letters described conditions in the Ottoman Empire as conducive to Missionary efforts and caught the eye of the Board.⁵⁰

In June 1818 the *Missionary Register* published a letter from Deocar Schmid, missionary at Madras, entitled "Intelligence respecting Jerusalem," containing information received from an Armenian Bishop who was touring India.⁵¹ The Bishop represented the people of Jerusalem as eager to welcome missionaries. He said they would be greeted "with great joy and respect by all denominations (with the exception of Roman Catholics) but especially by the Armenians . . ." ⁵²

Based on these meager but seemingly promising facts, the Board prepared to send two missionaries to the Holy Land. They ignored the later and ominous description of missionary opportunities in Jerusalem by Christopher Burckhardt, the first Protestant clergyman to visit that city.⁵³ Surprisingly enough, the *Panoplist* did not print any of these communications and no prominent mention of Jowett can be found until after Parsons and Fisk arrived at Malta. The Board's attention shifted westward as a result of Newell's and Hall's suggestions.

The Board waited some months before officially announcing its September 24 decision in the *Panoplist*. In the meantime, they frantically collected information in order to present a well reasoned and complete description of the forthcoming mission to the public.⁵⁴ Fisk was ordained as a missionary on October 6, 1818 and then was commissioned to remain in the United States collecting funds until the Board could finance the mission.⁵⁵ Curiously enough, the minister who preached the ordination sermon did not mention Fisk's forthcoming Palestine Mission and reiterated the latest public thought on the scope of missionary activity saying, "The banners of the cross will be unfurled in distant regions, and wave as signals of peace and joy, on the mountains of Persia, the plains of China and Hindoostan, and deserts of Africa, and among the wilds of America."⁵⁶ The Board continued to

⁵⁰Some letters were copied in the *Boston Recorder* 50 [1818]: p. 205.

⁵¹Copied by the *Boston Recorder*, 38 [1818].

⁵²*Missionary Register*, February 1819: p. 78.

⁵³*Missionary Register*, February 1819: p. 78.

⁵⁴Letter of January 12, 1819 from Jeremiah Evarts to an unnamed correspondent, ABC Archives: 1.01 vol. 2, p. 254.

⁵⁵Morton, p. 192.

⁵⁶Moses Stuart, *A Sermon, preached in the Tabernacle Church Salem, Nov. 5, 1818, at the Ordination of the Rev. Messrs. Pliny Fisk, Levi Spaulding, Miron Winslow and Henry Woodward, as Missionaries to the Unevangelized Nations*, Andover 1818, p. 6.

draw some hints from the *Missionary Register*, and the available travels and histories on the Eastern Mediterranean were probably reread.⁵⁷ And most importantly, the Board commanded the knowledge that Yankee shipowners had accumulated during their forty years acquaintance with the Levant and its lucrative trade.⁵⁸ It was no accident that Parson's and Fisk's first station before proceeding to Jerusalem was to be Smyrna, a city which Morison noted, "excepting Gallipoli, Smyrna appears to have been the one port, among the scales of the Levant, that ships of Salem, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore visited."⁵⁹

No sooner did the Board belatedly announce the projected mission to the Holy Land "then it was hailed by the religious public as a most interesting effort, and one which, might be the means, not only of conveying the Gospel to the Jews and Mohamedans, but of awakening many among ourselves to the duties of the times."⁶⁰ The Board realized its attempt to fire the imagination of the public and in the process greatly increased its treasury.⁶¹

At this point in the Board's short life, it still had not resolved the question of its proper scope of activity. In 1819, the Board occupied six formal missions: Bombay, Ceylon, Choctaw, Arkansas, and the Sandwich Islands. All of the missions catered expressly and exclusively to non-Christians.⁶² The Board now proposed to send missionaries to an area with large Christian national minorities, whose exact nature and beliefs were largely unknown. Samuel Worcester, who delivered to Parsons and Fisk their instructions on behalf of the Prudential Committee on October 31, 1819, summed up the Board's feelings:

At Jerusalem and in Judea, you will find people of many nations — Jews, Arabs, Turks, Asiatics and Europeans — of different and distinct countries, and of various religions — Judaism, Paganism, Mahomedanism, and Christianity. . . . With these mingled people, in all its varieties, you will endeavor, yourself as thoroughly acquainted as possible in regard to their general state, their religious opinions and rites, their moral and civil habits and manners, their means of improvement — in a word the cir-

⁵⁷In a Letter dated July 4, 1820 Parsons at Smyrna asked for many books including: "Thornton's *History of Turkey*, Reland's *Palestina*, Dearborn's *History of the Commerce of the Black Sea*, Goldsmith's *Greece*, Bassage's *History of the Jews*, H. Adams's *History of the Jews*, the Memoirs of Buchanan and Martyn, and the Travels of Dr. Chandler, Dr. Clarke, and Ally Bay", ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 33.

⁵⁸Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860* (Boston, 1921).

⁵⁹Samuel Eliot Morison, "Forcing the Dardanelles in 1810," *New England Quarterly*, 2 (1828).

⁶⁰*Missionary Herald*, 2 (1819): p. 93.

⁶¹See *Twelfth Annual Report* of the ABCFM, September 1821, pp. 95-97; also *Thirteenth Annual Report*, September 1822, p. 75.

⁶²Tenth Annual Report, in *First Ten Annual Reports of the ABCFM*, September 1819, p. 208.

cumstances favorable and unfavorable to the propagation of the gospel, in its purity . . . among them.⁶³

Worcester concluded by extending the two missionaries' area of inquiry to include the people of Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Persia, and Armenia, so all inclusive as to be meaningless.⁶⁴ While it was generally agreed that non-Protestant Christians, including Roman Catholics, were corrupt and depraved, Worcester made a fundamental distinction between "sending missionaries to the Heathen" and "teaching the Christians." In any case, the Board did not know the best way to approach the Oriental Christians. Fisk echoed one school of thought which believed other Christians should occupy the attention of the Board: "Are not churches, that are more highly favored, under some obligation to provide pastors and Bibles for these benighted brethren?" Parsons, on the other hand, echoed the largest segment of public opinion when he declared, "The Jews have special claims on our charity."⁶⁵

MISSIONARIES CONTEMPLATE ARMENIA

Armed with letters of introduction to "many respectable merchants in Smyrna," Parsons and Fisk left Boston on the first leg of their journey to Smyrna.⁶⁶ They stopped at Malta on the way. Their primary aim in Malta was to consult with William Jowett and James Conner, the Church Missionary Society's agent in the area:

We have interviews every day with the missionaries here and have received from them much valuable information. They have given us many helpful hints respecting the best manner of living, of preserving health, of studying and traveling, very important facts and opinions relative to the different classes of people who dwell around the Mediterranean and the wisest methods of promoting truth and true religion among them.⁶⁷

⁶³Samuel Worcester, *Instructions to Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons delivered by Samuel Worcester in Old South Church, Boston, October 31, 1819* [Boston, 1819], p. 6.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵Samuel Worcester, "Address to the Missionaries" in Moses Stuart, *A Sermon Preached in the Tabernacle Church Salem, Nov. 5, 1818, at the Ordination of the Rev. Messrs Pliny Fisk, Levi Spaulding, Miron Winslow, and Henry Woodward, as Missionary to the Unevangelized Nations* (Andover, 1819), p. 31. Also, Pliny Fisk, *The Holy Land an Interesting Field of Missionary Enterprise — A Sermon Preached in Park St. Church Just Before the Departure of the Palestine Mission, Boston, 1819* [Boston, 1819], pp. 28-29.

⁶⁶Letter dated October 31, 1819 in Morton, p. 258.

⁶⁷Entry dated January 3, 1820 in the journal of Parsons and Fisk at Malta, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. I No. 21. There were three British organizations active in the Eastern Mediterranean in 1820 — the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the London Society for Converting the Jews — whose combined operations consisted of exploration and distribution of religious literature were handled by five men; see Plato Ernest Shaw, *American Contacts with the Eastern Churches 1820-1870*, (New York, 1937), p. 16.

Jowett's attitudes can be found in two books he wrote at the conclusion of each of his two tours of the Eastern Mediterranean, in 1822 and 1826.⁶⁸ His advice on specific problems was most carefully weighed by Parsons and Fisk, though they and the future American missionaries would find his main thesis inadequate and faulty — "The Church Missionary Society does not consider itself called on to extend its primary attention to any country professedly Christian. Unconverted Jews, Mahomedans, and Heathens are viewed as the proper objects of this mission"⁶⁹

His only interest in the Oriental churches was how these "Ancient and Depressed Churches of the Levant may be excited to join us, in the work of evangelizing the Heathen, the Mahomedans, and the Jews adjacent to them."⁷⁰ The gulf between the British Episcopal Church and the ecclesiastical superstructure of the Oriental churches was relatively narrow and therefore Jowett naturally looked at the Eastern Christians with a good deal of sympathy, approaching them on a level of understanding and friendship. The Americans would soon take a much more callous view of the situation, exhibiting the same prejudice toward the Oriental churches they often did toward their Episcopal countrymen in America.

Rev. Charles William, though a great help to Parsons and Fisk during their residence at Smyrna, suggested in a letter to the Board that "the Missionaries to be sent in these countries be of the Episcopal Protestant Church."⁷¹ Not speaking from a nationalistic, imperialistic, or selfish point of view, he rightly observed that "all the ancient Christian world, of what ever denomination they may be, are without exception, all Episcopalians . . . [and therefore] Episcopal missionaries would meet with far less difficulties than others."⁷²

Much of the advice, however, found its way into Board policy, at least at the outset of the mission. Of the Oriental churches, Jowett's philanthropic interest were attracted by the Greeks, the Copts, and the Abyssinians, with but brief notice of the Armenians — those Arme-

⁶⁸Only during his 1825-1826 tour did Jowett travel to Palestine.

⁶⁹William Jowett, *Christian Researches in the Mediterranean from 1815-1820 in Furtherance of the Church Missionary Society; with an Appendix containing the Journal of the Rev. James Connor, Chiefly in Syria and Palestine* (London, 1822), p. 281.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 355.

⁷¹Letter dated February 1820 to the Board, ABC Archives: 10 vol. 4 No. 170.

⁷²*Ibid.* Parsons and Fisk conceded that an Episcopal "would enjoy some peculiar advantages. . . ." but agreed that the Board certainly should not shirk from the field. See letter of November 8, 1820 from Parsons and Fisk to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 26. The Board received an application from an American Episcopal minister who requested to be commissioned as a missionary specifically to Palestine — see letter dated November 6, 1823 from Palmer Dyer to J. Evarts, ABC Archives: 10 vol. 3 No. 130 — but was promptly rejected, for the Board never became so inter-denominational in character to welcome Episcopalians in their ranks.

nians of Cairo.⁷³ He and Fisk maintained an intimate relationship with several joint exploration tours and a lively correspondence, until 1825 when Fisk died (Parsons had died in 1822). The future American missionaries never established such a close liaison with the British, accelerating the already diverging policies.

The two missionaries regretfully left Malta. Fisk, no doubt in response to Jowett's prejudices, wanted to stay at Malta to study Arabic, and hence be of service to the Muslims of Palestine; but he recognized that the Board's "instructions are explicit" and proceeded to Smyrna.⁷⁴ At Smyrna they first established contacts with the British consul, with Williamson, and with the American merchants' representatives. The two then began preparing for their ultimate duties by learning Italian, which was the universal mercantile language of the Mediterranean, and modern Greek, which was considered a necessity for travel, and planning to study later "probably the Arabic or possibly the Turkish."⁷⁵ They concurred with Williamson's earlier observation that Smyrna was the most "important and promising Missionary Field" and ultimately they decided to ignore their instructions to proceed directly to Jerusalem.⁷⁶

All the while Parsons and Fisk tried to determine the most eligible and receptive groups to which to devote their attention. Based on the interests of the British as well as satisfactory initial contacts, Fisk wrote from Smyrna encouragingly about the prospects of mission work among the Jews⁷⁷ and laid groundwork for any attempts to labor among the Muslims by finally destroying the myth of the intolerance of the Ottoman government toward missionaries.⁷⁸ But as long as neither Parsons nor Fisk ventured from Smyrna or Scio — the island they retreated to during the hot summer months of 1820 to learn Greek — they had little contact with the various groups of the Levant. But when their Greek improved to a satisfactory point, they made preparations for travel and exploration.

Frustrated in their attempts to preach the Gospel effectively in a vernacular tongue because of insufficient training, the two realized that "the distribution of Bibles and religious tracts must for a season be our grand method of doing good in Turkey."⁷⁹ Parsons left Smyrna for a

⁷³Jowett, p. 281.

⁷⁴Letter dated January 3, 1820 to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol.1 No. 66.

⁷⁵Joint letter of Parsons and Fisk dated February 8, 1820 to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1. No. 24.

⁷⁶*Ibid.* See also letter dated February 1820 from Williamson to the Board, ABC Archives: 10 vol. 4 No. 120.

⁷⁷*Twelfth Annual Report*, September 1821, p. 94

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, Appendix H, p. 201.

⁷⁹Joint letter of Parsons and Fisk dated December 4, 1820 to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 24.

visit to the Holy Land armed with hundreds of religious tracts and Bibles in several languages, supplied by the London Bible Society and the British press at Malta. He had waited over a year before fulfilling the principal object of his mission — to explore and establish a station at Jerusalem. After several weeks in Jerusalem, he sent the Board the following recommendation:

To some Armenians who made applications for tracts I said "perhaps some of my friends will pass through Armenia with Bibles and tracts for sale." "We shall rejoice," they said, "and all will rejoice when they arrive." If a missionary should return with the pilgrims to Armenia his trunk of books would pass without exciting any suspicion and he would receive the greatest assistance from those who accompanied him. I earnestly hope that after the next passover some person will be prepared to undertake the interesting design of making known to the churches the moral state of Armenia.⁸⁰

Later that year before forwarding Parsons' journal from Smyrna, Fisk commented on Parsons' suggestion:

In that journal there is a suggestion respecting Armenia, which I hope will engage the attention of the Committee. The object in view is not the establishment, at least the immediate establishment, of a mission to Armenia. It is rather a visit to that country with the purpose of supplying the churches with the Holy Scriptures. The plan might be simply this. When you send out missionaries to Smyrna, let one of them come with a view to this object. Let him remain one year to study the Armenian language.⁸¹

Upon receiving these reports from the Levant, the Board, in an editorial comment in the *Herald*, acknowledged a coincidence which was "so remarkable as to deserve notice . . . that Armenia, as a field of missionary labor, had attracted the particular attention of some intelligent friends of mission in Boston, before these communications from Messrs. Parsons and Fisk were received; and an elaborate Memoir, or treatise, on the subject was partly written."⁸² No specific reference can be found regarding the "treatise," but it is not improbable that the Board had in mind William Goodell's "History of Armenia and its Acceptability as a Missionary Field." He wrote it when he was a student at the Andover Theological Seminary preparing for a missionary career and published it in the *Boston Recorder* in 1819.⁸³ Goodell presented a dry account of Armenian history, mostly medieval, together with several references to contemporary travel books which barely mentioned Armenia. He based his thesis on Buchanan's observation in 1810 that "next to the Jews, the Armenians

⁸⁰Entry dated May 5, 1821 in Parsons' Jerusalem Journal, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 48, pp. 61-62.

⁸¹Letter dated October 4, 1821 from Fisk to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. No. 138.

⁸²*Missionary Herald* 2 (1822): p. 45.

⁸³*Boston Recorder* 10 (1819): p. 37.

will form the most generally useful body for Christain Missionaries. Their general character is that of a wealthy industrious and enterprising people."⁸⁴ The effect of this isolated publication on the mass of American Christians was minimal. While the Board continued to receive a string of references to Armenians, it felt that other groups deserved their attention first.

As early as 1821, Fisk began to reconsider the scope of his activities in the Levant: "The prospect of teaching Mohametan children is entirely out of the question and I fear the immediate prospect as to the Jews is not less forbidding. But among the different classes of nominal Christians who exist in the country, something might be done."⁸⁵ Later that year he proposed to the Board that it "ought to consider our field as embracing Syria, Armenia, Asia Minor, and the Islands of the Archipelago," in fact aiming at Greek, Syriac, and Armenian Christians.⁸⁶ Parsons died in January of 1822, still consistent with his ordination sermon that "the moral state of the Jews be leading subject of our enquiry."⁸⁷ But already the non-evangelized Christians had begun to preoccupy the mind of Fisk, who would influence and direct the next five missionaries sent to the Levant.⁸⁸

In 1822 reinforcements arrived in the persons of Daniel Temple, who brought along a printing press which was established at Malta, and Jonas King, who would accompany Fisk on his travels in the Levant. Early in 1823, William Goodell and Isaac Bird arrived at Malta where they began to learn Italian and Modern Greek. In the instructions to Goodell the Bird, the Board explicitly ordered them to make Jerusalem their station, for the American Christian public demanded the reconquest of the Holy Land as a condition in return for their financial support. The Board, too, was proud that an American society first established a "Palestine Mission" and it wished to continue to command the world's attention by retaining a mission in Jerusalem.⁸⁹

The press at Malta began printing in Italian and Greek, the two languages with which Temple had some familiarity. At a meeting of

⁸⁴Claudius Buchanan, *Christian Researchers in Asia — With Notices of the Translations of the Scriptures into the Oriental Languages* (London, 1811), p. 230.

⁸⁵Letter dated May 8, 1821 from Fisk at Smyrna to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 131.

⁸⁶Letter dated October 4, 1821 from Fisk at Smyrna to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 138.

⁸⁷Letter dated January 23, 1822 from Parsons at Alexandria to Fisk, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 57.

⁸⁸Fisk too does not entirely give up the idea of converting the Jews for some time, though his primary interest has shifted to the nominal Christians. See letter dated January 21, 1822 in Bond, p. 171.

⁸⁹For instance, see Serano Dwight, "Address to the Palestine Missionary Society," in Richard Storrs, *A Sermon delivered at North Bridgewater October 31, 1821, at the Ordination of the Rev. Daniel Temple and Rev. Isaac Bird as Evangelists and Missionaries to the Heathen* (Boston, 1822), p. 46.

the Americans in the Levant at the end of 1822, it was deemed "most desirable" to purchase Armenian type so as to begin work in that language as quickly as possible.⁹⁰ But most initial contacts the Americans developed were with Greeks. They sent several Greek boys to be educated at the Cornwall School in Connecticut, established by the Board to educate promising heathen children. This action met with almost complete approval, for as the *Herald* stated, "There are few subjects, it may safely be presumed, on which the minds of the friends of missions would be more united, than with respect to the utility of giving an education to such Greek youths . . ." Americans, in 1823, condemned the tyranny of the Turks in face of the intensifying Greek revolution. Philhellenism gathered strength, for:

devoted friends of Greece, such as Edward Everett and Mathew Carey, aided and abetted by men prominent in commercial, journalistic and political affairs, initiated in 1823 a thoroughgoing campaign of propaganda for the Greek cause. Mass meetings were held in cities, towns and villages, stirring orations delivered, letters and addresses distributed far and wide, and plans devised for raising funds to assist Greeks in their struggle with the Sultan.⁹¹

Various notions of classicism and romanticism, strengthened by America's professed spirit of liberty, fanned the fire of Philhellenism. Not surprisingly, "The Greeks were identified with the Christian religion, and in some quarters the conflict was looked upon as a religious one — the Crescent against the Cross."⁹² The members of the American Board, often the most influential men in their communities, raised their voices along with the rest of the country, while they controlled an organization — the only one in the United States besides the federal government — that had representatives on the spot who could potentially aid the Greeks. Sereno Dwight, for years a guiding light of the Board, declared that "the religious association of Greece renders her particularly interesting to the Christian . . . [for] the issue of their struggle is big with consequences, not only to the combatants themselves, but to the surrounding countries, to the Oriental churches, to the Jews, to the Mohammedan religion, to Europe, and the world."⁹³ The Board again profited from this great public emotional outcry, understanding that duties to its contributors as well as humanitarian duties to the Greeks dictated the establishment of a Greek Mission.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Fisk felt an initial sympathy toward the Greek cause. He wrote in 1823:

⁹⁰Letter dated December 25, 1822 from Fisk at Malta to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 175.

⁹¹*Missionary Herald*, 4 (1823): p. 114.

⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁹³Sereno Dwight, *The Greek Revolution: An Address Delivered in the Park St. Church, Boston April 14, 1824* (Boston, 1824), p. 19.

The present is the time for a mission to Greece. The nation is roused — the elements of national and individual character are all in motion. An impression, a turn of public opinion, the commencement of institutions which at another time would require years, might be effected at once.⁹⁴

He saw the revolution as an opportunity to make an impression on the hitherto largely unapproachable bulk of the Greek people, who had frustrated all previous attempts at communication. The revolution, however, stirring up Greek national pride and sense of history actually strengthened those ecclesiastical institutions Fisk had hoped would crumble to pave the way for Protestant missionaries. The American missionaries continued to make no progress in their work among the Greeks, though, prodded by the Board which was responding to public opinion, they kept trying for several more years. The missionaries knew what contemporary travelers and observers would soon substantiate, that there was a wide discrepancy between the romantic notions of an Odysseus-like Greek and the actual ignorant, base shadow of past glories.

In November 1823, Goodell and Bird started for Jerusalem but they got only as far as Beirut. Bird explained, "We had then no intention of staying at Beirut, except long enough to obtain animals or a boat to carry us on to Jerusalem. We were prevented from proceeding, first by the season, next by the advice of our brethren, and by a personal examination of the country . . ." ⁹⁵ Up to this point missionary activity centered around learning languages and customs, and gathering information in their travels. Previously, because of language difficulties, they preached only to European audiences and their sole direct religious involvement with the native groups had been through the distribution of printed materials.⁹⁶ Now in Beirut, they established an official, permanent station for the first time and began to develop the basis for the opinions and policies of their future work. In their first joint statement in 1824, the Beirut Mission reiterated previous communications of individual missionaries:

The subject of Armenian types had been already suggested to you, and we hope has engaged the serious attention of the Committee. We deem this so important and so promising a measure that, after considerable discussion, it has been resolved that Brother Goodell devote himself to the study of Armenian and Turko-Armenian that he may be prepared to superintend the press in these languages . . . We are anxious to see

⁹⁴Bond, p. 412.

⁹⁵Entry dated April 29, 1828 in Bird's journal at Beirut, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 20, pp. 23-24.

⁹⁶In fact, Fisk writes, "I believe we are often spoken of as Bible Society Men than as missionaries" as they were in effect agents of the British Bible Society and its Malta Press. See letter dated February 22, 1823 from Fisk to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 1 No. 104, p. 60.

something done as soon as possible for the Armenians. The readiness with which they purchase the scriptures encourages us.⁹⁷

In this rather lengthy document there was no mention of a Greek mission and only passing references to the Jews. They concluded by enumerating areas they felt would make profitable fields: "There are several fields where it is desirable that extensive journeys should be undertaken without delay, such as the Barbary States, Abyssinnia, and Persia. But our thoughts turn with deeper interest still to the promising field which Armenia presents."⁹⁸

Of course the missionaries continued to fulfill the Board's instructions while they waited for an official decision about an Armenian mission. Fisk and King made another trip to Jerusalem. In Beirut, Bird polished his Arabic, aiming to preach to the Roman Catholic Maronites. Temple remained in Malta printing religious tracts in Italian and Greek. Only Goodell prepared for work among the Armenians.

Goodell traveled to Sidon during the Summer of 1824 and commenced his study of "Turkish with Armenian characters, the language best spoken, written, understood by the great body of Armenians."⁹⁹ His instructor, Jacob Aga, though an Armenian Bishop, was the English agent at Sidon and lived with another Armenian Bishop named Dionysius Carabet.¹⁰⁰ Carabet returned in the Fall to Beirut to instruct Goodell and also to aid in the work of translation. Almost immediately, another Armenian — a pilgrim en route to Jerusalem — was attracted to missionary service.¹⁰¹ Fisk and Bird, discouraged by their meager accomplishments, complained:

As missionaries our main business ought to be preaching, but I am sorry to say we find very little encouragement in Syria in this respect . . . Judge how trying this must be to our feelings. Shall we ever witness in Malta and Syria such scenes as our brethren have witnessed in Ceylon.¹⁰²

In contrast, Goodell's work proceeded relatively well. He wrote, "I have an invitation to preach every Sabbath in Turkish to the Armenians in Beyroot."¹⁰³ It appears that the missionaries' fame spread,

⁹⁷Letter dated May 26, 1824 from Goodell, Bird, Fisk, and King at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol.3 No. 220.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*

⁹⁹Entry dated June 16, 1824 from Goodell's journal at Sidon, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 28, p. 3.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰¹Letter dated March 14, 1825 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol 2 No. 38.

¹⁰²Letter dated September 19, 1825 from Fisk at Beirut to Temple, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 92.

¹⁰³Letter dated December 31, 1825 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 53.

Goodell explained, "by means of these men who are employed in my service, several Armenians have been induced to settle at Beyroot."¹⁰⁴ He also ambitiously began several projects, including a Turkish-English grammar, a Turkish-English/English-Turkish dictionary, and, in conjunction with Carabet, a translation of all four Gospels into Turkish-Armenian.¹⁰⁵ All the while he sent the Board glowing reports of the readiness and willingness of the Armenians to accept missionaries. The greatest encouragement felt by Goodell came in 1826, raising his hopes to a new high:

Mr. King's Farewell Letter [on the eve of King's departure to the United States] which (with considerable additions by myself in special reference to the Armenians) we had translated into Turkish, found its way to Constantinople . . . and produced an amazing excitement among the 100,000 Armenians of that Capital. A council was immediately held, consisting of all the Armenian monks, priests, and Bishops and Patriarchs . . . ; also all the principle Armenians of the laity, together with two Greek Patriarchs.¹⁰⁶

Goodell exaggerated the extent of the effect of the letter as well as the size of the council, but the letter nevertheless set forces in motion which led to the establishment of a school to educate the orthodox clergy.¹⁰⁷ Goodell pleaded "that the Armenians are evidently ripe for moral revolution" and called for missionaries to take advantage of this opportunity.¹⁰⁸ He also tried to shift the Board's attention away from Palestine and proposed that stations be set up in Constantinople and Smyrna, two large and important Armenian centers.¹⁰⁹

During 1826, the Board finally dispatched Josiah Brewer and Elnathan Gridley, the much sought reinforcements, to implement some long standing plans and policies desired by the American Christian public and the Board. Brewer was instructed to proceed to Palestine and labor among the Jews. But, "it was the unanimous and decided opinion of the brethren" as well as Rev. Jowett that Brewer ignore the Board's wishes and instead work in Ottoman Turkey, where "we have in three cities, Smyrna, Constantinople and Salonica, . . .

¹⁰⁴Letter dated January 3, 1826 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 55.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶Letter dated September 29, 1826 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 67. King's farewell letter was a lengthy description of his personal beliefs, emphasizing the reasons why he can not believe in the Roman Catholic Church. He uses arguments that could be equally applied to any Oriental church. See ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 166.

¹⁰⁷See letter of September 29, 1831 from Anderson to Goodell asking him to substantiate the report of the meeting, ABC Archives: 2.01 vol. 1, p. 361.

¹⁰⁸Letter dated September 29, 1826 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 no. 67.

¹⁰⁹Letter dated October 18, 1826 from Goodell at Beirut to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 70.

more than ten times the number of Jews in Syria and Palestine."¹¹⁰ The impatient Brewer, faced with continuing disappointments in his intercourse with the Jews, looked for new, more fruitful, groups to aim his message. He considered the Armenians of Anatolia exciting in their prospects. He wrote in August 1827, "Indeed I have twice been on the point of setting out for that quarter."¹¹¹ But the Greek revolution, in 1827, entered a particular bloody and disruptive stage and Brewer united with several Englishmen "in forming an association and assuming the responsibility of properly applying such gifts, designed to benefit Greece, as they may be entrusted with from Europe and America."¹¹² Brewer in the meanwhile, upset at alleged poor policies and decisions of the Board, severed his connection with the Board, though he continued to work for several more years among the Greeks at Smyrna.

Gridley, Brewer's companion missionary, died soon after arriving in the Levant before he was able to realize his purpose of preaching to the Greeks. Also ordained in 1826 was Eli Smith who was instructed to help Temple with the increasing printing chores at Malta. That same year, the Board felt the need to editorialize about its sputtering Levant operations, which it did in an article, entitled "Reasonable Expectations in Relation to the Palestine Mission." The Board's object in Palestine, according to the article, was "to reform abuses of Christianity of vast extent and of ancient standing" with the understanding that the conversation of Muslims would be impossible until the Oriental Christians could provide the proper model and example of pure Christianity for them to follow.¹¹³ The article then tried to express confidence in their missionaries to Palestine:

Our own expectations, with respect to this mission, have in no degree been disappointed. We have uniformly supposed that the early missionaries would require not less than five years to mature their plans and prepare for action.¹¹⁴

The board implied that since more than five years had passed since Parsons and Fisk originally had set foot in the Levant, they foresaw results in the near future. But a number of events from late 1826 through 1828 severely hindered the Mission's work in Beirut.

Ecclesiastic officials of several Oriental churches issued anathemas and edicts warning the people not to welcome the "Biblemen," who

¹¹⁰Letter dated December 12, 1826 from Brewer at Malta to the Female Society of Boston and Vicinity for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 3 No. 195, letter No. 3.

¹¹¹Josiah Brewer, *A Residence at Constantinople in the Year 1827, With Notes to the Present* (New Haven, 1830), p. 193.

¹¹²*Boston Recorder*, 33 (1828) p. 131.

¹¹³*Missionary Herald*, 7 (1826): p. 213.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.* pp 213-214.

were accused of threatening ancient and venerable customs and beliefs and trying to substitute in their stead "Lutheran" and "Calvinistic" heresies.¹¹⁵ The Greek and Maronite condemnations were particularly furious and forceful. The Armenians were slower in raising objections to the work of the missionaries because dissent had been prevalent in some quarters of the church for years and the hierarchy was in no way united in policy. But soon they too joined the chorus of threats against the Beirut Mission. External political considerations also forced the missionaries to tread a wary path. Worsening relations between the Ottomans and the English placed in jeopardy the crucial protection that the British consul in Beirut gave to the Americans, who were considered Englishmen by most of the natives as well as the Ottoman government. To add another problem to the list of woes, the yearly occurrence of the plague forced the missionaries into isolation and quarantines. The many problems combined to destroy the Mission's schools and the people were unapproachable because of their fear of the missionaries.

Finally in May 1828, just after the British consul had fled for his life on the eve of a war between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire over the Greek situation, the missionaries retired to Malta to await the end of the hostilities and to analyze the past actions of future prospects. Just before leaving Beirut, Bird presented a sober and rather empty appraisal of their labors:

At this pause in the work, everyone interested at all in the mission . . . will ask, what good had been done? . . . It has increased our familiarity with one of the most interesting portions of the globe. It has contributed to prove the practicability of Protestant missions in Turkey. It has brought to light some important traits of Mohammedism and of Popery in their modern state . . . it has evidently saved immortal souls.¹¹⁶

The Board, in the time, prepared to send Rufus Anderson, its assistant corresponding secretary, to Malta with a number of tasks. As a result of the Turkish brutalities in the Greek Revolution "the community generally are expecting and almost requiring that the Board commence operations on a considerable scale for the benefit of Greece,"¹¹⁷ and the Prudential Committee instructed that Anderson "after a short stay at Malta . . . proceed to Greece . . . [and] should visit the Ionian Islands, the Morea, Attica, and the Achipeligo."¹¹⁸ Mindful of the great gaps in their knowledge of the entire Eastern

¹¹⁵Entry dated January 14, 1827 in Bird's journal at Beirut, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 14.

¹¹⁶Entry dated April 29, 1828 in Birds's journal at Beirut, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 20.

¹¹⁷Letter dated October 24, 1828 from Anderson to Goodell and Smith at Malta, ABC Archives: 2.01 vol. 1, p. 111.

¹¹⁸Instruction to Rufus Anderson, November 24, 1828, ABC Archives: 8.1 vol. 1, p. 8.

Mediterranean situation due to slow communications and the poor medium of letter writing, the Board also saw that the exile of all the Board's missionaries at one location provided a rare opportunity for a full exchange of ideas. Another important consideration, which required immediate attention, was the very serious rift between the Board and its Levant missionaries. The rift had developed over the alleged mistreatment of Gridley and threatened to destroy the already low morale of the Palestine Mission.¹¹⁹ Anderson arrived in Malta on January 1, 1829 and spent two full months on that island discussing policy and problems with the missionaries before finally beginning his primary objective — the trip to Greece.

A joint letter from the missionaries in exile on Malta was sent to the Board during July 1828. The missionaries offered their opinions on the best plan of action once the political situation brightened, organized all the individual thoughts into an all inclusive statement, and gave Anderson a chance to prepare for the conference. At Malta, Anderson would agree with most of their ideas. It was understood that Bierut would be reoccupied by Bird and at least one other family sent immediately from America.¹²⁰ It was decided that "with regard to the mission to the Armenian people, so long talked of and so desirable, it will probably be best to have its seat at Constantinople . . ." and two men were designated to finally explore the Armenian sections of Anatolia.¹²¹ The relative importance of the new Armenian Mission in the Levant was indicated when Anderson remarked, "for two years to come, there will probably be a more urgent demand for publications in the modern Greek, than any other language — with the possible exception of the Armeno-Turkish."¹²²

Many uncertainties and doubts surrounded Anderson's trip to Greece. The Board for years had received contradictory opinions about the Greek people and just after Anderson departed from Boston the *Missionary Herald* warned those Americans, who eagerly expected quick evangelical action in Greece, that "there are strong reasons why we should proceed with much circumspection, and with as accurate knowledge as can be obtained" before inaugurating a mission.¹²³ The Greeks in Malta did not impress Anderson favorably. He reported,

¹¹⁹The rift was deep enough that no amount of explanation by Anderson could entirely satisfy the missionaries and he remarked on February 9, 1829 "that a habit of thinking and feeling has been created which time only can entirely destroy." See ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 13.

¹²⁰Letter dated July 24, 1828 from Bird, Temple, Goodell, and Smith at Malta to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 3 No. 227. Letter No. 2.

¹²¹Letter dated February 9, 1829 from Anderson at Malta to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 18.

¹²²Letter dated February 16, 1829 from Anderson at Malta to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 26.

¹²³*Missionary Herald*, 12 (1828), p. 376.

"There was not only no evidence of gratitude for what the Board has done for their children, but abundant evidence of the entire want of it."¹²⁴ After an extensive tour of Greece and a short visit to Smyrna, Anderson summarized his observations by saying, "I should think the Armenians a more promising people than the Greeks. Their desire for schools and their disposition in regard to the Gospel, seem to be similar, but they have been far less oppressed, and the general testimony is that they possess far less cunning and more honor."¹²⁵

Unlike the other Oriental Christian churches, reform was evident within the Armenian Church to a limited extent. Roman Catholic missionaries made some strides among the Armenian people during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, prodding the Apostolics to consider innovations.¹²⁶ In 1826, a new school for the education of the clergy was established in Constantinople by wealthy Armenians in response to King's "Farewell Letter" and Dwight wrote, "It is impossible to calculate the amount of influence exerted by Peshtimaljian, in preparing the minds of men to receive the true knowledge of the Gospel."¹²⁷ Many Armenians by 1820 eagerly sought the new approaches and ideas of the American missionaries to fulfill a spiritual emptiness.

Americans could not avoid Armenians in their travels, for Armenians often were the dragoman-interpreters and translators, of the European consuls.¹²⁸ What impressed the missionaries most was that the great majority of religious publications sold in the Levant between 1820 and 1828 were bought by "Armenian pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem."¹²⁹

At the end of the 1820's, the prospects in the Levant were not encouraging. Based on past experience, Beirut offered few hints of any future success, while many missionaries harbored strong reservations about work among the Greeks. An Armenian Mission was perhaps more promising, though this hope did not rest on first hand experience in the large Armenian population centers. However reluctantly, the Board was committed to initiate work at all three locations, especially Greece and Palestine, and plans were developed to deploy missions the moment the political climate brightened. ■

¹²⁴Letter dated January 12, 1829 from Anderson at Malta to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 6.

¹²⁵Letter dated August 10, 1829 from Anderson at Smyrna to the Board, ABC Archives: 16.5 vol. 1 No. 42.

¹²⁶Leon Arpee, *The Armenian Awakening, A History of the Armenian Church, 1820-1860* (Chicago, 1909), pp. 36-63.

¹²⁷Harrison Grey Otis Dwight, *Christianity Revived in the East* (New York, 1850), p. 15.

¹²⁸Letter dated May 30 1821 from Fisk at Smyrna to the Board, ABC Archives, 16.6 vol. No. 126.

¹²⁹Goodell, "History of Armenia," ABC Archives: 16.6 vol. 2 No. 103.

Coping With Massive Stressful Life Event: The Impact of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 on the Present Day Health and Morale of a Group of Women Survivors

Zarouhi Sarkisian

INTRODUCTION

History and present day events attest to the continued presence of war, famine and pestilence.¹ somewhat surprisingly, the literature on coping and stressful life events has neglected to address events of this scope or magnitude.² Instead, the focus has been on more commonly occurring stressors of lesser magnitude, e.g. marriage, birth of a child, divorce, and the death of a loved one. Only recently have some stressful life event scholars begun to research the impact of more massive and aversive historical events on an individual's physical health.³ Certainly, scholars in the psychiatric literature have argued for a long time that stressful life events of almost any scale, which oc-

¹H. Krystal and W.C. Niederland, eds., *Psychic Traumatization: After-Effects in Individuals and Communities* (Boston, 1971), p. 30.

²G.V. Coelho, D.A. Hamburg, and J.E. Adams, eds., *Coping and Adaptation* (New York, 1974), p. 428.

³J.C. Coyne and R.S. Lazarus, "Cognitive Style, Stress Perception and Coping" in I.L. Kutash, L.B. Schlesinger, and Associates, *Handbook on Stress and Anxiety* (San Francisco, 1984), p. 144

cur in one's early life, may have considerable impact on how one feels about one's self, how one makes choices, as well as how one responds to additional stresses later in life.⁴

This study attempts to examine the long term health consequences of an extremely stressful life event — the Armenian Genocide of 1915 — on the morale and health of women survivors. Two intervening variables are examined to gain some insight into how the Genocide may have influenced personal dispositions at two different points in time. The first variable deals with individual perceptions of how well one coped with the genocide during the immediate post event phase. The second variable deals with one's present social situation since social support is incorporated as a subcomponent. Lastly, this study extends earlier efforts by broadening the focus of impact to health in general, rather than to illness per se.

NATURE AND IMPACT OF STRESSFUL LIFE EVENTS

Stressful life events represent stimuli of situations which an individual is exposed to, in varying degrees, during the course of one's life. According to Luchterhand, massive stress can be defined as "the state of an individual when physical and psychological stress are powerfully linked by the force of event."⁵ This definition not only considers the nature of the event, but also how the individual perceives it and attempts to utilize his or her resources to deal with it. Such resources include physical and psychological coping mechanisms. It is a generally well accepted notion that such events can markedly influence one's perception of health and morale. Most research on stressful life events to date has focused on crises that are proximate to rather than remote from the onset of a disorder.⁶ Because of this, there remains little empirical evidence on whether stressful events early in life do, in fact, predispose the individual to a more or less vulnerable state to stressful life events later in life.⁷ This study is one attempt to document such a correlation.

How to measure the stressfulness of a life event remains a point of disagreement among researchers. The question is whether the actual stressfulness of life events can be measured objectively or whether it must be assessed in subjective terms. Nevertheless, as Dohrenwend

⁴B.S. Dohrenwend and B.P. Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events: Their Nature and Effects* (New York, 1974), p. 316.

⁵Luchterhand in Krystal and Niederland, eds., *Psychic Traumatization: After Effects in Individuals and Communities* (Boston, 1971), p. 930.

⁶B.S. Dohrenwend and B.P. Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events and Their Contents* (New York, 1981), p. 17.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 12.

and Dohrenwend argue, all investigations must start from the premise that the stressfulness of life events depend on how they are perceived.⁸

With the premise that one's perception of a life event is an important consideration, one needs to address the issue of an individual's relationship to his environment. Coping, therefore, is the outcome of how an individual defines his or her relationship with the stress in his or her environment. The coping process is seen as a mediation factor between a stressful event and its eventual impact on the individual.

Many coping theories are evolving in the current literature. Considerable evidence indicates there is a wide range of variability in individual reactions to stressful life events and that the period of recovery, if in fact it does occur, may be shorter or longer than the individual's or others' expectations. Because of the limitations in current theoretical frameworks, it is difficult to account for this variability in predicting effect adjustment. At the same time, however, some of this work suggests ways in which life events may influence one's morale and health. In general, the magnitude of the relationship between stressful life events and illness has been found to be small.⁹

Consequently, it becomes important to examine one's relationship to his or her social environment. A predominant hypothesis in the current literature on coping is that social support diminishes the effect of stressful life events.¹⁰ There is also some evidence that perceived social support influences one's health status and physical well being as well as one's psychological adjustment. Almost with no exception, studies have shown a direct relationship between perceived social support and effective adjustment.¹¹ From these and other studies, many investigators have concluded that social support facilitates the coping process. It is this body of literature that led this investigator to hypothesize that the perception of how well one coped with massive stressful life event, such as the Armenian Genocide, may influence one's level of morale and one's perception of one's own health throughout life as one experiences additional stressful life events, such as those associated with old age. Furthermore, it was anticipated that there would be positive correlation between how well one felt one coped with such event, and how good one felt about one's present existence (morale) and how good one perceived one's current health status to be.

⁸B.S. Dohrenwend and B.P. Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events: Their Nature and Effects* (New York, 1974), p. 323.

⁹B.S. Dohrenwend and B.P. Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events and Their Contexts*, p. 13.

¹⁰Caplan and Killilia in Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events and Their Contexts*, p. 17.

¹¹Veroff, Douvan, and Kulka in J. Garber and M.E.P. Seligman, eds., *Human Helplessness — Theory and Applications* (New York, 1980), p. 310.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional correlational research design drawn on semi-structured individual interviews with twenty participants was selected for this study. The twenty women survivors who volunteered for this study ranged in age from 72 to 93, and were living in non-institutional settings in the Watertown, Massachusetts and Providence, Rhode Island areas. Control through randomization was not feasible. Priests of two Armenian Apostolic Churches in these areas gave support and entrée to potential interviewees. Entrée was further facilitated by this investigator's Armenian heritage and fluency in the Armenian language. Each interview, which on the average lasted two or three hours, was conducted in Armenian and tape recorded in the interviewee's home. The interview format consisted of four sections: demographics, a health perception scale, Lawton's Philadelphia Geriatric Center Moral Scale — a Revision,¹² and a coping scale.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Sample population. Of the non-institutionalized Armenian women in this study, 15 participants (75 percent) were in their 70's; four (20 percent) in their 80's; and one (5 percent) was in her 90's. Fifteen participants (75 percent) were able to state their actual age and their age during the Genocide. Validation of this information was confirmed by cross-correlation of their remembered age during the Genocide with the historical date of the Genocide. Three participants (15 percent) gave approximate ages, since they were not certain of their exact ages. Name dates, rather than birth dates, were observed in the old country. This was due to the important role of the Armenian Church in establishing the laws and traditions governing the people. The Church was the depository where records were maintained on births, baptisms, weddings, and deaths. The Armenian people lived by the calender of the Church; therefore, it was appropriate to name children according to the day designated in the Church calendar at the time a child was born. Consequently, name dates were celebrated rather than birth dates.

The importance of the Church and religion was reflected in their daily lives. All the participants were baptized in the Armenian Church and practiced their Christian faith before the Genocide. During the

¹²Lawton's Philadelphia Geriatric Center Morale Scale — a Revision was designed to be administered to the elderly. An aggregate of 17 items consisting of three subsets were used to measure morale: Agitation, which measured the extent to which the participant felt content with her present existence; Attitude Toward Own Aging; and Lonely Dissatisfaction, which ascertained a sense of integration with society. Perceived social support was a dimension of morale in this subset.

Genocide, their commitment to Christianity was so strong that they chose to maintain it at the risk of dying rather than to convert to Islam and possibly be spared by the Turks. It was common practice for mothers, while in exile in the Syrian desert, to instill their Christian belief in their children before their deaths by teaching them the Armenian alphabet in the desert sand, making the sign of the cross, and reciting the Lord's Prayer.

The commitment to one's faith and belief was reflected in their commitment to marriage, where family was a sacred and indestructible institution and divorce was unknown. All participants had been married and none had been divorced. Four were married during the Genocide. Eighteen were widowed and two were presently married — one of whom remarried after becoming a widow. Of the four who were married during the Genocide, one was childless at the time, the second lost her one and only child in her marriage during the Genocide, the third participant's child survived, and the fourth lost one of her only two children during the Genocide.

Fourteen of the 20 participants (70 percent) were either living with family or within the same dwelling occupied by family. Eight participants (40 percent) lived with their immediate family, while five (25 percent) lived in the same dwelling with occupied by a family member or relative, and one with another family member living in the same dwelling. Five participants (25 percent) lived alone, but within close proximity (less than a half hour distance) to their children. Only one participant lived alone with no family in close proximity, though family support could be summoned if necessary.

Perception of health. Perception of health was categorized and coded as very good (4), good (3), fair (2), and poor (1). Assessment of perception of health by the participants revealed a range from 4 to 1; it was continuous, with a mean of 2.65, a median of 3, and a mode of 3. The participants who assessed themselves as poor consisted of one participant, who was just discharged from the hospital, and the two oldest participants, who were experiencing difficulty with vision and poor mobility. An objective evaluation was made to validate each participant's perception of health. There was mutual agreement with all but one participant, who assessed herself as "good." My objective judgment was "poor" based on her difficulty to carry out activities of daily living; however, her assessment was used in the analysis.

Level of morale. An attempt was made to determine the present level of morale of the 20 participants who survived the Armenian Genocide. Ordinal level data was used to determine the measure of morale. Findings revealed the range was from 3-14 and was not continuous. Seven participants (35 percent) of the sample population showed some relatively low scores (0-2). The mean was 8.85; the me-

dian, 9; and the mode, 5. Frequency distribution showed the bulk (65 percent) of the scores tended to cluster between 8 and 14.

Three subsets (Agitation, Attitude Toward Own Aging, and Lonely Dissatisfaction) made up the components of the morale scale. Mean scores on the subsets were corrected by dividing the total by the number of items in the subset. Scoring results on Agitation revealed a range from 0-5, and a mean of 2.85 (corrected score of .57). Results indicated relatively low scoring (0-2) on Agitation by nine participants (45 percent). Scores on Attitude Toward Aging were not significantly different: the range was from 0-3 and a mean of 1.55 (corrected score of .53). Three participants (15 percent) maintained a perfect score (100 percent) on both subsets, while eight participants (40 percent) showed higher morale scores on Attitude Toward Own Aging and nine participants (45 percent) scored lower. There was no correlation between Agitation and Attitude Toward Own Aging: correlation coefficient of 0.185 and level of significance of 0.4345. The score on Lonely Dissatisfaction was higher than both Agitation and Attitude Toward Own Aging, but the difference was not significant at the 5 percent level using the Wilcoxon signed rank test. The Lonely Dissatisfaction subset showed a marked difference with a range from 0-6, and a mean of 4.45 (correct score of .74). The score on Lonely Dissatisfaction was higher than both Agitation and Attitude Toward Own Aging. Three participants (15 percent) continued to maintain the highest morale scores obtained in the previous two subsets.

Contrary to the results reflected in the previous two subsets of Agitation and Attitude Toward Own Aging, there was a marked trend indicating high morale scores on Lonely Dissatisfaction. Three participants (15 percent) who had scored high (100 percent) on Agitation and Attitude Toward Own Aging continued to maintain their high score (100 percent) on Lonely Dissatisfaction. Two participants (10 percent) scored lower than their score results on Attitude Toward Own Aging, one (5 percent) remained the same and two (10 percent) maintained 100 percent on Attitude Toward Own Aging and Lonely Dissatisfaction. An impressive 12 participants (60 percent) improved their moral score on Lonely Dissatisfaction. Five other participants (25 percent) ranked a perfect score (100 percent) on Lonely Dissatisfaction (two of whom had previously scored 100 percent on Attitude Toward Own Aging, though not on Agitation). Nine participants (45 percent) scored 6 — the highest attainable score in this subset. There was a strong correlation between Attitude Toward Own Aging and Lonely Dissatisfaction, with a correlation coefficient of 0.56319 and a level of significance of 0.0097. The correlation between Lonely Dissatisfaction and Agitation was not significant at .05, but had a correlation coefficient of 0.398 and a level of significance of 0.08.

The responses to some items in subsets Agitation and Attitude

Toward Own Aging reflected a general assumption rather than a subjective response to the item. Response to item 4 in the Agitation subset, "Little things bother me more this year," most frequently reflected what the participant assumed was true aging rather than to what was true to her perception of herself. This same manner of response was also equated in item 1, "Things keep getting worse as I get older," and item 6, "As you get older you are less useful," in the subset, Attitude Toward Own Aging. Thus, although they demonstrated in their qualitative responses that things did not get worse as they became older or that they did not feel useless in their old age, their responses reflected a general attitude that aging equated with diminishing value and negative outcomes.

There appeared to be a cultural bias in the items of the test instrument in that they were inappropriate for this ethnic population. Item 11 under the Agitation subset was unintentionally eliminated and items 9 and 11 measuring Attitude Toward Own Aging had to be deleted because they appeared to be false assumptions for the sample population. Item 13 in the Lonely Dissatisfaction subset did not provide a time frame for an appropriate response. Thirteen participants (65 percent) chose to respond to this item in the time frame of life subsequent to the Genocide. A qualitative assessment was made on the remaining seven participants (35 percent).

There were four predominant themes in the qualitative responses reflected on the subsets of the test instrument: Agitation — their faith and belief in God, and optimism; Attitude Toward Own Aging — their ability to function physically; and Lonely Dissatisfaction — their sense of integration with family and church. The following subjective responses are examples describing these predominant themes: "With God's permission, you live" and "What will happen, will happen. I leave it up to God."

Optimism was expressed by comments such as "I always have hope I'm going to live better" and "Hope for the better, and it will be better." While the importance of the ability to function physically was described by "Life is sweet so long as you can function physically" and "I can still use my hands and feet. I can cook, launder, and sweep the snow. I like it. It's in my spirit. I don't feel old for my age."

Loss of spouse, but sense of integration with family and church was described by the comments, "I feel sad when I think of my husband and I was happier when my husband was alive." The role of church and family support was expressed by "Loneliness is difficult. When I go to church, and to meetings, I forget my pains. I enjoy people and I feel better," "I have my children and my grandchildren, Thank God;" and "As I get older, life becomes sweeter and my children tremble over me."

Perception of coping. The coping instrument consisted of six ques-

tions. The information on questions 1 through 4 were collected for future research. An attempt was made with questions 5 and 6 to get a scale (very good, good, fair, poor) on perception of coping from each participant. Question 5 was an open-ended question: "How well do you think you coped with the Genocide?" It was virtually impossible to obtain a scale on coping from the participants. Quantitative responses were forced except for three participants whose responses were "good," "well," and "badly." The forced responses did not reflect their perception of coping.

Question 6 was a summary statement with a quantitative value on coping: "You coped extremely well with an enormously tragic event. Do you share that perception?" All but three participants agreed that they had coped extremely well. One of the three who did not answer "yes" had just been discharged from the hospital. I felt it was inappropriate to ask the question after she expressed a desire to terminate the interview at that time. One participant stated that she had a vague recollection of the Genocide because she was too young, and another had difficulty responding because the event still carried enormous emotions of sadness and grief.

The legitimacy of this question was in the opportunity it provided each participant to reflect on her experience to cope with a massive and extremely stressful life event in which survival was the important issue. Qualitative responses provided further support for their agreement to both questions on coping.

The concept of coping implies appraisal and choice as a response directed toward exceptionally difficult situations, circumstances or environments which jeopardize an individual's health and welfare through harm, threat, or challenge. However, the Armenian Genocide of 1915 was such a massive, aversive, and extreme life event of serious magnitude, that the issue was not one of survival. It is a safe and legitimate assumption that it was in fact the fittest who survived the deportation and exile. Therefore, those who coped successfully under such aversive and traumatic circumstances, survived.

It is understandable why it is difficult to place a quantitative value on coping, when one is confronted with survival of a massive and aversive stressful life event of serious magnitude. Qualitative responses best described their ability to cope with such an event.

There was some variability in the way coping was perceived by the participants: God, religion, and their youth. The impact of the event was perceived by all; however, the manner in which they discussed it varied according to their age during the event and their memory of the event. The atrocities and horrors were still vivid and could be described in detail; however, coping responses varied with age. The young talked about it differently from the older. Open-ended content analysis provided themes related to their youth, their commitment to the

Christian faith and God, and to other strengths and virtues as mechanisms to their coping and ultimate survival. In the context of the interview, it is somewhat surprising that religion was mentioned and nation was not mentioned. This may be due to the fact that nation and religion were seen as one, as suggested by Libaridian.¹³ The following quotes reflect the tenor of their responses: "We were children. Were we capable of making that judgment [coping] . . . at that time?" "I was young and I didn't intellectualize how I coped;" "With God's strength, I endured and coped with patience. I would not convert [to Islam]. We must not lose our belief;" "How did you cope? How do I know? God's strength is great. How can man emerge from the fire without a nosebleed? I'm alive, aren't I?;" "With patience, we coped. What's good about coping?;" "We survived, did we not? That means we coped;" and "Faith, hope, and love in life — if you have this, you can cope with life. You must believe."

There were various factors which indicated there were problems with the instrument. One was terminology. There is no single word in Armenian which described "coping." Several words and phrases were used to describe the concept. Another was cultural. The issue was not coping but survival. There was no notion of coping when the question was asked. The concept of coping and the attempt to quantify it seemed absurd and trite, after each participant related in detail her history of the event. And finally, coping was ongoing. Coping was never resolved for a single participant, although the process of the interview moved them toward a perception and some resolution of the event.

Traditionally, discussion of the Genocide had always been among the survivors and not commonly shared with the younger generation. Because of the interview, the participants were subjected to process the entire event subsequent life events to someone who had not shared their experience. Although perception of the event was an important consideration, it did not seem to be the perception of the event itself but the event in relation to subsequent events that seemed important to the concept of coping.

Resolution was also evident when the participants were asked how they felt after the interview. The most common responses elicited were: "I feel much better;" "We have both benefited;" "I feel relieved;" and "I'm so happy to share this with you, especially since you're from the younger generation."

This study was undertaken to find support for an interrelationship between perception of coping and perception of health and morale. This investigator, though, was unable to test for this relationship because of the failure to collect adequate quantifiable data. Subsequently, this investigator tested for correlation between present

¹³Gerard J Libaridian, interview in Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 1984.

morale and present perception of health, and found a significant relationship. Analysis of health perception with total morale showed a very strong positive correlation, with a correlation coefficient of 0.63 and a level of significance of 0.0025.

Morale expressed by these women survivors was likely a direct reflection of their experience with the Armenian Genocide. It may be that with a massive stressful life event, one cannot test for perception of coping or degrees of successful coping. Coping is a dichotomous variable in this context. People either cope or do not cope. They either live or die.

SUMMARY

Stressful life events are stimuli or situations which every individual is exposed to a varying extent during the course of his or her life. For some time, psychiatric literature has suggested that stressful life events of almost any scale, which occur early in life, can influence one's perception of health and morale both during and after the initial crisis. It is only recently that scholars in these areas have begun to focus on the effect of massive and aversive stressful life events on an individual. One must consider not only the nature of the event, but also how the individual perceives it and attempts to utilize his or her coping resources.

Clinical data from most research in stressful life events is limited and collected from different types of disasters. Consequently, such limitations restrict the use of findings for comparison. There is also disagreement on whether the actual stressfulness of life events can be measured objectively or assessed subjectively. With the premise that the stressfulness of life events is dependent on perception, the notion of coping becomes one of adaptive behavior or response directed toward exceptionally difficult situations, circumstances, or environments which jeopardize an individual's health and welfare through harm, threat, or challenge. Evidence indicates a wide range of variability among individuals reacting to stressful life events. Therefore, predictability or adjustment is difficult.

Currently, there is interest in the relationship of control and health.¹⁴ Extensive empirical data confirms that persons with an internal sense of control demonstrate more competence, coping ability, and less vulnerability to the debilitating effects of stressful life events.¹⁵ Those who have experienced a greater amount of illness have perceiv-

¹⁴Shulz in Garher and Seligman, eds., *Human Help Lessness — Theory and Applications* (New York, 1980), p. 261.

¹⁵H. Lefcourt in Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend, eds., *Stressful Life Events and Their Contexts*, p. 15.

ed their environment as more threatening, challenging, and frustrating than healthier persons.¹⁶

In general, the magnitude of the relationship between stressful life events and illness has been found to be small.¹⁷ Consequently, it is important to examine women's relationship to their social environment in order to determine if it has any influence on their health. Current literature concludes that social support facilitates the coping process and influences one's physical and psychological well-being. Almost with no exception, studies show a direct relationship between perceived social support and effective adjustment.¹⁸

Although evidence is extremely limited, few studies show that those individuals who are able to find meaning in an aversive and stressful life event respond differently to an outcome than those who are unable to do so.¹⁹ Most current research focuses on whether people accept or recover following a stressful life event. An attempt is being made to determine how much time should elapse before complete recovery. Indications are that people continuously experience the crisis for the rest of their lives, but the emotional distress of a stressful life event is reduced with the passing of time and successful coping is attained as their lives are reorganized.

Lazarus' model on psychological stress demonstrated that coping is a cognitive and transactional process in which transactions are made between an individual and his or her environment.²⁰ It is a dynamic process in which these two functions frequently occur simultaneously. There is a transactional perspective to the model in which there is an assumption that previous knowledge of an individual or environment alone is inadequate and must be viewed from a relational perspective. There are several problems with this model including: cognitive appraisal processes are selective, recall processes are important determinants, there is ambiguity to stressful transactions, and linkages between coping and cognitive perceptual process are less than perfect.

CONCLUSION

Coping is a dynamic process in which there is a person-environment interaction. It implies adaptation or alteration. Successful adaptation or alteration is dependent on perception of social support. Morale is an

¹⁶Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend, *Stressful Life Events and Their Effects*, p. 29.

¹⁷Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend, *Stressful Life Events and Their Contexts*, p. 13.

¹⁸R.L. Silver and C.B. Wortman, "Coping with Undesirable Life Events" in J. Gerber and E. P. Seligman, *Human Helpness: Theory and Applications* (New York, 1980), p. 310.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 318.

²⁰R.S. Lazarus, *Psychological Stress and the Coping Process* (New York, 1966), p. 54.

important component of social support determining to what extent an individual feels content with his or her present existence, has a positive attitude toward his or her own aging, and has a sense of integration with society. It appears from this study that family and social relationships are strong contributors to morale.

The elderly Armenian women in this study have suffered deep pain, sorrow, and personal losses from the Genocide, but they have survived and managed to cope with life. In retrospect, coping had an impact on them in the sense that they survived; however, their morale was a reflection of the Genocide. Their strong commitment to their religion and to family helped them adapt to the adversities of the event, and continues to help them cope with life today in their old age. The study showed a strong, positive correlation between perception of health and perception of morale as well as a strong correlation between the subsets of morale, namely Attitude Toward Own Aging and Lonely Dissatisfaction.

The instruments that have been developed to study coping were not valid for this particular population. These instruments were meant to be universal and were found to be culturally biased. It is suggested that an instrument to measure coping for this particular population would have to be specifically designed and tested for future study.

The findings of this single study are relevant to nursing in areas of theory, practice, and research:

1. A need to examine our own attitudes toward aging.
2. The importance of past events in health assessment and provision of psycho-social support of the elderly.
3. Continued theoretical examination of the social, psychological, and biological factors influencing healthy aging.
4. The recognition and importance of family and social support to assist the elderly to function as independently as possible and to remain in the community.
5. To research and attempt to change the legal, political, and social issues that presently foster and undermine the elderly into situations of dependency. ■

The Güney File

I. An Interview with Yilmaz Güney
(October 1983, Paris)

Siyamend Othman

Siyamend Othman: According to some observers, the emergence of a Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey is the most serious challenge the Turkish state has had to face, since the very existence of this movement is a refutation of the concept of a Turkish "nation-state" on which the Turkish republic has been founded. Do you agree with this view and what future perspectives do you see for the Kurdish movement in Turkey?

Yilmaz Güney: Let me start by saying that this state you talk about is not that of "Turkey" but that of the Turks. It is true that the U.S.-client class which dominates this state oppresses not only the Kurds but all the workers and peasants and a large portion of the middle classes all over "Turkey." However, apart from this sociopolitical oppression which is general, the Kurds are subjected to an added oppression, that of being denied their rights as a distinct ethnic group. I agree that one of the principal challenges to the actual military regime comes from the Kurds but I think it would be wrong to assume that it is the only challenge. That is why I think that a positive perspective for the Kurdish movement lies in a joint struggle with the other forces of the opposition. The Kurds need the active support of these forces and vice versa. However, if we want this cooperation to bear fruit, the non-Kurdish opposition must accept that the Turkish state is occupying and colonizing a part of Kurdistan which has been divided among several states in the region. You see, I refer to present "Turkey" as "Turkey-Kurdistan" because I believe that they are two different countries with two different peoples.

S.O.: But who are the forces with which the Kurdish movement in Turkey could ally itself?

Güney: I must admit there are not a great many forces in "Turkey"

who would accept the independence of Kurdistan. In the region of the Middle East, all the existing states are horrified at the very mention of such an idea. The Soviet Union too is against such a project. In this context, it might be apt to refer to the attitude of the Tudeh party in Iran which, in spite of its persecution by the mullahs, has maintained a very negative position vis-a-vis the Kurdish movement in that country.

S.O.: The situation being thus, don't you think that the project of an independent and reunified Kurdistan is a completely utopic one?

Güney: It would be if the Kurds were depending on the good will of the states of the region. That is why the Kurds must rely on their own forces to obtain their rights. If I may, I would like to cite the Palestinian case as an example. Twenty or, even, fifteen years ago, which of the European governments would have accepted the idea of a Palestinian state? Today, largely due to the struggle of the Palestinian people, the situation is different.

S.O.: But the Palestinians, unlike the Kurds, have enjoyed the support of at least some states right from the beginning of their struggle.

Güney: If you mean the Arab states, I am sure the Palestinians would reply, "With friends like these who needs enemies!" In any case, do not forget that the Kurds, unlike the Palestinians who have been forced to leave their country, are living on their own territories and are thus in a more favorable strategic position.

S.O.: But as far as the Kurds are concerned, there is a further disadvantage. As you know, not all the Kurds are demanding an independent Kurdish state. Those of Iraq and Iran are only calling for an autonomy *within* the existing two states.

Güney: Let me say that, in my view, the Kurds' demands, whether in Turkey, Iran, or Iraq, can only be achieved through a process. We will wait and see what can be gained from "autonomy" in Iran and Iraq. In other words, I am not proposing any "final" or irrevocable solutions. It is for the Kurdish people to decide, in the process of its struggle, the advantages and disadvantages of this or that solution. As far as "Turkey" is concerned, I think it will be best, at the present stage, to fight for a united republic of Kurds and Turks. But I see this as an intermediary stage. When the moment comes and this joint struggle succeeds, then the Kurds will have the choice to decide their own destiny, whether to continue living with the Turks or form their own independent state.

S.O.: Do you adhere to any one of the existing Kurdish organizations in Turkey?

Güney: If you mean organizationally, the answer is no. But, on a general level, I naturally support all the political movements fighting for the liberation of the Kurdish people. This, however,

does not mean that I have no criticisms regarding the conduct of this or that organization. But these are questions which concern, mainly, the Kurdish militants and there is no need to go into them here.

S.O.: I think you would agree that one of the major weaknesses of the Kurdish movement in Turkey is its disunity and the factional rivalries between its various components. Have you attempted bringing these organizations together in the framework of a united front?

Güney: Yes, but this is not as easy as it might appear. Historically, the existing political formations in the part of Kurdistan attached to Turkey have had a very short past, that is, they are very young and lack experience and political maturity. For example, certain organizations have feared that a united front will lead to the decline of their influence and have, consequently, stayed aloof from such projects.

S.O.: Is this why you are contemplating, according to some sources, the possibility of founding a new political organization?

Güney: Partly, yes. But let me explain how the idea of this party, which is still in the process of development, first germinated. After the coup d'état of 1980, I was thinking of the possibility of uniting all the forces of the radical opposition within the framework of an anti-fascist front. However, for a variety of reasons which will take too long to explain, this proved to be unfeasible. Consequently, I began to think that a new organization, while preserving its own independence, might act as a catalyst for uniting the forces of the radical opposition. Discussions are still underway but a written program will soon be made public.

S.O.: Will the actions of this party be confined to Kurdistan?

Güney: No. We hope to be able to regroup the revolutionaries of Turkey and Kurdistan.

S.O.: In recent years, Turkish diplomatic missions and personalities abroad have been subjects of armed attacks by Armenian organizations. Do you think that these actions can weaken the Turkish regime and contribute to the realization of Armenian demands?

Güney: Perhaps in the beginning these actions could have been justified in that they brought to the attention of world public opinion the genocide of the Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. But to systemize this method of action will not lead to weakening the Turkish regime but, on the contrary, will bring its different components together. Furthermore, I frankly do not think that this line of action can result in the realization of Armenian demands. In my opinion, the only way open for

those Armenians who wish to return to their homeland is to join the struggle of the Kurds and the Turks *in the interior* to topple the present dictatorship. We are always ready to discuss these with Armenians.

S.O.: As you know, general elections are envisaged in Turkey for next November and, already, several political formations have been legalized. Do you believe in the feasibility of a legal opposition in Turkey today?

Güney: If you look at the organizations which have been legalized, you will see that they are an extension of the same old currents which the generals pretended to have eliminated. The Nationalist Democracy Party, for example, is a grouping of the elements which had belonged to the Nationalist Action Party of Turkey and the right-wing of the defunct Justice Party. The Party of New Turkey is a continuation of the Justice Party. Erdal İnönü's organization is an extension of the previous center-left current. But if you look inside the organizations which have been legalized, you will see that the regime has placed its own men in important positions in many of them. I may cite the example of the Generals Esener and Sunalp who are known to be close to General Evren. This is a mockery of democracy. These so-called elections are meant to put a democratic veil on a military dictatorship.

S.O.: So you do not think that these elections might lead to a relatively liberal climate in the country?

Güney: Frankly, I do not think that any fundamental changes should be expected from these elections. The regime will never allow the Kurdish people to form its political organizations nor will it allow the Turkish and Kurdish working classes to claim their economic rights or to form their free trade unions. That is why I think it is our duty to explain to those who might entertain illusions about a so-called "return to democracy" in Turkey the fallacy of such ideas.

S.O.: How do you combine your political role with your artistic activities as a film-maker?

Güney: Political movements are composed of people who come from different walks of life. Within these movements, one can find workers, teachers, peasants, artists, etc. Personally, I have always considered art to be an important instrument in the struggle of my people for its liberation. However, one should not mix the two, that is, art may help political action but it can not become a substitute for it.

S.O.: Have you envisaged making a film on the Kurdish question in Turkey?

Güney: When I return one day to Kurdistan, I will seriously con-

template making such a film. But for the time being, I think it would be artificial to try to recreate Kurdistan through the mountains of Europe!

S.O.: Why have you not made films in Kurdish?

Güney: Simply because the Kurdish language is forbidden by law in "Turkey." Today in exile, the major obstacle facing such an enterprise is the lack of competent cadres.

II. Biographical Notes

- 1937 Birth of Yilmaz Güney in Adana. His mother is a Kurdish peasant from Mush. She had escaped from her region during the First World War to settle in the south. His father, also a Kurd, had been living in Adana from his early childhood when he had left the Kurdish region of Siverek following a vendetta.
- Until the age of 14 or 15, Güney engages in all the sorts of petty jobs which a town like Adana can offer (cotton-picker, apprentice butcher, etc.) while, at the same time, he follows courses at school. His father wants him to study to become a cotton-weigher. "I wanted something else, but didn't know what that thing was," Güney recalls.
- 1952 He publishes a short story on the struggle of the peasantry in the literary supplement of *Birgun* (Today).
- 1952-54 Through encounters with Socialists, he begins to develop a political conscience.
- 1955 He writes more openly. For spreading "Communist propaganda," he is sentenced to seven and one half years in prison and two and one half years in exile. Later, these sentences are commuted to a year and one half in confinement and six months in exile. His crime was a short story in which a peasant shouts at a feudal landowner: "One day your end will come."
- 1958 Co-script writer and actor in Atif Yilmaz's film *Alageyik* (The Deer of Europe). Trial and police pursuits continue. . . .
- 1959 The final court judgement is passed. Güney escapes. During this time, he had been following courses at the Faculty of Economics at Istanbul. The escape and eventual imprisonment bring his formal studies to an end.
- 1961 He spends eighteen months in prison for his prior condemnation in 1955. In prison, he writes his first novel, a largely biographical one entitled *Boynu Bükük ölümler* (The Fields of Yüreghir).
- 1963 Yilmaz Güney enters a film-distribution company. He travels from town to town and proposes films to cinema halls. Some of the films he distributes have a marked influence on him. Among the most influential are those of Lufu Akad, particularly his film *In the Name of the Law*.
- 1968 The patron of the company in which he is employed learns of his previous prison sentence: "A Communist has no place at my business."
- He, then, directs *Seyyit Han* (The Bride of the Earth) which he considers his first important experience as film-maker. In this film he treats the problem of forced marriage among the Kurds.

- 1972 Güney is incarcerated for having put up students sought by the police as anarchists. In the military prison of Selimiye, he writes a series of recitals and letters: *Selimiye Uclenest* (The Trilogy of Selimiye), *Hucrem* (My Cell), *Salpa-Sanik* (The Accused), and *Selimiye Mektuplari* (The Letters of Selimiye).
- 1974 Hardly freed, he is accused of having shot a judge in a restaurant who had provoked Güney by shouting at him: "If he is a Communist, his wife is a whore." Yilmaz Güney is condemned, for murder, to eighteen years in confinement. In prison, apart from the three scenarios of *The Herd*, *The Enemy*, and *Yol*, he writes two novels: *Stories to My Son* as well as *We Want a Pan, a Window-pane and Two Breads*. His banned book, *On Fascism*, is rewarded by another seven and one half years in prison and two and one half years of forced residence for its author. For an article entitled "Political Groups," he gets a supplementary seven and one half years in prison together with two and one half years of forced residence. A letter to Senor Fernando Herrera, the director of the Valladolid Film Festival in Spain, adds yet another five years to the count. Moreover, seven other court hearings against him were still underway. All in all, he accumulates over a hundred years in prison sentences.

His films *Suru* (The Herd), *Dusman* (The Enemy) and *Arkadash* (The Friend) were all banned in Turkey. *Suru*, the story of a tribe of Kurdish herdsimen taking their sheep to Ankara, encounters a lively success in Europe.

After the military coup d'etat of September 12, 1980 and judging that he no longer had the possibility to produce in Turkey, Yilmaz Güney leaves both his prison and his country to settle in France. Before that, he had produced from prison, with his assistant Serif Goren, the film *Yol* which obtained the Palme d'Or of the Cannes Film Festival in 1982 and was an international success.

December 1981

Having become the symbol of the resistance against the military junta, Yilmaz Güney is stripped of his Turkish nationality and all his films, books, and posters are banned.

October 1982-April 1983

Making of the film *The Wall* which tackles the conditions of detention in juvenile prisons in Turkey.

February 1983

Publication in French, by Lattes Editions, of his novel *Les Champs de Yurechir*.

February 24, 1983

Yilmaz Güney founds, with other exiled Kurdish intellec-

tuals, the Kurdish Institute of Paris. The Institute is the first cultural body created by Kurds abroad to safeguard their threatened cultural heritage.

September, 1984

The most popular man of Turkey and Kurdistan dies in a Parisian hospital after a life in which creative professional activity was coupled with a constant struggle for liberty, democracy, and justice. ■

(Compiled by The Kurdish Institute, Paris)

III. Yılmaz Güney's Filmography

- 1958: *Alageyik* (The Deer of Europe) – script-writer and actor
Bu Vatanın Çocukları (The Children of this Country) – script-writer and actor
- 1959: *Karacaoglan'ın kara Sevdası* (The Mad Love of Karacaoglan)¹ – script-writer
Tütün Zamani (The Time of Tobacco) – script-writer
- 1960: *Ölüm Perdesi* (The Curtain of Death) – assistant director
- 1961: *Yaban Gülü* (The Wild Rose) – script-writer
Dolandiricilar Şahi (The King of Swindlers) – actor
Tatli-Bela (The Sweet Misfortune) – actor
Kızıl Vazo (The Red Vase) – assistant director
Seni Kaybedersem (If I Lose You) – assistant director
- 1963: *Ölüme Yalnız Gidilir* (Alone We Face Death) – script-writer
İkisi De Cesurdu (Both of Them Were Courageous) – script-writer and actor
- 1964: *Hergün Ölmektense* (Instead of Dying Everyday) – script-writer and actor
Kamali Zeybek (The Zeybek with a Knife)² – script-writer and actor
Dagların Kurdu Kocero (Kocero, the Wolf of the Mountains)³ – script-writer and actor
Halimeden Mektup Var (Letters of Halime) – actor
Kacaoglan (The Tall Man) – actor
Kara Şahin (The Black Hawk) – actor
Mor Defter (The Violet Notebook) – actor
10 Korkusuz Adam (Ten Men Without Fear) – actor
Prangasız Mahkûmlar (The Condemned Without Chains) – actor
Zimba Gibi Delikanlı (A Man as Should Be) – actor
- 1965: *Kasımpaşalı* (The Man from Kasimpasa) – script-writer and actor
Kasımpaşalı Recep (Recep of Kasımpaşalı)⁴ – script-writer and actor
Konyakçı (The Drunkard) – script-writer and actor
Kirallar Kirali (The King of Kings) – script-writer and actor
Ben Öldükçe Yaşarım (Even Dead, I Will Live) – actor
Beyaz Atlı Adam (The Man with the White Horse) – actor
Dagların Oğlu (The Sons of the Mountains) – actor
Davudo (David) – actor
Gönül Kuşu (The Bird of the Heart) – actor
Sayili Kabadayılar (The Braggarts) – actor

¹Karacaoglan: A popular sixteenth century Turkish bard, known for his love poems.

²Zeybek: A mythical figure, mixture of popular hero and gentleman bandit.

³Kocero: The most famous Kurdish bandit-hero who reigned in the mountains of Diyarbekir and Siirt in the 1960s.

⁴Kasımpaşa is a district in İstanbul.

- Kan Gövdeyi Götürdü* (There Was a Lot of Blood) – actor
Kahreden Kurşun (The Bullet Which Kills) – actor
Haracima Dokumna (Don't Touch My Share) – actor
Kanlı Bugday (Blood on the Wheat) – actor
Korkusuzlar (The Braves) – actor
Silaha Yeminliydim (I Had Sworn Peace) – actor
Sokakta Kan Vardı (Blood in the Street) – actor
Tehlikeli Adam (A Dangerous Man) – actor
Torpedo Yılmaz (Yılmaz the Tornado) – actor
Üçünüzü De Mıhlarım (I Will Kill the Three of You) – actor
Yaralı Kartal (The Wounded Eagle) – actor
 1966: *At Avrat Silah* (The Horse, the Woman and the Rifle) – script-writer, director, and actor
Burçak Tarlası (The Field of Beans) – script-writer
Eşrefpaşalı (The Man from Esrefpaşa)⁵ – script-writer and actor
Hudutların Kanunu (The Smugglers) – script-writer and actor
Yedi Dagin Aslanı (The Lion of the Seven Mountains) – script-writer and actor
Tilki Selim (Selim the Cunning) – script-writer and actor
Anası Yigit Doğurmuş (A Hero Is Born) – actor
Çirkin Kral (The Ugly King) – actor
Silahların Kanunu (The Law of Arms) – actor
... Ve Silahlara Veda ... (And Farewell to Arms) – actor
Kovboy Ali (Ali the Cowboy) – actor
Arsanların Donusu (The Return of the Lions) – script-writer
Kibar Haydut (The Gentleman Bandit) – actor
 1967: *Bana Kurşun İşlemez* (Bullets Do Not Pierce Me) – script-writer, director, and actor
Benim Adım Kerim (My Name Is Kerim) – script-writer, director, and actor
At Hirsizi Banus (Banus, the Horse Thief) – script-writer and actor
Şeytanın Oğlu (The Son of Satan) – script-writer and actor
Balatlı Arif (Arif of Balat) – actor
Bomba Kemal (Kemal the Bome) – actor
Büyük Cellatlar (The Great Butchers) – actor
Çirkin Kral Affetmez (The Ugly King Does Not Forgive) – actor
Eşkiya Celladı (The Butcher of Bandits) – actor
İnce Cumali (Cumali the Thin) – actor
Kızılmak-Karakoyun (Red Stream-Black Mutton)⁶ – actor
Kozanoğlu (Kozanoğlu)⁷ – actor
Kuduz Recep (Recep the Enraged) – actor
Kurbanlık Katil (A Murderer to Sacrifice) – actor

⁵Esrefpaşa is a district in İstanbul.

⁶The Kızılmak (Red Stream) is the principal river of central Anatolia.

⁷Kozanoğlu is a famous Turkish bandit

- 1968: *Pire Nuri* (Nuri the Flea) – script-writer, director, and actor
Seyyit Han (Seyyit Khan, the Bride of the Earth) – script-writer, director, and actor
Azrail Benim (I Am the Butcher) – script-writer and actor
Kargaci Halil (Halil, the Bird-catcher) – script-writer and actor
Aslan Bey (Aslan Bey) – actor
Beyoglu Canavari (The Monster of Beyoglu)⁸ – actor
Can Pazari (Run Who Can) – actor
Marmara Hasan (Hasan of Marmara) – actor
Öldürmek Hakkındır (I Have the Right to Kill) – actor
- 1969: *Aç Kurtlar* (The Hungry Wolves) – script-writer, director, and actor
Bir Çirkin Adam (An Ugly Man) – script-writer, director, and actor
Belanın 7 Türüsü (All Sorts of Misfortunes) – script-writer and actor
Bin Defa Ölürüm (I Will Die a Thousand Times) – actor
Çifte Tabancalı Kabadayı (The Man With Two Guns) – actor
Güney Ölüm Saçıyor (Güney Sows Death) – actor
Kan Su Gibi Akacak (Blood Will Flow Abundantly) – actor
Kurşunların Kanunu (The Law of Bullets) – actor
- 1970: *Umut* (Hope) – script-writer, director, and actor
Piyade Osman (Osman, the Infantryman) – script-writer and actor
Yedi Belalılar (The Seven Curses) – script-writer and actor
İmzam Kanla Yazılır (I Sign With Blood) – script-writer and actor
Sevgili Muhafizim (My Dear Bodyguard) – script-writer and actor
Şeytan Kayalıkları (The Rocks of the Devil) – script-writer and actor
Çifte Yürekli (Double Courage) – actor
Kanımın Son Damlasına Kadar (Until the Last Drop of My Blood) – actor
Onu Allah Affetsin (May God Forgive Him) – actor
Son Kızgın Adam (An Angry Man) – actor
Zeyno (Zeyno) – actor
- 1971: *Kaçaklar* (The Fugitives) – script-writer, director, and actor
Vurguncular (The Criminals) – script-writer, director, and actor
İbret (The Example) – script-writer and actor
Yarin Son Gündür (Tomorrow Is the Last Day) – script-writer, director, and actor
Umutsuzlar (The Desperate) – script-writer, director, and actor
Acı (The Pain) – script-writer, director, and actor
Ağit (Elegy) – script-writer, director, and actor

⁸Beyoglu is a district of Istanbul

(Compiled by The Kurdish Institute, Paris)

- Baba* (The Father) – script-writer, director, and actor
Çirkin Ve Cesur (Ugly and Courageous) – actor
Namus Ve Silah (The Honor and the Arm) – actor
1972: *Sahtekar* (The Impostor) – actor
1974: *Arkadaş* (The Friend) – script-writer, director, and actor
Endişe (Worry) – script-writer
1975: *Zavallılar* (The Disinherited) – script-writer, director, and actor
İzin (The Leave) – script-writer
Bir Gün Mutlaka (One Day Certainly) – script-writer
1978: *Sürü* (The Herd) – author
1979: *Düşman* (The Enemy) – author
1982: *Yol* – author
1983: *Düvar* (The Wall) – script-writer and director ■

(Compiled by The Kurdish Institute, Paris)

IV. Published Books by Yilmaz Güney

Boynu Bükük Öldüler (novel translated in French to *Les Champs de Yureghir*, Paris: J.C. Lattes, 1982).

Partly autobiographical novel, written in jail, when he was 24 years old.

Selimiye Uçlemesi (Trilogy of Selimiye): *Hücrem* (My Cell), *Salpa – Sanik* (The Defendant).

Stories written between 1972 and 1974 in the military jail of Selimiye in Istanbul.

Selimiye Mektuplari (Letters from Selimiye)

Soba, pencere cami ve iki ekmek istiyoruz (We Want a Stove, Panes on Windows, and Two Pieces of Bread).

Book written in 1976 in the prison of Ankara, giving account of life in Turkish jails.

Contes à mon fils (Tales for My Son).

From his prison in Kayseri, Güney wrote in 1977 stories to his son he had been obliged to leave, only a few months after his birth, to enter in jail. ■

(Compiled by The Kurdish Institute, Paris)

V. Statement of Yilmaz Güney to the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal
Session on the genocide of the Armenians
April 13-16, 1984
Paris

Mr. President, it was with interest that I learned that your honorable Tribunal would be convening a session on the genocide of the Armenians.

Men who care for justice cannot remain indifferent to this question, even less those who like me were born in Turkey. This is why I am taking the liberty of submitting some thoughts for your consideration.

First, there is no doubt in my opinion of the reality of this genocide. Animated by virulent nationalism, the Turkish leaders of the period dreamed of building a pan-Turanian empire which extended from Turkey to the steppes of Central Asia.

It so happened that the territories of Turkey inhabited by Turks and the Turkish speaking peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia were separated by regions inhabited by Kurds and Armenians. To eliminate this "obstacle," the government of the Committee of Union and Progress decided to liquidate physically these two peoples. Beginning in 1915 a planned and systematic policy based on wholesale massacres and massive deportations ended with the disappearance of Armenians of Turkey during the First World War. Within the context of the same policy, more than 700,000 Kurds were deported from Central Anatolia.

Second, had this genocide been recognized in time by the international community, had the League of Nations judged this crime against humanity and levied severe sanctions against it beginning in the 1920's, it is probable that the Kemalist leaders would not have attempted to submit the Kurds to the same fate as the Armenians and would not have massacred and deported, between 1925 and 1940, more than a third of the Kurdish population under their jurisdiction.

Third, there is no doubt that a democratic regime would have recognized this historic truth and condemned the authors of this genocide who, nonetheless, led the Turkish people itself close to catastrophe in their irrational adventure. A democratic regime at least would have honored the memory of the martyred Armenian

people. Its concern for justice and honor would have led it to invite in Ankara a tribunal such as yours to establish and proclaim the whole truth.

Unfortunately, the Turkish regime which oppresses its own people and which rules through terror is hardly preparing itself to adopt such an honorable position. How can it be different when we know that this regime continues to deny, against all evidence, the existence of millions of Kurds who constitute at least a quarter of the population of Turkey. And when the Kurds demand specific rights, the authorities of Ankara simply threaten them with the fate suffered by the Armenians. In fact, this dictatorship produces a large number of lies, distilled for the consumption of its allies and those who secure its funds.

Fourth, it should be pointed out that the Turkish military dictatorship has had no reason to fear sanctions from the Great Powers and in fact is being helped by them, particularly by the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany which, incidentally, continue to issue formal proclamations on freedom and the rights of Man.

Fifth, the recognition of this historical truth could have helped diminish racial hatreds and diffuse the antagonism of the peoples of the region that have suffered so much already, and today's Turks would not have been held responsible for crimes perpetrated over 60 years ago by their ancestors during a despotic and criminal regime of a finishing empire. Anti-Turkish racism is to be condemned as much as the anti-Armenian and anti-Kurdish hysteria of the leaders in Ankara.

Having made these observations, allow me, Mr. President, to express the wish that the verdict of your Tribunal will be taken into account by international institutions and that which has happened in silence and indifference to the Armenian people will never happen again elsewhere.

(Translated from French by The Zoryan Institute, Cambridge, Massachusetts)

COMMUNICATIONS

Toynbee, Turks, and Armenians

Lillian Etmekjian

TURKISH commentators claim that the British Blue Book, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-6*, which the historian Arnold Toynbee compiled for Lord Bryce during the First World War, cannot be taken seriously as historical evidence because Toynbee later admitted that the British government used it as war propaganda. This implies that truth and propaganda are mutually exclusive. Yet when this question was put to Toynbee in a personal letter, he answered:

It is true that the British Government's motive in asking Lord Bryce to compile the Blue Book was propaganda. But Lord Bryce's motive in undertaking it, and mine in working on it for him, was to make the truth known, and the evidence was good: the witnesses were all American missionaries with no political axe to grind. So the Blue Book, together with Lepsius' book, does give a true account.¹

Toynbee has never reversed himself on this matter. On the contrary, he has repeated in three of his post-war books that the Turkish government planned and carried out genocide against its Armenian subjects.

In *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, he makes a number of damning statements regarding the Turkish treatment of the Armenians. He writes that in the northeastern provinces of Turkey, the massacre of Armenians by Moslems had been endemic since 1895.² In

¹Letter, Arnold Toynbee to Lillian Etmekjian, March 16, 1966.

²Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1922), p. 17.

the same book he also sees a parallel between Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Empire and the lynching of blacks in some areas of the United States.³ Elsewhere he reiterates an American eyewitness account of the Turkish atrocities against Armenians in Cilicia in 1909. He quotes his narrator as saying,

grim silence and intentness on the part of the slayer, and the despairing silence of the victims, had been one of the most impressive characteristics of the scene. And next, he said, had been the innate mercilessness and cruelty revealed in the character of those who killed: not in the way of torturing — of that he saw nothing — but in the insatiable desire to kill, and satisfaction in the deed . . .⁴

And finally, he indicts the First World War Ottoman government of genocide by stating:

This is an ugly possibility in all of us; but happily even when the stimuli are present, atrocities are seldom committed spontaneously by large bodies of human beings . . . but the most signal modern instance was the attempt to exterminate the Armenians in 1915. In this case, hundreds of thousands of people were done to death and thousands turned into robbers and murderers by the administration action of a few dozen criminals in control of the Ottoman Empire.⁵

The point to bear in mind about *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* is that it provides proof that Toynbee stood by the Blue Book in a non-government sponsored book published four years after the end of World War I. Moreover, by 1922, when the book was published, Toynbee had developed close friendships with Turkish intellectuals and was making every effort to be fair to the Turks. The fact that he did not repudiate his war-time conclusions about the Armenian atrocities, despite his personal change of attitude toward the Turkish people in the post-war period, is itself an indication that the evidence against the Turkish government was overwhelming.

After a silence of forty-five years, Toynbee again mentions the Armenian genocide in two autobiographical books, *Acquaintances* in 1967 and *Experiences* in 1969. In the latter, he not only defines twentieth-century genocide but compares the Armenian and Jewish examples in a passage that illuminates his final judgment.

The distinguishing marks of our twentieth-century genocide are that it is committed in cold-blood by the deliberate fiat of holders of despotic political power, and the perpetrators of genocide employ all the resources of present-day technology and organization to make their planned massacres systematic and complete. I am old enough to remember the horror of the massacre of Armenian Ottoman subjects in the Ottoman Empire in 1896 at the instigation of the infamous Sultan Abd-al Hamid II. But this act of genocide was amateur and ineffective compared with the

³*Ibid.*, pp. 261-262.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 265.

⁵*Ibid.*

largely successful attempt to exterminate the Ottoman Armenians that was made during the First World War, in 1915, by the post-Hamidian regime of "The Committee of Union and Progress," in which the principal criminals were Talaat and Enver. The Second World War was accompanied by the Nazis' genocide of the Jews both in Germany and in the other European countries that were temporarily overrun and occupied by the German military forces. Since the general level of technological and organizational efficiency in Germany during the dozen years of the Nazi regime was considerably higher than it had been in Turkey during the ten years of the C.U.P. regime, the German genocide of the European Jews was still more effective than the Turkish genocide of the Ottoman Armenians had been.⁶

Since Toynbee remained firm in his conviction until the end of his long life that the Turks were guilty of genocide against the Armenians, why did he abstain from condemning them after the war? The answer seems to be rooted in his bent of personality and philosophy of life.

Until after World War I, Toynbee did not know any Turks on a personal basis. In fact, he had grown up in a family that regarded all Turks as ogres. It was due to his work on the Blue Book that he felt a compulsion to meet and make friends with "fellow-countrymen of the criminals by whom the genocide had been committed."⁷ His motive was to figure out how human beings could do the terrible deeds that had been done to the Armenians. To achieve this goal, he studied the Turkish language, he traveled to Turkey, and he cultivated the friendship of many Turks. In the process, he came to conclude that Turks are "human beings" and could be charming and intelligent companions. This seems to have been a shocking discovery for a young man who had been brought up in an English home where the Gladstonian view of all Turks as unmitigated barbarians prevailed. Halideh Edib, the American educated Turkish feminist and her husband, Adnan Adivar, became two of his closest friends. Anyone who has read Halideh Edib's books can appreciate how, with exquisite charm, this ardent Turkish nationalist could have convinced Toynbee that the downtrodden Turkish people had long been abused by evil Western imperialists and needed a chance to prove themselves. He was more easily convinced because of his propensity to feel sympathy for perceived underdogs and his tendency to bend over backwards to be fair to the unpopular point of view even to the point of being unfair to the other party. He divulged these aspects of his personality to his son Philip in *Comparing Notes: A Dialogue Across a Generation*.⁸ Moreover, he must have felt that he

⁶Arnold J. Toynbee, *Experiences* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 241-242.

⁷Arnold J. Toynbee, *Acquaintances* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 240.

⁸Arnold and Philip Toynbee, *Comparing Notes: A Dialogue Across a Generation* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), pp. 59-60.

had no right to condemn the Turks for behavior that, in his belief, had its roots in universal human nature. According to Toynbee, who believed in original sin, all humans, not just Turks, had a streak of "abominable wickedness."⁹ In fact, in his view, condemnation would be counterproductive. The only way to improve Turkish behavior would be to accept them as human beings. He felt that the Turkish people, no less than other groups, had the capacity to feel shame and would exercise it if not badgered by Westerners.¹⁰

In *Acquaintances*, Toynbee emphasizes the importance of personal relations to him and devotes a whole chapter to describing the warmth and depth of his Turkish friendships.¹¹ Not surprisingly, he does not note a single Armenian friend in this book, which is devoted to the important people in his life. Thus, there was no strong personal relationship with an Armenian to counteract the influence of his Turkish friends.

Of course, history has proved his theory to be wrong. Far from feeling remorse or shame for the action of their government in 1915, Turks today are denying the historical facts and have erected a monument to honor Talaat. When these facts were pointed out to him in my second letter in 1966, he replied:

Most human beings do wrong at times, in greater or lesser degree, I suppose. The only way back is to admit it and to be sorry for it, and nationalism is a hindrance to this, unfortunately.¹²

It is interesting to note that, while he feels that the only way Turks can be morally regenerated is by admitting and repenting their crime, he no longer shows interest in justice for the victims. In early 1920s, however, he had warned the Ankara government that they could not dissociate themselves effectively from the regime of Talaat and Enver unless they released captive women and children from Turkish households and allowed approximately 300,000 destitute Armenian refugees to return to their homes from the Erevan area.¹³ Yet, by 1926, although he regretted the Armenians were among the unfortunate peoples who received less than their due at the post-World War I peace conference, he was willing to accept the injustice as a by-product of a stable general settlement.¹⁴

Finally, why did Toynbee in 1967 break his self-imposed silence of forty-five years to discuss again the Armenian genocide? Did Halideh Edib's death in 1964 give him the freedom to bring up issues that

⁹Toynbee, *Acquaintances*, p. 242.

¹⁰Toynbee, *The Western Question*, p. 354.

¹¹Toynbee, *Acquaintances*, pp. 231-251.

¹²Letter, Arnold J Toynbee to Lillian Etmejian, April 13, 1966.

¹³Toynbee, *The Western Question*, p. 191.

¹⁴Arnold J. Toynbee and Kenneth P. Kirkwood, *Turkey* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1962), p. 262.

would have pained his dear friend if she were living? Or did he, at last, realize that it was his moral obligation to defend the truth when the Turks were attempting to distort history? Whatever his motives, he did restate before his death that the Turkish government of 1915 executed the crime of genocide against its Armenian subjects. That was the very least he could have done. Surely, by the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide, he must have realized that he had been mistaken in his expectation of Turkish remorse for their treatment of the Armenians. ■

A Correspondence Between Marmaduke Pickthall and the Armenian Bureau of London

E. V. Gulbekian

MARMADUKE WILLIAM PICKTHALL (1875-1936) was an English novelist who was converted to Islam in 1914, at which time he adopted the name "Mohammed." At the beginning of 1919 he was appointed an *imam* at the mosque in Woking, England and during that year he worked for the Islamic Information Bureau in London. This Bureau had been opened in 1918, financed apparently by Moslem Indians. As part of its activities the Bureau published a weekly newsletter entitled *The Muslim Outlook*, which Pickthall edited during 1919. He left the Bureau in December of that year.¹

His naive political attitude is apparent in a letter he writes from Bombay on March 24, 1921. In the letter he states: "I have been made extremely sad by the news of the murder in Berlin of Talaat Pasha, who was a great friend of mine. . . . There was a memorial meeting for him in the old cemetery in the Muslim quarter, at which I presided and had to address more than ten thousand people. I tried to tell them what a brave man Talaat was, and how sudden death was what he would have always chosen, and how such a death . . . was really a most glorious martyrdom."² Later, he edited the *Bombay Chronicle* from 1920 to 1924 and he entered the education service of the nizam of Hyderabad in 1925. His writings include *With the Turk in War Time* (1914) and *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (1930).³

¹Anne Fremantle, *Loyal Enemy* (London, 1938), pp. 252 and 296.

²*Ibid.*, p. 346.

³*Who was who 1929-1940* (London, 1967), p. 1077.

Although Pickthall could be regarded as an English eccentric, his views — and his letter to the Armenian Bureau — do reflect the prime concern of British foreign policy during the first half of the twentieth century, namely the retention of India within the British Empire.

The Armenian Bureau of London provided information on Armenian matters during the First World War, publishing a series of documentary booklets. For a time the Bureau was directed by the Raffi brothers, the sons of the famous nineteenth century novelist Hakob Melik Hakobian whose penname was Raffi. Aram Raffi was the Secretary of the Bureau for almost two years, withdrawing in 1918 or 1919 due to ill health, at which time his brother Arshak took his place.⁴ Aram died in November 1919 and his brother resigned as Secretary soon after. The correspondence with Pickthall was not continued thereafter.

The booklet which gave rise to Pickthall's letter was entitled *The Armenian Question in the American House of Representatives* (London, 1918). Pickthall's letter is typewritten, with corrections by hand, on plain unheaded paper. The Armenian Bureau's reply, signed "A. Raffi," is transcribed here from the signed and corrected handwritten draft; it was probably written by Arshak.

The correspondence illuminates the principles by which the Raffis ran the Armenian Bureau as well as the methods by which *Ittihad ve Terakke* propaganda was distributed in Great Britain.

⁴*Ararat* (London) vol. 6(1919):592.

Documents

The Islamic Information Bureau
33, Palace Street,
London S.W.1.

October 16th 1919.

Sir,

Our attention has been called to the following statement contained in a pamphlet issued by your Bureau.

"Under the Koran strictly interpreted, every Christian is an outlaw and can be killed at sight". (The Armenian Question p.23). The words, I am aware are not your own, but since your Bureau has passed them without comment or qualification, and is circulating them among the British public as no unimportant part of the Armenian case, I ask you, in the name of 150,000,000 British subjects, whose religion they misrepresent, kindly to give me the chapter and verse of the Koran which, strictly interpreted means that "Every Christian is an outlaw and can be killed at sight."

An early answer will oblige.

Yours truly,
(signed) Marmaduke Pickthall

The Secretary, The Armenian Bureau,
153, Regent Street,
London W.1.

Reply from the Armenian Bureau, 153 Regent street, London W.1.

Sir,

The pamphlet to which you refer consists of a speech delivered before the American Congress by the Hon. Lt. Col. Edward C. Little. This speech aroused great interest in America first because it is the longest speech ever made in any House of Parliament on behalf of the Armenians. It was reprinted from the official Parliamentary debates in America in pamphlet form, and we have reprinted it here as a document. There are many other points besides that which you mention, that I did not agree with, but I could not interfere with a State document.

Not only have we never carried on any campaign against Islam but we have always avoided any hostile reference to Islam. So much so, that when we have received telegrams from the Caucasus in which the word "Musulman" occurred, which word in Russian is synonymous with Tartar, to distinguish from the 'Tatarin' of Kazan, we have changed it to Tartar, in order not to create any misunderstanding by causing the word to mean Islam.

I am myself an oriental scholar and am acquainted with Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and other oriental literatures and have great admiration for anything Eastern. I have great respect for the teaching of Islam, although I do not profess to be an expert on religions.

The work of our Bureau is to provide studies of the Armenian Question emanating from high authorities. We never resort to agitation and the tactics of your Bureau, especially the method of your writing in condemnation of the whole Armenian race[:] trying to make people believe that it is the Armenians who have massacred the Turks, not the Turks the Armenians, though you have brought forward no facts in support of your allegations.

The baselessness of all your attacks on the Armenians could be established by quotations from the Turkish newspapers. The guilt of the Turks is admitted by the Turkish government, and documents ordering the extermination of the

Armenian race, signed by Talaat and Enver, are in existence and are accepted as genuine by the Turkish government and the press.

An Islamic or Ottoman Comm[ittee] established on the lines followed by our Bureau would do great service to Turkey. Years ago, with some Mohammedan friends I was trying to establish a Society composed of Mohammedans and Christians, who would endeavour to study the Eastern Question and promote a mutual understanding between the two. I was supported by my Mohammedan friends, but my travels to Near East and soon after the outbreak of the war prevented the realization of this scheme.

Yours truly,

A. Raffi

BOOK REVIEWS

Collecting Greek Coins

by John Anthony

London: Longman Group Limited, 1983, 301 pp., paperback, \$12.95.

THE TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION of ancient coins into two broad categories — Greek and Roman — is very much one of convenience. It obscures the fact that, during ancient times (starting in approximately the seventh century B.C. to about 500 A.D.), great numbers of coins were minted in Europe and the Middle East by peoples of many ethnic extractions other than Greeks or Romans. It is to the author's credit that, in giving us his very readable introduction to early "Greek" numismatics, he has not, as have some others, restricted his discussion to the coins of Greece and her colonies. Anthony presents the full range of early Western coinage, including that of Parthia, Sassanian Iran, Bactria, India, the Celts of Europe, and other non-Greek peoples who have played an important role in the history and development of coin production during the pre-Christian era.

Any such discussion would be incomplete without consideration of the coinage of ancient Armenia. Accordingly, Anthony devotes a separate two-page section of this book to Armenia, which seems brief but is nevertheless satisfying. Ancient Armenian coins have heretofore received scant attention, if any, in surveys of ancient numismatics. This is all the more unfortunate, since Armenians played a pivotal role in the history of the ancient East and since Armenian coinage sheds important light on the economy and history of the period. The coins of Tigranes II (95-56 B.C.) and his son Artavasdes achieve artistic and technical standards that equal or surpass contemporary examples of other countries.

Many reasons may be advanced for this comparative neglect, not the least of which is the tendency of some writers to dismiss the coinage of the non-Greek areas. Armenian coins are rare by comparison to other ancients, and many if not most of the better specimens have found

their way into museum collections and are thus unavailable to collectors. A large portion of historical Armenia is inaccessible to scientific research while the Turks, even to this day, deny that the Armenians ever lived there. Many aspects of pre-Christian Armenian history remain to be elucidated. Finally, it has only been relatively recently that adequate numismatic and historic data has enabled a systematic classification of the coins of the ancient period.

The short section on Armenia, accompanied by an illustration of a silver tetradrachm of Tigranes, concentrates on the coinage of this illustrious monarch and surveys the main events of his reign. "We have a few bronze coins minted by earlier kings," writes Anthony, "but the only Armenian ruler likely to appeal to modern collectors is Tigranes II. . . ." (p. 158). Many Armenian collectors would contest that judgement, although it cannot be denied that the coins of Tigranes represent the numismatic apogee of the ancient Armenian series, both in terms of aesthetic appeal and in terms of the sheer quantity of coins issued.

Considering that the author's aim is to present artistic (mostly silver) coins that are readily available to collectors, it might appear unreasonable to have expected a more detailed treatment of the other kings since their coins are extremely rare. On the other hand, the author discusses numerous silver pieces of other countries that are in the \$500 plus price range. The drachms and tetradrachms of Tigranes' son Artavasdes II, for example, while rare, would have provided an opportunity to illustrate a different design type and expand the discussion on Armenia.

The rarity of early Armenian coins may be gauged from the following condensed tabulation of specimens known to exist in major private collections and museums (See Table). The data is culled from the recent works of Dr. Paul Z. Bedoukian, the acknowledged world authority on Armenian numismatics.

Although the count is approximate, one conclusion we might draw from these figures is that virtually all of the silver pieces and a substantial number of the coppers belong to Tigranes II. By numismatic standards, the coins of all these kings, Tigranes included, are extremely rare. This situation should improve somewhat as new specimens come to light.

In addition to the chapters on Armenia and neighboring countries, Armenian collectors will find references to Tigranes and his country elsewhere in the text. On page 213 a reference is made to the "splendid sestertius" issued by the Roman Emperor Trajan to commemorate his expedition to Armenia (ca. 115-116 A.D.). References to Armenia on pages 153, 156, and 213 are missed in the index.

Anthony's introduction to the collection of ancient coins achieves a balance between a numismatic catalog and a straight history that should appeal both to beginning and intermediate collectors. He covers

some of the basics needed to understand coins and collect them intelligently, such as minting techniques and housing of a collection. In turn he surveys the history and coinage of the various Greek city-states and colonies and the non-Greek areas. All of this is done in a highly readable style that holds attention and interest. Coin books are almost useless without illustrations and this book offers over 500 good quality reproductions of coins, maps, and diagrams located throughout the text. An index and bibliography are included.

Armenian collectors should find the inclusion of Armenia in this survey gratifying and worth the rather high price for a paperback.

Levon A. Saryan
Greenfield, Wisconsin

Numerical Tabulation of Known Specimens of Ancient Armenian Coins

Silver		Copper	Silver		Copper
<i>Sophene</i> (ca. 260-150 B.C.)			Small silvers	3	—
Sames	—	7	"Antioch" coppers	—	39
Arsames	—	7	"Heracles" coppers	—	21
Arsames II	—	13	"Cornucopia" coppers	—	22
Xerxes	—	13	"Nike" coppers	—	52
Abdissares	—	11	Miscellaneous coppers	—	41
Zariadres	—	2	Joint issues	—	10
Morphilig	—	1	Artavasdes II		
<i>Commagene</i> (ca. 100-30 B.C.)			Tetradrachms	1	—
Mithridates Callinicus	—	18	Drachms	10	—
Antiochus Theos	—	9	Coppers	—	8
<i>Artaxiad</i> (ca. 189 B.C.-6 A.D.)			Artaxias II	—	5
Artaxias I	—	1	Tigranes III	1	31
Tigranes I	—	21	Tigranes IV	—	26
Tigranes II			Artavasdes III	—	13
Tetradrachms	189	17	Artavasdes IV (Augustus)	4	1
Drachms	77	—	Tigranes V	—	3

Compiled from Bedoukian, *Coinage of the Artaxiads of Armenia* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 1979) and Bedoukian, "Coinage of the Armenian Kingdoms of Sophene and Commagene" in *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes*, 28: 71-88, 1983. ■

Medieval Armenian Culture

Thomas J. Samuelian and Michael E. Stone, eds.

(University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies; no. 6).

Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1984, xvi and 468 pp.

MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN CULTURE is a compilation of thirty-one of the thirty-three papers presented at the Third Dr. H. Markarian Conference on Armenian Culture which took place on November 7-10, 1982 at the University of Pennsylvania. It may justly be considered a successor volume, albeit a much more extensive one, to *Classical Armenian Culture*, which was published in 1982 (see my review, *The Armenian Review* 2(1983), pp. 138-140). Its greater size, however, amplifies the concerns I voiced about that earlier work.

These are conference papers, a fact which should be more easily discernible on the cover or title-page of the book. This is not a synthesis on medieval Armenian culture; indeed, if it were, it could be faulted for omission of aspects integral to the life of Armenia in medieval times. What follows, then, is my own admitted bias about conferences and the publication of papers delivered at them.

Conference papers are often reports of the state of scholars' research on aspects of their discipline; many are not written in final form but with the expectation that the ensuing discussions will lead to further advances on the topic and open additional avenues for exploration. Each of these papers should have led to active discussion and an interplay of ideas based on the unique expertise of the Markarian Conference's participants. The editors cannot be faulted for not attempting to include a digest of these discussions; such a digest, even in concise form, would have created a volume of monstrous length. It appears, however, that many of the papers which could have benefited from verbal queries have been left in pristine form; they often lack indispensable, substantiating notes and critical commentaries to support their theses. Not every paper is in a state which would warrant publication. It is a disservice both to the reader and to the author, whose more sharpened and advanced thoughts on the subject could well differ greatly from the now publicly published account.

Moreover, papers that are merely "state of the question" in nature are useful as catalysts for discussion. Their value as publications is often uncertain; they rarely promote additional work. (The exception is one which reports on the status of a topic not easily accessible to the readers, e.g., N. Stone's "The Kaffa Manuscript of the Lives of the Desert Fathers," pp. 329ff).

It is the trend to publish all the papers delivered at congresses and conferences. This may be attributed to the "publish or perish" syn-

drome, the unfortunate academic market, tenurial decisions, or the heightened/lessened expectations of the age. Whatever the reason may be, more is not better.

For want of a better modern definition of "editing," an economically motivated one will suffice. The United States Copyright Office accepts as the basis of an editor or editors' claim to copyright: the selection, arrangement, compilation, editorial revisions, and all additional text contributed by the editor(s) to what is termed the "collective work," e.g., *Medieval Armenian Culture*. All conference papers have been included (with the exception of two, one of which was withheld from publication by its author), so there has been no selection. There are inconsistencies in citations, some not easily intelligible passages, incomplete thoughts, typographical errors, and simply bad English. Thus, there appears to have been little editorial revision. An editor should either have the authority to correct incorrect usage or to return a work to its author for correction. The arrangement seems predetermined by disciplines — historical, linguistic, art/archaeological, etc; there is, consequently, little arrangement. The additional text is a one-page description of the conference and acknowledgments to individuals.

Finally, it cannot be overstressed that the scholarly study of Armenian civilization at all levels is relatively new. It seems not only esoteric to non-armenologists but also, on occasion, of little use. If a work such as the present volume is to succeed, it should attempt a synthesis of its own expectations through the use of an introductory essay, editorial notes, and the selection of papers reflecting the best scholarship that the field has to offer. Papers that are not sufficiently stimulating or are at an incipient structural level may be either consigned to a "brief communications" section or rejected for publication.

Dr. Samuelian and Dr. Stone are scholars of repute; both of their papers make by no means trivial contributions to the field. This review reflects modern thoughts on editing and conferences and not on their own scholarship. Proper editing is time-consuming, aggravating, tedious, and yet, ultimately, satisfying. Hopefully, the editors of the next volume in such a series will first determine who their audience should be (one may not easily satisfy both the scholarly and the lay communities) and proceed on a determined level.

On the other hand, the conference itself should be considered a stimulating success. The convenors are to be congratulated for the breadth of the topics covered (though one regrets the continued absence of offerings on, *inter alia*, ecclesiastical, musicological, and social topics).

Since space does not allow a short discussion of each paper, a simple listing should be of use:

John A.C. Greppin, "A Section from the Greek-Armenian Lexicon to Galen;" J.J.S. Weitenberg, "Armenian Dialects and the Latin-Armenian Glossary of Autun;" Giancarlo Bolognesi, "A Pioneer of Armenian Etymology;" Robert H. Hewsen, "The Kingdom of Arc'ax;" Robert W. Thomson, "T'ovmay Arcruni as Historian;" George Huxley, "The Historical Geography of the Paulician and T'ondrakian Heresies;" Lucy Der Manuelian, "Armenian Sculptural Images Part II: Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries;" Mario D'Onofrio, "A Medieval Palace in Avan;" Mesrob K. Krikorian, "Grigor Tat'ewac'i: A Great Scholastic Theologian and Nominalist Philosopher;" Henning J. Lehmann, "An Important Text Preserved in MS Ven. Mekh. No. 873, dated A.D. 1299 (Eusebius of Emesa's Commentary on Historical Writings of the Old Testament);" Michel van Esbroeck, "The Rise of Saint Bartholomew's Cult from the Seventh to the Thirteenth Centuries;" Francine Mawet, "The Motif of the Bird in Armenian Epic Literature and its Relations with Iranian Tradition;" Michael E. Stone, "The Greek Background of Some Armenian Pilgrims to the Sinai and Some Other Observations;" Thomas J. Samuelian, "Another Look at Marr: The New Theory of Language and his Early Work on Armenian;" Jean-Pierre Mahé, "Critical Remarks on the Newly Edited Excerpts from Sebeos;" Martiros Minassian, "Le manuscrit actuel de l'ouvrage d'Eznik est-il celui de la première édition;" James R. Russell, "The Tale of the Bronze City in Armenian;" Zaven Arzoumanian, "Kirakos Ganjakec'i and his *History of Armenia*;" Helen C. Evans, "Canon Tables as an Indication of Teacher-Pupil Relationships in the Career of T'oros Roslin;" Valentino Pace, "Armenian Cilicia, Cyprus, Italy and Sinai Icons: Problems of Models;" Alice Taylor, "Vaspurakan Manuscript Illumination and Eleventh-Century Sources;" Viken Sassouni, "Evidence of Armenian Rug-Making on the Basis of the Illuminations of Armenian Manuscripts from the Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries;" Nira Stone, "The Kaffa Manuscript of the Lives of the Desert Fathers;" Thomas Matthews, "The Annunciation at the Well: A Metaphor of Armenian Monophysitism;" Bo Johnson, "Armenian Biblical Tradition in Comparison with the Vulgate and Septuagint;" Claude Cox, "The Use of Lectionary Manuscripts to Establish the Text of the Armenian Bible;" Joseph M. Alexanian, "The Armenian Gospel Text from the Fifth through the Fourteenth Centuries;" David D. Bundy, "The Sources of the Isaiah Commentary of Georg Skewrac'i;" Andrea Tessier, "Some Remarks about the Armenian Tradition of Greek Texts;" Dickran Kouymjian, "Dated Armenian Manuscripts as a Statistical Tool for Armenian History;" Alexander Kazhdan, "The Armenians in the Byzantine Ruling Class Predominantly in the Ninth through Twelfth Centuries."

The contents of this volume are probably not well known; I suggest that this and similar volumes be brought to the attention of the ex-

cellent, existing indexing services (e.g., *L'Année philologique*) so that those scholars outside the field may make use of the excellent scholarship which is available.

In short, a great deal of effort has gone into this volume. Those concerned with serious study of classical and medieval Armenia must know of it. It should have been, however, much more; the expertise was there. It is a shame that it was not fully used. ■

Levon Avdoyan
The Library of Congress
 Washington, D.C.

Arménie 1900. Yves Ternon, Jean-Claude Kebabdjian, eds. Paris: Editions Astrid, 1979, 187 pp.

Scenes et Portraits. Photographies Armenienne. Pierre Ter Sarkissian, Jean-Claude Kebabdjian, Michel Pazoumian, eds. Paris: Centre de Recherches sur la Diaspora Armenienne, Paris, 1982, 108 pp.

Ermakof. Herman Vahramian, ed. Milan: Casa Editrice Armena, 1982.

A FEW MONTHS AGO, a French sociologist was asked to listen to an Armenian radio station broadcasting in Paris. He kindly, but objectively and even with a bit of puzzlement and sadness, concluded that "Armenians appear to be the worst detractors of their own culture." When one looks closely at whatever Armenians express, the statement of the French sociologist comes to mind. It seems, unfortunately, that the Armenian collective consciousness reflects a rather unhealthy view of that culture.

Let us analyze the above three picture books. Such pictorial essays are a contemporary form of the Armenian cultural expression. They tell us far more about the psyche of that expression than a book full of words.

Why are picture books so important? First, because they go far beyond words and cannot be adorned with euphemisms. And second, and just as important, the sequential presentation and the very selection of pictures aims to enlighten or educate a reader, Armenian or not.

Arménie 1900 is a pioneer of its kind. The text, written by Yves Ternon and Jean-Claude Kebabdjian, provides a story line, that of a mythical traveler. Furthermore, the story line enriches the sequential layout of the photographs and postcards. The fine text has been translated from French to English recently.

This work has been a labor of love by Jean-Claude Kebabdjian. It appeals to all people. A short feature film by Jacques Kebabian is based upon the theme of the book, the fine visuals of the film being drawn from the photographs and postcards.

There is, unfortunately, a limited spectrum of images. This is excused by the general lack of photographs and postcards on Armenian subjects for this period. In spite of the thin array of visuals in *Arménie 1900*, there is a warm nostalgia and a poetic touch lacking in the other books.

Scenes et Portraits, by the Centre de Recherches sur la Diaspora Arménienne, is a mediocre expression of little artistic or cultural value. Whereas *Arménie 1900* is lavishly printed in sepia and full color, *Scenes et Portraits* is a dull black and white rendition. There is no sense of beauty in the printing.

The purpose of this book is unclear. Most of the photographs are family and individual portraits. What could a foreign observer ever derive from such a medley of portraits? The chronological layout does not lend itself to a comprehensive evolution of an idea, a message, or a goal. For instance, the photographs of the officers who fought in the Battle of Sardarabad, as presented, will only be of value to those who know Armenian history. Furthermore, this book propagates the invisible emasculation process of current Armenian expression. On the front cover are three sad Armenian women and not any of the brave and smiling officers of Sardarabad.

Ermakof is a book containing superb photographs, some unseen before. Ermakof's work, commissioned by the Tsar, totals some 16,379 photographs. Bearing this in mind, one wonders, "How was the selection of photographs made?" The answer to this question is unknown.

This book does not weave an "image story line." There are, often-times side by side, exceptional pictures and perfectly banal and worthless ones. Certain photographs could and should have been grouped together. Were it not for the inherent value of the photographs and the excellent printing, this random presentation would have given us very little. Again, as in *Scènes et Portraits*, the front cover is that of woman and daughter on a horse as if there existed no other crucial picture.

The arbitrary presentation of the text makes one wonder what went on in the mind of its creator. The introduction is in Italian, French, and English. Pictures are always displayed on the right pages; the left pages are empty or contain text in Armenian, Italian, French, or English. Each language is used without any translation. Why haven't all texts been translated? How can a non-Armenian read the Armenian texts? Professional laxism has never been proof of the "poetic touch." Thus, there is an absence of textual coherence as well as a lack of an image story line.

What saves the book is the rarity of some of the photographs and the superb printing of the Mekhitarists in Venice. Nonetheless, even if such a beautifully printed book can please the eyes, its absence of artistic discipline leaves one almost speechless.

What can be derived from these three books? Once we realize that such books rely chiefly on the kind of photographs selected, their sequential layout, and their texts, save for *Arménie 1900*, there is an absence of artistic and cultural presentation; an absence of story line, in images as well as texts; and, for those who know the field, an almost unconscious expression of cultural non-existence. The organizations of our diaspora have never encouraged or supported the benevolent use or paid services of Armenian professionals. Through its patriarchal system of funding artistic and cultural projects, the system of our diaspora only discourages professionalism, definition of goals, statements of "living" existence, and individual creativity.

Perhaps the French sociologist was right; for we cannot say that the Armenian diaspora lacks creative talents, artists, writers, true intellectuals, and dedicated individuals. Rather, we smother our expression of a "living" Armenianness. For those who seek financial support from our rich patriarchs, the stuffing of toothless lions becomes an invisible and unconscious pattern of expression. ■

Pascal Tchakmakian
Paris

Genocide and Human Rights — A Global Anthology

Jack Nusan Porter, editor

New York: University Press of America, 1982, 353 pp.

GENOCIDE AND HUMAN RIGHTS — A GLOBAL ANTHOLOGY examines the topic of genocide through specific cases of the twentieth century. This book is the most comprehensive of its kind, filling a gap in the fields of anthropology and sociology and human rights.

In his introduction to the volume, editor Jack Porter discusses the need for studies of genocide and attempts to lay the groundwork for defining genocide. The articles that follow are divided into five sections — the Jews, the Armenians, the Gypsies, Post-World War II Genocides, and the Implications of Genocide. These sections are of more or less equal length and appear to progress from the cases about which most is known to those about which less is known. The final section of the volume consists of reflective works which, for the most part, are intended to generalize from the specific cases. This section covers such topics as witnessing genocide, preventing genocide, the U.S.'s failure to ratify the genocide convention, and an early warning system for genocide.

The pieces in this anthology were written over a period of at least 30 years (unfortunately, the date of original publication is not always in-

cluded) for widely different audiences. Some papers, for example, were formal submissions to agencies deliberating cases of alleged genocide, others were written for specific ethnic audiences while still others were aimed at a general audience. Although most of the articles are self-contained and the collection, as a whole, forces readers to broaden their understanding of genocide; had articles for the volume been solicited from authors who were attempting to address common themes, the volume would hold together better and make a greater contribution to the work of both academics and human rights activists.

A number of issues which were either raised only briefly or omitted in this volume deserve further treatment. It would have been appropriate to include at least one article which discussed the history of genocide. In the brief introduction to his piece "Genocide, the United Nations and the Armenians," James Tashjian gives a glimpse of the considerable "history of man's inhumanity to man." While the term "genocide" may be a twentieth century invention, the process is not. An understanding of the historical precedents or even roots of contemporary genocides would give us a broader understanding of the issues involved and indicate areas of research that could help to predict and prevent genocide.

Another issue which is implicit in the book but not discussed directly are the two, clearly different, types of genocide. On the one hand there is "official" genocide which is carried out by states. This is the genocide of the Armenians, Jews, and Gypsies among others, and it is certainly the type of genocide about which most is written. This is the type of genocide which led Professor Porter to write that technology and bureaucracy are on a par with ideology as the "three major components" of genocide.

Another kind of genocide, however, is directed at small, relatively isolated groups on the frontier of expanding political, social, and economic systems which are usually controlled by different ethnic groups. Such genocides are perpetrated by individuals — ranchers, miners, and land speculators — and are allowed by governments which either cannot or do not care enough to prevent them.

In the second type of genocide, ideology and competition for resources are important. In Colombia in 1974, for example, ranchers were on trial for killing Cuiva Indians who wandered onto lands recently claimed by the ranchers. The colonists' defense was that they did not know it was against the law to kill Cuiva. They thought of the Cuiva as animals. In that part of Colombia, a Spanish verb, *cuivar*, was in common usage; it meant "to kill Cuiva." In many other parts of the world, bounties have been paid for each indigenous person killed. A closer examination of historical genocides, then, as well as those cases of the last two centuries would probably demonstrate that technology

mattered little to the perpetrators; whatever weapons were at hand would do. Nor was assistance from government sought in many cases.

A number of pieces in the book refer to the need to systematically collect information concerning past and present genocides with the idea of not only setting the record straight but also learning to predict future genocides. With regard to genocide and human rights, the pieces in the book I found most compelling were ones which documented specific cases. For this reason, alone, I found it odd that not one piece outlined, in detail, the genocide of Jews in Nazi Germany. The reader, it appears, was expected to be familiar with that case, yet, as we all know, a number of people recently have publicly denied that any such genocide occurred.

On a related matter, for those working on contemporary human rights violations, some of which may in fact be genocide, it would have been useful to have a piece describing how evidence for the Nuremberg trials would be any different than that which might be submitted to the U.N. today? With "genocide" being used for political purposes to describe a number of very different situations, it is essential to be careful in documenting such charges.

Few reviewers could read all the articles in this volume from an informed position; I would like to discuss two articles which cover situations with which I am more familiar. Rene Lemarchand's article on the Hutu-Tutsi conflict is clear, concise, and well documented. Lemarchand has spent decades researching and thinking about the situation in Burundi. His knowledge of the historical relationship between the two groups in conflict as well as the role of the Belgian authorities' involvement in the former colony is essential for an understanding of the "selective genocide" he describes. His article, as other factual presentations of genocide in this volume by Housepian, Yates, and the International Commission of Jurists, has an authoritative ring. Other articles in the volume do not include evidence which supports the charges the authors are attempting to make. In some cases, as with David Aikman's piece on East Timor, the kind of information that would make a strong argument for genocide is impossible to collect because Indonesia does not allow researchers in East Timor.

Richard Arens' article raises serious questions about supporting documentation as well as the qualifications of researchers. Arens asserts that "as a matter of official policy 'Ache Indians in Paraguay' have been hunted like animals; the survivors of these manhunts have been sold into slavery or forced onto reservations. . . . as a result of the continuing genocidal policies of the government. . . ." Arens offers no data to back up such assertions. In fact, Arens had never worked with South American Indians and did not speak either their language or Spanish. How are we to assess his observations that the Ache reservations are comparable to Nazi concentration camps? Is it because Ache

houses were enclosed by barbed wire fences? In many areas of South America, houses are fenced in in order to keep cattle out, it being cheaper to fence houses than pasture. Further, Arens observed that "Indian adults were squatting in positions of abject depression. . . . An Indian maintaining a conversation with me through an interpreter in a standing position would sit or lie down on the ground in what seemed like total apathy or fatigue." Yet, anthropologists who have worked in the area insist that lying on the ground is the preferred position for conversation. Cross cultural assessments of "abject depression" are difficult to make, even for qualified observers.

More importantly, however, such observations neither support nor refute allegations of genocide in Paraguay. They can, however, undermine the credibility of other documentation which may relate directly to genocide. The situation in Paraguay was serious. It seems similar to indigenous groups that live on the frontiers of expanding societies throughout the Americas, Africa, and Asia. There is little doubt that genocide, according to the U.N. definition, is occurring in many of these areas. Overstating the case or making assertions that elicit an emotional response or that cannot be backed up neither help us combat specific cases nor develop theories of genocide.

Genocide has existed for millennia; the process of exterminating peoples has continued into the twentieth century. Economic "progress," population increases, resource scarcity, and competition for political power within states has created tensions between peoples throughout the world. All too often such tensions have resulted in the attempted elimination of one distinct racial, ethnic, or religious group by another. Within the present global framework of sustained economic recession, increased competition for resources, and ideologies such as "the greatest good for the greatest number," we can anticipate conflict, at times leading to genocide, in many areas of the world. We do need, then, an understanding of the causes of genocide so that we can predict and prevent future genocides. This book, all reservations aside, is a necessary step in that direction.

Professor Porter concludes that "the future looks promising for genocide studies." I would agree; however, I find the prospect unsettling. ■

Jason W. Clay
Cultural Survival
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Ararat*By D.M. Thomas*

New York: The Viking Press, 1983, 191 pp.

ALTHOUGH D.M. THOMAS'S layered, involuted novel moves toward a final vision of the snowy peaks of Mount Ararat, the reader should not anticipate a story set in Armenia, about only Armenians. Toying with the reader's sense of reality and illusion, moving mercilessly and unceasingly between distinct points of view, from story-teller to *improvisatore* and from past to present, Thomas examines profound questions concerning the chaos, brutality, and fragmentation of human experience, the mysteries of art and creation, and the importance of illusion. References to Mt. Ararat and Armenia seem to tie the various stories together, creating an apparent, if not a real, unity. Moving with Protean deceptiveness from story to story and story-teller to story-teller, Thomas weaves a complex narrative which time and time again confounds the reader's attempts to create order. A lesser novelist might have difficulty controlling such a technique. In his best moments Thomas creates a sense of illusion which captivates and intrigues; in his less successful the reader can only wonder what has happened.

Thomas opens the novel with an introduction of the Russian poet Sergei Rozanov who has "made an unnecessary journey from Moscow to Gorky, simply in order to sleep with a young blind woman." Unable to sleep, disappointed in her age and her "dreadfully thin legs," Rozanov passes the night by relating the three stories which make up the bulk of the novel — his subject, improvisation. As the reader moves through the three stories distinctions blur and vanish, though the themes of *Ararat* and of undertaking a journey to Armenia remain constant. Rozanov has never been to Armenia, though his mother was born there. His three main characters — the two Victor Surkovs and the Armenian-American woman — move closer and closer to Armenia until, in the novel's penultimate scene, one finally captures a glimpse of Ararat through the Erevan smog.

The first story related by Rozanov, that of the ailing Russian poet Victor Surkov on his way to Armenia by way of a long scenic boat ride to America, forms the most substantive section of Thomas' novel. Throughout his journey Surkov engages in womanizing, commenting to himself that "it is true that I burn up women as a marathon runner burns up his flesh." He, like Rozanov, finds it difficult to sleep, partly as a result of the stories told to him by Finn, the Ancient Mariner-like Scandinavian who must tell of his participation in every genocide of the twentieth century — from Armenia to Indo-China. Commenting that "after the war was over, I worked in India, Africa, and later Indo-

China . . . I've never truly retired. One becomes indispensable, or at least one thinks one does," Finn creates images of haunting horror and evil, as frightening in the attitude he represents as in the events he depicts. Unable to sleep, Rozanov lies on the billiard table, metamorphizes into Pushkin, and relates in full (Thomas' own translation) Pushkin's last unfinished work, "Egyptian Nights." Pushkin now tells the story of the Italian *improvisatore* who has come to St. Petersburg just prior to the Decembrist revolution. Following his translation of "Egyptian Nights" Thomas provides two possible endings — the first an account of Pushkin's death in a duel with his wife's lover and the second relating the death of the *improvisatore* set against the background of the Decembrist revolt. Thomas moves quickly and abruptly between past and present, playing with the reader's sense of order, daring the reader to follow his Protean moves. From where does the gift of improvisation and story-telling arise, he asks? What are its mysteries? And, what purposes do our illusions and fictions serve?

Rozanov's second story features another Russian poet, also named Victor Surkov, who too travels to Armenia by way of America. Rather than take the slow scenic route, though, he speeds to New York by plane to meet his Armenian-American sculptress pen-pal. En route, as he thinks of his own confused personal life, Surkov reflects on the apparent smallness of man: "How fragile, minute, meaningless was his life, flying over the great expanse; how minute this expanse compared with the world." He continues, contemplating the mysteries of creation: "Darwinism doesn't explain it. To create all this mysterious existence. . . . It may have happened by impulse, but it's not random." Thomas' narrative technique, constantly shifting, raises questions, leaving the reader to ponder possible answers. In flying to America to visit the Armenian woman, this Surkov too hopes to find Armenia. Again the image of Ararat casts its shadow. Disappointed in finding an American woman, lamenting that her "apartment was as American as her accent," that "most of her work was not especially suggestive of Armenia," and that "there were not even many books that bore on their spines the weird hieroglyphs of Armenian," Surkov too improvises, his story having Ararat at its core. Surkov relates the experiences of an English spy who takes a photograph from the wrong side of the mountain and reveals "if only you were not blind, you would see which side I'm on! But these peaks dazzle you. . . ." The peaks of Ararat do dazzle throughout the novel. We then leave Surkov dreaming that he has completed Pushkin's work — as the other Surkov had in the previous tale — and confused by the relationship between the sculptress and her Armenian lover.

In the last, very brief, episode Rozanov finally completes the journey to Armenia. Following an opening reference to Pushkin's "Egyptian Nights" and the theme of improvisation, Thomas moves the reader

swiftly to Erevan and introduces an American-Armenian woman on a Roots inspired journey to the land of her ancestors. While a drunken Russian poet sleeps nearby she and her Armenian host experience a moment of passion and energy which she had not before known. Sitting together "they began to talk about the subject that had been too sacred to discuss in the presence of a non-Armenian: the holocaust and diaspora . . . they caught hold of each other's hands . . . they confronted each other, like the twin peaks of Ararat." They then went out to view Ararat in the dawn. The confusion of characters and moods, the shifting points of view, the questions on the mysteries of art, the spontaneous stories of the *improvisatore*, the tales of grim horror told by the participant in all holocausts since 1915 — these all converge, at least momentarily, in the vision of Ararat's snowy peaks. Truly, "when you see it — you will know it," as this American-Armenian woman was told. Yet one cannot maintain that vision. Thomas returns the reader to the presence of Rozanov and the blind graduate student. The sleepless Rozanov, though, can now relax in his bed in Gorky and think of his "long, secret poem about Meyerhold and his wife Zinaida." His hours of *non-writing* can now become fruitful moments of literary creation.

Thomas dazzles the reader with his narrative gymnastics, shifting perspectives and voice, moving the reader in and out of the stories and improvisations. While teasing the reader with his Protean moves, Thomas maintains a stable vision of Ararat. As Rozanov suggests early on, "It did not dream of Noah's flood, nor of the more terrible flood of 1915. It stood. It let the storm clouds improvise around it." Relationships emerge and dissolve, sex and love become interchangeable, horrors of the world haunt us, the mysteries of art and creation awe us, and we lose our ability to distinguish illusion from reality — but Ararat "stood." Thomas' *Ararat* reminds us of the importance of illusion, fiction and art. Against the dazzling brilliance of nature and the grim horror of reality, perhaps only illusions enable us to maintain order. The unity imposed on the stories by references to Ararat and Armenia might simply be superficial. Yet, perhaps all we need — or all we can have — is the illusion of unity, the illusion of order to live out lives. Such might be Thomas' final message — his final comment on the mystery and importance of art. ■

Mary Arshagouni
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FORUM

To the editor:

Like Gary and Susan Lind-Sinianian, I learned the basics of Armenian lacemaking in private lessons from Alice Odian-Kasparian, author of the recently published book, *Armenian Needlelace and Embroidery*. Consequently, I was a bit disappointed by the Lind-Sinianians' review of the book, which appeared in the Winter 1983 issue of the *Armenian Review*. Since I had read the book in manuscript form and again in the abbreviated version published by EPM Publications, as I believe the Lind-Sinianians themselves did, I may have noticed certain omissions or misleading statements in the review which perhaps would escape the first-time reader of the book. The review troubled me, too, because most of the text was not devoted to an assessment of the book's actual content. Rather, the reviewers criticize the book, a short general survey, for raising "many unanswered questions" which actually would be more appropriately addressed in a comprehensive volume on the history of Armenian needleart. Indeed, the book should be praised for raising "many unanswered questions." If Mrs. Kasparian's work has succeeded in stimulating interest in Armenian needleart, it will have fulfilled one of the author's most cherished ambitions.

First, readers interested in ordering the book should note that the price is \$29.95, not \$22.95, as indicated.

In their discussion of Mrs. Kasparian's third chapter, which presents her "opinion" that needlearts may have originated in Armenia, the Lind-Sinianians state that the chapter should be "read with reservations." The author bases her premise on the presence of all the necessary raw materials in ancient Armenia and on the existence of several 3,000 year old artifacts excavated at Toprak Kale and Garmir Blur showing women wearing lace-edged veils, which the review fails to mention. These artifacts antedate the appearance of lace in Europe by at least two thousand years. The Lind-Sinianians question the validity of her theory, not because they find her evidence faulty, but because, they say, "Lace probably developed from fishing nets, yet Armenia lacks a seacoast." Soviet Armenia now has no seacoast, but lace is no modern invention. At various times during Armenia's history, it extended to the Caspian, Black, and Mediterranean seacoasts. Ancient Armenian fishermen cast their nets in the waters of Lakes Van, Sevan, and Urmia as well as the Euphrates, Tigris, and Arax Rivers, among others. Armenia had to pay a tribute to the Arab

caliphs which included several tons of dried fish. This would have been most difficult for a people without fishnets. The Lind-Sinanians' objection to Mrs. Kasparian's opinion that iron tools were required for needlelace seems pointless. Iron needles may not have been essential to originate early rough lace, but intricate lace patterns would be difficult, if not impossible to make with a coarse bone bronze needle borrowed from a museum, even for the most skilled lacemaker. Armenian needlelace, finer than bobbin or crocheted lace, does seem to call for Iron Age technology. Even embroidery with thicker bone or bronze needles would be limited, since delicate fabrics, such as fine linen and silk, would be damaged by such implements. As any seamstress knows, a fine needle must be used.

As for "the mislabeled photographs of the basic technique" for lacemaking on page 39, this appears to be a printer's error in the book in which illustration "C" was switched with illustration "D." The accompanying text is correct.

In her survey of Armenian embroidery (Chapter Five), Mrs. Kasparian obviously chose to treat techniques such as embroidery with silk cocoons and gold work on velvet briefly because their use in the modern world would be extremely limited. Silk worm cocoons or real silver and gold threads simply are not available at the local craft or fabric store. Based on her descriptions, an individual with a fair knowledge of general embroidery should be able to work with these materials. "Hand towels" are not a technique but a utilitarian item embroidered using a variety of techniques which the author indeed does discuss as they are characteristically Armenian. Many of the stitches, such as the satin stitch, the cross-stitch, and the blanket stitch, are common in the United States and Europe and require no special explanation. She should certainly not be faulted for failure to include detailed instructions for producing opulent embroideries which, due to the expense and rarity of the necessary materials, would be almost impossible for the modern lacemaker to duplicate. Instead, she wisely describes three well-known Armenian embroidery techniques which, due to the American missionary and relief organization practice of exporting Armenian laces made by Genocide survivors, may often be found embellishing tablecloths, antimacassars, or handkerchiefs in homes around the world, treasured as family heirlooms by non-Armenians. The raw materials to recreate these lovely embroideries are readily available. Many examples are at hand, and the ethnically diverse market for which the book was published would certainly find Mrs. Kasparian's instructions useful and welcome. The American missionaries and relief workers, incidentally, taught Armenian needlelace techniques to other peoples of the Near East.

As for the names of the lace patterns questioned by the Sinaniens, Mrs. Kasparian explains many of the mythology-related ones in Chapter Two of her book. Others obviously are descriptive, such as the *aklor*, or rooster pattern. As for the word *nakhash*, the Sinaniens state that it is a Turkish word used by (one presumes former Armenian) residents of Marash to describe their embroidery. However, the word is

not Turkish but Arabic in origin, probably adopted by Armenians during the Arab occupation of Armenia which antedated the Turkish presence by several centuries. And is the term *heusvadz gar*, used by the author, indeed "completely unknown" among Armenians from Marash as the reviewers state? One wonders about such sweeping statements. Prospective readers of the book might find information on the terminology which Mrs. Kasparian has chosen for lace patterns interesting, as the reviewers suggest. But in a book intended for the general public as a survey of Armenian needleart, the author obviously had to limit material more useful to scholars. Mrs. Kasparian's original manuscript contained several hundred pages, but its publication by a commercial publisher meant drastic editing. Perhaps an Armenian philanthropic organization might be willing to underwrite the cost of publishing her work in unabridged form.

As the book now stands, I believe it has made a valuable contribution to the study of a neglected art. Reviews in the *Middle East Journal* and the English publication, *Embroidery Magazine*, published by the Embroiderers' Guild, echo this assessment. Can we not judge Mrs. Kasparian's work on the basis of what it accomplishes in a mere 127 pages of text and photographs, rather than undermine her contribution by criticizing it for failure to include information more appropriate to a comprehensive scholarly study of the subject or by questioning the author's opinions, which she never attempts to present as fact? Armenians and non-Armenians alike should be grateful that the author devoted so much of her spare time and money for decades to the perpetuation of Armenian needleart, particularly since no one else bothered. I hope the Lind-Sinanians are sufficiently interested in Armenian needleart that they themselves will continue Mrs. Kasparian's research and publish their own findings. ■

Susan K. Blair
Washington, D.C.

To the editor:

It is gratifying to see that an effort is being made to write a serious commentary on the articles in *Polyphony* headed "Armenians in Ontario." The commentator does not spare his appreciation of the subject as a whole, but the common theme of his commentary is directed to indicating the fact that there is a lack of depth in the total effort as well as in the individual articles.

While I may personally agree that there is some lack of cohesiveness in the total picture, I wish the commentator would have realized that *Polyphony* is not, as the *Armenian Review*, for example, aiming to become a "scholarly" publication. The commentator's yardstick is being applied in the wrong places. *Polyphony* is a popular publication.

What is more, the commentator does not seem to realize that there are definite restrictions in a publication like *Polyphony*, as all the writers are asked to remain within the ethnocultural limits of the subject and refrain from political issues, which belong to other publications and not to *Polyphony*. I assure him that it was very difficult for me to exclude politics from my article.

The commentator would have served a very useful purpose if he had mentioned in the penultimate paragraph of his article the comparable documentation in United States which could have been used. Are there such publications? It would be good to know if there are.

Another point is the commentator's poor interpretation of the word *veejak* which, in this context, means "lot" from which is derived this word lottery, and not "condition, destiny, or fate" which are correct but do not apply to the *veejag* of each girl hoping to secure the realization of her dreams in drawing of the *veejag*.

And finally, why don't we all come together in United States and Canada to produce various "polyphonies" in order to safeguard the invaluable history of the Diaspora on the American continent and for the benefit of future historians of Armenian or non-Armenian origin. It is tantamount to writing the ups and downs of our struggle for survival in the face of innumerable adversities. ■

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