BETWEEN THE GREAT IDEA AND KEMALISM:

THE YMCA AT İZMIR IN THE 1920s

By

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ABSTRACT

Despite the voluminous historical literature concerning American missionary efforts in the Middle East during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the international work of the Young Men's Christian Association has figured only marginally into most of these accounts. Similarly, the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922 and the "Great Fire" of İzmir, which concluded that conflict and brought an end to Hellenism in Asia Minor, remain largely disregarded episodes in the English-language historiography of the immediate post-World War I era. This thesis will address the place of İzmir between the Greek "Great Idea" and Kemalist "Anatolianism," the YMCA's efforts to establish itself in this contested city during the Greco-Turkish conflict, the vital role of the YMCA secretary Asa K. Jennings in evacuating Greek and Armenian refugees during the fire, and conclude with Jennings' subsequent drive to continue YMCA work in Turkey under the nascent Kemalist Republic of Turkey.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Although in the United States the Young Men's Christian Organization is no longer identified primarily as an institution devoted to the spread of the Gospel, its origins were explicitly religious, dedicated to both societal reform and proselytizing. The fact that YMCAs operate today in over one hundred and fifty countries is a testament to the fundamentally missionary character of this organization. The 1844 "Paris Basis," the founding document of the World Alliance of YMCAs, stated succinctly:

> The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite these young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men.[1]

That the YMCA today, especially as an international institution, is much more dedicated

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[1] C. Howard Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America* (New York: Association Press, 1951), 78.

to issues of social justice like poverty, human rights, and AIDS relief, shows how ambiguous the phrase "the extension of His Kingdom" is, and how its interpretation has changed over the past century and a half, which is largely the result of German "Higher Criticism," theological liberalism, and the rise of the Social Gospel.

The appearance of a progressive theology was not the only catalyst for this evolution in Christian missions in general, and the YMCA in particular. Inherent in the millennialism endemic to most varieties of Protestantism was an urgency to spread the Gospel not found in Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and "high-church" amillennial Protestant denominations. Pre-millennialists stressed the need to save as many souls as quickly as possible before the return of Christ and His establishment of a thousand-year kingdom on earth; post-millennialists posed that Christ would only return after believers had "conquered" the world through evangelization and established Christ's reign for him. In both cases, the urgency to spread the Gospel was pressing, and many of the early nineteenth-century missionaries fully anticipated the world's non-Christians to be receptive to Christianity.

The world proved to be less amenable to the tenets of Protestant Christianity than many missionaries had hoped. While each foreign mission had its own unique challenges, the lands of Islam proved especially recalcitrant to their efforts. Apostasy was forbidden to Muslims by Qur'anic law upon pain of death; Oriental Jews, the initial target of the missionaries, were mostly unresponsive to Christianity; and eastern Christians faced ostracism within their communities and excommunication from their churches for even entertaining Protestant ideas.

The paltry conversionary results of the missionaries' first several decades in the Islamic world precipitated the question of whether to continue the focus on evangelization, or to modify their efforts and pursue humanitarian and educational work among the unconverted. The YMCA was very much a participant in this question. By the turn of the century, its leaders such as John Mott and Sherwood Eddy had placed it on a course away from an evangelistic emphasis and toward a "civilizing" one, stressing education and instilling morals over the spread of the Gospel and conversion.

Institutions like the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (hereafter, ABCFM) had operated within the Ottoman Empire since the early nineteenth century. The YMCA, however, was a latecomer to the Sultan's domains, with its first branch opening in İstanbul on the eve of the First World War. Similar to other American missionary groups though, the YMCA targeted Ottoman Armenians, Christian Arabs, and Ottoman Greeks. Shortly after the conclusion of World War One, the YMCA established a small branch at İzmir (or Smyrna), whose population at the time was so overwhelmingly Christian and Greek that the city was derogatorily termed *giaour İzmir* or "İzmir of the infidels" by the Turks of the empire.[2]

İzmir's Christian population had made the city something of a beachhead for Western missionary penetration of the Ottoman Empire, with the International College, a girls' school, and the YWCA all antedating the establishment of the YMCA in 1919. Despite lacking the deep roots of other missionary institutions in the city, the case of İzmir's YMCA is intriguing for several reasons. First, Asa K. Jennings, a YMCA employee in İzmir in 1922, was instrumental in engineering the rescue of a great number

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[2] Florence A. Fensham, Mary I. Lyman and H.B. Humphrey, *A Modern Crusade in the Turkish Empire* (Chicago: Woman's Board Mission of the Interior, 1908), 43.

of the city's Christian population when the town was put to fire at the end of the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922, a largely forgotten act of heroism in a pivotal but often overlooked conflict. Second, with Jennings' help and largely because of the goodwill engendered by his assistance in ridding İzmir of its Christians, the YMCA was one of the few foreign institutions allowed to continue operating in Turkey after the establishment of a secular and nationalist republic in 1923. Finally, this effort to continue missionary work in Turkey, though of a decidedly de-Christianized nature, accentuated the tension between the evangelistic and humanitarian wings of the missionary movement.

II. THE YMCA AND THE İZMIR FIRE: THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Foreign Service and the YMCA

It is unsurprising that Jennings' name and the work of the YMCA in Turkey are not widely known, as there is a conspicuous dearth of book-length works in English concerning its history. Despite a voluminous literature by the ABCFM's missionaries, and substantial work written about the missionary impact upon individual minority groups of the empire, notably the Arabs and Armenians, to date no historian has produced a monograph on the missionary impact in Turkey during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[3]

The most significant text, and essentially the only one, to examine the foreign work of the YMCA in a comprehensive manner is Kenneth Scott Latourette's mid-

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[3] Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Mission as a Factor of Change in Turkey (Nineteenth to First Half of Twentieth Century)," *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* Vol. 13, No. 4 (2002): 391.

century study, *World Service: A History of the Foreign Work and World Service of the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and Canada* (1957). Latourette was both a scholar of Christian missions in the Far East and the history of global Christianity. He also served for a time on the International Committee of the YMCA, making him doubly qualified to write such a history. The scope of the book is wide-ranging and the detail contained in Latourette's country by country case studies is exhaustive. His book is dated though, and only chronicles the YMCA's foreign efforts with a minimum of critical analysis, undoubtedly a reflection of the time period in which it was written.

Similar to Latourette's *World Service* is Clarence Prouty Shedd's *History of the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations* (1955). This text, despite having an international scope, is not concerned with the content of the YMCA's work in foreign countries. Rather, it traces the development of the institution of the World Alliance itself, an international body of North American and European YMCAs. Shedd's focus was institutional, and he was more preoccupied with the affairs of YMCA executives at World Alliance conferences than with the effect those gatherings had upon individual YMCAs throughout the world.

Finally, though Charles Howard Hopkins' *History of the Y.M.C.A. in North America* does not have an international scope, and refrains from examining YMCAs outside of the United States and Canada, his work remains indispensable as a general reference book concerning the development of the YMCA. The book has particular value in tracing the YMCA's relation to the evolution of American Christianity over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the apex of the missionary movement in the

United States. Because the YMCA movement was so definitively a missionary one though, Hopkins could not refrain from addressing it as such. In several instances, he explains the push to expand overseas, without going into detail on the specifics of foreign ventures.[4]

These works comprise the most comprehensive accounts of the YMCA's evolution, and thus are indispensable to any historical research concerning it. Nonetheless, they display a common set of characteristics that serve to limit their usefulness today. First, and most obvious, is the fact that all of these writings date from the 1950s. Not only does the past fifty years of the YMCA's work not figure into these accounts, but the style of scholarship in these books is antiquated. *History of the Y.M.C.A. in North America, World Service,* and *History of the World Alliance* are all meticulously-researched, factual accounts of the YMCA, yet all lack a thematic or analytical framework within which to interpret the organization's growth. Also, the authors' accounts of the YMCA display highly sympathetic portraits. As all three were either associated with the YMCA or had elsewhere written admiringly of it, and the three books were published under the YMCA's auspices, the objectivity of their work is questionable at best.[5]

East Asia proved to be the earliest and most resiliently fruitful area of study for the YMCA's foreign work after the accounts of the 1950s. Sinologist John K Fairbank's 1969 call to write the missionary, the "invisible man of American history," into accounts

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[4] Hopkins, *History of the Y.M.C.A. in North America*, 309-360.

[5] As stated above, Latourette had himself served on the International Committee of the YMCA. C. Howard Hopkins would later go on to write a highly sympathetic biography of John Mott, and Clarence Prouty Shedd, a scholar or religion and education, was also an advocate of the YMCA. See Clarence Prouty Shedd, "Open Doors for Religion in the State University." *The Journal of Higher Education* Vol. 30, No. 4 (Apr., 1959): 227.

of China has begun to be met by historians interested in the YMCA. Given the voluminous material in the organization's archives concerning China and the Far East though, much work is to be done before we have anything close to a full picture of its work there.[6]

Shirley Garret's *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926* (1970) and Jun Xing's *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA in China, 1919-1937* (1996) represent the most significant works on the YMCA's foreign mission to China in the early twentieth century, with Jon Thares Davidann's *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan, 1890-1930* (1998) accomplishing the same for Japan. Common to all three books is a marked move away from the evangelistic and institutional focus that characterized Hopkins' and Latourette's work, and an effort toward depicting the YMCA's foreign work in the contexts in which it was operating. Also common to all three books is an emphasis on the primacy of the Social Gospel in the YMCA's mission, with its theological dexterity and potential to be synthesized with the Confucian order of both Japan and China.[7] These works are also notable in pointing out, contra the landmark works of the 1950s, that the shift to a social service-oriented mission was as much the result of the ineffectiveness of traditional proselytism in non-Western settings as it was a function of the shifting theological currents in the United States.[8]

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[6] John K. Fairbank, "Assignment for the 1970s," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 74, No. 3 (Feb., 1969): 877.

[7] Jon Thares Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan: 1890-1930* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1998), 23-24.

East Asia was viewed by many missionary societies as the most fertile region for planting the seed of the Gospel, and by 1920 over half of the missionaries operating there were American. It is therefore unsurprising that the quantity of historical scholarship concerning the Association's work in East Asia outnumbers that concerning the rest of the non-Western world.[9] It is perhaps because the YMCA arrived relatively late in the Middle East and managed to maintain only a small presence in the Islamic world over the twentieth century that there remains a paucity of scholarship concerning its efforts there. Indeed, the only work dedicated to the organization's endeavors there is a 2006 dissertation concerning the architecture of the YMCA's Jerusalem facility in the context of multiculturalism, a topic only tangentially related to the YMCA's actual work in Palestine. Similar is Kenneth Steuer's *Pursuit of an Unparalleled Opportunity: The American YMCA and Prisoner of War Diplomacy Among the Central Power Nations During World War I, 1914-1923* (2009). The YMCA had for all intents and purposes shut down in the Ottoman Empire at the end of 1915, and by the following year D.J. Van Bommel was its only secretary working in the empire. Steuer's story of the YMCA's "war work" in the Islamic world then is primarily one of the negotiations between the Association and the Ottoman government to establish a War Prisoners' Aid program.[10] Apart from relief efforts to British and Indian troops during the Mesopotamia and

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[8] William R. Hutchison, "Missionaries on the 'Middle Ground' in China," *Reviews in American History* Vol. 25, No. 4 (Dec., 1997): 633; Jon Thares Davidann, "The American YMCA in Meiji Japan: God's Work Gone Awry," *Journal of World History* Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring, 1995): 110.

[9] Albert Feuerwerk, "The Foreign Presence in China" in *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 12: Republican China, 1912-1949 Part I*, eds. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 169.

[10] Kenneth Steuer, *Pursuit of an Unparalleled Opportunity: The American YMCA and Prisoner of-War DiplomacyAmong the Central Power Nations During World War One* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), http://www.gutenberg-e.org/steuer/steuer.ch15.html (accessed February 5, 2010).

Palestine campaigns, the YMCA lay mostly dormant during the Great War in the Islamic World. Yet the account of the YMCA in *The Pursuit of an Unparalleled Opportunity* remains as one of a precious few published works depicting the YMCA's work in the Middle East at all.

THE İZMIR DISASTER

The YMCA's missionary labors in the Middle East have been overshadowed by its work in China or subsumed under the work of the American Board, which was the dominant missionary force in the Middle East for over a century. However, the association did participate in a pivotal yet overlooked episode in Turkish history, namely, the İzmir fire in September of 1922, which incinerated most of the city and precipitated the exodus of its Greek and Armenian populations. And while the YMCA's invisibility in the historiography of American missions in the Middle East is largely the result of simple omission, the episode of the İzmir fire has been anything but innocently passed over. The city's destruction often has been either deliberately purged from the historical record, or bent to serve a Turkish nationalist discourse unconcerned with the human catastrophe embodied in the event.[11]

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's enduring "cult-of-personality" status as the central figure of the Republic of Turkey's history has created a situation in which to question him, or the state-sponsored Turkishness he tried to forge, can effectively end a public intellectual's career in Turkey.[12] Therefore, historical issues involving minorities that

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[11] Onur Yıldırım, "The 1923 Population Exchange, Refugees and National Historiographies in Greece and Turkey," *East European Quarterly* Vol. 40, No. 1 (March, 2006): 46.

[12] Howard Eissenstaat, "History and Historiography: Politics and Memory in the Turkish Republic," *Contemporary European History* Vol. 12, No. 1 (Feb., 2003): 94. Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code, enacted in 2005, made it a crime to "insult Turkishness."

reflect poorly upon Turkey's leaders or government, particularly the ongoing Kurdish issue and the Ottoman Armenians' fate during the First World War, have often been ignored or overlooked in deference to the Turkish state's official line.[13]

Mustafa Kemal himself perhaps set the precedent for Turkish silence on the İzmir affair in his famous six-day speech in 1927. He stated that "our armies, which were already on the quais at Smyrna, had reached the first aim which I had indicated to them when I pointed them to the Mediterranean," and that he was "proud and ever happy to be the son of a nation and the commander of an army that can perform such a deed."[14] He made no mention of İzmir's destruction, and the city's capture was simply the concluding act to the bitter war with the Greeks. Turkish historians in the republican era have, on the whole, followed a strict Kemalist line, glorifying the Turkish nation and the secular republic Mustafa Kemal created, and not questioning the Turkish Republic's, and indeed the Ottoman Empire's, often dubious record concerning minorities.

The major English-language historians of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, then, have on the whole toed the Kemalist line concerning the tragedies perpetrated against the minorities during both eras. The 1990s neo-Ottomanist revival in the political sphere has undoubtedly resulted in historians of Turkey moving away from the notion of everything Ottoman being negative with everything republican being positive, but few historians of Turkey have tackled the Armenian question or the impact

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[13] Fatma Müge Göçek, "Reading Genocide: Turkish Historiography on the Armenian Deportations and Massacres," in *Middle East Historiographies*, eds. Israel Gershoni, Amy Singer, and Y. Hakan Erdem (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006), 109.

[14] Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha, *A Speech Delivered by Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, October, 1927.* (Leipzig: K.F. Koehler, 1929), 567-568.

of the population exchanges of the Treaty of Lausanne.[15] The same largely holds true for the İzmir affair. For example, Bernard Lewis' *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (1961) echoes Mustafa Kemal's 1927 speech in both its brevity and interpretation, stating tersely, "The Turks won a crushing victory at Dumlupınar and, driving the Greeks before them, reoccupied İzmir on 9 September, thus completing the reconquest of Anatolia."[16] Unlike Lewis, Stanford and Ezel Kural Shaw's *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Vol. II* acknowledges the burning of the city, but almost immediately turns polemic, asserting that the real "atrocity" was the allegation that the "victorious Turkish army was responsible for burning the conquered second city of the old empire."[17] Even Erik J. Zürcher's *Turkey: A Modern History* (1993), a work praised for its openness in discussing Ottoman minority issues, mentions the event only in the context of the overall physical destruction of the Greco-Turkish conflict.[18] And though the aforementioned works represent only a tiny fraction of the English-language histories of modern Turkey, Lewis, Shaw, and Zürcher's books are of the most influential on the subject, and indicate an intentional historical amnesia concerning what happened at İzmir in 1922.

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[15] Yılmaz Çolak, "Ottomanism vs. Kemalism: Collective Memory and Cultural Pluralism in 1990s Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 42, No. 4 (July, 2006): 590. Turkish historian Taner Akçam stands as a notable exception. See *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC., 2006.

[16] Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey.* 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 254.

[17] Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Vol. II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic-The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 363.

[18] Donald Quataert, "Review of *Turkey: A Modern History* by Erik J. Zürcher," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 22, No. 1/2 (1995): 190; Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1998), 172.

Despite the American Consul George Horton's damning account of the destruction of the city in *Blight of Asia* and Ernest Hemingway's 1930 short story "On the Quai at Smyrna," novelist Henry Miller nonetheless proclaimed in his 1941 travelogue of Greece, *The Colossus of Maroussi*, that "the Smyrna affair, which far outweighs the horrors of the First World War or even the present one has been somehow soft-pedaled and almost expunged from the memory of present day man."[19] Though Miller was writing only twenty years after the fire, the disaster at İzmir, much like the Armenian massacres of 1915, had largely disappeared from the public consciousness. It would be another thirty years before the city's destruction would finally be registered in the historical record in a manner befitting the magnitude of the event.

Marjorie Housepian Dobkin's *Smyrna, 1922: The Destruction of a City* (1971) was the first work of history to examine the İzmir affair with any depth rather than curtly describing it as the coda to the Greco-Turkish conflict. In spite its age, the book remains the most significant exposition on how the events of September, 1922, came to pass, and offers an excellent introduction to the conflict between the Greeks and Turks in Asia Minor between 1919 and 1922. *Smyrna, 1922* was exhaustively researched, drawing from the national archives in both the United States and London, the personal papers of the significant figures of the event such as US Consul George Horton and US High Commissioner Admiral Mark Bristol, and interviews with several persons who witnessed the fire. Dobkin's portrait is a comprehensive one, and it remains the standard work on the topic.

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[19] Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi* (New York: New Directions Books, 1975), 172.

Its thoroughness and landmark status notwithstanding, Housepian Dobkin's account is hardly a disinterested one concerning the relationship between the Turks and Christian minorities of both the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic. In her introduction to *Smyrna, 1922*, Dobkin professes to "finding as many Turkish and pro-Turkish sources as possible, especially as these touch on the two most sensitive areas—the treatment of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915-1916 and events in İzmir and environs in 1922." Only a few pages later though, she goes on to thank some of the most influential and vocally pro-Armenian historians of the past half century, such as Richard Hovannisian and Vahakn Dadrian, for their guidance in composing the book.[20] Similarly, Housepian Dobkin's treatment of the rise of the Ottoman Turks could scarcely be described as disinterested, especially when she contrasts them with the Armenian and Greek peoples whom they ruled. The state of the minority *rayahs* ("sheep") or *giaours* ("infidel dogs"), in Housepian Dobkin's words, "was totally dependent on the pleasure of their conquerors, and it was tolerable only so long as there was a modicum of statesmanship and control within the Ottoman administration."[21] This is a gross oversimplification of the Islamic *millet* system, in which Christians and Jews were second-class citizens of a sort but were on the whole afforded a great deal of tolerance. Put in the context of her other writings, it is obvious that she had something of an agenda

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[20] Marjorie Housepian Dobkin, *Smyrna, 1922* (1971; reprint, New York: Newmark Press, 1998), 7, 17-18.

[21] Housepian Dobkin, *Smyrna, 1922,* 25-26. Both of Housepian Dobkin's translations are somewhat misleading. *Giaour,* derived from the Arabic word *kafir* or "unbeliever," in Ottoman Turkish was indeed a religious slur concerning non-Muslims, but simply meant "infidel," at least according to the 1856 J.M. Redhouse English-Ottoman dictionary. The word "dog" is Housepian Dobkin's addition. Similarly, the word *rayah,* also derived from as Arabic word, does indeed signify "sheep," but in a political sense a more accurate definition would be "citizen." For more on the definition of *rayah* see Eli Kedourie's essay, "The Chatham House Version" in his *The Chatham House Version and Other Middle Eastern Studies.* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004): 351-394, especially pp. 362-364.

concerning the Ottoman minorities' fate between 1915 and 1923.[22] Similar to the debate of whether or not the Ottoman government's actions with the Armenians constituted a premeditated state policy of extermination, the debate around İzmir has often devolved into accusations over who started the fire. Most Turks blame the Armenians, if they mention the topic at all, while Greeks and Armenians place guilt upon the Turks.

Her polemics against the Ottomans and partiality to the Greeks and Armenians notwithstanding, Housepian Dobkin's account is unquestionably the standard work on the subject. It is also notable for introducing the figure of Asa K. Jennings to the world, offering the first account of his work in evacuating İzmir's refugees from the quay to nearby Mytilene. Nonetheless, Housepian Dobkin offers little background on the YMCA's presence in the town, and Jennings departs from her narrative as quickly as he appears to rescue the Christian population.

The same holds true for Giles Milton's *Paradise Lost: Smyrna, 1922. The Destruction of a Christian City in the Islamic World* (2006). Milton lauds Jennings perhaps even more than Housepian Dobkin, but there is a similar lack of context in *Paradise Lost* concerning Jennings' presence there in the first place. There is also no mention of his friendly relations with the Turks after the war. And whereas Housepian Dobkin uses the İzmir fire largely as a vehicle for airing her grievances concerning the Armenians' treatment at the Ottomans' hands, Milton also uses the context of İzmir to tell a story of another of the Empire's "minorities," though one even less numerous than the Armenians of the city.

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[22] Marjorie Housepian, "The Unremembered Genocide," *Commentary* Sep. 1966, 55-61.

The narrative of *Paradise Lost* centers around the "Levantines," a class of commercially-minded Europeans who had exploited the advantageous economic circumstances of the capitulatory system erected in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. Though retaining European citizenship, the Levantines often had resided in the empire for several generations, and therefore felt İzmir to be their home.[23] Milton's focus on this class is an interesting one, as the Levantines of İzmir, who mostly resided in the city's northeastern Bournabat district, constituted a tiny and disproportionately affluent segment of the population. And although the Levantines undoubtedly shared in the suffering associated with the destruction of the city, their experience was decidedly different from that of İzmir's Greeks and Armenians trapped on the quay or hunted down by Turkish irregulars throughout September. Most of the Levantines escaped physically unscathed with only the loss of property and businesses.

Milton's story in *Paradise Lost* amounts to a dirge for a forgotten world of cosmopolitanism and tolerance, but it is one that is sung with a very European voice. His narrative diverts from Housepian Dobkin's only insofar as the Levantines are the subject of concern. Finding new primary sources and interviewing the few remaining Levantines of İzmir undoubtedly adds to our understanding of İzmir during the final days of the Ottoman Empire, but Milton's overt romanticization of his subject matter overshadows what for the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews of the city was by all accounts an unmitigated disaster.

Paradise Lost and *Smyrna, 1922* then constitute the only book-length studies of the city's destruction. Works directly concerned with the Greco-Turkish conflict, such as

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[23] Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1919), 233.

Michael Llewellyn Smith's *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922* (1973), mention the event, as İzmir was the administrative center of Greek rule in Anatolia, and its ruin effectively ended the war. Conversely, books concerned with the Greek and Turkish population exchanges after the war, such as Bruce Clark's *Twice a Stranger* (2006) or Renee Hirschon's *Crossing the Aegean* (2003), mention the İzmir fire and the exodus of the city's minorities as a prelude to the forced emigration embodied in the Lausanne Treaty, but typically provide no further depth. The number of peer-reviewed articles in historical journals examining the İzmir fire largely mirrors that of the larger studies, with only a handful addressing the topic. Furthermore, their aim is typically to juxtapose the memory of the remaining survivors with the national historiographies of the Greek and Turkish states.[24] And like Housepian Dobkin and Milton's works, these other studies largely overlook the small yet growing American presence in the city, especially that of the YMCA.

The small body of existing literature on İzmir's destruction usually places the event in the immediate context of the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922. In early 1919, the victorious Entente powers of the First World War, searching to craft a new international system that would guarantee something of a durable European peace, had consequently delayed in addressing the equally daunting issue of partitioning the Ottoman Empire, to which Great Britain, France, Italy, and Greece all laid territorial claim. A series of overlapping wartime promises and bungled diplomatic proceedings allowed a brilliant Ottoman officer, Mustafa Kemal, to spearhead a nationalist revolution

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[24] Biray Kolloğlu Kırlı, "Forgetting the Smyrna Fire," *History Workshop Journal* Issue 60 (2005): 26-44; Leyla Neyzi, "Remembering Smyrna/İzmir: Shared History, Shared Trauma," *History & Memory* Vol. 20, No. 2 (Fall/Winter, 2008): 106-127.

in Anatolia, overturn the provisions of the 1920 Treaty of Lausanne, and establish the modern Republic of Turkey.

While this narrative is truthful, it simplifies a more enduring issue endemic to the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, and one in which missionary institutions such as the YMCA often played an unwitting role, namely, that of nationalism.[25] The rationale behind the Greek occupation of İzmir and invasion of Western Anatolia, and indeed the Turks' defense of it, did not follow the traditional pattern of colonial annexation with the aim of economic benefit or imperial aggrandizement. Rather, both the Greeks and the Turks were animated by fiercely irredentist ideologies in which Western Anatolia stood as sacred space dating from antiquity, exacerbating the violence of both the conflict as well as its tragic conclusion.

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[25] For a speculative take on the Protestant theological underpinnings of Ottoman minority nationalisms, see Elie Kedourie's essay "Minorities" in *The Chatham House Version and Other Essays* pp. 286-316.

III. THE GREAT IDEA, TURKISM, AND THE GRECO-TURKISH WAR

The Megali Idea

Arguably the most consequential minority nationalist uprising against the Ottomans was the Greek War of Independence from 1821-1830, with Greece becoming an independent nation by the Treaty of Constantinople in 1832. The half-century preceding the revolt had seen a literary renaissance among the Greeks, spurred on by a wealthy diaspora merchant community in Europe, which became acquainted with the political philosophies of Rousseau and Bentham, and whose sons had the opportunity of studying in the best European universities.[26] Out of this grew a movement among European intellectuals called *Philhellenism*, which was extraordinarily sympathetic to Greek national aspirations. A fashionable intellectual trend at the turn of the century,

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[26] Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 28.

exemplified by the writings of Lord Byron, the European *Philhellenists* helped to foster Hellenic nationalism. And while the Greek Renaissance was at first solely a peaceful literary and cultural movement, some of its participants began to form secret cells in Europe dedicated to revolution and the establishment of a Greek state.[27] Even with the backing of European intellectuals, Greek independence remained a lofty goal, especially as the Ottoman state was beginning to reconstitute its hold over its domains during this era.

After the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece in 1832, there remained the issue of how to forge a *nation* where one had not previously existed, not to mention the task of building a modern state. Even more critical was the question of the ethnic Greeks who remained outside the confines of the new state. Out of the situation in which only a third of all Greeks lived in Greece proper was born the idea that was to animate Greek nationalism until the destruction of the Ottoman Empire eighty years later, the Megali Idea.[28]

"The unification of all areas of Greek settlement in the Near East within the bonds of a Greek state with its capital at Constantinople" was to remain the driving force of Greek foreign policy from its nascence until at least the conclusion of the Greco-Turkish War of 1920-1922. The "Great Idea" (Μεγάλη Ιδέα) was a term coined by Ioannis Kolettis, who after independence emerged as a champion of the cause of ethnic Greeks living outside the kingdom against the direct subjects of the Greek crown.[29] King Otto,

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[27] C.M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: A Short History* 5th ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), 131.

[28]Clogg, A Concise History of Greece, 47.

[29] Maria Koundoura, *The Greek Idea: The Formation of National and Transnational Identities* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 85.

the Bavarian first monarch of Greece, utilized the Megali Idea as a means of consolidating his relatively unpopular rule, and by the time of the *fin de siècle,* the thought of a reconstituted Byzantine Empire was popular throughout all classes of Greek society.[30]

Despite its popularity, the "Great Idea" was never fully systematized, and beyond agreement about its basic goal of bringing all Greeks into a single state, there was a great deal of disagreement. For example, whether the idea was hearkening back to ancient Hellas or the Byzantine era, in which significant Roman elements like Caesarism were present, was one issue of contention.[31] And while as a political tool it was effective in galvanizing public opinion around Greek leaders, as a legitimate strategy of foreign policy it was fantastic at best, and even disastrous, evidenced by the thirty day Greco-Turkish war of 1897. Historian Richard Clogg wrote of that war that, "in the words of one contemporary observer, Greece combined the appetites of a Russia with the resources of a Switzerland" and that "the clear lesson of the war was that the single-handed pursuit of the 'Great Idea' was lost."[32]

It was with Eleftherios Venizelos' coming to power in Greek politics that the objectives of the Megali Idea came close to fruition, but only after a bitter political struggle with the Greek monarch, Constantine XII, and with significant assistance from the victorious Entente Powers after World War One. The humiliation of the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, coupled with the rise of the Committee of Union and Progress in

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[30] Mark Mazower, "The Messiah and the Bourgeoisie: Venizelos and Politics in Greece, 1909-1912," *The Historical Journal* Vol. 35, No. 4 (Dec., 1992): 890.

[31] D.A. Zakythinos, *The Making of Modern Greece: From Byzantium to Independence* Translated by K.R. Johnstone. (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1976), 195.

[32] Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece,* 70-71.

the neighboring Ottoman Empire in 1908, was the cause of great consternation within the Greek army, which clamored for its own reform and modernization program to match the menace of the seemingly renewed Ottoman state. In 1909, a group of dissident Greek officers formed the "Military League." Intending to emulate the success of the Young Turks, in August they assembled outside Athens at Goudi and revolted.[33] Political instability accompanied by continued agitation by military officials led to the rise of Venizelos, then the Prime Minister of Crete, who was called upon by the rebellious officers to assume control of the Military League. After Venizelos persuaded the Greek ruler, King George, to revise the Greek Constitution and implement a series of political reforms, he was chosen to represent Attica in the new parliament, and later was selected as Prime Minister by the recently-formed Liberal Party.[34]

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the Treaties of London and Bucharest dramatically increased the size of the Greek Kingdom, augmenting its land mass by 70% and nearly doubling its population from roughly three million to almost five million people.[35] The Ottoman State, which had taken on a veneer of strength and rejuvenation after the Young Turk Revolution, was clearly weak, and Greece's massive territorial and population gains only served to whet the appetite of devotees to the Megali Idea. Furthermore, with the charismatic Venizelos at the helm, the advent of the First World War augured well for achieving the goal of a "Greater Greece" on both sides of the Aegean.

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[33] Woodhouse, *Modern Greece,* 189.

[34] Mazower, "The Messiah and the Bourgeoisie," 886.

[35] Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece,* 83.

The outbreak of World War One led to what has been called the "National Schism" in Greek history. King Constantine, who led the victorious Greek armies as crown prince in the Balkan Wars and therefore was encouraged to term himself "Constantine XII," implying a succession to the last Byzantine emperor, was firm in his commitment to neutrality. The British and French, though, suspected him of furtively supporting the Central Powers.[36] Venizelos, on the other hand, was eager to enter the war on the Entente's side, though Bulgaria remained a great concern. Under the terms of the Greco-Serb Treaty of 1913, Greece promised to come to Serbia's aid should it be attacked by Bulgaria. Though Bulgaria did not enter the war until 1915, Venizelos, perhaps anticipating its entry, had early on promised the Allies Greek support against Turkey in exchange for help against Bulgaria should it begin hostilities.[37] Constantine held that the Greco-Serb Treaty was only applicable should Bulgaria *unilaterally* attack Serbia, and that in the context of a general European war it was invalid. Constantine maintained Greece's neutrality, and twice forced Venizelos to resign during the course of the war. Finally, Constantine himself was forced to abdicate under Entente pressure in 1917, and with Venizelos back in charge, Greece entered the war on the Allied side the same year.

Upon the conclusion of the First World War and entering the post-war settlement, the aims of the Megali Idea were for the first time largely achievable. The territorial gains of the Balkan Wars and the leadership of Venizelos, in the words of Lloyd George "the

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[36] Michael F. Finefrock, "Atatürk, Lloyd George and the Megali Idea: Cause and Consequence of the Greek Plan to Seize Constantinople from the Allies, June-August 1922," *The Journal of Modern History* Vol. 52, No. 1 On Demand Supplement (Mar., 1980): D1049.

[37] Woodhouse, *Modern Greece,* 194

greatest Greek statesman since Pericles," both signaled that additional gains in the western littoral of Asia Minor and Thrace, and perhaps even İstanbul itself, were possible.[38] And whereas previously the Kingdom had not had the benefit of significant Great Power assistance to advance the cause of the Great Idea, Venizelos' unwavering wartime commitment to the Entente boded well for Greece as the Allies set to the task of partitioning the Ottoman domains.

Evolution of Turkish Nationalism

With the Megali Idea, Greek nationalists were able to maintain relative unity in the simplicity of its purpose; Turkish nationalism offers an altogether different story. Indeed, a specifically "Turkish" nationalism arrived only in the final years of the empire's life. For centuries, the justifying principle of the Ottoman state had been the preservation of orthodox Sunni Islam, and if the subjects of the Sultan identified with anything beyond their respective locales, it would have been their religious community, and ultimately the Sultan himself. The rise of minority nationalisms and the ever-growing influence of Europe had spawned the reform movements, but after several decades, even reform-minded civil and military servants had tired of the ineffectual, overbearing, and top-down approach of the Ottoman government.

In 1904, the Ottoman Tatar Yusuf Akçura published an influential essay, "Three Types of Policy," in the Cairo journal *Türk*, reviewing the development of the empire's political philosophies over the previous century. The first political ideology Akçura enumerated was Ottomanism, which to greater or lesser degrees remained the predominant political philosophy over the course of the nineteenth century. The classical

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[38] Lord Kinross, *Ataturk* (New York: W. Murrow & Co., 1965), 164.

form of Ottoman governance was the *millet* system, in which the *dhimmis,* or non-Muslim monotheists, of the empire were divided into ecclesiastical communities whose head, the *millet-başı*, reported directly to the Sultan. Provided that these religious communities swore allegiance to the Sultan and submitted to a higher rate of taxation than that which their Muslim counterparts paid, they were largely left alone to govern their own communal affairs.[39] While the *millet* system had for the first few centuries of the Ottoman Empire functioned rather effectively, both the Serb Uprising of 1804 and the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece in 1832 demonstrated to the Turks that it was no longer suited to cope with the new nationalist ideas emanating from Europe.

The Ottoman response to both the ever-growing military and economic superiority of Europe, as well as the increasing threat posed by separatist-minded members of the empire *millets*, was a series of societal reforms begun in 1839 known collectively as the *Tanzimat*, which culminated in the Ottoman Constitution of 1876. The most notable, if not consequential, of these reforms for the empire's minorities was the 1856 Reform Decree, which conferred universal equality for all Ottoman citizens regardless of religion, a direct contravening of both Qur'anic law and longstanding historical precedent.[40] The edict's aim was twofold. First, improving the lot of Ottoman Christians would ostensibly deny European powers a pretext for interfering in Ottoman affairs, as had been the case with the recent Crimean War. More importantly, by kindling a new idea of citizenship and devotion to the state rather than to the recent idea of

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[39] Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System," in: *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), 69.

[40] Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 92.

"nation," the reformers sought to stem the rising nationalist tide amongst the *millets*, the gravest intellectual challenge to Ottoman rule. And while the intellectual underpinnings of Ottomanism ranged from religiously conservative, as shown by the Young Ottoman movement of the 1860s, to openly modernist, as advocated by the members of the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress, the idea of constitutionalism and at least nominal equality of all Ottoman subjects remained the predominant ideology of the empire until its end in 1923.[41]

The second great ideological current outlined by Akçura was pan-Islam, which followed the 1860s Young Ottoman movement and in many respects resembled conservative Ottomanism. The notion of *Ittihad-i Islam,* or Islamic unity, was not a new idea in Muslim intellectual circles, and, especially during the second half of his reign, Sultan Abdülhamid II used this notion to solidify his power. The *Tanzimat* project was born of a middle-class, bureaucratic, and largely secular mindset, despite the Young Ottomans' piety. Constitutionalism and a parliamentary system failed to grasp the imagination of the common Muslim, whose traditional loyalty was to Islam and the Sultan, and of the minorities, who by the time of Abdülhamid's reign had their own ideas of nation, which had little to do with devotion to an Ottoman fatherland. With the dismissal and exile of Grand Vizier Midhat Paşa in 1876, the *Tanzimat* movement lost much of its steam, and Hamidian pan-Islam held sway until the appearance of the Young Turks in the early twentieth century.

Abdülhamid's reign, despite its notoriety as an era of reaction and regression, in many ways extended the work of the *Tanzimat* by continuing "modernization" on a

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[41] Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 147.

technical and administrative level.[42] Where Abdülhamid differed from the program was in his approach to western political institutions, which he felt had caused problems for previous Sultans and in which he had no interest, as evidenced by his suspension of the Ottoman Constitution and his refusal to reinstate it until 1908.[43] Fearing continued European colonialism, and especially the creeping czarist domination of Central Asia and the Caucasus, he reclaimed the title of *caliph*, which had been used only sporadically by previous sultans, and almost never in a political sense. In this way, he appealed to all Muslims, not just Ottoman subjects or Turks, against Christian aggression in the Islamic world.[44] Abdülhamid's call for unity under the caliphate was popular outside the empire: in British India, Russian Central Asia, and French North Africa. On the other hand, strengthening the Palace and ulema left the Ottomanist-minded bureaucrats and military officials of the Porte disaffected.[45]

Having reviewed Ottomanism and pan-Islamism, Akçura then explained what he understood to represent the best "policy" for preserving the Ottoman Empire and moving it into the modern world: Turkism. Ottomanism had been a "waste of time," and Abdülhamid's pan-Islamism had so exacerbated tensions between Muslim and Christian, exemplified best by the 1894-1896 Armenian massacres, that minority allegiance to the Ottoman state was a lost cause. Most *millets* had their own national plans anyway. The

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[42] Zürcher, *Turkey,* 81.

[43] M. Naim Turfan, *The Rise of the Young Turks: Politics, the Military and Ottoman Collapse* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 62.

[44] Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Vol. II,* 260

[45] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 234.

solution was to look to Central Asia and to establish a pan-Turkic state between Caucasian Europe and Sinic East Asia with the Ottoman Empire as its titular head.

The Ottomanism of the Young Turks, Islamism of Abdülhamid, and Turanism of Yusuf Akçura vied with one another for supremacy on the eve of the First World War. Despite intellectuals' borrowing from alternate ideologies in formulating their ideas, there was no attempt at a synthesis until the appearance of Ziya Gökalp, a thinker who was to have a great influence upon the early Kemalist Republic. What Gökalp proposed was an amalgamation of Turkism, Islamism, and Modernism in which "the foregoing principle of our social policy will be this: to be of the Turkish nation, of the Islamic religion, and of European civilization."[46] The term "civilization" is important. Gökalp differentiated between culture (*hars)*, "the harmonious whole of the…aspects of the life of a single nation," and civilization (*medeniyet*), "a mutually shared whole of the social lives of many nations situated on the same continent."[47] Civilization stood above the nation, and was therefore transferable; culture, on the other hand, was a product of it, and could not be transposed onto another people group. The empire could partake in the civilization of Europe, but its culture had to remain Islamic. The Ottomans were moving from the religious society of the *umma* to the cultural society of the nation (*millet*).[48]Although religion would certainly remain part of the nation's identity, Islam and the Sultan would no longer be the primary source of allegiance.

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[46] Ziya Gökalp*, Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization,* trans. Niyazi Berkes (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 279.

[47]Ziya Gökalp, *The Principles of Turkism*, trans. Robert Devereux. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), 22.

[48] Özkirimli and Sofos, *Tormented by History,* 35.

The much-discussed "Eastern Question" amounted then to a century and a half long crisis for the Ottoman Turks, and the various ideologies propagated by Ottoman intellectuals; Ottomanism, pan-Islamism, and Turkism were the indigenous answers to what was nominally a diplomatic question, but in actuality one of survival. Since Küçük Kaynarca, the Ottomans' peripheral domains had steadily been lost to annexation or the independence of Christian minorities. Even the Arabs, though largely fellow Muslims, were by the last quarter of the century developing both a pan-Arab nationalism based upon a shared language and history (*qawmiyya*), and also regional ones emphasizing specific locales like Syria, Egypt, and Iraq (*wataniyya*). Europe, along with the minorities it sheltered, dominated the economic life of the empire through the capitulations. Even more unbearable than humiliation at the hands of Europe was that at the hands of former subjects, losing Albania, Macedonia, and Thrace to the Balkan League of Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece during the First Balkan War. With Ottomanism dead and pan-Islamism failing to retain the allegiance of even the Arabs, a variant of Turkism became something of a *fait accompli*.[49]

Onset of the Greco-Turkish War

The Greeks' Megali Idea and the Turkism of the late Ottomans need not have come into conflict, and it appears that during the span of the Great War, Turkish and Greek policies were oriented in different directions.[50] Venizelos' concern was Bulgaria, not the Ottomans, and he only offered to join the fight against the Turks in exchange for

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[49] Kemal H. Karpat, "The Memoirs of N. Batzaria: The Young Turks and Nationalism," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 6, No. 3 (Jul., 1975): 298.

[50] Frank Tachau, "The Search for National Identity Among the Turks," *Die Welt des Islams* Vol. 8, Issue 3 (1963): 165.

Allied support against a Bulgarian attack. To be sure, Thrace, western Asia Minor, and especially İstanbul were the ultimate ends of the Megali Idea. But assessing it now, Venizelos' request appears to be a defensive one aimed at ensuring that Salonika would not fall to what many felt was a superior Bulgarian military.[51] Likewise, after the collapse of the czarist regime and Russian withdrawal from the war, an Ottoman drive to the east and the establishment of a pan-Turkic state finally emerged as a viable option, especially with eastern Anatolia almost completely rid of Armenians. Following the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Enver Paşa, the Ottoman Minister of War, created the "Army of Islam," a solely Turkish regiment under his personal command, and moved into the Caucasus, an action of great consequence for the future establishment of the Republic of Turkey.[52]

It was only after the war that Greek and Turkish interests would come into conflict, and did so largely because of the actions in the east of the victorious Entente. The British had spurred an Arab revolt, and the Sykes-Picot Agreement had delineated the spheres of influence that would later become the British and French mandates over the Arabs. Anatolia was another matter. The 1915 Treaty of London, intended to sway the Italians from their longstanding "Triple Alliance" with Germany and Austria-Hungary, mentioned that in the case of a post-war partition of Asia Minor, "a maintenance of equilibrium" would have to be established in the eastern Mediterranean, and that Italy would receive a "just share" of the region around the province of Antalya.[53]

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[51]Adamantios M. Polyzoides, "Greece's Role in the World War," *New York Times* Aug. 21, 1916.

[52] Zürcher, *Turkey,* 140. Enver, after his exile to the USSR at Mustafa Kemal's order, was sent by the Soviets to Russian Turkestan to quell an anti-Soviet uprising. He ended up joining the rebellion he was sent to stop, and was killed by the Soviet army near Dushanbe in present-day Tajikistan.

[53] Maxwell H.H. Macartney and Paul Cremona, *Italy's Foreign and Colonial Policy, 1914-1937* (New York, Howard Fertig, 1972), 47.

Though wartime allies, the French and British had long pursued antagonistic policies in the Arab world, and, as early as 1917, the British were searching out other potential allies in the region. Venizelos, given his early and unwavering commitment to the Allied cause during the war, had by its end emerged as just the long-term ally the British sought. After the war, a group of philhellenes in the British Foreign Office, historian and polymath Arnold Toynbee among them, actively promoted a "Greater Greece" as Britain's proxy in the eastern Mediterranean.[54] Prime Minister David Lloyd George agreed, especially as British troops, in the process of decommissioning and tied down in Palestine and Mesopotamia, as well as Iran and the Caucasus, would not have been available for further action should the need have arisen. Finally, in 1915, Sir Edward Grey had offered Venizelos large portions of western Anatolia in exchange for Greece joining the conflict, though this was unknown to the other participants at Paris until late in its proceedings.[55]

Just as Great Britain had promised Palestine to both the Arabs and Zionists, portions of western Asia Minor to which the Greeks laid claim and which were offered to Greece by Grey were by the 1915 Treaty of London allotted to Italy.[56] Under the condition of the Mudros Armistice, the Allies were given the right to intervene militarily in Anatolia should a state of "unrest" come to pass.[57] And while this was clearly aimed at preventing Turkish reprisals against the Armenians in eastern *vilayets*, Venizelos used

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[54] Erik Goldstein, "Great Britain and Greater Greece, 1917-1920," *Historical Thought* Vol. 32, No 2 (Jun., 1989): 339.

[55] Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece,* 87.

[56] Anderson, *Documents of Modern History,* 160.

[57] Zürcher, *Turkey,* 138.

this as an opportunity to "protect" ethnic Greeks in western Turkey. In January of 1919, Venizelos petitioned the Supreme War Council to allow him to move two Greek divisions from Macedonia and one from the Ukraine, where they were engaged in anti-Bolshevik maneuvers, to Turkey.[58]

After requesting the troop redeployments, on Feb. 3, Venizelos appeared before the Council of Ten, laying out Greek territorial claims in Northern Epirus, the Aegean Islands, Thrace, and finally Asia Minor.[59] Based upon "the principle that no territory previously belonging to Turkey could remain part of the Ottoman Empire unless it contained an absolute majority of Turks," his claims were fully in the spirit of the Megali Idea. Uncertain of their military capabilities in Anatolia and eager to accommodate Venizelos after his help during the war, the Council proposed a committee to address the Greek claims.[60]

Italy, frustrated by its inability to come to a separate agreement with Greece and fearful that the Council of Four was going to award Greece its Anatolian claims, seized Antalya in March of 1919, before the Commission's report was readied, and began a sequence of landings and withdrawals, ostensibly to "maintain order" under the armistice, but obviously as a preparation for military action should the Greeks have been allowed to land in the littoral. Lloyd George and Clemenceau proposed giving Italy a mandate in Anatolia that would border the Greek, Constantinople, and Armenian mandates, to which

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[58] Confidential Memorandum , Jan. 31, 1919, in Arthur S. Link ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* Vol. 54 (hereinafter *PWW*) (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966-1994) 402-403.

[59] Paul C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1974), 74-75.

[60]Secretary's Notes of a Conversation held in M. Pichon's Room at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris, 4 February 1919, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference* Vol. 3 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1943), 867-875.

both Wilson and Venizelos objected; the Italians walked out of the Conference, not to return until May 5. In the meantime, Italy continued to strengthen its military presence in the eastern Mediterranean.[61]

Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau were incensed at the Italian intransigence and aggression that threatened to scuttle the peace deliberations. After Clemenceau reported that the Italians had stationed seven battleships off İzmir, Wilson lamented that constitutionally he was unable to commit troops, the United States having never declared war on the Ottoman Empire, and proposed cutting off American credit to the Italians as a means of halting their actions. Lloyd George responded by pointing out the futility of any punitive action short of military force, and declared that British admirals were to be instructed to allow Venizelos to occupy İzmir. The next day the Greek leader was told to begin moving his troops from Macedonia and to prepare for a landing at İzmir. On May 15, 1919, the Greek army occupied the city with no Turkish or Italian counter-maneuvers.

While Venizelos was taking the first steps to fulfilling the century-old Megali Idea, the Ottoman government could do little but protest, warning that a Greek occupation of western Anatolia was a betrayal of both the Turks and the principles of Wilsonianism, and would create "another Macedonia" in Asia Minor.[62] Prescient American observers, such as Admiral Mark Bristol and Dr. Alexander MacLachlan, the President of the College of İzmir, understood this as well, the latter noting that the Greeks were the least acceptable people to the Turks to be in Asia Minor, and that Wilson's

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[61] Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey* (1931; reprint, New York: Howard Fertig, 1966), 233.

[62] William Shepherd Benson to Woodrow Wilson, 24 May 1919 in *PWW,* Vol. 59, 473.

consenting to the landing had badly damaged America's reputation with the Turks.[63] On May 5, the Ottoman Ministry of War instructed Mustafa Kemal to head east, ostensibly to decommission the armies Enver Paşa moved to the Caucasus for his pan-Turkic drive into Central Asia, but fully expected him to begin a resistance movement.[64] Kemal arrived at Samsun just four days after the Greek landing, and immediately set to reorganizing the eastern forces under his command.

The army was not the only institution sympathetic to resisting after the war. In 1915, Enver had established the *Teşkilat-i Mahusa,* or "Special Organization," which he used as his shock troops in both suppressing nationalist sentiment among the remaining minorities during the war, which with the Armenians meant their mass deportation and death, and spreading anti-western propaganda in French and British colonies. There also was the *Karakol*, or "The Guard," which was a CUP unit designed to protect its members against reprisals by the Armenians, and which began smuggling Unionist members, as well as weapons and ammunition, out of İstanbul to Anatolia in the days after the armistice.[65] Alarmed at the Greek invasion, rumors of independent Armenian and Kurdish states, as well as the remaining British troops in the Caucasus, local groups termed "Societies for the Defense of Rights" appeared first in Thrace and around İzmir and later in eastern Anatolia. Finally, whereas the Sultan prostrated himself before the French and British to protect his throne, a significant percentage of the government remained nationalistic and sympathetic to Kemal's efforts.

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[63] William Shepherd Benson to Woodrow Wilson, 31 May 1919 in *PWW,* Vol. 59, 640-641. Wilson was later to agreed, stating "the less the Greek hand is shown in this business, the less I like the way it is used."

[64] Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, Vol. II*, 342.

[65] Zürcher, *Turkey,* 141-142.

With Kemal's "Amasya Circular" declaring the Sultan to be a prisoner of the Allies and therefore unable to work in the best interests of the Turkish people, the Sultan immediately recalled Kemal to İstanbul, undoubtedly at the behest of the Entente. He then resigned his post in the Ottoman army, and began organizing what was to become a new government. The local "Defense of Rights" organizations sent elected representatives to Erzurum and Sivas in the late summer and early fall of 1919, out of which the "National Pact" of the last Ottoman Parliament was drawn and which unified the Defense of Rights organizations, resulting in the "Association for the Defense of the Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia." The most important of the National Pact's demands was Article VI, which asserted complete independence for the country and freedom from economic, judicial, and political interference.[66]

When the Ottoman parliament adopted the National Pact in early 1920, the Allies occupied İstanbul, and exiled a number of nationalist MPs to Malta, while the Sultan dissolved the last Ottoman parliament on April 11.[67] Kemal's "Grand National Congress," which met for the first time on April 23 in Ankara, would eventually become the new Turkish government.[68]

Having consolidated and "cleansed" İzmir of Turks, Venizelos' Greek army awaited the coming treaty that would deliver to them the fulfillment of the Megali Idea, minus İstanbul. Fearing the rebel government at Ankara, Lloyd George rushed to complete an eastern settlement, which was signed at Sèvres in August. The Greek army

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[66] Anderson, *Documents of Modern History,* 174.

[67] Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 49.

[68] Lewis, *Emergence of Modern Turkey,* 251.

received permission from the Supreme War Council to go on the offensive in July. By August, when the first offensive was finished, it had occupied all of western Asian Minor in a defensive perimeter around İzmir, marking the beginning of the Greco-Turkish War.[69]

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[69] Peter Kincaid Jensen, "The Greco-Turkish War, 1920-1922," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 10, No. 4 (Nov., 1979): 556.

IV. THE YMCA IN ANATOLIA

Beginnings

Nationalist warfare presented a two-fold challenge to American missionary institutions, especially one like the YMCA that lacked the resources accompanying a long-standing presence in the region. There first was the rather straightforward issue of how to carry on mission work during a time of war, despite İzmir's distance from the actual fields of battle in central Anatolia. Second, and perhaps more problematic, was the question of how to effectively spread the message and values of Protestant Christianity in an environment where religious identification, long the primary marker of social difference in the Ottoman world, had largely been subsumed under or even replaced with the notion of nationality.

The initial spread of the YMCA movement abroad was a mostly decentralized affair, in which missionaries and their students would form an association, often attached to a previously established missionary school or college, but would otherwise remain unconnected to the North American YMCA. Europe saw its first YMCAs founded by Americans in the 1880s, with the establishment of Berlin's *Christlicher Verein Junger Männer* in 1883 by Friedrich von Schlümbach and a Paris association in 1887 by Franklin Gaylord.[70] By the end of the decade, several dozen associations had sprung up outside of Europe, and outside of any direct oversight by the American YMCA. In the Islamic world specifically, there were six associations in what is now Syria, one in Persia, and eleven in "Asiatic Turkey."[71]

Despite the YMCA's presence in Turkey, American involvement in the Ottoman YMCAs remained negligible until the eve of the First World War, and even then it was only tenuously established. The long reign of Abdülhamid II, who correctly suspected western missionaries of at least tacitly supporting separatist aspirations among the Ottoman minorities, especially the Armenians, presented even further obstacles to missionary groups aspiring to proselytize within the empire.[72] Indeed, Luther Wishard, whose two-year world tour from 1888-1891gave birth to the first American-sponsored YMCA "secretaries" abroad, only tepidly endorsed the association's viability in much of

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[70] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *World Service: A History of the Foreign Work and World Service of the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and Canada* (New York: Association Press, 1957.), 33-34.

[71] Hopkins, *History of the Y.M.C.A. in North America*, 314.

[72] Edward Mead Earle, "American Missions in the Near East," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 7, No. 3 (Apr., 1929): 402.

the Ottoman world, even declaring Palestine, the Promised Land, to be a "most unpromising" environment for the American YMCA to begin work. [73]

It was only with the short-lived liberalization of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 that the American YMCA was able to begin substantial foreign work in the Ottoman Empire. An American advisory committee was formed in İstanbul the same year, and the first foreign secretaries were sent to Egypt and Palestine the following one. In 1910, the first salaried American YMCA representatives, Ernst O. Jacob and Darius A. Davis, arrived in the empire, respectively, as "traveling secretary" for the Levant and secretary at İstanbul.[74] Dirk Johannes Van Bommel, a Dutch national who had studied at the YMCA College in Springfield, MA, arrived in İstanbul in 1912 as Davis' assistant.[75]

The success of Davis and Van Bommel at the Pera (Beyoğlu) Branch YMCA in its early years was modest. Although late-Ottoman İstanbul had a population of roughly five hundred thousand Greeks and Armenians, who were the primary target of the western missionaries' work, only a few months before the outbreak of World War One, the Pera Branch had a mere five hundred active members, with an equal number enrolled in evening foreign language classes. The numbers sufficed though, or enough promise was foreseen for the city, for the YMCA's International Committee to offer a $75,000 grant to purchase a property at No. 40 Rue Cabristan, next to the American Embassy.[76]

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[73] Latourette, *World Service,* 43.

[74] Latourette, *World Service,* 341.

[75] Memorandum from E.O. Jacob to C.V. Hibbard, July 17, 1920. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1920. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[76] Review of Y.M.C.A. in the Near East, Dec. 31, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

The First World War brought a drastic curtailment of the association's activities in İstanbul. Even before the Entente declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire following the Oct. 28 Turco-German bombardment of the Russian Black Sea coast, the Pera Branch was hemorrhaging members who were either entering military service or simply fleeing the city. Throughout Europe, the YMCA moved to relief work and service to prisoners of war, which prompted both Jacob and Davis to transfer to the Western Front.[77] Upon the United States' entry into the war in 1917, and the concomitant severance of diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire, the Pera Branch building was rented to the Dutch YMCA Legation to keep the property in the organization, with Van Bommel, a citizen of the Netherlands, remaining to supervise the facility.[78]

The İzmir YMCA began as an outgrowth of the association's relief work during and after the war. John Mott, the long-serving head of the American YMCA, had visited the city in 1911, meeting with the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan and receiving an exhortation from the city's luminaries to send a foreign secretary to the city. But the near constant state of war in the Ottoman Empire from the time of the YMCA's arrival prevented it from officially expanding its efforts to İzmir. At the conclusion of the Great War, E.C. Jenkins, John Mott's private secretary and the executive of the YMCA's Foreign Work Department, promised E.O. Jacob that the organization was committed to expanding its presence in Anatolia to the city. In 1919, following his war-time work in

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[77]Steuer, *Pursuit of an Unparalleled Opportunity,* http://www.gutenberg-e.org/steuer/steuer.ch15.html#note2 (accessed February 5, 2010); Latourette, *World Service,* 342.

[78] Review of Y.M.C.A. Work in the Near East, Dec. 31, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

Germany and a stay in the United States, Jacob was assigned as General Secretary at İzmir, and promised a future staff of at least two American associates to assist him.[79]

That İzmir would have received such notice as a potential field for YMCA foreign work is understandable. Incorporated into the empire in 1425 from the emirate of the Aydınoğlus, a Turkoman rival to the House of Osman in the early centuries of the Turkic conquest of Anatolia and the Balkans, İzmir at first largely stagnated during the several centuries of Ottoman rule, lacking the historical significance of cities such as Aleppo and İstanbul.[80] The city remained a small center of piratical activity until the great maritime powers of the sixteenth century, primarily Britain and Holland, began using it as the main conduit for Iranian silk making its way to Europe.[81] Thereafter, İzmir grew as an economic hub between East and West, with European merchants and traders, and their Ottoman Greek, Armenian, and Jewish counterparts, dominating the economic life of the city.[82] A town of around five thousand persons at the time of the Ottoman conquest, the city grew to two hundred thousand by the *fin de siècle*, with at least a substantial minority of Greek and Armenian inhabitants making it an attractive site for the YMCA's foreign work.[83]

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[79] Administrative Report, Smyrna Young Men's Christian Association, July, 1922. Turkey: Annual and Quarterly Reports, 1921-1925. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[80] Daniel Goffman, "İzmir: From Village to Colonial Port City," in *The Ottoman City Between East and West*, eds. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 82.

[81] Halil Inalcık and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 245.

[82] Henk Driessen, "Mediterranean Port Cities: Cosmopolitanism Reconsidered," *History and Anthropology* Vol. 16, No. 1 (March, 2005): 133.

Not only did İzmir have a large population of Ottoman Christians to be served, but because of its economic significance, the city had for a long time been home to a great many Europeans, the "Levantines." There also was a small American presence from which a nascent missionary enterprise could draw financial and logistical support. Indeed, İzmir was the entry point for Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons, the first American Board missionaries to the Ottoman Empire, who went to the city to learn modern Greek. The city later became a base of operations for Fisk and Parsons before they moved on to work among the Christian Arabs in Palestine and Syria.[84] The American Board subsequently made İzmir one of its main centers in Anatolia, and later founded the principal educational institutions of the city, with the Collegiate Institute for Girls opening in 1881 and the International College in 1902.[85] Likewise, because of its importance as an economic center, İzmir was the site of the first business contacts between the Unites States and the Ottoman Empire, with American merchant vessels arriving in İzmir as early as the 1780s, some twenty years before they would enter İstanbul.[86] Several American businesses, such as the American Tobacco Company, the MacAndrew and Forbes licorice company, Singer Sewing Machines, and Standard Oil,

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[83] Kırlı, "Forgetting the Smyrna Fire," 25. The precise demographics of İzmir at the conclusion of the First World War are almost impossible to ascertain. For example, the 1921 report by E.O. Jacob estimated the city's population to be roughly 500,000 These statistics were an issue of contention at the time of the Greek occupation of the city, with Venizelos being charged with inflating the number of Greeks in western Anatolia, thereby justifying its annexation by the Kingdom of Greece on Wilsonian principles of ethnic self-determination. This demographic debate has continued amongst historians, primarily in the context of the genocide question, and specifying exactly how many Ottoman Greeks and Armenians perished between 1915 and 1922.

[84] James L. Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey* (Boston: The Pilgrim's Press, 1908), 120.

[85] Leon Arpee, "A Century of Armenian Protestantism," *Church History* Vol. 5, No. 2 (June, 1936): 154.

[86] Robert L. Daniel, "American Influences in the Near East Before 1851," *American Quarterly* Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring, 1964): 72.

would move into the city over the next century.[87] Finally, and again because of its economic significance, İzmir represented the initial locale of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Ottomans, with the first American consulate in the empire opening in 1824.

It is therefore unsurprising that the YMCA received a great deal of encouragement when attempting to re-establish itself in the Ottoman Empire after the war. James L. Barton, the Foreign Secretary of the American Board, wrote Jacob upon his appointment to İzmir that "there is a large field in Turkey for the work of the YMCA, and that, too, in work that will not be done by any other organization."[88] The American Consul-General of İzmir, George Horton, similarly wrote to John Mott that the YMCA, "in the short time that it has been here, working under serious limitations, has proved that there is a big demand for it, and that its work is ripe to be done."[89] Even the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of İzmir, Chrysostomos Kalafatis, reminded Mott of his 1911 visit to İzmir, and inquired as to when the city would finally get its "turn" with a YMCA.[90]

That a Greek Orthodox clergyman would be calling for an American *Protestant* missionary institution to establish work in his domains is indicative both of the changes in Eastern Christian perceptions of American missionaries, and also of the types of

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[87] John A. DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Near East, 1900-1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), 39-40.

[88] James L. Barton to E.O. Jacob, Nov. 10, 1919. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1919. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[89] George Horton to John Mott, June 10, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

[90] Calls That Have Come to the Foreign Department from Smyrna. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

practices classified as evangelism. Pliny Fisk, the American Board pioneer of missions in the Ottoman Empire, had pushed for a strong missionary presence among the Greeks. Especially after Greece won its independence from the Ottomans in 1832, the Hellenic world appeared to offer an attractive prospect for mission work. The American Board did subsequently make a whole-hearted attempt at spreading its Congregationalist brand of Protestantism in Greece during the first several decades of the Kingdom's existence, but it chose to discontinue the mission in 1861, noting that after having dedicated almost thirty clergy to the country, as well as having distributed a million religious tracts and almost two hundred thousand modern Greek New Testaments, not even ten persons had convincingly imbibed Protestantism.[91]

The Greek reluctance to abandon Orthodoxy is understandable given their history under Turkish rule. During the era of Ottoman domination in which religion, via the *millet* system, had been the organizing principle of society, Orthodoxy was what bound together the *millet-i Rum* scattered throughout the diaspora of the empire. Even with Greek independence, there long remained a larger number of Hellenes outside of the borders of the kingdom than within, almost all of whom resided in the confines of the Ottoman Empire. Especially as the Megali Idea grew in popularity over the nineteenth century, few Greeks were prepared to forsake what had long been the primary marker of their identity.

The Orthodox were not exceptional. The clergy of the Armenian Apostolic Christians, among whom the American Board had perhaps its greatest successes during its tenure in the Ottoman Empire, were initially violently opposed to the tenets of

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[91] Theodore Saloutos, "American Missionaries in Greece, 1820-1869," *Church History* Vol. 24, No. 2 (June, 1955): 170.

Reformed Christianity.[92] Likewise, the American Board's mission to proselytize among the Syrian Maronites met fierce resistance until the 1860s, with the Maronite hierarchy threatening to excommunicate anyone who consorted with the American evangelists.[93] The clergy among the Egyptian Copts were similarly adamant in their resistance to the American Presbyterians who set out to revive with the Gospel what they perceived to be a moribund faith.[94]

Two related shifts, one in missionary policy and the other in theology, largely account for the change in perception of the Eastern Christian clergy toward western missionaries. The first was the simple, stark fact that the conversion numbers, especially juxtaposed with the statistics for missionaries' other pursuits such as building hospitals and schools, were weak.[95] If the "evangelization of the world in this generation" were actually to come to pass, a different strategy than simply preaching the Gospel was needed to reach the unconverted.[96]

Around the same time that the American missionaries abroad were coming to the recognition that unadulterated evangelism in its classical sense was ineffective, a new theological movement at home was transforming American Christianity in a way that would fundamentally alter what evangelism meant. The "Social Gospel" of the late

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[92] Elie Kedourie, "Minorities" in *The Chatham House Version and Other Middle Eastern Studies,* ed, Elie Kedourie (Chicago; Ivan R. Dee, 2004), 288.

[93] Ussama Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity," *The American Historical Review* Vol. 102, No. 3 (June, 1997): 697.

[94] Heather Sharkey, *American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008), 19.

[95] William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 92.

[96] This famous phrase, incidentally, was from the YMCA's John Mott. See John Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation.* New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1905.

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been succinctly described by one historian as the "ethicizing of Protestantism." Issues of theology were de-emphasized, if not outright ignored, with great value concomitantly placed on social activism.[97] Rather than splitting hairs over issues of orthodoxy, correct forms of church government, and *individual* salvation, the Social Gospel movement set itself to addressing societal, *collective* ills, such as abolishing child labor, providing relief for the unemployed, improving the lot of industrial workers, and lifting the moral standards of American society, all goals that mirrored the Progressive milieu in which it arose. Meliorist and theologically modernist, the Social Gospel, along with the "higher" Biblical criticism emanating from Germany, challenged traditional understandings of Protestant Christianity, and would have a significant impact upon the missionary movement abroad, whose work was gradually transformed from the traditional goal of proselytism to more worldly forms of service: education, providing health care, and inculcating the values of modern democratic societies.

In many respects, the "Four-fold Program" of the YMCA adopted in 1866, "the improvement of the spiritual, mental, social, and physical condition of young men," prefigured some of the aims of the Social Gospel. Because the YMCA was a Christian institution, religious activities such as Bible studies were from the first an aspect of its programming. On the other hand, the organization was also interdenominational, and not being under the supervision of any particular church body, it would encourage its members to seek out a church, where more extensive religious instruction could occur. Over time, the religious aspect of the Four-fold Program slowly atrophied, with its

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[97] Hopkins, *History of the Y.M.C.A. in North America,* 532.

physical and character-building efforts becoming the markers by which the association was known. By the early 1900s, most American YMCAs had drastically reduced their overtly religious work, opting instead to devote their resources to more popular athletic and physical health programs.[98]

The theological transition from traditionalist orthodoxy to modernist Social Gospel, coupled with the recognition of the inefficacy of traditional evangelism, were what accounted for the change in missionary tactics in the second half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth, and the consequent softening of attitude towards the YMCA by not only non-Protestant Christians in the Ottoman World, but even by non-Christians farther east in the Indic and Sinic realms.[99] When a YMCA secretary could write, "The Greek and Armenian Churches are practically on their knees before us, asking us to establish our work throughout all the regions where they are supreme," it was clear that the relationship between Eastern Christians and Western missionaries had undergone a significant transformation since the inception of missionary work a hundred years earlier. This led D.A. Davis, the post-war administrative secretary for Turkey, to "firmly believe there is a possibility for starting a real evangelical movement in the Greek Church."[100]

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[98] Mayer N. Zald and Patricia Denton, "From Evangelism to General Service: The Transformation of the YMCA," *Administrative Science Quarterly* Vol. 8, No. 2 (Sep., 1963): 218.

[99] For examples of the YMCA in the Far East, see Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution. The American Social Gospel and the YMCA in China: 1919-1937.* Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1996 and Jon Thares Davidann, *A World of Crisis and Progress: The American YMCA in Japan, 1890-1930.* Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1998.

[100] Memorandum from E.O. Jacob to Mr. Lyon, April, 1920; D.A. Davis to Sherwood Eddy, April 27, 1920. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1920.

The İzmir Association

When E.O. Jacob began his employment at İzmir in October of 1920, initiating the International Committee's direct supervision of the city's YMCA, the association had already been doing humanitarian work, and was slowly attempting to branch out into other forms of service.[101] For example, during the summer of 1920, with the assistance of both İzmir's Greek administration and the American Consul George Horton, the organization established a camp outside the city to instruct its youth in agricultural techniques.[102] The İzmir YMCA also established a "Christian Citizenship Training Program" in one of the prominent Greek schools of the city. The citizenship program was an extension of the Four-fold Program adapted for boys, combining devotional, athletic, and educational activities for its participants.[103] By the end of 1920, the citizenship program had doubled in size, with others clamoring to be allowed to participate.[104]

The agricultural and citizenship program represented the İzmir YMCA's most visible work and successes, but they differed from the day-to-day work of the association. In June of 1921, eight months after Jacob began his tenure in the city, he penned reports that both summarized the association's work and detailed the constraints under which it was operating. Concerning "physical work," the heart of most YMCAs' activities, he lamented that due to the lack of building and proper space it was "practically impossible

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[101] Agreement Between the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Organization and Ernest O. Jacob, October 1, 1920. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1920.

[102] James Perry to E.O. Jacob, January 7, 1920. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1920.

[103]The International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, *Handbook for Comrades: A Program of Christian Citizenship Training for Boys Fifteen to Seventeen Years of Age* (New York: Association Press, 1920), 2.

[104] Report by E.O. Jacob, December 31, 1920. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

in the sense in which we think of such work at home."[105] Recreational activities such as billiards, thrice-weekly "motion pictures," and tea rooms, none of which generated significant revenue for the association, were popular due to the fact that most of the members were below the age of twenty, a great portion of the city's male population having been mobilized after the resumption of the Greek offensive in the Aydın province.

However, in common with most American missionary institutions of its time, the İzmir YMCA's educational work constituted its greatest achievement. The association maintained a thousand-volume library, and subscribed to several dozen periodicals and daily newspapers in several languages. It also offered English and French classes on a regular basis, in which enrollment had doubled between 1920 and 1921. Jacob also contemplated expanding topically to include courses in mathematics, sciences, and business. Cultural activities such as music lessons and amateur drama were also part of the programming, though they were not as popular as the limited academic coursework it offered. Work of a markedly religious nature remained confined to a weekly Bible study session, the attendance at which was paltry compared with the academic and recreational activities.[106]

The YMCA's mission to İzmir before 1923, then, largely conforms to the historical patterns of both American Christian missions in general and the organization itself in particular. In contrast with the early years of the YMCA, both its domestic and foreign work, while born in a milieu of populist revivalism, had over time grown

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[105] E.O. Jacob to Dr. Studer, June 8, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

[106] A Year in the Young Men's Christian Association from the Report of the President, April, 1921; E.O. Jacob to Dr. Studer, June 8, 1921; Smyrna Y.M.C.A. Activities for the Month of May, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

decidedly less evangelistic and came to emphasize character-building, as exemplified by its Four-fold Program and the "Boys' Work" of the Christian Citizenship Training Program, physical work, and education. And while the organization insisted on remaining at least nominally Christian and its foreign secretaries still spoke the language of proselytism and conversion, the great majority of its efforts became of a non-religious nature, even if still cloaked with the veneer of spreading the Gospel.[107] This progression substantially mirrored that of other American missionary institutions, best exemplified by the American Board, which began its pursuits with the goal of converting the world's non-Christians, which in the face of diminishing returns on its evangelistic efforts, shifted the focus of the mission to social and educational work, albeit done all in the name of Christ.[108]

The success of the first agricultural camp and the citizenship program, coupled with increasing membership numbers and attendance at the association's language classes and weekly civic lectures and a moderately successful fundraising drive amongst İzmir's businessmen, foretold the beginning of a small but stable YMCA in 1921. Despite the fact that it remained paralyzed in expanding its physical work, it was not running deficits, and was well-equipped to maintain the activities it had developed since the end of the war. Furthermore, the association had been able to maintain friendly relations with the city's Greek and Armenian clergy, and retained the strong support of both the U.S.

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[107] For example, in a letter to E.O. Jacob urging him to come to İzmir, Ralph Harlow of the city's International College outlined his goals for the city, one of which was "a direct and open effort to present the claims of Jesus Christ upon the Muhammedan students." Conversion did remain the end goal, but the means to it via education and social service were not "evangelistic" in the word's traditional definition.

[108] Bayard Dodge, "American Educational and Missionary Efforts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 401: America and the Middle East (May, 1972): 18-21.

Consul-General Horton and the Greek High Commissioner Sterghiades. Even Greek nationalists were behind the association, with the Athens daily *Nea Hellas* stating that, "In a country where neither Church, Government, nor Society in general take care of the young people we think that America helps Hellenism by maintaining and developing—under its own management—the work of the Y.M.C.A."[109]

Despite Jacob's private reservations about the viability of not only the İzmir association, but also the YMCA movement in Turkey in general, the initial success of the İzmir branch prompted the International Committee to follow through on its promise to provide an additional American secretary at İzmir.[110] On account of the ongoing war in Anatolia, those under the age of eighteen constituted the principle demographic that the association was serving, making "boys' work" the organization's most attractive prospect for future work. By early 1922, the International Committee had settled on Asa K. Jennings, a man of great consequence in both the history of İzmir and of the YMCA's foreign work, as its next secretary in the city to assist Jacob with boys' work.[111]

An ordained Methodist minister originally from Utica, NY, Jennings at the time of his assignment to İzmir had for the past fifteen years been employed as a YMCA secretary in both North America and Europe. Like Jacob, Jennings spent the war years in Europe, doing relief work first in France and later in Moravia. After the war, he served in the United States as a national boys' work secretary, and later returned to the newly

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[109] A Year in the Young Men's Christian Association from the Report of the President, April, 1921; Translation of article from Athens newspaper *Nea Hellas*, June 12, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

[110] E.O. Jacob to John Mott, June 13, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921; Latourette, *World Service,* 343.

[111] D.A. Davis to Asa Jennings, March 29, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922. Kautz Family YMCA Archive. University of Minnesota Libraries.

created Czechoslovakia, heading the YMCA at Budějovice in Bohemia. Because the post-war Czechoslovak YMCAs were transitioning from foreign to native secretaries to run their work, Jennings was soon to be out of a job, and consequently was scheduled to transfer to İzmir at the end of the summer of 1922.[112]

Interestingly, given the push for expanded boys' work requiring another secretary and the seeming enthusiasm for the YMCA amongst the religious and civic leaders of İzmir, there is little documentary evidence to suggest that the conflict between the Greeks and nationalist Turks was something of which the association was conscious, or which it foresaw interrupting its activities. Jacob remained less than sanguine about the long-term prospects of the association, privately noting after his first year in the city that, "All hopes are centred on the conclusion of peace between the Greeks and Turks." He alone seems to have had doubts, and even he scarcely mentioned the war in his official reports, with finances, increasing memberships, and the perennial issue of finding adequate space for physical work consuming his attention.[113]

This seemingly lackadaisical attitude toward the Greco-Turkish conflict stemmed from the fact that both during the First World War and again after the Greek occupation, İzmir had been governed by two exceptional administrators: Rahmi Bey, the Turkish *Vali* of the city during the Great War, and Aristidis Sterghiades, İzmir's Greek High Commissioner from 1919-1922. Rahmi Bey had single-handedly saved İzmir from destruction in March of 1915 when, the city being endangered by bombardment and

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[112] "Doomed YMCA Worker Saved Greek Civilians. What Kept Him Alive?" *The Milwaukee Journal* June 13, 1945; D.A. Davis to E.O. Jacob, March 29, 1922; D.A. Davis to Asa Jennings, March 29, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[113] Administrative Report, Smyrna Young Men's Christian Organization, July, 1921. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1921.

occupation by a British fleet, he threatened to burn the city rather than see it occupied. The British Levantines protested their country's actions, and thus the city was spared. Rahmi Bey likewise managed to ingratiate himself with city's Levantines, and believing the Empire to be on the losing side of the war, often disregarded orders from İstanbul. He protected the city's foreign institutions as best he could, and even conducted something of his own foreign policy, making overtures to the Entente for an Ottoman surrender as early as 1916.[114]

After the Greek occupation of İzmir, Venizelos appointed Sterghiades, a fellow Cretan, as the Greek High Commissioner for Anatolia. Despite his association with the Venizelist party, his effectiveness as an administrator, coupled with the Royalist government's continuation of the Venizelist foreign policy in Asia Minor, guaranteed his position even after Venizelos' electoral defeat.[115] A scholar of Islamic law and previously an administrator of a similar kind in Salonika after the city was ceded to Greece during the First Balkan War, Sterghiades, described by Consul Horton, was "possessed of a strict sense of justice and a high ideal of duty, he lived as a hermit, accepting no invitations, and never appearing in society. He wished, he informed me, to accept no favors and to form no ties, so that he might administer equal justice to all, high and low alike." To demonstrate his impartiality, upon assuming control of the city, he publically executed three Greeks for disturbing the peace, and openly quarreled with the Greek clergy of the city, even going so far as to stop a church service when the sermon by Archbishop

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[114] Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 227; George Horton, *Blight of Asia* (Indianapolis, IN: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, 1926), 218; Richard Ned Lebow, "The Morgenthau Peace Mission of 1917," *Jewish Social Studies* Vol. 32, No. 4 (Oct., 1970), 286, n. 4.

[115] Sir H. Rumbold to Earl Curzon, Nov. 22, 1920. *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. Vol. XIII,* eds. E.L. Woodward and Rohan Butler (Hereafter *DOBFP*) (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1963), 180-181.

Chrysostomos veered into politics.[116] Known by the moniker "the Just," Sterghiades was nevertheless an open adherent of the aims of the Megali Idea, believing that by maintaining order and building an effective administration in İzmir, the Greeks could thus create a new civilization in Asia Minor reflective of the best of their Hellenic traditions.[117] Because of Sterghiades supervision, İzmir remained relatively free of the internecine conflict that irredentist warfare was likely to spark.[118]

The Destruction of İzmir

Despite the seeming tranquility in İzmir proper, by the summer of 1922, the circumstances of the war had largely turned against Greece. Until the watershed Battle of Sakarya in August of 1921, the Greek army had been able to maneuver freely in Anatolia, and indeed came close at this battle to routing Atatürk's forces and taking the nationalist capital, Ankara. Thereafter, however, the Turks assumed the initiative. France and Italy, recognizing the shifting military circumstances, withdrew their forces from Cilicia and Antalya, respectively, during the autumn of 1921. The Soviet Union was actively supplying the nationalist army with money and weapons, as Ankara had in March of 1921 concluded its first diplomatic treaty with Moscow, which left Great Britain, more specifically Lloyd George, alone supporting Greece in Asia Minor.[119] With the will of the Greek populace flagging and the ability of the Kingdom to finance the war swiftly coming to an end, some forward-looking Hellenes, Sterghiades among them, began to

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[116] Horton, *Blight of Asia*, 79-81.

[117] H.A. Henderson, "Aristides the Just," in *Current History: A Monthly Magazine of the New York Times. Vol. XVI, April-September, 1922* (New York: New York Times Company, 1922), 595; Smith, *Ionian Vision,* 94.

[118] Lord Granville to Curzon.Oct. 5, 1921 in *DOBFP XVI*, 417.

[119] Jensen, "The Greco-Turkish War, 1920-1922," 561; Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 160.

talk of suing for peace or even evacuation.[120] In a desperate measure to end the war in one stroke, the mentally unstable commander of the Greek army, Georgios Hatzianestis, moved troops from Anatolia to Eastern Thrace in an attempt to take Allied-occupied İstanbul, which presumably would demoralize the Turkish nationalists into submission and end the conflict. When the British and French promised that an attempt on the city would be met with military force, the Greeks backed down. Kemal then opened his final offensive on August 26, recapturing city after city as he drove the Greek army before him to the coast on his way to İzmir.[121]

The rumors of the Turkish offensive and rout of the Greek army at Uşak were mostly dismissed at first, but as the steady stream of Greek soldiers and refugees from the interior turned into a flood, the European citizens of İzmir with the means to flee the city began to do so. With over one hundred and fifty thousand refugees from the interior congregating in the city, a number growing at a rate of thirty thousand per day, Jacob and Caleb Lawrence of the International College formed a relief committee to stave off what was fast evolving into a humanitarian disaster.[122] With the fall of the Greek government and resignation of High Commissioner Sterghiades on September 7, the situation in İzmir continued to descend into anarchy, leaving only Allied consuls such as Horton in authority.[123] By the time the Turks entered the city on September 9, every American

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[120] Lindley to Balfour, July 7, 1922 in *DOBFP XVI*, 879; Lindley to Balfour, June 27, 1922 in *DOBFP XVI*, 865; Lindley to Balfour, June 30, 1922 in *DOBFP XVI*, 872-874.

[121] Jensen, "The Greco-Turkish War, 1919-1922," 563.

[122] Horton, *Blight of Asia,* 117; "Europeans Begin to Flee Smyrna," *New York Times* September 7, 1922; E.O. Jacob to D.A. Davis, September 18, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[123] "Greeks Hand over Smyrna to Allies: Looting Reported," *New York Times* September 8, 1922.

institution in the city was housing refugees, including one hundred in the city's YMCA.[124]

Upon entering İzmir, the now-victorious Mustapha Kemal declared an amnesty, and stated that any Turkish soldier caught looting Christian property or harming any minorities would be immediately shot.[125] The peace lasted not a day. As Consul Horton put it, "As the Turkish cavalry was entering İzmir on the morning of the ninth, some fool threw a bomb," and by the evening of the same day, "the looting and killing began."[126] Despite the presence of Allied ships in İzmir's harbor, there was no concerted intergovernmental assistance to the city's population in the days that followed. Even Greece refused to help its fellow Hellenes stranded in the city, with the Allies assuming that the Americans would take responsibility for the relief effort, despite its having no official recognition of either Constantine's or Kemal's governments.[127]

The refugees from the Anatolian interior and the citizens unable to evacuate on the last Greeks ships were trapped, entirely dependent upon the western relief organizations for sustenance and the few soldiers left behind to guard American and British property for protection. The violence that greeted the Turks' entry into the city had only worsened in the days since İzmir's recapture, with Jacob noting the rising number of dead in the streets and homes, and the Armenian quarter having been almost

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[124] E.O. Jacob to D.A. Davis, September 8, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[125] "Smyrna Welcomes Kemal Pasha's Entry," *New York Times* September 11, 1922.

[126] Horton, *Blight of Asia,* 127-128.

[127] Bristol to Acting Secretary of State, September 13, 1922 in *FRUS, 1922 Vol. II*, 420-421; Acting Secretary of State to Horton, September 8, 1922 in *FRUS, 1922 Vol. II*, 417-418.

completely looted since the Turks' arrival.[128] Still, the worst was yet to come for the Greeks and Armenians of İzmir.

On the 14th, Admiral Bristol sent a cable from İstanbul to Washington stating tersely:

> Wireless just received from my chief of staff at Smyrna states city is burning and that all American naturalized citizens and that women of native born Americans have been evacuated to Athens on destroyer *Simpson* in charge of Consul Horton. No details are given.[129]

Around one o'clock in the afternoon on the thirteenth, a fire had broken out in İzmir's Armenian quarter, and within twenty-four hours the conflagration had devastated not only that part of the city, but the Greek and European quarters as well.[130] The inferno drove the few Greeks and Armenians who remained in hiding to join the refugees on the quayside, swelling the number there to an estimated three hundred thousand.[131] The populace was now trapped between the fire raging in the portside European district, and the waters of the harbor. On September 19, Kemal issued a proclamation that all refugee men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were immediately considered prisoners of war, and that anyone remaining in the city after October 1 would be taken prisoner and deported to the interior, as were the Armenians in 1915.[132]

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[128] E.O. Jacob to D.A. Davis, September 18, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[129] Bristol to Acting Secretary of State, September 14, 1922 in *FRUS 1922 Vol. II,* 421.

[130] Culpability for the fire remains as hotly-contested an historical issue as the sister question of whether or not the actions against the Armenians during 1915 constituted genocide. Who started the fire is immaterial to this study, and the author has no stance on the issue.

[131] This is the most conservative estimate of the number of persons on the quay, with others putting it closer to half a million.

[132] Bristol to Acting Secretary of State, September 19, 1922 in *FRUS, 1922 Vol. II*, 426.

Asa Jennings had only been with the İzmir YMCA as its new boys' work secretary for a few weeks when the Turks entered the city, but he was instrumental in assisting Jacob in organizing the İzmir relief committee and housing refugees in the YMCA and his home.[133] While British and American ships had begun sporadically taking on refugees and transporting them to nearby islands, Jennings recognized that there were not enough ships to transport the remaining refugees to safety before Kemal's October deadline for their evacuation. With his family safely away on an American destroyer, Jennings resolved to personally muster as many ships as possible to begin transporting the mass of refugees on the quayside to safety in the Aegean isles.

Having received the American destroyer *Edsall*'s launch boat from its commander, Halsey Powell, Jennings first went to the French steamer *Pierre Loti* and interviewed its captain about taking on some of the refugees. Receiving a refusal, he then moved on to the Italian cargo ship, the *Constaninapoli*, repeating his request, and initially received another denial, with the Italian captain stating that he had orders to transport only cargo, not refugees, to İstanbul. However, when Jennings offered him five thousand lire to take two thousand refugees to Mytilene, with another thousand after he had finished the job, the captain agreed, thus beginning the great evacuation of İzmir's refugees.[134]

With permission from both the Italian consul to use the ship and the Turkish authorities to evacuate some of the refugees, the *Constaninapoli* transported the two thousand refugees to Mytilene, where to Jennings' shock, the twenty Greek transports

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[133] Sarah Jacob to D.A. Davis, September 14, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[134] Housepian Dobkin, *Smyrna, 1922*, 192; R.W. Abernethy, "The Great Rescue," in *The Spirit of the Game,* eds. A.E. Southon and R.W. Abernethy (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1926), 167-168.

that had been used to evacuate the occupying Hellenic army after their August route were laying dormant in the city's harbor. Commander Powell had in the meantime received a guarantee from the Turks not to attack Greek ships meant to transport refugees from the city, provided they did not fly the Greek flag or dock on the wharf, so Jennings immediately went to the Greek General Frankos at Mytilene, asking for permission to use the transports. At first open to the idea, Frankos then demurred, fearing that the Turks, who had no navy to speak of, would seize the ships and continue their offensive against the Greeks in the Aegean islands off western Anatolia.

However, Frankos did allow Jennings aboard the battleship *Kilkis* to wire the Greek central government with the same request for using the ships. Jennings received an even more cautious answer from Athens, which similarly feared a Turkish seizure of the ships, despite Ankara's assurances and the added protection of having American destroyers accompany the ships in and out of the harbor. On September 23, with scarcely a week remaining before Kemal's deadline for the refugees, Jennings, weary of Athens' irresolution in the face of an ongoing humanitarian catastrophe, sent the Greek government an ultimatum:

> I told them that if I did not receive a favorable reply by six o'clock that evening, I would wire openly, without code, so that the message could be picked up by any wireless station near, that the Turkish authorities had given permission for Greek ships to evacuate refugees from Smyrna, that the American navy had guaranteed protection to these ships, that I assumed responsibility for directing them to Greek soil in safety, that all we lacked was ships, and that the Greek Government would not permit Greek ships to save Greek and Armenian refugees awaiting certain death or worse! [135]

Around six o'clock the same evening, Jennings received a reply that said all Greek vessels in the Aegean had been placed under his personal command, making him,

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[135] Abernethy, "The Great Rescue," 170.

temporarily, an Admiral of the Greek navy. Over the next week, with the Greek navy at his disposal, Jennings engineered the evacuation of the remaining three hundred thousand refugees on the quay at İzmir, and was almost solely responsible for staying a near-certain replication of the 1915 deportation of the Ottoman Armenians, which was deadly to almost everyone involved.

The Great Fire of İzmir has in Greek historiography represented the closing act of the Megali Idea, which not only was a resounding failure as a foreign policy, but also indirectly led to the permanent destruction of the almost three thousand year old Greek community in Asia Minor, an occurrence that to some Greek scholars stands next to the 1453 fall of Constantinople in historical importance.[136] In many respects, the events at İzmir represent a watershed in the history of Christian missions in Asia Minor as well, though this fact has been much overlooked by most historians of the topic. The Greeks and Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, long the primary targets of western missionaries, had by the end of the Greco-Turkish War either been killed or driven out of Turkish domains, leaving the missionaries bereft of potential converts. Furthermore, the new nationalist government of the Turkish Republic was to take a much less tolerant view of western institutions desiring to operate in the country, especially ones advocating the Christian faith of the European powers that had dominated its lands for most of the previous century. "Is there any chance that the Y.M.C.A. can again take hold in Smyrna? Our constituency…are gone. The Y.M.C.A has had three glorious years. Let us hope that it faithfully served its purpose before it was wiped out."[137] The hero of the İzmir fire on

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[136] Yıldırım, "The 1923 Population Exchange, Refugees and National Historiographies in Greece and Turkey," 45.

the other hand, Asa Jennings, was less pessimistic about the organization's chances in the new country, and scarcely before the embers of İzmir had gone out, Jennings mind was lit with a new idea to continue the YMCA's work in Turkey in a manner both continuous with the institution's traditions and indicative of the course it was to take in the newly nationalistic Middle East.

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[137] E.O. Jacob, "My Smyrna Disaster Diary," Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

V. THE ANATOLIA PROJECT

The Early Kemalist Era

Having driven out the Greek army and concluded a peace acceptable to the nascent Turkish Republic with the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, the victorious Mustafa Kemal was to have remarked, "The war is over with ourselves victorious, but our real struggle for independence is to begin only now—this is the struggle to achieve Western civilization."[138] "Turkey for the Turks" was only the first goal of Kemal and his acolytes, who were intent on bringing the Turkish people out of what they perceived as its medievalism and into the modern world, meaning the civilization of the West.[139] Over the next decade, through the vehicle of the Republican People's Party (RPP), the Kemalists

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[138]Quoted in Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 463-464.

[139] "Yield to the Turks Now, Says Prentiss," *New York Times* November 11, 1922; Kinross, *Atatürk*, 439.

dominated the political life of the Turkish Republic, and initiated a sweeping program of societal reform bent on remaking the Turkish nation in the image of Europe, embodied by the "Six Arrows" of the RPP: republicanism, nationalism, populism, *e'tatism,* secularism, and revolution.[140]

The list of reforms is extensive, affecting government, civil law, the economy, and especially the role of religion in society. Islam had remained the ideological cornerstone of the Ottoman state from the beginning, and even the most progressive of the nineteenth century *Tanzimat* reformers had never questioned its place in society or sought to jettison religion from the public sphere. Especially after the long reign of Abdülhamid II, however, in which the role of Islam as a political weapon intensified, many Turkish intellectuals, some of whom would later join the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress that dominated the empire between 1908 and 1918, began to turn to positivism and *laïcite* as another solution to the empire's ills. As early as 1912, the Young Turk intellectual, Abdullah Cevdet, was calling for the ban of the *fez* and the abolition of dervish lodges, closing religious schools or *madrasas* and replacing them with technical schools, and simplifying the Ottoman language.[141]

Though Kemal would not have openly professed animosity to Islam, desiring rather to reduce it to a rational, "scientific" religion akin to deism, there is little question that a major thrust of the reforms of the 1920s and 1930s was the disestablishment of Islam in government and law and the curtailment of its role in society.[142] Only a month

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[140] Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, 63. These six principles were in 1937 written into the Turkish constitution, making Kemalism the official ideology of the Turkish state.

[141] Tuncay Saygin and Mehmet Önal, "'Secularism from the Last Years of the Ottoman Empire to the Early Turkish Republic," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* Vol. 7, No. 20 (Summer, 2008): 35.

after the expulsion of the Greek army and the victory at İzmir, the Grand National Assembly abolished the sultanate and scarcely a year later the caliphate. Mehmed VI and all remaining members of the Ottoman dynasty were subsequently exiled. The end of the sultanate and caliphate both precluded any hope of a constitutional monarchy in which religion could retain a place in the country's government, and also signaled Turkey's repudiation of its longstanding role as head of the Sunni world.

With sultanate and caliphate vanquished, and in what conspicuously resembles Cevdet's recommendations, Kemal continued his program to drive Islam out of the public sphere. The Dervish orders were outlawed, and their lodges seized by the government and converted into state schools. The fez was abolished, and western headgear made compulsory. Women were no longer forced to wear the veil, and later received the right to vote. Islamic law, the *sharia*, was replaced with legal codes based on those of Switzerland and Italy. Finally, the Arabic script, itself a significant religious symbol, was replaced with a modified Latin script, and the Turkish language purged of Arabic and Persian loanwords.

Most significant for the western missionaries who had been operating in the Ottoman Empire for the previous century was the Kemalists' drastic overhaul of the education system. The *madrasas* were closed, and in their place was erected a uniform system of primary education overseen by the Ministry of Public Instruction, with western subjects like literature, history, and modern languages replacing the traditional ones of the Qur'an, *hadith*, and Arabic and Persian.[143] This measure was not reserved for Muslim

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[142]Sabri M. Akural, "Kemalist Views on Social Change" in *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey*, ed. Jacob Landau (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 127.

schools though, and as the *millets* had been abolished anyway, Christian schools were likewise shut down or incorporated into the state system of public schooling. As education had been the missionaries most popular and successful work in Turkey, the ruling essentially obviated the possibility of their continued presence among the Turks.

There also was the question of a constituency, as Jacob had hinted at in the closing days of the İzmir evacuation. The ethnic cleansing of the city was reenacted on a national scale shortly after the inferno with the "Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations" signed by Ismet Inönü on January 30, 1923, even before the official conclusion of the peace with the Treaty of Lausanne. Excepting the Greek Orthodox denizens of İstanbul and the Muslims of western Thrace, every Christian of Turkey and Muslim of Greece was forcibly expatriated to their "national" homelands and prohibited by law from returning.[144] Not only then had the YMCA lost its constituency at İzmir, but the entire western missionary enterprise in Turkey was also thus deprived of clientele. With the new legal restrictions on their schools, and a dearth of students to populate them, American missions in Turkey were largely left in limbo during the early years of the republic.

Jennings' Desire to Continue

The situation for the YMCA in Turkey reflected this general uncertainty, at least in the waning months of 1922 and early ones of 1923, when the details of the Treaty of Lausanne were being forged, and the great movement of populations between Greece and Turkey was being conducted. Jacob, having fled to Athens after the fire, despaired of the

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[143]Arnold Toynbee and Kenneth P. Kirkwood, *Turkey* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976), 246.

[144]Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: The Mass Expulsions That Forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 106.

situation in the country, and requested a transfer elsewhere.[145] Jennings on the other hand remained, having received a personal request from Admiral Bristol to stay in the region. And under the auspices of Near East Relief, an American missionary organization founded in 1915 to aid the Armenians and Assyrian Christians displaced by the war, Jennings continued to assist in the evacuation of Greek refugees from Anatolia. The İstanbul YMCA was for the time being secure though, with the city's governor, Adnan Bey, foregoing any question of its status until after the peace was finalized at Lausanne.[146]

While Jennings was confident that the YMCA could continue its work in Anatolia despite the events of the previous several months, his plans for future activities in İzmir did not take shape until well into 1923, with work among refugees and the population exchange monopolizing his time.[147] However, refusing to admit that the YMCA had ever "quit" İzmir, Jennings went back to the city in April to survey the prospects of a return, and received a great deal of encouragement from the American and Turkish businessmen of İzmir, as well as the city's vali and mayor. Of particular interest to Jennings was the "Turkish Young Men's Union," which had recently opened, based much on the model of the YMCA and the city's previous "American Turkish club," founded by John Kingsley Birge.[148] İzmir's mayor, Şükrü Kaya, at first only tentatively supportive, eventually

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[145]E.O. Jacob to D.A. Davis, October 10, 1922. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1922.

[146]Asa Jennings to E.O. Jacob. February 19, 1923. Asa K. Jennings, Biographical Files, 1922-1923.

[147]D.A. Davis to C.V. Hibbard, February 19, 1922. Asa K Jennings Biographical Files, 1922-1923. Jennings was specifically involved in the exchange of prisoners signed at the same time as the convention on the exchange of populations. See "Agreement Between Greece and Turkey Concerning the Reciprocal Restitution of Interned Civilians and the Exchange of Prisoners of War," *American Journal of International Law* Vol. 18, No. 2 Supplement: Official Documents (Apr., 1924): 90-92.

agreed to accept Jennings' cooperation, leaving him to detail the minutiae of the agreement and gain the approval of both the International Committee of the YMCA and the Turkish government.[149]

Having received oral commitments of support from the new American Consul at İzmir, Albert Treat, the President of the International College, Cass Arthur Reed, and the overseer of the American Board in Turkey, Dr. W.W. Peet, Jennings submitted a preliminary proposal to the YMCA's International Committee in July of 1923, outlining the challenging political situation in the nascent Turkish Republic, while also reaffirming his belief in the possibility of renewed YMCA work there. Acknowledging that the policy of "Turkey for the Turks" and the longstanding animosity of Muslims toward western Christianity ostensibly impeded the future of evangelistic work, Jennings indicated that the more "liberal minded Turks" were seeking to develop the same kind of character-building institutions that the YMCA had long promulgated, and that they welcomed the association's assistance, provided that political and religious topics remained off limits. Furthermore, as the expelled Ottoman Greeks and Armenians had largely constituted the empire's commercial and financial base, and relatively few Turks were capable of filling these crucial positions, the "national policy" required competent substitutes as quickly as possible, and the YMCA was well-positioned to offer the kind of trade education necessary to build an indigenous, "national" Turkish business class. Jennings then proposed a "Community Social Service Center" in İzmir, but did not specify the types of

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[148]Birge, who had been a professor at the International College of İzmir, later went on to write *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (1937), which remains one of the standard works on Bektashism even today. See Howard A. Reed, "Perspectives on the Evolution of Turkish Studies in North America Since 1946," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter, 1997): 15-31.

[149]Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, April 7, 1923. Asa K. Jennings Biographical Files, 1922-1923.

activities in which this establishment would engage, perhaps assuming that traditional YMCA work would continue, excepting anything with the taint of Christianity.[150]

With the approval of the American Board, and the International College offering Jennings the use of its buildings in İzmir, which had gone unused since the fire, the International Committee agreed to back Jennings' plan at İzmir, offering to help accrue the necessary funds for the project, and agreeing to provide secretaries to assist Jennings. Not negotiable, however, was the name; whatever the final title of the organization was to be, the YMCA would have to be acknowledged in it if the International Committee was to act as a sponsor.[151]

Convincing the Turkish government to adopt Jennings' "Anatolian Project" was to prove more problematic, precisely because of the nationalistic and secular policies of the young republic. Over the summer of 1924, Jennings engaged in a protracted series of negotiations with the Turkish Minister of Public Instruction, Vassif Bey, concerning how Jennings' ideas could take shape in a manner acceptable to the Kemalist ideology. Jennings' initial trip to Ankara was largely a success, with Vassif Bey agreeing to the creation of a central committee of an equal number of Americans and Turks to direct the organization. It would solely be a nationalist, indigenous movement, and educational and physical work would remain the priorities of the new association.[152] Jennings' second trip to Ankara further clarified the organizational details, with the central committee being composed of six Americans appointed by Jennings, and six Turks appointed by Vassif

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[150] "Smyrna" Asa K. Jennings, Biographical Files, 1922-1923.

[151] Cass Arthur Reed to C.V. Hibbard, July 21, 1923; James Barton to A.F. Newell, September 10, 1923. Asa K. Jennings Biographical Files; John Mott to Asa Jennings, March 13, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924. Kautz Family YMCA Libraries. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[152] Asa Jennings to Vassif Bey, April 8, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924.

Bey, who was to chair the organization. Ankara, not İzmir, was to be the organization's first locale, with six other sites to follow. The Americans, while being provided with suitable buildings in each city where an association opened, were nonetheless financially responsible for erecting the facility at Ankara, and were likewise tasked with covering the startup costs of every subsequent municipal organization.[153]

The only points of great contention during the negotiations between Jennings and the Minister of Public Instruction were those connected to the name of the YMCA, and the specific nature of the educational activities at the proposed Turkish-American clubs. Mott and the International Committee had been insistent that the YMCA be acknowledged in the name of the new organization, proposing "The Preparation for Life Club of the Y.M.C.A." as a possible title.[154] The Vassif Bey, however, was equally as adamant that not only could the YMCA's name not be in the title of the new organization, but there was to be no open connection between the Turkish government and the YMCA, which had the double charge against it of being both a religious organization in a secular state, and a Christian organization in a predominantly Muslim society. Furthermore, even the "moral education" written into Jennings' proposals was found to be offensive, and Vassif Bey insisted on replacing it with "social education" so as to not offend the sensibilities of the Kemalists who dominated the government.[155] From the standpoint of the International Committee, the Turkish resolve on these points, while "not entirely reassuring," was nonetheless superseded by the "supreme value" of

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[153]Asa Jennings to Vassif Bey, June 23, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924.

[154]John Mott to Asa Jennings, March 13, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924.

[155]"Memorandum of Interview at Angora" by Fred Field Goodsell, July 2-3, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924.

establishing a working relationship with the Turks after almost a century of previous failures.[156]

The differences between Vassif and the YMCA were quickly swept aside when Jennings received an enormous pledge of financial support from Arthur Nash, an industrialist who claimed to have procured his fortune by following the "golden rule," and deemed that Jennings' proposed work among the Turks was precisely in this spirit.[157] While the International Committee was assisting the Turkish-American organization in procuring funds by giving Jennings its donor lists for foreign service, Jennings had managed by early 1925 to raise enough money to work for one year.[158] Nash, through a trust under the supervision of the Universalist Convention, was offering twenty-five thousand dollars to initialize the project in 1925, with fifty thousand dollars per year from 1926-1930 to follow.[159] His only request was that John Ascham, like Jennings an ordained Methodist minister who held a longstanding interest in Near Eastern affairs, be assigned to the project as a YMCA secretary and Jennings' primary assistant.[160]

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[156]Arthur Newell to C.V. Hibbard, August 4, 1924; Luther R. Fowle to Asa Jennings, August 4, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924.

[157]"The Church Industrial," *Time* July 25, 1925.

[158]John Manley to Asa Jennings, October 27, 1924. Anatolian Project, 1924; Asa Jennings to John Mott, January 14, 1925. Anatolian Project, January-May, 1925. Kautz Family YMCA Archive. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[159] The Universalist church to which Nash belonged is not to be confused with the Unitarian Universalist Church, though it did later merge with that denomination. At the time, this body was predominantly orthodox Protestant in its beliefs, but subscribed to the doctrine of *apokatastasis*, or universal salvation for all persons regardless of belief.

[160]Memorandum to John Mott by Asa Jennings, April 25, 1925. Anatolian Project, January-May, 1925.

Anatolian Project and the Turkish Hearth

With the generous donation having been made public, Jennings conferred with the new Minister of Public Instruction, Hamdullah Suphi Bey, an acquaintance from both Jennings' relief work and the initial stages of the Anatolian project. At first pledging to reaffirm the agreement between the YMCA and the Turkish government that his predecessor, Vassif Bey, had negotiated, Hamdullah Suphi then, without warning or any possibility of appeal, completely rearranged the details of the Turkish-American clubs' administration.[161] The Kurdish rebellion under Sheikh Sa'id earlier in the year had served to intensify nationalistic feelings among the Turks, leading the government to tighten its grip on foreign institutions operating in the country.[162] Furthermore, Hamdullah Suphi claimed that several European governments had proposed projects similar to Jennings' Turkish-American clubs. Undoubtedly due to the powerful Armenian lobby under the leadership of the outspoken nationalist Vahan Cardashian, the American Senate had perennially refused to ratify the "American" Treaty of Lausanne. Thus, the original proposal between Jennings and the Turkish government was to be altered.[163] Jennings' Anatolian Project was effectively nationalized, with Nash's funds to be deposited in a

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[161]Asa Jennings to Hamdoullah Soubhi Bey, August 15, 1925. Anatolian Project, June-December, 1925. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[162]Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, August 12, 1925. Anatolian Project, June-December, 1925.

[163] Because the United States had never officially been at war with the Ottoman Empire, they were not full participants in the negotiation of the Treaty of Lausanne. However, US Ambassador Joseph Grew and İsmet İnönü concluded a separate "Treaty of Amity and Commerce" during the Lausanne Conference. It is this "American" Lausanne Treaty to which Hamdullah Suphi was referring, not its more famous counterpart.

Turkish bank, Jennings and Ascham made employees of the Turkish government, and their work to be conducted under the auspices of the Turkish Hearth, or *Türk Ocağı.*[164]

The Turkish Hearth mirrored the YMCA movement in that its goals were, at least at first, non-political and non-sectarian, seeking only to buttress and elevate the Turkish people through education and the awakening of a sense of "Turkishness." The Hearth movement was established in the nationalistic milieu following the Young Turk revolution of 1908. Prominent Turkist and pan-Turanist intellectuals such as Yusuf Akçura, Halide Edib, and Ziya Gökalp, were all involved in the movement's founding.[165] Like the Young Turk movement, the Turkish Hearth began in the military medical school in İstanbul, and whereas the Committee of Union and Progress was a decidedly political organization, the Hearths were dedicated to a cultural nationalism, forming clubs throughout the Ottoman Empire that offered theatrical and musical performances, lectures, and art exhibitions glorifying the Turkish people, as well as publishing a popular journal, "Turkish Homeland" (*Türk Yurdu*), all "to advance the national education and raise the scientific, social and economic level of the Turks who are the foremost of the peoples of Islam."[166] Because of its association with the anathematized Committee of Union and Progress, as well as its pan-Turkism and pan-Turanism, both highly suspect

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[164]Joseph L. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 280-281; Report on the Angora Project to be Submitted to the Foreign Committee by D.A. Davis, November 11, 1925. Anatolian Project, June-December, 1925.

[165]Kemal Karpat, "The People's Houses in Turkey: Establishment and Growth," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 17, No. ½ (Winter-Spring, 1963): 56.

[166] Zürcher, *Turkey*, 134; Quoted in Touraj Atabaki, "Recasting and recording Identities in the Caucasus," *Iran & the Caucasus* Vol. 6, No. 1/2 (2002) 221.

ideas under the Kemalist regime that disavowed foreign adventurism, the Turkish Hearth saw its influence significantly wane during the early years of the republic.[167]

It is not insignificant then that Hamdullah Suphi Bey, in addition to being the new Minister of Public Instruction, had also been the head of the Turkish Hearth movement since its inception in 1912, and remained during his tenure in the government. Indeed, Jennings' original negotiations with Vassif Bey had taken place at the Hearth center in Ankara and had been attended by Hamdullah Suphi Bey. Furthermore, Hamdullah Suphi looked upon YMCAS as models for the Hearths of the early republic.[168] Given that the United States' failure to ratify the "American" Treaty of Lausanne was already several years old, and that the European governments who purportedly offered the Turks assistance with social work remained unnamed, it seems clear that Hamdullah Suphi used his position as Minister of Education to divert Nash's funds to the group over which he had presided for the past decade by simply nationalizing Jennings' organization. Jennings refused to accept the appearance of bad faith on the part of the Turks though, and at least for the time being, he and Ascham were scheduled to be employees of the Turkish government and advisors to the Turkish Hearth organization.[169]

Hamdullah Suphi Bey's desire to replenish the coffers of the Turkish Hearth was a far less grievous offense than what Jennings was to face from his American colleague,

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[167] Kemal Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 377-378.

[168] Untitled Report by Asa Jennings, June 21, 1924. Asa K. Jennings Biographical Files, 1924-1925. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries; Report on Tendencies in Turkey. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, 1924. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

[169] Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, September 20, 1925. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, August-December 1925. Turkey: Correspondence and Reports, August-December, 1925. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries; Asa Jennings to Hamdullah Suphi Bey, January 12, 1926. Anatolian Project, January-May, 1926. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

Dr. Ascham, and financial backer, Arthur Nash. Having tired of what he saw as insufficient progress toward concluding a final agreement with the Turks and beginning concrete work in Anatolia, Nash directed Ascham to privately ask Jennings to feign illness and step down, which would leave Ascham in charge of the project and in a place to mediate directly between Nash and the Turkish government.[170] Given that the project was entirely his creation, Jennings naturally refused. At the first meeting of the Anatolian Project's central committee, Ascham produced a letter from Nash directing him to negotiate the transfer to the Hearth of almost half of the proposed two hundred and fifty thousand dollars over the next six months, which in the eyes of the central committee effectively precluded the need for its existence. On account of his money, Nash, with Ascham as his representative, was attempting to usurp control of Jennings' project, using the good will and fame he had engendered among the Turks to lend a humanitarian veneer to what amounted to a simple donation to a Turkist youth group.[171] Finally, after a months-long, acrimonious, and deeply-personal imbroglio between Jennings and Ascham, the YMCA ended Ascham's "employment," and completely withdrew from its involvement with Nash and the Turkish Hearth.[172]

The Smyrna Welfare Council

Very much in character, Jennings tenaciously pressed on with his idea for social service in İzmir. On a return trip to Ankara to amend the contract for the home he was to rent while working for the Turkish Hearth, Jennings had a chance encounter on the train

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[170]Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, April 5, 1926. Anatolian Project, January-May, 1926.

[171] D.W. Ross' Minutes of the First Regular Meeting of the Resident American Committee, Anatolian Project. Constantinople, April 5, 1926. Turkey: Anatolian Project, January-May, 1926.

[172]D.A. Davis to D.J. Van Bommel, July 17, 1926. Turkey; Anatolian Project, June-December, 1926. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

with Hamdullah Suphi, who despite his erstwhile perfidy concerning Nash's funding of his organization, prodded Jennings to pursue his idea of a social service center in İzmir, and invited him to stay in Ankara for the celebration of the founding of the republic.[173] He then returned to İzmir on yet another exploratory mission, and was granted an audience with the city's mayor, Hüseyin Aziz Akyürek, and İzmir province's governor, Kiazim Paşa, who asked Jennings to clarify his relation to the YMCA in İstanbul, and explain his plan for service in İzmir. Contradicting Hamdullah Suphi's claims concerning the government's insistence that Jennings' project be carried out under the auspices of the Hearth, Kiazim explained that, as governor, he retained enough independence from Ankara to allow Jennings to carry on in İzmir, and proposed to do so, assuming the same provisions of non-sectarianism and devotion to Turkish nationalism were in place.[174] With the Foreign Committee's resolution approving the continuation of his project, and enough funds even without Nash' donation to begin work immediately, Jennings again set himself to the work of creating a program of social service to the Turkish people.[175]

In contrast with the long delay that had accompanied Jennings and Ascham's collusion with the Hearth, the work on Jennings' latest "Anatolia Project" began almost immediately, and signified the kind of service Jennings' had in mind from the beginning.[176] Organizationally, the work was very much under the control of the Turkish government, which would prevent any transgression of national principles. The central

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[173]Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, November 12, 1926. Turkey: Anatolian Project, June-December, 1926.

[174]Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, December 11, 1926. Turkey: Anatolian Project, June-December, 1926.

[175] D.A. David to Asa Jennings, December 1, 1926; Asa Jennings to D.A. Davis, December 20, 1926. Turkey: Anatolian Project, June-December, 1926.

[176] Asa Jennings to William Schram, February 17, 1927. Anatolian Project, 1927-1931. Kautz Family YMCA Archives. University of Minnesota Libraries.

committee of the organization was composed of twenty members of the Turkish assembly, with a "community welfare council" of nine Turks and three Americans to oversee the daily operations of the project.

The organization's work was threefold: Translations and Publications, primarily entailing of materials directed at youth education and health; Social Service, which included a range of activities from establishing an orphanage and clinics to running summer camps and a "boys' club"; and finally, Playground and Public Recreation, which amounted to a municipal park organization.[177] The Smyrna Welfare Council notably went on to establish an orphanage, to erect Turkey's first playground and a field for athletics, and to offer both Turkish and foreign language instruction in one of İzmir's mosques.[178]

The success of the Smyrna Welfare Council attracted enough attention in the capital for the Turkish government to relocate Jennings and his staff to the Ankara, where it was thought his work would have a more widespread influence, leaving the İzmir organization to be administered solely by Turks. Indeed, Jennings had so much continued success that in 1930, with the assistance of the Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Ahmed Muhtar, and American notables such as the educational reformer John Dewey, Jennings' longtime friend Admiral Mark Bristol, industrialist Cleveland Dodge, and William Hoover, the founder of the Hoover Vacuum Cleaner company, he was able to incorporate the American Friends of Turkey. Essentially one of the first organized foreign lobbying groups in the United States, the American Friends of Turkey, through fellowships and scholarships to Turkish students, was designed to offer the Turkish

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[177] Report on the Anatolia Project by D.A.Davis, May 27, 1927. Anatolian Project, 1927-1931.

[178]Report for Mrs. Emmons Blaine of Work Accomplished in Smyrna, Turkey, March 1, 1928. Asa Jennings Files, 1922-1928. Kautz Family YMCA Archive. University of Minnesota Libraries.

Republic firsthand knowledge of American "institutions and organizations," and instruct the Turkish nation in modern methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, and business administration, as well as nursing, engineering, and dentistry.[179] And even with Jennings' death in 1933, the American Friends of Turkey remains one of his lasting legacies, being one of the organizations that eventually became the American Turkish Council, one of the most powerful Turkish lobbying institutions in the United States today.[180]

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[179]American Friends of Turkey pamphlet, May 25, 1931. Asa K. Jennings Files, 1922-1928

[180] Howard Reed, "Perspectives n the Evolution of Turkish Studies in North America Since 1946," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter, 1997): 30.

VI. CONCLUSION

Few scholars would dispute the proposition that the nineteenth century gave birth to the nationalistic idea that eventually ruined the monarchical and imperialistic regimes that had governed Europe and dominated much of the non-western world for centuries. The principle of ethnic self-determination enshrined in the various treaties that concluded the First World War was at least a reflection of the spirit of nationalism. Similarly, the nineteenth century is almost universally understood by scholars as the zenith of the American Protestant missionary movement, which, seeking to follow John Mott's dictum to "evangelize the world in this generation," inevitably encountered the groups beginning to conceive of themselves as nations. And while there has been an abundance of scholarly work done on nationalism on the one hand and missions on the other, the full

repercussions of the interaction between the growth of nationalism and the spread of American Protestantism have yet to be fully defined, especially in the Islamic world. To be sure, the educational efforts of western missionaries, especially in the area of language, have been credited with kindling a sense of cultural pride that contributed to nationalistic feelings among the Arabs and Armenians in particular. One noted scholar of nationalism, Elie Kedourie, at least postulated that the introduction into the Islamic world of the Protestant idea of *sola fides* may have been partially responsible for the rapidity with which nationalism gained ground in the Ottoman Empire, but his idea was not pursued in any depth.[181] Significantly, the few scholars who have proposed a connection between the two movements typically discuss the effect of the missionary upon the budding nationalist, and almost never the reverse.

The Great Idea, with its aim of a reconstituted Byzantine Empire, remained the core of Hellenic nationalism during the first century of its existence. Though the Ottoman Empire's political and military decline was painfully obvious by the nineteenth century, the Kingdom of Greece was at no point before the First World War strong enough to retake eastern Thrace, western Anatolia, or the ultimate prize of İstanbul. Furthermore, though many philhellenic Europeans shared the Greek Kingdom's atavistic fantasy of the restoration of Byzantium, the chess-like game of nineteenth century European diplomacy, in which the preservation of the Ottoman Empire was necessary as a bulwark against Russian expansion into the eastern Mediterranean, precluded the likelihood of a substantive fulfillment of the Great Idea. The Greek occupation of Asia Minor after the war was only made possible by a confluence of unique factors: the total capitulation of

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[181] Kedourie, "Minorities," 289.

the Ottoman Empire, the fall of Russia to communism, the British need for an effective proxy in the Mediterranean, and, perhaps most importantly, the rise of the charismatic Greek statesman, Eleftherios Venizelos.

Unlike the Greek Great Idea, whose objectives had been formulated shortly after independence and remained relatively constant until the 1920s, the development of Turkish nationalism was a lengthier and more uncertain process. Indeed, nationalism itself was the bane of the empire in the century preceding World War One. As Yusuf Akçura outlined in "Three Types of Policy," Ottomanism, or the creation of a devotion to the Ottoman state that would transcend nationality, could not hold back the nationalist tide emanating from Europe, despite its widespread popularity among Ottoman intellectuals during the nineteenth century. The pan-Islam of Abdülhamid II, though effective as a propaganda tool to consolidate the Sultan's power, was similarly unable to stem nationalistic sentiment among the Ottoman subjects. For example, Muslim Arabs, though co-religionists with the rulers of the Ottoman state, by the time of the First World War were advocating the establishment of either a single pan-Arab state encompassing all Arabic-speakers, or smaller regional states. Whether it was the ambitious pan-Turkism of Enver Paşa or the truncated "Anatolianism" of the Kemalists, a uniquely "Turkish" nationalism was the only option remaining for Ottoman leaders. The Turkist "policy," however, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, proved much more effective than either Ottomanism or pan-Islam, demonstrated by the fact that even today Kemalist nationalism remains the ruling ideology of the Turkish state.

The challenge for the YMCA at İzmir was how to effectively navigate between the Greek Great Idea on the one hand, and the Turkish nationalism of the Kemalists on

the other. Although the YMCA was in its origins a decidedly Christian, missionary institution, by the *fin de siècle* the overtly religious aspect of its work had greatly declined. Like the other great missionary organizations of the nineteenth century, such as the American Board, the YMCA moved away from proselytism toward social service, primarily medical and educational work. Though American missionaries historically had had little success among the Orthodox of both the Greek Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire, the YMCA's mission to İzmir during the Greek occupation demonstrated the efficacy of a non-evangelistic model for Christian missions. The Great Idea of resuscitating Hellenism in Asia Minor was well-served by an American Christian organization dedicated not to accruing converts to Protestantism, but to providing the citizens of İzmir with a basic education, moral instruction, and a mean for bettering their physical health.

The destruction of İzmir, which brought an end to the nationalist conflagrations that had plagued the Ottoman Empire's final century, also signified a turning point in both Christian missions in Turkey, and perhaps in the wider Islamic world as well. During the imperial era, religion, either Islam or one of the branches of Eastern Christianity, had presented foremost an intellectual obstacle to successful missionary work. In the era after the First World War, however, nationalism became the primary ideology with which the missionary had to contend. The young Turkish Republic was an especially challenging environment for American missionary organizations like the YMCA. The Ottoman Greeks and Armenians, the longstanding targets of missionary work, had been either killed during the war, or driven out after it. Furthermore, Kemalist nationalism was a decidedly secular ideology, devoted to divesting the state of religion

and driving it into the private sphere. As education had remained a staple of American missionary throughout the nineteenth century, particularly for the YMCA, the Kemalist challenge to religious education made continued work in Turkey a daunting prospect.

The YMCA's response to this challenge was to further "secularize" its mission. Because Asa Jennings, the hero of the İzmir disaster, remained a trusted figure among both Turkish and American leaders, as well as the International Committee of the YMCA, he was able to convince all parties of the worth of a continued mission at İzmir. The content of Jennings' work in Turkey though, mostly educational and social work, did not substantively differ from what the YMCA had done there previously. What did change, however, was that in the new nationalist, secular environment of the republic, the "mission" was no longer even nominally Christian. With even Islam driven out of the public sphere, Christianity surely had to follow.

Rather than demonstrating the influence of missionaries upon nationalism, then, the experience of the YMCA at İzmir shows the reverse: the effect of the nationalist ideal upon Christian missions. The İzmir association, born under the Greek irredentist occupation of western Asia Minor, was likewise a participant in the catastrophic destruction of the city, itself a result of nationalist warfare between Greeks and Turks. Because of the fiercely nationalistic and laicist nature of the Kemalist government of Turkey during the early years of the republic, the YMCA, or rather Asa Jennings' Anatolian Project, was forced to "secularize" the mission, stripping itself of anything that even hinted of religion or Christianity and devoting itself entirely to the betterment of the Turkish nation, even being effectively nationalized when the organization was subsumed under the Turkish Hearth movement. By the time of Jennings' eventual success with the

community welfare council and American Friends of Turkey, the idea of proselytism, even in the benign form of setting a Christ-like example, was decidedly not part of Jennings' work. The YMCA at İzmir, along with Asa Jennings' efforts to continue on in Anatolia, represents a turning point in Christian missions: the nationalism that missionaries had helped to foster during the nineteenth century began to alter the mission, forcing western missionaries into the open service of the national idea rather than that of spreading the Gospel.

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