American Missionaries in Turkey and Northern Syria and the Development of Central Turkey and Aleppo Colleges, 1874-1967

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by

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Acknowledgements & Preface

The origins of this work ironically began with an Al-Jazeera special on the American film “Jesus Camp.” I was studying in Damascus and had gone over to a friend’s house to practice Arabic vocabulary. While the concept of the film intrigued me, the most interesting aspect of the show was the reaction it generated from my friend’s Syrian host family. As Arab Christians the concepts of Jesus’ teachings weren’t new to them, but they were appalled by the way that their American brethren expressed their religiosity.

As I began work at an internship with the Middle Eastern Council of Churches in Damascus later that month, I started to research the history of Protestant interactions with other groups in the Middle East. The topic fascinated me. At around the same time, I visited with my mentor, professor, and future thesis advisor, A K Rafeq at his home in Damascus. He would eventually lead me to identify the topic of my thesis and encourage me to outline the development of Aleppo College. As a native Syrian and graduate of the missionary education system, Professor Raefq possessed a unique insight for the project. He also expressed a great deal of excitement for the research, which in turn made me eager to begin my work. A historian of the first degree, Professor Rafeq has provided me with invaluable wisdom, assistance, and kindness. I am proud to have worked under his tutelage for the past two semesters, and am sincerely within his debt.

I must also speak praise to two academic mentors in my life, Professor Tamara Sonn and Professor Joel Schwartz. The instruction of these two individuals has undoubtedly transformed the way I view the world and my place in it. Without their influence and guidance, I would have never gained the courage to begin this project. Special thanks also goes to Professor David McCarthy for his work on the Honor’s defense committee, and Makhoul Boutros, Dee Dee Corradini, Robert Cunningham, Nancy Giddens, and Thomas Woehrle for providing me with information about the College alumni network.

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Many other individuals played a key roll in the formation of thesis – whether by challenging me to write “one more” page at Swem library, baking cookies, or simply being a rock of sanity in the midst of apprehensions and anxieties. Chris Bassett, Mary Bonney, Josh Cummings, Christine Daya, AJ Dronkers, Anthony Feghali, Ryan Forster, Lisa Grimes, Dan Maguire, Martin Saunders, Summer Marion, Bryan Jones, Kristen Pantazes, James Pool, Jack Starcher, Jon Sladky, Bailey Thomson, and Annie Wanlund each deserve personal thanks and mean more than I can express in words.

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Ocean spray splashed across the face of Alford Carleton, misting his hair. Tall and thin, with deep-set blue eyes and horn-rimmed glasses, the fifty year old missionary stood out among the rest of the travelers on the ferry deck. Americans were no longer a novelty in post World War II Turkey, but his suit and polished shoes still attracted the attention of passengers walking past. Carleton didn’t notice. He was deeply engaged in a conversation with a Turk standing next to him.

Neither man could speak the language of the other – Carleton couldn’t recall any Turkish and the man only knew a handful of English phrases. So they spoke in French. After a few translation difficulties, the men became thoroughly acquainted with another, and began discussion a variety of political topics of the day. The conversation went on for at least an hour, and finding Carleton to be sympathetic to his point of view, the passenger said in French, “nous musulmanes,” implying that two shared the common bond of Islam.

Carleton stepped away from the railing of the ship and faced the Turk. “I’m sorry to have to tell you, I’m not a Muslim.” The Turk cocked his head. “Then what are you?” “I’m a Christian.” The man squinted at Carleton, and shook his head. “That’s funny; you don’t look a bit Armenian!” The two men laughed, and continued talking late into the night.

Although brief, the conversation allowed the men to expose their differences without reducing them and “think about their cultural assumptions in new ways.” Carleton was a
premier example of the modern American missionary and his attempt to grapple with a complex process of self evaluation and willingness to interact with individuals from society outside his own. As a representative of the Congregationalists church in Turkey and Greater Syria for over thirty years, the topic of faith was not new to him. Missionaries, likewise, were not new to the region or its peoples. For the last one-hundred years they had proselytized, built schools, established printing presses, and, according to historian George Antonius, helped to spark an “intellectual effervescence” in the Arab world.  

From 1820 to 1959 the United States would spend almost $400 million dollars to support missionary endeavors in Greater Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran – an amount second only to its investment in Middle East oil. The majority of this work was performed by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the primary American missionary agency in the Middle East. Unfortunately, however, the story of the American Board and its influence in the region is largely unknown. Until now, very few historians have analyzed or investigated its history.

The impact & relevance of missionaries in greater Syria and Turkey

The foreign missionary, according to historian John Fairbank, appears to be the “invisible man of American history.” His influence at home and abroad is a “great and underused research laboratory for the comparative observation of cultural stimulus and response.” This statement is especially true when viewed in the context of foreign American missions in Turkey and Greater Syria. With the exception of several influential works like Stephan Penrose’s That They May Have Life: The Story of the American University of Beirut 1866-1941, Joseph Grabill’s Protestant Diplomacy in the Near East, and Michael Oren’s recent Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present, there is a void
in definitive literature on the development, ideology, and institutionalization of American missions in the Arab World.

Those scholars who have taken a particular interest in the realm of Protestant missionary activity often do the topic a disservice by using it to achieve other political ends. Many a religious historian has attempted to either vindicate American missionaries to the point of angelic innocence or villanize them as heartless tools of Imperialism, despite evidence to the contrary. American educational institutions, an easy target for individuals with a specific agenda have born the brunt of such one-sided analysis. In truth, however, American missions are far too complex and the development of their institutions too nuanced to be simplified into easy paradigms. Missionaries were both sinners and saints.

Despite being portrayed in secondary literature as a leviathan-like institution with common goals and aspirations, the American Board did not progress along a strictly linear model of ideology. In this thesis I will attempt to avoid such essentializations and paint an honest reflection of the American Board’s mission. In the process, I will identify how missionaries viewed their efforts in their own words, and balanced the sometimes overlapping and contradictory approaches to mission work. This is particularly evident throughout the last one hundred years as missionaries took various approaches to identify the most effective way to spread the gospel.

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: 1) To contribute a fresh perspective to the understanding of the methodology and administration of missionary educational institutions in general, and 2) to articulate a concise history of one missionary institution, the Central Turkey College in Aintab, Turkey and its successor, Aleppo College in Aleppo, Syria. Until
now, the College has been completely ignored by historians, and no accurate picture of its development exists.

I will argue that as American Board representatives faced the pressing realities of the mission field, they gradually began to reinterpret original conceptions of evangelism from a personal conversion level to a new notion of social change and regeneration in society as a whole. The primary method for enacting this system-oriented strategy was the establishment of permanent educational and medicinal institutions. Working in individualized environments these institutions would develop complex and unique strategies to deal with conflicting outlooks on mission goals. In the case of Central Turkey and Aleppo College, three distinctive institutional characteristics would arise from this process and provide the mission with both its greatest strengths and most apparent weaknesses.

First, the College would commit itself to an ideal of native rule and ultimate native control over the institution. Second, it would prioritize the educational and spiritual needs of the local community over the objectives and goals set by American Board. Third, until the 1930s it would espouse a deep conviction to produce not just educated men, but Christian men for the sake of general spiritual development and regeneration in the region.

These unique attributes would become the paramount symbols of the College’s administration from 1874 to 1967. They would allow it to overcome financial hardships, deportations and massacres of its Armenian constituencies, two World War wars, and rising nationalist opposition to foreign institutions in the region. They would also cause the College, however, to continually reevaluate what it meant to pursue “native rule” and the “interest of the community.” This inevitably became a source of conflict between the local administration of the College and the broader administration of the American Board.
Sources and methodology

In order to catalogue the development of Central Turkey and Aleppo College, I was required to find and evaluate a wealth of primary source material. With the exception of a three page article written by George Miller for the Christian publication *The Muslim World*, no one has attempted to trace the history and development of the College from its original establishment to its eventual nationalization in 1967.

A majority of my research depends upon the official records of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions from 1819 to 1919. I collected daily operating reports, letters, journal entries, financial statements, newspaper articles and testimonies of as many individuals involved with the College as possible. In some respects, the amount of hard data for the institution can be overwhelming and I attempted to report statistics and figures in a succinct and precise manner.

In addition to the official records of the College, I also extensively utilized publications of the Missionary Herald, a monthly American magazine that ran from 1819 to 1934. A majority of these records from 1821-1906 were available in electronic format and I was thus able to narrowly define my search topics to only include articles that mentioned Central Turkey College, Aleppo College, or the Protestant Armenian community at Aintab. These records provided detailed first hand accounts on the status of the College and secondary analysis of its development from the perspective of missionaries.

Records from the US Department of State and the Consulate in Aleppo comprise the second
substantial category of primary sources for my thesis. These dispatches, covering a time frame from the 1930 to 1954, provide a unique perspective and analysis of missionary educational efforts from fellow Americans who lack direct affiliation with the American Board. I utilized the records extensively in chapters five and six to provide details on native reaction and animosity towards Aleppo College.

As a third form of primary research, I conducted individual interviews with alumni and former Professors of the College. Most of these interviews were performed via email or phone, but I also accessed records of several missionary interviews on the internet. Although these personal narratives do not provide much in the terms of quantitative data, they do offer a qualitative evaluation of the mission and the College as a whole.

Finally, I utilized a larger body of secondary sources on the history of American missions, American Protestantism, the backgrounds of individual missionaries, the political and economic situation of the Ottoman Empire, and the development of modern Syria and Turkey. These sources allowed me to create a framework for understanding the circumstance and contexts of missionary work and their effect on Syrian society.

Outline of text, limitations of the work and the background of the author

With the summary of sources in mind, I must now acknowledge the very specific limitations of this work and its implications for the over all understanding of American Board efforts in Greater Syria and Turkey. All of my sources are primarily derived from the missionaries themselves. While this means that it is possible to clearly articulate what they thought about the mission and the College, I cannot claim that their accounts are unbiased. The thesis must
be read with the knowledge that these are strictly missionary or American records and they may not adequately portray native opinion or give voice to the native community.

On a final note, I also wish to recognize my own religious background and the implications it may have for selection bias in my research. I am a Protestant Christian raised in an Evangelical Lutheran household. While this background allows me to share the language and experiences of the missionaries as a religious insider, it could also influence the way I choose to identify key themes of mission work. To remedy this situation, I have conscientiously attempted to limit such partialities in my work and committed myself to objective research principles.

The paper will be broken down into five chapters, each describing mission activities throughout a specifically defined period of time. The story follows a linear progression, and it is hoped that the major themes described above will continually resurface throughout the work. I begin the study by describing the general development of ABCFM activities in Turkey and Syria by two pioneering American Board pastors, Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons.

After this introduction, I move on to depict the social and spiritual developments of Central Turkey and explain the major reasons for the founding of Central Turkey College in Aintab. The chapter ends as the future of the College seems uncertain with the burning of the main College Hall in 1890. Chapter Three focuses on the relationship between the College and the community of Aintab, the role of the Armenian constituency at the College, and how government-sponsored massacres and the First World War forced the College to close.

Chapter Four describes the relocation of Central Turkey College to Aleppo and the institution’s struggle to make sense of its original purpose and mission within this new
context. I will go on to describe the operation and administration of Aleppo College from 1937 to 1951 in detail until Chapter Five. In this last section, I will illustrate the gradual process of decline and eventual nationalization of the College by the Syrian government.

A postscript will provide a brief update on the status of Aleppo College alumni today.

INTRODUCTION:


2 Antonius, George, The Arab Awakening (New York: J.P Lippincott Company, 1939), 43


Chapter One:

INITIAL ENDEAVORS OF AMERICAN MISSIONARIES IN LEBANON, SYRIA, AND TURKEY

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

“The Jews have been for ages an awful sign to the world…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. The word of promise is sure, and the accomplishment of it will be as life from the dead to the Gentile world. The day is at hand. The signal movements of the age indicate its dawn. It may be your privilege to prepare the way of the Lord.”~Instructions to Parsons and Fisk from the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM

“The sale and distribution of the Holy Scriptures, and religious tracts, have been hitherto the only missionary operations carried on, in this country. A missionary visiting the different towns must endeavor, not only to make the acquaintance, but to gain the confidence of the leading men and priests of the Greeks. With the assistances of his new friends, the missionary may be able to distribute many copies of the everlasting Word in a language intelligible to the people, a blessing of which those regions have been deprived for some hundreds of years.”~Report to the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM

Pioneers in the Holy Land

The first notion of an American mission to the Middle East was born on a Sunday in October 1819, in the Old South and Park Street Churches of Boston, Massachusetts. According to a report from the day, “not only the pews, but the aisles, both galleries, and all the avenues, were thronged” in the Old South church as congregation members waited with sincere eagerness to hear the sermon of Reverend Levi Parsons. After several minutes’ delay, Mr. Parsons, “short, broad-nosed, and bespectacled” walked to the pulpit. A hush fell over the crowd, and he began to preach.
His topic? Not the rapture or revelation. Nor the spiritual progress of America or the status of native Christians in lands abroad. He spoke instead about the restoration of the Jews in Jerusalem and Palestine.

“They who taught us the way to salvations were the Jews,” he said to the congregation, “Our God was their God. Our heaven is their heaven.” Faithful American Protestants had a duty, Parson’s believed, to “consecrate the walls of Jerusalem for Christ” and restore the Jews to their rightful place in the Holy Land. Such a task wouldn’t be easy, and Christians needed to be careful “not to imitate the example of the crusaders, those deluded champions of the cross.” But with prayer and honest petition, the congregation would live to see a massive reawakening of faith in the region.

Speaking later in the evening at the Park Street Church, his partner, Pliny Fisk outlined the design and prospects of an American mission to Palestine, and beseeched the congregation to financially support their work. Together, Fisk and Parsons would be the first Americans to proselytize in the Turkish Empire. Their goal, according to the Missionary Herald, a Boston based missionary publication, would be to convey “the Gospel to Jews and Mahomedans” and awaken Christians in America “to the duties of the times.” Following the sermon, the two men collected $2,932.31 in offering donations and received final instructions for their journey from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

Poor weather prevented their ship, the Sally Ann, from immediately embarking from Boston Harbor, but the representatives began their journey soon afterwards on November 3, 1819. The journey to the Turkish Empire would last more than two months. On January 15, 1820,
the *Sally Ann* docked at the seaport of Smyrna, and the two men and their entourage immediately began their mission to the Jews.

Based in Smyrna for the first two years of their work, the missionaries were tasked with two primary goals: Discovering “what good could be done,” and “by what means,” for the redemption of the Jews and all other “countries to which [their] inquiries may be extended.”

Over the course of the next two years, they would identify locations for future American Board work in the region and attempt to “reclaim” it for Christ. Initially, their work was well received both by the native population and the Turkish government. “As to molestation from the government,” they wrote to the Prudential Committee in 1820, “we feel almost as safe as we should in Boston.”

The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM cautioned the men, nonetheless, to temper their evangelistic endeavors with a demeanor of humility and respect. Samuel Worcester, secretary of the American Board wrote to the men on October 31, 1819 to:

> Take all prudent care that you do nothing rashly, nothing inconsiderately or unadvisedly; that you do not inadvertently or needlessly expose yourselves to resentments, rapacities, stratagems, or acts of violence… [so that] by avoiding all appearances of earthly wealth and or distinction, by Christian courtesy and kindness, and meekness and gentleness, and by all fair and lawful means, you conciliate civility, confidence, favor, and respect.

As they began to interact with the local population, the missionaries realized that their original task of bringing light to Jews of Palestine would be more difficult than anticipated. Members of the Jewish community in Turkey did not respond well to proselytizing efforts
and were not easily accessible to outsiders. One missionary would later remark in 1833 that “apart from explicit and animating promises which relate to the Jews, scarcely any enterprise can be more discouraging than a Jewish mission.”¹¹ These developments would lead the two men to refocus their efforts outside of the Jewish communities and look to evangelize the native Christian population.

The missionaries met with native church leaders in each of the cities they visited and spent several hours each day conversing with their hosts or neighbors about their message and mission. The most effective way to spread the gospel, according to Levi Parsons, was the distribution of the scriptures. Seeped in “ignorance,” “superstition,” and obscure traditions the Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Armenian Apostolic, and other “nominal” Christians had more in common with their Muslim counterparts than with their Protestant brethren, according to Parsons.¹² Most Christians did not possess the Bible in their native language, and translation of the scriptures became a major missionary goal.

These Christian communities, especially in Greater Syria and Turkey, provided a considerable opportunity for the Board’s work. The distribution of religious texts in Turkey, Parsons argued in an 1820 letter to the Prudential Committee, rivaled the pair’s original mission to Jerusalem in importance.

The distribution of bibles and tracts is the grand method of doing good in Turkey. By no other method can we so extensively prepare the way for building the walls of Zion. Precious opportunities have been given us to instruct a multitude of souls in this way. We feel unwilling that the work should stop…but if both of us go to Jerusalem now, our usefulness, it seems to us, must be greatly diminished. Some man must be here in
order to superintend the publication of religious tracts, and to supply agents with bibles.\textsuperscript{13}

Beginning on March 12 the missionaries would set forth on a three hundred-mile journey from Smyrna to Scio and other parts of Western and Central Turkey. Despite their “unflagging efforts,” the missionaries “succeeded in converting only a small number of Eastern Christians, most of whom were destitute and had no choice but to accept employment or charity from the church.”\textsuperscript{14} Parsons would eventually arrive in Jerusalem and remain there for several months, but he was unable to establish any lasting presence in Jerusalem or fulfill his original mission to bring salvation to the Jews. Parsons left Jerusalem downhearted, and met Fisk in Smyrna in the spring of 1821.\textsuperscript{15}

Upon their reunion, however, the two were forced to travel to Egypt to escape the rising violence of Greek revolution against the Ottomans, and in the process of evacuation, Parsons became sick with dysentery.\textsuperscript{16} He would remain bed-ridden for the next few months, before finally dying in Alexandria in February 1822. Fisk would write to Parsons’ parents about their son’s death, and offer his sympathies for their loss. “I seem ready,” he wrote several days after Parsons’ passing, “to sink under my loss, and yet I would with a full heart and with all my soul bless God for the grace bestowed on my most dearly beloved brother.”\textsuperscript{17}

Fisk and Parsons would be the first, but certainly not the last Americans to travel to the Holy Land for the sake of the Gospel. Many more Americans would follow in their footsteps in the next one hundred years. Many would also meet Parsons’ fate. They would be challenged by native hostility, government oppression, disease, famine, and banditry. Just as Parsons and Fisk reconsidered the efficacy of their mission to the Jews, many future missionaries would need to reevaluate their original evangelistic objectives in the face of pressing realities
in the field. Paramount in this process was the Board’s attempt to balance the goal of individual conversion with the overarching objective of spiritual rejuvenation. This paradigm would become especially relevant to American missionaries as they transitioned from distributing religious tracts in the streets and established educational and medicinal institutions in the region.

_Ottoman educational institutions and foreign involvement in Syria and Turkey_

Although pioneers in their own right, Parsons and Fisk weren’t the first westerners to take an interest in the Ottoman Empire. European nations had begun developing permanent commercial and diplomatic institutions in the Ottoman Empire as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. Beginning with France in 1535, several foreign nations received special extra-territorial rights known as “capitulations” from the Ottoman Government. These capitulations conferred rights and privileges to foreigners residing in the Ottoman Empire who wished to conduct trade or commerce. They also cemented a relationship between the Ottoman Empire and kingdoms of Christian Europe, especially France.

The first foreign school in the Ottoman Empire appeared as early as 1734 in Antoura, Lebanon when a native priest opened a school under the administration of Jesuit missionaries. Four years later, in 1738, Catholic Lazarist missionaries established a school for boys in Damascus. In the years that followed missionaries from France, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, and later, America would spawn the development of a plethora of foreign educational institutions in the region.
Prior to the arrival of these new schools, public education in the Ottoman Empire was divided along ethno-religious lines and focused primarily on reading, calligraphy, and recitation. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, education was not a state responsibility, but was instead administered by individual religious millets. Millets were officially recognized religious communities given limited autonomy by the Ottoman rulers. During this period of time, the Ottoman Empire administered its territory through a series of vilayets (provinces), sanjaqs (sub-provinces), and qadas (small administrative units). The religious millet system allowed the Sublime Porte to exert its authority over the region without interfering with the day-to-day activities of various religious sects.

The system did not, however, provide standardized education. Literacy throughout Syria and Turkey was generally low. According to historian Kamal Salibi, “ignorance prevailed” in Lebanon and Syria in the early half of the nineteenth century, and quality higher education was usually reserved for only the wealthiest of families. Even the feudal aristocracies of the Druze and Maronites in Lebanon were “often barely literate.” Native schools for both girls and boys did exist during the time period, but the reality of Ottoman society meant that female education held little utility and was thus not common.

Describing the situation of education in modern-day Lebanon, as he saw it, Missionary Henry Harris Jessup wrote, “It must be remembered that Syria has no public schools. The only government schools virtually receive only Moslem children, and exclude the Christian sects. The system is narrow, bigoted, and short-sighted, intended to bolster up Islam, and ignore Christianity.” While this viewpoint is clearly exaggerated and reflects Jessup’s personal biases, it characterizes the outlook of many Americans as they entered the region. Two other missionaries, Bird and Smith, write about what they saw as the state of native education in Syria and central Turkey in an 1834 edition of the Missionary Herald:
Of the number of native schools, there is a great deficiency, and those that exist are almost useless for want of appropriate books and capable teachers; besides, those who want to read are, to a great extent, shut out from the word of God either by poverty…or by religious prejudices which prevent their receiving the Scriptures offered them.\textsuperscript{23}

While this view was generally accepted by most missionaries, American Board records do indicate that some missionaries felt the region had large potential for educational efforts. Writing in Malta in 1830, missionary William Goodell wrote that despite its illiteracy, degraded school system, and “sad deficiency of books” Syria had the potential to create a considerable number of intelligent readers (or at least when compared to Malta).\textsuperscript{24}

The first comprehensive reform of the Ottoman education system occurred in 1836 with the creation of a system of primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools under the jurisdiction of a Ministry of Education. Another, more comprehensive reform attempt in 1869 provided for the development of a compulsory four year elementary \textit{ibtidai} school, followed by \textit{rushdiyyah} and preparatory \textit{I’dadi} schools. Successful completion of these levels led to a higher secondary \textit{sultani} school.\textsuperscript{25} While the original education had focused solely on the essentials of reading and writing, these new schools gradually began to include courses on “mathematics, natural sciences, history, geography and modern languages,” by the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{26}
Initial setbacks to mission work and native responses to American missionaries

At the beginning of its work, the Board was unable to substantially challenge or change the existing educational system. Missionaries did set-up several primary and secondary schools in the urban centers of Istanbul, Beirut, and Jerusalem, but none could be adequately described as a success until after the mid 1830s. One report to the Prudential Committee in 1820 even advocated against the development of educational activities, stating that they were not as ripe or “easily and completely accessible” as the distribution of “a fount of types, which would ere long, silently water every portion of the field sowed with the word of God; and, with the divine blessing, would render luxuriant and plentiful the Christian harvest.”

Thus, until the late 1830s, Protestant missionaries primarily placed their focus on the distribution and sale of scriptures in the languages of the native Christians. Focus had shifted to Christian communities (rather than Jews or Muslim) very early in 1820s as missionaries realized that conversion would be a near impossibility for non-Christian religious groups. Muslim conversion meant at the very least, the complete exclusion from one’s society and family support network. Mutual suspicion between Muslim and Christian groups hampered a convert’s ability to gain acceptance in either community, and practically doomed him or her to “a chronic inability to earn a livelihood for himself or his dependents.”

To have a Muslim convert to Protestantism, according to American University of Beirut historian Stephen Penrose, was thus akin to asking him or her to change their nationality. “In the early days of the [Syrian Protestant] College” he writes, “a question on the registration card, ‘What is your nationality?’ was almost invariably answered, ‘Moslem,’ rather than Syrian, Arabian, or Palestinian. Moslem society constituted a unit stronger than national groups.”
While similar levels of social separation certainly existed between Christian sects, they did not carry the same limitations imposed by the Muslim (or Jewish) community.

Fisk and Parsons recognized this paradigm early in their exploration of the region and encouraged the Board to think of ways to effectively convert the native Christian population because “all who are not Mohammedans are allowed to change their religion as they please, and make what efforts they please to convert each other.” Recapturing native Christian communities for Christ would be imperative, one member of the American Board wrote in 1839, because the Muslim community looked…

Upon the native Christians as living exemplifications of what Christianity is. They see that these Christians are no better than themselves they think them to be even worse…Hence a comprehensive and wise system of efforts for the conversions of Mohammedans of Western Asia will embrace a system of efforts for the spiritual renovations of the oriental churches…the fire of a pure Christianity must be rekindled upon those Christian altars.

In this spirit, missionaries attempted to “gain the confidence of the leading men and priests” in native Christian communities and use these leaders to influence other believers and gain access to other communities.

But not all native Christians were receptive to the idea of missionary activity, especially those that already had connections with the papacy. These communities, officially tied to the Roman Catholic church and supported by Jesuit and Lazarist missionaries, opposed the new spread of Protestantism because it threatened to convert existing members of the Catholic flock. The Maronite Catholic church in Lebanon gave the missionaries particularly strong
resistance. While many missionaries articulated enmity towards the “sinfulness” of native Christian groups, the most potent condemnations were reserved for the Maronite Church. “The Maronites,” wrote Reverend Isaac Bird in his journal on February 6, 1826, “are destitute of saving faith, and are therefore going to perdition.”

In 1824 the Maronite Patriarch in Lebanon secured the first Imperial firman, or an official declaration from the Sublime Porte, outlawing the distribution of Protestant religious texts in Turkey. In several edicts after this firman, the strongest of which was published in 1829, the patriarch forbade his communicants from assisting the Protestants with their endeavors with the threat of excommunication. The community was to deny the Protestants shelter or any other form of assistance which would help them “be able to remain in these parts.”

This pronouncement was again reiterated on June 21, 1846, when the patriarch barred all Protestants from membership in the Holy Church and decreed perpetual excommunication and anathema to those that supported them. Because of this paradigm, competition between Catholic and Protestant missions became a lasting pattern in the region, especially in terms of the development of educational institutions. Catholic missionaries reacted to the Americans with equal animosity and began to “reinforce their presence” in urban centers like Beirut.

In Turkey, the Apostolic Armenian populations provided the most easily accessible, and successful target for conversion. The Druze of Mount Lebanon, a religious community who broke away from the Isma’ili sect of Shi’i Islam in the eleventh century, also proved to be hospitable to the missionaries’ presence and message. Attempts to convert other native Christians met with few substantial successes, and sometimes even the Armenian and Druze communities viewed the missionaries with suspicion.
The failure of conversion and the fulfillment of a new mission

Native hostilities, as well as the harsh environment of the mission work, made missionary activities very difficult. In the years following Parson’s death, many other missionaries would die for the cause of evangelism in Turkey. Much like the American settlers in the western territories, missionaries faced grueling physical and mental challenges in Antaolia. Family members, especially young children and pregnant wives, were the most susceptible to illness and death.

Pliny Fisk, as an example, was arrested and imprisoned for several months by the Turkish government in 1825 for distributing religious tracts in Jerusalem. He would later be attacked by a group of bandits near Nazareth and die in the fall of 1825 from his wounds. A third of the total number of missionaries in the Ottoman Empire from America between 1821 and 1846 suffered similar fates.

Following in Fisk’s wake, Rev. Elnathan Gridley, a Yale Graduate, arrived in Smyrna in 1825. He caught pneumonia within a year, and died in 1826. His replacement, David Temple served for only a short time period until consumption killed his wife and two children. Justin and Charlotte Perkins sailed to Turkey in 1832, but after Charlotte was struck with epilepsy and all five of their children died from various illnesses, he returned home to the United States.

Reinforcing a Protestant mission in Urmia in 1835, Ashahel Grant did not work for long before two of his three children and his wife Judith died. In a similar vein, Mary Van Lennep, commenting on the harshness of her mission work in Turkey wrote in 1843 that “I
sometimes fear that this sickness is a judgment upon me for improving so little my great 
blessings. I try to pray that…I may be willing to suffer.” She died less than a year later. 38

If the missionary did not suffer from disease, malnutrition, or banditry, he or she would 
certainly suffer from the physical exhaustion or the dangerous nature of travel at the time. 
Missionary Eli Smith, later famous for translating the entire bible into Arabic, lost his first 
wife Sarah in a shipwreck, and his second wife Mary Ward Chapin died from dysentery. 
Around the same time missionary Harrison Gray Otis Dwight lost both his son and his wife, 
Elizabeth. Smith and Dwight would go on to brave the perilous journey eastwards to Lake 
Urmia to visit a community of Nestorian Christians in May of 1830, despite the tragedies.

Disease, perilous travel, and hostilities from both the Turkish administration and the native 
Christian populations throughout the 1820s almost forced the Board to conclude its activities 
in the region. In terms of practical results – number of churches planted, number of converts, 
etc., the Turkish mission woefully underperformed Board missions in other parts of the 
world. But American Board missionaries, driven onward by the calling of the First and 
Second Great revivals of the eighteen century, continued their work.

In the next three decades, future missionaries would attempt to balance and modify the 
original mission of the Board in Turkey. The goal to reclaim the biblical “Holy Land,” and 
Jerusalem had ended in little but “embarrassment, anxiety, and disappointment.” 39 The 
desire to bring individuals to Christ through conversion likewise needed to be balanced 
against the ominous realities of failure in the field.

As time progressed, many missionaries also began to articulate the need to implement a 
program of education and spur the growth of literacy, reason, and rational thought throughout
the region. The promotion of an advanced school system, they believed, would encourage a rejuvenation of the general “backwardness” of the Turkish Empire. It would also, in the words of the American Board, “revive knowledge and the spirit of the gospel among Oriental Churches and by this means operate upon the Mohammedans, not to subvert them, not to proselyte, but merely re-awaken them to new duties in Christ.”

When the Board began to establish schools and permanent mission stations, it also needed to redefine how it would pursue a larger goal of effecting social change in Ottoman society. While these objectives (and others) originally complemented one another, they eventually came into conflict as mission activity expanded.

The American Board possessed a budget of $10,000 when Parsons and Fisk first crossed the Atlantic as pioneers in American missionary activity. By the mid-century, the number of individuals involved in the work had increased twofold and the total budget rose to almost $250,000. While they may have failed at their original attempt to convert Jewish or Muslim populations to Protestant Christianity, their efforts in the early nineteenth century were not a failure. In the future, their schools, printing presses, and concern for spiritual renewal would play a vital role in revitalizing Ottoman society and its interest in science, philosophy, and literature.

CHAPTER ONE:

1 Instructions to Parsons and Fisk from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston: Old South Church, October 31, 1819. as quoted in Anderson, Rufus, Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston: Missionary House, 1862): 232


8 Instructions to Parsons and Fisk from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston: Old South Church, October 31, 1819. as quoted in Anderson, Rufus, *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Missionary House, 1862): 231


10 Instructions to Parsons and Fisk from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston: Old South Church, October 31, 1819. as quoted in Anderson, Rufus, *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: Missionary House, 1862): 232


14 Oren, Michael, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present.* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 95


17 *Ibid,* 374


22 Jessup, Henry Harris, Fifty-three Years in Syria (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), 512


26 Ibid, 112


28 Penrose, Stephen B. L Jr., That They May Have Life: The Story of the American University of Beirut 1866-1941 (Beirut: The Trustees of the American University of Beirut, 1941), 131

29 Ibid, 131


39 Leonard, D. L. *Missionary Annals of the Nineteenth Century* (Cleveland: F.M. Barton, 1899), 107


41 Oren, Michael, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present.* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 132

42 Penrose, Stephen B. L Jr., *That They May Have Life: The Story of the American University of Beirut 1866-1941* (Beirut: The Trustees of the American University of Beirut, 1941), 5
“In great poverty and depression a noble beginning has been made. Those who aid it will throw the transforming power of a high Christian education right into the heart of this great and dark empire. To what nobler purpose can wealth be applied?” ~Cyrus Hamlin, President of Robert College in Istanbul, speaking on Central Turkey College, 1874

“Education is the nurture and development of the whole man for his proper End. That End must be conceived rightly in order to understand the process, and even man’s earthly end is predominantly moral.” ~R.L. Dabney, writing on his perception of the failure of secular education

“How shall we estimate the moral changes in the character, thoughts and aspiration of millions of men under the influence of the gospel, as illustrated by the example of thousands of our own countrymen, rescued from the degradation of heathenism, and now compelling respect and admiration by the progress they are making in Christian civilization? How shall we measure the influence of the press, scattering millions of pages of Christian literature far and wide...how estimate the results of education reaching hundreds of thousands of youth, waking to new thought and hope, freeing the mind from its bondage to the superstitions of ages, and leading it to a just recognition of the spirit and power of [the] gospel?” ~Annual Meeting of the American Board, 1875

Foundations of American involvement in central and eastern Turkey

It seemed “certain,” wrote the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM at its annual board meeting in 1878, “that as great as has been the success of the Central and Eastern Turkey missions in their past history, all this is but a work of preparation.” After three decades of failed attempts in Palestine, Lebanon, and Greece, the evangelical message had finally begun to take root in Turkey. Educational institutions, in particular, had gained a prominent place in the mission field. They provided “an assurance that true Christianity must of necessity have a commanding influence there [Central Turkey]... which shall not merely affect and bless these lands, but which shall also most surely affect and bless other lands, lying as yet in darkness.”
While certainly not the inexorable force described by many missionaries of the time, the rapid growth of American Board activities in the mid-nineteenth century heralded a new era of American mission work. The most prominent result of their work was the development of enduring evangelical churches, hospitals, and educational institutions.

The first institutions founded by the missionaries in Central Turkey were churches. With the aid of American pastors, native converts founded the first official Protestant church in Istanbul in 1846. That very same year missionaries established three others churches in Nicomedia, Adabazar, and Trebizond. These native Protestant churches, it was hoped, would serve as living witnesses to the ideals of “true Christianity” as the missionaries saw it, and revitalize the Turkish Empire for Christ.

Permanent missionaries began to arrive in Central Turkey as early as early as the 1830s. Devoid of a modern road system and lacking central government authority, the rural terrain of Anatolia provided an inhospitable welcome to American travelers. Despite the harshness of the geography, missionaries found initial successes for their work in Adana, Marash, and Aintab. With a substantial number of native Christian populations (at least one third of the population in Aintab was Armenian Christian), these cities appealed to the missionaries’ goal of reclaiming Christianity for Christ.6

The Board’s official mission to the Armenians began in 1831 with the arrival of Yale graduate William Goodell in Istanbul. He was joined a year later by Henry Dwight, and they soon began work in the capital city.7 Cyrus Hamlin, a Bowdoin College and Bangor Theological Seminary graduate, arrived in Istanbul in 1840 and joined their efforts.
According to Goodell, the American Board’s original goal was to empower Armenians, not convert them. “We tell them [the Armenians] frankly, you have sects enough among you already, and we 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.”

Faced with obstacles similar to the missionaries in Syria and Palestine, Goodell and Dwight met with few initial successes. While local Armenian communities responded favorably to American medical aid and educational work, the clergy of the Armenian Apostolic church did not. As one of the most ancient Christian communities and oldest national church, the Armenian Apostolic Church attempted to prevent reform and or Evangelical conversion efforts. When forty Armenian-Protestant converts formed the first Evangelical Armenian Church in Constantinople, they were immediately excommunicated from the Armenian Orthodox and Apostolic Church.

Native resistance to conversion, as well as the structure of Ottoman society made early conversions rare, even in the native Christian community. Under the existing Ottoman millet system, only officially recognized religious communities – including Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Maronite, Armenian Apostolic, Druze, and Jewish adherents – were granted civil rights or the ability to legally redress wrongs in their community. If an individual was not a member of an established religious group, they could not claim protection within its millet. This effectively meant that converts to the new faith had no legal standing under Turkish law.

Pressured by the Western governments in 1839, the Ottoman Sultan amended the legal status of the millet system in an attempt to protect the religious freedoms of minority groups through a royal firman known as the Hatti-Serif Gulhane. Under this edict, it was believed, all Turkish subjects would be given perfect religious liberty and protection from the
government. In reality, however, the Porte never enforced the firman’s statutes, and it had little effect on the status of Protestants in the region.

Frustrated by the situation, one American wrote to the Church Missionary Society that “it appears to be a principle of the Turkish government that no other form of Christianity can be professed by its subjects than that of certain acknowledged sects.” 11 As members of an unrecognized religious community, the Protestants effectively lacked any means of redress or autonomy in the Ottoman Millet system. It thus became clear by the late 1830s that the Board needed to organize an official Protestant Church and have it be recognized by the Sublime Porte. 12

While many native Christian and Muslim groups continued to express hostility towards the foreign Protestants and their converts, they slowly began to achieve legitimacy. In 1847 the Grand Vizier issued a firman recognizing the group as a millet, and in 1850 Sultan Abdul al-Mejid officially declared the Protestant Armenian community a religious millet, placing evangelical Christians on the same legal status as other Christian communities in the empire. By the time of the firman, the American Board had established seven stations in Turkey with a total of eighteen missionaries, six native pastors and preachers, and eight churches with a total membership of about two-hundred and forty communicants in Constantinople, Bebek, Brusa, Smyrna, Trebizond, Erzum, and Aintab. 13 Under the instruction of Cyrus Hamlin a school for boys in Bebek (the foundation of Robert College) had also been opened outside of Istanbul in 1842.

Missionary efforts continued at rapid rate throughout the next ten years with the establishment of a church of Erzum in 1847; Aintab and Brusa in 1848; Diarbekir and Sivas in 1851; Aleppo, Killis, and Rodost in 1852, Smyrna, Kessab, and Hzarsovan in 1853;
Cesarea, Arabkir, Akhissar, Tocat, Marash in 1854; Mashker, Divrik, Adana in 1855. The Board would also develop a total of twenty seven more churches, twelve training schools and seminaries, and ten station classes for the education of young to become preachers, educating an average of over 20,000 native students per year.\textsuperscript{14}

According to historian Leon Arpree, the growth of the Aintab field was “especially phenomenal,” where the number of Protestant converts equaled the total number of evangelicals throughout the rest of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{15} With one-hundred and forty-one communicants directly within the city limits, there were more Protestants in Aintab than in the Istanbul.\textsuperscript{16} So encouraged by these developments, A.H. Layard commented to the British Parliament in 1853 that there was “no considerable place in all Turkey where the influence of the reformation was not felt.”\textsuperscript{17}

By this time, the original goal of evangelizing the Jews and Muslims in Turkey had largely been refocused. While one 1880 Missionary Herald report described the conversion of two Muslims in Central Turkey who were exiled by the Sublime Porte, the majority of missionary activities in the region now centered solely on the native Christian population.\textsuperscript{18} Sustained expansion in all regions of missionary work lead the American Board to separate the field into “Western,” “Central,” and “Eastern” subdivisions in 1860. The Turkish missions would continue to grow in the next two decades and in “the latter year” there were a total of over one-hundred missionaries in twenty-three stations, with over forty ordained ministers and a total church membership of approximately 1,300 converts.\textsuperscript{19}

As the Protestant church grew, so too did its needs. A small force relative to the total size of the population, there was no way that missionaries could catalyze further expansion on their own. Nor would they want to do so. It soon became clear that a long-term commitment to
the mission field would require missionaries to train and equip the native population to be self-sufficient. This environment gave birth to the development of several different American institutions of higher learning in the Ottoman Empire. The ABCFM established Robert College in Istanbul as an extension of Bebek seminary in 1863. Three years later American Presbyterians formed the Syrian Protestant College of Beirut (now the American University of Beirut) in 1866. The third College to be developed would be established in the heart of the Central Turkey mission at Aintab and would cater to the region’s large Christian Armenian population.

Thus Central Turkey College in Aintab was born. Receiving its official charter from the Board of Reagents in Massachusetts in 1874, the College was hailed “as a means of raising up a body of educated men, for the ministry and other professions, who shall take up and carry forward the great work of a Christian civilization in all its details.” For the next four decades, Central Turkey College would provide excellent education to Armenian constituencies throughout Anatolia.

**The selection of Aintab for Protestant evangelism**

Missionaries identified the city of Aintab, a city 2,700 meters above sea level north of the Taurus Mountains as a particularly promising location for evangelism and educational activity. The area was famous for its pistachio groves, vineyards and limestone quarries. Commenting on the city’s particular suitability for Armenian proselytism, American missionary Rev. Benjamin Schneider said that “though there have often been times of very active inquiry, never since the gospel first began to be preached in Aintab, has the Armenian population been so much interested in these matters.” The population of Aintab during that
time period was approximately 40,000 individuals, of whom 30,000 were Turkish Muslims and 10,000 were Armenian Apostolic Christians with a scattering of Kurds and Jews on the outskirts of the city.\textsuperscript{22}

The first missionary in Aintab, however, Rev. T.P. Johnson, did not receive a warm reception from the Armenian community. After preaching to several crowds of Apostolic Armenians he was stoned out of the city by a mob at the instigation of an Armenian priest.\textsuperscript{23} While the incident did not initially bode well for further expansion in Aintab it did have the positive result of creating the first convert to Protestantism, a young man who had participated in the stoning and was so moved by Rev. Johnson’s composure that he decided to join the new faith and later become a deacon in the Protestant Armenian church.\textsuperscript{24}

Rev. Azariah Smith, another American missionary, arrived in Aintab around the same time, but received a different greeting. Cholera had begun to plague inhabitants of the city, and Smith was asked to remain in Aintab as a medical doctor to treat patients.\textsuperscript{25} This allowed him to gain a foothold in region for Protestantism. The first Armenian Protestant church opened in 1848 under the direction of Dr. Smith and accommodated a total of eight converts.

Smith was later joined by Rev. Benjamin Schneider in 1849 and together they set up several schools as an extension of their work. By 1856 there were a total of 517 students enrolled in Protestant primary and secondary schools, 221 originally from Aintab. In 1859, a Mr. Coffing brought the average church attendance up to more than 1,000 individuals, and divided the church into two equal sections in 1865. A permit to construct a second church building was obtained after four years (a difficult process under Ottoman law) and the building opened shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{26}
The Aintab Theological seminary, originally an extension of Bebek seminary in Istanbul was established in 1855 after native requests for its construction. In 1864, converted Armenian Protestants formed the Aintab Evangelical Union, and an overarching Evangelical Union in Eastern Turkey was created in 1866. By 1869, the church had grown so large that it separated into two congregations, listed over three hundred and fifty official communicants, and averaged an attendance of two thousand individuals during Sunday services. While comparably small at first, the Protestant congregation at Aintab grew exponentially in a period of twenty years.

Establishment of Central Turkey College in Aintab

By 1870, the Turkish, Syrian and Nestorian missions (which included the fields in Syria, Egypt, and Iran) had grown too large for the American board to manage individually. The Syrian and Nestorian missions were transferred over to the Presbyterian mission. Henceforth the Presbyterians worked independently of the ABCFM and the Congregationalists became responsible for the three Turkish fields.

At time of this division, the Board began to discuss the prospects for creating an institution of high learning in the Central Turkey field. Missionary colleges had already been established in Constantinople in 1863 and Beirut in 1866, with widespread success. The Protestant Armenian population in Aintab made several formal requests for the establishment of a similar institution. Recognizing their aspirations, a member of the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM wrote in an article for the Missionary Herald that:

The time seems to have come when a Christian College in Central Turkey will take the same place as a great Christian agency that was taken by Harvard and Yale in the
early days of New England…It is believe that the College will prove a most important aid, not only in the better preparation of the Evangelical party for their work, but as illustrating the spirit of the Gospel as elevating and pervading all the relations of social life.  

Another, soliciting funds for the endeavor in 1875, wrote:

The pressing demand now is for a few well-educated, native, Christian men to take the lead in the work of reformation…we commend this enterprise [the development of Central Turkey College] to persons of large means, who are considering how they may best use their wealth for the establishment of the Redeemer’s kingdom.

The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM commissioned Reverend T.C. Trowbridge as the chief fundraiser for the endeavor, and over a period of one year he was able to secure $20,000 in England, making “good progress in calling public attention to the enterprise, and preparing the way to receive subscriptions in [the] country.” Trowbridge also secured $17,993.41 through donations and subscriptions in America. Locally, the College received widespread support from the Armenian community in Aintab, which raised $7,050 in gold (160,000 piasters) for construction efforts. This substantial amount of money, it was argued, proved the Armenian’s desire to establish a College, and could be valued at almost $60,000 if volunteer labor and other community services were included.

Finally, after securing the necessary funds for its development, the ABCFM applied for an official charter through the Massachusetts Board of Reagents and established Central Turkey College in Aintab in 1874. Signed by Ezra Farnsworth, Richard H. Stearns, James M. Gordan, and their “associates and successors,” the document created an official corporation
called the “Trustees of Donations for Education in Turkey” and granted them the powers to manage the funding of the institution.\(^{33}\)

Central Turkey College would be, according to its constitution, “a Christian College, conducted and governed according the principles of evangelical Christianity.”\(^{34}\) The primary goal of its establishment was the “thorough education of Pastors, Preachers, and Teachers for the evangelical churches of Central Turkey.”\(^{35}\) A second, but also important goal was “the general advance of Science and Civilization among all the nationalities in that portion of the Turkish Empire.”

A group of sixteen individuals would manage the College, eight men appointed by the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM called the “Board of Trustees,” and eight men appointed by the local Evangelical Union called the Board of Managers. The President of the College would sit as an ex-officio member of the Board of Managers without a vote and represent the Managers before the Board of Trustees. The Board of Managers would be given “the immediate control of the College” but the Board of Trustees, consisting of almost all American members, would be “the ultimate authority in all the affairs of the institution.”\(^{36}\)

The Board of Trustees would hold this position for the next twenty-five years, “as a guarantee for the wise use of the funds in building up a Christian institution, devoted to the interests of religion and sound learning.”\(^{37}\) After this time period, the Board of Managers would gradually assume more authority and control of the institution, if deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees. Eventually, it was hoped, the Board of Managers would become fully autonomous and financially independent from the Board of Trustees by the year 1926.\(^{38}\)
This form of administrative structure and desire for long-term autonomy was unique. It would ensure that even from the outset, Central Turkey College would be different from its peer institutions. Three characteristics, in particular, were of importance consequence to the College’s development.

First, the school’s emphasis on religious instruction and evangelism meant that it would be inimitably recognized as the premier institution for post-secondary religious education. Beirut produced doctors. Lawyers and politicians graduated from Istanbul. Pastors and men of religious character came from Aintab. Conversion to Protestantism was not required by the institution as it was “a matter of individual conscience,” but students were expected to engage in conversations on matters of faith and spirituality. Most, if not all of the College’s first graduates would work with or for the evangelical churches of Central and Eastern Turkey.

As a consequence of this first characteristic, the majority of Central Turkey students came from Protestant (and largely Armenian), homes. This, leads to the second unique facet of Central Turkey College: its administrative and educational design catered almost exclusively to the needs of the local Protestant population. Unlike other American Board institutions, Central College did not possess outstations in the immediate countryside because the surrounding area (within twenty miles) was entirely Muslim. While the school was open to all nationalities and faiths, there can be no doubt that Armenian community in Aintab was the primary beneficiary of its services. Often, it would prioritize the educational and spiritual needs of the local community over the objectives and goals set by American Board, and this would lead to conflict between the local Managers and the foreign Trustees.
Finally, unlike Robert College in Istanbul or the Syrian American University in Beirut, Central Turkey College specifically outlined and committed itself to a policy of ultimate native control. This policy was not an abstract ideal, but an essential component of the College’s mission. The dual goals of producing preachers and promoting education depended upon this concept, and could not be fulfilled without the eventual transfer of the enterprise to native hands. What this meant in practice and who was identified as “native” would be debated throughout the rest of the institution’s lifetime. It would also have serious implications for the College’s expansion and development.

Organization and administration of Central Turkey College in Aintab

Supportive of the Protestants’ endeavors, a Muslim man named Taha Effendi donated a plot of land on a large hill half a mile outside of Aintab for the institution. Construction was scheduled to begin in the summer of 1874, but became delayed because the missionaries were unable to obtain the necessary permit from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to develop the land. The “Turks are determined,” wrote Rev. Adams, a missionary in Kessab “to stop our educational work.” The Americans lobbied the British Ambassador in Istanbul, Sir Henry Elliot, to remedy the situation. Sir Elliot sent his dragoman to the Sublime Porte to request the permit and express his frustration with the Ottoman government. Within three days, the Grand Vizier overruled the decision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and issued an Imperial firman to recognize the College’s construction.

Breaking ground on August 25, the missionaries began to build the facilities of Central Turkey College with the assistance of the native Armenian population. The College possessed a total of 34 acres of land enclosed by a limestone wall. The stone three-story
“Main” building measured 160 feet in length with two wings, each 52 feet long and 28 feet wide.\textsuperscript{45} The President’s house, a smaller structure next door to the main building, was built at approximately the same time.

The Preparatory Department of the College opened the same year with an enrollment of fifteen men under the instruction of Professor Alexander H. Bezjian.\textsuperscript{46} The first collegiate classes began on October 11, 1876 with a total enrollment of 55 students, and this date marks the official establishment of the Central Turkey College in Aintab.\textsuperscript{47} The construction of the main college hall was completed one year later, in 1877.

In 1874 the Board nominated and confirmed Reverend T.C. (Tillman Conklin) Trowbridge as the President of the College. Previously responsible for obtaining the financial endowment of the College, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor graduate seemed the natural candidate for the position. He was described as a man with “well known integrity and good judgment,” whose “contagious sympathies,” “unfailing cheerfulness,” “persuasive voice,” and “ready and tireless pen,” gave him “wide an effective influence.”\textsuperscript{48} Prior to his work as President, Trowbridge was a representative for the ABCFM in Constantinople and northern Armenian with his partner, Rev. Dunmore.

Rev. Trowbridge believed that the construction of the College placed American missionaries in Turkey in a unique and extraordinary position. Education efforts among the Armenians, he hoped, would bring intellectual and spiritual life to the region and stimulate a massive revival among the local population. Such a revival would recommit native Christian churches to the true message of Christianity and serve as a guiding light to the followers of Islam. In time, he believed, education would not only enlighten the region, but extinguish the prevailing Islamic system of superstition and ignorance. “If the churches connected with
the Board neglect this opportunity,” he wrote in 1879, “they will be unworthy of their history. God does not often give such an opportunity to his church. Here is a chance to strike a death-blow at the whole rotten system of Islam!”

Four other faculty members joined President Trowbridge in 1876. While they did not necessarily hold Trowbridge’s conception of Christian missions, they all came from an Evangelical Protestant background. Rev. Henry Lee Norris Jr., a medical doctor from Edinberg directed the College’s medical department and was assisted by Professor K II Sewny. Professor Alexander H. Bezjian a native Armenian who had studied at Bebel Seminary under Cyrus Hamlin and abroad at Yale, taught physics and chemistry. The faculty was completed by the addition of Mr Ovagim a tutor and graduate from Robert College. With the assistance of the endowment Trowbridge established three permanent “Woolsey,” “William Goodell,” and “Rufus Anderson” professorships.

For the next forty years, the College would provide a full four-year bachelor’s degree and preparatory medical training to its students. The official language of instruction was Turkish, and the College also mandated the study of English, Armenian, and Arabic languages. General arithmetic, science, geography, history, and religious instruction completed the school’s curriculum. Most of the students who attended the school during these initial years were from the surrounding countryside, and a majority were Armenian Christians. Many of the students came from underprivileged backgrounds, and according to President Trowbridge, paid for their college tuition by working on the College grounds.

In addition to its campus facilities, Central Turkey College also enjoyed a direct affiliation with the Azariah Smith Hospital, in Aintab. Named after the founder of the Evangelical church in Aintab, the hospital cost $2,000 to construct and accommodated approximately
forty patients. Students worked under the instruction of Henry Lee Norris until he left the College in 1879. His departure placed a significant strain on the existing faculty to continue the College’s medical education services. Trowbridge described the situation as “desperate” and he begged the Board to send a replacement as soon as possible.

Dr. F.D. Shepard and his wife arrived in Aintab in 1882 to revive the failing medical department and manage the Azariah Smith hospital. He was joined by his brother-in-law, Dr. Neal, in 1884 and the two men taught medicine at the College until Dr. Neal died of diphtheria on November 16, 1884. By this time, Central Turkey enrolled fifty-three students in the college proper, twenty in the College preparatory school, and eleven in the pre-medicine program, for a total of 84 students. Of those students living at the College, twenty-five were church members, and eight members of the senior class would continue their studies after graduation to become ministers.

Taken as a whole, the prospects for Central Turkey College were extremely encouraging. Initial setbacks in the establishment of the College did not dampen the growing momentum of its education system. As early as 1880, growing excitement for the mission work would lead the people of Marash to donate $2,250 for a girls' seminary. A sister-institution of Central Turkey College, the seminary would open in 1886 under the name of the Central Turkey College for Girls. In January 1883 the College received a total of $17,050.35 in donations, and by June 30, 1886 the Board of Managers reported a total operating budget of $148,286.30 to the Board of Trustees. By 1885, the College enrolled 142 students from thirty different Turkish towns.

That is not to say, of course, that the College did not face difficulties throughout its initial years. One member of the Board of Trustees, James Gordan, kept in constant
correspondence with President Trowbridge over the lack of available funds for the College.\textsuperscript{62} But taken as a whole, the future of Central Turkey College appeared bright.

With the death of Reverend Trowbridge in 1888, the Board of Trustees appointed a new President, a Congregationalist minister named Americus Fuller. Born on November 1, 1834, Fuller graduated from Bowdoin College in 1859 and received his theological education from Bangor Seminary in 1862. From 1874-1882 he enlisted with his wife as a missionary with the American Board in Aintab. He returned to Central Turkey College in 1884 and taught at the College until he was selected to replace the deceased President Trowbridge.\textsuperscript{63} President Fuller’s appointment marked a new stage of the College’s development into the modern century. It also marked a renewed zeal for spiritual evangelism in the Armenian community.

In 1889, the College witnessed the first of several revival movements in connection with the services of the Third Church of Aintab and the preaching of Pastor Haratune Jenanian. A large number of conversions and “recommitments” to Christ occurred in Aintab during this time period (1889-1890) and Christians began to proclaim their faith in a much more public and “electric” tone. “Christians became earnest and eager, their faces shone with a new light,” wrote President Fuller in 1889.\textsuperscript{64} Although the College did not experience the same level of revival, it did enter into a “deep and fruitful state” in which students spoke with one another “and with the teachers about religious things with deep earnestness and great freedom.”\textsuperscript{65} Several students even professed conversion to Protestantism.

The fervor of the revivals could not last forever, however, as tragedy struck the College at the end of the year in 1890. At the peak of its expansion efforts, the College would thus be unexpectedly forced to rebuild from the ground up. What had once been a near certain future of prosperity was now thrown into doubt.
The Burning of Central Turkey College and Prospects of the New Century

The smell of smoke woke President Fuller at midnight on December 26, 1890. Leaping from his bed, he looked out of the window to see flames engulfing the campus yard. The main college building was on fire. Fuller sounded the alarm. Throughout the rest of the night students, faculty, and community members fought the fire “inch by inch” with “whatever human strength and skill” they possessed. As the last ashes of the east wing smoldered in the morning light, all of the students and most of their belongings had escaped from harm. But much damage had been done to the College property.\(^{66}\)

The main building had previously been appraised for $90,000.\(^{67}\) Its cracked limestone walls now barely stood upright. The east wing was burned to the ground – several class rooms, the dormitory, the dining room, and the College museum, all destroyed in a span of several hours. The winter supply of wood, most of the College’s furniture, and a “good many” textbooks were likewise lost. The President’s house, the printing press, the library, the laboratory, and the kitchen of the west wing were damaged, but in tact. In total, the cost of the fire amounted to more than $11,000 or 2,500 liras.\(^{68}\)

Overnight, the College had been reduced to a state of poverty. Classes were postponed, and the payment of faculty salaries indefinitely suspended. But President Fuller would not allow the tragedy to extinguish “the light” of the College. They would rebuild from the ground up. Writing to the Prudential Committee several days after the fire, Fuller would state that community members bowed their “hearts in prayer” in the hope that God would reveal a new path for Aintab mission. “There is but one way,” he wrote, “we must go forward. Delay and hesitation only make that way more difficult.”\(^{69}\)
Ironically, this low point in the history of Central Turkey College marked an overall high point in the development of American missions in the Turkish Empire. In the same year, the Turkish Mission represented approximately one-third of total activities of the ABCFM. It possessed one-third of its converts, employed one-third of its labor force, expended one-third of its funds, and produced one-third of all native charitable gifts.\textsuperscript{70} This position was maintained until the end of the ABCFM’s mission work in the twentieth century.

If ever there was a time when the American Board could support rebuilding efforts in Aintab, this was it. Fundraising began immediately in the United States, with the express goal of reopening the College in the next year. “Relatively speaking,” wrote one missionary in Marash after the tragedy, “there is no comparison between the power of this institution [Central Turkey College] for good here and one of similar size in America.”\textsuperscript{71} American Christians, in his mind should be thus compelled to support the reconstruction of the College.

But the fire of 1890 would be only the first of several major setbacks to the College. In the next twenty years, it would be plagued by financial difficulties, poor administrative leadership, deportations of its native Christian population, and the horrific effects of the First World War. The College would rise to overcome these challenges, but only by redefining its original mission and purpose.

\begin{center}
\textbf{CHAPTER TWO:}
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\begin{enumerate}
\item Cyrus Hamlin, as quoted by the Detroit Tribune in “Proposition to Found a Christian College in Central Turkey” Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 673, Vol. 1, No. 764.
\item Dabney, R.L. \textit{On Secular Education} (Moscow, Idaho: Ransom Press, 1989)
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5 Ibid, 379


10 American Board of Commissioner for Foreign Missions, 16:8.1 vol 118, Syria, 1 (1838-44), communiqué of July 4, 1839 from Salisbury Square to the Church Mission Society entitled “Religious Toleration in the Turkish Empire”, no. 124

11 Leonard, D. L. Missionary Annals of the Nineteenth Century (Cleveland: F.M. Barton, 1899), 143


22 Ibid, 47


26 Ibid, 47

27 Bernhard Frederick Nordmann, *American Missionary Work Among Armenians in Turkey* (1830-1923) (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1927), 57-58


33 Smith, Judson “Central Turkey College at Aintab.” American Board of Commissioner for Foreign Missions. “The Missionary Herald.” APS Online Vol. 96 No. 6 (June 1900): 224

34 Constitution of Central Turkey College, Article I. Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 673, Vol. 1, No. 786

35 Ibid, 786

36 Ibid, 787


38 Constitution of Central Turkey College, Article XII. Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 673, Vol. 1, No. 789


42 Ibid, 74


55 “In Memoriam, In connection with the Medical Department of Central Turksy College, it is proposed to erect a Hall in memory of Azariah Smith, M.D.” Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 673, Vol. 1, No. 491


Chapter Three:

MASSACRES, WAR & THE CLOSURE OF CENTRAL TURKEY COLLEGE, 1891-1924

“God is using you now and is now and is going to use you yet for greater things. America is the best country under the sun. The entry of the United States into the world war is to relieve the oppressed people and to uphold democracy.” ~Layla Barakat, an Armenian Refugee in the United States

“We now come to an institution which in several respects stands in a class by itself, for Central Turkey College at Aintab could say in 1914, as could none of the other institutions in our group of colleges, ‘in the spirit and methods of its management the college is planned to be a native and not a foreign institution, and it is intended ultimately to be directed, owned, and supported by the churches associated in the Cilicia Evangelical Union.’” ~Arthur Reed, in the Judgment of a Specialist

“Native professors in American colleges, teachers, pastors, leaders, and students in the educational institutions were seized by the thousands, some of them horribly tortured, many put to death, while others were sent into exile down into Syria and northern Arabia…The effect upon educational work in the interior of Turkey was paralyzing, as in the College at Aintab, Euphrates College at Harput, and the College at Van. Nearly every Armenian teacher was at once eliminated and the older students either taken into the army, exiled, or killed.” ~Rev. James L. Barton

The American Board at the turn of the century

According to the 1901 Geography and Atlas of World Missions, the American Board Commissioners for Foreign Missions spent nearly one third of its total budget in Turkey at the end of the nineteenth century. Over a period of ten years, from 1885 to 1895, the budget for missionary institutions in the region increased by sevenfold with the establishment of nine colleges, nine hospitals, over four hundred primary and secondary schools, and ten medical dispensaries. American presses, publishing in English, Arabic, Turkish, and Armenian, circulated journals, newspapers, Bibles, and some four million text books on a variety of topics and ideas.
These positive developments provided a contrast to the original hardships of the nineteenth century, and point to the importance of this time period to mission work. From 1819 until 1896, a little less than eight decades since the journey of Parsons and Fiske to the holy land, the American Board spent approximately $7,000,000 and employed a total of seven-hundred missionaries. By World War I, the operation’s total value had supposedly aggregated to $20,000,000, with lands, facilities, and equipment at $2,000,000 and annual appropriations for operating expenses at $360,000.6

The success of the American Board, moreover, was not unique. The Presbyterian Board in Syria and the Church Missionary Society in Palestine saw similar gains in effectiveness and mission reach at the end of the nineteenth century.7 “In terms of number of missionaries, financial contributions, and amount of home front propaganda,” argued historian Paul Varg in 1954, “the missionary movement reached its peak in the United States” from 1890 to 1917.8

In terms of educational impact, the ABCFM’s Turkish mission had evolved from only a few hundred students in 1850, to over thirty-three thousand in 1914.9 Central Turkey College would be swept up in this expansion, in spite of the fire of 1890. In less than two years after the conflagration, the College would reopen its doors and continue its educational efforts in full force. Writing several years later in 1908, Rev. C.S. Sanders of Aintab would praise the College’s work, stating that “Central Turkey College has done more for the building up of an educated native ministry of a self-governing, self-supporting native evangelical community than any other similar institution in the Turkish Empire.”10

But just as this time period marked a string of successes for the American Board, it also provided the largest number of challenges to its work. This held especially true for the
Central Turkey mission. In the midst of unprecedented success, the Board was unexpectedly confronted by the rise of competing and sometimes violent nationalist movements, government sanctioned purges of the Turkish-Armenian population, and the chaos of the First World War. In less than five years, from 1914 to 1919, the Turkish mission field would be transformed from a beacon of hope and promise to a symbol of disappointment and failure. Intrinsically tied to the native community of Aintab, Central Turkey College would be directly affected by each of these developments. The Great War, in particular, would devastate the College’s activities and bring it close to the threshold of extinction.

The “Armenian question” and the outlook of Central Turkey College in 1892

As President Fuller had promised, reconstruction of Central Turkey College began in 1891, immediately following the provision of requisite funds. The College appealed to its evangelical donors in America for a total of $20,000 in aid to replace the building and continue work. Word of the calamity reached the news desk of several major mission publications in the United States. Publishing a note of encouragement in March 1891, the New Constantinople newspaper wrote that the Turkish Governor had sent his condolences to the College, “and expressed the wish that the college might be rebuilt. Many priests and Moslems have done the same.”

During this time period, the Azariah Smith Memorial hospital in Aintab continued to function under the management of Dr. Shepard and Dr. Caroline Hamilton, despite the inactivity of the College. By 1897, the hospital had made over 20,964 professional calls to Turkish, Arab, Kurdish, Jewish, and Armenian community members. A nurse at the hospital and daughter of the former President, Miss Elizabeth Trowbridge, would remark, “One
pleasant feature of the hospital work this year has been the friendly relations maintained between patients of different races and creeds. This has been especially noticeable in the treatment of Muslims by Christians and vice versa.”

After two full years of construction, the College reopened its doors in 1893, with a total of ten male graduates and thirty faculty and administrative members. In the next two years it would gradually increase its enrollment and endowment to pre-1890 figures. The College’s future again looked bright. It faced a new challenge, however, as the Ottoman government initiated a purging campaign against the Armenian population of Central and Eastern Turkey in 1894 through 1896.

In the previous two decades, Armenians had lobbied both the Sublime Porte and the courts of European powers for protection and equal status under Turkish law. Security from the armed incursions of Kurdish and Circassian groups was of particular importance to the community. With the Conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877 and the signing of the San Stefano agreement, Russia had pledged to protect the population of Armenians south of its border against the two groups. One year later, however the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 voided this protection status (along with an Armenian call for independence). The signatories pledged instead to jointly guard the region against Kurdish incursions and compel the Sultan to provide Armenians with proper protection under the rule of law.

Reforms efforts were slow, and many Armenians became impatient for change. They began to organize political parties to confront the Turkish government and safeguard the liberties of their communities. In the process, several Armenian nationalist groups decided to apply “direct action” against the Turkish government. This was often expressed as armed resistance against the Turkish army. By the early eighteen-nineties, these groups began to
engage in “pitched battles” against the Turkish army and other armed Muslim groups.\textsuperscript{17} American colleges, with primarily Armenian constituencies, immediately felt the effects of these skirmishes. In 1892 Turkish forces burned the house of one missionary to the ground. Later, in 1893, Ottoman police set fire to an Anatolia College building under construction in Merzifon.\textsuperscript{18}

When Armenians in the Sassun district of Central Turkey refused to pay taxes to either the Turkish government or the local Kurdish military authorities, they were targeted by the government as insurrectionists. Government campaigns against the Armenians began in the fall of 1894 at Sassun, and in September 1895 through January 1896 in Constantinople, Trabzon, Erzurum, Harput, Aintab, Marash, Urfa. Approximately 50,000 Armenians were killed in the massacres, 10 percent of whom were Protestant converts.\textsuperscript{19} The bloodshed would earn Sultan ʿAbdul Hamid the title of the “Red Sultan” and “Abdul the Damned” in the West.

The purges did not directly affect Central Turkey College until 1894, when rising tensions between the Armenian communities of Aintab and the Sultan Abdul al-Hamid in Istanbul lead to harsh crackdowns against the minority group. Two professors were arrested in October under the charge of “sedition and the organization of secret societies” against the Turkish government. The men were later exonerated on October 17, but the incident would portend future Turkish hostilities towards the missionary enterprise.\textsuperscript{20}

To its credit, the College administration would not allow the growing conflict to impinge on the school’s educational efforts. Regular classes continued without interruption except for one particularly brutal week in Aintab. The College also enrolled a total of 160 students, the largest number in its history. Commenting on the situation of the Armenian community in
Aintab, President Fuller would write in the Missionary Herald that the “Armenians as a race, have apparently accepted the situation so savagely force upon them, and are sadly but diligently settling themselves to the work of gathering up and securing what remains them after the storm.”

Educationally, the Aintab mission continued to uphold high standards of academic achievement. Its curriculum included Turkish, Armenian, English, and optional French language instruction. It also mandated five years of religious study, and courses in geography, physics, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, history, music, and writing. The College still suffered, however, from a lack of administrative oversight and financial support.

President Fuller had been absent from the institution for more than a year after the Armenian massacres because of physical illness. When he returned to Aintab in 1898, he found that the mission as a whole needed to reduce the scope and breadth of its work in order to meet budgetary constraints. “Schools and churches have been obliged” he wrote in December 1898, “either to suspend their work or get on with very inadequate means.” By December 31, 1899, seven years after the reconstruction of the main building, the College had fixed its operating budget at a total of $93,383.58. This sum allowed the College to continue to operate, but hindered any expansion of College work.

The Armenian question was likewise, left unsolved. Efforts by foreign representatives at the Sublime Porte to curb violence against the Armenian population were largely ineffective. At the same, the Turkish government began to view American Board institutions with distrust, alleging that they had become breeding grounds of Armenian nationalism and resistance. Seeking continued friendly relations with the Porte, Protestant missionary leaders reiterated their neutrality in the conflict and attempted to assuage such suspicions whenever
possible. Speaking at an ecumenical mission conference in 1900, the President of Roberts College in Istanbul, George Washburn stated:

American missionaries in Turkey have no political ends in view, of any kind or shape whatever. They have not gone to Turkey either to overthrow the Turkish Government, or to reform the Turkish Government, or to have anything to do with the ruling of the country. All that any American missionary asks of Turkey is that he should be protected in those rights which are guaranteed to all Americans by solemn treaty between the United States and Turkey.\textsuperscript{26}

Writing a decade after the last Armenian massacres in Anatolia, and two years before the next, Rev. Dennis James asserted that missionaries could not be blamed for the massacres. In his view, the Americans had always insisted that Christian communities under their care offer obedience to the rule of law and respect for the Turkish authorities. “Flagrant wrongs” were to be solved through legal means of redress, not violence. “No one has realized better than the missionaries” he wrote in 1906, “the hopelessness of any attempt at an Armenian revolutionary propaganda, and the dangers involved in such agitations.”\textsuperscript{27}

Damnation, James asserted should be cast on the “ill-will of Moslem society towards subject Christian races.” Missionaries were not to blame for the conflicts, but the “antiquated and manifestly absurd” Turkish government. Armenian Christians (Protestant or Apostolic) become “the prey of malice and cruelty, sometimes resulting in what is practically a policy of extermination, based not so much upon any really unreasonable and revolutionary attitude of the subjugated communities, as upon the passions, the traditions, and the fears of Turkish officialdom.”\textsuperscript{28}
Such pronouncements could not expunge the idea of Protestant complicity in the Armenian insurrections. Commenting on what he saw as the most devious form of meddling in Turkey’s internal affairs, Sultan ‘Abdul Hamid would reportedly write in his journal that “private schools constitute a grave danger to our nations. With unpardonable carelessness we have allowed representatives of all sorts of nationalities to build schools at all times and places. What a peril they are, as has often been shown.”29 The Turkish government would soon act to remedy the situation and attempt to finally settle the Armenian question. Educational efforts in Central Turkey continued, but ominous clouds began to loom on the mission’s horizon.

**Commemoration of twenty-five years in the Ottoman Empire**

Amidst joy and festivity, the College celebrated its official 25th anniversary in the fall of 1901. The number of native faculty members had greatly increased since the founding of the College in 1876, as had the total enrollment of students. The date was especially significant to the Armenian community of Aintab, because it signaled the self-imposed deadline of increased native control of the institution.

Lack of local financial support, however, meant that the Board of Trustees was wary of increasing native influence over the College. While the Board still agreed in the concept of ultimate native control, it did not believe that the local Board of Managers held the capacity to govern the institution autonomously. Fulfillment of the original intent of the College’s constitution was thus ignored out of necessity and deferred to an undetermined later date. Perhaps, it was hoped, the College would be ready for such transition in another twenty-five years? The question would be left unanswered until the end of the next decade.
While the financial security of the Armenian population in Aintab might have been in doubt, their religious zeal certainly was not. Following the second annual inter-denominational Missionary Conference at Brummana on the slopes of Lebanon in August 13, 1901, another religious revival swept through Central Turkey in 1902 and 1903. Students and professors at Central Turkey College were active in the movement, and helped spread its message to Marash, Hadjin, Adana, Tarsus, Killis, Aleppo, and Urfa. Dr. John Merrill, then a Professor at the College, wrote in 1903 that since the events of the revival churches in Aintab would hold nightly meetings in the city, and that “at the College, all the boys have been touched. Many, including a number of seniors, have found the life, and are rejoicing in it.” Two unidentified Armenian students at the College even began to preach the gospel message to crowds of upward of 1,000 men and women on Sunday afternoons.

Inopportune, however, these evangelistic demonstrations again attracted a negative backlash from the local Turkish government. According to Missionary Herald reports, the authorities took steps to “break the influence” of revival groups ”little by little” until they finally barred Protestants from using “any of the school houses” and limited the community to a maximum of two legal public gatherings per week. These restrictions would continue until 1905 when President Fuller, constrained by the infirmities of old age, resigned from the College and returned to America.

In his place, Dr. John Merrill was selected by the Board of Trustees to serve as the new President. Unlike his predecessors, however, Merrill was not seen as the obvious candidate for the President’s replacement. It was hoped however, that his passion for class room instruction would be transferable to the role of College President, despite his lack of administrative skills.
By time of Merrill’s inauguration, the College possessed a total attendance of 144 students, from 26 different locations in the Ottoman Empire. Eighty-three lived within confines of the College proper. Over two thirds of the men were Protestant, and 24 were active in the evangelical church. 44 were orphans, 60 the sons of artisans, 47 the sons of men engaged in trade, 22 the sons of professional men, 5 of farmers, and 4 the sons of fathers without employment.35

Social instabilities, political transitions and bloodshed in the Ottoman Empire

In 1906, Sultan ‘Abdul Hamid bestowed America with the status of “most favored nation.” This meant that for the first time in the Board’s history, American missionaries could own, sell and build on property as if they were native citizens. It also allowed the Americans to gain the same economic capitulations that had been historically given to their European counterparts. This was but one example of the Sultan’s many efforts to radically transform the Empire’s education, communication, and law systems at the turn of the century. Induced by internal and external political pressures as well as the need to compete in the modern international arena, the Sultan’s reform efforts mirrored the top-down example of his predecessors. Absolute power rested in the hands of the Sultan, and reform would be imposed on the nation from above.36

The laws and institutions that resulted from these reforms, however, would eventually bring the downfall of Sultan. Catalyzed to action over a period of two decades, a group of reform-minded political activists called the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) or “the Young Turks” would lead a loose network of exiles and reformers to overthrow the Turkish
government. In the summer of 1908, the CUP convinced the commanders of the Turkish army in Macedonia to mutiny against the Sultan. They threatened to march on Istanbul if the group’s demands were not met. In acquiescence, the Sultan announced the restoration of the 1876 Constitution, established a parliamentary government led by members of the CUP, and declared full restoration of civil and religious liberties to all citizens on July 24, 1908.\textsuperscript{37}

A countercoup by the Istanbul garrison overthrew the CUP government for a brief period of time in April 1908, but the Macedonia army quickly quelled the rebellion, deposed the Sultan, and placed him under house arrest in Salonika. While the Young Turk Revolution initially promised relief for the Empire’s various religious minorities, the group’s insistence on promoting Pan-Turkism soon came into conflict with the established community identities of the Empire’s non-Turkish subjects. Like the Sultan before it, the CUP began to distrust the intense nationalist sentiments of Armenians in central and eastern Turkey.\textsuperscript{38}

Disturbances between the government and the Armenians population began in the winter months of 1909. In April 1909, the Armenian community attempted to revolt against the Young Turks, and they reacted with a harsh military response. Protestants attending an annual meeting of the Evangelical Union at Adana were attacked and slaughtered. Among those dead were twenty-six leaders of thirty-three different Protestant congregations, including one faculty member of Central Turkey College.\textsuperscript{39} An additional one-hundred and twenty members of the Protestant congregation of Adana were also killed. The community lost its church, parsonage, and sustained private losses of almost $400,000.\textsuperscript{40}

The massacres spread throughout the rest of the region, and Central Turkey College was forced to close because of the disturbances. The College resumed classes towards the end 1909 with an enrollment of 110 College students. Fortunately, John Merrill, wrote to the
Board of Trustees, there had been no racial violence between students of the College and community members. But Armenian outrage over the massacres, especially in Aintab, grew.

At the end of the school year the College discovered that students had formed a secret Armenian revolutionary society. Students who had allied with the local Armenian population in Aintab threatened to strike and promote their cause against the local Young Turk authorities. Approximately two-hundred individuals, almost all Apostolic and Protestant Armenians, belonged to the society. President John Merrill was forced to address the issue in a way that would pacify growing CUP displeasure with the American institution without ostracizing the local Armenian community. Following a recommendation from the faculty, Merrill closed the College for a period of six weeks. When the College reopened, he refused to admit any students who possessed a connection to the society.

“We had met our college difficulty firmly and settled it wisely,” Merrill wrote to the Board of Trustees after the incident. Because of this, he believed, the College at Aintab had been spared further molestation from Istanbul. “Had the college been full of young Armenian revolutionaries and the Turks of the city full of suspicions towards us and the Armenians…I do no believe the local government could have kept order.” In Merrill’s mind, the College had done all it could to promote order and maintain neutrality between the Armenian Christian population and the Young Turks.

The reaction, while “firm”, did not dispel Turkish suspicions of the institution. Missionaries in Aintab did not understand, asserts historian Joseph Grabill that “the existence of the society at Central Turkey; regardless of the school’s disciplining it, convinced many Turks of missionary complicity in the Armenian insurrection.” The American Board might deny
culpability for the disturbances, but it would be naïve to assume that their educational institutions did not contribute to the budding notions of Armenian nationalism. Conflicts between the Turkish government and pro-independence Armenian groups continued for the next five years until Turkey entered into World War I. As the social, political, and humanitarian crisis deepened, every American institution of higher learning in Central Turkey would be transformed in the turmoil.

The beginning of the Great War and a campaign against the Armenians

According to historian Joseph Grabill there were approximately 1,800,000 to 2,000,000 Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire in 1914. Church records indicate that on the eve of the First World War, the American Board in Turkey had a total of 15 stations, one hundred and forty-six missionaries, one hundred and seventy-nine native ministers, thirteen thousand eight hundred and ninety-one communicants, and fifty thousand nine hundred adherents. The Armenian Archbishop substantiated this figure in a 1910 report of his diocese, estimating that there were approximately forty-nine thousand and fifty Protestant Armenians in Turkey. Most, if not all of them would be exiled, deported, or killed from 1914-1923.

The First World War, more than any other social or political force of the past, would devastate the American Board’s mission in Turkey. Only 20 to 35 percent of the foreign missionaries in the Turkish Empire remained at their stations at the end of the war. Of those that stayed, a significant portion died from typhus, typhoid, and cholera. Writing about the War’s effect on Christian missions in 1919, Rev. James Barton would conclude that “the character of the work was materially changed owing to the unprecedented conditions” of the field.
After Turkey entered World War I on the side of the Central Powers, the Young Turk government ratified a new education law mandating the study of Turkish language for all Turkish subjects. The law also stipulated that the instruction of Turkish be comparable to the study of any other language in the educational system. Faculty members at Central Turkey College attempted to adhere to the law, but many of the most qualified Turkish instructors throughout the mission field had been mobilized into the Ottoman army. As the divide between practice and compliance grew, tensions continued to increase between the missionaries and the Turkish government.\textsuperscript{50}

This apprehension was most often manifested by the government’s refusal to grant building permits, censorship of text books, and banning of public meetings. The government often gave no reason for such impediments. Prior to the war in 1913, President Merrill would write to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees to express his frustration with the Turkish government on this issue. A government official had denied the College the necessary accreditation for several courses, and thus prevented it from solidifying the next year’s curriculum. “The government is putting obstacles in the way,” he wrote, while simultaneously “acknowledging that there is no objection to the granting of the desired recognition of these courses.”\textsuperscript{51}

Merrill would also urge the Board of Trustees to increase funding for the institution. “In our local financial situation,” he wrote in 1914, “we are beginning to feel the lack of funds very seriously.\textsuperscript{52}” With the onset of the war, transportation costs doubled and food shortages became a daily occurrence.\textsuperscript{53} In July 1 1916 the total balance of the College and Hospital accounts combined was $3,151.44.\textsuperscript{54} The College continued to operate, but the extent of its influence in the region had been severely hindered.
Despite continued clashes with the Young Turks, Armenian Christians as a whole remained loyal to the government when it entered the war. Several groups in the eastern region of the empire, however, enlisted in the Russian army in the hope of eventual Armenian independence from Istanbul. When Russian armies defeated Turkish forces in a series of battles in 1915, the Armenians became the scapegoat for the Empire’s loss. Several demonstrations against the government in Cilia that same year, only added fuel to the accusation of treachery against the state. These two incidents lead to the “wholesale arrest and deportation” of Armenian communities to the interior of the Arabian Desert.\textsuperscript{55}

\textit{Affect of World War I on Central Turkey College in Aintab}

Writing on behalf of her husband in 1917, Mrs. Merrill, the wife of President John Merrill, claimed that the Turkish-Armenian disturbances struck Aintab in August, 1915. Turkish officials imprisoned three Central Turkey Professors and two Protestant Armenian pastors in a dungeon in Oorfa with a charge of sedition. The men were “miraculously acquitted” in front of a military tribunal, but the incident marked the beginning of the Turkish campaign against the region’s Armenian population.\textsuperscript{56}

The College attempted to open its doors in September, but was incapacitated by a lack of appropriate funds. Faculty members agreed to work on half-salaries to ensure the College’s daily operation. But just as the school year began, the government in Istanbul demanded a complete list of the College’s faculty and administration. With only a few exceptions, the faculty was entirely Armenian. President Merrill hesitated to give the Turkish authorities the
list, because he knew it meant that most of the faculty would be exiled. After initial resistance, he eventually complied with the order.

The next day, a majority of the faculty was informed that they would be exiled. Almost everyone affiliated with the College – Professors, janitors, stewards, and farmers, were included in the order. Only one Armenian professor, the head of the Turkish Department, was spared.\textsuperscript{57} Lamenting the day of the deportations Mrs. Merrill would write that “it was one of the hardest days my husband and I ever knew. We could do nothing. We could scarcely go to see them.”\textsuperscript{58}

Turkish military forces occupied the College in the same month and seized the College’s orphanage for boys. The College would be occupied three more times during the war – by Turkish forces from October 15-December 18, 1917; by the English from December 17, 1918 to November 1, 1919; and by the French from November 1, 1919 through December 16, 1921. Total damages and expenditures from the occupation went above $114,000.00.\textsuperscript{59}

In less than a month after the first occupation, every member of the Board of Managers had been exiled or deported with the exception of a professional dentist in Aintab.\textsuperscript{60} The Armenian students of the College were next. The government deported 95 in the next three years. Of the total number of students enrolled at the College prior to the beginning of the war, 15 were killed, 57 conscribed as soldiers, and 49 never heard from again.\textsuperscript{61}

Thousands of Armenian refugees passed through Aintab each week, according to what was left of the College staff. When possible, Mrs. Merrill and several orphan boys would sneak into the refugee camps and bring them soup and water.\textsuperscript{62} Writing under near house arrest
because the Turkish government had severed relations with America in April 1917, President Merrill vividly described the situation at Aintab:\(^{63}\):

> There have been many deaths from starvation, and many cases of sickness and of death from eating harmful herbs and grasses. Toward the end of the year typhus had become quite common, though fortunately it was of a mild type. There have been no Christian religious services in the city again this year. One of the Protestant churches is a military factory, and the other two, in a miserable state of destruction, are open for the shelter of Turkish or Armenian refugees.\(^{64}\)

Postal relations with the surrounding countryside were almost entirely suspended because of the war, and the College became increasingly isolated towards the end of the war.\(^{65}\) President Merrill presided over the last commencement of Central Turkey College in 1917. It was a small ceremony, and would be Merrill’s last public duty as President before the College closed entirely.\(^{66}\) He and his wife stayed in the region for two more years before finally returning to America in 1920.

**Closing and Transfer**

In 1915 the United States consul reported that over 150,000 Armenian refugees had flocked to Aleppo, the largest urban center in modern day Syria. Hundreds were dying daily; he believed that at least $150,000 a month would be required to meet the needs of the locality alone.\(^{67}\) By the war’s end in 1918, at least one million Armenians had perished.\(^{68}\)
The post-war period presented a serious challenge to the future of American missions. Only a paltry 36 missionaries were left in the field, and not more than 200 of the original 1,200 native workers were left alive. The monumental success of the last three decades (in terms of facilities and manpower) had been reversed overnight. How would they rebuild their institutional infrastructure? How would the message of Christ be spread in the Turkish field? Who would care for the Armenian refugee population? Would the region ever be safe for mission work again? The answers to each of these questions were unclear.

With the majority of the native population dead or deported, its professors banished, and its facilities degraded by successive military occupations, Central Turkey College closed its doors for the last time in 1919. The situation was bleak. Only Lorrin A. Sheppard, the lead Doctor of the Azariah Smith Hospital remained as a representative of the Board. It appeared as if the institution would be unable to recover in the post-war environment.

But neither the Armenian community in exile, nor the workers of the American Board were prepared to abandon the College or its mission. As early as 1922, members of the exiled Aintab community began to discuss plans for a new institution of higher learning a hundred miles south of Aintab, in Aleppo. Just as it had risen from the ashes of the 1890 fire, Central Turkey College would be resuscitated from its near death experience and continue its educational and spiritual mission in the twentieth century. Cast in a new form as Aleppo College, it would become one of the most prominent institutions of higher learning in Syria, and undoubtedly alter the course of mission work in the region.

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56 Letter from Mrs. Merrill to the Board of Trustees, September 20, 1917.” Papers of the American Board of
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59 Merrill, John. “Letter to Ernest Riggs concerning Occupation of Central Turkey College in Aintab, March 28,
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62 Letter from Mrs. Merrill to the Board of Trustees, September 20, 1917.” Papers of the American Board of
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70
Chapter Four:

THE TRANSITION TO ALEPPO AND THE GROWTH OF THE COLLEGE, 1924-1952

“Central Turkey College is not simply a single educational institution, but it is part of an effort to develop in the Near East a native evangelical community as a missionary force. The College, therefore must be located where it can serve this end, and where it can be used by the native evangelical community in the service of this purpose. In its re-establishment, the college must be true to its spiritual ideals. It must remain international in scope. It must be missionary in aim. If the college is re-established in Aleppo, it must be adapted to its new environment – racial, religious, educational, political. It should seek affiliation and service, not isolation.”1 –Dr. John Merrill, former President of Central Turkey College, October, 1924

“This widened conception of the work of God in the world has a profound effect upon the missionary’s methods of presenting his own Christian message. He is not content to combat the error which looms so large in the creeds of other men. He is anxious to find the kernel of truth of which so often that error is but a distorted expression. He comes to supplement, not solely to create. He prays for all men with anew sympathy – for all mosques and temples and synagogues as well as for all churches. He will preach wherever he is invited. He speaks the truth, but prunes his vocabulary.”2 –Howard S. Bliss, President of the Syrian College in Beirut, 1902-1920

Post-War Situation & the Renewal of the Board’s Mission

As smoke rose from the smoldering hills of Anatolia in 1918, the American Board began to regroup and rebuild. The First World War had ended, resulting in the defeat of the central powers and the subsequent disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. While missionary activities in the Turkish Empire had been placed on hold throughout much of the war, Americans had been extremely active in providing relief aid to the region. In 1915 then-Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Cleveland Dodge, Charles Crane, and other representatives of the American Board formed the Near East Relief Society formed in order to alleviate the horrendous conditions of native communities in Central and Eastern Turkey. Over a period of fifteen years they collected more than $116,000,000 in aid and impartially distributed it to regions of great need.3
This evenhandedness enhanced the native perception of American missionaries in the region, especially in the traditional Christian communities. According to historian Joseph Grabill, the aid efforts served to “melt away” decades of Orthodox, Catholic, and Maronite hostility towards the Armenian Protestant community. As the victorious Great Powers began to carve the former Ottoman Empire into zones of influence and control, many inhabitants even clamored for an American, rather than a European mandate.

But with the signing of the Treaty of Sevres on August 10, 1920 and the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923, the region was divided between Great Britain, France, Italy and Greece. American leaders, wary of tying the post-war United States to the region through an American mandate, supported the new ruling authorities, despite Wilsonian claims of universal autonomy.

While an analysis of the political negotiations, treaties, and social developments of the post-World War I time period is extremely important, it cannot be described here in detail. To do justice to such a topic would require a much larger volume of research and study. What is relevant to the topic of American missionaries in Turkey and Syria is not so much the history of these political decisions, but how the American Board dealt with post-war realities to continue its mission.

Writing to the Board of Trustees several months before he returned to America, President Merrill would state that he couldn’t conceptualize how the College would recover after the

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events of the last five years. The entire Armenian population of Aintab and its immediate
surroundings had ceased to exist after the deportations and warfare of 1915-1920. “College
affairs have been at a standstill for so long that it is a question of where to take hold of them
again, and the unsettled state of everything makes you feel that the period of waiting is not
over.” He expressed hope, however, in the resiliency of the former community of Aintab.
Reopening Central Turkey College in Aintab might be a practical impossibility, but that
didn’t mean the America Board should renounce its mission in the region.

The instinct of the local constituency, represented by the men who have signed this
letter is undoubtedly correct, and feeling on the subject is strong. The young men
ought to be gotten into schools again just as soon as ever it is possible, both for their
own good and for the good of the community.

The “local constituency” that Merrill referenced was located just below the border line
between Turkey and Syria in Aleppo. According to the estimates of the American Board,
approximately 40,000 Armenian refugees had settled in the city as a result of the war. This
community in exile vocally expressed its needs to the American Board and began to petition
it to investigate new opportunities for American educational institutions in Syria. While
Aleppo technically belonged under the sphere of influence of the American University in
Beirut, the majority of the Aleppo’s inhabitants were unable to pay the high tuition fees of
the institution. According to a native Armenian and Professor at the College, ninety percent
of the students in Aleppo could never hope to go to Beirut.

Even if the community was able to locate funding for post-secondary education, most of the
students did not possess the qualifications for such advanced study. President Merrill would
report in 1925 that the combined attendance of primary and secondary schools in Aleppo was
below 15,000 students, or less than 5 percent of the total population. It was in this context that discussions on the development of a new American College for the education of Armenian Protestants in Aleppo were born.

Of the 40,000 refugees in Aleppo, 4,000 confessed Protestant belief. Many of the leaders of Cilicia Evangelical Union as well as the Board of Managers now lived in Aleppo, and they believed that there were strong prospects for American Board work in the city. The Board of Managers met in April, 1923 and initiated a preliminary inquiry as to the feasibility of reestablishing an American education system in Aleppo. They soon requested 600 Turkish pounds from the Board of Trustees of Central Turkey College in order to establish a high school for Armenian youth in Aleppo. The Trustees granted the request, with some hesitation, and the Aleppo High School for Boys opened its doors in the fall of 1923 with a total of four classes.

The relocation to Aleppo and conflict between the Managers and Trustees

As the Board of Managers began reestablishing their work in Aleppo, the Board of Trustees faced the daunting task of recovering lost ground in Aintab. The Trustees had previously appraised the total property value of Central Turkey College at $119,020 dollars. It was thus, an expensive investment that could not be easily ignored. But the College lacked the necessary financial resources and personnel to immediately resume its activities.

The Trustees decided to focus their efforts on the College’s affiliated Hospital in Aintab. After several months of debt and mismanagement, it soon became clear that the Board of Trustees would not be able to effectively manage the Hospital’s daily operations. In March 1924, they decided to cede the responsibility of the Hospital back to the American Board and
cut all native ties to the institution. When the Board of Managers in Aleppo received news of the decision, they loudly voiced opposition to the plan.

Ultimate authority for such policies, argued the Board of Managers, rested in native hands. By making the decision to terminate the Hospital’s connection to Central Turkey College without consulting the Managers, the Board of Trustees had undermined the very Constitutional framework of the institution. Matters were made even worse when the Board of Trustees expressed its dissatisfaction with the Board of Manager’s management of the new boy’s high school in Aleppo and their staunch insistence on native autonomy in 1924. The Board of Managers of Central Turkey College would eventually acquiesce to the decision of the Trustees and the Hospital was officially cut off from their supervision. The incident highlighted, however, the growing tension between the native administration’s desire for full autonomy, and the Trustees disbelief in their ability to be independent.

As an ex-officio member of the Board of Managers when he returned to region in 1924, President Merrill supported the grievance of the Board of Managers and spoke on their behalf to both the Board of Trustees and the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM. “This self-consciousness on the part of the native churches is one of the most precious things that has been gained,” he argued in a letter to Rev. James Barton in 1924.

While this consciousness meant that the Managers would sometimes be overly protective of their authority, it spoke to the uniqueness of the College’s commitment to local rule. The Trustees should thus attempt, he argued, “to keep it and to strengthen it...Our precious gain in Central Turkey has been that such work has been viewed as a function of the native church itself. It was not done for them, but with them, that they might the sooner do it for themselves.”

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Other members of the American Board, including the Prudential Committee’s general secretary Ernest Riggs, and former Professor G.K. Daghlian, would heartily disagree with Merrill’s defense of native control of the institution. Addressing the issue in a letter to Riggs in 1927, he would write:

It is claimed that the nature of C.T. College, as ultimately belonging to the Cilicia Evangelical Churches is a rare and fine distinction in its favor and its appeals to the American public and friends as the more reasonable and more correct way of having a college in the Near East. If proof of the pudding is in the eating, this claim must be considered practically wrong. As one closely connected with the College over a good many years I am yet to meet the person who can show a list of concrete good results that can be attributed to this provision.

Further disagreement between the Board of Managers and the Board of Trustees would arise as the two groups attempted to decide what role the Boy’s High School in Aleppo would play as a successor to Central Turkey College, if any. Describing the efforts of the College Board of Managers as “unsuitable” and “squalid,” Riggs would express serious reservations about any long-term investments in Aleppo. In his mind, the school fit “the environment of poverty and uncertainty which has characterized this border city ever since the war.” It couldn’t measure up to the former conception of a missionary college, and certainly did not possess the capacity to become an independent establishment like Constantinople or Beirut.

When the school opened in 1923 it reported a total enrollment of fifty-three students. This figure would rise consecutively in the next four years with ninety-five students in 1924, 128 students in 1925, 163 students in 1925, and 211 students in 1927. As the ABCFM began to
revive many of its mission stations in the following years, divisions between Central Turkey College’s Board of Managers and the Board of Trustees would widen. Merrill and the Board of Manager viewed the Boys High School in Aleppo as a transitory “feeder” institution that would eventually continue the original work of Central Turkey College.

Writing in 1927, Merrill would chastise Riggs for failing to see the “wonderful opportunity” presented by the Aleppo work and the prospects for the development of a new College in the area. “The more I think of it, the more I wonder at the attitude that seems to have developed in Boston toward this Aleppo work. Do you all understand its wonderful opportunity? Do you understand the strength of its cooperative policies?”

In 1928 the Board of Managers would take the first serious step to transform the Boy’s High School into a post-secondary institution, despite the Trustee’s hesitations. The school began to staff faculty members to provide French and Arabic language instruction instead of Turkish. They also steadily increased the standards for admission to the school each year in an attempt to raise it to the prewar preparatory standards of Central Turkey College.

One year later the Board of Managers drafted an official Constitution for their proposed College and submitted it for ratification by the Board of Trustees. The new Constitution would replace the old governing document of Central Turkey College, and establish Aleppo College for the purpose of “thorough education of young men for spiritual leadership and for service to society, continuing the work of Central Turkey College, founded at Aintab, Turkey, in 1876.”
The Board of Managers would be forced to wait almost a decade before the document could be implemented. Finally, in 1937 the Boy’s High School of Aleppo merged with the Presbyterian North Syrian School for Boys to officially establish Aleppo College.\textsuperscript{20}

The merger required the construction of two new buildings on a plateau near the western outskirts of Aleppo. The property itself was 200 deunum, or approximately 50 acres in size and could be bought for a total of $1,760.00.\textsuperscript{21} One member of the Board of Managers, Dr. Al-Tounyan, had already worked with another associate in Aleppo to purchase the land surrounding the mound. John Merrill described the proposed location of the new College to the Prudential Committee in a 1928 letter:

\begin{quote}
It is a hill, much like the location of the college at Aintab – as high as any hill in the immediate vicinity, if not higher – about ten minutes walk outside the city to the North. From the top of hill, which is the part now for sale, you can see the Beylan Mountains to the west and the line of the range that stretches to the south from the Beylan. The city of Aleppo lies before you to the south, while the broad ribbon of the gardens which border the Kuweik river comes from the north, passes the hill on the east, and then turns south west around the base of the hill. It is really one of the sightliest spots in the near suburbs of Aleppo.\textsuperscript{22}
\end{quote}

Fully operational the next year, the new College consisted of a primary school, a secondary school, and a junior college.\textsuperscript{23} By the mid-century, the American Board would govern the institution through a partnership with native Armenian and Syrian evangelical churches. Unlike the four-year program provided by its predecessor in Gaziantep, Aleppo College developed a two-year “junior” curriculum in “secretarial skills, business, arts, pre-medicine, and pre-engineering.”\textsuperscript{24} These courses of study prepared graduating students to obtain full
bachelors degrees at the American University in Beirut or similar universities abroad. Commenting on Aleppo College’s status as the successor to Central Turkey College, Dr. Z.A. Bezdijian, head of the Protestant Chancery in Constantinople would say that he had become ever more “impressed with the fine work of Aleppo College…in spite of the shortness of its means.”

From 1937 until the early 1960s, Aleppo College would be considered one of the premier institutions of American higher education in Syria. Its graduates would go on to become notable doctors, businessmen, engineers, and politicians throughout the Arab world. The school would not only provide professional instruction for its students, but transform the way they viewed their nation and its place in the world.

Administration, Enrollment and Organization of the College

The most thorough account of the administration and organization of Aleppo College from 1925 until the middle half of the twentieth century is a American Council of Education survey of the Syrian education system commissioned by the US Department of State in 1945. Utilizing this survey, reports from American missionaries and consulates in Aleppo, and original graduation documents from the College during the time period, it is possible to produce an outline of the courses of study, extracurricular activities, and intellectual experiences of students in the early stages of the College.

After the merger in 1937, the College was separated into three distinct sections: an elementary school (primary education), a high school (secondary education), and a junior college. According to the 1949 survey, the elementary boy school taught male students from
the third to the sixth grade in Arabic. Because the school lacked instruction for kindergarten though the second grade, boys completed their first three years of study at the sister institution of Aleppo College, the American High School for Girls, which was located off campus inside the city.\textsuperscript{26}

Tuition fees, including health and laboratory fees ranged from $38.53 to $206.82 per year, and the boarding fee was approximately $318.18.\textsuperscript{27} In today’s terms, the cost would be approximately 2,882.34.\textsuperscript{28}

The high school for boys provided instruction for the seventh through eleventh grades. Separated into two “A” and “B” sections, students completed a total of thirty-nine class periods per week, including a homeroom and two study periods.\textsuperscript{29} Classes in English, Arabic, Bible studies, and athletics were compulsory courses for every student regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation. Faculty utilized a simplified series of “readers” by Michael West to instruct the students in classic English literature in the lower secondary classes, but for all intents and purposes, the students received a “genuine” American education.\textsuperscript{30} Students also studied at least one math class per year: arithmetic during the seventh and eighth grades, algebra during the ninth, geometry during the tenth, and physics during the eleventh grade. Other courses included music, biology, general science, geography, and a mandatory Armenian language class for Armenian students.\textsuperscript{31}

All of the high school courses were taught in English, and almost all of text books were of American origin. Special classes for students without prior knowledge of English or Arabic were also provided.\textsuperscript{32} According to the American Council of Education survey, Aleppo College had a combined enrollment of four-hundred and seventy-nine students in 1949.\textsuperscript{33}
The junior college, in contrast to the larger enrollments of the primary and secondary schools, contained a total of sixty-two students (thirty-five freshman and twenty-seven sophomores) in 1949, all of whom were men. This number increased to sixty-nine students by 1951 and also saw the graduation of the first women to enroll at the College, Matilde Sayegh.

As required in the earlier levels of instruction, students studied English, Arabic, and Armenian (if an Armenian student) throughout their freshman year. All other subjects were taught in English with American texts, and included studies of literature, introductory college mathematics, Arab history, and religion.

A total of twelve Professors provided instruction for the students at the junior college in 1951, seven of whom were native to Lebanon, Syria, or Turkey. In alphabetical order they included: Mr. George Adrouny (Biology and Chemistry), Dr. Alford Carleton (Philosophy, Ethics and Religion), Mrs. Mary Carleton (English), Mr. Ibrahim Hannush (Engineering), Mrs. Arthur Jacot, Mr. George Karam (Athletics), Mr. John Karaynsuf (Economics, Geography, and History), Mr. Nuri Khalidi (Political Science and History), Mr. Emile Najjar (Arabic and History), Mr. Ibrahim Obeid (Physics and Mathematics), and Mr. Thomas Weaver (English, Music, and Psychology).

According to the American study, students in the second year of the junior College were divided into three specialization sections: arts, science, and engineering. This specialization acted to further post-secondary education in the field of study desired by the student. All students were also required to study philosophy and literature. In addition to these two core curriculum, arts students were required to study economics, political science, the history of modern Europe, and religion for a total of eighteen credits. Science specialists,
in contrast, enrolled in calculus, physics, biology, and several labs for a total of twenty-three credits. Engineering students, finally, enrolled in descriptive and solid geometry, calculus, physics, and drawing for a total of twenty-five credits.  

Comparing the different sections of the study, it becomes apparent that arts students were required to complete several credits less than the engineering and science specialists. The arts section was also the largest section of study at the College, with a total of nineteen enrolled students. The survey also asserts that Aleppo College “is considered to have the best science laboratories of any school in Syria.” A library, complete with approximately 8,000 volumes, was “extensively used by the students and friends of the College.” 1,700 books of these books were originally held in the College Library at Aintab and were brought to Aleppo after the war. 

**Student life and experiences and the influence of the College**

In addition to the schooling provided to the students inside the classroom, Aleppo College provided a host of extra-curricular activities for junior college students. Resembling a modern university in America with its plethora of opportunities, the College sponsored a football (soccer), basketball, and volley ball teams, a fine arts club, an international relations club, a choir, an orchestra, a glee club, stagecraft club, a Christian Endeavor society, a Boy Scout troop, a campus newspaper called the College Herald, and a literary review printed at least once a year in Arabic, English, and Armenian. In addition to these standard activities, the College’s commencement literary review in 1951 also references opportunities for an annual field day, torch relay race, bicycle race, evening
swim meeting, horse back riding, tennis matches, and ping-pong. Two students (unnamed) even participated in the second annual Arab Olympiad held in Cairo, Egypt the same year.  

The College’s swimming pool, according to several alumni accounts, was a center for large Saturday afternoon community gatherings during the summer months. American professor Tom Weaver, an accomplished musician and skilled horse back rider, similarly maintained a stable near the campus with several thorough-bred Arabian horses.

The authority to control and direct all extracurricular activities at the College was given to an elected Student Council. This Council, an assembly of freshman and sophomore students who met every fortnight to act as a liaison between the student body and the College administration, was officially recognized in 1951. Realizing that “school would advance more if the students were given a share in the running of school affairs,” the governing faculty Council ratified the Council’s constitution in an attempt to provide a deeper conception of student autonomy and involvement at the College.

In addition to these activities, students and faculty of Aleppo College continually interacted with the local population in positive and multifaceted dimensions. While the College primarily served Christian Arab and Armenian students, it did enroll several Muslim and Jewish students. While the College no longer pursued any direct proselytizing efforts (excluding Bible instruction), it continued to engage the Christian social communities.

Speaking on his experiences at the College in a 1980 interview with American Robert Shuster shortly before he died, College Professor Dean Votaw spoke about the interactions of the religious and political communities in Aleppo at Christmas.
A very fine thing that this community did, though, once a year at Christmas time was to have visitation by invitation to any one of the upper echelon in the Christian community, or the missionary community, or the government community. So on Christmas day we would go to the churches, all these churches, seven, eight, ten of them, for a brief visit with their bishop, [and] sit around and drink coffee sip coffee, and candy, which was the way they entertained people, and meet the bishops and some of the others of the churches. And the people doing that were missionaries, other missionaries like us from other parts of the world (Danish missions, English missions). And also the Moslem leadership from the city of Aleppo: the mayor, chief of police, the government heads, department heads. They'd go over here to these various churches to pay their respects. That's what it was. It was a community idea. Then on New Year's Day the Protestant American community would do the same. These people would all come to the Mission headquarters, either at the College or at the Protestant church girls' school in town. Which was a way to meet people.  

Matilde Sayegh, the first woman to attend the College, writes in 1951 that she felt “embarrassed and shy” as a “stranger” during her first day of classes at the College. Over a period of two years, however, she believed that she had finally been accepted into the social community of the College, and that her presence brought additional worth to the educational environment.

I have proved to my own satisfaction that the presence of women students in a college gives some mental stimulation to the men, for women often have a different point of view. This makes classroom hours fuller, richer, and more interesting if accompanied by poise and mutual respect. I am deeply grateful to everybody with whom I have been so happily at work, teachers and students alike.
In a similar fashion, sophomore engineering student Marwan Shihabi writes about the position of women in Syrian society during the same time period. Most intriguing, is his assertion that a society or nation (Syria) cannot compete with other nations if it “fetters” its women and family life.

We often wonder why the Middle East lacks something of spiritual and material progress. Women’s development in a given society is the barometer by which we may judge that society’s standards. She, with man, forms the bonds holding together the family. If she is fettered, either by foolish customs or by narrow-minded public opinion, the family is also fettered. Consequently, society and the nation cannot achieve much, nor keep up the race with other nations.⁵¹

Aleppo College by the middle of the twentieth century

Writing several years after 1952, American Professor George Miller would articulate the continued tension between foreign and local rule of Aleppo College in an article titled “Aleppo College, Failure or Fulfillment.” This article is significant not only because it is the only known published article on Aleppo College, but because it expresses the idea that even by the mid-century, American missionaries in the Middle East had not been able to develop a singular system for local administration of missionary institutions.

At the time of its founding, he argued, “It was the expressed goal that within twenty-five years the school (Central Turkey College) should be locally administered and supported.” Ninety-three years after the College’s original founding and forty-two years after its relocation to Aleppo, the school was still attempting to approach its “avowed purpose.”⁵² It
had managed to make the transition from central Turkey to Aleppo and flourish, but College administrators were unable to reach any final conclusions as to the nature or meaning of native control. As a result, the College would continue to be administered “from above” and the ideal of native control would grow increasingly distant.

After independence, Syria strengthened its army and initiated a massive overhaul of its educational system. The government discontinued the use of the French Baccalaureate, a standardized test from the French Mandate, and replaced it with the Syrian Baccalaureate, which is still in use today. From 1944 to 1949 the budget for nationalized education tripled and the overall national budget for Syria doubled. This increase meant that the state was spending a little less than one-fifth of its budget on education.\(^5\) It also meant that government was becoming much more interested in American missionary institutions. All foreign schools felt increasing pressures from above because of the gradual nationalization of education.\(^4\) As the nationalized education system grew in prominence in the early sixties, the future of Aleppo College appeared uncertain.

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**CHAPTER FOUR:**


4 Grabill, Joseph L. *Protestant Diplomacy in the Near East* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 157

6 Ibid, 269


11 “Inventory of the Property in Aintab, as of 1914.” Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 674, Vol. 2, Part 1, No 152


19 “Proposed Constitution for Aleppo College, as Adopted by the Board of Managers in 1928 and 1929.” Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Research Publications from Wesleyan University Library. ABC 16.9.6.1, 1817-1919. Unit 5, Reel 674, Vol. 2, Part 1, 579


22 *Ibid*, 303

23 George Miller, “Aleppo College: Failure or Fulfillment?” *Muslim World*, 57 (January 1967), 42-45


27 *Ibid*, 404


31 *Ibid*, 390

32 *Ibid*, 402-403

33 *Ibid*, 403

34 *Ibid*, 403


39 *Ibid*, 404


42 Ibid, 404


46 Corradini, Dee Dee. Phone interview by author, March 19, 2008.


48 Ibid, 22


51 Ibid, 32


54 Ibid, 456
Chapter Six:

EXPANSION AND DECLINE: THE NATIONALZATION OF SYRIAN EDUCATION, 1952-1967

“There are practical and theoretical objections to a church school which recognizes no ties other than those which link it to its immediate physical and spiritual environment. In this day of ecumenicity the church and all its agencies are seeking to keep a balance between an integral relationship with the local situation and a vital sense of the world-wide Christian mission.”

~ Professor George Miller, 1967

“Private schools are prohibited from teaching or implanting subjects which might cause the following: Corruption of morals and the weakening of the national spirit; Ritual dissension and discord among citizens; Disparaging the dignity of the Syrian people and that of the Arab nation; Using education as a means of political and party propaganda.”

~ Syrian Government Decree No. 175, “Regulations Governing Private Schools.” Article 7

“This is an incident which took place at a foreign college, in an American College, in a college which is supposed to be a missionary college with higher standards than one which permits scenes of confusion and aggression. What is the opinion of those parents who are proud of their Arabism? What is the opinion of those responsible officials who know of the incident through the complaint of the students, and of the students’ request for the punishment not of the students of the College but of the College itself.”

~ Article published in the December 7, 1953 edition of Al-Watan concerning the Mudaris Incident

By the middle of the twentieth century, Aleppo College had become one of the most prominent institutions of higher learning in Syria. It still maintained the purpose of educating “young men for spiritual leadership” and the “encouragement of true science and civilization,” in its Constitution, but for practical purposes, it had divorced itself from the methodology of its predecessor at Aintab. Forms of direct evangelism no longer permeated the institution’s daily life. Religious educational instruction still continued, but the fundamental character of the mission had changed. Aleppo College was now a secular institution run by both evangelical missionaries and non-religious faculty.
Following the end of World War II and the independence of Syria in 1946, the College enjoyed the peak of its operations in Syria. The 1950s, in particular, stand as the golden age of the College’s development and the pinnacle of its educational efforts in the region. In the midst of this achievement, however, the College would begin to face increasing pressure from the Syrian government to comply with national education standards and procedures. While the College was able to resist the standardization process for almost a decade, compliance with successive directives from the Syrian government reduced the College’s educational monopoly. Its standards, admission policies, and prestige suffered as a result.\(^5\)

In the course of only a few years, brief when compared to its long history, the College would be reduced to an institutional status of minor importance. By 1967, less than one-hundred years from the date of its founding, Aleppo College would be converted into a state-run institution, and the era of American missionaries would pass.

*Aleppo College and Initial Attempts at Nationalization*

As referenced in the previous chapter, the Syrian government in Damascus began to reshape the education policy of the country as soon as it gained independence. As the budget for the national education system in Syria increased in the late forties and early fifties, the state began to produce a much larger pool of students eligible to receive post-secondary education. The total enrollment for all universities in Syria doubled during this time period, and from 1944 to 1954 the total number of students in intermediate and secondary schools increased from 11,600 to 54,000.\(^6\) While this provided a wealth of new opportunities for students who previously would have been unable to obtain a post-secondary degree, it also lowered the overall quality of students in the university system.
As the premier foreign College in the region, and one of only two other accredited post-secondary institutions in Syria until 1958, Aleppo College immediately felt the impact of this influx. It was unable, however, to drastically expand its enrollment to meet the new demand. In comparison to larger Syrian institutions like Damascus University, its student body was relatively small. While exact enrollments for each year of operation are unavailable, it is possible to extrapolate that the total enrollment of the College steadily increased from 1953-67 to six-hundred students a year.

In 1951, the College possessed a total enrollment of 500 students, 122 of whom studied at the junior college. According to Professor George Miller, the enrollment of the elementary and secondary schools as well as the junior College peaked in 1967 with a total of four hundred boys and about two-hundred and fifty girls in a nearby sister institution. This report is substantiated by another appraisal of the school in 1966 which placed the levels near the one hundred and fifty boarding students and three-hundred and fifty day students.

The majority of these students were drawn from the Armenian Christian population in Aleppo, but relative to peer institutions in Syria, the College’s student body was very diverse. This diversity was a result of the unique two year preparatory system of the College which enabled graduates to continue study as sophomores at the American University of Beirut or other foreign universities abroad. Students of all faith backgrounds and from over eleven different countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, and Indonesia, to name a few) attended the College in 1951. The College even had the privilege of enrolling the Crown Prince of Bahrain and several sons of the prominent Syrian politician Nazim Qudsi. Thus, despite its small size, Aleppo possessed a robustly international and cosmopolitan education program.
Because of this international scope and the College’s high standards of instruction, the community of Aleppo held the College in relatively high regard. While the school was no longer evangelistic *per se*, it did benefit from its reputation as a “missionary” school and its connection with the American University of Beirut. In truth, however, students were not primarily drawn to the College because of its “Christian” character, although it may have played a role. The appeal of Aleppo College was that it was a distinctly *American* institution. After the country’s rise to global dominance after World War II, this meant something. American Professor of religious studies, Dean Votaw retrospectively described the prestige of attending an American school.

There was something good about going...studying in American school, see. It was a missions school, but it was an American school and there was status feeling about it, if they could afford it. And it did cost more than government school.¹³

Although Votaw does not go into further detail about the differences between Aleppo College and other government schools, his point is indicative of the division between private and public education that existed in Syria in the middle of the twentieth century. In terms of faculty and resources, Aleppo College still maintained supremacy over the native public Universities. In the eyes of some Syrians, especially government officials in the newly created Ministry of Education in Damascus, this discrepancy represented a threat to the native education system.

On March 18, 1952, the Syrian Government passed the Decree No. 175 “Regulations Governing Private Schools” in an attempt to strengthen administrative practices governing foreign institutions in the country and remedy existing inequalities between private and
public education. The new law prohibited the opening of new foreign schools in the country and required that all existing schools apply for re-licensing. The avowed reasons for the decree, according to a dispatch from the US Department of State, were “to guard against corruption of national morals or weakening of the national spirit, the spreading of sectarian dissention and discord among the citizenry, and the disparagement of the Syrian people or the Arab nation.”

If fully enforced, the law would have drastic implications for all non-government educational institutions in Syria. “It is apparent from these main provisions of the decree,” wrote Foreign Service officer William Bremer in 1952, “that, if it were to be rigorously enforced, the activities and scope of the religious minority schools in this country would be very severely curtailed.” According to Bishop Malatios Swaity, the Vicar of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, “strict enforcement [of the law] would mean that all Greek Orthodox schools in Syria would be forced to close.”

Three provisions of the decree would significantly affect Aleppo College if enforced. First, the law stipulated that funds from foreign donors could not be used in private schools without the prior approval of the Ministry of Education. Aleppo College depended almost entirely on foreign fundraising and such a limitation would severely curtail the institution’s operating capability.

Second, the law prevented private institutions from teaching more than one “living” foreign language to its students and required all courses to be taught in Arabic. For the last fifteen years the College had prided itself on a multi-lingual curriculum in English, Arabic, Armenian, and French. Full compliance with the law would inevitably mean that Armenian language courses would be dropped from the program of study, a daunting prospect. The
College also didn’t possess the administrative capability or physical resources to transfer all of its instruction into Arabic. Finally, the law truncated many administrative powers of the College, including the flexibility to accept students from non-government accredited schools and the ability to set admission standards, tuition fees, and enrollment levels.

President Alford Carleton met with the Syrian Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Ahmad Futayh on January 17, 1953 to discuss the issue. He was joined by Mr. Carl L. Nelson, the head of the Protestant Evangelical Mission at Deir-ez-Zor. They discussed the following key questions:

1) Would this mean that public events of the College could only be conducted in Arabic language? 2) Would the College be permitted to continue charging tuition at a rate higher than permitted by the government? 3) Would the College still be permitted to enroll students who had never obtained certification for primary level instruction from the government, who had attended non-accredited minority religious schools?

Secretary-General Futayh surprised the President by indicating that Aleppo College would be able to continue most if not all of its standard operations, even if they violated the decree. The College would be permitted to maintain its own standards of admission and rate of tuition. It would also be permitted to accept students without accreditation until 1957. Although the proceedings of the meeting were not placed in writing, Carleton “received a measure of satisfaction on all three points.” This “furnished,” in the opinion of Foreign Service official James M. Moose, “an additional illustration of this Government’s policy to modify by oral interpretation those of its acts which might create opposition, while at the same time retaining the offending order as a potential weapon.”
Thus, Aleppo College was permitted to continue normal operations. For the time being, the chief effect of the legislation would be to increase the amount of paperwork on the desk of the College’s administration. The true target of decree appeared to be Muslim semi-religious schools. According to State Department official Harlan Clark, it appeared as if the Syrian officials recognized “the value of these foreign schools and [were] willing to make concessions in particular cases to permit their continued operations.” He cautioned however, that in light of “Syria’s general distrust for foreign influences,” the “possibility of future severe restrictions on foreign educational institutions cannot be excluded.”

The “Mudarris Affair” and resistance to American educational efforts

City-wide protests against the College one year later would demonstrate the validity of Clark’s apprehensions. Although the College certainly held a position of high regard within Syrian society, it was also the symbol of a foreign religion and western power. As opposition to Protestant activities in Syria began to rise in the late 1950s, the College would increasingly depend upon the Syrian government for protection and stability. This in turn meant that the Ministry of Education in Damascus would begin to play a larger and larger role in the operation of the College’s daily affairs and procedures.

The December 1953 “Mudarris Affair” at Aleppo College paints a vivid picture of this reliance. Records of the incident are fully catalogued in several dispatches from the US Department of State, and illustrate the tenuous relationship between the foreign institutions in Aleppo and the local population. The following account is a summary of the events as described in a report collected by James S. Moose.
On December 4, 1953 students, faculty, and community members gathered outside of the College auditorium for the opening performance of the annual Arabic language play. This year, students from Aleppo College and its affiliated girls’ school would perform a rendition of “Thaalaba Al-Jahed,” a story that praised the hospitality and generosity of Arab culture. Ushers closed the doors on packed house, and the play began in the mid-evening.

Near the end of the play, one young man named Mahsin Mudarris began to whistle and make suggestive comments at several of the female students on stage. A student from Aleppo College sitting in the audience named John Zakaria Hanna confronted Mudarris and asked him to be quiet. Mudarris refused, and Hanna asked him to leave the auditorium. Angered by the suggestion, Muddaris physically dragged Hanna from the hall and struck him in eye. The men were separated by a chauffer who had been waiting in the lobby. College ushers promptly arrived on the scene to restrain the men. Several other students followed the ushers outside and a crowd quickly formed.

After exchanging verbal taunts, Muddaris stated that he would return to the hall to get his gloves and leave. The ushers released him, but as they did so he kicked Hanna two times in the abdomen. At this time, the play had finished, and audience members began to exit the hall. Startled by the crowd, Mudarris ran away from the building towards the city proper. In the process he fell into a barbed wire fence that surrounded the College and seriously injured himself. College administrators tended to his wounds, called the police, and transported him to a hospital.

Two days after the incident, rumors began to spread in several public Syrian institutions that Aleppo College had performed an anti-Arab pro-American play and had beaten Muddaris when he objected to its content. On December 6, approximately 70 government school
students visited the office of the editor of *Al-Watan*, a daily newspaper, and demanded that he report the story. After some hesitation, he printed the following headline on the front page of the December 7 edition: “Anti-Arab propaganda at the American College instigates protests, clashes and wounds last night between protesting students and Americanized students who shouted slogans against the Arabs.”

The reaction of the general public was almost immediate. At 11am on the morning of December 8, approximately 2,500 students marched on the College with the “ostensible intention of burning it to the ground.” Local authorities prevented the students from harming the campus and the following morning the Syrian government published an official version of the Muddaris incident that cleared the College of any wrongdoing. Rather than pacifying the crowd, however, the article only served to convince the students that the government had a role in the wrong doing.

They again marched on the College, and this time the police response was especially brutal. Several students were injured, and rifle fire could be heard throughout the city streets. After Tuesday’s riots, “widespread indignation grew” against the treatment of the students, and strikes broke out among government students, lawyers, and textile workers across the city.

Aleppo police forces would eventually diffuse the situation through multiple arrests, and an official public apology for the way they handled the situation. It would later be discovered that most of the riots had been instigated by the Arab Socialists Resurrection Party (ASRP) in Aleppo with the aid of several other underground communist organizations. Muddaris was reportedly both pro-communist and a partisan of the ASRP. While it was unlikely that the disturbance was planned by either group, the State Department believed there was little doubt
they had used the incident as an excuse to stir-up latent resentment for the College and the Syrian government.

In a report to the Ministry of Education two weeks later, the Faculty Council of Aleppo College would apologize for not maintaining order in the hallways, but defended their decision to perform the play. “We…carefully inquired of a large number of Muslim Arab students whether they heard anything or saw anything that was insulting or offensive to Islam, Arabism, and the state, and they have uniformly replied that they did not.”

The College closed the next Monday, on December 14, and did not open again until after the winter break on January 4, 1954. “It is significant to note that the initial reaction among the public in Aleppo to the strict measures of the local authorities was one of indignation against the regime and sympathy for the injured students. However, a late report from Aleppo indicates that public opinion has, as of the time of this writing (December 16), swung behind the government.”

Similar, but smaller outbursts of anger and distrust for the American enterprise in Syria would continue for the next two years. They often reflected the general socioeconomic divisions between communities that could afford private education and those that could not. Several American schools were shut down by the Syrian government, and others were placed under increased supervision.

*Administration and organization of the College 1954-1967*

Primary sources detailing the educational system in Syria in general and Aleppo College in particular from 1954 onwards are scarce. Personal interviews, correspondences, and a 1966
survey by the Middle Eastern Institute on “Education and Science in the Arab World” provide the last (to the author’s knowledge) available records on the College’s administrative history. While it must be admitted that these primary sources are influenced by the historical and sociological circumstances of their authors, they offer the clearest and most thorough examination of College activity during the time period.

The passage of decree No. 175 in 1952 forced the College to recertify the entirety of its operation with the government. The College obtained official permits to continue instruction in the junior college and secondary school, but Syrian officials denied the renewal of the College’s elementary school certification. To compensate, the College immediately placed its elementary school program under the care of the Arab Protestant Church. Later in the same year, the College was issued another permit, this time removing the institution’s official accreditation for higher learning. While not officially sanctioned by the Syrian government, the school continued to provide two years of college preparation to students who wished to pursue advanced bachelors degrees or professional training.

Despite this development, Aleppo College maintained its former aura of prestige and reputation for high academic standards until the early nineteen-sixties. The College boarding school still catered to a primarily Armenian Christian and middle-to-upper class population, primarily because the total cost of enrollment was “beyond the financial capabilities of the common people of Syria.”

By this time the school’s library had grown to a total of 13,000 volumes, primarily in English and Arabic, and reportedly grew by at least 200 books a year. Student continued to be involved in a plethora of extracurricular activities, despite the changes in the educational system. As it had been before, swimming at the College pool remained a favorite past time.
of the student body and local community. Dr. Chakmakijian, a graduate of the College now residing in Texas, described his experience at the College as “wonderful,” not only because of the education it provided but because of the special opportunities given to students to visit the homes of faculty members and be immersed in a fully American educational experience.  

The College provided early-level instruction in the fields of engineering, medicine, dentistry, law, education, allied professions, and secretarial skills. All courses (with the exception of the Arabic, French, and Armenian language classes) continued to be taught in English. Agricultural training was also provided at the behest of the American Board, and since 1951 the College operated a business and commerce department with an endowment from the Trans-Arabian pipeline.

Harkening back to the College’s missionary roots, students still attended mandatory bible instruction as part of their core curriculum. The majority of these religious lessons focused on the study of scripture and the reading of advanced religious texts in English. Direct proselytizing in class, especially with Muslims students, was discouraged. According to Ms. Nancy Giddens, a former teacher at the Girls School of Aleppo, few faculty members at the College were taught for “missionary reasons.” Non-Christian students, from her perspective, attended the College to obtain an education in English and receive an “American experience,” not a spiritual one. “Even today,” among alumni, she writes, “religious differences are not part of any discussion.”

Informal discussion of religion was encouraged in the reading room of the ground floor of the faculty dormitory. The room, or community center, contained Bibles and other Protestant religious texts printed in Arabic and English. Students visited the room, but often out of a
desire to learn another language, not expressly for spiritual purposes. Eager to learn both Arabic and English, Armenian students would visit the reading room and receive instruction by one or more faculty members after class hours. This form of indirect evangelism represented one of the only documented attempts to promote the gospel at the College.39

In the next four years, stricter enforcement of government laws brought private schools – Aleppo College in particular – into greater conformity with the government system. In 1958 the government ratified a second important education law to establish the University of Aleppo and again attempt to standardize the curriculum of all schools in the country. As these reforms made the “discrepancy between permit and practice” obvious, the government firmly restricted Aleppo College to six years of classes above the primary school level. As a result, the institution was forced to drop its courses in Armenian and French, limit the number of hours of instruction in English, and “practically eliminate” the science laboratory periods.40

The most notable impact of the standardization process, however, was the decrease in diversity at the College. The type of training now offered at Aleppo differed little from the curriculum of other schools in Syria and the Arab world generally. The College subsequently lost its international magnetism and preeminent junior college status. Students did not need to travel to Aleppo or pay the high tuition rates of the College when they could receive the same level of preparation at home. By the end of the nineteen-sixties, the majority of students hailed from Aleppo and “its immediate surroundings.”41 The College’s comparatively small enrollment and similarity of courses also meant that it now played only “a very minor role in the preparation of specialists.”42
In 1967, the Syrian education system was further nationalized through the passage of the Arab Cultural Unity Agreement with Jordan and Egypt. Under the stipulations of the treaty, the government introduced a sequential school ladder, standardized teacher requirements, and a completely uniform course curriculum. The education system in Syria was thus officially divided into six years of compulsory elementary education, three years of secondary education, and an additional three years of upper-secondary education.

The law also nationalized Aleppo College as an official institution of the state. Several Professors remained on staff during the transition to a Syrian administration, but what was left of the American faculty and representatives of the American Board returned to the United States. For the past thirty years, the College had “stood alone” in Syria as an institution of higher learning. Now, it had been reduced to little more than a secondary high school. The age of American education in Syria, and the Arab world in general, had come to a close.

CHAPTER FIVE:


8 Mattison, Frances C. ed. *A Survey of American Interests in the Middle East*. Washington: Middle East Institute, 1953: 79


10 Mattison, Frances C. ed. *A Survey of American Interests in the Middle East*. Washington: Middle East Institute, 1953: 79


15 *Ibid*, 1


17 *Ibid*, 2

18 *Ibid*, 1


20 *Ibid*, 2


23 *Ibid*, 3


Ibid, 4


Qubain, Fahim Issa, *Education and Science in the Arab World* (Ayer Publishing, 1979), 437

Ibid, 436


Ibid, 45

Qubain, Fahim Issa, *Education and Science in the Arab World* (Ayer Publishing, 1979), 437

44 Ibid
Postscript:

Forty Years Later: The Aleppo College Alumni Network Today

While the present-day institution of Aleppo College no longer possesses its former character or prestige, the testament to the institution’s academic achievement and successes continues to live through its alumni network. Board records indicate that as early as 1900 Central Turkey College enjoyed a strong and well organized network of alumni in a “position to do much” and give “generously for the future of their Alma Mater.”\textsuperscript{1} The network continued to be active through 1925 when approximately fifty alumni of the College decided they would organize an annual reunion and create a permanent organization to orchestrate the meeting.\textsuperscript{2}

The first modern Alumni reunion occurred 12 years ago in June 1996 in Salt Lake City and was hosted by Dee Dee Corradini. Many of the College’s alumni now live and work in the United States, and approximately thirty are involved in the College’s established alumni network. Ms Corradini began planning the reunion at the behest of her father, Horace Martin McMullen, a former missionary and President of the College after Alford Carleton. Unfortunately, her father did not live to see the reunion.\textsuperscript{3} But his wish to reconnect with Aleppo College alumni living in America was fully realized and has become an annual tradition.

The reunion now takes place at the homes of various alumni throughout the United States. Previous reunions have occurred in Dallas, California, Salt Lake City, Vancouver, and several other locations. The reunion serves a purely social function, allowing alumni to renew old friendships and reminiscence about their experiences over delicious meals.
The event is traditionally broken down into four days from Thursday to Sunday. Hosts of the event provide an opening dinner at their home, and the reunion is concluded with a final Sunday afternoon brunch. Saturday afternoon is reserved for the selection of the next year’s reunion location, usually through self-nomination. This year, the reunion will be held on October 31- November 1, 2008 in Dallas with room reservations at the Bradford Lincoln Park hotel.4

In addition to its yearly meeting, the alumni network also still collects and donates a yearly undisclosed amount of money to their Alma Mater. Several of the faculty members at the nationalized institution were denied pensions from the government and struggle to get by in old age. The small sums “make a huge difference in their lives.”5

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POSTSCRIPT:


3 Corradini, Dee Dee. Phone interview by author, March 19, 2008.


5 Corradini, Dee Dee. Phone interview by author, March 19, 2008.
Appendix A:

CONSTITUTION OF CENTRAL TURKEY COLLEGE IN AINTAB

Preamble

Whereas, the evangelical churches of Central Turkey urgently need a well educated native ministry, and well educated teachers for their high schools; and Whereas, those churches, at the Annual Meeting of their “Union” at Oorfa, in 1870, through their delegates, took the initiatory steps for improving the means of education; and Whereas, those churches have expressed an earnest desire for the early establishment of a first-class institution where young men can be educated for ministry and for other callings and professions, and have pledge themselves to contribute liberally, according to their ability, for the endowment of such an Institution; and Whereas, the Mission of the A. B. C. F. M. in Central Turkey has promised to co-operate with those churches in founding such an Institution; and Whereas, the A. B. C. F. M. at its Annual Meeting in Salem, Mass., in 1871, has also endorsed the plan of establishing such an Institution; and Whereas, said Institution, with the title of “THE CENTRAL TURKEY COLLEGE,” has been incorporated under the laws of the State of Massachusetts, U.S.A.; and Whereas, it is believed that said College will be a powerful instrument for good in the work of Reformation now going forward in the Turkish Empire; and Whereas, Aintab is considered the most eligible location for the College, on account of its healthy climate and its central position to the Turkish-speaking population south of the Taurus Mountains;

Therefore, for the general organization and management of “THE CENTRAL TURKEY COLLEGE,” there have been adopted the following Constitution and By-Laws.

Constitution

Article I. The primary object of the Central Turkey College is the thorough education of Pastor, Preachers, and Teachers for the evangelical churches of Central Turkey. A secondary, but important object, will be the general advance of true Science and Civilization among all the nationalities in that portion of the Turkish Empire. Hence the College shall always be a Christian College, conducted and governed according to the principles of evangelical Christianity.

Article II. There shall be a Board of sixteen Trustees and Managers, eight of them to be appointed by the “Union” of the evangelical churches of Central Turkey, to be known as the Board of Managers, and eight by the Prudential Committee of the A.B.C.F.M. in America, to
be known as the Board of Trustees. The “Board of Managers” shall form a distinct body, having a President, Secretary and Treasurer.*

**Article III.** The “Union,” at its first election, shall elect two members of the Board of Managers to serve for one year, two to serve two years, two to serve three years, and two to serve four years; and every year thereafter shall elect two members to serve in the places of those whose term of office has expired. For the first twenty-five years, four of the Managers so elected, shall be selected from missionaries of the A.B.C.F.M. in Turkey. In case of a vacancy by death, removal, or otherwise, in the Board of Managers, the unexpired term of the member or members so removed, shall be filled by the “Union” at its regular meeting. The President of the College shall be, ex-officio, President of the Board of Managers, but without the right to vote.

**Article IV.** The Prudential Committee shall elect eight Trustees to serve as a permanent Board in America, and shall fill any vacancies that may occur in the Board during a period of twenty-five years. After the expiration of this period, if in the judgment of the Prudential Committee, the College has become established upon a firm basis, and in accordance with the original intent, as defined by Article I, vacancies shall be filled by the “Union” in the same manner as in the case of the eight previously appointed; each new member, so elected, to serve for four years, provided, however, that the member of the Board of Trustees in America, who shall be appointed to serve as Treasurer, and his successors, shall be elected by the Prudential Committee during a period of fifty years.

**Article V.** The Board of Managers shall have the immediate control of the College. They will secure the necessary grounds and buildings, prepare the course of instruction, propose nominations for President and Professorships, fix the rates of tuition, make all necessary rules and regulations, and in general, decide all local questions affecting the interests of the College; it being understood always that this is to be Christian institution, in which the principles and practice of the Christian religion are to be taught and illustrated in the lives and characters of its teachers, and that no course of instruction shall be allowed which is not in accordance with the principles of evangelical Christianity.

**Article VI.** The Board of Managers shall make an Annual Report to the Trustees in the U.S.A., a copy of which shall be presented also at the Annual Meeting of the Cilicia Evangelical Union. This report shall give an account of all the funds received and expended, of the studies pursued during the year, and of the general condition of the College.

**Article VII.** The Trustees shall confirm nominations for President and Professorships, if they approve of the same. They shall also hold the right to remove such officers, and in case of a vacancy, if nominations approved by the Trustees are not made within a year from the time said vacancy occurs, the Trustees may appoint such officers. The Trustees shall determine the salaries of officers and instructors, after receiving recommendations on the subject from the Board of Managers.

* The Rules and By-Laws of said Board shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees in America for their approval.
Article VIII. The Board of Trustees shall be the ultimate authority in all the affairs of the institution, but their action in local matters shall be solely through the Board of Managers, and all cases referred to the Trustees must be presented through the Board of Managers, and with the sanction of that Board.

Article IX. The Trustees in America will hold and direct the use of all funds raised in the U.S.A. or elsewhere than in Turkey, whether to be given as grants in aid of buildings and the necessary equipment, or to be held as a permanent fund, the income only to be applied for the support of officers or scholarships. In the disbursement of all funds they will be advised by the Board of Managers, but in making grants they will be expected to act in accordance with the intent of Article V.

Article X. In case the Board of Managers are equally divided on important questions, an appeal may be made to the Trustees in America for final decision; or in any case of disagreement, a minority of three may make such an appeal. The Trustees will be expected, also, to offer any suggestions or counsel, as occasion may require.

Article XI. The Board of Managers shall have charge of all funds raised in Turkey, (in addition to the 160,000 piasters raised by the Union,) whether such funds are to be applied in the purchase of a lot, in the erection of buildings, or invested as a permanent fund, the income only of which shall be used for the support of teachers, and in case of a balance on hand, for the support of Professors.

Article XII. At the expiration of fifty years from January, 1875, the control of all funds shall be transferred to the Board of Managers in Turkey, provided that in the judgment of the Prudential Committee the Institution is fulfilling, and is likely to fulfill, its original purpose as defined in Article I. Otherwise, the funds shall be transferred to other institutions within the bounds of the present Central Turkey Mission, for the general purposes of evangelical Protestant education, subject to such conditions as the Prudential Committee may desire. In the case of such transfer, the funds invested in Turkey shall be under the control of the evangelical churches in the above-named mission field.

Whenever, in due course of time, the number of Trustees in America shall be less than three, all the care and responsibility for the conduct of the Institution shall be transferred to the Board of Managers in Turkey, with exception of funds invested in America, which shall be held and transferred as above stated.

Article XIII. The lot on which the College buildings shall be erected, those buildings themselves, and all the real estate belonging to the College, shall be held in trust by the Board of Managers for the period of twenty-five years. After that period, the real estate of the College shall be held in trust, as stated Article XI, by the Board of Managers, except one-tenth, which shall be held by American citizens, who shall be chosen by the Board of Managers.

Article XIV. The Faculty shall consist of the President and Professors of the College. In addition to their duties as instructors, they shall be invested with authority over the internal
affairs of the College, it being always understood, however, that they shall be at liberty to seek advice and counsel from the Board of Managers, and to consult with them in regard to course of study.

Article XV. This Constitution and the By-Laws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Trustees at an Annual Meeting, or at a meeting regularly called for this purpose, full notice of the proposed amendments having been given at a previous meeting.

By-Laws

1. An Annual Meeting of the Board of Managers shall be held in connection with the Annual Meeting of the evangelical churches of the Cilicia Union, due notice of the time and place having been given by the Secretary two weeks in advance. A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

2. Special meetings of the Managers may be called by the President and Secretary, on going two weeks’ notice of the time and place, and a statement of the business to be considered at such meetings.

3. An Annual Meeting of the Trustees in America shall be held in the month of January each year, one week’s notice thereof being given by the Secretary.

4. Special meetings of the Trustees may be called in the same manner by the President and Secretary, whenever deemed necessary.

5. Three members of the Board of Trustees shall be sufficient for the transaction of any business at a meeting duly called.

6. The officers of the Boards shall be elected each year at Annual Meetings of said Boards.

7. The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall constitute an Executive Committee, with authority to make all needful arrangements to raise and invest funds, and to attend to necessary details of business in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the direction of the Trustees. The Executive Committee shall render a report at each Annual Meeting, and at such other times as the Board of Trustees shall direct.
Appendix B:

CONSTITUTION OF ALEPPO COLLEGE

AS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGERS IN 1928 AND 1929
subject to final vote of ratification

I. NAME. The name of the institution for the control and administration of which provision is hereinafter made shall be ALEPPO COLLEGE, the qualification EVANGELICAL being added, when further designation is necessary.

II. PURPOSE.
1. The primary purpose of Aleppo College shall be the thorough education of young men for spiritual leadership and for service to society, continuing the work of Central Turkey College, founded at Aintab, Turkey, in 1876.
2. A secondary but important purpose shall be the encouragement of true science and civilization, generally.
3. Hence, the college shall always be a Christian college governed and conducted in the spirit of evangelical Christianity.
4. Also, the college shall always be open to any young man of good character and adequate preparation, without regard to race, nationality or creed.

III. ORGANIZATION.
Responsibility for the affairs of Aleppo College shall be vested in four bodies, as hereinafter set forth: viz.
   a. The Evangelical Union
   b. The Board of Managers
   c. The Board of Trustees
   d. The Faculty

IV. THE EVANGELICAL UNION.
The Evangelical Union, formerly known as the Cilicia Evangelical Union, shall elect the members of the Board of Managers as hereinafter provided, shall receive the Board of Managers, and shall be the final court of appeal in all matters relation to the college.

(Responsibility for the College was accepted by the Evangelical Union, April 16, 1928.)
V. THE BOARD OF MANAGERS.
1. The Board of Managers shall consist of ten members, six native and four foreign, and of such further members as the Evangelical Union, on recommendation of the Board of Managers, may determine.
2. The members of the Board of Managers shall be elected by the Evangelical Union at its annual meetings, for terms of four years each, following the present order of election (1928), vacancies occurring irregularly to be filled for the unexpired term.
3. No employee of the College shall be eligible to election as a member of the Board of Managers.
4. The president of the College shall be the president of the Board of Managers ex officio, but without vote.
5. The Board of Managers shall constitute the official and responsible corporate body of Aleppo College.
6. The Board of Managers shall hold, and shall be responsible for and administer, all funds and all properties belonging to the college and all donations made for its use, the control of which is not vested specifically in the “Trustees of Donations for Education in …………”, or elsewhere; provided that, in the case of real estate, the legal title to property held by the Board of Managers may be in the name of the Board of Managers of Aleppo College, or in the name of some other person or persons, at the discretion of the Board of Managers.
7. The Board of Managers shall determine the course of study to be pursued in the College and shall be responsible for its application, shall elect the president with the confirmatory vote of the Board of Trustees, shall appoint the professors and shall fix the rates of tuition, and shall make all necessary general rules and regulations for the institution; it being understood that the college is always to be a Christian college, as it stated in Article II of this constitution.
8. The Board of Managers shall report in writing to the Evangelical Union at the annual meetings of the Union, setting forth the educational, financial and general condition of the institution.
9. The Board of Managers shall transmit to the Trustees of Donations for Education in ………… each year, in time for presentation at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, Managers, and an abstract of the action taken by the Board of Managers during the last twelve months.

VI. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.
1. The TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS OF EDUCATION IN ………… (legal title), chartered by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, United States of America, March 27, 1874, are recognized as forming an integral part of the organization of Aleppo College.
2. The membership of the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ………….. and the method of the election of its members are determined by the By-Laws of that body.
3. It is anticipated that the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ………….. “shall continue to be responsible for investing and safe-guarding of the funds of the College in America, for so long a time as the Prudential Committee
of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions shall see fit,” as provided in Article VII, paragraph 2, of the constitution of Central Turkey College, as amended in 1909.

4. The confirmatory vote of the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ............. shall be necessary to the election of the president of the college and to the appointment of the head physician of the hospital.

5. Relationships between the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN .............and the BOARD OF MANAGERS OF ALEPPO COLLEGE shall be as defined in the Articles of Co-operation appended to this constitution.

VII. THE FACULTY.
1. The Faculty of the College shall consist of the president, professors and other permanent employees of the college.
2. The Faculty shall have control over all the internal affairs of the college, being responsible for the same to the Board of Managers, through the president.
3. The Faculty shall always be at liberty to seek advice from the Board of Managers, and may be advised by that Board.

VIII. AMENDMENT
This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Evangelical Union at any annual meeting, upon the proposal of the Board of Managers, notice of the proposed amendment having been given to the executive committee of the Evangelical Union in writing, at least one month in advance.

in all eight articles.
ARTICLES OF CO-OPERATION.

1. The TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ........ confirm the relationship and accept the duties set forth in Article VI, paragraphs 1, 3, 4, and 5, of the foregoing constitution of Aleppo College.

2. At the request of the Board of Managers of Aleppo College (formerly, Board of Managers of Central Turkey College) and of the Evangelical Union, the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ........ have relieved said Board of Managers temporarily of all responsibility for the administration of the Azariah Smith Memorial Hospital at Aintab.

3. The TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ........ have asked the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to conduct temporarily the Azariah Smith Memorial Hospital at Aintab, and have instructed the treasurer of the Board of Trustees to pay over to the American Board for this purpose, until further notice, all the income from the Hospital funds.

4. The TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ........ have recorded (December 1, 1927) their purpose of “passing over to the institution in Aleppo the income of endowment funds, aside from the income belonging to the Hospital, for so long a period as the Aleppo institution seem to be fulfilling the general aims of Central Turkey College, as it existed at Aintab formerly, and maintains what appears to this Board a sound financial policy.

5. Amendments to these articles may be made only by the reciprocal action of the TRUSTEES OF DONATIONS FOR EDUCATION IN ........ and the BOARD OF MANAGERS OF ALEPPO COLLEGE, with the consenting vote of the EVNGELICAL UNION.

Five articles in all.
Appendix C:
MAPS & CHARTS

FIGURE A.1
MAP OF ANATOLIA

The AMERICAN BOARD
The MISSIONS 1810 to 1860

Missions existing in 1860 are marked

Missions previously in existence, and either closed or transferred are marked

The political boundaries on the map are from the year 1860.

Western Turkey: 1819-Present
Smyrna: 1820 - Present
Palestine: 1821-1845
Malta 1822: – 1833
Syria 1823: – (1870)
Nestorian: 1834 – 1840
Cyprus: 1834 – 1840
Central Turkey: 1847 – Present
European Turkey: 1858 – Present
Eastern Turkey: 1855 – Present
Assyria: 1850 - 1860


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FIGURE A.2
MAP OF ANATOLIA

The OTTOMAN EMPIRE & the Near East
Circa 1914
Heavy line indicated boundary of the Ottoman Empire.

FIGURE A.3
MAP OF ANATOLIA

AMERICAN BOARD Mission Fields Stations Colleges
Circa 1914

FIGURE A.4
MAP OF ANATOLIA

The AMERICAN BOARD
ASIATIC TURKEY
Including EASTERN, CENTRAL, AND WESTERN TURKEY MISSIONS

### TABLE A.6

**CHART OF ABCFM EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missions</th>
<th>When Established</th>
<th>No. of Missions</th>
<th>Organized Churches</th>
<th>Planned Visits to Converts</th>
<th>Established Missions</th>
<th>Church Statistics</th>
<th>Native Contributions</th>
<th>Native Laborers</th>
<th>Educational Statistics</th>
<th>Medical Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W. Central Africa</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>9,075</td>
<td>4,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>16,620</td>
<td>2,305</td>
<td>10,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulu Branch</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodesia Branch</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Turkey</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1,454</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4,047</td>
<td>2,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Turkey</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5,581</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>15,228</td>
<td>24,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Turkey</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Turkey</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>14,135</td>
<td>7,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>70,406</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>1,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madura</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>9,052</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>21,276</td>
<td>8,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceylon</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2,825</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1,231</td>
<td>4,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1,966</td>
<td>5,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,663</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>6,206</td>
<td>2,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>1,718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>15,354</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>5,126</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>6,013</td>
<td>1,84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>3,365</td>
<td>1,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7,200</td>
<td>7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 1 of whom nine are physicians.
- 2 of whom eight are physicians.
- 3 of whom six are physicians.

*4 The Kumi-oi churches and the Japan Mission are too closely allied to permit of clean separation in statistics.

*5 These statistics are largely those of the previous year.

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**STATISTICAL VIEW OF THE WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS OF THE AMERICAN BOARD circa 1909-1910**


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**Note:**
- Statistical data has been abstracted from the original document for the purpose of this transcription. The full table is presented to illustrate the extensive range and detail of mission activities documented during this period.
### TABLE A.7
Chart of Public, Private, & Foreign Schools & Their Enrollments on Various Levels, Syria, circa 1944-45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>Public Schools</th>
<th>Private Schools</th>
<th>Foreign Schools</th>
<th>Grand Total, Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Schools</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Percent</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>63,755</td>
<td>21,785</td>
<td>85,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Percent</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4,557</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>6,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Percent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>1,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Percent</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>69,124</td>
<td>23,474</td>
<td>92,598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data supplied by the Ministry of Education. See also Sa'id al-Husri, Reports on the Conditions of Education in Syria during the Year 1941 (Damascus: Government Press, 1946)*

### TABLE A.8
Chart of Foreign Schools and Enrollment, classified According to Nationality of Governing Body, Syria, circa 1944-45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Primary Schools</th>
<th>Secondary Schools</th>
<th>Vocational Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Schools</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>8,179</td>
<td>8,655</td>
<td>16,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,273</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>1,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>9,942</td>
<td>9,936</td>
<td>19,878</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE A.9
CHART FROM ALEPPO COLLEGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program of Studies</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-School Section</td>
<td>Aleppo College</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circa 1945-46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>7th Year</th>
<th>8th Year</th>
<th>9th Year</th>
<th>10th Year</th>
<th>11th Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic for Armenians</td>
<td>(5)*</td>
<td>(5)*</td>
<td>(5)*</td>
<td>(5)*</td>
<td>(5)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study period</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Omitted from totals.*

Appendix D:

ASSORTED PICTURES

MISSIONARIES IN BEIRUT, 1871

Front Row: Dr. Van Dyck, S.E. Calhoun, W.W. Eddy, D. Bliss, William M. Thomson

Jessup, Henry Harris, Fifty-three Years in Syria (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), 412

Central Turkey College, c. 1874

Official Header of the College

AZARIAH SMITH HOSPITAL AT AINTAB
Front Entrance


NURSE IN THE BABIES'WARD
Hospital at Aintab


Central Turkey College, c. 1900
New College Building

American Board of Commissioner for Foreign Missions. “The Missionary Herald.” APS Online Vol. 96 No. 6 (June 1900): 225 “Central Turkey College at Aintab” by Judson Smith
President Fuller with several faculty & students, c. 1900

Central Turkey College


AMERICAN PRESS IN BEIRUT

Machine Room

Jessup, Henry Harris, Fifty-three Years in Syria (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), 59
CENTRAL TURKEY COLLEGE
FUNDRAISING POSTER, circa 1914
Congregationalist & Christian World

"Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions." Microfilm. ABC 16:9.1.6.1.
Unit 5, Reel 674, Vol. 2, Part 1. No. 402

ARMENIAN SYRIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE POSTER, circa 1917
Courtesy Missionary Research Library

Grabill, Joseph L. Protestant Diplomacy in the Near East (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 179

ARMENIAN BOYS IN RELIEF ORPHANAGE, circa 1919
Marash, United Church Board for World Ministries and International

Grabill, Joseph L. Protestant Diplomacy in the Near East (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 179
ALEPPO COLLEGE, ALEPPO SYRIA circa 1966

Entrance to the main classroom building

Dr. Alford Carleton, circa 1930
Graduate from Oberlin College, President of Aleppo College from 1937-1954

Dr. Alford Carleton, circa 1960s
As Executive vice president of the ABCFM

Mr. Paul Votaw, c. 1951
Professor and Missionary at Aleppo College

Matilde Sayegh, c. 1951
First female student enrolled in Aleppo College.

AK Rafeq, c. 1951
Student at Aleppo College, later Professor at College of William & Mary in Virginia

“The Commencement Number of the Literary Review of Aleppo College, 1951.” (Aleppo: Maronite Press, 1951) 11 (pp 4,5 for Rafeq & Sayegh respectively)
Chemistry Lab, c. 1951
Aleppo College

“The Commencement Number of the Literary Review of Aleppo College, 1951.”
(Aleppo: Maronite Press, 1951) 34

Aleppo College Alumni Reunion, 2007
Bremerton, near Puget Sound, Washington

Courtesy of Nancy Giddens

Aleppo College Alumni Reunion, 2007
Bremerton, near Puget Sound, Washington

Courtesy of Nancy Giddens
SATTELITE PHOTOGRAPH OF ALEPPO COLLEGE, circa 2006

Kader-Rasfari, Abdul, “Aleppo College School,” Google Earth Communities. 5/22/06
<http://bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/showflat.php/Cat/0/Number/424710/Main/424710>
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Records of the Department of State relating to the internal affairs of Turkey, 1910-29. Microfilm. Washington: The National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1961


