AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS (ABCFM) AND "NOMINAL CHRISTIANS": ELIAS RIGGS (1810-1901) AND AMERICAN MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

by

Mehmet Ali Doğan

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STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL

The dissertation of **Mehmet Ali Doğan**

has been approved by the following supervisory committee members:

Peter Sluglett	, Chair	**4/9/2010** Date Approved
Peter von Sivers	, Member	**4/9/2010** Date Approved
Roberta Micallef	, Member	**4/9/2010** Date Approved
M. Hakan Yavuz	, Member	**4/9/2010** Date Approved
Heather Sharkey	, Member	**4/9/2010** Date Approved

and by **Johanna Watzinger-Tharp**, Chair of the Department of **Middle East Center**

and by Donna M. White, Interim Dean of The Graduate School.

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I investigate the missionary activities of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in the Ottoman Empire. I am particularly interested in exploring the impact of the activities of one of the most important missionaries, Elias Riggs, on the minorities in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century. By analyzing the significance of his missionary work and the fruits of his intellectual and linguistic ability, we can better understand the efforts of the ABCFM missionaries to seek converts to the Protestant faith in the Ottoman Empire. I focus mainly on the period that began with Riggs' sailing from Boston to Athens in 1832 as a missionary of the ABCFM until his death in Istanbul on January 17, 1901.

Elias Riggs was one of the most influential missionaries in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century, and his life was associated with a period of significant change in the Ottoman Empire and the modern history of missionaries in the Middle East. He was instrumental in the ABCFM's decision to develop a Protestant publishing enterprise for the peoples in the region. In addition to his editorship of religious periodicals, he published a variety of books for the mission. He was a member of the translation committee for the Turkish Bible and he worked several years on translating the Bible into Armenian and Bulgarian. He had an exceptionally long career and worked in many parts of the region.

To my parents

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INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation, I investigate the missionary activities of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in the Ottoman Empire. I am particularly interested in exploring the impact of the activities of one of the most important missionaries, Elias Riggs, on the minorities in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century. By analyzing the significance of his missionary work and the fruits of his intellectual and linguistic ability, we can better understand the efforts of the ABCFM missionaries to seek converts to the Protestant faith in the Ottoman Empire. I focus mainly on the period that began with Riggs' sailing from Boston to Athens in 1832 as a missionary of the ABCFM until his death in Istanbul on January 17, 1901. I concentrate particularly on the effects of his publishing activities among the minorities in the Ottoman Empire.

The place of Elias Riggs in the missionary activities during the nineteenth century makes a fascinating story. He had an exceptionally long career and worked in many parts of the region. The first ABCFM school in Greece was opened by Elias and Martha Riggs in Argos in 1834. Riggs was based in Athens, 1832-34; in Argos, 1834-38; in Izmir 1838-53; and in Istanbul, 1853-1901. Riggs was associated with William Goodell, Cyrus Hamlin, William Schauffler, and Henry Otis Dwight, missionaries who had arrived in Istanbul in the 1830s. During his only return visit to the United States, in 1856-1858, he

taught Hebrew at Union Theological Seminary, but he declined an offer of the chair of Hebrew at the same college, preferring to return to the mission field in the Middle East. He spent the winter of 1862-63 in Egypt, from where he returned to Istanbul by way of the mission stations in Anatolia. During his years in Istanbul, he taught in mission schools; edited magazines; published tracts, hymns, and books; visited the missionary stations in neighboring cities; and preached frequently in mission churches. After the publication of his Bulgarian Bible in 1871, he joined a committee working on a standard Turkish Bible, published in 1878. From 1885 to 1888, he lived in Antep (Gaziantep) in Southeastern Anatolia, returning to Istanbul after his wife's death. For the next few years, he focused on the missionary activities of the European Turkey Mission. Riggs died in Istanbul on January 17, 1901, and is buried in Feriköy Protestant Cemetery.

Elias Riggs was one of the most influential missionaries in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century, and his life was associated with a period of significant change in the Ottoman Empire and the modern history of missionaries in the Middle East. He was instrumental in the ABCFM's decision to develop a Protestant publishing enterprise for the peoples in the region. In addition to his editorship of two religious periodicals (*Avedaper*, in Armenian, and *Zornitza*, in Bulgarian), he published a variety of books for the missions in the Ottoman Empire. He was a member of the translation committee for the Turkish Bible and he worked several years on translating the Bible into Armenian and Bulgarian.

The missionaries of the ABCFM arrived in the Ottoman Empire during a period of great flux. Greek nationalists were agitating for independence, and the Ottoman authorities were beginning to contemplate and implement a European-style reform

programme in order to strengthen the central authority in the Empire. Changes were also occurring within the non-Muslim religious minority communities of the Empire who were organized into a few broad *millets*, including the Greek Orthodox, the Gregorian Armenians, and the Jews. After the reform policies of Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) and Sultan Mahmut II (1808-1839), the efforts to modernize and reorganize the state apparatus continued in the Ottoman Empire under a period known as the *Tanzimat* (reorganization) (1839-1876), and later during the era of Abdülhamit II (1876-1909).[1]

My research raised new questions with regard to the characteristics of the ABCFM's missionary activities during the reform period of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire and the role of Elias Riggs: How did this long history of the American missionaries in the foreign lands begin? What were the outcomes of the Westernized and modernized educational influence of the ABCFM in the Middle East? What were the effects of Riggs' publishing activities among the minorities in the Ottoman Empire? How and why was Elias Riggs an important figure in the publications of the ABCFM? What was the discussion between the ABCFM missionaries about the methodology and the question of how to approach the Eastern Churches and their followers? How did the Tanzimat period and the creation of the Protestant millet affect American missionary activities in Anatolia and the Balkans?

Many Christian missionary organizations in the United States and Western Europe considered the Ottoman Empire a promising field for their missionary activities. Missionary societies of various sizes and different denominations from almost all Western countries sent missionaries to the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth and

[1] For more discussion on the Tanzimat era, see Chapter 4; and for millets, see Chapter 5.

early twentieth centuries. While Catholic missionary activities had started in the Ottoman territories as early as the sixteenth century, the more organized American and European missionary endeavors which began in the nineteenth century aimed both to bring Christianity to the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and to revitalize Eastern Christianity. Of course, missionaries to the Ottoman Empire were also attracted to the Holy Land. It soon became clear that there was little point in attempting to proselytize among the Muslims because it was forbidden by the imperial authorities and hence, the mass conversion of the Muslim population in the Empire to Christianity was not possible. Therefore, the Western missionaries concentrated primarily on the many Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire, including Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Copts, Maronites, and Jews.

When the American missionaries arrived at the Ottoman Empire, there were already other missionaries working in the field. The Catholic Church had always been interested in the Eastern Christians, and Catholic missionaries had long been attempting to bring them into communion with Rome. In 1622, the Papacy created the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith *(Propaganda Fide)* in order to centralize Catholic missionary activities. Protected by various European powers, particularly France, several Catholic orders and congregations, including the Capuchins, Franciscans, Carmelites, Dominicans, Augustinians, and Jesuits, worked in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. They established schools and hospitals mainly for the Eastern Christians, but, before the nineteenth century, their schools were often of no better quality than the local schools.

The second half of the eighteenth century, when secularism and anticlericalism were on the rise in Europe, was a period of decline. The European Catholic monarchies resented the Jesuits' close connections with the papacy, and Jesuit activities were greatly restricted in France, Spain and Portugal, culminating in the suspension of the order by the papacy in 1773. All French missionary societies were suppressed by Napoleon in 1809, and this ended French recruitment for a generation. However, Catholic missionary enterprise took on renewed momentum in the mid-nineteenth century mainly because of the reinstatement of the Jesuits in 1814, the rivalry between Catholic and Protestant missionaries, and the Tanzimat period in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, Jesuit schools in Istanbul in the 1850s, for example, were offering a liberal education which included instruction in modern languages and fine arts.[2]

The ABCFM was not the only Protestant missionary endeavor in the Ottoman Empire. Before the arrival of the Americans, Protestant missions in the Ottoman Empire had been dominated by British missionary organizations which began to take an interest

[2] See Mehmet Ali Doğan, "Missionary Schools," in *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 385-388. For a general idea of Catholic missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire, see Jérôme Bocquet, *Missionnaires Français en Terre d'Islam: Damas 1860-1914* (Paris: Indes Savantes, 2005); Charles A. Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The Church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Chantal Donzel-Verdeil, *Les Jésuites de Syrie (1830-1864): Une Mission Auprès des Chrétiens d'Orient au Début des Réformes Ottomanes* (Lille: Atelier National de Reproduction des Thèses, 2004); István György Tóth, "Between Islam and Catholicism: Bosnian Franciscan Missionaries in Turkish Hungary, 1584-1716," *The Catholic Historical Review* 89:3 (July 2003): 409-433; Charles A. Frazee, "The Formation of the Armenian Catholic Community in the Ottoman Empire," *Eastern Churches Review* 7:2 (1975): 149-163; Hristo Gluškov, "Les Missions Catholiques et l'Influence Française en Thrace de l'Est Durant les Annees 80 du XIXe Siècle," *Bulgarian Historical Review* 26:1-2 (1998): 179-196; Jean-Baptiste Piolet, ed., *Les Missions Catholiques Françaises au XIXe Siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris: A. Colin, 1901-1903); P. Marie-Joseph, "La Mission des Carmes à Bagdad & l'Influence Française en Orient," *Études Carmélitaines Historiques et Critiques* 3:3 (15 Juillet 1913): 293-317; and the following three articles in Heleen Murre-van den Berg, ed., *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2006): Bernard Heyberger and Chantal Verdeil, "Spirituality and Scholarship: The Holy Land in Jesuit Eyes (Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries)," 19-41; Giuseppe Buffon, "Les Franciscains en Terre Sainte: de l'escape au territoire, entre opposition et adaptation," 65-91; and Anthony O'Mahony, "The Coptic Catholic Church, the Apostolic Vicar Maximus Giuaid (1821-1831), the Propaganda Fide and the Franciscans in Early Nineteenth Century Egypt," 93-111.

in the Eastern Mediterranean after the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815. For example, the Church Missionary Society (CMS), established in the period of British missionary revival in 1799, began its operations in the Mediterranean in 1812 and set up a Mediterranean mission in Malta in 1815. Other British missionary organizations active in the Mediterranean in the first half of the nineteenth century were the London Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, the Religious Tract Society, and the Wesleyan Methodists.[3] The British missionaries provided intelligence, support, and advice for the newly arriving American missionaries and reports on British missionary work frequently appeared in the columns of the missionary periodicals in the United States during the 1820s.

Archives and Review of Literature

The best place to start and carry out the kind of interdisciplinary research in which I am interested was the official archives of the ABCFM at Houghton Library of Harvard University. The records of missionary activities in the Middle East provide valuable information on the social, religious, political, and economic events of the region. Understandably, the various organizations sometimes exaggerated their success and were rarely sufficiently objective to assess their failures. I was a Visiting Fellow at the Center of Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University and I worked at the official archives of

[3] See George H. Scherer, *Mediterranean Missions 1808-1870* (Beirut: The Bible Lands Union for Christian Education, 1930); Richard Clogg, "Some Protestant Tracts Printed at the Press of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople: 1818-1820," *Eastern Churches Review* 2 (1968): 152-164; A. L. Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine 1800-1901: A Study of Religious and Educational Enterprise* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); Yaron Perry, *British Mission to the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Palestine* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); and Kenneth Cragg, "Being Made Disciples – The Middle East," in *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999*, ed. Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 120-143.

the ABCFM at Houghton Library a few years ago. While in Boston, I also studied at the Franklin Trask Library at the Andover-Newton Theological School and Congregational Library and Archives. My research in Massachusetts helped me map out the interactions between the people in the Middle East and the American missionaries through the missionaries' personal papers, memoirs, publications, records, correspondences, translations, and reports.

To complete this dissertation, I also consulted the Ottoman archives. The relevant materials are located at the *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi* (Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives) in Istanbul. Since I had done some preliminary research in the Ottoman archives, I knew which files were crucial for my dissertation.[4] Although I was not able to find any documents directly related to Elias Riggs,[5] I found hundreds of documents related to the missionary activities of the ABCFM in Anatolia and the Balkans.[6] I evaluated my findings at the Ottoman archives by comparing them with the materials which I had collected at the official archives of the ABCFM at Harvard University. Documents and books related to the Near East Mission of ABCFM are housed in the private library and archive of the *Amerikan Bord Heyeti*, which I also consulted while I was in Istanbul.[7] Access to the collection is granted on a special permission basis.

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[4] The materials from the Ottoman archives are cited in the dissertation as follows. For example, BOA, Y.PRK.DH., 10/58 (29 Zilhicce 1315 [20 May 1898]). BOA: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives; Y.PRK.DH. (Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Dahiliye Nezâreti Maruzatı): Fon Kodu; 10: Dosya No; 58: Gömlek No; (29 Zilhicce 1315): Date (Hijrî); [20 May 1898]: Date (Gregorian).

[5] There were a few materials related to his descendants working as missionaries in the Ottoman Empire, including his son Edward and his grandson Henry. For example, see Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi/Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives (hereafter BOA), DH.EUM.2.Şb., 32/11 (5 Rabîulevvel 1335 [30 December 1916]); BOA, DH.EUM.2.Şb., 27/37 (12 Zilkâde 1334 [11 September 1916]) BOA, DH.MKT., 1550/90 (29 Muharrem 1306 [5 October 1888]); and BOA, HR.TO., 148/81 (25 August 1888).

[6] For a list of the archival documents I have utilized, see the bibliography.

[7] The documents were subsequently transferred to the ARIT (American Research Institute in Turkey) center in Istanbul.

I have examined new sources and present a new picture of this very influential missionary organization both in American and Middle East history. In this sense, the dissertation will contribute to the growth of the studies on missionary activities within the framework of modern American and Ottoman studies. Many scholars have studied Western missionaries in the Middle East by focusing on several aspects of their activities and consulted the relevant local sources and missionary archives. There are a number of monographs on American missionary activities focusing in whole or in part of the Middle East, including Uygur Kocabaşoğlu's pathbreaking book in Turkish entitled *Anadolu'daki Amerika: Kendi Belgeleriyle 19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki Amerikan Misyoner Okulları* (America in Anatolia through Its Own Documents: American Missionary Schools in the Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth Century); Frank Stone's pioneering book about the educational institutions of the ABCFM in Anatolia entitled *Academies for Anatolia: A Study of the Rationale, Program and Impact of the Educational Institutions Sponsored by the American Board in Turkey, 1830-1980*; Robert L. Daniel's significant study *American Philanthropy in the Near East, 1820-1960*; David H. Finnie's pioneering book *Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East*; Joseph L. Grabill's original study *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927*; Adnan Abu-Ghazaleh's *American Missions in Syria: A Study of American Missionary Contribution to Arab Nationalism in 19th Century Syria*; Hans-Lukas Kieser's *Der Verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839-1938* and *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East*; Erdal Açıkses' *Amerikalıların Harput'taki Misyonerlik Faaliyetleri* (American Missionary Activities in Harput); Lisa Joy Pruitt's

"A Looking-Glass for the Ladies": American Protestant Women and the Orient in the Nineteenth Century; Jeremy Salt's *Imperialism, Evangelism and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878-1896*; A. L. Tibawi's pioneering study *American Interests in Syria 1800-1901, A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work*; Ussama Makdisi's important study on the encounter between American Protestant missionaries and Maronite Christian leaders in nineteenth-century Lebanon, entitled *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East*; and Heather J. Sharkey's compelling examination of American Presbyterians' efforts to evangelize Egypt, entitled *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire*.

In addition to monographs and scholarly articles, a few edited volumes, which grew out of a number of conferences and symposiums focused upon the complex history of the Western missionary work in the Middle East, have appeared in recent years: *New Faith in Ancient Lands: Western Missions in the Middle East in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* edited by Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *Christian Witness between Continuity and New Beginnings: Modern Historical Missions in the Middle East* edited by Martin Tamcke and Michael Marten, and *Altruism and Imperialism: Western Cultural and Religious Missions in the Middle East* edited by Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon. The first edited volume, which attempted to analyze only the American missionary activities in the Middle East, was published by the University of Utah Press in 2011, entitled *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters* edited by Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather J. Sharkey. The collection of essays in the book examined the missionary activities of various American denominations and organizations, including Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, and the

Methodist Episcopal Church in the Middle East throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition to the edited books, there are also special edited issues of academic journals on the subject, including "Beyond the Clash of Civilizations: Missionaries, Conversion and Tolerance in the Ottoman Empire," edited by Ussama Makdisi and published in *Archaeology and History in Lebanon* (Autumn 2005); and "Missionary Transformations: Gender, Culture and Identity in the Middle East," edited by Eleanor Abdella Doumato and published in *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (Fall 2002).

Although the work undertaken by American missionaries in the Middle East has been studied by many scholars, more research needs to be done regarding Elias Riggs' missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire. The only works to focus exclusively on his missionary enterprise are the two articles published by Philip Shashko, entitled "A Recent Discovery: The Elias Riggs Translations from *Bulgarski Narodni Pesni* by the Miladinov Brothers," and "Elias Riggs: A Man with a Mission."[8] In the official archives of the ABCFM at the Houghton Library of Harvard University, I found Elias Riggs' diary, entitled *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children* and his biography *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey* written by his grandson Charles Trowbridge Riggs, both of which remain unpublished[9] and have aided me in tracing footsteps of this influential missionary in the Middle East throughout the nineteenth century.

Elias Riggs mainly worked in an Ottoman orbit centered in Anatolia and the southeastern Balkans and not in the Arabic-speaking regions of the Empire. Although

[8] Philip Shashko, "A Recent Discovery: The Elias Riggs Translations from *Bulgarski Narodni Pesni* by the Miladinov Brothers," *Etudes Balkaniques* 26:1 (1990): 69-79; and "Elias Riggs: A Man with a Mission," *Spektur* 75 (1991): 86-91.
[9] ABC 77.1, Biographical Collection, Box 61, Folder 50:21.

Greece and Bulgaria are clearly not regarded as Middle East countries today, I prefer using the term Middle East throughout this dissertation to "define" the broader region where Riggs and his friends worked. Riggs was a missionary at the Istanbul station of the European Turkey Mission when he died, and while he worked for this Mission, he worked mainly in Istanbul, not in Bulgaria. I will also try not to separate Elias Riggs' activities from the general activities of the ABCFM in the region by using the term Middle East. American conceptions of the region are also important in this context since Riggs and his missionary friends were *American* missionaries. I prefer using the term Middle East throughout this dissertation because, as Heather Sharkey argues, it is "simply shorthand for evolving American conceptions of the region across decades of political flux."[10]

Chapter Overview

The first chapter begins with a description of a diverse series of religious revivals called the *Second Great Awakening*, which emerged in various regions in the United States. It illustrates how the Awakening motivated a wave of social activism and gave great impetus to the foundation of several benevolent societies and missionary organizations, including the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (ABCFM), and how this awakening of religious concern signaled the inception of missionary work in New England. This chapter introduces the subject by analyzing the beginning of American foreign missionary endeavor in the United States after the Second

[10] For a note on terminology related to the Middle East, see Heather J. Sharkey, "American Missionaries and the Middle East: A History Enmeshed," in *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters*, ed. Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather J. Sharkey (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), xi.

Great Awakening and the establishment of the ABCFM in 1810. The ABCFM was the first foreign mission board founded in the United States, and the largest in the nineteenth century. It sent first missionaries to the Indian subcontinent and then to the Middle East in order to establish a mission in Jerusalem. The second half of this chapter thus focuses on the activities of the missionary pioneers in the Ottoman Empire, Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons. It argues that the pioneers received detailed instructions from headquarters regarding the Bible and other publications because the use of the printed word and distribution of Bibles were very important for the missionaries in order to reach potential converts in the region.

After explaining how this long history of the American missionaries in foreign lands began, the next chapter analyzes the formative years of the American missionary establishment after Parsons and Fisk and the early printing activities of the ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire. The chapter argues that before the arrival of the Americans, Protestant missions in the Middle East had been dominated by British missionary organizations and that the British missionaries provided intelligence, support, and advice for the new coming American missionaries. Malta, under British rule, was an ideal location for a mission station and a favorable place for the American missionaries to print their materials. In this chapter, it was also explained how the ABCFM founded its first school in Beirut in 1824. The missionaries considered schools as an important means of multiplying their opportunities of making contact with the children, their friends, and families. In the early years, the ABCFM missionaries had not been successful in converting Muslims and the chapter shows why the Western missionaries now concentrated primarily on the many Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire,

including Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Copts, Maronites, and Jews. Several exploratory journeys were undertaken during the 1820s, mainly to investigate conditions in the region, and to find suitable locations for mission stations and congregations to be evangelized. Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire were very conservative and the ecclesiastical authorities of both the Maronite and the Greek Orthodox churches strongly opposed the American missionaries during the 1820s when they tried to distribute Bibles and tracts among their followers. Chronologically structured, the chapter deals with the early forays of the ABCFM in the Middle East during the 1820s and argues that the early years of ABCFM's work in the region were of an experimental nature.

Chapter 3 introduces Elias Riggs, who accepted the offer of the ABCFM to become one of its missionaries in Greece in 1832. His foreign missionary service lasted for more than sixty years, and he was one of the most influential missionaries in the Ottoman Empire for the greater part of the nineteenth century. The instructions of the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM specified his particular responsibility as "the re-publishing of the Gospel" in the lands where he was to go. Riggs worked at the two mission stations of the ABCFM in Greece, Athens and Argos. In terms of popular acceptance, the missionaries of the ABCFM were not successful among the Orthodox Greeks in Greece, who were very largely unresponsive to their efforts. According to the Greek priests, missionary schools and activities were undermining the ties between the Greek people and the Greek Church by disseminating heterodox ideas; therefore, the evangelical activities should be suppressed. The chapter also examines ongoing discussion between the ABCFM missionaries about the methodology and the question of

how to approach the Eastern Churches and their followers. It shows that with the help of the previous missionaries' exploratory journeys, the ABCFM was now reasonably well informed about the religious, moral, intellectual and social situation in the region.

The first part of Chapter 4 deals with the efforts of the ABCFM's missionaries for "restoration" of the "nominal" Christians in the Tanzimat era. They regarded the Christians of the Ottoman Empire as "nominal" Christians. Since they were bankrupt of Christian virtues and had a deteriorated form of religion, they were Christians in name only and needed guidance to a better form of Christianity. The ABCFM argued that the "Oriental Churches" needed assistance from abroad for their spiritual renewal. For the ABCFM, the "nominal" Christians in the region were also an obstacle to its being able to make advances among the Muslims. The second part of the chapter illustrates why the ABCFM transferred Elias Riggs from the Greek mission to Izmir and examines his missionary activities in the city. Like the other ABCFM missionaries in the mission station of Izmir, Elias Riggs was chiefly occupied with the press and its editorial labors, including translating, preparing, and publishing Bibles, tracts, religious books, and school books in vernacular languages. The demand for the books and tracts published by the mission press in Izmir gradually increased as the ABCFM began to establish more mission stations in Anatolia. In order to reach the people of the region, as expected, the books were published in the vernacular languages, including Armenian, Armeno-Turkish (Turkish in Armenian letters), Greek, Greco-Turkish (Turkish in Greek letters), and Bulgarian. In 1844**,** the ABCFM decided to discontinue its Greek department in the Ottoman Empire and to focus on the Armenian population. In Izmir, Riggs worked among the Greeks for six years (1838-1844) and then among the Armenians for eight

years (1844-1852) after the ABCFM changed its strategy. The chapter demonstrates how his tours around the region gave him greater familiarity with the various religious and ethnic communities of the Ottoman Empire. It also shows the advances of the ABCFM in the cities in Anatolia from Istanbul to the Euphrates that were becoming ABCFM mission stations.

Chapter 5 addresses Elias Riggs' missionary activities in the Ottoman capital along with the creation of the Protestant millet in the Ottoman Empire in 1850. The recognition of the Protestant millet by the Ottoman authorities marked the beginning of a new era for the ABCFM's missionary enterprise. In 1859, the mission to the Bulgarians was initiated. In 1871, the ABCFM established the first Protestant church among the Bulgarians. In addition, because of the expansion of its efforts among the Armenians, ABCFM reorganized its missions in Anatolia and divided them into three: Western Turkey Mission, Central Turkey Mission, and Eastern Turkey Mission. In order to reduce the cost of the missions in Anatolia, the ABCFM urged that the local population should support the local pastors. The missionaries knew that they were foreigners in the eyes of the people and professionally used local pastors who could be in close touch with the people. The chapter shows that with the increase in the numbers of graduates from its seminaries, the ABCFM needed higher educational institutions for both sexes. The increase in the number of schools brought a growing demand for school books and more schools meant more literate people who asked for more printed materials. The chapter also explains why the ABCFM transferred its press from Izmir to Istanbul, where Riggs spent most of his time on activities among the Bulgarians. In addition to revising the Bulgarian Scriptures, he prepared and edited Bulgarian religious tracts in Istanbul.

Chapter 6 analyzes Elias Riggs' missionary activities between 1870 and 1901. In 1870, the missionary activities of the ABCFM in Anatolia became so extensive that the Prudential Committee transferred the Syria mission to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, which became responsible of the missionary activities among the Arabic-speakers, Persians, and Nestorians. The ABCFM continued its missionary activities in Anatolia and the Balkans. The chapters shows that with the opening of several mission stations and out-stations, the missionaries in the Ottoman Empire needed reinforcements from headquarters in Boston so as to strengthen the missionary force in the field. It also analyzes the efforts of the ABCFM missionaries to provide the Bible in vernacular, which was vital for their evangelical activities; *Zornitza*, a newspaper in Bulgarian published by the ABCFM in order to reach every possible convert in the region; the role of women missionaries in the mission; Elias Riggs' missionary activities in the European Turkey Mission and the effects of his literary work in the region. With Riggs' death, the ABCFM lost its last pioneer and its most prominent Christian scholar in the Levant. The chapter also mentions that the ABCFM reminded the missionaries in the field that the aim of the Board was "to Christianize and not to civilize." The fundamental aim was to convert people to Protestantism.

The conclusion summarizes the missionary activities of the ABCFM and Elias Riggs in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century. American missionaries utilized "education" in the missionary establishments in order to reach the peoples of the region and many Ottoman officials thought that the missionary schools constituted a threat to the Empire and implemented measures to control and limit their activities. The conclusion also gives a few examples of the missionary societies of various sizes and

different denominations from almost all Western countries which sent their missionaries to the Ottoman Empire. It also considers how and why Elias Riggs was an important figure in the history of the ABCFM.

CHAPTER 1

FROM NEW ENGLAND INTO NEW LANDS:

THE BEGINNING OF A LONG STORY

"*For Jerusalem's sake* let us *give ourselves no rest*" [1]

> In every direction to which we can turn our eyes, we may discover regions which claim the compassionate regard of Christians. From the North and the South, from the East and the West, we may hear the same call that was heard, by Paul in vision, from a man of Macedonia: "Come over and help us." In Europe, in Asia, in Africa, how many millions of our apostate race are perishing for want of the Bread of Life! What darkness covers, what idolatry debases. Heathen nations! On the borders of our own country, how many Indian tribes to civilize and christianize! Within the limits of our own territory, how many populous settlements seldom hear a sermon from a minister of Jesus![2]

So said the chairman of the managers of the *Philadelphia Missionary Society* in an address to his colleagues in 1813. His words captured the spirit of a nineteenth century that was marked by the rapid, global pursuit of foreign missions among North American and European churches. In the United States, many evangelical Protestants believed that the Middle East, as the heart of the "Bible Lands," was a particularly promising field for missionary activities. They therefore set out to establish missions in the region.

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[1] Timothy Dwight, *A Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Theological Institution in Andover, and at the Ordination of Rev. Eliphalet Pearson, LL.D. September 28th, 1808* (Boston: Farrand, Mallory, 1808), 26.

[2] "An Address of the Managers of the Philadelphia Missionary Society," *Religious Remembrancer*, September 11, 1813, 7.

This chapter examines the historical roots of American missions in the Middle East. These missions began amid the early nineteenth-century movement known as the Second Great Awakening. Critical to this missionary engagement was the establishment of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), which sent American missionary pioneers to the Levant in the 1820s. These early ABCFM initiatives in the Middle East were of an experimental nature, but they set the foundations for subsequent American Protestant missionary encounters in the region.

The Second Great Awakening

The earliest American missions to the Middle East developed in the context of a series of Christian evangelical revivals in the early nineteenth century, known collectively as the Second Great Awakening. The term Second Great Awakening suggested succession from an earlier revival movement, namely, the First Great Awakening, which had emerged during the 1730s and 1740s. Both movements profoundly affected the characteristics of American Christianity and extended the influence of Christianity over the nation. The First Great Awakening influenced political and social thought, transforming the religious and social life of the colonies before the American Revolution. The Second Great Awakening was a series of revivals, in which American society experienced an outpouring of religious concern, a flowering of spiritual sentiment, a vast mobilization of people, and unparalleled growth in church membership.[3] Alexis de Tocqueville, the French aristocrat who visited the United States

[3] See Barry Hankins, *The Second Great Awakening and the Transcendentalists* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004); Frank Lambert, *Inventing the "Great Awakening"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Donald G. Mathews, "The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process, 1780-1830: An Hypothesis," *American Quarterly* 21:1 (Spring 1969): 23-43; William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals,*

in the early nineteenth century, observed that "there is no country in the whole world in which the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."[4]

This "awakening" emerged in various parts of the United States mainly as a reaction to the deism of the Enlightenment and the general decline in religious interest in America. Many local congregations had been disrupted during the American War of Independence, while some were dissatisfied with Christianity as previously practiced. The Second Great Awakening was a galvanizing event that boosted attendance in churches throughout the country. All denominations, such as *Congregationalists* in New England, *Presbyterians* in the mid-Atlantic region, and *Methodists* and *Baptists* in the Southwest participated in these revivals, as did Christians who were moving westward with the frontier.[5] Moreover, the Awakening provided the impetus for the foundation of several new American denominations such as the *Disciples of Christ*, the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, and the *Transcendentalists*.[6] Its revivals, which fortified the Protestant culture of the early American republic, had a wide social and political impact. Namely, the revivals enhanced American Christian discourses about creating a godly republic. They also stimulated a wave of social activism that led to the foundation of several benevolent societies and missionary organizations, including the *American Board*

Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978); Nancy F. Cott, "Young Women in the Second Great Awakening in New England," *Feminist Studies* 3:1/2 (Autumn 1975): 15-29; Richard Carwardine, "The Second Great Awakening in Comparative Perspective: Revivals and Culture in the United States and Britain," in *Modern Christian Revivals*, ed. Edith L. Blumhofer and Randall Balmer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 84-100; and Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

[4] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2002), 241.

[5] J.R. Fitzmier, "Second Great Awakening," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, ed. Daniel G. Reid et al. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 1067.

[6] See Matt McCook, "Aliens in the World: Sectarians, Secularism and the Second Great Awakening" (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2005).

of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810), the *Home and Foreign Mission Society* (1812), the *General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions* (1814), the *American Education Society* (1815), the *American Bible Society* (1816), the *American Colonization Society* (1817), the *Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1819), the *American Sunday School Union* (1824), the *American Tract Society* (1825), the *American Home Missionary Society* (1826), and the *American Temperance Society* (1826).[7] Between 1810 and 1870, American evangelicals established approximately twenty-four societies dedicated to evangelism and Bible and tract distribution.[8] "Earlier deistic elements," says Robert Linder, "now combined with a virile evangelical faith to produce for the fledgling republic a civil religion which emphasized America's godly connections, unique history and millennial mission to convert the world to Christianity and democracy."[9]

Donald Mathews argues that the Second Great Awakening was "an organizing process that helped to give meaning and direction to people suffering in various degrees from the social strains of a nation on the move into new political, economic and geographical areas."[10] Indeed, the Unites States was rapidly changing. The country was not a narrow band along the eastern seacoast anymore and already extended many

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[7] Wilbert R. Shenk, ed., *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 4; Mark A. Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 68; McLoughlin, *Revivals*, 112; and Hankins, *The Second Great Awakening*, 16. The reader can also find a list of American societies, which was established during the first half of the nineteenth century, with their date of founding in Charles I. Foster, *An Errand of Mercy: The Evangelical United Front 1790-1837* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 275-279. Foster admits that his list is not exhaustive and the dates are not definite.

[8] William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 45.

[9] Robert D. Linder, "Division and Unity: The Paradox of Christianity in America," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, ed. Daniel G. Reid et al. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 9.

[10] Donald G. Mathews, "The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process, 1780-1830: An Hypothesis," *American Quarterly* 21:1 (Spring 1969): 27.

hundreds of miles inland.[11] The Louisiana Purchase had doubled the size of the country in 1803. The population had increased rapidly, from slightly fewer than four million to almost thirteen million between 1790 and 1830.[12] Additionally, the country was receiving new waves of immigrants daily.[13] Along with population growth, there were also two demographic shifts: a strong westward movement of people from the seaboard states and migration from rural areas to towns and cities.[14] "The incredible dimensions of national expansion were a daunting challenge," Mark Noll observes "and the ecclesiastical response was the voluntary society."[15]

New England

The Second Great Awakening brought about a major revitalization of the New England social order[16] and signaled the inception of missionary work in New England, where Congregational and Presbyterian churches dominated the revivals of the Awakening. In 1798, Connecticut pastors established the *Missionary Society of Connecticut*[17] to carry out missionary work in order to evangelize both the new European settlers and Native Americans.[18] After the formation of the *Massachusetts Missionary*

[11] Keith J. Hardman, *Issues in American Christianity: Primary Sources with Introductions* (Grand Rapids: Bakery Books, 1993), 111.
[12] Mark A. Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 68.
[13] Edwin Scott Gaustad, *A Religious History of America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 129.
[14] Randall B. Woods and Willard B. Gatewood, *The American Experience: A Concise History* (Fort Worth: Harcourt College, 2000), 199.
[15] Mark A. Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World*, 68.
[16] Richard D. Birdsall, "The Second Great Awakening and the New England Social Order," *Church History* 39:3 (September 1970): 345.
[17] "Missionary Society of Connecticut," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* 1:1, July 1800, 13-14; and James R. Rohrer, "The Connecticut Missionary Society and Book Distribution in the Early Republic," *Libraries and Culture* 34:1 (Winter 1999): 18.
[18] *The Constitution of the Missionary Society of Connecticut: with an address from the Board of Trustees to the people of the state, and a narrative on the subject of missions: to which is subjoined, a statement of the funds of the Society* (Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1800), 8.

Society in Boston in May 1799, a missionary endeavor developed among the Congregational churches in New England.[19] Similar societies were organized in other New England states. The members of the Massachusetts Missionary Society declared their aim as "to diffuse the knowledge of the Gospel among the heathens, as well as other people in the remote parts of our country, where Christ is seldom or never preached."[20]

Missionary literature was also expanding in the region. Missionary biographies, sermons, narratives, and tracts were circulating. Missionary publications in New England such as *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, and *Panoplist*[21] were reporting on the foreign missionary work of the European missionaries regardless of denominational affiliation in order to promote missionary activities at home and abroad.[22] These overseas examples certainly convinced many people in New England of the need for foreign missions as the revivals of the Second Great Awakening spread

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[19] Congregational Library and Archives (Boston), Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ Records, 1799-1996. Box 2 Folder 1 (Minutes, 1799-ca. 1803); "A Brief Abstract of the Proceedings and Fund of the Massachusetts Missionary Society," *The New-York Missionary Magazine, and Repository of Religious Intelligence* 1:6, 434-435; and "An Address of the Massachusetts Missionary Society to the Public," *The New-York Missionary Magazine, and Repository of Religious Intelligence* 1:6, 436-440.

[20] S. M. Worcester, "Origin of American Foreign Missions," in *American Missionary Memorial, Including Biographical and Historical Sketches*, ed. Hamilton W. Pierson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1853), 10.

[21] The *Panoplist* started in 1805 and became *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine United* after the absorption of the *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine* in 1808. It was published as *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (1812-1817) and *Panoplist and Missionary Herald* (1818-1820). In January 1821, it simply became *Missionary Herald* which was the official monthly publication of the ABCFM for more than a century. See Gaylord P. Albaugh, *History and Annotated Bibliography of American Religious Periodicals and Newspapers Established from 1730 through 1830*, 2 vols. (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1994), vol 1, 618-626 and vol 2, 721-723. For the early years of Panoplist, see Peter Kawerau, *Amerika und die Orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang Der Amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1958), 128-139.

[22] For example, "London Missionary Society," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* 1:1 (July 1800); "A Dialogue between Africanus, Americanus, and Benevolus, on Sending Missionaries to Carry the Gospel to the Heathen in Africa. Dedicated to the Missionary Societies in the states of New-York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts," *The New-York Missionary Magazine, and Repository of Religious Intelligence* 2:1 (1801): 25-34; "Religious Intelligence: Abstract of the Account of the Protestant Missions in the East Indies for the Year 1803," *Christian Observer* 3:12 (December 1804): 781-784; "Religious Intelligence: Missions in India," *The Massachusetts Missionary Magazine* 4:5 (October 1806): 195-198; and "Religious Intelligence: Foreign. Missions in South Africa. East Indies. Otaheite. Great Britain. Methodist Conference," *Panoplist* 1:1 (June 1805): 29-33.

across New England for two or three generations.[23] Ultimately, too, these examples of missionary cooperation of mutual awareness also planted the seeds of Protestant ecumenism.

The Second Great Awakening was also a turning point in the history of theological education in New England. Andover Theological Seminary, whose faculty were associated with the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, opened its doors in September 1808 and became an important center of missionary spirit for foreign missions.[24] In a sermon preached at the opening, Timothy Dwight, President of Yale, stated that "it is the design of this Institution to furnish students with a sufficient opportunity to prepare themselves for the Ministry of the Gospel."[25] According to its constitution, the seminary "shall be equally open to Protestants of every denomination."[26] In addition to being America's first postgraduate theological school and offering a new style of American theological education, the seminary was the training center for the missionaries of the ABCFM from the beginning.[27] According to Leonard Woods, author of *History of the Andover Theological Seminary,* all but one of its missionaries studied at the seminary during the first decade of the American Board.[28] Andover Theological Seminary retained considerable influence, so that over the next fifty years, 40 percent of

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[23] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 416.
[24] Henry K. Rowe, *History of Andover Theological Seminary* (Newton: Thomas Todd, 1933), 23; John A. Andrew III, *Rebuilding the Christian Commonwealth: New England Congregationalists & Foreign Missions, 1800-1830* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 17 and 20; and "Theological Institution," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 1:4 (September 1808): 191.
[25] Timothy Dwight, *A Sermon Preached at the Opening of the Theological Institution in Andover, and at the Ordination of Rev. Eliphalet Pearson, LL.D. September 28th, 1808* (Boston: Farrand, Mallory, 1808), 10.
[26] *The Constitution and Associate Statutes of the Theological Seminary in Andover; with a Sketch of its Rise and Progress* (Boston: Farrand, Mallory, 1808), 13.
[27] David W. Kling, "The New Divinity and the Origins of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," in *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 30.
[28] Leonard Woods, *History of the Andover Theological Seminary* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1885), 200.

the ABCFM's missionaries attended it. No other institution claimed anything close to that proportion.[29] Andover Theological Seminary became the premier missionary school, Glenn Miller states, "in part because its students desperately needed the inspiration of a new spiritual vision."[30]

Establishment of the ABCFM

In the midst of the Second Great Awakening, inspired by a student missionary movement, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was born.[31] With support from several Andover faculty members and other interested people, four students from Andover Theological Seminary, Adoniram Judson, Jr., Samuel Nott, Jr., Samuel J. Mills, and Samuel Newell,[32] presented a petition of carefully formulated questions to the annual meeting of the *General Association of Massachusetts Proper*[33] on June 27, 1810 in Bradford, Massachusetts.[34] They stated that "their minds have been long

[29] Glenn T. Miller, *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 78.
[30] Ibid., 78.
[31] For the general history of the ABCFM, see William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1910); Clifton Jackson Phillips, *Protestant America and the Pagan World: The First Half Century of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1969); Rufus Anderson, *History of the Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches*, 2 vols. (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1872); *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1861) and Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (New York: M.W. Dodd, 1842).
[32] Although two other students were also involved, Luther Rice and James Richards, their names did not appear in the petition because of the fear that a larger number would alarm the association. See *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1861), 42-43.
[33] It was the General Association of the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts and came into being in 1802 in order to assist the closer coordination of the several local organizations of Congregational clergymen. *Proper* was erased from its name in 1820. It had a lot of influence over the Congregational churches in Massachusetts and ultimately became the *Massachusetts Congregational Conference*.
[34] "Minutes of the First Annual Meeting" in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 9-10; and Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*

impressed with the duty and importance of personally attempting a mission to the heathen" and asked for advice "whether they may expect patronage and support from a Missionary Society in this country, or must commit themselves to the direction of a European society."[35] The petition was turned over to a committee on the subject of foreign missions. The following day, it recommended the organization of a foreign missionary board and the recommendation was unanimously accepted by the association, which forthwith organized the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions "for the purpose of devising ways and means, and adopting and prosecuting measures, for promoting the spread of the gospel in heathen lands."[36]

The ABCFM was the first foreign mission board founded in the United States, as well as being the largest in the nineteenth century. It served as an interdenominational foreign mission society for Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and for some Reformed churches. Initially an organization of Massachusetts and Connecticut Congregationalists, the ABCFM shunned the term *Congregationalist* in its title and recruited Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed members until they established their own foreign mission boards.[37]

The ABCFM held its first meeting in Farmington, Connecticut, in September 1810 and elected Samuel Worcester, pastor of the Tabernacle Congregational Church in Salem, Massachusetts, corresponding secretary. The Prudential Committee, a smaller executive committee under the direction of the Board, was appointed. A constitution was

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(New York: M.W. Dodd, 1842), 24-26; and M. Cutler and S. Worcester, "Religious Intelligence: Minutes of the General Association of Massachusetts Proper," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 3:2 (July 1810): 86-90.

[35] "Minutes of the First Annual Meeting," 9-10.

[36] William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1910), 6; and "Minutes of the First Annual Meeting," 10.

[37] Peter G. Gowing, "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," in *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission*, ed. Stephen Neill, Gerald H. Anderson and John Goodwin (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 18.

also adopted. In January 1811, in search of financial support, the ABCFM sent Adoniram Judson to Britain in order to seek the possibilities of cooperation with the London Missionary Society (LMS)[38] in the foreign missions.[39] LMS found the offer impracticable mainly because of administrative difficulties.[40]

Soon after Judson's return from Britain, the Prudential Committee announced to the Christian public in the Second Annual Meeting in Worcester, Massachusetts that "prophecy, history, and the present state of the world, seem to unite in declaring, that the great pillars of the Papal and Mahommedan impostures are now tottering to their fall." "Now is the time" the Committee added "for the followers of Christ to come forward, boldly, and engage earnestly in the great work of enlightening and reforming mankind." According to the Board, people in New England were in a very important position in the missionary enterprise: "*a great and effectual door* for the promulgation of the Gospel among the heathen is now opened to all Christian nations; but to no nation is it more inviting, than to the people of New England" and "no nation ever experienced the blessings of the Christian religion more evidently, and uniformly, than the inhabitants of New England."[41]

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[38] London Missionary Society formally founded in 1795. For a detailed account of the society, see Susan Elizabeth Thorne, "Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Imperialism: British Congregationalists and the London Missionary Society, 1795-1925" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1990); and Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895*, 2 vols. (London: H. Frowde, 1899).

[39] "Missionary Exertions," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 4:3 (August 1811): 144; "Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 16-24; *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1861), 45; and John O. Choules and Thomas Smith, *The Origin and History of Missions; A Record of the Voyages, Travels, Labors, and Successes of the Various Missionaries, who have been sent forth by Protestant Societies and Churches to Evangelize the Heathen…* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1837), vol.2, 238.

[40] *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 4:4, September 1811, 183.

[41] "Minutes of the Second Annual Meeting / Address to the Christian Public," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 28; and "An Address to the Christian Public, Prepared and

While trying to raise the necessary funds, the Prudential Committee decided to send the first missionaries to the Indian subcontinent. At a widely publicized ordination ceremony, Leonard Woods, professor of theology at Andover Theological Seminary, encouraged the first group of ABCFM missionaries to adopt the following objectives: "I would excite you by motives which no follower of Christ can resist, to make the spread of the Gospel, and the conversion of the world, the object of your earnest and incessant pursuit."[42] Five young men commissioned by the American Board, Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell, Samuel Nott, Gordon Hall, and Luther Rice (the first three with wives), departed for India in two separate ships in February 1812.[43]

The First Missionaries

The target of the ABCFM's first foreign mission was Burma,[44] but it proved to be a complete disaster. By the time the first missionaries of the ABCFM arrived in Calcutta, the United States had declared war on Britain (the War of 1812) which isolated the Board from its missionaries. The British East India Company, which controlled the region, was not friendly toward these new American missionaries. Samuel Newell and his wife went to Mauritius where Harriett Newell died in childbirth.[45] Adoniram Judson, his wife, and

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Published by a Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 4:6 (November 1811): 244-245.

[42] Leonard Woods, *A Sermon Delivered at the Tabernacle in Salem, Feb. 6, 1812 on Occasion of the Ordination of the Rev. Messrs. Samuel Newell, A.M., Adoniram Judson, A.M., Samuel Nott, A.M., Gordon Hall, A.M., and Luther Rice, A.B., Missionaries to the Heathen in Asia, under the Direction of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1812), 11.

[43] William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1910), 7-16; and "Ordination," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 4:9 (February 1812): 425-426.

[44] "Instructions: Given by the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to the Missionaries to the East, February 7, 1812," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 40.

[45] "Letter from Mr. Newell," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (August 1813): 131-135.

Luther Rice became Baptists. They resigned from the service of the American Board and connected themselves with the Baptist Church.[46] Rice returned to the United States and the Judson family obtained passage to Burma. Gordon Hall and Samuel Nott went to Bombay and tried to avoid deportation to Britain by petitioning the British governor for permission to stay in India.[47] Afterward, the Nott family left India because of Samuel Nott's health problems.[48] Charles Maxfield properly describes the situation: "Each packet of letters received from the missionaries was a new chronicle of disaster."[49] According to the ABCFM, "disappointments in the great work of evangelizing the world are to be expected"[50] and "the immediate consequences may be such as to disappoint the hopes and try the faith of Christians. But that ultimate consequences of *all* attempts to diffuse the Gospel among mankind will be glorious."[51] The ABCFM also invited Americans to engage in a cause "which aims directly and supremely at the glory of God, and the salvation of the whole human race."[52] John Andrew III, however, appropriately states that "even the most passionate supporters of the enterprise clearly recognized that their dream of millions of new Christian converts was far from realization."[53]

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[46] See "Religious Intelligence," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (January 1813): 372-377; "Religious Intelligence," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (March 1813): 467-474; *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* 3:10 (May 1813): 291-293; and Edward Judson, *Adoniram Judson: A Biography* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1894).

[47] See "Minutes of the Fifth Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 81-114; "Religious Intelligence," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (May 1814): 232-233; and "Report of the Prudential Committee," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (October 1814): 458-470 and 471-477.

[48] "American Missionaries," *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* 12:5 (May 1816): 243.

[49] Charles A. Maxfield III, "The 'Reflex Influence' of Missions: The Domestic Operations of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1850" (PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1995), 77.

[50] *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 70.

[51] "Address to the Christian Public," in *First Ten Annual Reports*, 47.

[52] Ibid., 52.

[53] John A. Andrew III, *Rebuilding the Christian Commonwealth: New England Congregationalists & Foreign Missions, 1800-1830* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 97.

At home, Mary Norris, widow of a wealthy Salem merchant, bequeathed thirty thousand dollars to the ABCFM.[54] The litigation over the bequest demonstrated the need for legal recognition and the ABCFM procured an act of incorporation in June 1812 in order to secure its funds.[55] Therefore, by acquiring legal existence, it obtained the right to receive bequests and estates, the opportunity to arrange widespread fund raising projects and to develop its group of auxiliary societies. During its first years, the ABCFM employed agents whose main responsibility was to encourage the missionary spirit and raise funds from local congregations to support its missionaries. It also received donations from several local benevolent and missionary societies, although many of the donations were small sums. Although the ABCFM received no more than one thousand dollars during its first year, in 1816, for example, the donations to the ABCFM exceeded twenty-seven thousand dollars.[56]

"The object of the Board" the ABCFM announced "is *one*-the promulgation of Christianity among the heathen. The means, by which this object is designed to be effected, are two kinds; -the publication and distribution of the Scriptures in the different languages of the nations; and the support of faithful missionaries to explain, exemplify, and impress on the mind, the great truths which the Scriptures contain."[57] Trying to increase the support for foreign missions, the American Board claimed that "*the readiest and most efficacious method of promoting religion at home, is for Christians to exert*

[54] *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (March 1811): 480.
[55] *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1861), 77-78 and 405-407.
[56] "Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports*, 161.
[57] "Address to the Christian Public," in *First Ten Annual Reports*, 67.

themselves to send it abroad."[58] It was the same argument that the ABCFM had used during the debates on the act of incorporation in the Massachusetts legislature.

The expenses of the Board were increasing as well. Immediately after the end of the War of 1812, the ABCFM decided to send reinforcements to India. Five more missionaries arrived in Ceylon in March 1816.[59] In the same year at home, the Prudential Committee declared its intention to send missionaries to the Indian tribes and to establish schools among them "under the missionary direction and superintendence" in order to "make the whole tribe English in their language, civilized in their habits, and Christian in their religion."[60] By 1819, the ABCFM had twenty-three missionaries and many assistants under its direction in Bombay, Ceylon, the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), and among American Indian tribes (Cherokees and Choctaws).[61]

To the Holy Land: From New England to Jerusalem

In the autumn of 1818, the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM determined to send missionaries to "Western Asia" ultimately in order to establish a mission in Jerusalem and assigned two missionaries, Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk, to that service.[62] When the decision was announced by the ABCFM, the idea of initiating the first American mission to Jerusalem and conveying the Gospel to the Jews and Muslims

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[58] Ibid., 76.
[59] James Richards, Edward Warren, Daniel Poor, Benjamin C. Meigs and Horatio Bardwell were ordained at the Presbyterian church in Newburyport in June 1815 and sailed in October 1815. See John O. Choules and Thomas Smith, *The Origin and History of Missions; A Record of the Voyages, Travels, Labors, and Successes of the Various Missionaries, who have been sent forth by Protestant Societies and Churches to Evangelize the Heathen…* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1837), vol.2, 258.
[60] "Minutes of the Seventh Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports*, 135.
[61] "Report of the Prudential Committee," *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald* 15:11 (November 1819): 505-518 and 15:12 (December 1819): 545-562.
[62] "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald* 15:2 (February 1819): 92 and "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Boston Recorder* 3:43 (October 17, 1818): 179.

excited the religious public in the United States.[63] "After ages of darkness, the light of the gospel is soon to re-illumine the shores of Palestine," a Boston newspaper wrote.[64] In a letter received by a newspaper in Ohio, a missionary said: "The glory of the Lord will return. The Jews are to be gathered in from their dispersions, and acknowledge that Jesus, whom their fathers crucified, to be their Saviour and their God. I consider this mission a grand link in the chain of events, which are preparatory to the second coming of our blessed Lord."[65]

Indeed, it was widely believed that the missionaries must prepare the world for the approaching millennium by the restoration of the Jews which was "endemic to American culture."[66] Millennialist anticipation was very popular among American Christians and religious societies used millennial motifs extensively in their activities.[67] Many sermons called people to take action in order to hasten the advent of Christ's millennial reign. "The world is forming anew," *the Panoplist and Missionary Herald*

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[63] Several publications informed their readers of the new mission and usually used the news from *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald* and *Boston Recorder*. For example, "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Christian Monitor* (Hallowell) 6:5 (September 1818): 80; "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Latter Day Luminary* (Philadelphia) 1:9 (August 1819): 431-432; "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Religious Inteligencer* (New Haven) 3:41 (March 13, 1819): 665-666; "Mission to Jerusalem," *Religious Remembrancer* (Philadelphia) 6:10 (October 31, 1818): 40; "Mission to Jerusalem," *Christian Chronicle* (Bennington) 1:20 (November 7, 1818): 318-319; "Mission to Jerusalem," *Christian Herald* (New York) 5:15 (November 7, 1818): 460; and "Mission to Jerusalem," *Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine* (Richmond) 2:11 (November 1819): 531-532.

[64] "Poetry: Mission to Jerusalem," *The Boston Recorder* 3:46 (November 10, 1818): 192. For another poetry, see "Lines on the Recent Designation of Messrs. Parsons and Fisk, as Missionaries to Jerusalem," *Christian Herald* 5:17 (December 5, 1818): 543-544.

[65] "Mission to Jerusalem," *The Weekly Recorder: A Newspaper Conveying Important Intelligence and Other Useful Matter Under the Three General Heads of Theology, Literature, and National Affairs* 5:47 (July 2, 1819): 371.

[66] Carl F. Ehle, *Prolegomena to Christian Zionism in America* (New York University, 1977), 331. For the attitudes of various types of American Protestants toward the Holy Land, see Robert T. Handy, ed., *The Holy* Land *in American Protestant Life 1800-1948* (New York: Arno Press, 1981). For a recent study on millennialism and American missionary activities in the Middle East, see Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the Middle East* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010).

[67] See James A. De Jong, *As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Rise of Anglo-American Missions 1640-1810* (Laurel: Audubon Press, 2006).

claims, "the men of this generation will be the patriarchs of the millennial age."[68] Moreover, Jerusalem was an exceptionally attractive city for missionary activities. New Englanders in general considered New England as a "New Jerusalem." Indeed, in order to benefit from such interest for Jerusalem and raise funds for missionary enterprise, the American Board was very quick to take action and launch a Palestine mission.[69]

American missionaries' interest in the Ottoman Empire was not new. Even one of the first missionaries to India had tried to encourage the Prudential Committee to open a mission in western Asia when the first American missionaries had troubles with the authorities in British India. "A mission to western Asia would be our own," Samuel Newell wrote from Ceylon to the Corresponding Secretary of the Prudential Committee "and it would be free from the objections which I stated to establishing our mission in British India. We should be in the neighborhood of Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, those interesting theatres, on which the most wonderful and important events, recorded in sacred history, took place." After mentioning his desire of bringing "*a great light*" to "the regions of thick darkness," he added that "when I think of these things, I long to be on my way towards Jerusalem."[70]

In their book entitled *The Conversion of the World*, which was published in Andover in 1818, Gordon Hall and Samuel Newell pointed to the imminence of the millennium and mentioned the western part of Asia as an interesting and worthy field for "missionary exertions." According to them, the people in the region were "destitute of the

[68] "Motives for Christian Exertion," *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald* 14:4 (April 1818): 153.
[69] Rao H. Lindsay, *Nineteenth Century American Schools in the Levant: a Study of Purposes* (University of Michigan, 1965), 65-67.
[70] *The Panoplist and Missionary Magazine* (November 1814): 518-519.

gospel, immersed in gross ignorance, and led away by the delusions of Mahomet."[71] Besides the encouragement of American missionaries in India, Samir Khalaf argues, "the early volumes of the *Missionary Herald* were replete with appeals from travelers and merchants returning from exploratory visits to the region."[72]

In 1819, the report of the Prudential Committee wrote the following:

> In Palestine, Syria, the Provinces of Asia Minor, Armenia, Georgia and Persia, though Mohammedan countries, there are many thousands of Jews, and many thousands of Christians, at least in name. But the whole mingled population is in a state of deplorable ignorance and degradation, -destitute of the means of divine knowledge, and bewildered with vain imaginations and strong delusions.[73]

The missionaries of the ABCFM regarded the Christians of the Ottoman Empire as "nominal" Christians. They believed that Ottoman Christianity lacked true Christian virtue and represented a deteriorated form of the religion. Thus, they reasoned, Ottoman Christians were Christians in name only and needed guidance toward a better form of Christianity. This denigration of Ottoman Christianity was typical of all foreign missionaries in this period, −American as well as European, Protestant and Catholic.

Missionary Pioneers: Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk

Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk, the missionary pioneers to the Holy Land, were both graduates of Andover Theological Seminary. After having been appointed by the ABCFM, while preparing for their journey to Jerusalem, they were sent on preaching

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[71] Gordon Hall and Samuel Newell, *The Conversion of the World, or, the Claims of Six Hundred Millions and the Ability and Duty of the Churches Respecting Them* (Andover: Flagg & Gould, 1818), 33-34.

[72] Samir Khalaf, *Cultural Resistance: Global and Local Encounters in the Middle East* (London: Saqi Books, 2001), 130. For nineteenth-century Holy Land writing in the United States, see Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790-1876* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2007).

[73] "Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 230.

tours in the United States as agents for the Board in order to enlist enthusiasm and raise funds to support the new mission. Before their departure, both of them preached in Boston and presented their hopes and dreams for the mission to Jerusalem. In his farewell sermon, Fisk presented a survey of Eastern lands and focused mainly on the Christians in the region. According to Fisk, "though they call themselves Christians, [they] are still destitute almost entirely of the Scriptures, and deplorably ignorant of real Christianity."[74] He anticipated spreading "true Christianity" among the Eastern Christians as well as making "spiritual conquests" among the Muslims.[75] Levi Parsons believed that "many of the Jews are willing to receive the New Testament." "The millions of Jews" Parsons noted in his sermon entitled *The Dereliction and Restoration of the Jews* "must be furnished with the *word of God*, and with the instruction of *Missionaries*. But this cannot be done without *charity*; without the *liberal*, and *persevering* efforts of the Christian world."[76]

After the sermons, the instructions of the Prudential Committee were delivered in public by Samuel Worcester, the Secretary of the Prudential Committee. "Your mission," he said "is to be regarded as a part of an extended and continually extending system of benevolent action, for the recovery of the world to God, to virtue and to happiness."[77] The ABCFM wanted Parsons and Fisk to stop at Malta and Izmir (Smyrna), study the

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[74] Pliny Fisk, "The Holy Land an Interesting Field of Missionary Enterprise: A Sermon, Preached in the Old South Church Boston, Sabbath Evening, Oct. 31, 1819," in *Sermons of Rev. Messrs. Fisk & Parsons, just before their Departure on the Palestine Mission* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1819), 28.

[75] A. L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 16.

[76] Levi Parsons, "The Dereliction and Restoration of the Jews: A Sermon Preached in Park-Street Church Boston, Sabbath, Oct. 31, 1819," in *Sermons of Rev. Messrs. Fisk & Parsons, just before their Departure on the Palestine Mission* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1819), 19.

[77] Samuel Worcester, "Instructions from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Rev. Levi Parsons and the Rev. Pliny Fisk, Missionaries designated for Palestine. Delivered in the Old South Church Boston, Sabbath Evening, Oct. 31. 1819," in *Sermons of Rev. Messrs. Fisk & Parsons, just before their Departure on the Palestine Mission* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1819), 44.

languages of the region (especially Arabic), visit the historic Seven Churches of Asia,[78] gather information about the region, not offend against local laws or customs, survey the new field in the Ottoman Empire, and keep in communication with Boston. The main aim was to establish a mission, if possible, in Jerusalem, or otherwise in Bethlehem, and investigate what could be done for the Jews, pagans, Muslims, and Christians. Worcester also added his millennialist view that "the Jews have been for ages an awful sign to the world. But the period of their tremendous dereliction, and of the severity of God, is drawing to a close. You are to lift up an ensign to them, that they may *return and seek the Lord their God and David their king.* They will return."[79] Since the use of the printed work and the distribution of Bibles were very important for the missionaries in order to reach potential converts in the region, Parsons and Fisk also received detailed instructions regarding the Bible and other publications:

> Whether copies of it exist and are read, -of what kind, and to what extent? Whether the circulation of it might be increased? –In what versions, by what means, and in what amplitude? It will be an object also to ascertain what other books are in use, or are held in esteem; and what useful books or tracts might be circulated, and in what languages.[80]

Motivated by the desire to spread Christianity in the Mediterranean region, Parsons and Fisk left Boston in November 1819 and entered the harbor of Malta the next month. After receiving hints and information for their prospective missionary activities in the region from William Jowett, a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, and other Westerners, they arrived at Izmir in January 1820.[81] They were welcomed by

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[78] The seven churches of Asia are the seven major churches of early Christianity in Western Anatolia: Ephesus, Pergamos, Sardis, Laodicea, Smyrna, Thyatira, and Philadelphia.
[79] Samuel Worcester, "Instructions from the Prudential Committee," 51.
[80] Ibid, 47.
[81] *Eleventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster), 30-31.

Charles Williamson, chaplain to the British consulate, and by the international trading community.[82] In a letter written to Boston in February 1820, they claimed that "In all the populous Catholic and Mahomedan countries on the north and south sides of the Mediterranean, there is not a single Protestant missionary." They mentioned three missionaries in the region: William Jowett in Malta, Isaac Lowndes from the London Missionary Society in Zante, and Samuel Sheridan Wilson in Malta. They added that "in all the Turkish empire, containing perhaps 20,000,000 of souls, not one missionary station permanently occupied, and but a single [Protestant] missionary besides ourselves [James Connor]."[83] Although they found the situation in the region more encouraging than expected, they reported that "the prevalence of the plague" and "the nature of the Turkish government" which might be considered unfavorable to Christian missions were the two main obstacles to their activities.[84]

As expected, in order to evangelize people, first they needed to learn the languages of the region. After spending the summer in Chios (Sakız), an island in the Aegean Sea, where they studied modern Greek, they visited the sites of the seven biblical churches of Asia in Western Anatolia. At the end of 1820, Parsons went to Jerusalem to look into the conditions in order to establish a mission station and Fisk remained in Izmir.[85] Parsons arrived at Jerusalem in February 1821 and this was regarded as a

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[82] James A. Field, *America and the Mediterranean World 1776-1882* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 93; and *Eleventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster), 31-32.

[83] "Palestine Mission: Extract of a Letter of the Rev. Mess'rs Fisk and Parsons, to the Cor. Sec. of the A.B.C.F.M., Smyrna, Feb. 8, 1820," *Religious Remembrancer* (June 24, 1820): 174.

[84] "Religious Intelligence: Palestine Mission: Letter of the Rev. Messrs. Fisk and Parsons to the Corresponding Secretary of the A.B.C.F.M., Smyrna, Feb. 8, 1820," *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald* 16:6 (June 1820): 265-267.

[85] For more information about the socioeconomic context of Izmir, see Daniel Goffman, "Izmir: From Village to Colonial Port City," in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999),

significant event by the ABCFM and the religious public in the United States. He became one of the first missionaries to enter the city, and, according to the ABCFM, he was the first Protestant missionary who "entered that field, with a view of making it the centre of his own evangelical exertions."[86] He distributed Bible and tracts and continued the missionary explorations and excursions to the interesting localities in the vicinity.[87] His memoir contains the record of his thoughts with respect to a missionary station in Jerusalem:

> The reading of the scriptures is perhaps the most effectual method of doing good at Jerusalem. In this respect, the time from Christmas to the Passover is invaluable. Multitudes, and among them men of influence and literature, from almost every part of the world, are literally assembled in one place; and the information they receive will be communicated to thousands of souls. This station I view as one of the most important that can be selected, and one which cannot be relinquished, without great criminality on the part of the Christian community.[88]

Parsons quickly realized it would be impossible to reside in Jerusalem. He came to the conclusion that it was best for him to return to Izmir in order to join Fisk in the preparation of tracts to be distributed in different languages among the pilgrims.[89] While returning to Izmir, Parsons became sick. Both Parsons and Fisk went from Izmir to Alexandria where Parsons' health continued to fail. Parsons died of dysentery in

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79-134; and Christine May Philliou, "The Community of Smyrna/Izmir in 1821: Social Reality and National Ideologies" (MA thesis, Princeton University, 1998).

[86] *Twelfth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1821), 93. The ABCFM also described Parsons as "the first Protestant missionary to Jerusalem went from a land of which the Apostles had no knowledge." See *The Missionary Herald* (January 1824): 4. Tibawi stated that at least three contemporaries visited Jerusalem before Parsons: Christian [Christoph] Burckhardt (1818), an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society; James Connor (1820) on behalf of the Church Missionary Society; and Melchior Tschoudy (1820), a Swiss pastor and an agent of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews. See A. L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria*, 20.

[87] Miles P. Squier, "Rev. Levi Parsons," in *American Missionary Memorial, Including Biographical and Historical Sketches*, ed. Hamilton W. Pierson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1853), 270.

[88] Daniel Oliver Morton, *Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons, First Missionary to Palestine from the United States* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1830), 389.

[89] Ibid., 385.

Alexandria in February 1822.[90] Three years later, in 1825, the pioneer Fisk died in Beirut while preparing an Arabic-English dictionary for use by missionaries.[91]

Hilton Obezinger states that Parsons and Fisk "approached their expedition with a deep sense that they were charting a newly-acquired territory for many others soon to follow."[92] Indeed, many others followed them and the American missionaries established an extensive network of mission stations in the Middle East throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mainly in order to reach those to whom they referred as the "nominal" Christians of the Eastern churches.

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[90] *Thirteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1822), 72-76.

[91] See "Death of Mr. Fisk," *The Missionary Herald* 22:4 (April 1826): 128-133. For a detailed account of their missionary activities, see Alvan Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M., Late Missionary to Palestine* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828); Daniel Oliver Morton. *Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons, First Missionary to Palestine from the United States* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1830), and Richard Clogg, "Ο PARSONS ΚΑΙ Ο FISK ΣΤΟ ΓΥΜΝΑΣΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΧΙΟΥ ΤΟ 1820," *Ο ΕΡΑΝΙΣΤΗΣ* (Eranistes) 5:30 (1967): 177-193.

[92] Hilton Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant: Levi Parsons, Pliny Fisk and the Palestine Mission," *Religion & Literature* 35:2-3 (Summer-Autumn 2003): 242.

CHAPTER 2

SETTLING IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE: MISSIONARY TOURS AND EXPLORATIONS

After the Second Great Awakening, as Bruce Masters argues, the Protestant missionary enterprise "was marked by an almost innocent enthusiasm to bear witness for the 'light of Christ,' as well as a casual arrogance that Anglo-Saxon culture was indeed superior to any the missionaries would encounter in the 'field.'"[1] According to the American missionaries, there was misery and ignorance in the Mediterranean, and people were waiting to be given spiritual truth. "By enlightening and reforming nominal Christians in Turkey," Pliny Fisk and Jonas King wrote from Egypt, "we are preparing the way, and raising up agents to bear a part when they shall be prepared, in convincing the followers of the false prophet of their errors, and teaching them the truth."[2] Convinced that their Anglo-Saxon race was the most civilized, the missionaries believed that their guidance to a better form of Christianity would also enable the "ignorant" masses in the region to become more "civilized." While American missionaries were trying to evangelize the world, they had also an opinion that they were "under special

[1] Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 147.
[2] "American Board of Missions: Proceedings and Intelligence: Palestine Mission: Journal of Messrs. Fisk and King, in Upper Egypt" *The Missionary Herald* 19:12 (December 1823): 376.

obligation to save and renovate the world."[3] William R. Hutchison summarizes the issue of "evangelization or civilization" that mission executives and theorists based at mission headquarters and missionaries experienced in the mission field:

> From the beginning, mission boards, executives, and all but the most superficial advocates dealt constantly with the "cultural" questions: whether or not to teach in English; whether to send out "farmers and mechanicks" or only preachers; how to relate to governments and other secular entities. As for missionaries in the field (it is well to remember, incidentally, that many theorists had themselves been missionaries in the field), they not only cared about such issues; they confronted them as matters of daily experience, as truly agonizing questions affecting their own sense of duty and purpose. The dispiriting gap between the generally tiny harvests of converts and the plethora of successful civilizing ventures (a gap that was not emphasized in reports to the home churches, yet was well understood by both missionaries and executives) made the issue of "civilizing and evangelizing" a personal and often painful one for devoted workers who had been recruited to evangelize the world. Even for the many missionaries, perhaps a majority, who went about their teaching or healing with little sense of personal strain, the questions that others were debating as grand theory impinged in a thousand disconcerting ways. Whether the captive audiences of proud Moslems or Buddhists in a hospital ward were to be preached to and prayed over, or just healed, was the sort of symbolic and practical issue that could determine the nature, and sometimes the fate, of any missionary endeavor.[4]

There were similar discussion among the Catholic missionaries. The Propaganda Fide warned its missionaries not "to transport France, Spain, Italy or some other European country" to the people in the mission field. "Do not introduce all of that to them," the Propaganda Fide instructed, "but only the faith."[5]

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[3] William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 8.
[4] Ibid., 12-13.
[5] Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (New York: Penguin, 1977), 179.

The Construction Years of the American Missionary Establishment

Many others followed the two American missionary pioneers, Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk. Jonas King replaced Levi Parsons. Since Parsons and Fisk had tried to convince Boston of the need for printed materials, the ABCFM sent Daniel Temple to Malta with a printing press in 1822 and a mission press was established.[6] Moreover, the next year, the ABCFM reinforced its mission field by sending two other missionaries to Malta: William Goodell and Isaac Bird, as well as their wives (who in this period the ABCFM did not officially count as missionaries). All three, Temple, Goodell, and Bird, were graduates of Andover Theological Seminary.[7]

American Mission Press in Malta

Malta, a devout Catholic country, had become part of the British Empire in 1800 voluntarily after British forces ousted a French invasion. Under British rule, Malta was an ideal location for a mission station and a favorable place for the American missionaries to print their materials. However, even in Malta, there were constraints. So as not to alarm the Catholics of the island, the British authorities only allowed the ABCFM missionaries to print only for export.[8] While in Malta, they were mostly occupied with the preparation, publication, and distribution of books and tracts in the region, in addition to making exploratory journeys and corresponding with other Western missionaries. The mission press was printing copies of the Bible, other religious tracts, and later, school books in the

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[6] Before Malta, the only mission press of the ABCFM was in Bombay. See "Seventy Years in the Maratha Mission," *The Missionary Herald* 80:8 (August 1884): 301-302.

[7] *Fourteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1823), 117-129; and ABC 16.5: Miscellaneous Papers Relating to the Near East Missions, vol. 1 (Communications for the Mediterranean), (Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, reel 502).

[8] E. D. G. Prime, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell* (New York: Robert Carter, 1876), 75.

vernacular in order to reach those whom they referred to as the "nominal Christians" of the Eastern churches. As it was said during the arguments related to a printing establishment in the Mediterranean in early 1821, "a missionary, by means of the press, increases his power to do good, in an incalculable ratio. They, who can hear his voice, may be, comparatively, few. But tracts and books reach thousands."[9]

The American missionaries regarded the island "only as the fulcrum for the lever, which is to move all the Levant at a future day."[10] By 1832, the printing presses of the ABCFM had produced sixty-one million pages in eleven different languages from their inception.[11] The next year, the ABCFM decided to transfer the mission press from Malta to Beirut (for Arabic) and Izmir (for Armenian, Greek, and Turkish) as two separate presses. According to the ABCFM reports, the mission press in Malta printed a total of some 350,000 copies of books and tracts.[12]

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[9] *Twelfth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1821), 201.

[10] "Importance of the Printing Establishment at Malta," *The Missionary Herald* 22:4 (April 1826): 133.

[11] *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832), 125. The press printed 4.8 million pages in 1831 alone.

[12] *Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1834), 52. For printing activities in Malta, see Geoffrey Roper, "Arabic Printing in Malta 1825-1845: Its History and Its Place in the Development of Print Culture in the Arab Middle East" (PhD diss., University of Durham, 1988); Evra Layton, "The Greek Press at Malta of the American Board of Commissioners *for* Foreign Missions (1822-1833)," *ΕΡΑΝΙΣΤΗΣ* (Eranistes), no. 53 (1971): 169-193; Geoffrey Roper, "The Beginning of Arabic Printing by the ABCFM, 1822-1841," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 9:1 (Spring 1998): 50-68; Geoffrey Roper, "Turkish Printing and Publishing in Malta in the 1830s," *Turcica*, no. 29 (1997): 413-421; W. J. Burke, "The American Mission Press at Malta," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 41:7 (July 1937): 526-529; Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda 19. Yüzyılda Amerikan Matbaaları ve Yayımcılığı," in *Murat Sarıca Armağanı* (İstanbul, Aybay Yayınları, 1988), 267-285; and Dagmar Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut Again: Eli Smith, the American Syria Mission and the Spread of Arabic Typography in 19th Century Lebanon* (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1998). For printing activities of the ABCFM in the world, see J. F. Coakley, "Printing Offices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1817-1900: A Synopsis," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 9:1 (Spring 1998): 5-34.

The ABCFM's First School in Beirut

After establishing the mission press in Malta, the missionaries of the ABCFM, Jonas King, Pliny Fisk, Isaac Bird, and William Goodell, the last two with their wives, came to the eastern Mediterranean and established a mission station in Beirut. In 1824, the ABCFM founded its first school in the city. By the middle of 1825, the school had between eighty and ninety students, all of whom were Arabs.[13] Samir Khalaf states that "the model of the first school in Beirut was used as a prototype to expand and multiply 'common schools' in vicinity."[14] Although the schools were suspended after the Greek attacks on Beirut and subsequent incidents in 1826, the American missionaries had thirteen schools with about six hundred students by the next year. Jonas King arrived at Istanbul in June 1826 and became the first American missionary in the capital of the Ottoman Empire.[15]

According to the missionaries, the spread of the Bible required the establishment of "civilized Christian institutions" and literacy was a paramount requirement in order to gain personal knowledge of the Bible and its teachings. They considered schools as an important means of multiplying their opportunities to make contact with the children and their friends and families. However, in 1828, since their safety was under threat because of the conditions in the eastern Mediterranean caused by the Greek revolt and the

[13] All except two of the students were boys. See *Seventeenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1826), 93.
[14] Samir Khalaf, "On Doing Much with Little Noise: Early Encounters of Protestant Missionaries in Lebanon," in *Altruism and Imperialism: Western Cultural and Religious Missions in the Middle East*, ed. Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon (New York: Columbia University, 2002), 19.
[15] *Eighteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1827), 65.

Ottoman-Russian war, the missionaries in Beirut together with a few Armenian converts moved to Malta.[16] After two years, they returned and reopened the station.

Obstacles to the American Missionaries

In the early nineteenth century, the ABCFM missionaries came to understand that they were not going to be able to convert Muslims. In addition, they found little interest among Ottoman Jews, particularly in Jerusalem, in American missionary activities. Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire were very conservative and the ecclesiastical authorities of both the Maronite and Greek Orthodox churches strongly opposed the American missionaries during the 1820s when they tried to distribute Bibles and tracts among their followers. In general, as Ussama Makdisi argues, the Eastern Christians "refused to accept the missionaries' self-proclaimed monopoly on spiritual purity and piety, and those few who converted faced excommunication by their own churches."[17] As'ad Shidyaq, a Maronite who became a Protestant, was imprisoned by the Maronite Patriarch and eventually died in chains in 1830. He was the first local martyr and the story of his conversion, imprisonment, and death was published by the American missionaries to show "the depth of their enemies' wickedness."[18] Eastern Christians associated with the American missionaries received anathemas and curses from their

[16] "Departure of the Missionaries from Beyroot," *The Missionary Herald* 24:11 (November 1828): 348-352.
[17] See Ussama Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity," *The American Historical Review* 102:3 (June 1997): 692.
[18] Samir Khalaf, *Cultural Resistance: Global and Local Encounters in the Middle East* (London: Saqi Books, 2001), 178. For example, Isaac Bird's last words in his book entitled *the Martyr of Lebanon* were: "Such a death was a splendid triumph of grace,- a triumph worth all the suffering which achieved it. It commended the blessed gospel; it brought joy to many pious heart; it exposed to public execration the spirit of a wicked priesthood…" See Isaac Bird, *The Martyr of Lebanon*, (Boston: American Tract Society, 1864), 207-208. For more on this event, see *Khabariyyat As'ad ash Shidyaq* (Malta, 1833); *Brief Memoir of Asaad Esh Shidiak: An Arab Young Man of the Maronite Roman Catholic Church* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1839?); and Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

churches.[19] According to the Board, however, "difficulties great and many do, indeed, lie in the way. The errors of a thousand years are not to be easily and at once eradicated… Opposition, however, will be the signal and the proof of success."[20]

In 1824, the Propaganda Fide warned the Maronite church about the Protestant missionaries and the Bibles they were distributing. Interestingly enough, the American missionaries were distributing an Arabic Bible published by the British and Foreign Bible Society which was more or less a copy of the Catholic version printed in Rome in 1671. At the urging of the Maronite and Greek Orthodox leaders, the Sublime Porte issued a decree in 1824 forbidding the distribution of tracts and Bibles printed in Europe. According to the Ottoman authorities, their circulation agitated relations between the various religious communities in the empire.[21] Abu-Ghazaleh argues that "although Protestant missionaries ascribed the decree to Catholic pressure, the Ottoman decision was primarily administrative designed to protect the operation of the millet system in the empire and in this way it was similar to the decree of 1723 which tried to check the activity of the Catholic missions among Orthodox Christians."[22] At first, the decree caused panic among the American missionaries. However, in the long run, it did not have

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[19] For example, see "Syria: Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Whiting," *The Missionary Herald* 27:5 (May 1831): 147-148; R. R. Madden, *Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, and Palestine in 1824, 1825, 1826, and 1827* (London: Henry Colburn, 1829), 2:232-233; and Heleen Murre-van den Berg, "'Simply by Giving to them Maccaroni': Anti-Roman Catholic Polemics in Early Protestant Missions in the Middle East, 1820-1860," in *Christian Witness Between Continuity and New Beginnings: Modern Historical Missions in the Middle East*, ed. Martin Tamcke and Michael Martin (Münster: LIT, 2006), 69.

[20] *Fifteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1824), 126.

[21] See A. L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria 1800-1901, A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 26-29.

[22] Adnan Abu-Ghazaleh, *American Missions in Syria: A Study of American Missionary Contribution to Arab Nationalism in 19th Century Syria* (Brattleboro: Amana Books, 1990), 20.

much of an effect on the missionaries of the ABCFM and they continued selling and distributing their printed materials.[23]

As expected, the relations between American and Catholic missionaries were not very cordial. For example, the Jesuits were seen by the American missionaries as "mired in the "corruption" of the detested papacy."[24] According to the missionaries of the ABCFM, the Jesuits were giving a false impression to the people of Lebanon that the Protestants "have no religion, no priesthood, no churches, and so on."[25] Ten years after the ABCFM opened its first school in Beirut, the American missionaries claimed that "the bigotry, intolerance, unreasonableness, and worldly-mindedness of the priests have been brought to light by their opposition to the Scriptures and the schools" and according to them, this wrong impression seemed to be widely accepted.[26]

As far as controversy with the local churches was concerned, William Goodell thought that the American missionaries must avoid agitation. In 1829 he wrote:

> I do not think that this is the time for controversy in these countries. There is, so to speak, no foundation. There is not knowledge enough. There is not conscience enough. There is not religion enough. We must labor to give the people knowledge, an enlightened conscience, and pure and undefiled religion, and controversy will then commence among themselves, and be carried on between themselves, and not between them and us who are strangers and foreigners, and of course regarded with more

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[23] See "Opposition of the Catholics," *The Missionary Herald* 21:4 (April 1825): 108-109; "American Board of Missions: Palestine Mission," *The Missionary Herald* 21:3 (March 1825): 92. For Jonas King's conversation with "an Arab of the Roman Church" and another conversation relating to the Maronite Patriarch's Order, see "Palestine Mission: Journal of Mr. King," *The Missionary Herald* 21:10 (October 1825): 313-318.

[24] Ussama Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity," *The American Historical Review* 102:3 (June 1997): 683.

[25] "Syria: Extracts from a Communication of Messrs. Bird, Smith, and Thomson," *The Missionary Herald* 30:11 (November 1834): 414.

[26] Ibid. Several years earlier, after John Keeling, a Methodist minister in Malta, was attacked as a result of remarks made by a priest, the ABCFM stated in his annual report that "the Pope is making great exertions to prevent the admission of light into countries which have been under the control of the Romish church." See *Sixteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1825), 83; and "Malta: Excitement among the Catholics," *The Missionary Herald* 21:9 (September 1825): 273.

> or less jealousy, and who, from the strength of our convictions respecting the whole system of truth, would be in danger of attempting too much at once.

After mentioning a quotation from Jesus "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," he put his position in plain words: "Missionaries in this part of the world must, I think, often remember this text, and act in some measure accordingly."[27] The American missionaries believed, moreover, that their object was "*not to pull down or build up a sect, but to make known and inculcate the great fundamental truths of the Gospel*."[28] By the beginning of the 1830s, the ABCFM was trying to redefine its objectives and shift its focus to different sects in the region, including Greeks in Izmir and Greece, as well as Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia. This redefinition of objectives had its roots in the previous decade, of course.

Help of the British Consuls

Another important incident in the 1820s was that Fisk and Bird were arrested for a day in Jerusalem in February 1824. The annual report of the ABCFM reads: "On the tenth of February, while in their lodgings, they were apprehended by a company of armed Turks, and carried before the Judge, on a charge, made by the Catholics, of distributing books which were "neither Mussulman, Jewish, nor Christian."… Yet it would not seem that the Turks -urged into this measure, as they evidently were, by the Catholics- were very seriously in earnest; and therefore the kind interference of Mr. Damiani, the [British] Consul of Jaffna [Jaffa], readily procured their full release."[29] Like this British consul,

[27] "Malta: Extracts from Letters of Mr. Goodell," *The Missionary Herald* 26:1 (January 1830): 17-18.
[28] *The Missionary Herald* 26:6 (June 1830): 177.
[29] *Fifteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1824), 125.

the British Embassy in Istanbul was the principal defender of Protestant interests in the Ottoman Empire. Goodell and Bird wrote from Beirut in 1823: "The English consul and his lady have treated us as if we had been their own children; and by taking us under the wing of their protection, and, as it were identifying our interests with their own, have given us an importance and respectability in the view of the natives which we could not otherwise have enjoyed."[30] The American missionaries in Beirut received travel permits from the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul through the British Consulate in Beirut.[31]

The Ottoman authorities in Istanbul considered all English speaking Protestants to have the same identity and did not make any distinction between American and British missionaries during the 1820s.[32] Finnie argues that the British and the Americans were not political rivals in the region and the British were helpful mainly out of "common humanity, bolstered by common language and tradition."[33] The British in the Ottoman lands also helped the Americans out of common Protestantism in solidarity against their common European Catholic rivals.[34] Such solidarity between British and American missionary endeavours was not confined to the Ottoman Empire. In South Africa, for example, John Philip, a missionary of the London Missionary Society (LMS), wrote to Rufus Anderson, the secretary of the ABCFM, in 1837 that they were "engaged in a common cause." Philip also added that "we feel that your Society [ABCFM] and ours

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[30] "American Bord of Foreign Missions: Palestine Mission: Journal of Messrs. Goodell and Bird," *The Missionary Herald* 20:8 (August 1824): 242.
[31] Çağrı Erhan, "Ottoman Official Attitudes Towards American Missionaries," in *The United States & the Middle East: Cultural Encounters*, ed. Abbas Amanat and Magnus Thorkell Bernhardsson (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 2002), 318.
[32] Ibid.
[33] David H. Finnie, *Pioneers East: The Early American Experience in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 126.
[34] For the importance of Protestantism to British culture, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). On page 54, Colley argues that "Protestantism was the foundation that made the invention of Great Britain possible."

[LMS] were made to cooperate."[35] Andrew Porter mentions that "not only common principles but a shared history united British and American endeavours" in South Africa.[36]

American Missionaries among the Armenians

On April 29, 1823, Fisk and King wrote from Jerusalem, explaining their efforts "to disseminate the light of life":

> Early in the morning an Armenian priest called and bought a Testament in the Turkish language, printed with Armenian letters. We gave him a second as a present. After this we took five such Testaments, and went to the Armenian Convent and sold them all at the door, and others were wanted. One man paid in advance, so as to be sure of getting one. We returned to our homes and took ten more, but before we arrived at the Convent, we sold them all to the Armenians in the street. We had only five more such Testaments. We came again to our lodging and took those five and sold them all immediately on our arrival at the Convent door. More were wanted. One man followed us half way to our lodgings and begged us for the love of God to let him have one. We had repeatedly told him that we had not a single copy remaining, but these people are so used to telling and hearing lies, when they buy and sell, that they never think of believing what they hear. O that, by reading the Gospel, they may learn that truth is better than falsehood.[37]

In the early years of their mission, the American missionaries in the region informed headquarters in Boston about the necessity of activities among the Armenians. In a joint letter written from Beirut in May 1824, Fisk, King, Bird, and Goodell recommended the extension of printing activities primarily for the benefit of the Armenians and added: "We are anxious to see something done, as soon as possible, for the Armenians. The readiness

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[35] Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 127-128.
[36] Ibid.
[37] *Fifteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1824), 118.

with which they purchase the Scriptures, encourages us."[38] The American missionaries in the field realized that the Armenians were more open to missionary work than the Greeks. By the end of 1826, two Armenians, Dionysius Carabet and Gregory Wortabet, were admitted to the mission church in Beirut.

In 1830, Eli Smith and Harrison Grey Otis Dwight undertook an ambitious exploration of the interior of Anatolia, reaching as far as northern Persia and Georgia. The ABCFM instructed them to collect information about the local Christian communities, the Armenians in particular. Smith and Dwight recommended that the ABCFM should establish stations in Izmir and Istanbul.[39] Smith and Dwight also suggested that the ABCFM should establish a mission for the Nestorian Christians living on the borders of Turkey and Iran, and in 1833, Justin Perkins became the first American missionary to be sent to the Nestorians.[40] The ABCFM also decided that it was important to establish a mission station at the capital city of the Ottoman Empire. William Goodell established a mission station of the ABCFM in Istanbul in 1831.[41] His instructions were

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[38] "Joint Letter of the Missionaries," *The Missionary Herald* 21:1 (January 1825): 13-15.

[39] Clifton Jackson Phillips, *Protestant America and the Pagan World: The First Half Century of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1860* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1969), 144-145. See Margaret R. Leavy, "Looking for Armenians: Eli Smith's Missionary Adventure, 1830-1831," *Transactions - The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 50 (December 1992): 189-275; and Eli Smith, *Researches of the Rev. E. Smith and Rev. H.G.O. Dwight in Armenia: Including a Journey through Asia Minor, and into Georgia and Persia, with a Visit to the Nestorian and Chaldean Christians of Oormiah and Salmas*, 2 vols. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833).

[40] For a detailed account of this mission, see Justin Perkins, *A Residence of Eight Years among the Nestorian Christians, with Notices of the Muhammedans* (New York: M.W. Dodd, 1843). See also H. L. Murre-van den Berg, "The American Board and the Eastern Churches: the 'Nestorian Mission' (1844-1846)," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 65 (1999): 117-138.

[41] For Goodell's first days in Istanbul, see "Constantinople: Extracts of a Letter from Mr. Goodell," *The Missionary Herald* 27:10 (October 1831): 319-320; "Constantinople: The Destruction of Pera by Fire, and Loss of Mr. Goodell's Effects," *The Missionary Herald* 27:12 (December 1831): 380-381; and "Constantinople: Extracts from a Letter of Mr. Goodell, Dated Sept. 28, 1831" *The Missionary Herald* 28:4 (April 1832): 111-113. Goodell studied Arabic and Turkish in Beirut and started to translate the scriptures into the Armeno-Turkish before leaving Malta. See *The Missionary Herald* 28:1 (January 1832): 4.

to work mainly among the Armenians, and he eventually established four schools, one in the city and the others in the surrounding villages.[42]

Rufus Anderson's Visit

After Greece asserted its independence from the Ottoman Empire, the ABCFM attention was also drawn to that country. Pliny Fisk, however, had already come to regard Greece and the Greek population of the Mediterranean region as a great field of opportunity for American missionary activities:

> The Greeks need missionaries; for though nominal Christians, they pay an idolatrous regard to pictures, holy places and saints. Their clergy are ignorant in the extreme. Out of hundreds, you will scarcely find one who is capable of preaching a sermon. Of course, there is little preaching; and that little is oftener an eulogium on some saint, than an exhibition of Christ's Gospel. The people are consequently ignorant and vicious. Before the Bible society began its work, the Scriptures were rare, and in most of the schools that exist, the children merely learn to read ancient Greek, without understanding it. Greece offers to view an extensive missionary field.[43]

Moreover, twelve Greek youths were sent to be educated in the United States at the expense of the ABCFM between 1823 and 1831.[44]

In 1828, Rufus Anderson, the assistant secretary of the ABCFM, was appointed by the Prudential Committee to visit the eastern Mediterranean mainly to confer with the missionaries there and to investigate the situation for future missionary operations,

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[42] Frank Andrews Stone, *Academies for Anatolia: A Study of the Rationale, Program and Impact of the Educational Institutions Sponsored by the American Board in Turkey: 1830-1980* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984).
[43] Alvan Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M., Late Missionary to Palestine* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 411.
[44] *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1831), 43.

particularly in Greece.[45] He arrived in Malta in 1829 and personally observed the situation in the field.[46] After his visit, the headquarters of the ABCFM in Boston focused more on the American missions to the nominal Christians in the eastern Mediterranean and the "increasing of light" among the Greeks.[47]

The ABCFM was very cautious about missionary work in Greece: "[T]he first evangelical operations in Greece should be conducted with judgment and caution. The people are ignorant and superstitious, and their prejudices are easily exited. Books and schools seem likely to exert more beneficial influence, with less liability to opposition or suspicion, than any other means that can be freely used at present."[48] Boston appointed Jonas King to work in Greece in 1830.[49] The next year, King started a Lancasterian school[50] in Athens, providing books from the mission press in Malta.[51] King was the only missionary of the ABCFM in Greece and the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM decided to send reinforcements to the field.[52] Elias Riggs received an invitation from the

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[45] "American Board of Missions: Special Agency to the Mediterranean," *The Missionary Herald* 24:12 (December 1828): 394-396; and "American Board of Foreign Missions: Special Agency to the Mediterranean," *The Missionary Herald* 25:5 (May 1829): 166-167.

[46] "American Board of Foreign Missions: Agency to the Mediterranean," *The Missionary Herald* 25:8 (August 1829): 261-262.

[47] For his visit, see Rufus Anderson, *Observations upon the Peloponnesus and Greek Islands made in 1829* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1830). For his views on foreign missions, see Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions, Their Relations and Claims* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1874).

[48] *Twenty-first Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1830), 51.

[49] William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,* (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1910), 87.

[50] Lancasterian or Lancastrian schools were very popular during the early nineteenth century. In the Lancaster model school, more advanced students taught less advanced ones. It enabled teachers to educate more students at lower cost since abler pupils were helping their teachers. See Carl F. Kaestle, ed., *Joseph Lancester and the Monitorial School Movement: A Documentary History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1973); and Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 69-74.

[51] Theodore Saloutos, "American Missionary in Greece: 1820-1869," *Church History* 24:2 (June 1955): 161.

[52] See F. E. H. Haines, *Jonas King: Missionary to Syria and Greece* (New York: American Tract Society, 1879).

secretary of the ABCFM to become a missionary in Greece, and he accepted the appointment.[53]

Some Remarks on the 1820s

It was apparent that the early years of ABCFM activities in the Ottoman Empire were experimental in nature. It was obviously necessary for the incoming American missionaries to learn the languages of the people in the region before trying to evangelize them. Several exploratory journeys were undertaken during the 1820s, mainly to investigate conditions in the region, to find suitable locations for mission stations, and congregations to be evangelized. From the beginning, the missionaries in the field demanded that the Prudential Committee should send more missionaries. "It is our united opinion" the missionaries in Malta wrote to Boston "that an addition of laborers is extremely desirable in the extensive regions that border on the Mediterranean; and the unsettled state of affairs here should not be taken into account in deciding on the practicability of such a measure."[54] The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM was aware of the opportunities that the Mediterranean region presented: "It must be obvious to every intelligent and reflecting man, that the countries around the Mediterranean furnish one of the largest, most interesting, and most inviting fields of missionary labor, which the world now presents."[55] Apparently, preparations were being made for more extensive activities in this new missionary field over the following decades.

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[53] ABC 6: Candidate Department, vol. 12 (Candidates, 1831-1837), part 4; and Prudential Committee Minutes, vol. 3 (July 21, 1831-July 22, 1834), 75.
[54] *Fourteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1823), 125.
[55] Ibid.

In addition to compiling reports on the conditions of the mission, the ABCFM missionaries recorded their observations about anything they saw in the region, including the political dynamics of the various religious "denominations"[56] and their arguments with the local churches.[57] They did so in letters, detailed journals, memoirs, and more. For example, Goodell kept a meteorological journal and wrote from Beirut to Boston about the climate mainly to help future missionaries. In addition to advising future missionaries about matters of dress, his letters included many details: regular meteorological observations (at 9 am and 3 pm), the range of the temperature, the direction of the wind, and the general state of the weather throughout 1825.[58]

The American missionaries in Beirut repeatedly requested that Boston send a physician to their mission station in order to help the missionary labor in the region and preserve the health of the missionaries and their families. They claimed that a well-educated physician could reach people very easily, acquire information about the customs and opinions of the people, and gain access to many individuals and families in ways which others could not. In addition, the influence of a physician over local governors and officials might be the most effective protection for the missionaries.[59] In another letter, Goodell claimed that a physician could reside wherever he pleased without a *ferman* and could "go into any town or city, and Turks, Jews, and Christians would all beseech him to take up his residence among them."

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[56] For example, "Religious Denominations in Syria and Holy Land," *The Missionary Herald* 22:3 (March 1826): 92-93; 22:4 (April 1826): 126; and 22:5 (May 1826): 164-165.
[57] For example, "American Board of Foreign Missions: Palestine Mission: Controversy of the Missionaries with the Maronite Patriarch," *The Missionary Herald* 23:10 (October 1827): 297-302.
[58] See ABC 16.6: Mission to the Jews (Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, unit 5, reel 514); "Climate of Syria," *The Missionary Herald* 21:11 (November 1825): 345-348; "Syria: Mr. Goodell's Observations on the Climate of Syria," *The Missionary Herald* 22:6 (June 1826): 183-185; and "Mr. Goodell's Observations on the Climate of Syria," *The Missionary Herald* 23:4 (April 1827): 102-103.
[59] "Joint Letter of the Missionaries," *The Missionary Herald* 21:1 (January 1825): 13-15.

The request for a physician was repeated for years: "We supply the gift of tongues, with which the apostles were favored, by the facility for acquiring languages, and by our printing establishment; but the gift of healing we cannot supply, unless physicians are connected with us."[60] The ABCFM eventually sent a medical missionary, Asa Dodge, who arrived in the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of October 1832. The Prudential Committee regarded his medical skill, and all his future practice, "only as a means of furthering the spiritual objects of the mission." Dodge arrived at Beirut in February 1833 but died in Jerusalem two years later.[61]

In the Mediterranean field, the ABCFM was active in Malta, Beirut, Jerusalem, and Izmir in the 1820s.[62] For the American missionaries at that time, the main obstacles were political turmoil, wars, clerical opposition, local disturbances, epidemics, plagues, and so on. They used every opportunity to make contact with the local people, for example, Bird's Italian class[63] and Goodell's religious instruction to the beggars in

[60] *The Missionary Herald* 24:11 (November 1828): 352.

[61] *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832), 156; *The Missionary Herald* 28:12 (December 1832): 411; and 31:7 (July 1835): 281. Asa Dodge was the second medical missionary sent by the ABCFM to a foreign mission. The first one was John Scudder, who went to Ceylon in 1819. See "Medical Missionary Work under the American Board," *The Missionary Herald* 93:7 (July 1897): 268-270.

[62] For the missionary activities in Jerusalem, for example, see Kai Kjær-Hansen's several articles published in *Mishkan*, including "First "Organized" Bible-work in 19th Century Jerusalem (1816-1831). Part VII: Five Bible-men in Jerusalem (1823-1824)," *Mishkan* 55 (2008): 55-69; and "First "Organized" Bible-work in 19th Century Jerusalem. Part VIII: Bible-men in Jerusalem from the Summer of 1824 to the Spring of 1827," *Mishkan* 57 (2008): 71-82.

[63] About thirty students attended, aged between eight and twenty. The missionaries proclaimed "this school has greatly the advantage of the other in producing a greater degree of intimacy and friendship between us and the scholars, and thus affording a more ready access to the bosom of families. See *Literary and Evangelical Magazine* 8:12 (December 1825): 679.

Beirut.[64] There were forty-seven missionary stations under the direction of the ABCFM in the world by 1830, thirty-three of them among the Indians in North America.[65]

At the age of twenty-two, Elias Riggs sailed with his wife and missionary friends from Boston to Malta on October 30, 1832, to begin his foreign missionary service,[66] which would last for more than sixty years as a Western missionary in Eastern lands. He would be one of the most influential missionaries in the Ottoman Empire for the greater part of the nineteenth century. His first years as a missionary of the ABCFM among the "nominal" Christians in the mission field will be discussed in the next chapter.

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[64] Goodell and Bird wrote from Beirut in July 1825: "Four times a week through a part of the winter, and twice a week through the whole, we addressed a congregation of beggars, consisting frequently of an hundred and fifty persons." See *Literary and Evangelical Magazine* 8:12 (December 1825): 680; and *Christian Spectator* 7:10 (October 1, 1825): 551.

[65] *Twenty-first Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1830), 104.

[66] ABC 77.6.1 (Missionaries: Birtplace, Residence, Dates of Sailing), Sailing Dates: 1812-1918, 230. Elias Riggs was one of the 75 ordained missionaries of the ABCFM who worked in the 55 mission stations of 12 missions. The expense of the operations in 1832 was upwards of $120,000. See *The Missionary Herald* 29:1 (January 1833): 12-14 and 26; and the same journal 29:3 (March 1833): 109.

CHAPTER 3

FROM NEW JERSEY TO GREECE: RIGGS' ARRIVAL

The second son of a Presbyterian clergyman, Elias Riggs was born at New Providence, New Jersey, on November 19, 1810, the year in which the ABCFM was established.[1] His ancestor, Edward Riggs, migrated from England to Massachusetts Colony in 1633 with his wife, Elizabeth, and six children.[2] Elias Riggs' mother, Margaret, and father, whose name was also Elias, had eight children and were devoted

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[1] The information about Elias Riggs is mostly from his diary, entitled *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children* and his biography *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey* written by his grandson, Charles Trowbridge Riggs, both of which remain unpublished and in the official archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at the Houghton Library of Harvard University: ABC 77.1, Biographical Collection, Box 61, Folder 50:21. Also see *Memorial Service for the Late Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., LL.D.: Missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Gloucester: John Bellows, 1901); E. P. Crowell, *Amherst College: Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., LL.D., of the Class of 1829* (Amherst: Amherst College, 1899); *Service in Honor of Rev. Elias Riggs, A.C. `29. D.D., LL.D., of Constantinople… Exercises at the Amherst College Church on the Evening of Baccalaureate Sunday, 1899* (Springfield: Springfield Printing and Binding Company, 1899); Charles Trowbridge Riggs, "Elias Riggs – A Pioneer in Turkey: Missionary of the American Board, from 1832 to 1901," *The Missionary Review of the World* 56:1 (January 1933): 30-32; Edward Riggs, "Elias Riggs, the Veteran Missionary to Turkey," *The Missionary Review of the World* 14:4 (April 1901): 267-271; "Dr. Elias Riggs," *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* 28:5 (Mai 1901): 237-238; Henry O. Dwight, "A Mighty Worker before the Lord: Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., LL.D.," *The Missionary Herald* 97:3 (March 1901): 98-103; "Dr. Elias Riggs," *The Missionary Herald* 95:8 (August 1899): 312-313; "Elias Riggs," in *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), Vol. 15, 602-603; David M. Stowe, "Elias Riggs," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: Macmillan, 1998), 570-571; and ABC 77.1, Box 1, Folder 15, The Riggs Family.

[2] For Elias Riggs' ancestry, see John H. Wallace, *Genealogy of the Riggs Family with a Number of Cognate Branches Descended from the Original Edward through Female Lines and Many Biographical Outlines* (New York: Published by the Author, 1901); and Clara Nichols Duggan and Helen Katherine Duggan, *More about the Riggs Family, 1590-1973: with the cognate Ogilvie, Haley, and Brittain families, Descended from Edward Riggs, born about 1590* (Holtland: C.N. and H.K. Duggan, 1974). See also Henry Earle Riggs, *Our pioneer ancestors being a* record *of available information as to the Riggs, Baldridge, Agnew, Earle, Kirkpatrick, Vreeland and allied families in the direct line of ancestry of Samuel Agnew Riggs and Catharine Doane Earle Riggs* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Bros., 1942).

Christians. Riggs' father graduated from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) and was the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at New Providence from 1807 until his death in 1825.

The Making of a Missionary

College Years

Elias Riggs' interest in learning languages started at an early age. He learned to read at the age of four, began to study Greek at nine and Hebrew at thirteen, and graduated from Amherst College at nineteen and from Andover Theological Seminary at twenty-two. During his years at Amherst College, in addition to continuing to study Hebrew and the cognate Semitic languages, he had the chance of acquiring the pronunciation of Modern Greek by having the close friendship of two Greek students from Chios (Sakız) island.[3] At the commencement of the summer term of 1830, he entered the junior class at Andover Theological Seminary and it was not difficult for him to pass the examinations. The Seminary was the center of an influential revival of biblical and oriental studies at that time.[4] During his last year in the Seminary, Riggs helped one of his professors, Moses Stuart, professor of sacred literature and "the father of Biblical science in America," by reading the proofs of some of his publications. Moses Stuart thanked Elias Riggs sincerely in the second edition of his *Hebrew Chrestomathy* by

[3] These students were Nicholas P. Petrocokino (or Petrokokino) and Constantine T. Ralli, two of the twelve Greek youths came to the United States to be educated at the expense of the ABCFM in the 1820s. For the full list, see *Twenty-Second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1831), 43.

[4] See Charles C. Torrey, "The Beginnings of Oriental Study at Andover," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 13:4 (July 1897): 249-266; and Benjamin R. Foster, "On the Formal Study of Near Eastern Languages in America, 1770-1930," in *U.S.-Middle East Historical Encounters: A Critical Survey*, ed. by Abbas Amanat and Magnus T. Bernhardsson (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 10-44.

saying that he was "laying a foundation broad and deep, in respect to the oriental languages generally, which promises a superstructure of more than ordinary magnitude."[5] In 1832, the year of his graduation, he published *A Manual of the Chaldee Language*.[6] Moses Stuart wrote its preface and after commending the work and Riggs to all lovers of oriental study, he said "I hope and trust, that this is only the first fruits of a golden harvest which he may yet produce, to enrich the treasuries of sacred Literature."[7] Indeed, Riggs did not fail his professor and continued to publish grammar books and participated in translating and publishing the Bible in several languages during his missionary years in the Ottoman Empire.

Before Riggs entered Amherst College, his father passed away when Riggs was fourteen years old. This sad event certainly affected him: "What seemed most like a turning point in my religious experience was at the time of my father's death, when I felt overwhelmed by the sense of my irreparable loss, and was led to turn for a relief and refuge to my Heavenly Father."[8] Riggs' interest in participating in missionary activities deepened at Amherst College. He was the first secretary of a student organization called *Friends*, a secret society to motivate a missionary spirit among its members and their associates. Riggs was one of the two students who drafted the constitution and the society continued for thirteen years. Several members of the society became missionaries in

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[5] Moses Stuart, *Hebrew Chrestomathy: Designed as an Introduction to a Course of Hebrew Study* (Andover: Flagg and Gould, 1832), VII.

[6] Elias Riggs, *A Manual of the Chaldee Language: Containing a Chaldee Grammar, Chiefly from the German of Professor G.B. Winer, a Chrestomathy, Consisting of Selections from the Targums, and Including Notes on the Biblical Chaldee, and a Vocabulary Adapted to the Chrestomathy, with an Appendix on the Rabbinic and Samaritan Dialects* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1832). In his book, he says that the Aramean Language comprises two principal subdivisions: the Syriac (West Aramean) and the Chaldee (East Aramean). The approximate region of the Chaldean Language was the province of Babylonia, between the Euphrates and Tigris.

[7] Ibid., V.

[8] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 4.

foreign lands later, including the first president of the society, Justin Perkins (a missionary of the ABCFM in Iran), Leander Thompson (ABCFM, Beirut), Henry J. Van Lennep (ABCFM, Izmir), Ebenezer Burgess (ABCFM, India), Edwin E. Bliss (ABCFM, Trabzon, Merzifon, and Istanbul), Joel S. Everett (ABCFM, Izmir, and Istanbul), and Benjamin Schneider (ABCFM, Bursa, Antep, and Merzifon).[9]

In addition to generating and educating ministers in the major doctrines of New England orthodoxy, Andover Theological Seminary was an important center of missionary spirit for foreign missions. Riggs' commitment to the missionary cause continued there and he became a member of the Society of Brethren, which had been established to stimulate mission interest at Williams College and was transferred by Samuel John Mills and his friends to Andover.[10] William G. Schauffler was an active member of the Society, and he and Riggs became close friends. Riggs helped him with his Greek while he aided Riggs in the study of German at Andover. Their friendship continued for decades while both of them were in the several mission fields in the Middle East. Needless to say, Schauffler was another prominent student of Prof. Moses Stuart. In addition to his help in the establishment of the ABCFM, Moses Stuart facilitated the missionary impulse at Andover and many of his students were pioneers in the modern missionary movement around the world, translating the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew into several languages.[11] Almost all the leading American missionaries in the

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[9] W. S. Tyler, *History of Amherst College during its First Half Century, 1821-1871* (Springfield: Clark W. Bryan, 1873), 276-277; and Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 4.

[10] Samuel John Mills was a mission promoter and devoted his life to missionary work. He and his friends presented themselves for mission work to the annual meeting of the General Association of Massachusetts Proper and triggered the creation of the ABCFM. See Chapter 1; and Gardiner Spring, *Memoir of Samuel John Mills* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1829).

[11] For a short list, see John H. Giltner, *Moses Stuart: The Father of Biblical Science in America* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 27.

Middle East in the nineteenth century had been under Moses Stuart's tutelage at Andover, including Daniel Temple, Jonas King, Harrison Dwight, Justin Perkins, William Goodell, William G. Schauffler, and of course Elias Riggs.

Missionary Call

Before graduating from Andover, Elias Riggs received a suggestion from Rufus Anderson, Secretary of the ABCFM, that he should join the ABCFM as a missionary to Greece. A young person (Mr. Cutter) had already been appointed to the post but he could not accept the offer because of his father's condition. Rufus Anderson had visited Greece in 1829 and knew the situation very well in terms of the potential missionary work there.[12] Jonas King, who had joined the ABCFM replacing Levi Parsons in the Middle East, was the only missionary of the ABCFM in Greece.[13] He requested an associate from the headquarters in Boston in order to expand missionary activities and particularly to enlarge the educational efforts of the ABCFM. The Prudential Committee decided to send a missionary to assist Jonas King in Greece, seeing the potential opportunities in the field. In addition to his other qualifications, Rufus Anderson knew that Elias Riggs was familiar with Modern Greek and he was a promising candidate for the post.

Riggs, however, had a slightly different plan in his mind. Before entering the service of the ABCFM, Riggs presented his general plan of preparatory study to the Prudential Committee. Instead of going directly to Greece, he intended to spend a year or two teaching in the United States while studying the language, history, and antiquities of

[12] See Rufus Anderson, *Observations upon the Peloponnesus and Greek Islands, made in 1829* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1830).
[13] See F. E. H. Haines, *Jonas King: Missionary to Syria and Greece* (New York: American Tract Society, 1879).

ancient Greece as well as the history of the Eastern Churches and carrying out biblical studies at Andover or another theological seminary. He also wanted to spend a year in Europe, particularly in France and Germany because, in his view, "knowledge of the languages, literature, national characteristics and public institutions of these countries, appears highly important" regarding his possible work in Greece.[14] On the other hand, he stated that he knew the importance of joining the mission in Greece as soon as possible and he would follow whatever the Committee would decide. Naturally, the Committee urged him to go straight to the field.[15] Riggs accepted the offer and the Committee appointed him to the mission in Greece on February 20, 1832.[16]

Before sailing to Greece, in September 1832 at Mendham, New Jersey, Elias Riggs married Martha Jane Dalzel, who was fond of books and foreign missionary work,[17] and who had already been accepted as an assistant missionary by the Board.[18] Two days later after the marriage, Riggs was ordained as an evangelist by the Presbytery of Elizabethtown before he was twenty-two years old. In presence of a large congregation in Park Street Church, Boston, on the evening of October 24, 1832, Eli Smith addressed Elias Riggs, William Thomson, and Asa Dodge, three missionaries who were about to depart for the mission fields in the Mediterranean. While Smith informed them about his experiences in the mission fields, he stated that they would experience seven trials, and

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[14] Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (February 14, 1832), ABC 6: Candidate Department, vol. 12 (Candidates, 1831-1837), part 4.

[15] For Riggs' state of mind before leaving the United States for the mission in Greece, for example, see some of his letters, to Rufus Anderson (January 6, 1832), to David Greene (April 12, 1832), to Rufus Anderson (January 17, 1832), to Rufus Anderson (June 14, 1832), ABC 6: Candidate Department, vol. 12 (Candidates, 1831-1837), part 4; and Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (July 16, 1832), ABC 6: Candidate Department, vol. 12 (Candidates, 1831-1837), part 5.

[16] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Prudential Committee Minutes, vol. 3 (July 21, 1831-July 22, 1834), February 20, 1832, p.75.

[17] Elias Riggs, "A Missionary for Fifty-five Years," *The Missionary Herald* 84:2 (February 1888): 59.

[18] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Prudential Committee Minutes, vol. 3 (July 21, 1831-July 22, 1834), July 19, 1832, p. 110.

their classical and sacred associations, their constitutions, their courage, their temper, their wisdom, their piety, and their faith would all be tried.[19] The instructions of the Prudential Committee were also delivered to them in the same place by Rufus Anderson and David Greene, specifying their particular responsibility as "the re-publishing of the Gospel" in the lands where they were to go.

With the help of the previous missionaries' exploratory journeys, the Prudential Committee was reasonably well informed about the religious, moral, intellectual, and social situation in the region: "We know what needs to be done; what are the best methods of operating; what are the hindrances and delays to be expected; and what effects may reasonably be anticipated." The Prudential Committee instructed them that "*an improved system of education must be given to the people of the east.* The missionary must permanently occupy some advantageous position, and, while he seizes every opportunity for preaching the gospel, must surround himself by a constellation of Lancasterian schools, as numerous as he can effectually superintend." According to the instructions, Elias Riggs was designated to "liberated Greece." The ABCFM had one single object: "the propagation of the 'glorious gospel of the blessed God' in Greece, in Palestine, and throughout the world." The Committee wanted Riggs to confer with Daniel Temple at Malta about the press and then go to Athens to meet King. After remaining in Athens for a season, he and King would need to decide whether they should continue in Athens or move to another place in the peninsula. The Committee wished him to visit the principal towns of the Peloponnese to supply the schools with school books from the mission press in Malta. The ABCFM did not expect Riggs and King to be engaged

[19] Eli Smith, *Trials of Missionaries: An Address Delivered in Park-street Church, Boston, on the Evening of October 24, 1832, to the Rev. Elias Riggs, Rev. William M. Thomson, and Doct. Asa Dodge, about to Embark as Missionaries to the Mediterranean* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832).

personally in day-to-day instruction, but wanted them to superintend the schools supported by the funds of the ABCFM.[20]

The other two missionaries, William Thomson and Doctor Asa Dodge, were designated to the mission station in Beirut. The ABCFM wanted Thomson to inaugurate a new station in Lebanon and the Committee regarded Dodge's medical skills and his future practice "only as a means of furthering the spiritual objects of the mission." His first duty, of course, was to preserve the health of the missionaries and their families in the mission field.

At the age of twenty-two, Elias Riggs sailed with his wife and missionary friends from Boston to Malta on October 30, 1832, to begin his foreign missionary service,[21] which would last for more than sixty years as a Western missionary in Eastern lands. He would be one of the most influential missionaries in the Ottoman Empire for the greater part of the nineteenth century.

Elias Riggs' Arrival

Before Riggs' arrival, the missionaries of the ABCFM in the Mediterranean field were Isaac Bird, George B. Whiting and their wives in Beirut, William Goodell, H.G.O. Dwight and their wives among the Greeks and Armenians in Istanbul, William G. Schauffler among the Jews in Istanbul, Jonas King in Greece, Daniel Temple, Homan

[20] *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832), 152-157.

[21] ABC 77.6.1: Missionaries: Birtplace, Residence, Dates of Sailing (Sailing Dates: 1812-1918), 230. Elias Riggs was one of the 75 ordained missionaries of the ABCFM who worked in the 55 mission stations of 12 missions. The expense of the operations in 1832 was upwards of $120,000. See *The Missionary Herald* 29:1 (January 1833): 12-14 and 26; and the same journal 29:3 (March 1833): 109.

Hallock (printer) and their wives in Malta, while Eli Smith was on a visit to the United States.

The Riggs family, together with the Thomson and Dodge families as well as Elizabeth Mulligan, a missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church sent to the Greek Mission as an assistant teacher,[22] crossed the ocean in a little brig *Garnet,* of 180 tons.[23] They arrived at Malta in December 1832 and were subjected to a quarantine of twelve days because of a cholera outbreak in Europe and the United States.[24] After the quarantine, Riggs family stayed at the house of the Temple family. For Elias Riggs, it was nice to see Daniel Temple, who was occupied with the printing activities of the ABCFM in Malta and Nicholas P. Petrocokino, who was helping Temple with the Greek publications,[25] both of them were friends from Amherst College.

The Riggs family and Elizabeth Mulligan sailed for Athens in a Greek bark on the first day of 1833 and the journey took nearly one month, mainly because of contrary winds and snow storms. Athens was then not a large city, in fact little more than a village. Ottoman forces were still in control of the city at the time of Riggs' arrival. Under the London Conference in 1832, Otto, Prince of Bavaria, had been proclaimed King of Greece, and Greece had become independent under the aegis of the Great Powers (Britain, France, and Russia). In the same year, the Great Powers and the Ottoman Empire had signed the Treaty of Constantinople and set the boundaries of this new kingdom with the Arto-Volos line as its Northern border. When Otto ascended the throne,

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[22] S. D. Denison, *A History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (New York: The Foreign Committee of the Board of Missions, 1871), 177.
[23] "Departure of Missionaries," *The Missionary Herald* 28:12 (December 1832): 411.
[24] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 6. See ABC 77.1, Biographical Collection, Box 61, Folder 50:21.
[25] Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 9. See ABC 77.1, Biographical Collection, Box 61, Folder 50:21.

he was a minor and a regency council of three Bavarians ran the government until 1835.[26] Two weeks after Riggs' arrival, King Otto came to Athens and the city authorities invited Jonas King and Elias Riggs to his formal reception.[27] Ottoman troops left the city in April 1833, and the next year, Athens became the capital of Greece. The Riggs family stayed at King's house in Athens one and a half years until they moved to Argos in June 1834. Their first child, Joseph, was born in Athens and died in Argos.

Riggs' Missionary Activities in Greece

Jonas King had settled in Athens in 1831 as the only missionary of the ABCFM in Greece. He was married to a Greek girl, Annetta Mengous. King wore local dress, and distributed and sold school-books, tracts, and gospels printed by the mission press in Malta. He had three Lancasterian schools in Athens when Riggs arrived.[28] In his first weeks in Athens, Riggs accompanied King to his schools, and started to teach, pray, and address religious subjects there. King and Riggs were received by the last Ottoman governor of the city and King Otto's secretary for religion and public instruction.[29] Riggs also visited the American Episcopal missionaries who welcomed him cordially.[30]

Riggs worked at the two mission stations of the ABCFM in Greece, Athens and Argos. In Athens, he assisted Jonas King and was occupied with teaching and getting to know the region. King and Riggs traveled in the peninsula and the Aegean islands. On the

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[26] See Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 46-50.
[27] *The Missionary Herald* 29:9 (September 1833): 310; and Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 6.
[28] "Greece," *The Missionary Herald* 29:1 (January 1833): 18.
[29] *The Missionary Herald* 29:9 (September 1833): 309-311. King Otto kindly received Riggs in 1835. See F. E. H. Haines, *Jonas King: Missionary to Syria and Greece* (New York: American Tract Society, 1879), 287.
[30] *Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833), 34.

one hand, since they were two of the pioneer missionaries of the ABCFM in Greece, they tried to gain first-hand experience of the social, religious, and educational conditions of the country by means of these exploratory tours. On the other hand, in addition to education and preaching, their missionary efforts were devoted to selling and distributing school-books and Protestant tracts in those tours since the missionaries in the field were expected to engage in several different activities of the ABCFM.[31] Regarding the various objectives of the ABCFM, the Prudential Committee stated that the ABCFM was an "educating," "translating," "book-printing," "book-distributing" society for "preaching the gospel" in the cultivation of the mission field.[32] Although invited to participate in a mission among the Nestorians of Iran, Riggs decided to remain in Greece.

The establishment of schools among the Eastern Christians was one of the most effective strategies employed by the Western missionaries in the region. In his original instructions from the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM, Elias Riggs had this detailed stipulation of his duties regarding the schools:

> In view of the unquestionable destiny of the Greek people, the Christian philanthropist contemplates them with the deepest interest. In this view we regard your mission as highly important. In deliberating, however, what the Board, as a missionary society, should attempt to do for the benefit of liberated Greece, the Committee feel bound to make the exerting of a religious influence their grand object. Whatever tends not directly to this result, falls without our proper sphere. We cannot found a college for literary and scientific purposes; though we might give religious books to its library, and support a course of religious instruction within its walls. We cannot sustain a grammar school for teaching the ancient Greek, unless such a school be essential to a *system* of schools exerting, on the whole, a decidedly religious influence. We cannot publish an arithmetic,

[31] For example, between July 1833 and April 1834, King and Riggs visited Napoli, Corinth, and the islands of Syra, Hydra, and Spetsae. Within ten months, they sold or distributed "8,251 school-books and tracts in Modern Greek, 326 New Testaments and Psalters, 19 copies of the Pentateuch and book of Joshua, and one Turkish Bible and one Turkish New Testament." See *Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 41.
[32] *The Missionary Herald* 29:8 (August 1833): 292-293.

> or a grammar, or a geography, unless so composed as to exert a religious influence, or unless such books belong necessarily to a *system* of school-books framed expressly with reference to the advancement of religion. This is our criterion.[33]

The Riggs family's first move upon arrival at Argos was to establish a school for girls expecting that eventually it would have three departments: "an infant school, a common school and a higher school for educating female teachers."[34] The school started with nine students and by 1836 it contained seventy girls.[35] In November 1837, reinforcements arrived at the mission in Argos: Nathan Benjamin and his wife. Riggs and his family remained in Argos until they were transferred to Izmir in 1838.

Riggs and King were not alone in Greece of course. Independence brought more missionaries to the field and both British and American missionaries established mission stations in Greece. The Church Missionary Society's school in Syra, Cephas Pasco and Horace T. Love, the American Baptist missionaries who arrived at Greece in 1836,[36] and John J. Robertson and John H. Hill,[37] with their wives, as missionaries of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Athens were some of the examples of the other group of

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[33] *Twenty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832), 154.

[34] *The Missionary Herald* 32:1 (January 1836): 5. See also "Greece: Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Riggs at Argos," *The Missionary Herald* 32:6 (June 1836): 226-227.

[35] "Greece: Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Riggs at Argos," *The Missionary Herald* 33:2 (February 1837): 70-71. For the academic impact of the American missionary schools, see Nikos Kastanis, "American Pestalozzianism in Greek Mathematical Education 1830-1836," *BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics* 22:2 (2007): 120-132.

[36] William Gammell, *A History of American Baptist Missions in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America, under the Care of the American Baptist Missionary Union* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1850), 299-312.

[37] After fifty years of service, John H. Hill died at Athens in 1882 at the age of 91. Elizabeth Mulligan, who sailed from the United States to Greece with Riggs family, was Mrs. Hill's sister. See William Bacon Stevens, *Service Commemorative of the Life and Work of the Rev. John Henry Hill, D.D., LL. D., for Fifty Years a Missionary to Greece, who Died at Athens July 1st, 1882, Held in Calvary Church, New York, on the evening of Tuesday, December 12th, 1882, together with the Memorial Sermon Preached on that Occasion* (New York: Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, 1882).

missionaries working in the same area.[38] Among the missionary organizations operating in Greece, the Protestant Episcopal missionaries deserve attention since it is possible to compare their activities with the ABCFM efforts. The Protestant Episcopal missionaries in Greece focused on education and publication like the ABCFM missionaries did. However, they were more careful than the ABCFM missionaries not to intimidate the Greeks and more diplomatic by adapting themselves to the changing conditions in Greece.[39] Before sailing for Greece, Robertson and Hill were instructed in Boston that "you are by no means to say, or write, or do anything which may justly give rise to the impression that you have visited the Greeks for the purpose of introducing another form of Christianity, or establishing another Church, than that in which they have been nurtured."[40] Indeed, they followed their instructions and Hill's schools at Athens became "the most lasting missionary educational enterprises in Greece"[41]

Greek Response

Before the independence of Greece, the conditions were not very favorable for the missionaries to commence large-scale activities. During the war, as a result of the strong

[38] For a short account of the missionaries in Greece in the nineteenth century, see Stephen A. Larrabee, *Hellas Observed: The American Experience of Greece, 1775-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 1957), 176-205.

[39] For more information about the mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Greece, see Charles T. Bridgeman, "Mediterranean Missions of the Episcopal Church from 1828-1898," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 31:2 (June 1962): 95-126; Julia C. Emery, *A Century of Endeavor, 1821-1921, a Record of the First Hundred Years of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (New York: The Department of Missions, 1921); Henry D. Gilpin, *The American Missionaries in Greece: Address Delivered at St. Luke's Church, in the City of Philadelphia, on the Evening of the Thirteenth of October, 1856* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1856); and William Cutter, "Missionary Efforts of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, Prepared from Official Documents," in *History of American Missions to the Heathen, from their Commencement to the Present Time* (Worcester: Spooner and Howland, 1840), 577-588.

[40] S. D. Denison, *A History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (New York: The Foreign Committee of the Board of Missions, 1871), 143.

[41] Dimitra Giannuli, ""Errand of Mercy": American Women Missionaries and Philanthropists in the Near East, 1820-1930," *Balkan Studies* 39:2 (1998): 229.

Philhellenic movement and great enthusiasm in the United States, several ships containing clothing, food, and medical supplies sailed for the cause of Greek relief and some of the cargo was distributed by Jonas King.[42] After the independence, however, the situation changed noticeably. Dimitra Giannuli argues:

> The Greek national struggle represented a spiritual but also an ideological and political cause that excited and mobilized American evangelists. Greek political independence provided a twofold opportunity to restore the dogma and practices of the Greek orthodox Church to its early Apostolic form with the infusion of reflective aspects of Protestantism and to establish a representative Greek government modeled after the examples of classical Greece and the contemporary U.S. republic. On the ground the missionaries discovered that among the "gifts" they brought the most welcome was not evangelism but secular education for both genders.[43]

While the missionaries tried to extend their activities, a powerful anti-Protestant feeling grew increasingly among the Greeks. In terms of popular acceptance, the missionaries of the ABCFM were not successful among the Orthodox Greeks in Greece who were unresponsive to their proselytizing efforts. Theodore Saloutos describes the unpromising situation of the American missionaries by saying that "seeking converts in a land where church and state worked hand in hand was almost like being committed to the fate of Sisyphus. It was a case of one dogma pitted against another, and it was inevitable that the Greek won out on native soil."[44]

In the minds of Greek people, religion and nationality went together. The influence of the Greek Orthodox Church was powerful as Plato E. Shaw argued

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[42] Edward Mead Earle, "American Interest in the Greek Cause, 1821-1827," *The American Historical Review* 33:1 (October 1927): 44-63; George J. Leber, *The 1821 Greek War of Independence and America's Contribution to the Greek Cause* (Washington D.C.: Order of Ahepa, 1971), 17-18; Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 22-40; Stephen A. Larrabee, *Hellas Observed: The American Experience of Greece 1775-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 1957), 148-175.

[43] Dimitra Giannuli, ""Errand of Mercy": American Women Missionaries and Philanthropists in the Near East, 1820-1930," *Balkan Studies* 39:2 (1998): 228.

[44] Theodore Saloutos, "American Missionary in Greece: 1820-1869," *Church History* 24:2 (June 1955): 171.

"disloyalty to the Orthodox church was viewed as disloyalty to the nation itself; and a convert to Protestantism became thereby in the eyes of his people a man without a country."[45] Even Rufus Anderson, who was an enthusiastic supporter of the ABCFM mission in order to "increase of light" among the Greeks, admitted in the 1840s that in spite of all the efforts of the American missionaries, "not ten persons are known, who are confidently believed to have been truly converted to God by these means."[46] When he realized that the ABCFM efforts in Greece continued to be unproductive, he suggested that the Armenians in Anatolia were likely to be a more suitable focus for attention of the ABCFM.

The missionary educational enterprise became a matter of concern and the Greeks began to implement measures to control and limit the educational activities of the missionaries as well as taking measures toward reforming their own educational system in the early 1830s.[47] Greek priests thought that the missionary schools constituted a threat to the Greek nation since there was always the risk of that the Greek students would be converted from Orthodoxy to Protestantism in these schools. According to the Greek priests, missionary schools and activities were undermining the ties between the Greek people and the Greek Church by disseminating heterodox ideas; therefore, the evangelical activities should be suppressed.

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[45] P. E. Shaw, *American Contacts with the Eastern Churches, 1820-1870* (Chicago: The American Society of Church History, 1937), 78.

[46] Rufus Anderson, *Report to the Prudential Committee of a Visit to the Missions in the Levant; also a letter to the Committee from the Rev. Dr. Hawes* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1844), 7. In the same report, Anderson pointed at the Greeks for the failure: "To me the condition of the Greek mind, in relation to evangelical efforts for the benefit of the Greek people, appears altogether extraordinary. We are not mistaken in the material facts in the case. The Greeks have retired from us. To a most affecting extent they have become inaccessible to our preaching, our books, and our influence."

[47] See, for example, Polly Thanailaki, "The American Protestant Missionary Schools in Greece in the Nineteenth Century and Greek Orthodox Education," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 49:1-2 (Spring/Summer 2004): 75-87.

In 1833, in the name of King Otto, the regency proclaimed the formation of the Church of Greece as an independent body from the Patriarchate in Istanbul.[48] A Greek synod was also established and had the authority to watch over the contents of the school books.[49] Charles Frazee states

> In the very first year of its existence the Holy Synod of Greece set about its task with two goals in mind – one was to reform and reorganize church life within the nation, the other was to insure that foreign influence was kept a minimum. Under the latter heading was included everything from Protestant English missionaries to monks from Russia and the Ottoman Empire.[50]

With its new national character, the Church of Greece issued a proclamation concerning translations of the Old Testament and disapproved missionary translations in order to guard their followers "from every deviation."[51] More restrictions followed and the Patriarch in Istanbul also issued an edict against all missionary schools in 1836.[52]

There were also restrictions on the printing and distribution of books in Greece. According to an order which was issued by the Greek authorities, all the higher schools must employ an ecclesiastic to teach the Catechism of the Greek Church, and must have

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[48] John S. Koliopoulos and Thanos M. Veremis, *Greece: The Modern Sequel, from 1821 to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 141-151.

[49] Elias Riggs' translation reads: "The Council will watch over the diligent preservation of the doctrines professed by the eastern church, and especially over the contents of the books designed for the use of youth, and of the clergy, and treating of religious subjects: and whenever it shall be positively assured that any man whatever is endeavoring to disturb the church of the kingdom, by false doctrine, by proselyting, or by any other means, it shall call upon the secular power to apply a remedy to the evil according to the civil laws." See "Greece: Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Riggs at Athens," *The Missionary Herald* 30:4 (April 1834): 122-126.

[50] Charles A. Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece 1821-1852* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 125.

[51] A literal translation of the proclamation by Riggs: "1. The translation of the Seventy, the only one heretofore received by the eastern church, is, and is declared to be, the canonical translation of the Old Testament. It is [to be] read in churches, and is also for the use of the clergy, of the youth, and of the people in general, so far as relates to their religious instruction. 2. Every other translation, whether from the Hebrew, or from any other language, is disapproved for the above mentioned use, and is proclaimed uncanonical and inadmissible in the eastern church." See "Greece: Journal of Mr. Riggs at Argos," *The Missionary Herald* 32:2 (February 1836): 56-57.

[52] For the efforts of the Patriarchate in Istanbul to restrict the missionary activities between 1836 and 1838, see Kyriaki Mamoni, "Struggles of the Ecumenical Patriarchate against the Missionaries ("Ecclesiastical Spiritual Central Committee of Constantinople" 1836-38)," *Mnēmosynē* 8 (1980-1981): 179-212.

an ecclesiastical picture in every schoolroom.[53] Elias Riggs' impression was that "this order was not communicated at the same time to all missionaries" and "it was not treated alike by them all."[54] The ABCFM decided to downgrade the mission to Greece, mainly because of the restrictions of the Greek authorities and in 1842, Jonas King remained the sole missionary of the ABCFM in the country. Charles Tuckerman wrote in 1872 that "the course adopted by Dr. King was not calculated to encourage missionary work at Athens." "One of the chief difficulties in the way of its advancement," he added, "is the bitter prejudice which exists in the popular mind, caused by the mistaken zeal and intolerance of some of the early workers in the missionary field."[55]

The ABCFM did not close but downgraded the mission to Greece mainly because of the restrictions that the Greek authorities placed on missionaries and the powerful anti-Protestant feelings of the local Orthodox bishops and priests. After experiencing these difficulties in Greece, the ABCFM was now shifted its attention to the Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. Although the Ottoman authorities were less strict than the Greek authorities, "parallel to the increase in the missionary activities in the 1830s and 1840s, more and more problems arose, and the official attitude of the Sublime Porte towards the missionaries became stricter in succeeding years."[56]

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[53] Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *The Work of the American Board among the Greeks* (Unpublished manuscript, ABCFM Manuscript Histories of Missions, 1948), 9-10.
[54] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 9.
[55] Charles K. Tuckerman, *The Greeks of To-day* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1872), 211-227.
[56] Çağrı Erhan, "Main Trends in Ottoman-American Relations," in *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Mustafa Aydın and Çağrı Erhan (London: Routledge, 2004), 14.

The Discussions within the ABCFM regarding the Methods

According to the ABCFM headquarters in Boston "whatever field, whatever department, of Christian effort claims their attention -whether domestic or foreign missions, the education of ministers, the multiplication of Bibles and tracts, the improvement of morals or education, the advancement of science, or whatever it may be- the object of pursuit the same; it is, THE SPEEDY CONVERSION OF THE WHOLE WORLD."[57]

There were ongoing discussions between the ABCFM missionaries about the methodology and the question of how to approach the Eastern Churches and their followers. In a letter to Elias Riggs in 1836, Daniel Temple summarized his views on, what his son called, "the manner in which missionaries should deal with the prejudices and errors of the corrupt Christians among whom they labored."[58] Indeed, the missionaries of the ABCFM considered the ritualistic practices of the Orthodox Church as greatly inferior to those of the Protestants. "It is not time, I am persuaded," Temple says "to go into controversy with the Greek Church on the subject of her rites and ceremonies. With the present limited amount of spiritual knowledge among the people, I fear this course would be disastrous."[59] In the same letter, Temple argued that the ABCFM missionaries should not attack the Eastern Churches openly and added "if their church must be attacked, it should be by its own members, and not by us. We can say a vast amount of truth, without making any attack." One of his rhetorical answers to the

[57] "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions: Proposed Enlargement of the Missions of the Board during the Present Year," *The Missionary Herald* 29:3 (March 1833): 108.
[58] Daniel H. Temple, *Life and Letters of Rev. Daniel Temple, for Twenty Years a Missionary of the A.B.C.F.M. in Western Asia* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1855), 140. Daniel H. Temple was the son of Daniel Temple.
[59] Ibid., 140.

"question" was to "surround men by the great ocean of the light, the sacred Scriptures, and all their foolish rites will vanish away like icebergs in the sea of the torrid zone."[60]

In 1837, some of the ABCFM missionaries in the Mediterranean region met in Izmir and discussed their circumstances and methods as well as the obstacles to their work in the region.[61] Daniel Temple, John B. Adger, Homan Hallock from Izmir; Jonas King, Elias Riggs, Nathan Benjamin from Greece; Harrison G. O. Dwight from Istanbul; Eli Smith from Syria; and Simeon H. Calhoun, the agent of the American Bible Society in the region, attended the meeting.[62] After explaining the reasons why their activities had not resulted in more conversions, they argued that there were two methods of conducting missionary activities among the "nominal Christians." The first one was "directly to expose and assault the errors and superstitious rites of the people, and attempt to compel them by argument to abandon their false refuges and embrace the truth." This would certainly bring opposition and attract more attention from the authorities. The second method was

> to hold up clearly before their minds the doctrines and precepts of the Bible, in their spiritual meaning and application, and press on their attention the importance of holiness of heart and life, but without making any direct attack on their present system of belief or their ceremonial observances, supposing that when the leading truths of the gospel shall be understood and received by them, their errors and heartless formalities will soon be renounced.[63]

They stated that with the second method the missionaries would encounter less prejudice and have more access to the people in the region as well as attracting less attention from

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[60] Ibid., 142.
[61] *Twenty-Ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1838), 66.
[62] See *The Missionary Herald* 34:4 (April 1838): 113-126.
[63] Ibid., 117.

the authorities. In short, the missionaries emphasized that "it is far better to preach the truth than to denounce existing error."[64]

Riggs' Transfer to Izmir

Despite the obstacles and setbacks, the ABCFM continued to work in Greece, but the country became an increasingly difficult field for the missionaries.[65] The ABCFM decided to close down the mission station at Argos since it had lost much of its importance after the removal of the Greek capital to Athens and the Greek government's insistence on some features of Orthodoxy in schools made it very difficult to continue the schools there.[66] Nathan Benjamin and his wife moved from Argos and joined King at Athens, and the Riggs family was transferred to Izmir in 1838. Under the Treaty of Constantinople, most Greeks still lived within the Ottoman Empire and the ABCFM was not only working in Greece but also among the Greek population in the Ottoman Empire through its mission stations in Istanbul, Izmir, Trabzon, Bursa, and Cyprus in the 1830s.[67] By the time the Riggs family removed to Izmir, the ABCFM had four mission stations, and including the Riggs family, twelve missionaries, one printer, twelve female assistant

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[64] Marcellus Bowen, *Historical Sketch of Mission Work in the Smyrna Field, 1820-1884* (ABC 88, unpublished manuscript), 2.

[65] Jonas King used the same phrase "a difficult field" in his letter to William Goodell. See F. E. H. Haines, *Jonas King: Missionary to Syria and Greece* (New York: American Tract Society, 1879), 302. Haines reads "After the people there became free from Turkish rule, old ambition for political power in Europe was stealthily kept up by Russian agency, and national pride was aroused against the influence of every foreigner, and a reaction followed the gush of intense gratitude at first felt for kindness shown during the time of their struggle for liberty." Jonas King described the obstacles in Greece in detail in the annual report of 1844, see *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1844), 91-93.

[66] Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *History of the Work of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the Near East and more especially in Turkey, 1819 till 1934* (ABCFM Manuscript Histories of Missions 31:4), 8.

[67] For a summary, see Gerasimos Augustinos, ""Enlightened" Christians and the "Oriental" Churches: Protestant Missions to the Greeks in Asia Minor, 1820-1860," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 4 (1986): 129-142. For Cyprus, see Terry Tollefson, "American Missionary Schools for Cyprus (1834-1842): A Case Study in Cultural Differences," *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, vol.10/11 (1994/1995): 37-87.

missionaries, and nine local helpers working among the Armenians and Greeks in Anatolia.[68]

Elias Riggs was expected to continue working among the Greek population in Izmir and manage the Greek department of the printing establishment of the ABCFM. "Greek educational thought of the nineteenth century," Charis Meletiadis argues "was characterized by the opposition between two educational models, the one intending to conserve the ideology, objectives, and processes of the Byzantine school tradition, the other giving emphasis to the dissemination of enlightened European advances in Greek society."[69] When the missionaries became part of the equation, it certainly complicated the issue, as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter which will examine Riggs' missionary activities in Izmir.

[68] See Marcellus Bowen, *Historical Sketch of Mission Work in the Smyrna Field, 1820-1884* (ABC 88, unpublished manuscript); and *Thirtieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1839), 61.

[69] Charis N. Meletiadis, "Routes of Commerce, Routes of Education: The Influence of the West European Paradigm on Greek Education in the Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth Century," *Library of Mediterranean History* 2 (1995): 76.

CHAPTER 4

"RESTORATION" OF THE "NOMINAL" CHRISTIANS IN THE TANZIMAT ERA

"[L]et us *hasten on* in our work while the day lasts," wrote the ABCFM missionaries at work in Izmir in 1839, "Mr Riggs is now here, and has very much strengthened our hands in the book-making department of our mission."[1] The Riggs family arrived at Izmir in November 1838 and Elias Riggs immediately began to preach in Greek to a small audience in the chapel of the Dutch consulate.[2] Riggs was associated with Daniel Temple and helped him in the management of the mission press in Greek.[3] Before Izmir, he had worked among Greeks in Greece, and in his new position in Izmir, he would naturally live in a multifaceted social and political environment in the Ottoman Empire.

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[1] Daniel Temple, Elias Riggs, John B. Adger, and Homan Hallock, "Appeal for the Press in Asia Minor," *New York Evangelist* 10:43 (October 26, 1839), 1.
[2] *Thirtieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1839), 61.
[3] "Mission in Turkey," *The Missionary Herald* 36:1 (January 1840): 5.

The Tanzimat Era and the Missionaries

While the ABCFM was transferring Elias Riggs from the Greek mission to Izmir, the Ottoman Empire was about to enter a reform era known as the *Tanzimat* (reorganization) period (1839-1876). Beginning with *Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu* (the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane) issued by Sultan Abdülmecit in 1839, the ensemble of the Tanzimat reforms over the next forty odd years represented an attempt to modernize the Empire and ranged from reorganizing the educational system to regulating inter-communal relations at all levels of the social and political structure.[4] Carter Findley summarizes what happened during the Tanzimat era:

> Ottoman policies during that period responded to emerging global modernity in both its Janus-like faces, the threatening aspect (separatist nationalism in the Balkans, imperialism in Asia and Africa) and the attractive aspect (the hope of overcoming Ottoman backwardness by emulating European progress). The Tanzimat was both a time of crisis, which implied impending collapse, and of accelerating reforms, which signified renewal.[5]

The Gülhane decree guaranteed the life, honor, and property of all imperial subjects, both Muslims and non-Muslims, and hinted at religious equality. It was "a significant first step toward the transformation of hitherto Muslim, Christian, and Jewish subjects into *Ottomans*."[6] The other important legal act of the era was the *Islahat* (reform) decree of 1856, which asserted religious equality before the law to all the sultan's subjects[7]: "As all

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[4] For an English translation of the Gülhane decree, see J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East. A Documentary Record: 1535-1914* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956), 113-116. For Turkish (latinized transcription), see Mehmet Ö. Alkan, ed., *Cumhuriyete Devreden Düşünce Mirası: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet'in Birikimi*, vol. 1 of *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), 449-451.

[5] Carter Vaughn Findley, "The Tanzimat," in *Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 14.

[6] M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 74.

[7] See Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

forms of religion are free and shall be freely professed in my dominions, no subject of my empire shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall he be in any way annoyed on this account. No one shall be compelled to change their religion."[8]

Recent Ottoman historiography has evaluated the implications of the Tanzimat reforms,[9] which initiated a process of social, cultural, and political change and naturally affected all the activities of the Western missionaries. The legal status of the missionaries in the Empire was changed by the reforms which "introduced a new category of *ecnebî* (foreigner), which referred to all foreign nationals regardless of religious affiliation (although the phrase occasionally referred more specifically to non-Muslim foreigners)."[10]

The Western missionaries in the Ottoman Empire thought that the Tanzimat era signified that the pendulum had started to swing in the other direction and the atmosphere was favorable for seeking converts. After the Gülhane decree was issued, Daniel Temple, Riggs' associate in Izmir, wrote to his mother:

> The sultan has just issued a proclamation placing all the subjects of his empire on an equality. The Christian and the Jew are now to enjoy the same privileges as the Turk. This is one of the most important steps that has ever been taken by this government. It is paving the way for the entire subversion of the Mahometan religion. It is one of the most striking features in the signs of these extraordinary times. It is, as we all trust and

[8] Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, vol. 1, 151.
[9] For example, see Carter Vaughn Findley, "The Tanzimat," in *Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 11-37; and Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), vol.2, 759-944. For a complete literature of the Tanzimat reforms, see Coşkun Çakır, "Türk Aydınının Tanzimat'la İmtihanı: Tanzimat ve Tanzimat Dönemi Siyasî Tarihi Üzerine Yapılan Çalışmalar," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 3 (Bahar 2004): 9-69.
[10] Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, 74.

> confidently believe, preparing the way of the Lord in this country. The hand of the Lord is stretched out, and who can turn it back?[11]

However, the picture Temple drew was not quite accurate. As Jeremy Salt has put it, the Protestant missionaries, the Ottoman state, the Eastern churches, and European governments could not agree on exactly what the two reform edicts had exactly granted in terms of religious freedom.[12] The missionaries interpreted religious equality as religious liberty, meaning that people could now choose their religion freely. From a missionary perspective, William Goodell, a leading missionary of the ABCFM in Istanbul, commented quite favourably in 1861 on the Islahat decree of 1856:

> Before the promulgation of the late Hatti-Humayoun there were more cases of persecution and oppression reported to the missionaries during one week than now occurs during a whole year. Then much of their time was taken up endeavouring to obtain protection and justice for the persecuted for conscience' sake. Now cases of persecution are only occasional, and their whole time is occupied by their proper missionary work. That the Hatti-Humayoun has not accomplished all that could be desired, is certainly true; but it has accomplished more than ever I expected it would. I never for a moment expected that it would prevent all oppression and wrong, and introduce at once a millennium of justice. Nor did I ever suppose for a moment that this weak, selfish, tyrannical Government was so much in advance of all the Christian Governments on the earth, that it would not connive at violations of the solemn pledge it had publicly given. But, though I never expected everything from it, I expected much, and the result has far exceeded my expectations.[13]

In fact, much of the persecution reported was not the work of Muslims but of other Christians.[14] It was axiomatic that the missionaries of the ABCFM at work in the

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[11] Daniel H. Temple, *Life and Letters of Rev. Daniel Temple, for Twenty Years a Missionary of the A.B.C.F.M. in Western Asia* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1855), 246-247.

[12] Jeremy Salt, "Trouble Wherever They Went: American Missionaries in Anatolia and Ottoman Syria in the Nineteenth Century," *The Muslim World* 92:3-4 (Fall 2002): 287.

[13] *Evangelical Christendom* (March 1, 1861), 134.

[14] Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Attitudes Concerning Christian-Muslim Equality in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Modern Middle East: A Reader*, ed. Albert Hourani, Philip Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson (London: I.B.Tauris, 2004), 80. See also "Letter from Mr. Goodell, November 6, 1860," *The Missionary Herald* 58:2 (February 1861): 41.

Ottoman Empire were very satisfied with the two imperial edicts however much they looked down on the Ottoman government which they branded as "weak," "selfish," and "tyrannical" in their correspondence.

As far as the Ottoman state was concerned, missionary enterprise among the various ethnic groups of the Empire was a matter of concern throughout the Tanzimat reform period. Mehmet Emin Ali Pasha, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs and one of the most influential figures in the Tanzimat era like Mustafa Reşit Pasha and Keçecizade Fuat Pasha, explained the Ottoman position to Earl Russell, the British Prime Minister in November 1865:

> No one disputes the right of the missionaries to express, by the same title as every other person, their religious opinions with the respect due to those of others; but in every case where this expression assumes a character of publicity calculated to give rise to scandal to a part of the population, to wound the public conscience, and to disturb the tranquility of the country, the imperial government is compelled to reserve to itself the right to act in conformity with the existing laws and public interests, which it is bound to protect.[15]

According to the ABCFM missionaries, the Islahat decree of 1856 was "a boon of priceless value" and its principal function was to secure the Protestant communities in the Empire from molestation at the hands of the "corrupt churches."[16] Armenian, Greek, and Catholic community leaders of course opposed Protestant missionary activities since they feared losing their own followers. William Goodell claimed that these communities were fully backed up by most of the European governments and these "corrupt churches" were

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[15] *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1866), 283. For the whole discussion between Mehmet Emin Ali Pasha and Earl Russell, see "Protestant Missions in Turkey: Correspondence Respecting Protestant Missionaries and Converts in Turkey," *Annals of British Legislation: Being a Digest of the Parliamentary Blue Books*, ed. Leone Levi (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1865), vol. 1, 33-57.

[16] "Letter from Mr. Goodell, November 6, 1860," *The Missionary Herald* 58:2 (February 1861): 42.

responsible for the persecutions of the missionaries, not the Turks. "[T]he Turks never of themselves showing a disposition to molest us, and being drawn in to side with our persecutors only when under this terrible outside pressure,"[17] William Goodell declared. The ABCFM missionaries claimed that the Armenians and the Greeks were displeased with the decree of 1856 because it was "favorable to the propagation of Protestantism, but not to their baptized idolatry."[18] As a matter of fact, the Christian groups greeted the decree with "mixed feelings," as Selim Deringil argues, "because it brought mixed blessings, such as military service for non-Muslims, the payment of regular salaries to religious functionaries, making it illegal for them to 'milk' their communities, the presence of laymen on millet councils, and so on."[19] In short, after the decree it was easier to move between religions, religious sects, and denominations.[20]

Missionary Activities among the Muslims

The Islahat decree of 1856 was regarded by the missionaries and their friends at the capital city of the Empire as "a real charter of religious freedom to all subjects of the Sublime Porte, not excepting the Mohammedans."[21] There is ample evidence**,** in the ABCFM archival sources, that the missionaries of the ABCFM in the region passionately

[17] Ibid., 41.
[18] *The Missionary Herald* 52:6 (June 1856): 184.
[19] Selim Deringil, "There is no Compulsion in Religion: On Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839-1856," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42:3 (2000): 572, endnote 69.
[20] For example, see İlber Ortaylı, "Tanzimat Döneminde Tanassur ve Din Değiştirme Olayları," in *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu, Ankara: 31 Ekim-3 Kasım 1989* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994), 481-487.
[21] E.D.G. Prime, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell* (New York: Robert Carter, 1876), 385. In the same book, there are also translations of the Gülhane decree (p.480-482) and the Islahat decree (p. 486-489). The ABCFM missionaries draw a distinction between the Gülhane and Islahat decrees and closely monitored the political developments in the Ottoman Empire in order to know the conditions in which they worked.

desired to work among the Muslim population in order to convert them. For the ABCFM, the "nominal" Christians in the region were not a good example of Christianity and were an obstacle to their being able to make advances among the Muslims. The following instructions of the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM to Cyrus Hamlin before his departure to Istanbul described the mentalities and methods of the missionaries on their activities among the Eastern Christians and Muslims:

> The object of our missions to the oriental churches, is, *first*, to revive the knowledge and spirit of the gospel among them; and *secondly*, by this means to operate upon the Mohammedans. At the same time this does not preclude the idea of direct missions to the Mohammedans themselves, which we also have;-one missionary to them being resident in Constantinople, and another in Persia. But to think of exerting much influence upon the Mohammedan mind, while the native christians churches remain as they are, is out of the question, without such a divine interposition as we are not authorized to expect. The Mohammedans look upon the native Christians as living exemplifications of what Christianity is. They see that these Christians are no better of themselves; they think them to be even worse; and this opinion is said to be correct by the Europeans generally who have resided in Turkey. The consequence is inevitable and unquestionable; the Mohammedan confidently asserts the Koran to be more excellent than in the Bible, and his own religion than the Bible, and his own religion than the gospel. In vain do we reply, that the native Christians have lost the knowledge and spirit of the gospel, and their immoral lives are therefore is no sense the effects of the gospel. The Mohammedans has never seen any other effect, and he will not read the Bible to correct the evidences of his senses and perhaps too of his painful experience. He treats that holy book with the contempt he feels for its professed followers. Hence a comprehensive and wise system of efforts for the conversion of the Mohammedans of Western Asia, will embrace a system of efforts for the spiritual renovation of the oriental churches. These churches must be reformed.[22]

The missionaries of the ABCFM even claimed that the Islahat decree of 1856 was "considered by Mohammedans themselves as opening the door to them to become

[22] "Objects of the Missions to the Oriental Churches, and the Means of Prosecuting them," *The Missionary Herald* 35:1 (January 1839): 40.

Christians, if they please."[23] Naturally the Muslims were the least attainable group and Protestant missionary endeavor in the Ottoman Empire had not been successful in proselytizing among the Muslims before the decrees. The Ottoman officials did everything they could in order to compete with the missionaries' efforts among the Muslim population of the Empire and only a few conversions took place over the following decades. The activities of the American missionary establishment in the Ottoman Empire among the Muslim population will be analyzed in detail in the following chapter in connection with Elias Riggs' activities in Istanbul, although Frederick W. MacCallum's admission in 1924 needs to be mentioned here: "All our work is practically destroyed; not a single church of Moslem converts in existence in all the Turkish area after a hundred years of foreign missions."[24]

American Missionary Activities in Izmir before Elias Riggs

According to the ABCFM, although there were oppositions and obstacles in the mission fields, the Ottoman Empire was "opening to the truth." In 1840, there were a total of 365 missionaries connected to the ABCFM throughout the world.[25] By 1840, the ABCFM was established in Izmir, Bursa, Istanbul, Trabzon, Erzurum, Cyprus, Beirut, Jerusalem, Aleppo, and Dayr al-Qamar (in Lebanon, working among the Druzes) in the Ottoman Empire, working mainly among the Eastern Christians.

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[23] *The Missionary Herald* 52:6 (June 1856): 184.
[24] Samuel W. Zwemer, *The Law of Apostasy in Islam, Answering the Question Why there are so few Moslem Converts, and Giving Examples of their Moral Courage and Martyrdom* (New York: Marshall Brothers, 1924), 16.
[25] "Growth and Need of the Foreign Work," *The Missionary Herald* 78:11 (November 1882): 438.

The Izmir mission station was established in 1826 by the ABCFM but the first attempt was not very successful. By transferring the mission press from Malta to Beirut and Izmir as two separate presses in 1833, the ABCFM headquarters rejuvenated the mission station in Izmir. Indeed, the ABCFM wanted to bring the mission press nearer to the missionary stations and operations in Anatolia. Although opposition to the missionaries and mission press in Izmir, which they had expected, started soon after their arrival,[26] the operations of the ABCFM gradually developed. The main opposition came from the Roman Catholics, as William Strong argued, while the Muslims were fairly tolerant of the press and the American missionaries because they were confident about Islam and their knowledge of the United States was limited.[27]

Obstacles and Responses

When the missionaries opened schools for Greek children in Izmir, they faced the opposition of the Greek ecclesiastical leaders in the city who warned the parents not to send the Greek children to these schools and claimed that the intention of the missionaries was "to corrupt and draw them from the faith of their forefathers."[28] In 1836, the Greek Ecclesiastical Committee in Izmir asked the missionaries to introduce a Greek Orthodox teacher to one of the missionary schools in the city. The English and American missionaries refused the request and published a booklet in answer to the charges of the Greek Ecclesiastical Committee which claimed that everyone was anxious

[26] *The Missionary Herald* 30:5 (May 1834): 191.
[27] William E Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1910), 87.
[28] "Smyrna: Extracts from a Letter of Mr. Temple, Dated September 5, 1836," *The Missionary Herald* 33:4 (April 1837): 150.

to know what end the missionaries had in mind. According to the Committee, the missionaries were always talking about the word of God without informing the Greek people what this was. Since the missionaries saw the Eastern Churches as corrupt churches and regarded their followers as nominal Christians, the Committee asked the missionaries: "Are we enemies of God? Have we ever attempted to shake your belief! Has any one of our countrymen ever said to you, this your sentiment is a prejudice, that a superstition, this is not apostolical, or that is not good?" The Committee rejected the missionaries' "accusations" that the Greek nation was ignorant and the Greek clergy was unacquainted with the Scriptures, and insinuated that the missionaries were "endeavoring privately and intrusively to make proselytes." The answer of the missionaries was that they speak their sentiments freely in public and in private, and it was no part of their system "to make *proselytes*."

The Committee also compared the Protestant missionary activities to the activities of the Catholics two centuries ago:

> But we are not surprised at your actions. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also, there appeared schools and institutions of learning for the poor Greeks in Candia and Cyprus, and wherever else Popish despotism prevailed, and books were published to seduce the Greek children to the Popish Church; and Gregory himself acted on this plan, and the word philanthropy was constantly in his mouth.

The missionaries' answer was that the Catholic missionaries never introduced the Scriptures into their schools or taught children in the vernacular. The Greek Ecclesiastical Committee also warned the British and American missionaries and wanted them to consider the results of their activities among the Greeks:

> Our religion, Gentlemen, while it is of divine origin, serves also to keep us united, and confers upon us numerous other benefits; it distinguishes a whole nation. Consider, then, the consequences of inculcating religious

> sentiments opposed to those of our Church. Should such sentiments be imbibed by our youth, what sort of a nation shall we form and what benefits shall we derive from our religion? Could you bear to see old contentions and religious divisions, spring up among us? If the American Gentlemen have no other object that to enlighten our nation, we wish they might hear advice, posterity will doubtless call them disturbers of the nation.

The missionaries said that their schools were open to inspection by the Committee and responded to the questions of the Committee with questions of their own:

> The Committee insinuate that we cause disturbances, confusion, and sc[h]isms among the Greeks, stirring up hatred among them one against another. But when and where have we done this, and in what way? ... What have we done to create disturbance, or to excite hatred among the Greeks against each other? All our measures, all our movements have been of a character entirely pacific. We are lovers of peace and concord. … If the people are generally dissatisfied with our teachers and our schools, why then have they placed so many of their children under the care of such teachers and in such schools?

The Protestant missionaries in Izmir argued in a booklet that their intentions were simply to make the Greek children in the schools operated by the missionaries as familiar as they could with the Old and New Testaments, "in a language which they understand, and to aid them in the acquisition of various other kinds of useful knowledge." With regard to their principles, the missionaries responded that their principles were the principles of the Gospel: "We acknowledge no other rule but the Gospel, we know no other master but Christ." The missionaries concluded that they did not want to revive ancient controversies and their aim was to see all the people "in possession of the Holy Scriptures in their own spoken tongue, and they may all be able to read them as the only Revelations from God to man, the only rule of faith and practice, and the only infallible

guide to eternal life."[29] Daniel Temple reported to headquarters in Boston and mentioned the booklet before its publication: "It does not attack their tenets or rites, for the time for us to do this, I think, is not yet come,"[30] which was exactly what the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM in Boston wanted.

After this dispute, the eight schools, which had almost 800 students and were under the direction of the ABCFM, the Church Missionary Society, and New Haven Ladies' Greek Association,[31] were closed in 1836. Only one missionary school for boys remained among the Greeks. Another ABCFM school for Armenian girls opened by John B. Adger was continued by the Armenians themselves.[32] The missionary schools in Izmir were open to all religions.[33] In 1836, the patriarch of the Roman Catholic Armenians denounced the Protestant missionaries and their publications. The Protestant missionaries, however, tried to minimize the efforts of the Catholics to win over the Eastern Christians. Heleen Murre-van den Berg's excellent article, entitled "'Simply by giving to them maccaroni…' Anti-Roman Catholic Polemics in Early Protestant Missions in the Middle East, 1820-1860," describes the methods of the Protestant missionaries: "firstly by putting in as much Protestant effort as possible, and secondly by convincing the Eastern Christians that Catholicism constituted a serious deformation of the Christian message."[34]

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[29] *An Answer to the Charges of the Greek Ecclesiastical Committee at Smyrna, against the English and American Missionaries* (Smyrna: Harlow American Press, 1836).
[30] "Smyrna: Letters from Messrs. Temple and Adger, Dated June, 1836," *The Missionary Herald* 32:21 (December 1836): 468.
[31] It was an association formed to establish and support female schools among the Greeks. For more information, see Josiah Brewer, *First Four Years of the American Independence Smyrna Mission: Under the Patronage of the New Haven Ladies' Greek Association* (Smyrna: Harlow Press, 1834).
[32] *Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1837), 57-58.
[33] *The Friend of Youth* 11 (January 1834), 2.
[34] Heleen Murre-van den Berg, "'Simply by giving to them maccaroni…' Anti-Roman Catholic Polemics in Early Protestant Missions in the Middle East, 1820-1860," in *Christian Witness Between Continuity and*

"Renovation" of the "Oriental Churches"

The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM in Boston argued that the "Oriental Churches" needed assistance from abroad for their spiritual renewal. The Committee clearly defined the objectives of the ABCFM among the Eastern Christians while sending Cyrus Hamlin to the Ottoman Empire in 1839: "Our object is not to subvert them; not to pull down, and build up anew. It is to reform them; to revive among them … the knowledge and spirit of the gospel." The Committee explained to the missionaries that introducing Congregationalism or Presbyterianism among the Eastern Christians was not their objective. "You are not sent among those churches to proselyte," the headquarters pointed out, "[L]et the Armenian remain an Armenian, if he will; and the Greek a Greek, and the Nestorian a Nestorian, and the oriental an oriental. Modes of government, both civil and ecclesiastical, are doubtless important, but they are not the great thing. We cannot afford to expand much of our time, strength, and money upon them, while so great a work lies before us as the conversion of the world." The ABCFM was well aware that attacks on the rites, ceremonies, "superstitions," and "corrupted institutions" of the Christian sects in the region would bring more hostility to the American missionaries since they were foreigners. Instead, "the first impulse" must come from the foreign missionaries and "the work of the reform among these churches will doubtless be accomplished chiefly by means of the [evangelical] native Christians themselves." The Committee considered that it was not a good idea to increase the number of missionaries in the field at this point. The example given by the Committee while explaining the

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New Beginnings: Modern Historical Missions in the Middle East, ed. Martin Tamcke and Michael Marten (Münster: LIT, 2006), 80.

objects of the mission among the Eastern Churches was attention-grabbing: "It was not thus England conquered India; the great body in her conquering armies were natives of the country."[35]

For reforming "a degenerate Christian church," the ABCFM advised Cyrus Hamlin to search for talented young men and clergy from among the Eastern Churches, particularly the Armenians in order to have possible local helpers; to improve the schools established by the local congregations rather than establishing new ones; to introduce the study of the Bible as taught in the theological seminaries in the United States into the Eastern Churches through a seminary under the control of the ABCFM; to introduce the printing presses into these churches and to preach the gospel among them. In view of the fact that Cyrus Hamlin's operations would be in Istanbul, the ABCFM was very careful in its instructions not to arouse the hostility either of the clergy of the Eastern Churches or of the Ottoman authorities to their missionaries in the capital city of the Ottoman Empire:

> If you have schools, and a tumult is raised against them, do not resist. If the heated blasts of controversy assail you, do not reply controversially, and be slow to reply at all. If the civil arm is employed to obstruct your labors, yield, as far as may be with a good conscience, to the laws and the powers that be. If, to crush your schools or prevent the use of your school books, the priesthood establish schools and issue books of their own resembling yours; whatever you may think of the spirit or the motive, you should by all means give them free course in this thing.[36]

All missionaries of the ABCFM leaving the United States for the Ottoman Empire received these kinds of instructions during the 1830s and 1840s. It was exactly what the

[35] "Objects of the Missions to the Oriental Churches, and the Means of Prosecuting them," *The Missionary Herald* 35:1 (January 1839): 41.
[36] Ibid., 42.

missionaries of the ABCFM did, not only in Istanbul but also in Izmir and the other cities of the region, in order to advance their activities.

Elias Riggs' Activities in Izmir

Izmir was one of the major economic centers in the Ottoman Empire with easy access to Europe. In addition to being a multiethnic trading center visited by European and American traders and skippers, the city hosted consulates from seventeen countries by the mid-nineteenth century. The first US consul in Izmir was appointed in 1802, the first consular post in the Middle East. There was a small American merchant community in the city as a result of the commercial activities between Boston and Izmir.[37] The city was also an arrival point at the Ottoman Empire for the American missionaries coming from the United States. They first arrived at Izmir and then proceeded to the mission stations in the Empire. For example, George W. Coan and his wife Sarah Coan, and Edward Breath and his wife Sarah Ann Breath, arrived at Izmir in 1849 and stayed with the Riggs and Benjamin families before continuing their journey to the mission in Urmiya.[38]

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[37] See Elena Frangakis-Syrett, "The Economic Activities of the Greek Community of İzmir in the Second Half of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Dimitri Gondicas and Charles Issawi (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1999), 17-44; Elena Frangakis, "The Ottoman Port of Izmir in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, 1695-1820," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 39:1 (1985): 149-162; A. Mesud Küçükkalay, *Osmanlı İthalatı: İzmir Gümrüğü 1818-1839* (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006); Cânâ Bilsel, "The Ottoman Port City of Izmir in the 19th Century: Cultures, Modes of Space Production and the Transformation of Urban Space," in *7 Centuries of Ottoman Architecture: "A Supra-National Heritage"*, ed. Nur Akın, Afife Batur, and Selçuk Batur (İstanbul: Yem Yayın, 2001), 225-233; Bruce Stanley, "Izmir," in *Cities of the Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia*, ed. Michael R. T. Dumper and Bruce E. Stanley (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 187-194; and A. Üner Turgay, "Ottoman-American Trade during the Nineteenth Century," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 3 (1982): 189-246.

[38] E. Allen Richardson, ed., *Letters from a Distant Shore: The Journal of Sarah Ann Breath* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2008), 51. Other examples: Cyrus Hamlin and his wife went from Boston to Izmir in 45

The Riggs family arrived at Izmir in November 1838. Next year, Riggs had a malarial fever and his illness forced him to go to a more suitable place for his health temporarily. His doctor suggested he should go to Syria, and in October, he left Izmir for Beirut on an Austrian steamer, *Seri Pervas*, accompanied by Elias R. Beadle and his wife, incoming missionaries for Syria. They arrived at Beirut via Rhodes and Cyprus, and Riggs continued to Jerusalem with Charles S. Sherman and his wife, who were the ABCFM missionaries on their way to the mission station there. Riggs' health trip was short and within a month, he visited Jaffa, Bethany, Jericho, Bethlehem, Rama, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea. Riggs published his travel account in *the Missionary Herald* after his first visit to the Holy Land and stated that during the tour, he had "many opportunities for religious conversation with people of various nations."[39] Riggs was in Izmir when the ceremony of the reading of the Gülhane decree took place in the city in December 1839.[40]

Riggs' achievements in the Izmir station were very important in terms of American missionary activities in the region. Beirut and Izmir were the two presses connected to the ABCFM and one of the main objectives of the mission stations in these two cities was the preparation of books and tracts. With his linguistic ability and intellectual qualifications, Elias Riggs was precisely the person whom the ABCFM needed in the mission station of Izmir and the headquarters in Boston evidently appointed

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days and then proceeded to Istanbul on an English steamer. See *The Missionary Herald* 35:7 (July 1839): 269. Elias R. Beadle and his wife left the United States on June 14, 1839, arrived at Beirut in October, and were accompanied from Izmir by Elias Riggs. See "Journal of Mr. Riggs on a Tour in Syria," *The Missionary Herald* 36:9 (September 1840): 337-345.

[39] "Visit to Palestine," ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 136 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520); and "Journal of Mr. Riggs on a Tour in Syria," *The Missionary Herald* 36:9 (September 1840): 337-345.

[40] "The Hatti Scheriff," *The Catholic Telegraph* 9:11(March 14, 1840): 83.

the right person for the mission. Like the other ABCFM missionaries in the mission station of Izmir, Elias Riggs was chiefly occupied with the press and its editorial labors, that is translating, preparing, and publishing Bibles, tracts, religious books, and school books in vernacular languages.

Mission Press

In 1838, the year Riggs arrived at Izmir, the American missionaries in the city had two presses in use with Greek, Armenian, Hebrew, and English fonts.[41] Daniel Temple was the superintendent and Homan Hallock was the missionary printer in the printing mission of the ABCFM in Izmir. Riggs and the ABCFM missionaries at work in Izmir wrote of their aims to improve and extend the activities of the mission press for the future activities of the mission in 1839:

> Beyond all doubt the sale and the use of our publications would be increased by increasing their *variety* and their *attractiveness*. We must not expect the taste of all to be suited by one particular work. We must prepare a variety of books and tracts; some for schools, and others on the history of the church; some on the state of the heathen world, others on the evidences of Christianity; some commentaries on the scriptures, and many explanations of Christian doctrine, and solemn appeals to the consciences of men.[42]

Indeed, they managed to extend their sales and distribution network, and the books and tracts published by the mission press in Izmir went to several places, including Istanbul, Edirne, Yassy, Bucharest, Galatz, Varna, Russia, Izmit, Adapazarı, Bursa, Trabzon, Erzurum, Tokat, Zile, Erzincan, Yozgat, Amasya, Merzifon, Athens, Syra, Corfu, Patras, Crete, Cyprus, Beirut, Diyarbakır, Konya, Adana, Kayseri, and Jerusalem. Eight or ten

[41] *Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1838), 64; and *The Missionary Herald* 35:1 (January 1839): 5.
[42] "Appeal for the Press in Asia Minor," *New York Evangelist* 10:43 (October 26, 1839), 1.

booksellers in Istanbul were selling materials published by the mission in 1842.[43] The funding for the press operations of the ABCFM mission in the city was from the books sold (mostly school books) locally and from funds raised in the United States. Moreover, the ABCFM received funding from the American Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Tract Society for its printing activities in Izmir.[44]

Demand for the books and tracts published by the mission press in Izmir gradually increased as the ABCFM began to establish more mission stations in Anatolia. In order to reach the people of the region, as expected, the books were published in the vernacular languages: Armenian, Armeno-Turkish (Turkish in Armenian letters), Greek, Greco-Turkish (Turkish in Greek letters), and Bulgarian. These were some of the books, tracts, school books, and the Bibles in vernacular published by the mission press in Izmir: *Mother's Manual* (prepared by Martha Riggs, about the care and physical, intellectual, moral, and religious education of children), *Astronomy* (3,000 copies printed in 1841 in Modern Armenian), *Infant School Manual* (120 pages, in Greek, compiled by Elias Riggs and intended only for primary school teachers), *Bible* (in Armeno-Turkish, translated from Hebrew and Greek by Panayotis, under William Goodell's revision), *False Claims of the Pope* (in Modern Armenian, 77 pages, 1,000 copies printed in 1840), *The Two*

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[43] *Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1843), 91. For example, the Lancasterian school in Limassol, Cyprus, received a set of the *Reading Lessons* printed at the mission press in Izmir in 1840. See "Cyprus: Semi-Annual Report of the Mission, Dated Jan. 1st, 1840," *The Missionary Herald* 36:6 (June 1840): 217.

[44] See, for example, "The Foreign Christian Press," *Christian Observer* (January 23, 1840): 14; *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the American Tract Society* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1840), 73; *Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the American Tract Society* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1841), 44; "A Plea for the Press," *Episcopal Recorder* 17:34 (November 16, 1839): 135; *Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1843), 91; *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1844), 110; and H.G.O. Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey: A Narrative of the Protestant Reformation in the Armenian Church* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1854), 145.

Lambs (in Greek, 48 pages, translated by Elias Riggs while in Greece and first printed in Athens), *Guide to Repentance* (in Modern Armenian, translated in Izmir under Adger's revision), *Absurdities of Deism* (in Greek, compiled by Elias Riggs), *New Testament* (Ancient Armenian, printed in 1839 at the expense of the American Bible Society), *New Testament* (Modern Armenian, 5,000 copies printed in 1842-1843), *Hymns* (in Greek, composed by Elias Riggs and used in public worship and missionary schools), *Pilgrim's Progress* (in Modern Armenian in 1843 and later in all the main languages in which the press published in Istanbul), *Answer to the Smyrna Greek Committee* (in Greek), *Bible Questions* (in Greek prepared by Elias Riggs, partly in Greece and partly in Izmir), *Sabbath* (Armeno-Turkish, written by Schneider in Bursa and translated under his revision), *Young Christian* (Armeno-Turkish, 2,000 copies printed in 1844), *Child's Book on the Soul, Part I* (in Bulgarian, translated in Odessa and revised by Elias Riggs in Istanbul, printed at the expense of the American Tract Society, 2000 copies).[45]

It is obvious from the list that in addition to the original productions, Elias Riggs and the other American missionaries in the region translated or helped to translate many

[45] Report for printing in 1844, see Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (February 18, 1845), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2, item 123 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516); for 1845, see Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (March 4, 1846), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2, item 130 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516). For the list of materials published in Izmir, see "Historical and Descriptive Catalogue of Greek, Greco-Turkish and Bulgarian books and tracts, Issued from the Printing establishment of the A.B.C.F.M. in Smyrna," ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2, item 71 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516); "Historical and Descriptive Catalogue of Armenian and Armeno-Turkish Publications of the Smyrna Press," in *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1846), 249-254; and "Historical and Descriptive Catalogue of Armenian and Armeno-Turkish Publications of the Smyrna Press (Prepared by Rev. John B. Adger, July, 1846)," ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2, item 81 and 82 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516). Although it is an incomplete list, see also John A. Vinton, "Catalogue of Publications Issued from the Mission Presses Connected with the Missions of the Board to the Several Oriental Churches," in *History of the Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1872), vol. 2, 503-518. For a short list of books and tracts published by the mission presses of the ABCFM in the world by 1838, see "Books Printed at the Several Printing Establishments of the Board Connected with the Mission beyond Sea," *The Missionary Herald* 34:1 (January 1838): 37-44.

religious publications from England and the United States for the establishment and development of evangelical work in various parts of the Ottoman Empire. For example, Leigh Richmond's *Dairyman's Daughter* was the most famous moralistic tale printed by the American missionaries in Izmir. Another observation is that there were a fair number of secular publications, mostly school books and grammar books. In addition to the books and tracts, the mission press also produced periodicals. *A Magazine of Useful Knowledge*, a monthly periodical in Greek, was published by the mission press under Daniel Temple's superintendence. It was the pioneer of such missionary literature in the region and had 1200 subscribers in 1839.[46] Another magazine in Armenian edited by John B. Adger followed.[47] *The Evangelical Preacher* was another monthly publication of the mission press in Izmir that contained "sermons on doctrinal or practical subjects." Samuel A. Rhea, an ABCFM missionary on his way to the Nestorian field, after seeing several books published by the mission press of the ABCFM along his way, wrote from Erzurum that "the light is spreading far and wide" through the mission press in Izmir.[48]

As a matter of fact, the mission press had special type fonts for printing schoolbooks which included algebra, geometry, and trigonometry texts.[49] The American missionaries in Izmir also imported books and tracts from abroad to sell and distribute in the Empire. The Prudential Committee instructed the missionaries in the region that there

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[46] Thomas Laurie, *The Ely Volume; or, the Contributions of Our Foreign Missions to Science and Human Well-being* (Boston: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1881), 216; and "Historical and Descriptive Catalogue of Greek, Greco-Turkish and Bulgarian books and tracts, Issued from the Printing establishment of the A.B.C.F.M. in Smyrna," ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2. item 71 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516). It was published in the mission press until 1843 and then transferred to Nicholas Petrokokino.

[47] Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (February 23, 1842), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 117 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520).

[48] Samuel A. Rhea, "Appeal from Turkey," *Christian Observer* (August 16, 1851): 229.

[49] *Changing Fonts: The Evolution of a Press* (İstanbul: SEV-YAY, 2002).

should be no "odious imprint" upon their books: "They will be Christian books, with the native language, dress, and manners."[50] The ABCFM projected that when the American missionaries in the region could dispense with their own mission presses, they could employ the local presses for their printing; however, they managed it only in Greece.[51]

Since the American missionaries put special emphasis on using the Bible in vernacular, it was necessary for them to provide the Bible in the vernacular among the people they worked in the multilingual Ottoman Empire. Therefore, a major objective of the missionaries in the region was to translate the Bible. They also needed to provide schools to teach people how to read the Bible because literacy rates were very low in the Ottoman Empire. The missionaries in Izmir observed that most of the Greeks in the vicinity spoke Turkish instead of their own language.[52] Greek Orthodox Turkish speakers in Anatolia were called *Karamanlı*. "Since most of them did not know any Greek, they expressed their faith in Turkish and developed a religious literature that was written in Turkish but using the Greek alphabet. This transliteration system is called *Karamanlıca* in Turkish and *karamanlidika* in Greek."[53] They were mainly in Anatolia. In order to reach them, the missionaries published religious materials in Greco-Turkish, that is, the Turkish language in Greek letters. Benjamin Schneider, an ABCFM missionary in Bursa,

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[50] "Objects of the Missions to the Oriental Churches, and the Means of Prosecuting them," *The Missionary Herald* 35:1 (January 1839): 43.
[51] Ibid., 43.
[52] See, for example, "Smyrna: Letter from Mr. Riggs, Dated Sept. 20th, 1842," *The Missionary Herald* 39:3 (March 1843): 100.
[53] Xavier Luffin, "A Comparison between the British and Foreign Bible Society's Translations of the New Testament in Karamanlıca (1892) and in Ottoman Turkish (1899)," *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 54:3-4 (2002): 150 and 162. Richard Clogg described them as "a substantial body of Christians" and stated that "during the Ottoman period they were largely concentrated in the interior of Asia Minor, although they were also to be found in the Crimea and on the shores of the Sea of Azov." See Richard Clogg, "The Publication and Distribution of Karamanli Texts by the British and Foreign Bible Society Before 1850," *Journal of Ecclesiastical Society* 19:1 (April 1968): 57.

addressed this issue in his letter while explaining the conditions in Mihaliç (today Karacabey), a small town west of Bursa, in 1840.

> Rode to Moohalitch [Mihaliç], lying twelve hours west of Broosa [Bursa], and two hours from the sea-cost… The population is about 11,000, of whom 1,150 are Armenians, 3,500 Greeks, and the rest Mussulmans. The Greeks have two churches, one Hellenic school and one school on the old plan. The Armenians have one church and school. Neither the Greeks, nor the Armenians speak their national tongue. Turkish is the only language used. Hence, neither the services of their churches, nor the books read in their schools are understood. The teacher of the Armenian school frankly confessed that neither he nor his pupils understood what was taught. The teacher of one of the Greek schools, being acquainted with the modern Greek also, is able to impart to his scholars some knowledge. Those of the priests whom I saw seem to be simple, but very ignorant men. Speaking only the Turkish, they do not at all comprehend the prayers and other parts of the church services, which they daily perform. When such is the character of the priesthood, the condition of the people is easily imagined. I sold a few books and tracts, and distributed more. For each of the Greek priests I left a copy of the New Testament, and made an arrangement to forward some Armeno-Turkish Pentateuchs to the Armenians. I had the opportunity of conversing on the subject of religion with various individuals, and the seed thus sown by means of conversation and books, I trust will not prove in vain.[54]

Benjamin Schneider was not wrong in his conclusion and the ABCFM tried to work among these people in every possible way, including the distribution of Greco-Turkish and Armeno-Turkish publications. Xavier Luffin argued that the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church denounced the Protestant missionary activities in 1836 and the printing activities of these missionaries "eventually 'boosted' the press activities of the Greek Orthodox Patria[r]chate, which now had to produce more religious books – prayer books, scholia, but also diatribes against Protestantism – in order to counterbalance the success of the Protestant editions in Anatolia."[55]

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[54] "Broosa: Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Schneider," *The Missionary Herald* 37:7 (July 1841): 299.
[55] Xavier Luffin, "A Comparison between the British and Foreign Bible Society's Translations," 152.

The same happened when the missionaries concentrated their efforts on the Armenian population and the missionaries published in Armeno-Turkish, which was Turkish in Armenian script. For example, between 1840 and 1853, the ABCFM missionaries printed 55,000 copies of the scriptures in Greco-Turkish. The following items were some of the Armeno-Turkish publications of the American missionaries in Izmir: A second edition (first edition in Malta) of the New Testament (4,000 copies) in 1843, the Old Testament (3,000 copies) in 1841, the Pentateuch (2,000 copies), and the Book of Psalms (2,000 copies) in 1844,[56] all of which were widely distributed in the region.[57] The ABCFM missionaries argued that the main reason for printing in Greco-Turkish and Armeno-Turkish was that "fully half of the Armenians and Greeks in the Turkish Empire do not speak their national languages, but Turkish, writing the same with Armenian and Greek letters."[58] After 1853, the publication of the Scriptures in Greco-Turkish and Armeno-Turkish was undertaken by agents of the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society.[59]

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[56] John A. Vinton, "Catalogue of Publications Issued from the Mission Presses Connected with the Missions of the Board to the Several Oriental Churches," in *History of the Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches* (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1872), vol.2, 503-518. See also Peter Kawerau, *Amerika und die Orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang Der Amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1958), 364-397.

[57] For example, James T. Barclay, an American missionary in Palestine, wrote that he distributed the Bible in vernacular in the region: "The version of Scripture principally distributed is, of course, the Arabic, that being the language universally spoken, and most generally read, throughout all these regions. But beside the Arabic translation, I have also distributed a goodly number of the Coptic, Syriac, Syro-Chaldaic, Judeo-Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew, modern and ancient Greek, Spanish, Judeo-Spanish, Italian, German, Armenian, and our own vernacular, here, as well as on the route hither." See D. S. Burnet, comp., *The Jerusalem Mission: Under the Direction of the American Christian Missionary Society* (Cincinnati: American Christian Publication Society, 1853), 205.

[58] "Missionary Periodicals at Constantinople," *The Missionary Herald* 70:10 (October 1874): 299.

[59] Edwin E. Bliss, "The Missions of the American Board in Asiatic Turkey, 1831-1887: A Condensed Sketch," *The Missionary Herald* 84:7 (July 1888): 297. For a general account of the printing, publishing, reading, and literary activity in the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century, see Johann Strauss, "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th-20th Centuries)," *Arabic Middle Eastern Literatures* 6:1 (2003): 39-76; and Johann Strauss, "'Kütüp ve Resail-i Mevkute': Printing and Publishing in a Multi-ethnic

Missionary Tours to the Interior

The ABCFM reinforced the mission station in Izmir[60] by sending Henry J. Van Lennep (1840-1844), Simeon Howard Calhoun (1843-1844), Joel Summer Everett (1845-1846), Nathan Benjamin (1846-1852), Thomas P. Johnston (1834), and John B. Adger[61] (1834-1846). The members of the mission in Izmir made separate missionary tours to the interior of the region in order to understand local conditions, to seek opportunities, to distribute and sell books, tracts, and in their own words "to sow some of the good seed by the way side."[62] They tried to write down everything they saw and reported back to headquarters.[63] John B. Adger made such a tour in company with Simeon H. Calhoun, an agent of the American Bible society, and suggested that they should prepare more books, open more schools, and send more missionaries to the interior.[64]

In 1842, Elias Riggs, with Adger and two Armenians, made a tour to the interior, including Aydın, Nazilli, Karacasu, Denizli, and the ruins in the vicinity for the purpose of "ascertaining by actual observation, how the Scriptures and other religious books and tracts would be received by the people of the interior of Asia Minor, and how, generally, a salutary religious influence might be exerted upon them."[65] Riggs gave an interesting

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Society," in *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy*, ed. Elisabeth Özdalga (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 225-253.

[60] For a short account of the mission station in Izmir, see Marcellus Bowen, *Historical Sketch of Mission Work in the Smyrna Field, 1820-1884* (unpublished manuscript, ABC 88); and Lyman Bartlett, "Historical Sketch of the Smyrna Field," *The Missionary Herald* 91:3 (March 1895): 93-97.

[61] See John B. Adger, *My Life and Times, 1810-1899* (Richmond: The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1899).

[62] "Journal of Mr. Adger, on a Tour in Asia Minor," *The Missionary Herald* 35:6 (June 1839): 204.

[63] See, for example, "Journal of Mr. Adger, on a Tour in Asia Minor," *The Missionary Herald* 35:6 (June 1839): 204-212, and 35:7 (July 1839): 225-238.

[64] "Journal of Mr. Adger, on a Tour in Asia Minor," *The Missionary Herald* 35:7 (July 1839): 236-238.

[65] "Smyrna: Letter from Mr. Riggs, Dated Sept. 20th, 1842," *The Missionary Herald* 39:3 (March 1843): 97-100.

sketch of their tour in a letter to Boston, which was published in the *Missionary Herald*, the monthly paper of the ABCFM. He observed that the Greeks' Lancasterian school in Nazilli was using the series of cards issued in the mission press in Izmir, as in Aydın. In Denizli, Riggs wrote:

> We were pleased to observe here, as generally in the interior, the absence of that hostility to our books which has been excited, to so great a degree, in places which have been occupied as missionary stations. We gave away no books here gratuitously, nor indeed generally in the interior. We felt that our motives for doing so could not probably be appreciated, and that suspicions might thus be excited where none existed before.[66]

Riggs suggested to ABCFM headquarters that on future tours, the missionaries should take fewer books with them and the book distribution should be left to a local agent. He obviously did not want to intimidate the people in the cities where the ABCFM could open mission stations. Indeed, some of the priests and the laity of the Eastern Churches feared the displeasure of their ecclesiastical superiors and would not buy or accept books and tracts published by the mission press when the American missionaries tried to distribute or sell them.

The American missionaries in the region always looked for suitable ethnic and religious communities to whom they might extend their missionary enterprise. In addition to preparing and printing books and tracts, Elias Riggs was also active working among the ethnic communities in Izmir, and claimed that a considerable number of Jews in the city "privately professed their belief that Jesus is the Christ, the hope of Israel and salvation of the world."[67] Riggs visited a *tekke*, dervish lodge, on the last Friday of

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[66] Ibid., 99.
[67] *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1841), 94.

Ramadan in 1840 in Izmir and witnessed religious services conducted by Turkish dervishes, of which he wrote an account in the Missionary Herald.[68]

Henry J. Van Lennep, for instance, believed that missionary activities would be fruitful among the Bulgarians in Edirne and other places in the region, where the ABCFM described there were "people professing the religion of the Greek Church."[69] In 1840, Elias Riggs reported that B. Barker, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, made a tour to Bulgaria and the surrounding area, and "both from personal observations and from correspondence, has long been convinced that it is a very interesting field for missionary effort."[70] The Annual report of the ABCFM stated that about 2,000 copies of the Bulgarian New Testament were sold at a fair in the vicinity of Edirne.[71] Edward M. Dodd, an ABCFM missionary in Salonica, described the Bulgarians as "the *Armenians* of European Turkey."[72]

When Elias Riggs went to Istanbul for the annual meeting of the mission in the summer of 1843, he also visited Varna, a Bulgarian town on the Black Sea coast on the suggestion of his missionary friends in Istanbul. He spent only a week there because he could not find many people who spoke Bulgarian, only a few peasants from the neighboring villages, and he observed that Turkish is the language of conversation. Moreover, the place was not healthy and his health was not good enough to go to the

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[68] "Smyrna: Extract from a Letter of Mr. Riggs, 9th Dec. 1840," *The Missionary Herald* 37:6 (June 1841): 242-243. For the original, see Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (December 9, 1840), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 110 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520).
[69] "Smyrna: Letter from Mr. Van Lennep, Sept. 1st, 1842," *The Missionary Herald* 39:2 (February 1843): 76, *Thirty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1842), 102.
[70] *The Missionary Herald* 37:7 (July 1841): 287.
[71] *Thirty-Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1842), 102.
[72] *Forty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1852), 59.

interior cities and villages. Therefore, he returned to Istanbul and continued to revise some tracts in Bulgarian for the mission press.[73] Elias Riggs' interest in Bulgarian and working among the Bulgarian population of the Ottoman Empire began in Izmir and his activities among them would be part of the spectrum of his activities during his Istanbul years.

Shifting from Greeks to Armenians

Elias Riggs and the other missionaries of the ABCFM in Izmir were mostly working among the Greek population. In addition to preparing a manual for primary schools in modern Greek in his first year in Izmir, Riggs also prepared some hymns in Greek which were sung in the chapel of the Dutch consulate.[74] Over the next few years, Riggs prepared and published several books and tracts in modern Greek, including a treatise on the difficulties of infidelity and a volume on sacred geography and antiquities. In 1841, Riggs was preaching in Greek at his own house and had a Bible class consisting of six or seven men. Although Riggs started the class at their request, he confessed that "no one of them evinces any serious concern for the salvation of his soul."[75] "Of all the branches of the oriental church," the ABCFM indicated "the Greek seems to be the most difficult to engraft with an evangelical faith and influence."[76] The Greek clergy persistently opposed the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular language. Riggs

[73] Letter from Riggs to Rufus Anderson (November 16, 1843), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 128 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520).
[74] *Thirty-First Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1840), 86.
[75] "Smyrna: Report of the Station for 1841," *The Missionary Herald* 38:7 (July 1842): 274. Also see Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (February 23, 1842), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 117 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520).
[76] *Thirty-Second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1841), 90.

stressed that among the Greeks, "the publications most extensively circulated and most purchased are the school books."[77]

The years 1843 and 1844 marked an important turning point for the ABCFM mission in the Ottoman Empire in general and the Izmir mission in particular. Rufus Anderson, the secretary of the ABCFM, visited Athens, Izmir, Bursa, Istanbul, Trabzon, Beirut, and Jerusalem in 1843 and 1844. He had meetings with the American missionaries and discussed the future of missionary enterprise in the region. In his report to the Prudential Committee, Rufus Anderson examined the American missionary activities among the Greeks in the region: "To me the condition of the Greek mind, in relation to evangelical efforts for the benefit of the Greek people, appears altogether extraordinary. We are not mistaken in the material facts in the case. The Greeks have retired from us. To a most affecting extent they have become inaccessible to our preaching, our books, and our influence."[78]

As explained in the previous chapter, the ABCFM had already downgraded its missionary activities in Greece, mainly because of the strong opposition of the Greek authorities and ecclesiastics. After Anderson's visit in 1843-44 and in the light of his observations on the field, the ABCFM decided to discontinue its Greek department in the Ottoman Empire and focus on the Armenians. The ABCFM missionaries in the field justified this shift by saying that the Greeks offered them "little encouragement"[79] and

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[77] Letter from Elias Riggs to Rufus Anderson (December 16, 1843), ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 6, item 129 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 520).

[78] Rufus Anderson, *Report to the Prudential Committee of a Visit to the Missions in the Levant; also a letter to the Committee from the Rev. Dr. Hawes* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1844), 6.

[79] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Goodell, March 7, 1844: Review-Progress-Prospects," *The Missionary Herald* 40:6 (June 1844): 203-204. Goodell also justified their previous work among the Greeks in Istanbul and argued that in the 1830s "all direct access to the Armenians seemed closed against us; nor did it appear

"the Spirit of the Lord" was "evidently moving on the Armenian mind in various places."[80] The letters and reports of the ABCFM missionaries in the field in the first half of the 1840s were full of such statements about mission work among the Greeks and Armenians. Rufus Anderson, too, claimed after his visit that "the mind of a Greek, on being turned from the prevailing superstitions of his church, tends towards infidelity – the Armenian mind, on the other hand, goes to Bible in quest of truth."[81]

The mission, which was called the "Mission to the Armenians," had five stations in 1843: Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa, Trabzon, and Erzurum.[82] For Rufus Anderson, Izmir was the most suitable place for the mission press because "the Frank influence is great enough to secure its toleration."[83] As a result of the shift, the positions also changed in the Izmir mission station. Daniel Temple returned to the United States[84] and Elias Riggs also turned to the Armenians. The new situation brought new requirements for the ABCFM because the mission stations needed more missionaries who knew Armenian and Turkish in order to reach potential converts. As a result of their continuous tours to the interior cities of Anatolia, the American missionaries realized that most Armenians spoke Turkish

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possible to reach them, except in a very circuitous way. Indeed we were obliged to commence operations among the Greeks, in order to introduce ourselves among the Armenians."

[80] "Broosa: Journal of Mr. Schneider," *The Missionary Herald* 40:5 (May 1844):169. Schneider's arguments explained the ABCFM's work among the Armenians very well: "Though little appears on the surface, it is plain that an under current in favor of the gospel has been set in motion. Hence it is obvious that increasing favor to the cause of truth may be expected with every passing year. The Spirit of the Lord is evidently moving on the Armenian mind in various places. Proofs of this are constantly multiplying. And the inference seems to be warranted by facts already ascertained, that in every Armenian community in this empire, to which the influence of our stations and books has reached, there are a few who are the beginning to feel the power of the truth, and to seek for the good and paths, which their church has long forsaken."

[81] He also added that "a real, thorough, spirited reformation has commenced among this interesting Oriental nation," which "possess acute, active, Yankee minds." See "Dr. Anderson's Tour in the East," *New York Evangelist* 15:33 (August 15, 1844): 130.

[82] *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1844), 98.

[83] Rufus Anderson, *Report to the Prudential Committee*, 13.

[84] Daniel H. Temple, *Life and Letters of Rev. Daniel Temple, for Twenty Years a Missionary of the A.B.C.F.M. in Western Asia* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1855), 357.

instead of their own language. The situation was the same even in Izmir. In 1851, for example, Thomas P. Johnston preached in Turkish on Sundays because many Armenians in the congregation understood only Turkish and after him, Elias Riggs preached in Armenian at a different hour in Izmir.[85]

It is possible to see the progress of the American missionaries among the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire through their reports in the *Missionary Herald* and the annual reports of the ABCFM. The ABCFM summarized activities among the Armenians as "preaching (embracing the various forms of oral instruction), education, translations, the distribution of books, and a native agency."[86] For example, by 1843, Dwight was preaching in Armenian and Goodell in Turkish in Pera, Istanbul; in Trabzon and Bursa there was regular preaching to the Armenians in Turkish; Cyrus Hamlin was instructing at his seminary at Bebek, Istanbul; Elias Riggs and John B. Adger were supervising a translation of the Old Testament into modern Armenian by local scholars in Izmir. The missionaries in Izmir continued their tours in the vicinity looking for possible mission stations among the Armenians. Nathan Benjamin, for instance, was disappointed after his tour that he found less Armenians than he expected along the road.[87] The American missionaries made inquiries and suggested setting up stations at some places near Izmir, including Manisa, Akhisar, Kırkağaç, Aydın, and Nazilli.[88]

Intensifying the efforts of the ABCFM vis-à-vis the Armenians in the region naturally complicated the situation between the American missionaries, possible converts,

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[85] *Forty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1852), 63.
[86] *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1844), 101.
[87] "Mr. Benjamin's Tour in Asia Minor," *The Missionary Herald* 44:9 (September 1848), 309-314.
[88] "Letter from Mr. Benjamin, March 6, 1852," *The Missionary Herald* 48:6 (June 1852): 177; and "Smyrna," *The Missionary Herald* 48:7 (July 1852): 195.

and the Armenian Orthodox Church. The ABCFM reported that "[T]he evangelical Armenians, persisting in refusing to countenance by word or deed the superstitions of their national church, have been excommunicated, and subjected to grievous trials."[89] Therefore, the ABCFM planned to establish a church for the evangelical Armenians at the annual meeting of the Armenian mission in June, 1846.[90] The Church was inaugurated in Istanbul on July 1, 1846 as the first evangelical church in Anatolia, and other churches followed at Izmit, Adapazarı, and Trabzon. By 1851, about twenty individuals had "enrolled themselves as Protestants" although there was no Protestant church in Izmir.[91] The church was organized in the city in 1852, later than the other mission stations because the American missionaries in Izmir mainly focused on translating and printing and the ABCFM did not want to intimidate anyone in the city in order to preserve the unhindered functioning of the mission press. Tekirdag, for instance, was a city west of Istanbul where missionaries visited two or three times and a Protestant church was also opened in 1852 mainly through the efforts of a local agency.

In Izmir, Riggs worked among the Greeks for six years (1838-1844) and then among the Armenians for eight years (1844-1852) after the ABCFM changed its strategy. During his time in the Izmir mission station, Riggs worked as preacher, editor, translator,

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[89] *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1846), 95.

[90] The ABCFM missionaries prepared the plan with Allan and Königh, two missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland, and Swan L. Pomroy from Maine. According to the annual report of 1846, the plan was done "in compliance with the request of the native brethren." For the plan, see "Plan of Church Organization for the Evangelical Armenians," in *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1846), 238-248.

[91] *Forty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R.Marvin, 1851), 70.

book distributor, and treasurer (a few years).[92] Elias Riggs' years in Izmir were "a period of experiment and of laying foundations" for ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire and "the lines of opposition have been sharply drawn."[93] However, the advance of the ABCFM was obvious and many cities in Anatolia from Istanbul to the Euphrates were becoming ABCFM mission stations.

As explained in the previous chapter, in addition to the opposition of the Greek population of Greece, Riggs and other Western missionaries faced the restrictions put up by the Greek authorities, the Church of Greece, and the Patriarchate in Istanbul. During Riggs' years among the Greeks in Izmir, the situation was roughly the same. When the American missionaries focused on the Armenians, the opposition came from the Armenian Church that naturally did not want to lose its followers to Western missionaries.

Another significant feature of these years was that Elias Riggs was no longer an inexperienced missionary. Although he had been sent by the ABCFM to the mission field in Greece because he had the necessary skills and abilities to carry out the missionary activities there, it was his first mission and he had no previous experience. In Izmir, however, he brought his previous experience from Greece (Athens and Argos) to the field, and strengthened his linguistic potential and developed his editorial abilities while working for the mission press. His tours in the region gave him greater familiarity with the various religious and ethnic communities of the Ottoman Empire. Year by year, he

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[92] For example, according to Elias Riggs' letter, the total expenditure of the Izmir station in the year 1843 was $12,324. See "Report of the Smyrna Treasurer," ABC 16.7.1: Mission to the Armenians, vol. 2, item 75 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 516).

[93] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), xxi.

became a major figure in the ABCFM, organizing all kinds of missionary activities in the region throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

According to William G. Schauffler, the mission press was "the one battery which the enemy could never silence. Its guns were never spiked, its position never carried."[94] In 1852, the ABCFM headquarters decided that the time came to remove this "battery" from Izmir to Istanbul in order to work more efficiently. For the Riggs family, it meant to move once again to Istanbul with the mission press. Riggs' activities in the Ottoman capital will be discussed in the next chapter along with the creation of the Protestant millet in the Ottoman Empire.

[94] E. E. Bliss, "The Publication Department of the Missionary Work in Northern Turkey," *The Missionary Herald* 68:12 (December 1872): 380.

CHAPTER 5

"ASIA MINOR" AS A MISSIONARY FIELD: MISSIONARY NETWORK AND ELIAS RIGGS

The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM decided to send Elias Riggs and Nathan Benjamin from Izmir to Istanbul in 1852 because the ABCFM believed that "the operations of the mission press can be carried forward to the greatest advantage"[1] in Istanbul where "there is an increasing interest in the truth."[2] The city would be the center for the press and for "all the other evangelical influences."[3] Before transferring its press from Izmir, the ABCFM produced publications in Istanbul using the ordinary presses in the city. After the transfer, the missionaries could use the presses and types belonging to the ABCFM. Since Istanbul was the capital city of the Ottoman Empire, the ABCFM wanted to benefit from its strategic position.

One of the most important reasons for the transfer was the creation and official recognition of a Protestant millet in the Ottoman Empire, which marked the beginning of a new era for the ABCFM's missionary enterprise. In this chapter, after explaining the importance of the formal recognition of the Protestant millet for the American

[1] *The Missionary Herald* 48:7 (July 1852): 193.
[2] *The Missionary Herald* 49:1 (January 1853): 4.
[3] Ibid., 4.

missionaries, Elias Riggs' first years in Istanbul and the ABCFM's activities among the Bulgarians and the Armenians in the 1860s will be analyzed.

Protestant Millet

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were three main non-Muslim millets, religious communities, in the Ottoman Empire: the Greek Orthodox, the Gregorian Armenians, and the Jews.[4] In 1831, the Armenian Catholic millet was given formal recognition by an imperial edict of Sultan Mahmud II.[5] The first church for the Protestant Armenians was formed on July 1, 1846 and the ABCFM started to form churches from local converts in the Ottoman Empire. The ABCFM was aware that this move would eventually bring the formation of a new sect, as Rufus Anderson had admitted earlier: "[W]hen it was found that the Oriental Churches, or any of them, could not be reformed *as such*, *then* we should encourage secession."[6] However, some of the ABCFM missionaries' statements were contradictory. For example, Goodell said to the members of the Eastern Churches: "you have sects enough among you already and we

[4] See Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, 2 vols. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982); Dimitrios Stamatopoulos, "From Millets to Minorities in the 19th-Century Ottoman Empire: An Ambiguous Modernization," in *Citizenship in Historical Perspective*, ed. Steven G. Ellis, Guðmundur Hálfdanarson, and Ann Katherine Isaacs (Pisa: Edizioni Plus, Pisa University Press, 2006), 253-273; and Bilal Eryılmaz, *Osmanlı Devletinde Gayrimüslim Tebaanın Yönetimi* (İstanbul: Risale, 1996). Before the demise of the Empire, 12 distinct Christian communities had been recognized as millets in the Ottoman Empire. See Bruce Masters, "Millet," in *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (New York: Facts On File, 2009), 383-384. On the nature of the millets, see Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), vol. 1, 69-88.

[5] See Kemal Beydilli, Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpay-Tekin, *II. Mahmud Devri'nde Katolik Ermeni Cemaati ve Kilisesi'nin Tanınması (1830)=Recognition of the Armenian Catholic Community and the Church in the Reign of Mahmud II (1830)* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1995); and Charles A. Frazee, "The Formation of the Armenian Catholic Community in the Ottoman Empire," *Eastern Church Review* 7:2 (1975): 149-163.

[6] Letter from Rufus Anderson to the Syria Mission (January 11, 1840), ABC 16.8.1: Syrian Mission, vol. 8, Syrian Mission, Supplementary Papers; Documents, Records, Minutes, 1836-1870, box 4, item 823 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 548).

have no design of setting up a new one or of pulling down your churches or drawing away members from them in order to build up our own."[7] It is apparent that these kinds of statements were made by the ABCFM missionaries in order not to alarm the Greek and Armenian ecclesiastics or to offend the members of the Eastern Churches.

The Armenian Patriarchate opposed American missionary activities since it feared losing its own congregations. In the eyes of the Armenian Patriarchate, missionary activities, particularly missionary schools, were dangerous since the activities of the missionaries and their educational institutions were undermining the doctrines of the Armenian Church. The antagonism of the Armenian Church towards the Protestants intensified when Patriarch Mattheos was elected, after which Protestant Armenians were excommunicated and anathemas were issued against them.[8] Since "they were literally sheep without a shepherd,"[9] the Protestant missionaries needed a protective shield without delay to prevent the persecution of the converts and to provide an alternative to the Gregorian and Catholic Armenians.[10]

In 1847, a decree was issued by the grand vizier and Protestants were recognized as a separate religious community at ministerial level in the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, the Protestant millet was recognized by an imperial edict issued by Sultan

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[7] David Brewer Eddy, *What Next in Turkey; Glimpses of the American Board's Work in the Near East* (Boston: The Taylor Press, 1913), 69-70.

[8] For the anathemas, see H.G.O. Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey: A Narrative of the Protestant Reformation in the Armenian Church* (London: James Nisbet, 1854), 323-327.

[9] Eddy, *What Next in Turkey*, 70.

[10] For persecutions, for example, see Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *History of the Work of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the Near East and more especially in Turkey, 1819 till 1934* (ABCFM Manuscript Histories of Missions 31:4), 12-17; Cyrus Hamlin, *My Life and Times* (Boston: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, 1893), 283-295; William G. Schauffler, *Autobiography of William G. Schauffler: for Forty-Nine Years a Missionary in the Orient* (New York: A.D.F. Randolph, 1887), 188-191; and Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey*, 211-297.

Abdülmecit in 1850. In 1853, the Sultan issued another edict for the Protestants and affirmed that

> It is my imperial desire that no improper or disorderly thing of whatever kind, be thoughtlessly occasioned to the faithful subjects of my kingdom of the Protestant faith, and that the special privileges granted by my Imperial Government concerning religion and matters pertaining to it, be perpetually preserved from all detriment. And, as it is my imperial will that no injury of whatever kind, or in whatever manner, come upon them, therefore, this most righteous imperial edict has been written, that those against it, may know that, exposing themselves to my royal indignation, they shall be punished.[11]

There was cooperation between the British and American missionaries in the city to achieve the recognition of the Protestants by the Ottoman authorities. Formal recognition was accomplished with the help of British diplomats in Istanbul, particularly Sir Stratford Canning (afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe).[12] In the farewell address of the American missionaries in Istanbul to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe on the occasion of his return to England in 1852, the missionaries noted that "twenty years ago there existed not one Protestant subject in this whole empire! The existence, indeed, of Protestant Christians anywhere was almost unknown to the Government and to the Mohammedan population of this country." "Now a Protestant denomination is acknowledged," the missionaries continued, "and its members possess the Imperial Charter of their civil rights; and the Mohammedan population of Turkey, from the Sovereign to the peasant,

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[11] See H. G. O. Dwight, "Translation of the Ferman Granted by Sultan Abd-ul-mejeed to his Protestant Subjects," *Journal of American Oriental Society*, vol.4 (1854): 443-444. For the edicts, see Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey*, 340-348; E.D.G. Prime, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell* (New York: Robert Carter, 1876), 483-485; E. D. G. Prime, "Civil and Religious Liberty in Turkey," *Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review* (October 1875): 617-621; *Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1848), 142; "Letters from Messrs. Homes and Dwight: Recognition of Protestantism in Turkey," *The Missionary Herald* 44:3 (March 1848): 98-99; "Constantinople. Letter from Mr. Homes, January 1, 1851: Charter of the Protestants," *The Missionary Herald* 47:4 (April 1851): 114-115; and "Armenians: The New Firman of the Sultan," *The Missionary Herald* 50:4 (April 1854): 106. See also Vartan H. Artinian, "The Formation of Catholic and Protestant Millets in the Ottoman Empire," *The Armenian Review* 28:1 (Spring 1975): 3-15.

[12] Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1888).

are beginning to see the Christianity in its purest character."[13] Four years later, in 1856, the missionaries of the ABCFM, including Elias Riggs, and the British missionaries in Istanbul congratulated Lord Stratford de Redcliffe this time "on the success of his efforts in procuring" the Reform Edict from the Sultan.[14]

After the recognition of the Protestant millet, the Protestant missionaries were in a better position than before. When they converted someone to Protestantism, the convert had a group identity recognized by the Ottoman authorities. Opening schools and organizing churches was easier than before for the missionaries and the Protestant community. However, although millet status was very important for the Protestant missionaries in order to advance their activities in the Ottoman Empire, it did not end the problems of the American missionaries. The ABCFM noted that

> The priesthood could excite the ignorant prejudices of the people; Turkish governors and local officials could be bribed; the central government was far off; the long delays of justice made men ready to risk penalties, provided their ends were gained. Hence, though victory was sure in the end, a battle was to be fought in almost every new place that was entered. In such circumstances men hesitated to leave their old associations, much as Hindoos shrink leaving their caste. Some lacked the moral courage to do so; others hoped for a reform in the old church, and imitated the Protestants in the establishment of schools, and in the introduction of religious services better suited to the wants of the people.[15]

The formation of both Armenian Catholic and Protestant millets definitely undermined the authority of the Armenian Patriarchate since most of the members of these two new millets were converts from the Armenian Church.

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[13] Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey*, 352.
[14] See "Turkey: Presentation of an Address from the English and American Missionaries to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe," *New York Observer and Chronicle* 34:17 (April 24, 1856).
[15] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), xxi-xxii.

Riggs' First Years in Istanbul

By 1852, the ABCFM had several missions in the region, including *the Mission to Greece* (Athens), *the Mission to the Jews* (Salonica and Istanbul), *the Mission to the Armenians* (Istanbul, Izmir, Merzifon, Trabzon, Erzurum, and Antep), *the Syrian Mission* (Beirut, Abeih, Tripoli, Aleppo, Hasbeiya, and Sidon), *the Assyrian Mission* (Musul and Diyarbakır), and *the Mission to the Nestorians* (Urmiya, Seir, and Gawar).[16] Although the ABCFM focused on the Armenians, the ABCFM missionaries were also working among Greeks, Assyrians, Nestorians, Maronites, Druzes, and Jews.

By joining the ABCFM team in Istanbul in 1853, Elias Riggs went into the third stage of his missionary work. He had spent his first years as a missionary in Greece and he had no previous experience in the field. He spent the second stage of his work among the Armenians and Greeks in Izmir. In view of the importance of the missionary work in Istanbul, the ABCFM always reinforced the missionary force in the city and Riggs was now in the center of the mission. While in Istanbul during the third stage of his missionary work, he was among the chief missionaries of the ABCFM, including Cyrus Hamlin, the founder of Robert College, William Goodell, an ABCFM missionary in the region since 1822, and William G. Schauffler, the pioneer of the mission to the Jews.

The ABCFM report of 1858 summarized the responsibilities of the missionaries in Istanbul:

> The missionaries at *Constantinople* are necessarily much employed in labors not directed specially to the people of that city and vicinity, but having reference to the whole field; in the Bebek seminary, and the female

[16] In addition to these missions and mission stations, there were also 22 out-stations, including Bursa, Izmit, Adapazari, Tekirdag, Manisa, Sivas, Kayseri, Tokat, Kilis, Urfa, Kessab, and Maras. *Mission to the Armenians* had six stations, twelve out-stations, seventeen missionaries, nineteen female assistant missionaries, eleven local preachers, and thirty-five local helpers. See *Forty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1852), 53-90.

> boarding school; in connection with the press, translations and revisions; in superintending the general book distribution; in connection with the mission post office; and in the transaction of much business for the various interior stations. They usually, by appointment of the mission, constitute a *committee ad interim,* to transact such of its business as must be transacted between one annual meeting and the next.[17]

The ABCFM missionaries in Istanbul were active in Bebek, Pera, Hasköy, and Kumkapı. The mission press was under the direction of Nathan Benjamin. Elias Riggs started to teach in the Bebek Seminary, a boarding school in Bebek, a village six miles north of the city on the European shore of the Bosphorus; by 1854, it had fifty students, of whom ten were Greeks.[18] Most of the students were Armenians and the ABCFM was training these young men for the ministry in order to teach and preach the gospel in the mission stations. Indeed, many went as evangelical laborers. Former students and graduates of the seminary were employed as preachers, teachers, helpers, and translators in Anatolia and the Balkans.[19] In addition to preaching in Greek to the students in the Seminary and a few others, Riggs was also responsible for Armenian theological instruction. Moreover, he continued to prepare tracts for the mission press. The Greek department of the Seminary was closed in 1855. After the death of Nathan Benjamin, Riggs left the Seminary and transferred to the mission press. He also served as the mission treasurer for a time.

Riggs and other missionaries of the ABCFM in the city made tours to neighboring cities, towns, and villages to promote missionary work. In 1853, for example, Riggs

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[17] *Forty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1858), 43.

[18] The Annual Report of the ABCFM for 1853 states that the number of Greek students in the seminary was fifteen. See *Forty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1853), 60.

[19] In 1858, for example, the theological class at Bebek had five graduates and they went to Kayseri, Harput, Bilecik, Edirne, and the Assyria mission. See *Forty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1858), 40. Also see *Forty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1853), 60; and *The Missionary Herald* 51:9 (September 1855): 269.

visited Bursa and the vicinity and reported that the Protestants in Demirtaş (Demirdesh), a Greek village near Bursa, were "hungry for religious instruction." He also observed the hostility shown towards them. "Frequently while I was there, when the Protestants were passing through the streets, they were hooted after; and I was also, when with them. In one instance, being out with my host after sunset, stones were thrown at us by some person concealed among the trees."[20] After his next visit to the same village in 1854, however, Riggs stated that the Protestants in the village met freely and publicly and did not "hesitate to sign in their meetings."[21] This was largely because the number of the Protestants increased in the village and in Bursa, where the provincial governor was friendly towards the Protestants after the edict of 1853 mentioned above.

The Riggs family lived in Bebek between 1853 and 1856 while the Ottoman Empire was fighting against Russia in the Crimean War. After working for about twenty-four years in Greece and the Ottoman Empire, Riggs, "entirely overworked," returned to the United States with his family because of his health problems.[22] It would be the only visit to the United States for the rest of his life. In the United States, Riggs attended ordination ceremonies of the ABCFM missionaries,[23] preached and gave missionary addresses in several places, attended the annual meeting of the ABCFM, wrote to the newspapers and journals, visited relatives and friends, supervised the Armenian Bible which was electrotyped by the American Bible Society in a duodecimo form,[24] and taught Hebrew and Chaldean at the Union Theological Seminary. He declined an

[20] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Riggs, September 9, 1853," *The Missionary Herald* 50:2 (February 1854): 33.
[21] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Riggs, September 20, 1854," *The Missionary Herald* 50:12 (December 1854): 374.
[22] "Station Reports," *The Missionary Herald* 52:9 (September 1856): 258.
[23] See, for example, "Charge to Mr. Jackson Coffing, Ordained a Missionary to Western Asia," *The Independent* 7:415 (November 13, 1856):1.
[24] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1860), 51.

invitation to become a professor of Hebrew literature in the Seminary after consulting the ABCFM headquarters in Boston. The Riggs family returned to Istanbul in 1858.[25]

Riggs among the Bulgarians

After returning from the United States, the Riggs family resided in Hasköy in the premises of the Female Boarding School. Riggs preached in Armenian at Hasköy and Balat, and had a Bible class for Armenian students in the Female Boarding School until its closure in 1862. After returning from the United States, Riggs spent most of his time on activities among the Bulgarians. In addition to revising the Bulgarian Scriptures, he prepared and edited Bulgarian religious tracts.

As explained in the previous chapter, the ABCFM started to become interested in the Bulgarian population of the Ottoman Empire while Elias Riggs was in Izmir. According to the ABCFM, there were several encouraging indications to open a separate mission for the Bulgarians. Edward M. Dodd, an ABCFM missionary in Salonica, described the Bulgarians as "the *Armenians* of European Turkey."[26] In 1857, Hamlin accompanied Henry Jones, traveling Secretary of the Turkish Mission Aid Society, on a tour for the "exploration of European Turkey."[27] Hamlin stated that "[n]o unevangelized people ever purchased the Bible with such eagerness as the Bulgarians."[28] However, the ABCFM missionaries also noted that although hundreds of Bibles were sold among the

[25] Elias Riggs reached Istanbul 68 days after they embarked at Boston. See Elias Riggs, *Reminiscences for my Children*, 16. ABC 77.1 Biographical Collection, Box 61, Folder 50:21.
[26] *Forty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1852), 59.
[27] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Hamlin, May 18, 1857," *The Missionary Herald* 53:9 (September 1857): 293-299; and *Forty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1857), 63-67.
[28] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Hamlin, May 18, 1857," *The Missionary Herald* 53:9 (September 1857): 296.

Bulgarians "there was no evidence that they were thoughtfully read."[29] After the tour, Hamlin reported to the headquarters in Boston the ways that the ABCFM could approach the Bulgarians: "The Bulgarian population have such a desire for schools, for the cultivation of their own language, and for freedom from Greek despotism, that they will be disposed to receive the assistance which otherwise they might reject."[30]

In 1859, the mission to the Bulgarians was initiated. However, immediately after starting the mission among the Bulgarians, the annual report of the ABCFM for the year 1860 stated that they "welcome Protestant aid, not from a sense of spiritual want, but from a desire for civil, intellectual and social elevation."[31] Moreover, there were other discouraging developments for the ABCFM missionaries. The Bulgarians generally attended the Greek churches, whose priests were naturally opposed to the Protestant missionaries. The ABCFM missionaries stated that "the strong attachment of all classes to their national unity" was an obstacle to the missionary activities among the Bulgarians.[32]

Plovdiv (Philippopolis, Filibe), Stara Zagora (Eski Zağra), and Sofia (Sophia) were the mission stations of the ABCFM among the Bulgarians in the Balkans in 1863. Later, they started to work in Edirne (Adrianople) and Samokov, and all these mission stations belonged to the Western Turkey Mission. A school for girls was established in Stara Zagora but it was suspended for a few weeks because of local opposition. As a

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[29] *Fifty-Sixth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1866), 72.
[30] "Constantinople: Letter from Mr. Hamlin, May 18, 1857," *The Missionary Herald* 53:9 (September 1857): 296.
[31] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1860), 60.
[32] *Fifty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1863), 63. The missionaries of the ABCFM including Elias Riggs had the same problem while they were working among the Greeks. The missionaries realized that in the minds of the Greek people, religion and nationality went together.

seminary for the education of female teachers under the charge of Mary E. Reynolds, it was regarded as "a most important instrumentality in the evangelization of the Bulgarians" by the ABCFM.[33]

The ABCFM missionaries made preaching tours in the surrounding cities and villages. In 1871, the ABCFM organized a separate mission for the Bulgarians, the European Turkey Mission, with four stations, Istanbul, Stara Zagora, Plovdiv, and Samokov.[34] Since Elias Riggs' activities were mainly for the Bulgarians, he was attached to the European Turkey Mission. Riggs brought the first Bulgarian Bible published by the mission press to the first annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission. For the first time in the history of the ABCFM, a vernacular Bible was ready when the mission was established among a particular group of people. The ABCFM designated Istanbul as the mission station of the European Turkey Mission where the Bible and tracts in Bulgarian were issued and circulated among the stations of this new mission. Riggs' main work was to prepare the materials to be printed for this new mission, and in Istanbul, he also occasionally preached in Bulgarian in Istanbul. He and his wife Martha also continued their work in the literary department for the Armenian mission in Istanbul. The mission press in Istanbul published more than ten million pages in 1870, half of which were in Bulgarian, but there were still no churches in the European Turkey mission.

In 1871, the ABCFM established the first Protestant church among the Bulgarians. Henry Pitt Page wrote from the European Turkey Mission to Boston in 1871:

> We have reason to hope that the church will be able, next year, to pay one half his salary for the whole year. They could not raise so much this year, having expended considerable for a lot of land on which they intend to build a church; but we thought best to adhere to the rule that the church pay one

[33] Ibid., 64.
[34] There were also four out-stations.

> half, even under these circumstances. The little flock is jubilant and of good charge. There is, at present, little or no persecution in the place. What a contrast between this state of things and that of two years' ago, when the people seized our horses and drove us from the village![35]

According to missionaries, European Turkey was "the most advanced and civilized portion of the Turkish Empire."[36] The American missionaries in the region also reported that the Muslims in the Balkans were usually more accessible to foreigners than the Muslims in Anatolia.

The ABCFM among the Muslims

As an institution for "the evangelization of the heathen and Mohammedan world," the ABCFM was also interested in the Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the ABCFM regarded the evangelization of the Muslims as the main object of its activities in the Ottoman Empire.[37] "From almost every part of our field," missionaries in Istanbul reported in 1854, "there has been a demand for the Bible in the Turkish language; and we have reason to believe that the Scriptures are now read by Turks more than at any other period."[38] There were several factors to account for the interest and it did not necessarily mean that the Muslims would convert. In 1860, for example, William W. Meriam, a missionary in Plovdiv, stated that his Turkish teacher, who was Muslim and would soon be an *imam*, was interested in the New Testament and said "he shall be

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[35] "Missions of the Board: European Turkey Mission," *The Missionary Herald* 67:12 (December 1871): 381.
[36] *Sixty-first Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1871), 13-18.
[37] See, for example, *Fifty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1863), 65.
[38] *Forty-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1854), 73.

better fitted for his future labors if he understands that book, as well as the Koran."[39] By 1860, 15 people had converted from Islam to Protestantism in Istanbul and the ABCFM mentioned the two factors in its Annual Report: "The practical abrogation of the death penalty for apostasy from Islam, and the good faith of the Government, in maintaining, so far, the religious freedom guaranteed in the Hatti Humayoun [Reform Edict]."[40] The converts, however, were not organized into a separate church and were not members of the Protestant Armenian churches. Since the converts from Islam were few and some of those who had been baptized returned to Islam, the American missionaries were disappointed.

After 1856, in addition to the various groups in the Ottoman Empire, the ABCFM worked also among the Muslims, who were "once considered the most hopeless of all."[41] William Schauffler started to adapt the Armeno-Turkish New Testament, which was in Turkish written in Armenian letters, for the Muslims of Turkey. However, the mission to the Muslims did not show "delightful progress" like the mission to the Armenians. While trying to expand missionary activities in Anatolia, the ABCFM also started working among the Alevi population in Anatolia, whom the missionaries called "nominal Mohammedans."[42] It was gaining more experience among the "heterogeneous masses" in

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[39] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1860), 62.
[40] Ibid., 62. By 1864, the number of converts from Islam was about twenty-five. One of them died as a Christian and six of them became Muslim again. See *Fifty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1864), 62-63.
[41] *Forty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1857), 67. According to the ABCFM missionaries, seeking converts among the Muslim population of the Empire was the most difficult task.
[42] The missionaries used the word *Kuzzel-bashes* for them by 1857. See *Forty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1857), 62-63. For the American missionary activities among the *Alevi* population, see, for example, Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, "Alevilik Hakkındaki 19. Yüzyıl Misyoner Kayıtlarına Eleştirel Bir Bakış ve Ali Gako'nun Öyküsü," *Folklor/Edebiyat* 8:29, Alevilik Özel Sayısı 1 (2002): 301-325; Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Muslim Heterodoxy and Protestant Utopia: The Interactions Between Alevis and Missionaries in Ottoman Anatolia," *Die Welt des Islams* 41:1 (March 2001): 89-111.

Anatolia and receiving more information about the ethnicities and religions through the reports from the missionary field.

According to the ABCFM, the Turks (Muslims) only knew the corrupt forms of Christianity from the "nominal Christians" in the region and their objections to the missionary efforts were therefore understandable. The ABCFM claimed that through the efforts of the Protestant missionaries, they would understand that the Christian religion was not idolatrous. Therefore, revival among the nominal Christians was "a stepping stone" to the conversion of the Muslims.

The ABCFM among the Armenians

After diverting its labors from the Greek to the Armenian Mission, the ABCFM estimated that this more inviting and promising field would bring more converts. However, the ABCFM did not expect such a rapid increase in the mission stations and in the number of churches and converts. Moreover, it was probably not desired by the ABCFM because "the demand for qualified native helpers increases far more rapidly than the ability to prepare them, and presses heavily on the stations, particularly on those more remote from the capital."[43] The ABCFM needed more missionaries too. It started other seminaries and schools in the interior parts of Anatolia in order to meet the increasing demand for local preachers and teachers in mission stations and out-stations. The first Protestant church was established in Istanbul in 1846 and after ten years, there were twenty-four Protestant churches in Anatolia. By 1870, the ABCFM had three theological

[43] *Forty-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1854), 84.

schools in Merzifon, Maraş, and Harput to train Armenians for the ministry, and five female seminaries in Merzifon, Antep, Harput, Mardin, and Stara Zagora.[44]

Since the Board urgently needed more missionaries in the mission to the Armenians, it discontinued its mission to the Jews and left that field to English and Scottish missionaries. The report of the American missionaries in the field summarized the reason and exhibited striking confirmation of their interest:

> The Armenian field is emphatically *our* field; and our exclusive right to occupy it has been conceded, as it were, by all Protestant Christendom; which naturally imposes upon us the duty of seeing that it is fully occupied and well cultivated. If we do not come fully up to our responsibilities in this respect, we shall forfeit our right of possession, and can make no complaint if other Societies undertake to do the work which we neglect.[45]

It shows the mentality of the ABCFM and the decision was for practical reasons. It was a realistic move of the ABCFM in order to meet the increasing demands of the field from Thrace to Ağrı.

Because of the expansion of its efforts among the Armenians, the ABCFM divided the mission to the Armenians into two missions in 1857: Northern Armenian Mission and Southern Armenian Mission. While the Northern Armenian Mission had thirteen stations (four stations in Istanbul: Kumkapı, Samatya, Hasköy, and Bebek, Bahçecik, Izmir, Tokat, Sivas, Kayseri, Trabzon, Erzurum, Arapkir, and Harput), thirty out-stations, twenty-eight missionaries, twenty-nine female assistant missionaries, three local pastors, thirteen preachers, and ninety-one local helpers, the Southern Armenian Mission had five stations (Antep, Maraş, Antakya, Halep, and Urfa), seven out-stations,

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[44] Each theological school (higher seminary for theological instruction) was for an Armenian mission in Anatolia. Merzifon was in the Western Turkey Mission, Maraş in the Central Turkey Mission, and Harput in the Eastern Turkey Mission. The female seminary in Stara Zagora was obviously for the Bulgarian.

[45] *Forty-seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1856), 99.

eight missionaries, seven female assistant missionaries, two local pastors, two preachers, and fourteen helpers. All the materials for the Armenians were printed in Istanbul.[46] The ABCFM continued to increase its influence in Anatolia: for example, the number of out-stations in the Northern Armenian Mission increased from thirty to forty-five within three years.[47] The ABCFM claimed that the number of Armenian Protestants in the Ottoman Empire was over 15,500 in 1868.[48]

The Northern Armenian Mission was also in charge of the activities among the Bulgarians and the Muslims. A few years later, the ABCFM missionaries realized that the names of the missions were not appropriate. Therefore, in 1861, the ABCFM reorganized its missions in Anatolia and divided them into three; Western Turkey Mission, Central Turkey Mission, and Eastern Turkey Mission, showing that it favored geographical instead of ethnic names for its missions in Anatolia.

Since Elias Riggs' mission station was Istanbul, he worked under the Northern Armenian Mission and then the Western Turkey Mission. The missionaries of the Western Turkey Mission worked among the Armenians, the Bulgarians, and the Turks. Istanbul was the parent station of the Western Turkey Mission. In 1869, three American missionaries in Istanbul, Elias Riggs, Edwin E. Bliss, and Andrew T. Pratt became responsible for the literary department for the three Armenian missions in the Empire.

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[46] *Forty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1857), 56-74.
[47] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1860), 47.
[48] For a general survey of the Armenian mission in 1868, see a revised edition of a paper presented at the Evangelical alliance at Amsterdam by J. K. Greene. *Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1868), 14-18.

Missionary Network

ABCFM referred to the cities where the missionaries resided as a *station*, and in the *out-stations*, there were local preachers or helpers. According to the constitution and regulations of the Board, a *missionary* was a person "who has been ordained a minister of the gospel, and is actually under the direction of the Board." All other American people sent by the Board to the field were *assistant missionaries*, including licensed preachers, physicians, schoolmasters, and printers.[49] The ABCFM missionaries kept detailed records. For example, in the 1850s and the 1860s, in the tables published in each annual report, one could find the details and statistics of every mission station and out-station, including the number of local pastors, local licensed preachers, churches, preaching places, and the average size of the congregations.

The ABCFM missionaries in the Ottoman Empire stressed that their work "is apostolic; it is to evangelize whole nations; to plant Christian institutions, and to lay the foundations of Christian culture and Christian civilization amid destitute millions."[50] The remainder of the tasks would be accomplished by local (converted) Christians. The ABCFM missionaries had regular meetings with the leaders of the Protestant communities and the representatives of the local churches in order to maintain relations between the American missionaries and the Protestants in the Empire. When the body expanded, problems started to emerge. In Istanbul, for example, the annual report of 1859 mentioned that there was "some difficulty in adjusting satisfactorily the relations of the native ministry to the missionaries." According to the ABCFM, resolving the difficulties

[49] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1859), 192.
[50] *Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1867), 33.

requires "time and more experience, but it can be done only by those actually on the ground."[51]

In the 1850s, the ABCFM missionaries always supported a local church when it was established because they knew that the church could not survive without the mission aid. However, the annual reports hinted at the future plans of the ABCFM on the subject of supporting the local pastors and helpers in the local churches: "Nature and Scripture both teach, that the shepherd should draw his support from the flock."[52] The annual report of 1862 stated that the expenditures for local helpers employed by the ABCFM directly in the missionary work throughout the world had increased more than 50 percent within ten years. In order to reduce the cost of the missions in Anatolia, the ABCFM urged that the locals should support the local pastors:

> The native churches, and the individual converts, must be trained from the first to the habit of self-support. The cost of the "Native Agency," and especially of supporting those who serve as native pastors, must be thrown from the beginning, as much as possible, upon the natives themselves… A native pastorate, especially, and native self-support, must go together.

The ABCFM managed to do that in the Hawaii mission and headquarters stressed that "it must be reached ere long in the missions of Western and Central Turkey."[53]

By 1866, only one church of the Protestant Armenians had raised the salary of its pastor.[54] However, the ABCFM was confident of its missionary activities among the Armenians. Elias Riggs wrote:

> Believing that we have evidence of a genuine work of the Holy Sprit, we cannot doubt that he would carry it on, even if the missionaries should all be

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[51] *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1859), 54.
[52] Ibid., 57.
[53] *Fifty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1862), 37.
[54] The church was at Adapazarı. Seven churches paid from one-tenth to one-half. See *Fifty-sixth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1866), 75.

> removed. The advance already made, though less than what we desire, is still such as to encourage the hope that these churches will become self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating; and we trust the advance will be with accelerated speed.[55]

The missionaries believed that the result would be self-multiplying local churches. The ABCFM declared that its aim was to train and assist the local element and it did not claim authority to rule over the local congregations in the various mission fields.[56]

The ABCFM also had the same idea for the mission presses in the field. The policy of the Prudential Committee for the mission stations all over the world was "to get rid of the printing presses in every mission, as soon as natives can be found with capital to make the purchase, and with sufficient intelligence and skill to carry out the business."[57]

The Mission Press in Istanbul

In 1856, the ABCFM headquarters in Boston recognized that education and the press were auxiliary methods while the main method for "the conversion of the world" was "the oral utterance of the gospel, in public and private."[58] Its missionaries in the Ottoman Empire always tried to increase the attendance at the preaching of the gospel in the mission stations in order to satisfy headquarters in Boston.

The British and American missionary organizations, including the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the

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[55] *Fifty-sixth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1866), 75-76.
[56] *Fifty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1869), xxiii.
[57] *Fifty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1862), 37.
[58] "Charter, Constitution, and Regulations of the Board," in *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1859), 195.

Turkish Missions Aid Society, and the London Tract Society, assisted the mission press of the ABCFM in Istanbul.[59] The Turkish Missions Aid Society, for example, was established in England not to send missionaries but to support existing missionary work in the field. That kind of assistance was invaluable for the ABCFM since it also provided moral support for the missionaries in the field.

The mission press in Istanbul published materials in several languages, including Armenian, Armeno-Turkish, Greco-Turkish, Judeo-Spanish (Ladino), modern Greek, English, Turkish, and Bulgarian. In 1858, the number of pages printed in the mission press was 18,828,000 and 10,992,440 in 1869.[60] Several Bulgarian tracts were printed for the European Turkey Mission. In addition, the mission press in Istanbul printed two journals; *Avedaper* in Armenian and Armeno-Turkish and *Zornitza* in Bulgarian.

The ABCFM received permission to open a bookstore in Istanbul to sell "only Protestant books." There was also a central book depot in Istanbul in order to supply the interior mission stations with religious materials whenever they were needed. In 1864, the Ottoman government closed the mission bookstore, seized the mission presses and arrested several Turkish converts. As a result of the efforts of the British ambassador and the representative of the US government, the bookstore and presses were reopened. The Ottoman officials required that missionaries should stop their propaganda in public places

[59] See, for example, *Forty-sixth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1855), 58.
[60] The number of volumes and tracts printed in 1858 was 89,250 and in 1869 it was 80,920. See *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1859), 53; and *Sixtieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1870), 15-16.

and continue their activities only in church or in private, in homes, churches, and book depositories.[61]

The ABCFM also continued to provide the Bible in the vernacular. In 1863, the revised edition of the Armeno-Turkish Bible was completed by William Goodell and was published at the expense of the American Bible Society. Riggs revised the Bulgarian Scriptures with the aid of two local scholars (one for the Eastern dialect and the other for the Western dialect) and with the help of A. L. Long, from the American Methodist Episcopal Mission and the editor of a monthly paper, *Zornitza*. The ABCFM was aware of the difficulty of Riggs' task, because of "the forming state of the language and the prevalence of various dialects in different parts of the country."[62]

In 1871, Hagop Efendi, the head of the Protestant community, stated that 85 percent of the adult Protestants in the Empire (mostly converted from Armenian Orthodoxy in Anatolia and from Greek or Syrian Orthodoxy in the Levant) could read.[63] With the increase in the numbers of the graduates from its seminaries, the ABCFM needed higher educational institutions for both sexes. The increase in the number of schools brought a growing demand for school books and more schools meant more literate people who asked for more printed materials. In 1872, the ABCFM claimed that "for many years the missionary press furnished to the Armenians of Turkey two thirds of their reading matter."[64] Elias Riggs was one of the most important figures in this

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[61] *Fifty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1864), 14-17 and 61-62.
[62] *Fifty-sixth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1866), 73.
[63] *Sixty-first Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1871), 12.
[64] E. E. Bliss, "The Publication Department of the Missionary Work in Northern Turkey," *The Missionary Herald* 68:12 (December 1872): 381.

enterprise and as Joseph L. Grabill stated "[w]ithout creative leaders such as Elias Riggs, the Protestant presses would not have had their educational thrust."[65]

Some Remarks on the activities of the ABCFM in the 1860s

During this period, technological advances such as improved methods of communication and transportation undoubtedly helped American missionaries in the field. By 1860s, the telegraph had reached beyond the Euphrates in Anatolia, making it much easier for the missionaries to communicate with the stations in the Balkans and Anatolia. Cyrus Hamlin, who was called "the most *Satanic* man in the Empire" for his mechanical ability,[66] assisted the Americans at an exhibition of electromagnetic telegraph before Sultan Abdülmecit and the dignitaries of the Sublime Porte in the Palace in 1847. The first use of the telegraph was in the Bebek Seminary.[67] Henry Harris Jessup, an ABCFM missionary in Beirut, stated that the postal telegraph service enabled the Ottoman government in Istanbul "to move the whole Empire like a machine."[68] With the help of the telegraph, the Ottoman government was quickly able to find out what was happening in the interior parts of the Empire and local officials were informing the Sublime Porte about the activities of Western missionaries in the field. The new railway lines also enabled missionaries to reach the field more easily. The annual report of the ABCFM for 1863 reads:

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[65] Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 21.
[66] Cyrus Hamlin, *Among the Turks* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1878), 58.
[67] "Proceedings of the American Oriental Society," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 1:4 (1849): liv-lvii; Cyrus Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, 185-194; and Yakup Bektas, "Displaying the American Genius: The Electromagnetic Telegraph in the Wider World," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 34:2 (June 2001): 199-232.
[68] Henry Harris Jessup, *Fifty-Three Years in Syria* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1910), vol.2, 438.

> The congregations at *Smyrna* [Izmir], and its out-stations, still remain small, but the light is slowly spreading from those centres to surrounding regions. The Smyrna and Aidin [Aydın] railway enables the missionaries, more easily than ever before, to reach the outposts of their field, and to push those outposts still further into the surrounding country.[69]

ABCFM activities in Eastern Anatolia and Syria increased in the 1860s and the headquarters stated that the missionaries found "the New England of Turkey."[70] In 1862, for example, half of the expenditures of the ABCFM were for the missions in the Middle East. The expenditures of the ABCFM in China were less than one-seventh of its expenditures in the Middle East,[71] showing the importance that the ABCFM attached to its missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire. The salaries of the missionaries were a small part of the expenditures. Leonard Bacon, while reviewing the expenditures and finances of the ABCFM, reported the sort of expenditures wherever the ABCFM was successful:

> There must be schools, first, perhaps for the most rudimental instruction; then schools of a higher order, in which young persons, giving evidence of Christian character and promise of Christian usefulness, may be trained to be teachers in their turn, and to be helpers in other departments of the work of evangelization. If there are schools, converts, churches, there must be books; the Holy Scriptures must be given to the people in their own language; books of devotion must be prepared, for the church, the family, and the closet, and books of instruction for the school. Here arises the necessity for a class of expenditures which tends to an indefinite enlargement.[72]

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[69] *Fifty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1863), 60.
[70] *Fifty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1862), 14.
[71] Ibid., 33.
[72] Ibid., 35-36.

By 1862, the total receipts of the ABCFM (mostly from donations and legacies) for its fifty-two years were over $9 million,[73] and by 1868, its income was fifteen times larger than it had been in 1818.[74]

With the opening of several mission stations and out-stations, the missionaries in the Ottoman Empire needed reinforcements from headquarters in Boston so as not to weaken the missionary force in the field. Headquarters tried to meet the demand of the missions in the Ottoman Empire by sending reinforcements, which were "renewedly and earnestly called for." The ABCFM also warned their missionaries in the field that "the evangelization of the world, not its education and civilization, is the immediate object of missionary efforts."[75]

The ABCFM missionaries in the region met regularly to discuss the needs and prospects of the mission stations. They did not hesitate to change their plans in the light of changing conditions of the region in order to try to find the most suitable ways to approach the peoples of the region. After several decades in the region, they knew the languages of the region, the most suitable places for the mission stations, the manners and customs of the peoples in the region, the most appropriate ways of reaching them, and the details about the climate, safety, and health conditions of a particular area. They also had printed Christian literature in various vernaculars, which was vital for their evangelical activities. Their intensive work with suitable methods brought more converts and new fields to enlarge their operations. For example, the missionaries knew that they were foreigners in the eyes of the people and professionally used local pastors who could be in

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[73] The receipts were from donations and legacies. *Fifty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1862), 40.
[74] *Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1868), xx.
[75] Ibid., 21.

close touch with the people. The ABCFM employed women missionaries to reach the women at their houses in the region. The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM reported in 1867 that

> [w]hile diplomats are digesting protocols and ultimata, and the armies of ambitious monarchs are waiting marching orders, the missionaries of the Board are rapidly settling the Eastern question. Give them but a few years more, and twenty more men to help them, with the same divine favor that has crowned these efforts for the last ten years, and they will hope to make sure the evangelization of the Turkish Empire[76]

It was the normal practice of the ABCFM to overstate its accomplishments in the world in order to receive more financial and political support from the American religious circles.

In 1870, the missionary activities of the ABCFM became so extensive in Anatolia that the Prudential Committee transferred the Syria mission to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, which became responsible for all missionary activity among the Arabic-speakers, Persians, and Nestorians. The ABCFM continued its missionary activities in Anatolia and the Balkans. This division was a significant mark of a new era in the ABCFM's activities in the Ottoman Empire, which will be analyzed in detail in the next chapter.

[76] *Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: T.R. Marvin, 1867), 34.

CHAPTER 6

ELIAS RIGGS: "INVALUABLE IN ALL DEPARTMENTS"[1]

In 1870, the ABCFM decided to limit its activities to Anatolia, while another Protestant missionary organization, the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, continued to work in the Ottoman Arab provinces and Iran. The number of the ABCFM's missionary schools for Eastern Christians, particularly Armenians, increased dramatically in the following years. In addition to opening kindergartens and primary and secondary schools in almost every city in the Ottoman heartland, several colleges were founded: The American College for Girls in Istanbul (1871), Central Turkey College in Antep (1876), Euphrates College in Harput (1878), Central Turkey Girls' College in Maraş (1880), Anatolia College in Merzifon (1886), and International College in Izmir (1898). Although not under the direct control of the American missionaries, Robert College (1863) and the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut (1866, later the American University of Beirut) were closely connected with them. The missionaries of the ABCFM regarded the schools, seminaries, and colleges as "the strongholds and the permanent fortifications by which the gospel shows its purpose to hold the ground it has conquered and to make it

[1] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), 30.

the base of conquering more."[2] Through schools, it was easier for the American missionaries to reach the local communities. In addition to this, the local Christians were more open to missionary activities after they had received a modern education since they could read and understand the missionary publications.

It was not a coincidence that the ABCFM's activities in Anatolia and the Balkans increased dramatically immediately after 1870. Since the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions had taken over the ABCFM's work in the Arab provinces and Iran, the ABCFM had the opportunity to use its financial ability and manpower in the region more effectively throughout Anatolia and the Balkans. In 1871, as explained in the last chapter, the ABCFM organized a separate mission for the Bulgarians, the European Turkey Mission, with four stations: Istanbul, Stara Zagora, Plovdiv, and Samokov. Since Elias Riggs' activities were directed mainly towards the Bulgarians, he was attached to the European Turkey Mission.

Elias Riggs and the European Turkey Mission

In the earlier years of the European Turkey Mission, the missionaries in the field concentrated the usual activities of the ABCFM and pursued the usual missionary methods in order to increase the number of converts. They learned Bulgarian, the language of the mission field, prepared and published books and tracts in Bulgarian, established schools, travelled frequently throughout the field, and preached wherever they found an opportunity. The annual reports of the European Turkey Mission in later years expressed the activities of its missionaries in the field as follows:

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[2] *Seventy-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1883), xix.

> The evangelistic work has been well sustained by personal labors of missionaries, preaching as they have had opportunity at their various stations and engaging in tours quite generally among the churches, where their presence has been found most valuable for counsel and for the encouragement of native preachers. Indeed no part of missionary work is of more value than that of touring by the missionaries, especially when accompanied by their wives. It is difficult to overestimate the influence which a missionary and his wife may exert by a visit of a few days in one of the native Christian communities. The suggestions they are able to give the native teachers and preachers are of the greatest value, not only as instruction, but as encouragement to these faithful laborers, often overburdened with care and anxiety, and sometimes subjected to bitter opposition on the part of the enemies of the truth.[3]

Since the missionaries needed to distribute and sell religious materials while touring and preaching, the supply of Christian literature to the people in the region was crucial for the mission. Considering his previous experience in the mission press, Elias Riggs was certainly an important figure in the literary work of the mission, as will be explained in the following pages.

The Bulgarian Exarchate

The Bulgarians were Orthodox Christians but they were also struggling for a national ecclesiastical hierarchy that would release them from the control of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul. Elias Riggs personally witnessed this struggle and he described it in his reminiscences:

> Early in May [1861] occurred the break between the Bulgarians and the Greek Patriarch. The two Bulgarian Bishops who were in Constantinople were threatened with exile unless they would recognize the authority of the Patriarch, but were offered protection by the Roman Catholics if they would accept *union* with the Church of Rome, (not absorption in that Church but a simple recognition of the supremacy of the Pope, the Bulgarians to retain

[3] *Eighty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1892), 30. For the European Turkey Mission, see H. C. Haskell, "Historical Sketch of the European Turkey Mission for its First 50 Years," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 16, European Turkey Mission, item 2 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 577).

> their own usages, fasts festivals, pictures, vestments, communion in both kinds, services in Slavic, marriage of the common clergy, etc.) Under these circumstances the Bishops applied to be taken under the protection of the Protestant community, and sent, through me, to the Vekil (civil head) of that community, Sdepan Effendi, a paper not signed, but which they declared themselves ready to sign if it were accepted by him, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the only authority for faith and practice, and promising to submit all questions of rites and ceremonies to a lawfully constituted Synod of the Bulgarian Church. Sdepan Effendi regarded this as ranging themselves among Evangelical churches, and declared that if that paper were signed and put into his hands he could and would protect them. The Turkish authorities also had informed them that they were at liberty to choose between the Greek, R. [Roman] Catholic and Protestant communities, but must range themselves under one of these recognized communities. However, before the negotiations were completed, under strong pressure from their own people, the Bishops decided to accept the alternative of exile, hoping the secure, as they ultimately did, the consent of the government to recognize the independence of the Bulgarian Church.[4]

The struggle of the Bulgarians for an independent Church would soon bear fruit. After Sultan Abdülaziz granted a decree in 1870, the Bulgarian Exarchate was established.[5]

The Schools of the European Turkey Mission

The missionaries of the ABCFM established a theological seminary at Samokov in 1872 in order to train a local ministry for the European Turkey Mission.[6] Girls' shools were also opened, thus enabling them to reach all potential converts in the region. "Efforts are constantly making to raise the standard of education in these institutions," the missionaries of the ABCFM in the field stated "and at the same time to maintain a thoroughly efficient Christian influence that may tell on the religious character and life of

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[4] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 18-19.

[5] For the most current study on the Bulgarian Exarchate, see Ümit Eser, "'Philetism' in the Balkans: The Formation of the Bulgarian Exarchate (1830-1878)" (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2009). See also James F. Clarke, "Protestantism and the Bulgarian Church Question in 1861," in *The Pen and the Sword: Studies in Bulgarian History*, ed. Dennis P. Hupchick (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1988), 328-344.

[6] *Sixty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1873), 12.

the pupils. A good deal of personal interest in religion has been manifested among these pupils, especially in these girls' school."[7] According to the missionaries of the ABCFM in the European Turkey Mission, the Christian training of young men and women in Bulgaria was very important because this training in the schools of the ABCFM was "the most efficient means to oppose the infidel education found in the national schools."[8]

Among the people with whom the missionaries worked there was a growing demand for higher education for purely secular purposes only and the ABCFM naturally could not supply this kind of demand. The missionaries assisted the common schools in the field so that people could read the Scriptures; however, when this aim was achieved, the missionaries of the ABCFM intended to use their funds for the purpose of preparing teachers and preachers in order to have "self-supporting" and "self-propagating" Protestant churches in the field.[9] The ABCFM encouraged the local churches "to aid their own young men" and in the 1880s, the aim of the missionaries in the field was that "in general, all assistance from the Board in the aid of evangelistic or educational work should hereafter be regarded as a grant in aid, and be on a scale of reduction year by year, till it wholly ceases."[10] For the ABCFM, education was a preparatory step to the reception of the gospel, and it was a missionary principle that "education must follow the gospel, not precede it."[11]

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[7] *Eighty-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1892), 30.
[8] *Eightieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Samuel Usher, 1890), 34.
[9] See "Memorandum for the Missions in the Turkish Empire, and Recommendations," in *Seventy-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1882), lxvi-lxxvi.
[10] Ibid., lxxiii.
[11] N. G. Clark, "Two Unsolved Mission Problems," in *Eighty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1893), xxi-xxvi.

The European Turkey Mission, like the other missions in the region, tried to develop "able native leaders" who would help "self-supporting" churches in the region. After the annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission in 1889, held at Samokov, where Elias Riggs was present, J. K. Greene, an ABCFM missionary of the Western Turkey Mission summarizied the efforts of the ABCFM in Bulgaria for the reader of the Missionary Herald:

> The Evangelical work has already developed able native leaders. Such men as Mr. Tsanoff, teacher in the Collegiate and Theological Institute in Samokov; Mr. Tonjoroff, pastor at Philippopolis; Mr. Boyajieff, pastor at Sofia; Mr. Sichanoff, pastor at Bansko, are an honor to the Protestant name, and commend themselves to both missionaries and natives as able and eloquent preachers, as wise counselors, and as trustworthy Christian men. These men received their education principally in our own schools, and, to say nothing of Christian character, will compare favorably in intellectual capacity and culture with Bulgarians who have pursued full courses of study in America or Europe. While they are not a whit behind their fellows, in certain important respects they are much better fitted to do good their countrymen than the men educated abroad. The men above mentioned have been tried for years, and are now in the prime of life, and, thank God, there are other and younger men who give promise of being worthy followers.[12]

The ABCFM supplied its manpower in the field with the educated local students from its own schools. Here Robert College, although not under the direct control of the ABCFM but was closely connected with it, should be mentioned. When William Hayes Ward, an American journalist, passed through Bulgaria, he found everywhere "men speaking English and full of American ideas, gained at Robert College."[13] The annual report of the ABCFM for the year 1885 stated that "Robert College has made a self-governed Bulgaria possible."[14]

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[12] J. K. Greene, "The Mission in Bulgaria," *The Missionary Herald* 85:7 (July 1889): 275-278.
[13] Charles C. Starbuck, "Theological and Religious Intelligence: A General View of Missions. I. The Turkish Empire and Persia," *The Andover Review* 5:28 (April 1886): 420.
[14] *Seventy-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1885), xlvi. For some of the graduates of Robert College who became

The Mission Press for the Bulgarians

The mission press was always one of the most effective agents in the missionary activities of the ABCFM. "As education advances," N. G. Clark, the foreign secretary of the ABCFM, stated in 1882, "a Christian literature must supply the demand of the growing intelligence."[15] The publishing department of the Western Turkey Mission, which was responsible for both the Bulgarian materials of the European Turkey Mission and the Armenian publications of the Western Turkey Mission, was regarded "as a most efficient helper in the great work."[16] The ABCFM headquarters in Boston was very happy with the mission and stated that they "know of no mission connected with the Board where more wise and faithful work has been done, and we recored, with devout gratitude to God, his favor bestowed on the mission."[17] The materials published by this mission were very important for the three Armenian missions in the Ottoman Empire, the Western, Central, and Eastern Turkey Missions. Later, the Istanbul station of the European Turkey Mission worked only on the publication of materials in Bulgarian, while the Istanbul station of the Western Turkey Mission continued as the literary department for Armenian materials. In short, Istanbul was the center of missionary publications for all the missions of the ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire.

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prominent figures in Bulgaria, see Rajna V. Manafova, "For Bulgarian-American Cultural Ties (1878-1915)," *Bulgarian Historical Review* 8:4 (1980): 63-71; *The Samokov American Schools; A Record of Sixty Years of American Educational Work in the Heart of the Balkans, Present Results and Future Promise* (Boston: 1924), 8; and Ivan Ilchev, "Robert Kolezh i Formiraneto na Bulgarska Inteligentsiia (1863-1878 G.)," [Robert College et la Formation de l'intelligentsia Bulgare (1863-1878)] *Istoricheski Pregled* 37:1 (1981): 50-62.

[15] *Seventy-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1882), xxvii. For a small piece on the missionary literature of the ABCFM in the United States and the foreign fields, see E. E. Strong, "Missionary Literature – A Brief Survey," *The Missionary Herald* 81:11 (November 1885): 446-451. For the printing offices of the ABCFM in the world, see J. F. Coakley, "Printing Offices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1817-1900: A Synopsis," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 9:1 (Spring 1998): 5-34.

[16] *Sixty-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1875), xxxviii.

[17] Ibid.

Samokov was the educational center of the European Turkey Mission while Istanbul station was responsible for publications. Towards the end of the century, the ABCFM transferred its Bulgarian publication activities from Istanbul to Samokov since it was cheaper to publish the materials in Bulgaria and the missionaries wanted to be safe from Ottoman censorship. Riggs remained in Istanbul as the only representative of the European Turkey Mission there, while Samokov became the largest station of the European Turkey Mission.

Riggs resided at Istanbul and concentrated on the literary work of the ABCFM particularly for the Bulgarians. He prepared various publications in Bulgarian, Armenian, Turkish, and Greek. As in the other mission fields, the ABCFM gave importance to the publications for the European Turkey Mission. "The demand for good books is rapidly increasing among the people," the American missionaries in this mission explained the situation, "and unless this demand is met, there is a great danger lest they turn to the pernicious literature of Europe."[18] The mission press in Istanbul published several books and booklets for the European Turkey Mission, including *the Child's Treasury*, *Harmony of the Gospel*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *John Huss*, *Letters to Mothers*, *Tract Premier*, *Bible Almanac, Scripture Picture Book, Bible Dictionary, Whom Shall We Believe?*, *How Does a Man Become a True Christian?, the Peace of God, the Progress of Sin, Confession of Faith, the Peace of God, Why did Christ Die?, the Heavenly Voice and What is it to Believe in Christ, Why am I a Christian?, the Worth of the Soul*, *A Life for a Flower*, and *Hymn and Tune Book*.[19] In 1883, for example, the mission press in Istanbul published

[18] *Sixty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1874), 9.

[19] For example, see "Report of the Constantinople Station of the European Turkey Mission for the Year Ending May 1882," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 7, item 3 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 567);

53,280 copies of various tracts and books, over 500,000 pages in total.[20] The missionaries of the ABCFM also published vernacular textbooks for their schools.

The Scriptures and Protestant literature were prepared and published by the missionaries of the ABCFM in order to reach speakers of the various languages. The ABCFM also printed a newspaper in Bulgarian, *Zornitza* (Day Star), and circulated them throughout the region.[21] In addition to religious subjects and news, there were also other topics, including travel, science, folklore, and history, on the pages of *Zornitza*. Its circulation by the ABCFM missionaries was so successful that Henry C. Haskell, a missionary of the ABCFM in the region, claimed that *Zornitza* became synonymous with 'newspaper' in many places in the region.[22] However, in 1894, Elias Riggs argued that several causes limited the circulation of the materials published by the missionaries, including *Zornitza*:

> 1. The publication of a paper under the patronage of the Bulgarian Exarch, expressly intended to rival and crowd out the *Zornitza*, and the use of strong official pressure to promote its circulation.
> 2.The publication of a multitude of native political papers in Bulgaria, for which prepayment is not required, and some of which are favored with sudsidies by the Bulgarian government.
> 3. The fact that our current news, so far as it relates to Bulgaria, must of necessity be less fresh than that given by papers printed in the principality. And

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Seventy-first Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston: Riverside Press, 1881), 30; "Report of the Constantinople Station of the European Turkey Mission for the Year Ending June 30, 1885," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 7, item 6 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 567); *Seventy-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1882), 24; *Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1879), 17; and "European Turkey Mission, Constantinople Station: Annual Report to 2nd April, 1888," ABC 16.9 Mission to Turkey, vol. 7, item 9 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 567).

[20] *Seventy-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1883), 34.

[21] The name Zornitza (Zornitsa) was translated as Day Star or Morning Star. It was first issued as a monthly newspaper but changed later to a weekly publication.

[22] Constantine Stephanove, *The Bulgarians and Anglo-Saxondom* (Berne: Paul Haupt, 1919), 305.

> 4. That we are debarred, partly by the general aim of our papers, and partly by the censorship, from full and free discussion of political matters.[23]

Zornitza was widely read in the region. Describing this mission magazine, Barbara Reeves-Ellington rightly claimed that it "advocated female education from its very first issue and promoted the idea that educated women were essential to spritual regeneration and national progress through their work as mothers and teachers."[24] According to the ABCFM, *Zornitza* was appreciated by the Bulgarians and "it has been doing missionary work where no other agency could do it, entering hundreds of homes which no Protestant could enter, removing prejudice, and making known the way of life."[25] With regard to the circulation of missionary publications, the missionaries of the ABCFM in the field wanted to transfer control of the newspaper publications to the locals gradually. "It may not be wise to give up the supervision of such publications for some years to come," the missionaries stated, "but competent natives should be associated with missionaries in their management and in the translation and preparation of books for the press; and, if possible, native publishers should be secured to have the care and responsibility of the circulation, not only of the newspapers, but of other works."[26]

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[23] *Eighty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1894), 28.

[24] Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "Petko Slaveykov, the Protestant Press, and the Gendered Language of Moral Reform in Bulgarian Nationalism," in *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters*, ed. Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather J. Sharkey (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), 212.

[25] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), 24. The American missionaries in the field were always aware of the importance of this publication and repeated such statements: "The religious press continues its work, much as in past years, as a valuable evangelical agency. The *Zornitza*, the weekly newspaper in the Bulgarian language, has attained a circulation of over four thousand copies (4.455), not-withstanding the fact that there are now over twenty Bulgarian newspapers in the Principality. The religious articles in the *Zornitza* find access to thousands of minds not otherwise to be reached." See *Seventy-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1888), 28.

[26] "Memorandum for the Missions in the Turkish Empire, and Recommendations," in *Seventy-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1882), lxxiv.

According to the missionaries, "the sooner responsibilities are put on such [local] communities, the quicker will they learn to take them up."[27]

The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM recommended to missionaries in the field that "the preparation of particular portions of the newspapers may be assigned to native editors, under a missionary as editor-in-chief."[28] The representatives from all the ABCFM stations in the Ottoman Empire came to Istanbul for a missionary conference in 1883 and it was agreed that "the publication of Christian books, tracts, and periodicals, is a branch of the work which native enterprise cannot be expected to assume for many years to come."[29] By 1883, out of fifty-four missionaries of the ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire, six missionaries were working in the publication department. Elias Riggs was one of them.

By 1885, the mission press, which had started at Malta and transferred first to Izmir and then to Istanbul, had published over three million copies of 607 different books and tracts.[30] The demand for the materials printed by the mission press in Istanbul increased and the missionaries of the ABCFM increased the number of pages and the variety of materials. Other missionary societies, such as the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the Religious Tract Society of London, continued to assist the mission press of the ABCFM in Istanbul in various ways.[31]

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., lxxvi.
[29] *Seventy-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1883), 16. See also "The Missionary Conference at Constantinople," *The Missionary Herald* 79:8 (August 1883): 289-293.
[30] *Seventy-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1885), xlii.
[31] *Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1879), 23.

The Obstacles to the European Turkey Mission

As in other fields, the missionaries of the ABCFM also encountered obstacles and persecutions in this field as well. The European Turkey Mission was not an easy one for the American missionaries in the beginning. The annual report for the year of 1873 reads

> The mission, and the Protestants in this field, are not yet free from the exciting and stimulating influence of persecution. One Protestant brother has been for weeks confined in prison, "convicted on a false accusation by his own wife, simply to compel him to turn from his resolution to read the Bible, and follow its teachings." The house of the bookseller at Panagureshte, and several other dwellings there, were stoned and much injured by a mob, and very serious opposition was made to the burial of the bookseller's child at that place. But the most serious case of persecution occured in April last, at Merichleri, where it was supposed the spirit of opposition had spent its force. The school-house and chapel, which the Protestant bretheren had recently erected, was violently assaulted during an evening service, when the life of the mission helper was seriously threatened; and the next day the building was deliberately pulled down, and the threats were uttered against the lives of all the Protestants. It would seem, however, that some at least among the officials intend to afford protection, and to see that justice takes its course against lawless persecution; and the course of a Bulgarian bishop, now residing at Samokov, has been so friendly in appearance, or at least so much opposed to violent opposition, as much to surprise the people, and cause them even to accuse him of being a Protestant.[32]

According to the ABCFM, in the European Turkey Mission, particularly in Bulgaria, "the chief danger" was "the spread of irreligion and infidelity among the upper classes."[33] J. K. Greene, an ABCFM missionary of the Western Turkey Mission, after attending the annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission and after mentioning this danger, argued that "[t]o us Americans is providentially given the opportunity to supply

[32] *Sixty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1873), 13.
[33] *Seventy-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Samuel Usher, 1889), xvii.

moral and spiritual instruction to not a few of the people, and to raise up religious leaders."[34]

The American missionaries in the field also complained to Boston about the "political and missionary power of the Roman Church." As it was explained in the previous chapters, they did not like the Catholic missionary activities in the region. "You have neither church nor school beyond their reach over the whole empire," Cyrus Hamlin expressed his dissatisfaction, "you can hardly establish a school in any remote village, but in a few weeks the Jesuits will have one there."[35] A Bulgarian bishop said to an American missionary in the region that "we are afraid of the Greeks and the Catholics, but not of the Protestants."[36]

The political and social condition of the region certainly affected the missionary activities of the ABCFM. Political disturbances and wars, including the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877-78, the Serb-Bulgar War of 1885, and the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, presented difficulties to the ABCFM missionaries in the field. Moreover, the ABCFM argued that "[t]he Bulgarian government has encouraged national education and literature, while the ecclesiastics of the National Church have done everything in their

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[34] He also argued that the progress of the government in Bulgaria was remarkable: "For the Bulgarians, emerging from a thraldom of five hundred years, to have accomplished so much in self-government and civilization in ten years is worthy of great price." See *Seventy-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Samuel Usher, 1889), 39.

[35] *Seventy-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1888), xiv. The American missionaries published anti-Roman Catholic tracts such as *Papists and Protestants* and *Claims of the Pope*. See "Missionaries and Protestants in Turkey," *The Missionary Herald* 74:7 (July 1878): 217-218. James F. Clarke mentioned that Charles F. Morse wrote a tract in Bulgarian entitled *Papata i Rimo-Katolicheskata Tsŭrkva* (*The Pope and the Roman Catholic Church*) and according to the missionary reports, it was a bestseller in the region. See James F. Clarke, "Protestantism and the Bulgarian Church Question in 1861," in *The Pen and the Sword: Studies in Bulgarian History*, ed. Dennis P. Hupchick (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1988), 339-340.

[36] The American missionaries claimed that conduct of the Bulgarian bishop "proved that he was sincere." See James F. Clarke, "Bulgaria," in *Bulgaria and Salonica in Macedonia* (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1895), 6.

power to discourage the evangelical movement in that country."[37] The ABCFM missionaries were not alone in complaining about the government and ecclesiastics. The missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Bulgaria were also not happy with "Bulgarian officialdom and the priesthood" who persistently opposed "the advance of Protestant faith." However, the Methodist missionaries argued that "the people themselves, with a few exceptions, are receptive and even kindly disposed."[38]

In 1885, the missionaries of the ABCFM in the European Turkey Mission and all of the Bulgarian pastors, preachers, and teachers gathered in a conference in order to discuss progress. Fifty-one people were present and they were from the four stations (Istanbul, Monastir, Philippopolis, and Samokov) and twenty-seven out-stations of the European Turkey Mission.[39] The ultimate aim of the ABCFM was, of course, "self-supporting" and "self-propagating" Protestant churches in the Balkans. However, as Nestorova-Matejic argued, the ABCFM missionaries "did much in Bulgaria, but accomplished little."[40]

The Role of Women Missionaries

Another important point related to this period was the enlargement of the missionary activities for women. The ABCFM sent several women missionaries to the field and they tried to use every opportunity to approach the women of the region. The

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[37] *Eighty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1899), 43.

[38] Dora Davis, *The Bulgaria Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1906), 33. The Methodist missionaries worked at the north of the Balkans while the missionaries of the ABCFM worked at the south.

[39] *Seventy-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1885), 25.

[40] Tatyana Khristova Nestorova-Matejic, "American Missionaries in Bulgaria: (1858-1912)" (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1985), later published in Bulgarian: Американски мисионери сред българите, 1858-1912 (Sofia: 1991).

headquarters in Boston was very proud of the women missionaries and their missonary work and the annual report of the ABCFM for the year of 1878 reads

> Working at first through the seminaries, in a little time they begin to labor in the homes of the people; go out on tours with missionaries; visit their former pupils; and teaching girls' schools at various points away from the main centers. Their influence has been felt widely outside of their immediate sphere of labor. At Eski Zagra [Stara Zagora], some years since, a Bulgarian woman, loyal to her old church, pointed out to a missionary lady a fine, large stone building, that had been erected for a girls' school in that city, saying "We owe this to you missionaries. Had you not come, nothing of the kind would have been provided."[41]

Several homes were opened for "the regular weekly woman's prayer-meeting." In Philippopolis alone, the ABCFM argued, "thirty-five weeks are necessary to complete the curcuit of thirty-five homes, which welcome its gathering."[42]

The ABCFM was aware of the importance of having the women missionaries in the field. "The great enterprise," the ABCFM annual report in 1880 stated, "could never look to completion till woman was reached."[43] The ABCFM employed the women missionaries "in teaching, in touring, in holding meetings, in visiting the women in their own homes, in superintending Bible-women, in the one endeavor to bring to their own sex, and through them to their homes, those gracious agencies which are to transform and bless them."[44] "Foreign missionary consecration," stated E. K. Alden, the Home Secretary of the ABCFM, "as every true missionary will be the first to emphasize, does not consist in a voyage across the ocean, and a residence, whatever may be the externals, pleasant or otherwise, in foreign lands." Moreover, Alden also pointed out how a

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[41] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), xxiv.
[42] *Missionary News from Bulgaria*, No.13 (May 10, 1887), 4.
[43] *Seventieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1880), xxxiii.
[44] *Seventy-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Samuel Usher, 1889), 51.

missionary of the ABCFM, whether a man or woman, should be: "Foreign missionary consecration is the surrender of the entire being, 'spirit, soul, and body,' person, time, energy, and property, to the proclamation of Christ, to the utmost of our ability, in our own time to the ends of the earth."[45]

The local pastors and churches were also very important for the ABCFM and according to Cyrus Hamlin from the Western Turkey Mission, "the speedy accomplishment of the work depends upon the development of this power."[46] The ABCFM proudly claimed that through the schools for girls of the ABCFM in the region, several girls received a Christian education and became "enlightened wives and mothers, nurses, teachers, and leaders in their village communities."[47] On the model of the female teachers, Barbara Reeves-Ellington argues that

> While Bulgarian nationalism began as a protest against encroaching Greek nationalism in the spheres of religion and education, and continued in response to Ottoman secular reform, the importance of women's education was recognised in Eski Zağra only in the face of the threat of American Protestantism. The American project of religious reform was a losing proposition among a people who believed that it was precisely their rites and traditions that distinguished them as a separate people. In contrast, the model of the female teacher that the ABCFM missionaries introduced in Eski Zağra was not threatening. To the contrary, the example of women who worked to promote cultural and religious transformation offered Bulgarian women a new base of cultural power on which they could justifiably build.[48]

One of the most effective ways of introducing Protestant teachings among the people in the region was through the women missionaries. The report of the Samokov station stated

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[45] *Seventy-second Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1882), xxxviii.
[46] Ibid., lxii.
[47] *The Samokov American Schools; A Record of Sixty Years of American Educational Work in the Heart of the Balkans, Present Results and Future Promise* (Boston: 1924), 9.
[48] Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "A Vision of Mount Holyoke in the Ottoman Balkans: American Cultural Transfer, Bulgarian Nation-Building and Women's Educational Reform, 1858 1870," *Gender & History* 16:1 (April 2004): 165.

that "[i]n places where there have been Protestant homes to furnish an abode, the Bible-women have been doing much good. Their labors are the more pervasive because so quiet and unobtrusive."[49]

The Riggs Family

While working for the European Turkey Mission, Elias Riggs and his family did not stay in Istanbul all the time. They sometimes left Istanbul because of health problems. Due to his health conditions, for example, Elias Riggs went to Egypt in 1872 in order to seek relief in the warmer climate.[50] They sometimes needed to go out of Istanbul for family matters. In 1877, for example, Elias Riggs took a brief vacation in his work and accompanied one of his sons, Charlie, to Liverpool on his return to the United States where he continued his college studies at Princeton.[51] Sometimes, they went to other cities in order to visit their children. The Riggs family, for example, visited their daughter and son-in-law and spent the winter in Antep in 1878. While at Antep, Elias Riggs taught in Central Turkey College, gave lessons in Hebrew and Greek to select classes, preached in Turkish and Armenian, and attended the annual meeting of the Central Turkey Mission.[52] In 1881, for example, the Riggs family visited their son, Edward Riggs, in Merzifon. In addition to preaching in the city church, Elias Riggs gave lectures to the

[49] *The Missionary Herald* 85:7 (July 1889): 289.
[50] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 26; and *Sixty-third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1873), 12. While in Egypt, Riggs was interested in the evangelical missionary activities among the Copts and visited the mission stations of the United Presbyterian Church. See "United Presbyterian Mission in Egypt," *The Missionary Herald* 69:10 (October 1873): 325.
[51] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 28.
[52] Riggs family was in Antep between November 12, 1878 and April 8, 1879. See Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 44; Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 28; and Letter from Riggs to Clark (March 31, 1879), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 6, European Turkey Mission; Letters HO-S, Miscellaneous, item 399 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 566).

theological class in Greek.[53] The Riggs family sometimes travelled in order to attend the annual meetings of a particular mission. In June 1874, for example, Elias and Martha went to Samokov to join their friends in the fourth annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission.[54] In 1891, Elias went to Philippopolis for the twentieth annual meeting of the same mission. It was his last visit to Bulgaria.[55]

The whole Riggs family, with all the children and grandchildren of Elias and Martha Riggs, came from Antep, Merzifon, and the United States and gathered at Istanbul in 1882 for the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding.[56] Elias and Martha Riggs were in Antep between September 1885 and April 1889. Although his wife was ill, Riggs continued his usual missionary activities by teaching, preaching, and helping at the preparation of the missionary publications. He gave a course in Greek, lessons in Latin, and exegetical instruction in the College. Martha Riggs died in Antep on November 15, 1887. After Elias Riggs returned to Istanbul in 1889, he mostly focused on the editorial work for the mission press and was a member of a committee of three missionaries for the preparation of a Bulgarian Commentary on the New Testament. In addition to his usual missionary activities in Istanbul, he also visited interesting places within the city.

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[53] They stayed in Merzifon three months. See Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 45.

[54] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children,* 27.

[55] Riggs also attended the fiftieth annual meeting of the Western Turkey Mission in the same year and he was the only missionary present at the meeting "who had been a member of the mission from its organization." See Letter from Riggs to Clark (June 2, 1891), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 14, European Turkey Mission, item 190 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 575).

[56] George W. Wood, "The Golden Wedding of Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Elias Riggs," *The Missionary Herald* 78:11 (November 1882): 485-487. Charles Trowbridge Riggs described the event: "Mrs. Margaret Trowbridge and her children and Mr. Charles Riggs arrived from Aintab in May; Mr. James Riggs and his wife and child reached Constantinople with William Riggs Trowbridge in July from the United States; and in August Dr. Trowbridge came from Aintab, and Mr. Edward Riggs and family from Marsovan. A photograph of this group of twenty-one was taken to commemorate the anniversary; and very soon copies of this were to be found in nearly every missionary home in Turkey." See Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 46-47, and Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children,* 29. A copy of this photograph is in the Appendix A of this dissertation.

For example, in 1885, he visited the library of the Mosque of St. Sophia which held some six thousand volumes.[57]

Elias Riggs' Literary Work in the European Turkey Mission

According to the ABCFM missionaries in the field, the mission press was a way "to disseminate a knowledge of the truth."[58] Elias Riggs and his missionary friends who were responsible for the mission press in Istanbul prepared tracts and books for publication.[59] Riggs revised several books and tracts and spent most of his time preparing works for publication. His letters were full of details related to the activities of the mission press and his literary role. Before the decision of the ABCFM to organize a separate mission for the Bulgarians, he wrote

> My time is mainly devoted, and is likely to be during the whole of the present year, to two works: (1), editing a revised edition of the Bulgarian Bible with references, and (2), harmonizing the Armenian, Armeno-Turkish, and Bulgarian translations. Beside these, I have now in hand, and in press, a new and enlarged edition of our Armenian Hymn-book. I have no stated preaching service, and it is not the adjustment of my brethren that I ought now to have; but I esteem it a privilege to preach occasionally in Armenian or Bulgarian, and do so; and also instruct a class of women in our Yeni Kapoo Sabbath-school.[60]

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[57] Elias Riggs, "The Library of the Mosque of St. Sophia," *The Missionary Herald* 81:5 (May 1885): 188-190; and Letter from Riggs to Clark (March 10, 1885), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 9, European Turkey Mission, item 281 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 570).

[58] *Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1878), 24.

[59] For a general overview of the mission station of the ABCFM in Istanbul, see Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *History of Constantinople Station, 1831-1931* (ABCFM Manuscript Histories of Missions); and Emrah Şahin, "Errand into the East: A History of Evangelical American Protestant Missionaries and their Missions to Ottoman Istanbul during the Nineteenth Century" (MA thesis, Bilkent University, 2004).

[60] *The Missionary Herald* 65:5 (May 1869): 158.

By 1884, for example, Riggs was preparing and editing tracts and hymns in Bulgarian, revising the Turkish and Armenian versions of the Scriptures, and revising the Bible Dictionary in Greek.[61]

In 1873, he began to revise the Turkish Bible as a member of the committee within a team of W.G. Schauffler, George F. Herrick, and Robert Weakley, a missionary of the Church Missionary Society. Schauffler left the team but they completed the work in five years. In 1878, the work of this committee was published in Turkish and Armeno-Turkish.[62] Regarding the Armenian and the Bulgarian translations of the Bible, Elias Riggs stated that he spent most of his time for seven years on the Armenian Bible and half of his time for eleven years on the Bulgarian Bible. He explained that the translations were "first issued in parts in small editions, intended partly to supply the existing demand and partly to secure criticisms and to leave room for corrections arising from comparison of the different parts of the Bible."[63] During his last years in Istanbul, after the translation of the Scriptures into Bulgarian, he was mostly occupied with its repeated revision and publication of successive editions. According to Riggs, these revisions were necessary because of "the astonishingly rapid changes" that "the language has undergone within a few years."[64] Many words that had been in common use were dropped from the usage of the Bulgarian people and thousands of new words were in use. The ABCFM regarded this growth of the language as "one of the signs of the marvelous changes which have taken

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[61] Letter from Riggs to Clark (November 7, 1884), ABC 16.9.3: Western Turkey Mission, vol. 16, item 209 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 604).

[62] See Letter from Riggs to Clark (March 31, 1877), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 6, European Turkey Mission; Letters HO-S, Miscellaneous, item 386 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 566). Henry O. Dwight mentioned that the American and British and Foreign Bible Societies appointed him to this committee. See Henry O. Dwight, "A Mighty Worker before the Lord: Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., LL.D.," *The Missionary Herald* 97:3 (March 1901): 100.

[63] "The Americans in Turkey," *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature* 27:6 (June 1878): 650.

[64] Letter from Riggs to James L. Barton (January 13, 1898), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 14, European Turkey Mission (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 575).

place in Bulgaria."[65] Nevertheless, Riggs argued that most of these new words would not affect the translation in hand because they were related to the arts, sciences, and functions of government.[66] Some of Riggs' missionary friends in the field, however, opposed the idea of revisions and urged that "the changes in the language were not of great consequence and that the mission should devote its funds and efforts not to scholarly accuracy but to the promotion of more strictly evangelistic work."[67]

Martha Jane Riggs, Elias Riggs' wife, also produced materials for the mission. While in Izmir, she had prepared a series of "Letters to Mothers on the Training and Instruction of their Children" published in Greece under the title of "the Mother's Manual." In a sketch of her life published in the Missionary Herald after her death, Elias Riggs explained her literary works in Istanbul:

> After removal to Constantinople in 1853, in connection with the removal of the publication work of our mission to that city, she added a second series of the letters to mothers, and the whole were issued in a Bulgarian translation – first in the periodical, the *Zornitza (Dayspring)*, and then in a volume. They were tranlated also into Armenian and Turkish and published by our mission, and a part of them also by a native Armenian editor, who issued them as a series in his paper.[68]

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[65] *The Missionary Herald* 94:7 (July 1898): 260.

[66] Letter from Riggs to James L. Barton (January 13, 1898). The annual report of the ABCFM for the year of 1899 described the revisions of Elias Riggs as follows: "During the year he has completed the revision of the Bulgarian Bible Dictionary, to which he has made many additions and corrections. He calls attention to some of the changes which have taken place in that language during the last twenty years or more, and which necessitate a careful revision of leading works. Word from Slavic or Russian sources, which were regarded as admissible by good Bulgarian scholars then, would today be rejected by the same scholars. He is now engaged upon a careful examination of the Bulgarian version of the Bible, and in this work has reached the end of II Samuel. Dr. Riggs expresses regret that he now discovers several important mistakes which have run through all of the editions of the Bible from that of 1871." *Eighty-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1899), 44.

[67] Those missionaries were George Daniel Marsh and James F. Clarke. See William Webster Hall, *Puritans in the Balkans: The American Board Mission in Bulgaria, 1878-1918; A Study in Purpose and Procedure* (Sofia: Cultura Printing House, 1938), 114.

[68] See Elias Riggs, "A Missionary for Fifty-five Years," *The Missionary Herald* 84:2 (February 1888): 59-62.

In her *Letters to Mothers* in Bulgarian, Martha Jane Riggs argued that "mothers had a duty to their nation and to God to raise 'useful members of society' and assured her readers that only educated Christians could successfully meet this challenge."[69]

Elias Riggs continued his translation and revision work until his death. When friends in the United States invited him to his home country, Riggs replied

> You ask if I could think of coming to America in 1900. It would be very pleasant to me to see you my fellow-workers at the Missionary Rooms and a few surviving friends, and inspiring to attend some of your great convocations. But I suppose, there is no probability of my ever again crossing the ocean. May I, and we all, be prepared, when summoned, to cross the last river, and enter the cloudless land![70]

Riggs was right; he died in Istanbul on January 17, 1901 while revising the Bulgarian Bible for a new edition. The Istanbul station of the European Turkey Mission closed down on his death. In 1900, the European Turkey Mission had five stations (Samokov and Philippopolis in Bulgaria, and Istanbul, Monastir and Salonica were in the Ottoman Empire) and forty-eight out-stations. The total missionary force of the mission was twenty-five (eleven ordained missionaries, nine wives, and seven single women) and the total local workers were eighty-five (fourteen ordained preachers, sixteen unordained preachers, thirty-eight teachers, ten Bible-women, seven other local workers). According to the annual report for the year of 1900, there were fifteen churches in the mission with

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[69] Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "Embracing Domesticity: Women, Mission, and Nation Building in Ottoman Europe," in *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, ed. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 276. For more discussion on *Letters to Mothers*, see Barbara Reeves-Ellington, "Gender, Conversion, and Social Transformation: The American Discourse of Domesticity and the Origins of the Bulgarian Women's Movement, 1857-1876," in *Converting Cultures: Religion, Ideology and Transformations of Modernity*, ed. Dennis Washburn and A. Kevin Reinhart (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 115-139; and Barbara A. Reeves-Ellington, "'That Our Daughters May Be As Corner Stones': American Missionaries, Bulgarian Nationalists and the Politics of Gender, 1832-1872" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 2001).

[70] Letter from Riggs to James L. Barton (June 23, 1899), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 14, European Turkey Mission (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 575).

1,270 communicants; fifty Sabbath schools with 2,291 members, and fifty-one designated preaching places with 3,385 adherents.[71]

Riggs' Literary Effects in the Region

Learning and using the languages properly in their evangelical activities were very important for the American missionaries in the region. That was one of the main reasons why Elias Riggs was very important for the ABCFM to run its activities in the region since he knew several languages. In addition to using his language abilities in preparing and publishing materials for missionary activities, he preached in the vernacular throughout the region. For example, when Elias Riggs attended the dedication of a newly completed evangelical church in Izmir in October 1882, the services were in English, Greek, Armenian, Turkish, and Spanish. Charles Trowbridge Riggs, one of the grandchildren of Elias Riggs, described the services

> Dr. Riggs presided at the morning service, and read the Scriptures, first in Armenian and then in Greek; and he later on gave a resume in Armenian and also in Greek of the progress of Christian work in various parts of the world during the fifty years that he had been permitted to devote to the missionary cause. In the evening, he preached in English.[72]

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[71] In 1900, the European Turkey Mission had "1 theological school, 10 students in the collegiate training; 3 boarding and high schools with 44 male and 92 female pupils; 20 other schools with 82 male and 125 female pupils, making a total of 635 under Christian instruction. Native contributions for support of their own Christian work amounted to $9,019." See *The Ninetieth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: The Board, 1900), 38. For the report of the same station for the years of 1900-1901, see "Report of the European Turkey Mission, 1900-1901," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 16, European Turkey Mission, item 1, p.3 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 577). For a general overview of the mission, see Vladimir A. Tsanoff, ed., *Reports and Letters of American Missionaries Referring to the Distribution of Nationalities in the Former Provinces of European Turkey, 1858-1918* (Sofia, 1919); and J. F. Clarke, *Sketch of the European Turkey Mission of the American Board* (Boston: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1901).

[72] Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 47. See also *The Missionary Herald* 79:1 (January 1883): 24-25.

When Ferhat Mehmet Efendi was baptized by Riggs in Istanbul in 1885, the services were in Turkish.[73] When needed, Riggs gave lessons in Latin to a few students at the Central Turkey College in Antep. The gravestone of Elias Riggs in Istanbul has inscriptions in five different languages with different alphabets: English, Greek, Bulgarian, Ottoman Turkish, and Armenian. He used these languages extensively in his missionary activities throughout the Ottoman Empire. "Rarely has a missionary had the opportunity, or a scholar the ability," as Henry O. Dwight stated "to repeat this service for several different races, using several different languages."[74] George F. Herrick, an ABCFM missionary in the Western Turkey Mission who worked for the literary department for the three missions in Anatolia, described Elias Riggs' literary effects in the region:

> The homes, the schools, the churches where Dr. Riggs' translations of the Word of Life are read, and where the hymns he has translated are sung, are numbered by the ten thousand, and extend from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf; from the snows of the Caucasus to the burning sands of Arabia.[75]

Elias Riggs had stated in his early years of missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire that "in one thing, Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans in this country agree; all their services of worship are performed in an unknown tongue."[76] Riggs was not alone in his assessment. For example, in a letter to the secretary of the American Bible Society, William Goodell talked about a conversation with his Turkish teacher and wrote that Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Copts, Maronites, Jacobites, Roman Catholics, and Turks

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[73] Elias Riggs, *A Tribute: Reminiscences for my Children*, 32.
[74] Henry O. Dwight, "A Mighty Worker before the Lord: Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., LL.D.," *The Missionary Herald* 97:3 (March 1901): 102.
[75] "Report of the European Turkey Mission, 1900-1901," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 16, European Turkey Mission, item 1, p.3 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 577).
[76] Dwight, "A Mighty Worker," 102.

prayed in languages that they did not understand.[77] According to the American missionaries, it was very important to preach to people in the Empire and to supply the Bible and all the religious materials in the vernacular in order to facilitate acceptance by the various ethnic communities. Riggs explained the nature of his work for the European Turkey Mission in the Missionary Herald as follows

> My work continues to be of a nature which affords very little of *incident* or variety to report. The preparation of a translation of the Scriptures requires long, patient, minute, and sometimes monotonous toil. But it is amply repaid when we see the translation going into free circulation and bringing forth fruit. The blessed words of Inspiration have the same convincing, edifying, and comforting power in one language as in another. And the words of other tongues are just as sweet to the nations who use them as those of our own are to us. It is matter of thanksgiving and praise that so large a portion of the human race have now the Scriptures translated and accessible in their own tongues wherein they were born.[78]

The efforts of the ABCFM missionaries to supply their materials in vernacular certainly affected the languages in the region. The most important material to distribute among the "nominal Christians," according to the American missionaries, was the Bible in the vernacular.[79] A member of the Gregorian Church argued in an Armenian journal published in London that Riggs' translation of the Bible into Armenian "*laid the foundations of our modern Armenian*." He praised Elias Riggs at the beginning of the twentieth century, saying that "it still remains to me a matter of wonder how a foreigner

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[77] E.D.G. Prime, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell* (New York: Robert Carter, 1876), 370. Goodell added that "while in business transactions with one another they always made it a point to understand and be understood, in all transactions with their Maker they used words without meaning, and that, in fact, nobody but Protestants even so much as pretended to offer unto God a '*reasonable* service,'- a worship intelligible to themselves."

[78] *The Missionary Herald* 65:5 (May 1869): 158.

[79] For a short account, see "Dr. Riggs as Bible Translator," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 20, European Turkey Mission (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 581).

could penetrate so deeply into the spirit and construction of our language as to bring it under rules, and give it almost the final form of structure which we are using today."[80]

In his memoirs entitled *My Life and Times*, while talking about Bebek seminary, which was designed to train local assistants and preachers, Cyrus Hamlin described the influence of the mission on the Armenian language

> An able and accomplished professor of the Armenian language and literature was always employed. One's native language, his native tongue, must be his chief instrument of thought and expression. Our course gave a great impulse to the cultivation of the Armenian language. We found it clay and iron, and we left it gold. I only claim that the seminary at Bebek had a part and an honorable part in the renaissance of the language. The entire influence of the mission went in that direction.[81]

Barbara Merguerian notes that the translation and publication activities of the missionaries among Armenians motivated others "either as admirers or competitors" to follow their example and massive amount of books and periodicals were published in Armenian. "The development of the Western Armenian language," Merguerian claims, "became a significant component of the growth of Armenian nationalism in this period."[82]

The same kind of admiration for Riggs' translation of the Bible into Armenian could also be seen for his translation efforts of the Bible into Bulgarian. In the translation team of the Bible into Bulgarian, Elias Riggs worked with A. L. Long from the Methodist

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[80] The article was written by L. Zartoumian and translated into English by Herbert M. Allen. I use his translation for the quotations. Zartounian claimed that "Dr. Riggs' Bible will remain as the most important text of our modern Armenian, the root from which springs the language which we write today." See Herbert M. Allen, "An Armenian Estimate of Dr. Elias Riggs," *The Missionary Herald* (May 1901): 194-195.

[81] Cyrus Hamlin, *My Life and Times* (Boston: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, 1893), 249-250. For more on Bebek Seminary, see Cemal Yetkiner, "At the Center of the Debate: Bebek Seminary and the Educational Policy of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1840-1860)," in *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters*, ed. Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather J. Sharkey (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011), 63-83.

[82] Barbara J. Merguerian, "The ABCFM Press and the Development of the Western Armenian Language," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 9:1 (Spring 1998): 49.

Bulgarian Mission, helped by two competent local scholars.[83] It was emphasized that this translation played an important role in "the regenaration of a nation."[84] Constantine Stephanove claimed that the Bulgarian Bible "meant the resuscitation of the Bulgarian nation from the fetters of Hellenism, the triumph of the Bulgarian language, [the] Bulgarian National Church and schools, over the deadliest and secular enemy of the Bulgarian race."[85] There were two dialects of Bulgarian, the Macedonian (or the Western) and the Thracian (or the Eastern), when Riggs started to translate the Bible into Bulgarian. "The two being at that time about equally prevalent," as Robert Thomson from the European Turkey Mission remarked, "he decided in favor of the Thracian."[86] Elias Riggs saw that the Eastern dialect was becaming more important and decided to use it in their translations.[87] In the field, Elias Riggs and the other ABCFM missionaries used Bulgarian everywhere and in every possible way, including churches, schools, and publications. They preferred vernacular in preaching in the churches, in teaching in the mission schools, and in preparing and publishing books, tracts, and periodicals.

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[83] They were "Christodulos Costovich" and "Petko Slaveikoff." One trained in the eastern dialect of Bulgarian and the other in the western. See Elias Riggs, "The Bible in Bulgarian," *The Missionary Herald* 68:3 (March 1872): 76-79.

[84] For example, Constantine Stephanove claimed that "it is difficult to point out to another country in which the Bible has played so striking a rôle in the regeneration of a nation." See Constantine Stephanove, *The Bulgarians and Anglo-Saxondom* (Berne: Paul Haupt, 1919), 300.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Charles Trowbridge Riggs, *Elias Riggs, 1810-1901, Missionary to Greece and Turkey*, 57. Edward Riggs, one of Riggs' sons, explained the most important difficulty in translating the Bible into Bulgarian: "The language and literature of the Bulgarians were reviving in two distinct parts of the country with two distinct and rival dialects. To hold an even balance between these two, to combine where possible and side with the better, and thus to set up a medium standard which should command the respect and adhesion of all parties, was no easy task, and required an instinct for native idiom, which Dr. Riggs possessed in a rare degree, and the results are said by those of qualified to judge to have been as near a complete success as could be hoped." See Edward Riggs, "Death of Elias Riggs: A Sketch of the Veteran Missionary to Turkey by One of his Sons," *New York Observer and Chronicle* 79:7 (February 14, 1901): 224.

[87] Leo Wiener described Elias Riggs' choice as follows: "In his long report, which is of great interest on account of its wealth of topographical notes, he dwells on the necessity of using the Eastern variety of speech, instead of Macedonian, for all other publications, since from his inquiries among the schoolteachers and other competent men, he had become convinced that the future belonged to that dialect." For the American's early effects on the Bulgarian language, see Leo Wiener, "America's Share in the Regeneration of Bulgaria, (1840-1859)," *Modern Language Notes* 13:2 (February 1898): 33-41.

Of course Riggs' influence was felt not only through his Bible translations but also his grammars, commentaries, hymn books, and other missionary publications.[88] Riggs completed his Bible commentary in Bulgarian (three volumes) in 1898.[89] Since his youngest son was blind, he was also interested in preparing and editing some portion of the Scriptures in Armenian and Turkish for the blind in embossed characters. Riggs closely followed developments in Bulgarian literature and translated parts of *Bulgarski narodni pesni*, a collection of Bulgarian folk songs, into English.[90] He translated several hymns into Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, and Turkish. The report of the European Turkey Mission for the years of 1900-1901 claimed that "the number of hymns which he translated or wrote in the Bulgarian language reached the remarkable number of 478."[91] He prepared a book of hymns and tunes in Bulgarian published in Istanbul in 1866 and he was the translator of most of the hymns in the book.[92] Riggs was a member of the *American Oriental Society* and informed American scholars through his letters and articles in academic journals and missionary magazines.[93]

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[88] His letters to the headquarters in Boston were full of information related to his literary efforts. For example, see Letter from Riggs to Clark (November 18, 1891), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 9, European Turkey Mission (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 575).

[89] *The Missionary Herald* 94:7 (July 1898): 260.

[90] See Philip Shashko, "A Recent Discovery: The Elias Riggs Translations from *Bulgarski Narodni Pesni* by the Miladinov Brothers," *Etudes Balkaniques* 26:1 (1990): 69-79; and Elias Riggs, "Bulgarian Popular Songs and Proverbs," *The American Presbyterian and Theological Review* (April 1864): 259-276.

[91] "Report of the European Turkey Mission, 1900-1901," ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 16, European Turkey Mission, item 1, p.3 (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 577). He translated over sixty hymns into Bulgarian in 1899. See Letter from Riggs to James L. Barton (January 10, 1900), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 20, European Turkey Mission, (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 581).

[92] James F. Clarke, "Bible Societies, American Missionaries and the National Revival of Bulgaria" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1937), 302.

[93] See Elias Riggs, "Inverted Construction of Modern Armenian," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* vol.6 (1858-1860): 565-566; Elias Riggs, "Pronunciation of Greek," *Southern Presbyterian Review* 5:4 (April 1852): 495-503; and for his answers to some inquiries about the Albanian language, see "Proceedings of the American Oriental Society," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 1:4 (1849): lvii-lviii.

The high quality of his literary labors for the ABCFM was also seen in his grammar books. He published *Notes on the Grammar of the Bulgarian Language* in Izmir in 1844, *A Brief Grammar of the Modern Armenian Language as Spoken in Constantinople and Asia Minor* in Izmir in 1847, *A Vocabulary of Words Used in Modern Armenian but not Found in the Ancient Armenian Lexicons* in 1847 in Izmir**,** *Correct Method of Speaking the Modern Armenian Language* in 1853 in Istanbul, and *Outline of a Grammar of the Turkish Language as Written in the Armenian Character* in Istanbul in 1856. In the preface of his grammar of the Modern Armenian, Riggs shared his observations that the only language of the Armenian books was the Ancient Armenian. He also added

> It is only during the present century that the modern language has begun to be cultivated as a language of books, the genius of the age and the best interests of humanity requiring that authors should no longer, as formerly, veil their ideas in a dialect accessible only to the few, but should spread them far and wide in the free and idiomatic use of the languages vernacular to their countrymen.[94]

Riggs' translation efforts also led him to suggest the emendations in the English version of the Old and New Testaments. In his *Suggested Emendations of the Authorized English Version of the Old Testament* published in the United States in 1873, he pointed out that the amendments which he suggested were "the result, not of a systematic revision of the English Version, which I have never attempted, but of comparisons made in the course of translating the Scriptures into the Armenian and Bulgarian."[95] He also

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[94] Elias Riggs, *A Grammar of the Modern Armenian Language as Spoken in Constantinople and Asia Minor*, second edition (Constantinople: A. B. Churchill,1856), 3.

[95] He also added that "they are offered to the candid consideration of all who feel especial interest in the correction of the English Version, and specially of those providentially called to the work of translating the word of God into other tongues." See Elias Riggs, *Suggested Emendations of the Authorized English Version of the Old Testament* (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1873), 5.

published a booklet later and presented some examples in order to show the need for retouching the revised English version of the Scriptures.[96]

On his death in 1901, the ABCFM lost its last pioneer and its most prominent Christian scholar in the Levant. He had worked for the ABCFM for sixty-nine years, far longer than anyone else ever employed by the organization. Some time before his death, regarding the importance of the foreign missionary work, he wrote in the Missionary Herald

> I mourn and *wonder* that the churches need to be *urged* to sustain the foreign missionary work, instead of accounting it a royal privilege to be workers together with Christ. His mission was a *foreign* mission, and our ancestors, a few years ago, were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and their incorporation into that Commonwealth was the fruit of foreign missionary work. We pray daily that God would wake up his people to know their duty and to enjoy their high privilege of sharing in this precious work.[97]

Riggs was one of the ABCFM missionaries who worked, in his words, "in this precious work" among the peoples of the Middle East and he experienced the growth in the activities of the ABCFM throughout his life. A comparison of the annual reports of the ABCFM showed a steady increase in the number of missionaries, local laborers, churches, church members, schools, and students in the region during his Istanbul years, see Table 1.[98]

While the missionary activities grew each year to evangelize the "nominal Christians" in the Ottoman Empire, the ABCFM reminded the missionaries in the field

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[96] See Elias Riggs, *Some Reasons in Favor of Retouching the Revised English Version of the Scriptures* (New York: Burr Printing House, 1888).
[97] *The Missionary Herald* 94:7 (July 1898): 260. For the original letter, see Letter from Riggs to James L. Barton (January 13, 1898), ABC 16.9: Mission to Turkey, vol. 14, European Turkey Mission (Papers of the ABCFM, reel 575).
[98] *Services at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of the American Mission at Constantinople* (Gloucester: John Bellows, 1906), 94.

Table 1. The Growth of the ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire

Year	Missionaries	Local Laborers	Churches	Members	Schools	Students
1850	38	25	7	237	7	112
1855	58	77	23	584	38	363
1860	92	156	40	1,277	71	2,742
1865	89	204	49	2,004	114	4,160
1870	116	364	69	2,553	205	5,489
1875	137	460	77	3,759	244	8,253
1880	146	548	97	6,626	331	13,095
1885	156	768	105	8,259	390	13,791
1890	177	791	117	11,709	464	16,990
1895	177	867	125	12,428	449	20,604
1900	153	910	133	13,529	425	23,040
1904	187	1057	132	16,009	465	22,867

that the aim of the Board was "to Christianize and not to civilize."[99] According to ABCFM headquarters, the fundamental aim was to convert people to Protestantism, and all other activities such as teaching them how to read and write and providing "the arts of civilized life" were secondary. The ABCFM was very clear in its aim that "deliberately, intelligently, by all means at our command, we press on this great Christian

[99] *Sixty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1884), xxvii. These kind of statements were somewhat different from the statements of the early years of the ABCFM, particularly for the missions among the Indians. For example, in the annual report for the year of 1823, the policy of the ABCFM for the mission among the Cherokees was that "Christian principles only have been found adequate to transform an idle, dissolute, ignorant wanderer of the forest into a laborious, prudent and exemplary citizen. Other means have been tried without effect." *Fourteenth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1823), 56. While talking about the "requisite qualifications of a missionary to uncivilized nations" in the same annual report on the page 190, it was argued that the resources of the ABCFM are limited and "economy in the expenditure of our finances is of indispensable importance, and hence the question arises, How shall we most effectually, and the most extensively, promote the Redeemer's cause with the means which are put into our hands? Or in other words, What description of characters are likely to be the efficient instruments in promoting at once the interests of religion and civilization? Our opinion is made up. We think that they should be those only, who possess such talents as qualify them for instructing the heathen in the knowledge of the Gospel, and also for promoting among them an acquaintance with the arts of civilized society;--*and these talents should meet in the same person.*--" This kind of ethnocentric rhetoric was available in the missionary writings throughout the nineteenth century. See, for example, Jay Riley Case, *An Unpredictable Gospel: American Evangelicals and World Christianity, 1812-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

propagandism, until the whole world shall be penetrated and filled and leavened by the gospel."[100] The ABCFM regarded its mission in the Ottoman Empire as its most important mission: in its annual report for the year of 1885, it was said that "[i]f we fail in Japan, other agencies will fill up our lack; but if we fail in Turkey, all fails."[101]

[100] *Sixty-fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1884), xxviii. These kind of statements were very common in the ABCFM's publications. See, for example, "Our missionaries can go forth in full hope that nothing that is most strong in the world, whether old, fixed social habit and institutions, or old religions, or old philosophies, can effectually resist the gospel; that it has the same power now that it had when preached by the apostles; and that heathenism must inevitably fall before the light which will sooner or later shine into its darkness." T. D. Woolsey, "The Gospel for the World," *The Missionary Herald* 71:6 (June 1875): 165.

[101] *Seventy-fifth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Stanley and Usher, 1885), xlvi.

CONCLUSION

> In Palestine, Syria, the Provinces of Asia Minor, Armenia, Georgia and Persia, though Mohammedan countries, there are many thousands of Jews, and many thousands of Christians, at least in name. But the whole mingled population is in a state of deplorable ignorance and degradation, destitute of the means of divine knowledge, and bewildered with vain imaginations and strong delusions. It is to be hoped, however, that among the Christians there, of various denominations, some might be found, who are alive in Christ Jesus; and who, were proper means employed for their excitement, improvement, and help, might be roused from their slumbers, become active in doing good, and shine as lights in those darkened regions. It is indeed to be hoped, that no small part of those, who bear the Christian name, would willingly and gladly receive the Bible into their houses, and do something towards imparting the heavenly treasure, as opportunities should be afforded, to the Jews, Mohammedans, and Pagans; and dispersed as they are, among the different nations, they might do much; at least might afford many and important facilities and advantages for carrying into effect the expanding desires of benevolence.[1]

Thus read the report of the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM in 1819. The earliest American missions to the Middle East developed during the context of a series of Christian evangelical revivals, which occurred during the early nineteenth century and became known collectively as the Second Great Awakening. The American missionaries established an extensive network of mission stations in the Middle East throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mainly in order to reach those to whom they referred as the "nominal Christians" of the Eastern churches.

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[1] "Minutes of the Tenth Annual Meeting," in *First Ten Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with Other Documents of the Board* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 230.

Many missionary societies of various sizes and different denominations from almost all Western countries sent their missionaries to the Middle East. The variety of European and American missionary activities in the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Arab provinces can be gauged from a few examples throughout the region: the ABCFM's hospital in Talas, Kayseri; the Brothers of the Christian Schools' educational activities in Izmir (French Catholic); the Italian Salesian school in Antalya; the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions' mission press in Beirut; the Russian Orthodox Imperial Pravoslavic Society's schools in the Galilee; an Austrian Catholic girls' school in Edirne; the Pentecostal missionary Lillian Trasher's orphanage in Asyut, Egypt; the Prussian Protestant Kaiserswerth Deaconesses' school in Jerusalem; the Scottish medical mission in Tiberias/Safad, Northern Palestine; the French Lazarist St. Benoit College in Istanbul; the ABCFM's mission station in Van; the Quaker American Friends' schools in Ramallah; and the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions' hospital in Kermanshah, Iran. Large-scale Protestant missionary endeavor in the Ottoman Empire began in the early nineteenth century and was mainly dominated by two organizations, the ABCFM, based in Boston, and the Church Missionary Society, based in London. By the end of the nineteenth century, the ABCFM had become the largest Protestant missionary organization in the world and the most substantial Protestant missionary organization in the Ottoman Empire.

As an important element of both "civilizing" and "Christianizing" efforts, the American missionaries utilized "education" in the missionary establishments of the region in order to reach those whom they described as the "nominal Christians" of the Eastern Churches. The ABCFM founded its first school in Beirut in 1824 and the

educational activities became *sine qua non* of the ABCFM missions. In general, the Tanzimat reform period in the Ottoman Empire, which began in 1839, provided a favorable environment for missionary activity. The ABCFM established an extensive network of schools at all levels in the hinterlands of the mission stations, particularly in Anatolia. Education in the missionary schools was of good quality, and it was reported that 85 percent of Ottoman Protestants (mostly converted from Armenian Orthodoxy in Anatolia and from Greek or Syrian Orthodoxy in the Levant) could read by the 1870s. In the following years, the number of its missionary schools for Eastern Christians, particularly Armenians, increased dramatically because the ABCFM decided to limit its activities to Anatolia in 1870, while another Protestant missionary organization, the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, continued to work in the Arab provinces. In addition to opening kindergartens and primary and secondary schools in almost every city in the Ottoman heartland, several colleges were founded.

The Annual Reports of the ABCFM and Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in 1914 stated that the American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire directed 473 elementary, fifty-four secondary, and four theological schools, as well as eleven colleges, teaching a total of 32,252 students. In most of the colleges, there were regular classes on history, literature, mathematics, science, economics, logic, and philosophy; religious instruction was also a part of the curriculum. American missionary schools offered students not only a Protestant education but also an opportunity to understand the workings of the "Anglo-American mind." Language was always a major issue, and the ABCFM decided that instruction in its schools should be in the vernacular. Thus, Arabic was used in Mardin, Mosul, Syria, and the other Arab provinces; Armenian was used in

Eastern Anatolia; Turkish was employed in Central Anatolia; and Greek, Armenian, Turkish, and Bulgarian were the preferred languages of instruction in Western Anatolia and the Balkans.

According to the Protestant missionaries, the spread of the Bible required the establishment of "civilized Christian institutions" and literacy was a paramount requirement in order to gain direct knowledge of the Bible and its teachings. Missionaries in the Ottoman Empire did not limit their educational activities to the establishment of schools for boys, but, as is evident from the names of the schools, were also interested in educating girls as part of the general endeavor to reconstruct society. The ABCFM headquarters in Massachusetts was aware of the importance and influence of the women missionaries for every mission in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to educational and medical work (operating hospitals), the missions established printing presses to publish schoolbooks, and copies of the Bible and other religious tracts in the vernacular, in order to reach to members of the Eastern Churches.

The missionaries of the ABCFM regarded the Christians of the Ottoman Empire as "nominal" Christians. Since they were perceived as being bankrupt of Christian virtues and had a deteriorated form of religion, they were Christians in name only and needed guidance to a better form of Christianity. Therefore, the missionary activities of the ABCFM aimed both to bring Christianity to the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and to revitalize Eastern Christianity in the region. Christian missionaries were forbidden by imperial authorities from proselytizing among Ottoman Muslims. As a result, the Western missionaries concentrated primarily on the Jewish community and the many Christian

minority groups in the Ottoman Empire, including Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Copts, and Maronites.

The Ottoman Reaction

As far as the Ottoman state was concerned, the missionary educational enterprise was a matter of concern for most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, since the mission boards established their schools both with and without explicit permission from the Sublime Porte. Many Ottoman officials thought that the missionary schools constituted a threat to the Empire and implemented measures to control and limit their activities. This distrust only deepened when many graduates of Robert College went on to become leading members of the independent Bulgarian government.[2]

American missionary activities in the region also disturbed the ecclesiastical hierarchies of the Eastern Churches. Ottoman officials closely monitored missionary activities among the minorities, including Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldeans, Copts, Maronites, and Jews, and they intervened when necessary. In an edict dated 1839, for example, it was stated that two years earlier, a few Americans had opened a primary school around *Beyoğlu* (a district on the European side of Istanbul, also known as Pera) to educate children free of charge and some Armenians, Greeks, Catholics, and Jews went to the school. When it was understood that they were trying to convert children to Protestantism, parents did not send their children to the school and it was closed. However, some Armenian students who went to that school published some books and continued to seek converts among the Armenians. When complaints reached

[2] For example, see BOA, Y.PRK.DH., 10/58 (29 Zilhicce 1315 [20 May 1898]); and BOA, HR.SYS., 62/1 (9 January 1893).

the Sultan, he ordered imperial bureaucrats to warn the Armenian Patriarch that he needed to block those missionary activities among the Armenians.[3]

Maarif-i Umûmiye Nizamnâmesi (Regulation for Public Education) of 1869 brought new regulations for missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire.[4] Every foreign school needed a license to operate, teachers must have diplomas certified by Ottoman officials, and school books and curriculum must be certified by the Ministry of Education or its local offices. Opening and operating of foreign schools would not be allowed unless these conditions were met. However, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha argued in his report dated 1893 that the governments rarely enforced these regulations. When the state wanted the foreign schools to comply, the embassies in Istanbul made difficulties.[5]

During the reign of Abdülhamit II (1876-1909), the Sultan and his bureaucrats closely monitored missionary activities. This period also coincided with the extension of American missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire. Many reports were prepared by

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[3] BOA, HAT., 794/36842 (3 Zilhicce 1254 [17 February 1839]). In the early documents related to the American missionaries, the Ottoman bureaucrats used the term English sect (*İngiliz mezhebi*) instead of Protestant. The document reads "*bundan iki sene mukaddem Amerika ahalisinden çend nefer sahsın bilâ-ücret sıbyân okutmak vesilesiyle Beyoğlu civarında ihdâs eyledikleri mektebe Rum ve Ermeni ve Katolik ve Yehûd milletlerinden biraz çocuk gitmiş ise de bunların talim eyledikleri lisan ve öğretdikleri kitablar o makûle sıbyânın ezhânlarını tahvîl ve İngiliz mezhebine çevirmek olduğundan milel-i mezkûre çocukları men' ile el-hâletü hâzihî mekteb-i mezbûr mesdûd kalmıs ise de Ermeni milletinden mukaddemâ mekteb-i mezkûrda tahsil edenlerden bazı reâyâ tahvil-i ezhân-ı milleti mûcib ve İngiliz mezhebine çevirmekliği müstevcib kitablar tab' ile millet-i mersûme içine neşretmekde ve bu keyfiyet uygunsuzluğu müeddî olmakda idüğü beyânıyla o makûlelerin men' olunması hususu bu defa istid'â olunmuş ve keyfiyet fi'l-hakika böyle olduğu hâlde çirkin ve uygunsuz bir şey göründüğünden bu maddenin önü kesdirilmesi lâzım gelmiş olduğuna binâen o makûlelerin tekdiriyle işbu uygunsuzlukların men' ü def'ine mübâderet eylemesi için Ermeni Patriği tarafına tenbih olunması hususuna irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i şahane müte'allik buyurulmuş olmakla mûcebince icra-yı iktizâsı bâbında irâde efendimindir.*" See *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni-Amerikan İlişkileri (1839-1895)* (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2007), vol.1, 3. On this issue, also see BOA, HAT., 512/25086 (18 Zilhicce 1254 [4 March 1839]).

[4] For example, see BOA, Y.EE., 112/6 (24 Cemâziyelâhir 1286 [30 September 1869]).

[5] "*Bu üç şart kâmilen mevcut olmadıkça mekâtib-i hususiye küşadına ve devamına ruhsat verilmez ve hilâfında hareket vukuunda men' ve sed olunur deyû kuyûd-ı lâzıme derç olunmuş ise de hükûmetçe bu kuyûd-ı ihtiraziyenin arkası aranmayıp hayli vakit boş bırakılmıştır. Sonra işin takibine kıyam olundukta dahi bazı sefaretler tarafından ika'-ı müşkülât edilmiştir.*" See Yahya Akyüz, "Cevdet Paşa'nın Özel Eğitim ve Tanzimat Eğitimine İlişkin Bir Lâyihası," *OTAM (Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi)* 3 (1992): 94.

Ottoman officials, including the reports and briefs of Ahmet Cevdet Pasha (1893), former Minister of Education; Zühtü Pasha (1893), Minister of Education; Şakir Pasha (1898), *Anadolu Umum Islahat Müfettişi* (the Inspector of General Reform in Anatolia), in order to provide a road map to control and limit missionary enterprise in the Ottoman Empire.[6] In these kind of reports, the officials tried to present a picture of the situation to the Sultan and highlighted several issues including the number of licensed and unlicensed missionary schools, how they started to operate, and what kind of precautions the state might take in order to restrain the "obvious damage" caused by missionary activities.[7] Lists of American missionary schools with their locations, dates of establishment, and brief information can be found in the Ottoman archives.[8]

One unintended consequence of the ubiquity and quality of these foreign missionary schools was that the Ottoman administration was motivated to combat the

[6] On these reports, see Yahya Akyüz, "Cevdet Paşa'nın Özel Eğitim ve Tanzimat Eğitimine İlişkin Bir Lâyihası," *OTAM (Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi)* 3 (1992): 85-114; Yahya Akyüz, "Abdülhamit Devrinde Protestan Okulları ile İlgili Orijinal İki Belge," *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 3:1-4 (1970): 121-130; Atilla Çetin, "II. Abdülhamid'e Sunulmuş Beyrut Vilâyetindeki Yabancı Okullara Dâir Bir Rapor," *Türk Kültürü* 22:253 (1985): 44-52; and Atilla Çetin, "Maarif Nazırı Ahmed Zühdü Paşa'nın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki Yabancı Okullar Hakkında Raporu," *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 10-11 (1981-1982): 189-218.

[7] For example, Ahmed Zühdü Pasha, Minister of Education, started his report written in 1894 that "*memâlik-i mahrûsa-i şâhânede ruhsatlı ve ruhsatsız ne kadar mekâtib-i ecnebiye bidâyeten ne suretle te'sis olunmağa başlamış idüğinin ve mine'l-kadîm hükûmetden ruhsat mecburiyetinde bulunup bulunmadıklarının ve eskiden ruhsat mu'âmelesi ne yolda olup şimdi nasıl cereyân etmekde ve bunlar hakkında Maârif Nizamnâmesi hükmünce ve ahden hükûmetin hakk-ı nezâret ve teftişi ne raddede ve bu tefrişât el-yevm ne gûne icrâ edilmekde ve bunlar üzerinde nezâret ve teftişin daha müsmirr olabilmesi ve kendilerinden devlet ve memleketce husûlü melhûz olan mazarrâtın tahdid edilmesi içün ne gibi tedâbirin ittihazınâ lüzûm görünmekde bulunduğunun…*" See Atilla Çetin, "Maarif Nazırı Ahmed Zühdü Paşa'nın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki Yabancı Okullar Hakkında Raporu," *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 10-11 (1981-1982): 193.

[8] For example, see BOA, Y.EE., 102/38 (19 Muharrem 1311 [2 August 1893]); BOA, Y.A.HUS., 475/109 (6 Cemâziyelevvel 1322 [20 July 1904]); BOA, Y.A.RES., 122/88 (7 Cemâziyelevvel 1321 [1 August 1903]). For some of the transcriptions in the Latin alphabet, see Şamil Mutlu, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Misyoner Okulları* (İstanbul: Gökkubbe, 2005); and Adnan Şişman, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde XX. Yüzyıl Başlarında Amerikan Kültürel ve Sosyal Müesseseleri* (Balıkesir: Alem Basım-Yayın, 1994). For an example, see Appendix B.

allure of these institutions by improving and modernizing its own educational system.[9] Thus, several new state schools for Muslims were established in order to compete with the missionaries' efforts, and it is clear that the spread of missionary schools in the Ottoman Empire accelerated the state's adoption of Western educational models. In the province of Damascus, for example, Emine Evered points out that "in an effort to counter foreign schools and undermine their presumed moral and political effects, the Ottoman state began to establish *ibtidaî* and *rüşdiye* schools as well as *idadî* schools." She also mentions that "by 1885, it had 275 *ibtidaî* schools, of which 29 were for girls, eight *rüşdiye* schools, one *idadî*, and one vocational school."[10] The Damascus Imperial Medical School was established in 1903 in order to compete with the French and American medical schools in Beirut.[11]

In 1899, Ottoman officials stated that appropriate measures should be taken and the Ministry of Finance should allocate sufficient amount of money to open new schools for Muslim students in the Empire because Muslim students studying at foreign schools in the Ottoman Empire were obliged to attend religious services, and this would have negative consequences.[12] What was interesting was that although the state actually forbade Muslim students to attend foreign schools and investigated the reasons for their choice,[13] it was obvious that some Muslim students did attend the missionary schools.

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[9] See, for example, BOA, Y.PRK.MF., 2/53 (15 Rebîulevvel 1310 [6 October 1892]).
[10] There is a small typo in the original text. Evered wrote that "it had 275 *idadî* school" and *idadî* should be *ibtidaî*. Emine Ö. Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans: Politics, Reform and Resistance from the Tanzimat to the Young Turks* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012), 114.
[11] Ibid., 127-136.
[12] BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK., 60/24 (4 Rebîulâhir 1317 [11 August 1899]).
[13] For example, in a document dated 1888, it was stated that some Muslim students (particularly girls, even marrigeable girls) attended Protestant and foreign schools (*Bazı etfal-i Müslimenin ve hususiyle kız çocukların Protestan vesair ecnebi mekteplerine devam itmekde oldukları hatta bunların içinde gelinlik kızların dahi bulunduğu*…). See BOA, İ.DH., 1066/83576 (11 Cemâziyelevvel 1305 [24 January 1888]). For forbiding Muslim students to attend foreign schools, see also BOA, Y.PRK.MF., 1/55 (6 Rebîulevvel

The state warned the parents of these students and they were required to register their children to the Muslim schools.[14] The Sublime Porte also tried to block the careers of alumni of the missionary schools. In 1888, for example, the Ottoman bureaucrats forbade doctors who had graduated from American missionary schools to work in the municipal medical offices.[15]

The Sublime Porte in Istanbul and the local authorities in the Empire did not only monitor the missionary schools but also closely followed every kind of missionary activity. The Ottoman bureaucrats in Istanbul, for example, examined books published by the missionary press and the American missionaries needed to get permission to print their books and tracts.[16] When the American missionaries in Istanbul encountered difficulties[17] in distributing published materials to the missionaries throughout the Ottoman Empire in spite of having had approval from the imperial authorities for their books,[18] American diplomats intervened to find a solution.[19] In 1884, when Ottoman officials were informed that American missionaries were openly selling and distributing

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1305 [22 November 1887]); BOA, Y.PRK.MF., 2/90 (29 Zilhicce 1310 [13 July 1893]); BOA, Y.EE.KP., 8/798 (28 Şaban 1316 [11 January 1899]); BOA, DH.MKT., 2302/99 (7 Şevval 1317 [7 February 1900]); BOA, BEO., 1481/111013 (3 Muharrem 1318 [2 May 1900]); BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 98/21 (27 Şaban 1318 [20 December 1900]); BOA, MF.MKT., 789/57 (20 Rebîulâhir 1322 [4 July 1904]); BOA, MF.MKT., 1035/9 (7 Zilhicce 1325 [11 January 1908]).

[14] See, for example, BOA, MF.MKT., 294/13 (2 Cemâziyelâhir 1313 [19 November 1895]); BOA MF.MKT., 309/6 (21 Şevval 1313 [5 February 1896]); BOA, DH.TMIK.M., 98/21 (27 Şaban 1318 [20 December 1900]).

[15] BOA, DH.MKT., 1560/60 (26 Safer 1306 [1 November 1888]).

[16] For example, for permission to print *Talimat-ı Din-i Mesih* in Greco-Turkish, see BOA, MF.MKT., 1015/76 (6 Şaban 1325 [14 September 1907]); for permission to print Old and New Testaments in Armenian and Turkish, see BOA, MF.MKT., 28/111 (6 Cemâziyelevvel 1292 [10 June 1875]). See also BOA, MF.MKT., 930/11 (29 Rebîulevvel 1324 [23 May 1906]); BOA, MF.MKT., 168/13 (24 Şevval 1310 [11 May 1893]); BOA, BEO., 159/11885 (5 Şaban 1310 [22 February 1893]), BOA, BEO., 177/13272 (11 Ramazan 1310 [29 March 1893]); BOA, MF.MKT., 714/3 (20 Rebîulevvel 1321 [16 June 1903]).

[17] For example, local authorities sometimes confiscated their approved books at customs. As an example, see BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 702/4 (29 Şevval 1312 [25 April 1895]).

[18] See BOA, DH.MKT., 1338/104 (29 Cemâziyelâhir 1299 [17 May 1882]); BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 702/3 (29 Şevval 1312 [25 April 1895]); BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 498/76 (6 Cemâziyelevvel 1306 [8 January 1889]); BOA., TRF.I.MN., 197/19694 (17 Zilhicce 1321 [4 March 1904]); and BOA, DH.MKT., 61/33 (22 Zilkâde 1310 [7 June 1893]).

[19] BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 702/4 (29 Şevval 1312 [25 April 1895]).

their books in Istanbul, the officials argued that any future permits to sell books should include a condition that books should be only be sold in designated places.[20] In 1894, Avedaper[21] published in Istanbul was closed because of one article "promoting discord."[22]

The Sublime Porte frequently blamed the American missionaries for supporting the Armenian revolutionary committees in the Ottoman Empire.[23] Thus, Ottoman diplomats in Washington, D.C. informed the Sublime Porte in 1894 that Judson Smith, the secretary of the ABCFM, had stated that American missionaries did not support the Armenian revolutionary committees in a disclaimer sent to the press in the United States.[24] Smith claimed that the American missionaries had been in the Ottoman Empire for seventy years and they followed the policies of the ABCFM, which was "never be interested in politics, concern yourself with your religious duties." Smith also promised that if a missionary participated in political provocations in the Ottoman Empire, he would be expelled from the ABCFM.[25] Ottoman diplomats frequently informed the

[20] BOA, MF.MKT., 84/70 (5 Zilkâde 1301 [26 August 1884]).
[21] For a sample page of Avedaper, see Appendix B. See BOA, DH.MKT., 248/13 (9 Zilhicce 1311 [13 June 1894]).
[22] BOA, A.MKT.MHM., 715/5 (9 Zilhicce 1311 [13 June 1894]).
[23] For example, see BOA, Y.PRK.MK., 9/49 (9 Şaban 1317 [12 December 1899]); and BOA, HR.SYS., 2739/15 (23 December 1894).
[24] BOA, HR.SYS., 2830/2 (17 February 1894); BOA, HR.SYS., 2737/6 (29 January 1894); BOA, HR.SYS., 2737/16 (22 February 1894); and BOA, Y.A.HUS., 291/21 (18 Şaban 1311 [24 February 1894]).
[25] See BOA, HR.SYS., 2830/2 (17 February 1894). *"Gerek Memâlik-i Şahane'de ve gerek tebaa-i Osmaniyye'den Amerika'da mütemekkin Ermeniler beyninde icra olunan harekât-ı ihtilâl-cûyânede Memâlik-i Şahane'de icra-yı vazife eden Amerikalı Misyonerler Cemiyeti'nin medhali olduğuna ve harekât-ı mezkûrenin bu misyonerlerin zîr-i idaresindeki mekteblerin te'sir-i nüfuzuyla vuku'a gelmekde idüğüne dair geçenlerde evrak-ı havâdisde bir takım rivayât görülmüşdür. Bu makûle iddaları suret-i kat'iyede tekzib etmeği lâzımeden addeylerim. Amerikalı Misyonerler Cemiyeti yetmiş seneden beri Memâlik-i Şahane'de ifa-yı vazife etmekde olup Memâlik-i Sahane'ye i'zâm edilen her bir misyonerin memleketin umûr-ı siyasiyesiyle asla iştigâl etmemek ve münhasıran vezâif-i ruhâniyeleriyle iktifa etmek talimâtları iktizâsındandır. Misyonerlerimizin bu yetmiş sene zarfında talimât-ı mezkûreye tamamıyla tevfîk-i hareket etdikleri ve Devlet-i Aliyye'nin umûr-ı siyasiyesine gerek bizzat müdahaleden ve gerek zîr-i idare veya taht-ı nüfuzlarında bulunan kesânı Hükûmet-i Seniyye'ye karsı ihanete teşvikden ictinâb eyledikleri itikadındayız. Eğer cemiyet Memâlik-i Şahane'deki misyonerlerinden birinin mârru'z-zikr talimât hilâfına hareket etdiğini veya bizzat politika tahrikâtına iştirak etdiğini veyahud misyonerler mekteblerinde*

Sublime Porte about public opinion in the United States and reports on missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire.[26]

During the First World War, shortly before the absolute demise of the empire, most missionary activities in the Middle East were either curtailed completely or severely restricted.

Elias Riggs

The publication and distribution of religious books and pamphlets was one of the most important activities of the American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire. When the number of schools and colleges began to increase, the ABCFM mission in Turkey had to produce its own textbooks and other reading materials. In addition, the American missionaries also made extensive use of the printed word in order to reach potential converts in the region. Appropriate religious propaganda was made available through bookstores located in all the mission stations. By 1880, the Scriptures had been translated into all the principal languages of the Ottoman Empire, so that "Christian literature" was available to all able to read. The printing activities of the American missionaries were impressive and Elias Riggs was an important figure in the publications of the ABCFM. His works, especially his translations of the Bible, were distributed and sold not only by American missionaries but also by European missionaries all over the Ottoman Empire.

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talebeden veya ahaliden birini tasavvurât-ı ihtilâl-cûyânede bulunmağa teşvik etdiğini istihbâr ederse onu derhal tekdir u tevbîh edecek ve bu hareketin tekerrürü hâlinde memuriyetinden azleyleyecekdir." See *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeni-Amerikan İlişkileri (1839-1895)* (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2007), vol.1, 87.

[26] The diplomats even sent information on the American missionary activities in Hawaii. See Selim Deringil, "An Ottoman View of Missionary Activity in Hawai'i," *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol.27 (1993): 119-125. For the other examples, see BOA, HR.SYS., 2735/28 (22 December 1890); BOA., HR.SYS., 2735/20 (15 May 1890); BOA, HR.SYS., 2736/34 (20 December 1893); and BOA., HR.SYS., 2742/26 (16 December 1901).

Elias Riggs was proclaimed by his contemporaries as well as by later observers as a "champion." He was a unique example among the other Western missionaries in the Middle East in terms of the length of his missionary service, his literary ability, and his family. He was a "champion" in the missionary service, laboring in the missions connected to the American Board for sixty-nine years. He could use several ancient and modern languages. In addition to his wife, some of his children and grandchildren became missionaries in the foreign missions.[27]

Since Riggs worked in several mission stations of the ABCFM among Greeks, Armenians, Turks, Kurds, and Bulgarians, the impact of the missionary activities of the ABCFM on the various religions and sects of the Ottoman Empire can be better understood by analyzing the significance of his missionary activities and tracing the responses that he evoked. Moreover, his residence in the Ottoman Empire coincided with a number of important events. In addition to witnessing the formation and recognition of a Protestant *millet*, the promulgation of *Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu* and *Islahat Fermanı* (the Reform Edict), the *Tanzimat* period, and the creation of a constitutional monarchy in the Ottoman Empire, he was an active figure in the history of the ABCFM in the region. Riggs lived through the reigns of five Ottoman sultans.

Since he was senior in age and service of the ABCFM as a missionary in the field, Riggs was described as the patriarch of American missionaries in Turkey.[28] "Far and away the most important American impact on the culture of the Near East," Robert

[27] For example, Joseph Grabill mentioned that Elias Riggs was "the remarkable progenitor of three children, eleven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren who became missionaries, most of them in the Near East." See Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 21.

[28] See, for example, H. M. F., "Last Glimpses of the East: Americans in Constantinople," *New York Evangelist* 56:27 (July 2, 1885): 1; and "The Death of Dr. Riggs," *Congregationalist* 86:4 (January 26, 1901): 127. The latter mentioned that it was "in the sense in which Greeks and Armenians might have used the word."

Daniel states "came from the missionary."[29] Elias Riggs was an important part of this impact, particularly with his translations of the Bible and the relevant religious tracts for the peoples in a multilingual Empire. While explaining Riggs' devotion to the translation of the Bible, Julius Richter points out "[t]his work of his predilection was characterized by painful exactitude, patient research, sincere fidelity and a wonderfully consistent style."[30] Riggs spent several years of his life in the Ottoman Empire in order to reach the aim of the missionaries which was "through the introduction of the Bible and the proclamation of the simple gospel to plant self-supporting, self-propagating churches as the basis of a true civilization."[31]

In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson mentioned the development of vernacular languages as one of the processes that created the "imagined communities" of nationality. Anderson argued that the production of a massive stream of cheap printed material (print-capitalism) in the vernacular instead of Latin contributed to the emergence of new nationalisms, including German nationalism in the sixteenth century.[32] He also pointed out

> Maronites and Copts, many of them products of Beirut's American College (founded in 1866) and the Jesuit College of St. Joseph (founded in 1875) were major contributors to the revival of classical Arabic and the spread of Arab nationalism. And the seeds of Turkish nationalism are easily detectable in the appearance of a lively vernacular press in Istanbul in the 1870s.[33]

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[29] Robert L. Daniel, "American Influences in the Near East before 1861," *American Quarterly* 16:1 (Spring 1964): 76.
[30] Julius Richter, *A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1910), 109.
[31] *Seventy-ninth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Press of Samuel Usher, 1889), 41.
[32] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 37-46.
[33] Ibid., 75.

In order to explain the direct line he drew between mass printing, growing literacy, and nationalism, Anderson gave several examples, including a recent one: "The Thai government actively discourages attempts by foreign missionaries to provide its hill-tribe minorities with their own transcription-systems and to develop publications in their own languages: the same government is largely indifferent to what these minorities *speak*."[34]

Anderson was not alone in his views on the missionary contribution to the development of vernacular languages in the Middle East. "Riggs helped unify Armeno-Turkish," Joseph Grabill pointed out in 1971 "as Martin Luther had the German tongue."[35] Regarding the influence of the missionaries on the various vernaculars in the Ottoman Empire, Johann Strauss argued

> Missionaries sometimes tended to overestimate the impact of their publications, of which they kept such a meticulous record, but there can be no doubt that many written languages used in the Ottoman Empire, Bulgarian, Albanian and especially Modern Armenian, owe their formation to a considerable extent to the efforts of Protestant missionaries, a fact which is little acknowledged today. The *nahḍa* in the Arab Middle East is unthinkable without the work of the Protestant missionaries, or without the efforts of Catholic institutions in Syria, Lebanon and even Iraq.[36]

Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw also mentioned Elias Riggs while explaining the influence of the missionaries on Armenian ethnic identity. They argued that the sultan's recognition of the Catholic and Protestant millets undermined the authority of the

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[34] Ibid., 45.

[35] Grabill also mentioned that "as Luther and his co-reformers had used movable type to help win northern Europe and eventually North America to Protestantism, so the missionaries used it to win people in Turkey. The Protestants converted Near Easterners to America's bookish culture and its individualistic and rational notion that the Bible must be widely available in the vernacular." See Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East*, 21-22.

[36] Johann Strauss, "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire (19th-20th Centuries)," *Arabic Middle Eastern Literatures* 6:1 (2003): 46. He also pointed out that "missionary publications addressed a readership among all communities of the Ottoman Empire in principle. Their impact should not be underestimated, even if mainly Christians but hardly any Jews or Muslim Turks were affected… To some extent, however, they also influenced Turkish print culture. The missionaries' illustrated papers attracted Turkish publishers and printers who even borrowed clichés from them."

Patriarch of the Gregorian Armenians and "stimulated linguistic and historical studies, contributing to the new feeling of Armenian nationalism that was to disturb the Ottoman state later in the century. Leading the revival were missionaries who encouraged Armenian ethnic identity. An American Protestant missionary named Elias Riggs wrote a grammar book to teach Armenian to those *millet* members who spoke only Turkish."[37] The efforts of the American missionaries in translating, preparing, publishing, distributing, and selling Bibles, tracts, religious books, newspapers, and school books in the vernacular contributed to the rise of national consciousness among minorities in the Ottoman Empire, including the Armenians and Bulgarians.

After examining the historical course of the ABCFM missions in the Ottoman Empire throughout this dissertation by following in Elias Riggs' footsteps, it is good to conclude by mentioning the Protestant population at the end of the Empire. According to Bruce Masters, the number of Protestants in the Ottoman Empire in 1914 was about 65,000.[38] Taking into consideration that the total population of the Empire was about 18 million people, one might think that the American and European Protestant missionaries, including the missionaries of the ABCFM, were not very successful at converting the people of the Empire, including the "nominal" Christians, into Protestantism. However, one should also remember that there were no Protestant missionaries or any Ottoman Protestants in the region in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

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[37] Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), vol. 2, 126.

[38] Bruce Masters, "Missionaries," in *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (New York: Facts On File, 2009), 385.

APPENDIX A

THE RIGGS FAMILY (1882)

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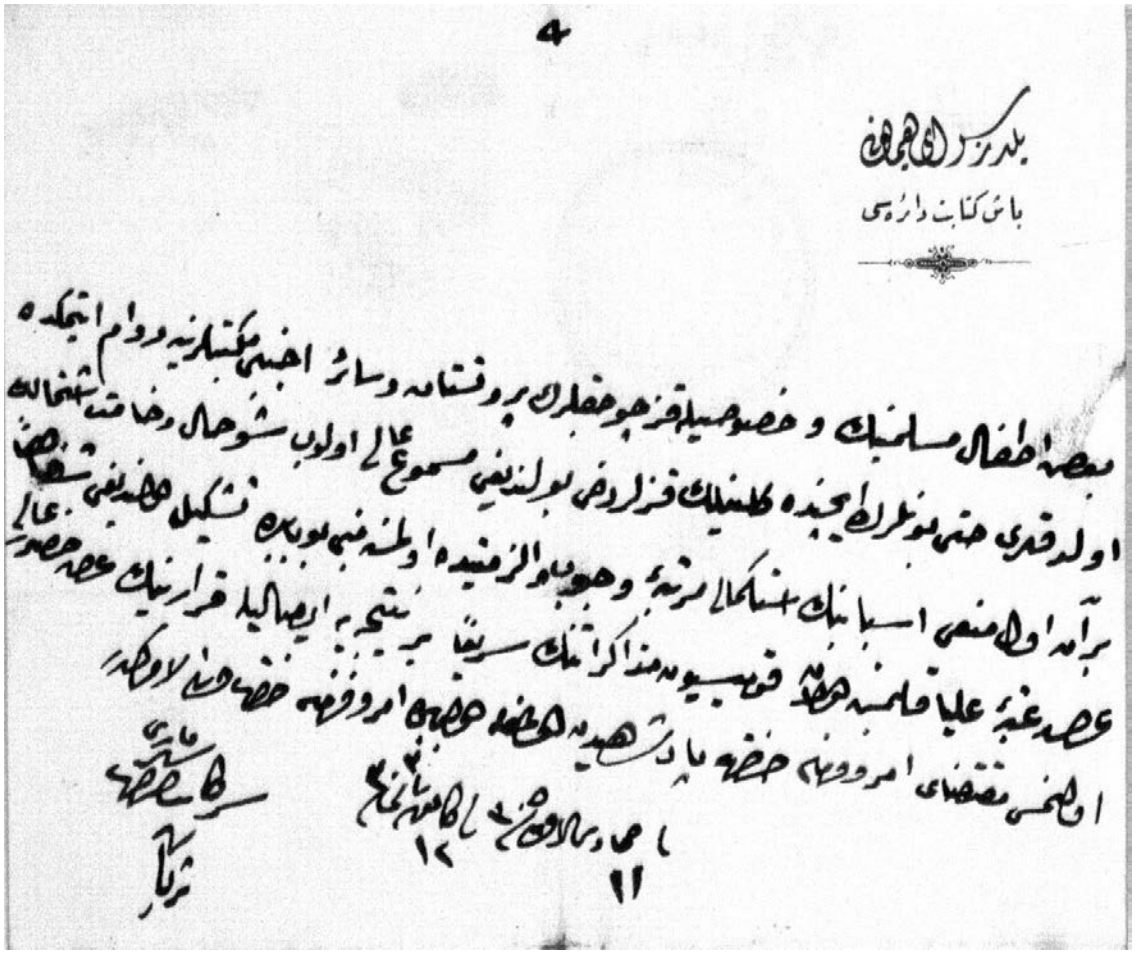
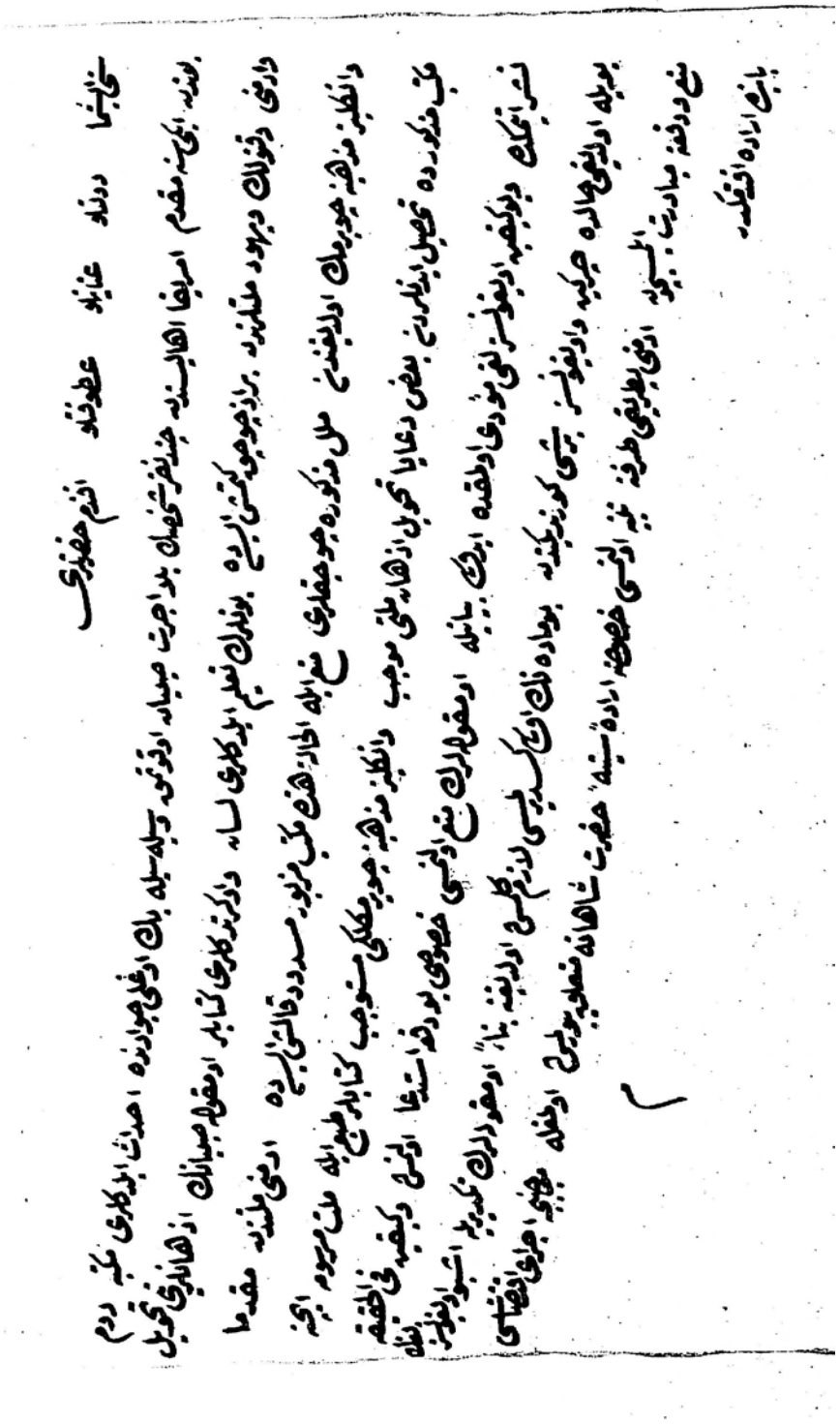
APPENDIX B

EXAMPLES FROM THE OTTOMAN ARCHIVES



BOA, İ.DH., 1066/83576 (11 Cemâziyelevvel 1305 [24 January 1888])

Request for preventing Muslim students from attending Protestant and foreign schools and investigating the reasons for their choice



BOA, HAT., 794/36842 (3 Zilhicce 1254 [17 February 1839])

Decree warning the Armenian Patriarch to be aware of American Protestant missionary activities among the Armenians

ԱՒԵՏԱԲԵՐ

ՇԱԲԱԹԱԹԵՐԹ

ԿՐՕՆԱԿԱՆ, ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱԿԱՆ, ԸՆՏԱՆԵԿԱՆ ԵՒ ՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆ

ՀԱՏՈՐ Թիւ· ԿՈՍՏԱՆԴՆՈՒՊՈԼԻՍ, ՄԱՅԻՍ 19, 1894 Թիւ 20

ԲՈՎԱՆԴԱԿՈՒԹԻՒՆ

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Ըլլալ	154
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ԱՒԵՏԱԲԵՐԻ ՇԱԲԱԹԱԹԵՐԹԻՆ ԿԸ ՏՓատարածուի ամէն շաբաթ օր·

Տարեկան գինն է ամէն տեղ օրոյ հասնելով կանխիկ $1^1/_2$ մէճիտիէ, վեցամսեայն $^3/_4$ մէճիտիէ. թղթատարի ծախքը իմբագրութեան վրայ է. Մէկ բերքի գինն է 30 փարա

Իմբագրութեան, բանտնորագրութեան եւ թղթատարութեան պատկանելու ամէն գրութիւնք պարտին ուղղուիլ առ Մր. Հ. Ս. Գաբրիէլ, Ամիրգոմ Խան, Կ. պոլիս·

ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՅ ՄԻՒԹԵԱՐՈՅ ԸՆԿԵՐՈՒԹԻԱՆ ԿԱՏԱՐԱԾ.

Հ· Փ· ԿԻՒՆԻ, ՏՊԱՒՈՐԻՉ

Հ· Ս· ԳԱԲՐԻԷԼ, ՏՆՕՐԷՆ-ՏԵՐ

ԿԱՏԱՐԱԾԻ ՄԸ ԴԱՐՁԸ

Օր մը կատարած մը մեծ ներգործութիւն մը կ'ունենայ մեր միտքերուն վրայ. եւ մանաւանդ երբ այդ կատարածը մեր կեանքին մէջ նոր դարձ մը կը բանայ. այդ կատարածը մեզի կը ստիպէ որ մեր անցեալ կեանքին վրայ դառնանք եւ մեր ներկայ դիրքը քննենք. եւ մեր ապագայ ընթացքին համար ալ որոշումներ ընենք. Ասոնք ամէնքն ալ մեզ կը ստիպեն որ մեր անցեալ կեանքին վրայ մտածենք. Ասոնք ամէնքն ալ մեզ կը ստիպեն որ մեր անցեալ կեանքին վրայ մտածենք. Ասոնք ամէնքն ալ մեզ կը ստիպեն որ մեր անցեալ կեանքին վրայ մտածենք.

ՀԱՒԱՏՈՒՆ ՎԻՐԱՒՈՐ ՓՈՒՉԵՐԸ

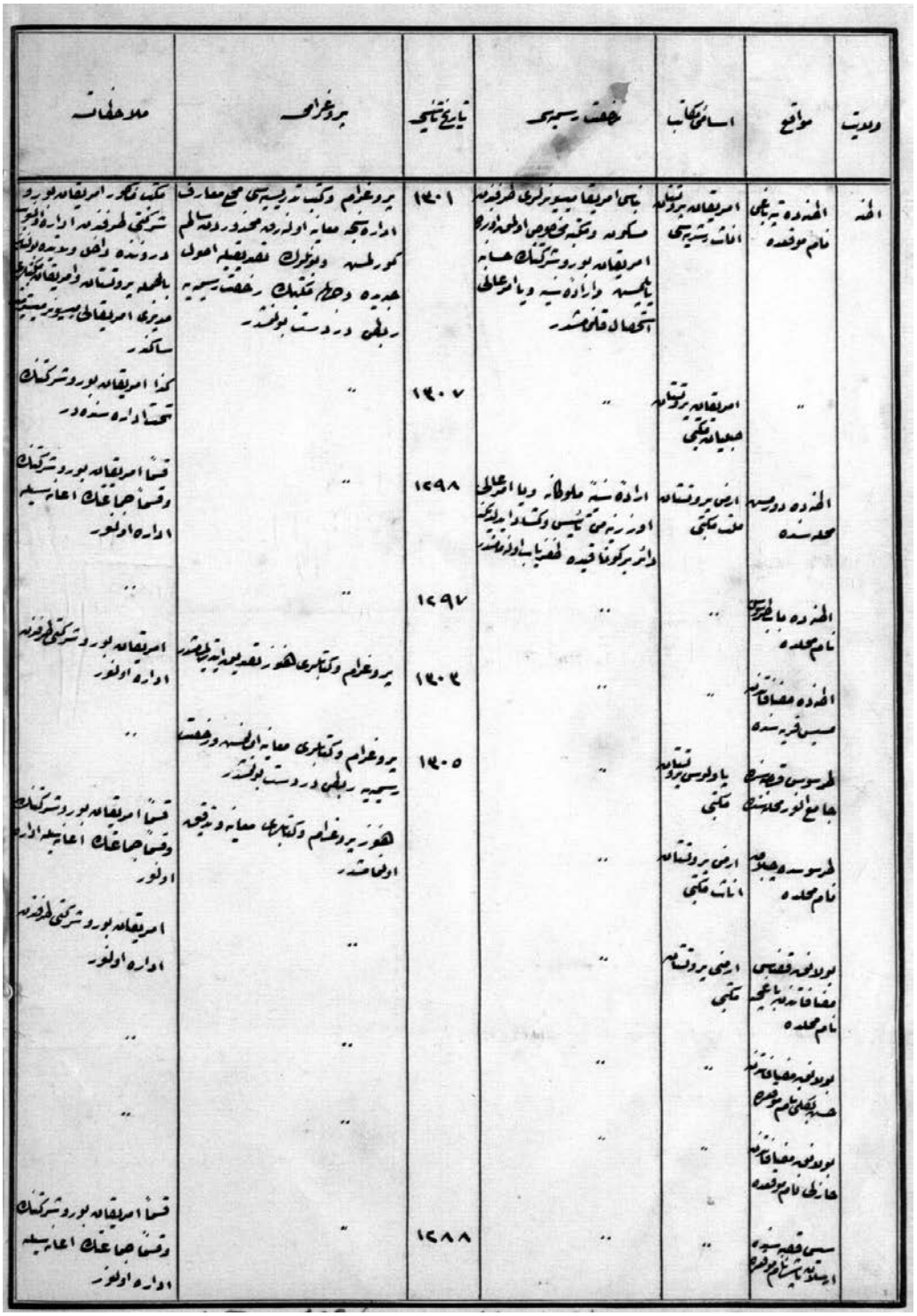
Մեծ խումբ մը կը համրուկներ գետի ջաղաք մը որ հեռուն կը փայլէր չաշխարհն պայծառութեամբ. Ճամբան հոս լայն եւ ոտքի էր, հոն նեղ եւ խոռոչոտ. հոս կ'ելլէր անտառի գլուխ ատենները մէկ եւ հանդարտ ջուրերու քովէ, հոն անպայման եւ մերկ ժայռեր վրայէ. հոս շրնչատատած էր կանաչ դալարիքով ուր ցանդատած էին սիրուն ծաղիկներ, հոն ամայի եւ անտառը ապատաժներով. Հոս խոռոչոտ եւ փոքրուն մէջ տարածուած էին մարդիկներ որոց փոչերը կը մանէին համրոշներուն ոտքերը եւ կը բռնէին անոնց հանդերձները որոնք ծայրերը, հոն փչային մեծ ծառերը կը գոչէին համրոշները, երբ համրոշները կը հրեին ցանդը եւ կը ջանային բանալ համրոշ, իրենց հանգերձները կը պատռէին եւ իրենց ձեռքերը կը ծակտռէին եւ կ'արիւնէին. սակայն եւ այնպէս ամէնը կը ժպտէին եւ սեղմով կը գրկէին այն փշրաւորիչ բաներէն.

Շատ անգամ համրոշներուն առջեւէն կ'երթային մէկը որ երթալն կը հարթէր խոռոչոտ տեղերը, կը գետցրներ գոգաւոր փորերը եւ գեղեցիկ ծաղիկներ կը տնկէր տրեսներու համար համրոշներուն, եւ ցանդը կապցրելու համար կը փայլեր ուրար ջրոյ ակրներ. Սակայն փոչերը գոռհնալ կ'ուճէին համրոշ վրայ. Ուսած բան քոմս կ'ելլային. "Ո՞վ է ասանք որ կը համրոշին եւ ինչո՞ւ այսպէս գետցրելու պիտի կատարէն այս համրոշներուն. Ո՞վ է այս առաջնորդը որ կը հարթէ ուրեն, եւ ինչո՞ւ արեւուտքի չերքը փոչերը եւ հոգեներէնները քանի որ կ'ուզէ համրոշներուն?"

Ալի ատեն բնակիր գոյա իր այրերուն եւ հրամայեց որ գոգահոլ ոտքեր, Նոքերուց, և ան տեղ իրենց համրոշներուն առջեւէն գացրը փչային իրենց մէջտեղ կը անկեր չքնաղ, գեղեցիկ ծաղիկներ, որոց նմանը չէր գտնուեր բոլոր համրոշ վրայ. Ամրոշները, երբ գոհացան աշխատութենէն կ'անցնէին մարդիկներուն առ փոչերուն

BOA, DH.MKT., 248/13 (9 Zilhicce 1311 [13 June 1894])

Front page of *Avedaper*, an Armenian newspaper published by American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire

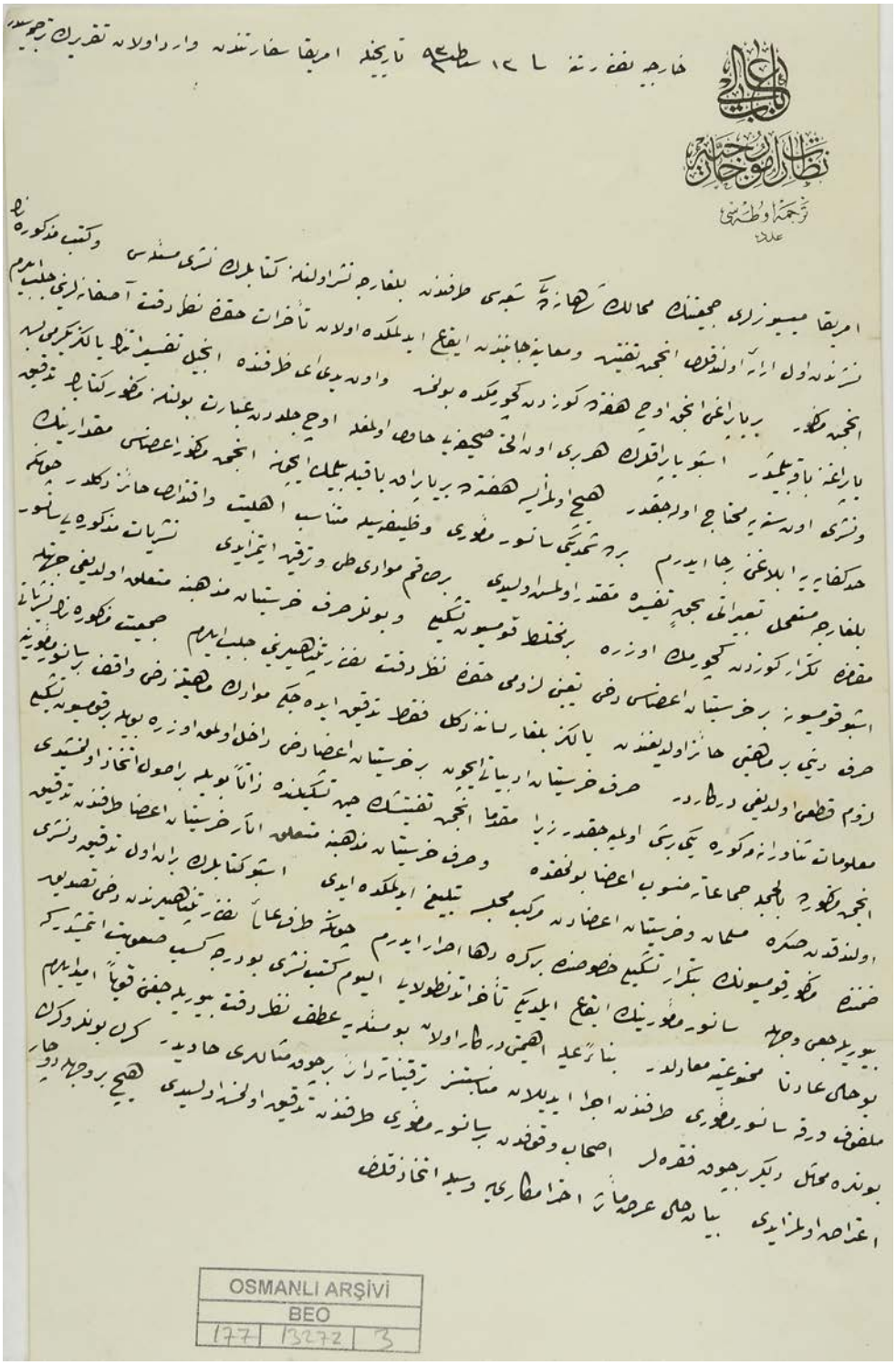


BOA, Y.EE. 102/38 (19 Muharrem 1311 [2 August 1893])

The first page of a small booklet showing Protestant and American schools in the Ottoman Empire

BOA., TRF.I.MN., 197/19694 (17 Zilhicce 1321 [4 March 1903])

A letter from the Directorate of Education in Bitola (*Manastır*) on not preventing the sale of Bibles and tracts published by missionaries with the permission of the Ministry of Education



OSMANLI ARŞİVİ
BEO
177 | 13272 | 3

BOA, BEO., 177/13272 (11 Ramazan 1310 [29 March 1893])

On delays in giving permission to American missionaries to print books in Bulgarian

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