Introduction

In the course of more than 25 years of missionary work among Arabs, Turks and Kurds in the Middle East I have been struck repeatedly by the fact that many colleagues seem quite unaware of the context, the "big picture", of which they are an integral part. Most missionaries to the region know something—sometimes a lot—about the particular country in which they work, and they usually know the background to the particular mission and/or ministry of which they are a part. Few, however, perceive themselves as heirs of a heritage going back to the 1820s.

There are several reasons for this disconnect:

1. A failure to teach mission history in many evangelical seminaries and Bible schools, the recruiting ground for most missionaries to the Middle East.
2. The lowering of academic standards by many Evangelical mission agencies, which provide the bulk of missionary candidates to the region today. Not long ago the potential recruit would have had to have a Bible School diploma or Theology degree to be considered an eligible candidate. Not any more (see Pikkert 2005:2). One of the many worrying long-term consequences of this "dumbing down" is that fewer and fewer missionaries have a sense of historical development, whether in theology, history, church history, or missions.
3. The fact that missions is not necessarily perceived as a long-term commitment. Frequent career change is a norm in missions as much as in any other vocation. While the number of career missionaries has decreased dramatically over the years, the number of "short termers" going overseas has grown in leaps and bounds (Raymo 1996:25, 148). This had led to an erosion of the sense of cultural depth and understanding missionaries were at one time in a position to accrue.
4. The fact that an increasing number of contemporary missionaries to the Middle East come from non-European or North American backgrounds. It is understandably difficult for the growing body of, say, Korean, Filipino, and South American missionaries to relate to a past in which their forefathers had no input and for which they, consequently, do not feel responsible.

Although missionaries to the Middle East may not perceive themselves as heirs of a troubled legacy, the people to whom they seek to minister *do* see them in that light. Their depth of awareness of the history of Christian-Muslim relations—or rather, their perceptions of that history as drawn from their religious and nationalist texts, the popular press, and oral traditions—goes back

to the Middle Ages, the Crusades, and the knowledge "that only a few centuries ago their people were superior to the West in all fields of cultural endeavor of which the West is so proud" (Patai 1983:297). In fact this different understanding of history between missionaries and nationals constitutes one of the "civilizational clashes" between missionary and Muslim.

A proper understanding of the relationship between Christianity and Islam is very important. Accounting for more than half the world's population between them, both are missionary religions with mutually exclusive claims to finality, universality, and truth; both believe themselves to be true to a degree the other is not. This inherent conflict of interests is compounded by a long history which has often been fraught with conflict and antagonism (Zebiri 2000:5, 175).

This thesis seeks to answer the question of whether the basis for the Muslims' rejection of the Christian message is essentially theological, or whether it is based on a history of socio-political and cultural misunderstandings. It does so by outlining the evolving framework within which Protestant missionaries have operated, by probing their methodology and by juxtaposing these with actual results. I trust that this exercise will enable us to learn from the travails of our predecessors, leading to humbler, wiser, and more fruitful intercourse with the people of the Levant.

Pieter Pikkert
Istanbul, 2006

Contents/Outline

Acknowledgements 2

Key Terms 2

Summary 3

Introduction 4

Contents/Outline 6

Abbreviations 11

Footnoting 13

Turkish name changes 13

Arabic orthography 13

1. The Research Problem, Paradigm and Literature Review 14

1.1. The research problem 14

1.2. The purpose 15

1.3. Paradigms: Bosch's enlightenment missionary & Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" applied to missions to the Middle East 16

1.3.1. Criticisms of the Huntington paradigm vis-à-vis the Muslim world 19

1.3.2. Suitability of the paradigms to describe Christian-Muslim relations 21

1.4. Parameters of study 27

1.5. Methodology 28

1.6. Literature review 28

1.6.1. Works interacting with Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" paradigm as it pertains to the Muslim world 29

1.6.2. Works which deal with the socio-political and cultural framework which limited the missionaries options 32

1.6.2.1. Works which deal with the socio-political and cultural framework missionaries inherited from their home culture 32

1.6.2.2. Works which deal with issues with which missionaries had to grapple in the Middle East 33

1.6.3. Works on the missionaries' goals and strategies 36

1.6.3.1. General Missions strategy and The Great Experiment 37

1.6.3.2. Debate/apologetics 39

1.6.3.3. Spirituality as understood by Muslims 39

1.6.3.4. Tentmaking 41

1.6.4. Works which look at the response to the missionary enterprise 41

1.6.4.1. Reports and testimonies of converts 42

1.6.4.2. An evaluation of the negative responses 42
1.6.5. Works which examine missiological implications 43
1.9 Deliniation of Chapters 44
2. 1800-1918: The Late Ottoman Period and Enlightenment Missionary 45
2.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the Enlightenment missionary enterprise? 45
2.1.1. The 19th century missionaries' socio-political, cultural and theological framework 45
2.1.1.1. Reasonable methods guarantee progress 45
2.1.1.2. Anglo-Saxon Protestantism > cultural superiority > racial superiority 47
2.1.1.3. Missionary attitudes towards Islam 52
2.1.1.4. Liberal theological trends > Ecumenism > social renewal > social gospel 56
2.1.1.5. Missionary technological prowess and financial power 57
2.1.2. The host's socio-political, cultural and theological framework 59
2.1.2.1.The erosion of the Empire, wars and massacres 59
2.1.2.2. Capitulations 62
2.1.2.3. The humiliation of Islam > reform movements 63
2.1.2.4. Brief periods of political reform > brief attempts at Muslim evangelism 64
2.1.2.5. Conditions in the Arabian Peninsula 67
2.2. What were the missionary goals and strategies? 68
2.2.1. The ABCFM strategy: the "Great Experiment" 68
2.2.1.1. The establishment of educational facilities 71
2.2.1.2. Medical work 74
2.2.1.3. The formation of missionary compounds 75
2.2.1.4. Literature production/distribution 76
2.2.1.5. Clubs and societies 79
2.2.1.6. Courts and lobbying 81
2.2.2. Early attempts to target the Muslim majority directly 83
2.2.2.1. The Lutheran Orient Mission Society's (LOMS) response to the "Great Experiment" 83
2.2.2.2. The Scottish Mission to Aden 84
2.2.2.3. The Arabian Mission in the Arabian Peninsula 85
2.3. The popular response to the missionary enterprise 85
2.3.1. An evaluation of the "Great Experiment" 86

2.3.2. The missionaries split the Orthodox Churches 87

2.3.3. The empowerment of Christian minorities > Muslim majority felt threatened > massacres 91

2.3.4. The response to Christian apologetic literature 96

2.3.5. Positive responses 98

2.4. What were/are the missiological implications? 102

2.4.1. Missionaries tied their cart to the wrong horses 103

2.4.2. The clash of apologetics 106

2.4.3. There were converts! 107

3. 1919-1946: Arab Nationalism and the Veterans 108

3.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the veteran's missionary enterprise? 109

3.1.1. Socio-political and cultural developments in the sending countries 110

3.1.2. Theological and missiological ferment in the sending countries 111

3.1.3. The socio-political and cultural framework of the Middle East 115

3.1.3.1. New political framework in Turkey > virtual elimination of missions 116

3.1.3.2. Developments in the Arab world 120

3.2. What were the veteran missionary goals and strategies? 126

3.2.1. Analysis of the failure 126

3.2.2. Understand Islam, create apologetic literature 128

3.2.3. Contextualization of life and worship 134

3.2.4. Stations, hospitals and schools: institutionalize—or not? 139

3.2.5. The importance of intermission cooperation and a long-haul mentality 142

3.2.6. Prepare the next generations of missionaries 143

3.2.7. Other initiatives and methods 144

3.2.8. "Great Experiment" methods linger on 145

3.3. What was the response to the missionary enterprise? 147

3.4. What were the missiological implications? 151

3.4.1. The need for a pluralistic, free society 151

3.4.2. The need for a contextualized theology and Christian communities 152

3.4.3. The need for perseverance and inter-mission cooperation 153

4. 1947-1979: Pre-Boomers Give Way to Boomers and The Arab World Moves onto the World Stage 154

4.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise? 155

4.1.1. The pre-Boomers and their world 155
4.1.2. The Baby Boomers and their world 158
4.1.3. New Structures: interdenominational evangelical agencies in the Middle East 163
4.1.4. The Christian Zionist movement 164
4.1.5. Perceptions of Islam 165
4.1.6. Developments in the Arab world 166
4.1.6.1. The retreat of colonialism and the rise of Arab nationalism 166
4.1.6.2. The creation of the State of Israel and the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, and the formation of a Palestinian national identity 168
4.1.6.3. The Cold War: Soviet support of Arab states 171
4.1.6.4. Arab oil wealth > economic development and political clout 172
4.1.6.5. Arab Protestantism 174
4.1.6.6. Muslim view of Protestantism and Christian missions 175
4.2. What were the missionary goals and strategies? 177
4.2.1. Relief work among Palestinians 179
4.2.2. Education 179
4.2.3. Medical work 180
4.2.4. Clubs 181
4.2.5. Christian literature/media 182
4.2.6. Debate and dialogue 183
4.2.7. "Great Experiment" methods linger in the Arab world 189
4.3. What was the popular response to the missionary enterprise? 190
4.3.1. Positive responses 191
4.3.2. Negative responses 193
4.4. What were/are the missiological implications? 194
4.4.1. Critique of the relationship between Christianity and Western culture 194
4.4.2. Evaluation of missionary support of national politics 196
4.4.3. Evaluation of dialogue and apologetics 197
5. 1979-present: Islamic Fundamentalism, Political Frustration, and the emergence of the GenX missionary 199
5.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise? 199
5.1.1. Socio-political and cultural developments in the sending countries 199
5.1.1.1. The revival of religion 200

5.1.1.2. America, the sole superpower 204
5.1.1.3. "Islamophobia": the demonization of Islam 205
5.1.1.4. The GenX / postmodern missionary 208
5.1.1.5. Non-Anglo missionaries arrived in force 213
5.1.2 The socio-political framework of the Middle East 215
5.1.2.1. Population growth 215
5.1.2.2. Islamic resurgence 216
5.1.2.3. The response to perceived American neo-colonialism 218
5.1.2.4. Media in the Middle East 220
5.1.2.5. Muslim portrayal of Christianity 222
5.1.2.6. The persecution of Christians 226
5.1.2.7. Country-specific socio-political situations 227
5.1.2.7.1. Egypt 228
5.1.2.7.2. Iraq 229
5.1.2.7.3. Lebanon 230
5.1.2.7.4. Saudi Arabia 232
5.1.2.7.5. Turkey 232
5.2. What were the missionary goals and strategies? 236
5.2.1. "Tentmaking" 236
5.2.2. Literature production 237
5.2.3. Bible correspondence courses (BCC) 240
5.2.4. Exploiting technology: long distance missions 241
5.2.5. Other non-residential approaches 242
5.2.6. Short term work 243
5.2.7. Children's work 246
5.2.8. Understand "Muslim culture" > create contextualized forms of communication 247
5.2.9. Working with the national OBP church 250
5.3. What was the popular response to the missionary enterprise? 251
5.3.1. Positive responses in the Arab world 252
5.3.2. Positive responses in Turkey 256
5.3.3. Negative responses 257
5.4. What were/are the missiological implications? 259
5.4.1. There were converts! 259

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5.4.2. Issues outside missionary control 260
5.4.3. Issues under missionary control 263
6. The Way Forward: Church-centered New Testament Spirituality 266
6.1. Reasons why Muslims convert 268
6.1.1. Contemporary analysis of Muslim conversions to Christianity 269
6.1.2. Fascination with the person of Jesus Christ 271
6.1.3. A thirst for truth 273
6.1.4. The Bible speaks 274
6.1.5. Dreams also speak 276
6.1.6. Attraction to individual Christians and/or a Christian community 277
6.1.7. The desire for a personal encounter with God 279
6.2. Why church-centered? 280
6.3. Church-centered New Testament spirituality as a missionary method 283
6.3.1. Presenting the Christian message in a clear and culturally appropriate way 284
6.3.2. Living lives consistent with the message 287
6.3.3. Building a Muslim background Protestant Church 289
6.3.4. Discipling, training and relinquishing responsibility 290
6.3.5. Trusting God to lead the national church into all truth 291
Bibliography 294

Abbreviations

ABCFM/American Board/ The Board	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (the three abbreviations are used interchangeably)
AIPAC	America Israel Public Affairs Committee
AR	Annual Report of the ABCFM
AUB	American University of Beirut
AUPM	American United Presbyterian Mission
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCC	Bible Correspondence Course
CBN	Christian Broadcasting Network
CSM	Church Mission Society
CT	*Christianity Today*
EMQ	*Evangelical Missions Quarterly*
EU	European Union

FEBA	Far East Broadcasting Association
IBRA	International Broadcasting Association
IBMR	*International Bulletin of Missionary Research*
IRM	*International Review of Missions*
LOMS	Lutheran Orient Mission
MBP	Muslim Background Protestant (Convert to Protestantism from Islam)
MEI	*Middle East International*
MH	*Missionary Herald*
MK	Missionary Kid
MW	*The Moslim World / The Muslim World*
NCC	National Council of Churches
NEST	Near East School of Theology
NGO	Non-government Organization
NR	*National Review*
NYT	*New York Times*
OBP	Orthodox Background Protestant
OM	Operation Mobilization
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
SGI	Servant Group International
TACO	Turkish Afrasian Creative Outreach
TEAM	The Evangelical Alliance Mission
TWR	Trans World Radio
UMM	United Mission in Mesopotamia
UPCUSA	United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America
USN	*U.S. News and World Report*
WAP	*Washington Post*
WEC	Worldwide Evangelization for Christ International
WP	*World Pulse*

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List of research project topics and materials

Footnoting

Since much of the primary source material is drawn from missionary periodicals published during the periods analyzed I have introduced a minor change to the Harvard method of referencing. By inserting the abbreviation of the particular magazine consulted into the in-text reference the reader can tie what may otherwise be obscure names with the better known periodicals without having to turn to the bibliography each time. In other words (Schneider MH 1835:302) refers to an article a Mr. or Ms. Schneider wrote for the *Missionary Herald* in 1835, and (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxiii) refers to a report without a specific author's name beginning with the words "The Gospel" and published in the American Board's Annual Report for 1878. Books are footnoted in standard Harvard fashion.

Turkish Name Changes

Ottoman Turkish used a revised Arabic script, hence the orthography of place names in missionary communications varied. Furthermore, a number of places were given new names after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The modern names are on the right.

Adabazar = Adapazarı
Adrianople = Edirne
Angora = Ankara
Antep = Gaziantep
Aintep = Gaziantep
Cesarea = Kayseri
Constantinople = İstanbul
Diarbekir = Diyarbakır
Kharpout = Harput
Marash = Kahramanmaraş
Maraş = Kahramanmaraş
Marsovan = Merzifon
Nicodemia = İznik
Smyrna = İzmir
Trebizone = Trabzon
Urfa = Şanlıurfa

Arabic Orthography

There is no standard for transcribing Arabic into English, hence different writers write the same word differently: e.g., Nasser/Nasir, Yassir/Yasser/Yasir, Husein/Husayn, Qur'an/Quran/Kuran, Mohamet/Muhammed/Muhammad, etc.

Chapter 1

The Research Problem, Paradigm & Literature Review

1.1. The Research Problem

The Protestant missionary movement has had a long history in the Near East with, as yet, little to show for it. Although in the course of the last 15 years or so it appears that growing numbers of Middle Eastern Muslims are embracing Protestantism, the number of such Muslim Background Protestants (MBPs) is still insignificant when compared to the exploding population of the region. The missionary has, in fact, come to be perceived as a malignant foe by the majority Muslim population (see, for instance, Zebiri 2000:47, 4). Why is this so? Why, in spite of nearly two centuries of missionary work in the region, have most people there resisted the missionary's message? Can we attribute this failure to the so-called hardness of the Muslim heart, the notion that God's time for the Muslim world hasn't yet come, or other theological factors? Or has the Muslim majority been, in effect, inoculated against Christianity by the missionary community, the very agents who sought to introduce it? *Is the basis for the Muslim's rejection of the Christian message essentially theological, or is it based on a history of socio-political and cultural misunderstandings and clashes?*

Brief explanations of the terms "essentially theological", "socio-political" and "cultural" from a Christian point of view are in order. Based on the doctrines of election and reprobation, the "essentially theological" consideration refers to the idea that ultimately God determines whether anyone, Muslim or otherwise, rejects or accepts Christianity; if taken to a hyper-Calvinistic extreme, they essentially render discussions on social, political and cultural forces and constraints on the subject of conversion superfluous. From a Muslim point of view, "essentially theological" would therefore refer to rejection of the gospel on the basis of a clear communication of these theological assumptions by the missionaries, without any cultural or socio-political perceptions clouding the issue. The Muslims would find this theological understanding unacceptable, and would, therefore, reject the presentation of the gospel specifically on this ground.

By "socio-political" we refer to social and political factors both in the missionary sending countries and in the Middle East which shaped the formation and reception of the Christian message. How did such social phenomena as, for example, the 19th century missionary community's targeting of certain religio-ethnic groups as opposed to others, different perceptions

of the underlying purpose of Christian educational and medical institutions, notions of cultural superiority, multiculturalism, and generation gap issues within the missionary community, effect the communication, perception and reception of the Gospel in the Middle East? Conflicting international political attitudes and relationships—whether 19th century capitulations, mid-20th century Arab nationalism, late 20th century political Islam, or early 21st century neo-colonialism—were also important factors, and will be discussed in some detail.

"Cultural" refers to the shared knowledge and values of particular societies. Missiologists like Roland Muller, for instance, make a distinction between the "shame-honour" axis they see running through the Middle Eastern culture and the "guilt-innocence continuum" (Muller 2006:152) they trace in Western culture, and insist that presentations of the Gospel to the former ought to have been radically different from those to the latter if they were to be effective (:151-247). It is an age-old problem in missionary communication that missionaries confuse what I have termed here the "essentially theological" and "cultural" when communicating the Gospel. Certain cultural precepts in the missionary's home country (such as standards of clothing, smoking/non-smoking, dancing, etc.) were sometimes equated with authentic theological prescriptions, so that rejection of the cultural precept became misinterpreted as rejection of the Gospel itself. By juxtaposing "essentially theological" with "cultural" in my thesis statement, I am therefore not suggesting that some supra-cultural understanding and communication of the Gospel is possible. The Gospel always wears "cultural robes", as David Bosch stated in the title of a book (Bosch 1974); the real question I am addressing here is what weighed heavier in Muslim rejection: "essentially theological" or "socio-political" and "cultural"? Reality is not a series of separated constituent elements; the religious, social, political and cultural dimensions of life are inseparably interconnected. We divide and dissect merely to present the essential features of a complex story.

Lastly, there is the question of whether the slowly growing number of MBPs today indicative of the fact that the missionary community has learned from its mistakes, or has there always been a trickle of people who left Islam to embrace Christianity? If so, why?

1.2. The Purpose

I trust that a deeper understanding of the reasons why the Muslim world is resistant to Christianity along with a better grasp of the reasons why certain Protestant missionary approaches have bedeviled the Muslim's ability to appreciate missionary motives and objectives will enable both contemporary missionaries to the region as well missiologists concerned with the issues facing Protestantism in Middle East today to reevaluate their methods and approaches.

1.3. Paradigms: Bosch's Enlightenment Missionary & Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" Applied to Missions to the Middle East

We approach our subject by integrating and applying two paradigms, notably those afforded by David Bosch and Samuel Huntington. Missionaries, like everyone else are, to a greater or lesser degree, prisoners of their own culture. Everywhere they go they carry the aroma of Western culture as much—if not more—than the "aroma of Christ" (2 Cor. 2:15). David Bosch, in his monumental *Transforming Mission* (2003), describes the modern missionaries' western smell as the Enlightenment framework out of which they operate. Drawing heavily from Bosch's analysis of the 19th century English speaking missionary movement, we note those Enlightenment attitudes which helped frame the methods and strategies missionaries employed in the Ottoman Empire. In short, we explore how much of Christ the missionaries took to the Middle East, and how much of their own Western culture. Were they in reality ambassadors of Western culture as much as of Jesus Christ?

Understanding this is of fundamental importance for a number of reasons:

1. It enables us to grasp something of the missionaries' mentality during the eras in question;
2. It enables us to grasp what most of the Muslim community reacted against;
3. It enables us to grasp the frameworks from which subsequent missionary effort sought—largely unsuccessfully—to liberate itself.

Like Bosch, we pay more attention to motifs in the English-speaking world than those on the European continent, and for the same reason: during the past two centuries the English-speaking world has provided more non-Roman Catholic missionaries than any other group (Bosch 2003:285). That is changing. A glance at such resources as Patrick Johnstone's and Jason Mandryk's *Operation World* (2001), or simply attendance at a missionary conference in the Middle East, shows that non-Westerners are moving into the region in force in our own day. We touch on the relevance of that change in due course.

The main thesis of our second paradigm, drawn from Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1996) is simple: "In the post-Cold War world the most important distinctions among people are not ideological, political, or economic. They are cultural" (1996:21). Huntington describes the Muslims' world as a "challenger civilization" to the West. According to Huntington the region's exploding population, its historic and ingrained animosity toward the West, and the absence of a strong core-state combine to create a

high potential for violent conflict. "The dangerous clashes of the future are likely to arise from the interaction of Western arrogance, (and) Islamic intolerance" (Huntington 1996:183). He goes on to predict that conflicts are most likely to take place in what he identifies as "cleft countries", states which contain people from two or more different civilizations, and along "fault lines" which divide one civilization from another, with the danger of a conflict in a "fault line" state escalating into an inter-civilizational war involving several countries. With respect to this thesis, the latter point is important, for our geographical focus is the Ottoman Empire and the countries which emerged from it. No country more aptly fits Huntington's description of a "cleft country" than that Empire, or the Turkish Republic which replaced it.

Huntington goes on to say that,

> The relations between Islam and Christianity, both Orthodox and Western, have often been stormy. Each has been the other's Other. The twentieth-century conflict between liberal democracy and Marxist Leninism is only a fleeting and superficial historical phenomenon compared to the continuing and deeply conflictual relation between Islam and Christianity. At times, peaceful coexistence has prevailed; more often the relation has been one of intense rivalry and of varying degrees of hot war. Across the centuries the fortunes of the two religions have risen and fallen in a sequence of momentous surges, pauses and countersurges (1996:209).

Although Huntington's "clash of civilizations" paradigm has come under severe criticism, he has, nevertheless, touched a nerve for at least three reasons.

Firstly, many cultures have proved themselves to be remarkably resilient. Although we live in a rapidly shrinking global village, many Non-Western civilizations have, in the course of the latter third of the 20th century, rejected core Western values in favor of their own cultural norms (see Catherwood 2003:202-204). Such cultural appeal as the West has is largely tied to its material superiority, and as that gap diminishes the West's cultural appeal for non-Western peoples fades. Huntington writes:

> Spurred by modernization, global politics is being reconfigured along cultural lines. People and countries with similar cultures are coming together. People and countries with different cultures are coming apart. Alignments defined by ideology and superpower relations are giving way to alignments defined by culture and civilization. Political boundaries increasingly are redrawn to coincide with cultural ones: ethnic, religious, and civilizational. Cultural communities are replacing Cold War blocs, and the fault lines between civilizations are becoming central lines of conflict in global politics (1996:125).

He says, in short, that while states remain the key actors in global politics, they increasingly define their interests in civilizational, or cultural terms which re-enforces the differences between major cultural blocks.

Secondly, conflict, rather than blending, seems the norm today. Even as we become more and more inter-dependent globally, we also experience the erection of new barriers between peoples. According to Huntington, in the new, post-Cold War world order, "the most pervasive, important and dangerous conflicts will not be between social classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities" (1996:28).

This reality of the perception, at least, of intercultural conflict is, at this point, perhaps best illustrated by quoting a few pre-9/11 headlines from the mainstream American media: "The New Crescent of Crisis: Global Intifada" (Krauthammer WAP 1990:A23); "The Muslims are Coming, The Muslims are Coming!" (Pipes NR 1990:28); "The Red Menace is Gone. But Here's Islam" (Scioline NYT 1996:41); "It's Time to Fight Back" (Zuckerman USN 1998:92). As we will see, things have not improved since that fateful day.

Missionaries have, by and large, viewed both Muslims and Islam as a menace, an enemy to be defeated. Interestingly, that view is a relatively new phenomenon with respect to the general population in the West. The observations about Middle Easterners in general and Islam in particular of an earlier generation of secular travelers, such as those of the American James Ellsworth De Kay in his *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832* (1833), stand, as we will see, in stark contrast to the dire view of Islam and the low opinion of Turks shared by the missionary community at the time. This forces us to examine why, even back then, the missionaries' view of Arabs, Turks and Islam was particularly prejudiced.

This leads us to Huntington's third proposition, which asserts that religion seems to be the most powerful source of conflict. This assertion is, obviously, most important for our purposes.

> The causes of this ongoing pattern of conflict lie not in transitory phenomena such as twelfth-century Christian passion or twentieth century Muslim fundamentalism. They flow from the nature of the two religions and the civilizations based on them. Conflict was, on the one hand, a product of difference, particularly the Muslim concept of Islam as a way of life transcending and uniting religions and politics versus the Western Christian concept of the separate realms of God and Caesar. The conflict also stemmed, however, from their similarities. Both are monotheistic religions, which, unlike polytheistic ones cannot easily assimilate additional deities, and which see the world in dualistic, us-and-them terms. Both are universalistic, claiming to be the one true faith to which all humans can adhere. Both are missionary religions believing that their adherents have an obligation to convert non-believers to that one true faith. From its origins Islam expanded by conquest and when the opportunity existed Christianity did also. The parallel concepts of "jihad" and "crusade" not only resemble each other but distinguish these two faiths from other major world religions. Islam and Christianity, along with Judaism, also have teleological views of history in contrast to the cyclical or static views prevalent in other civilizations (Huntington 1996:210-211).

In other words, he states that the clash between the inherently incompatible civilizations of Islam and the West is rooted in religion, i.e., in the contradictory natures of Islam and Christianity with the result that, in John Esposito's words, "historical dynamics often found the two communities in competition, and locked at times in deadly combat, for power, land, and souls" (1992:46; cf. Lewis 1990: 22-49).

As we look at nearly two centuries of missionary work in the Middle East, Huntington's premise about the Westerners' belief in the universality of their culture is of primary interest. Did/do Western Protestant missionaries share this mentality, possibly unwittingly, and thus contribute to the hardening of the Muslim heart against their message?

1.3.1. Criticisms of the Huntington Paradigm vis-à-vis the Muslim World

Huntington's civilizational paradigm is not without its critics. Let us note these concerns, and then state why we believe there is sufficient merit in the model for our purposes.

The first criticism states that in the confrontation between Islam and the West, Islam is not a major factor. Although Islamic fundamentalist groups, sometimes funded by "rogue states" pursuing their own, non-Islamic agendas, vent their spleens by exploding bombs or hijacking aircraft—Lockerbie and 9/11 being cases in point—radical, fundamentalist Muslims are but a puny percentage of the billion or so Muslims living in dozens of countries, cultures, languages and backgrounds. The underlying causes to existing tensions, the argument goes, are not primarily cultural or theological but political, economic, strategic and psychological (Ramachandra 1999:15-17). It fails to distinguish between the militant stridency of the few and the legitimate aspirations of the many.

Another criticism of the Huntington thesis is that it tends to view Islam as a total, monolithic, fixed system, whose precepts have operated unchanged over centuries, in all kinds of societies, and determined the attitudes of diverse peoples towards politics, sexuality and society. According to those who table this criticism this distorted view of Islam is also espoused by Islamic fundamentalists such as Khomeini, Turabi, and the Muslim Brotherhood. Thus the image of a timeless "Islam" is not just "the fabrication of fevered Western minds" (Halliday 1995:111), it is an notion shared with the Islamists themselves. In reality the clash of civilizations theory does not fully account for the diversity in Islam and Middle Eastern cultures. Egypt and Iran, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Syria differ dramatically from each other. It is even possible to argue that modern Turkey should not be considered a Middle Eastern country at all. Islamist movements, for their part, are determined by the issues facing the societies in which they finds themselves. This being so, Islam is fragmented; Sunni, Shi'ite, Alawite, Wahhabi, Ismaili,

etc.—each is fractured by various ideological and national concerns. By imposing a superficial unity on events taking place in very diverse contexts the clash of civilizations theory fails to grapple with the real issues tormenting the region (cf. Ramachandra 1999:21-22). In response, suffice it to say at this stage that there are certain themes that unite the diverse states in the region, including "Islamic religion and culture, collectivism, shame and honor, romantic attachment to history, an animistic worldview alongside monotheism, strong national identity and historical and political connections between countries" (Meral EMQ 2005:210).

A third criticism is that the notion of clashing civilizations is nothing but a myth employed by those who wish to remain in power. Fred Halliday maintains that, like "The Islamic Threat", it is part of the rhetorical baggage of political struggle, employed by those who wish to remain in power or by those who aspire to power (1995:6). Like other political myths, once launched, they gained a certain reality. The myth of confrontation is taken up by Islamist movements to justify their own causes (Ramachandra 1999:19). Many in the Muslim world, like their counterparts in the West, opt for slogans and demonization. At its worst, both sides have engaged in a process of "mutual satanization" (Esposito 1995:193-194).

By presenting Islam as a global threat which must be curbed, and Islamic cultures as inherently incapable of embracing such aspects of modernity as individual freedom, social tolerance, women's rights, and democratic government, powerful lobbies, including those associated with the Christian Evangelical Right (namely groups such as the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, Christians' Israel Public Action Campaign, Friends of Jerusalem and Bridges of Peace) have created a terrifying specter easily exploitable for political or religious purposes (cf. Lewis 1993:136-137).

A fourth critique is the observation that most Islamist movements react to events within the Islamic world. The concern in Muslim circles is how to maintain control within the community, rather than an external threat to the survival of Islam. This is neatly demonstrated in *The Satanic Verses* affair, for which Khomeini accused the novelist Salman Rushdie of *Kufr* (blasphemy). By depicting Mohammed as he did, by expressing doubt, and by allowing the profane to masquerade as the religious, "Rushdie represented a challenge from within that embattled religious leaders, in Bradford as in Tehran, could not accept" (Halliday 1995:126).

The rhetoric of the mullahs is not, by and large, calling for the conquest or conversion of the non-Muslim world; it is a cry of concern: "Islam is in danger!". That concern is the common thread running through Islamist movements (1995:119-120). Fighting the "Great Satan" has not been the Muslim world's preoccupation. Even resistance to the current American occupation of

Iraq is largely political. For centuries Islam has perceived itself as being under threat from without—that is not new. It is the threats from within—loss of belief and submission—that are the primary cause of concern to Muslim leaders today (:125-126).

A fifth critique is the fact that the history of Islam and the West contains much that is positive. Huntington's paradigm, some maintain, paints an altogether negative picture of Islam. There has been much more to the story of Western-Muslim relations than military clashes. There has also been a long history of commercial and cultural cross-fertilization and cooperation. The two civilizations have been "partners in history" for centuries. The Muslim writer Khurshid Ahmad reminds us that,

> There is also a long and brilliant history of peaceful relationships, diplomatic cooperation, economic and trade relationships, transfers of technology and the cross-fertilization of ideas and cultural experiences. In this respect, both have enriched each other. Any objective balance sheet of historical influences during the first millennium would lead to the conclusion that Islam's contribution to the development of Europe and other Western countries has been immense. To ignore this bright and brilliant tradition and concentrate only on the experience of clash and confrontation is neither fair to history nor helpful in promoting better relations in the future (Ahmad, quoted in Chapman 1998:8-9).

J. M. Gaudeul points out that

> …the most fruitful and worthwhile encounters between Christians and Muslims took place in many ways, usually without publicity, and sometimes without words. One thinks… of so many examples of hospitality by Muslim individuals or groups who welcomed Christians, even missionaries… One thinks as well of the silent service of hundreds of religious men and women who attended sick Muslims in their thousands in dispensaries or hospitals, who taught their children in schools, and who spent their lives without any visible gain (no conversions took place save a few exeptions) simply as a gesture of love that, for some, would not even be understood in their life-time. In a way, this is where the real dialogue had been taking place, and very often controversies simply obliterated its meaning or at least distorted it (Gaudeul 2000:258).

1.3.2. Suitability of the Paradigm to Describe Christian-Muslim Relations

If there is truth in the above-mentioned criticisms, what are the merits of the paradigm? We will be brief, for the more pertinent facts will be unpacked later.

First of all, impressions of history matter as much—maybe more—than the facts. Christians and Muslims cannot forget their past, nor can they act as if nothing has happened between them. The two communities have faced each other across the Mediterranean for more than a thousand years, sharing a history of both mutual hostility and recognition (Hourani 1980:4). Between them there is a huge depository of memories and impressions easily exploited to create the image of a powerful enemy (Nasr 1996:11). Even if impressions are, essentially, the result of the selective choosing and interpreting of events to suit current purposes, they have given shape to both the communication and reception of the missionary message.

For example, the selective popular memory of the Christian Minorities of the Middle East, missionaries included, needs to be taken seriously as it continues to affect attitudes between them and their Muslim neighbors. Those memories tend to focus on the periods of oppression and persecution by Muslim rules like al-Hakim, or on periods of anarchy. It glosses over the fact that on several occasions, notably in Egypt and Syria, Christian communities welcomed the Muslim armies as liberators from the oppressive Byzantines, as that historical reality would lead to uncomfortable questions pertaining to the reason why so many Christians converted to Islam. Was it because of the weakness of the church, the attraction of Islam, sheer expedience, or the pressure of persecution? (Chapman 1998:8-9)

Secondly, the legacy of the Crusades, though outside the scope of this thesis, still functions as a grid through which many Muslims perceive the West. For those interested in pursuing the subject, we direct the reader to Amin Maalouf's *The Crusades Through Arab Eyes* (1989) to get a vivid portrayal of a society deeply shaken by the destructive and traumatic clash with alien Western culture. There can be little doubt that the Crusades embittered Middle Eastern/Western relations. The resultant misrepresentation and misunderstanding came to be felt particularly strongly by the Muslim side.

Thirdly, the legacy of the Reformation affected the way Protestantism, in particular, viewed Islam. Some scholars hold that the Reformation created great derision, even hatred, of Islam. At the time of the Reformation, Protestants saw Islam, alongside Roman Catholicism, as the embodiment of the Antichrist, while Roman Catholics saw in Islam many of the features they hated most in Protestantism (Chapman 1998:11).

Fourthly, there is the huge imprint of the Enlightenment on the missionary enterprise to the Middle East. Drawing largely from Bosch, I will, at this stage, merely give a synopsis of three Enlightenment themes which had a particularly profound effect on the missionary enterprise to the Middle East and which, more than anything, led to a veritable culture clash between Islam and Christendom in the modern era.

There was, first of all, the tension between reason and revelation. Reason, which, according to the Enlightenment philosophers, was perceived to exist independent of the norms of tradition or presupposition (Bosch 2003:264), came to play an extremely important role in Christian theology, supplanting faith as the starting point. Consequently, theology came to differ from other academic disciplines only in its "object", not in its methodology or point of departure (:269). This was, and continues to be, a troubling development to many Muslims. Nasr, for instance, expresses shock at the way Western critics handle the Qur'an: "The Quran was and

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continues to be analysed and criticized in the West not as the verbatim Word of God as Muslims believe, but simply as a human compilation to be rent asunder by rationalist and historicist methods" (Nasr 1996-97:11). We will analyze this issue in greater depth when discussing apologetics and debating methods.

Secondly, there was tension between what might best be termed as intolerant tolerance and revelation. Bosch points out that the Enlightenment only made allowance for "tolerant religion", through which one's values could, if necessary, be adjusted from time to time. The role of religion was the opposition of sectarianism, superstition, and fanaticism. Enlightenment religion was not to challenge the dominant reason-based world-view (Bosch 2003:272). Consequently, the Enlightenment poured scorn on Islam:

> With the coming of the Enlightenment, the rationalists took their turn to denigrate Islam and pour scorn on the Prophet. Voltaire, for example, thought of Muhammad as a fanatic, and Renan believed that Islam was totally closed to new ideas, science, progress and freedom (Chapman 1998:11).

Did the missionary community absorb this derision for Islam and the Muslim? Is that the light in which they viewed their neighbours?

Thirdly, there was tension between the individual and the community. In Islam, as in Christendom prior to the Enlightenment, the community takes priority over the individual. The individual is not regarded as emancipated and autonomous but is perceived, first and foremost, as standing in relationship to God and the community of believers. Thus Islam is pre-Enlightenment in the sense that life, in all its stratifications and ramifications, is pervaded with religion. Legislation, the social order, private as well as public ethos, philsophical thinking, art—all these are, in one way or another stamped religiously (Bosch 2003:276-268).

With the Enlightenment, however, "individuals became important and interesting in and to themselves" (2003:267), leading to the individualism typical of Western culture. "The insatiable appetite for freedom to live as one pleases developed into a virtually inviolable right in the Western democracies" (:267). Its most recognizable effect on Christianity was the rampant individualism which came to pervade Protestantism in particular. As we will see, Protestant missionaries would export the doctrine of individualism to the Islamic world as if it were a tenent of Christianity. There it would contribute to the amalgam of popularly conceived notions about Western culture and Christianity Islamists now so vehemently reject.

Along with the legacy of the Enlightenment, Western Imperialism also contributed to the sense that there really is a culture clash between the Muslim world and the West. Virtually all majority Muslim regions in the world were colonized by Western powers for periods of time

ranging from a few years of occupation to about 200 years. By 1920 only four Muslim countries—the new Repubic of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Afghanistan—remained independent of some form of non-Muslim rule (Huntington 1996:210).

Turkey's Anatolian homeland, thought briefly occupied, was not colonized. Nevertheless, Western Imperialist ambitions played a very important role in the Empire's final century, as it was the refusal to allow the "Sick Man of Europe" to fall prey to the Russians which motivated Western European power to prop up the patient (Fromkin 1989:28-30).

The colonial expansion of the Western Protestant nations was, by and large, a secular undertaking (Bosch 2003:303), which left many Muslims deeply scarred. Philip Hitti maintains that, from the Muslim perspective, this domination, this cultural imperialism, was "more pernicious than earlier encounters because it came in the guise of educational and religious missions that sought to 'civilize' the Muslims and liberate them from Islam." Western imperialism was perceived as "part of an all-out campaign on the part of the West to root out Islam" (1962:7). The European style of education, with its emphasis on science, technology, and rational inquiry, which, as we shall see, the missionaries had a huge role in establishing throughout the Ottoman Empire, directly challenged the traditional *maktabs* (schools) and *madrassas* (religious boarding schools associated with mosques). The introduction of British and French systems of law meant that the areas defined by Islamic law became increasingly narrower. "Throughout this process, the Muslim world suffered from what they felt was the typical imperialist attitude of condescension and superiority towards conquered, less enlightened people. They suffered an acute loss of identity" (Chapman 1998:12-13).

This notion of "cultural imperialism" has been, and continues to be, one of the primary sources of anti-Christian sentiments in the Islamic world. Indeed, throughout the period under consideration, Protestant missions have preached the gospel of the beneficence of Western civilization along with the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ. "When the Basil Mission was founded in 1816, it formulated its aim both as proclaiming the 'gospel of peace' and as spreading a 'beneficent civilization' (Bosch 2003:296). In that same year, Samuel Worcester described the American Board's objectives as 'civilizing and Christianizing'" (:296). Writing in 1927, the German historian of missions Julius Richter described "Protestant missions as an integral part of the cultural expansion of Euro-American peoples" (Quoted in Bosch 2003:292). The consensus among Westerners that the "Christian West" had the "right" to impose its views on others and reshape the world in its own image was so broad that it was taken for granted, operating mainly at an unconscious, presuppositional level (:292).

From the point of view of Western governments, the missionaries, who lived among the local people and thus knew their languages and understood their customs, were ideal allies, the best possible agents of cultural, political, and economic influence. Missionaries became pioneers of Western imperialistic expansion (2003:303-304).

> By and large, missionaries not only acquiesced in the imperialist venture but saw it as a good thing, both because it would be in the interest of the colonized, and because of the providential opportunity which it afforded to bring the gospel to the 'unreached'. The belief that the progress which had been achieved in the West was largely due to the influence of Christianity encouraged the view that other societies would follow the same path, and attain the same prosperity, once the gospel had been disseminated among them. The exporting of Western culture and patterns of commerce could therefore be seen as complementary, if ultimately subordinate, to the diffusion of the Christian messsage (Zebiri 2000:30).

This mutual recognition is evident from the fact that, as we will see, missionaries were quick to petition their ambassadors to further their purposes, and these gentlemen tended to respond positively to the requests.

Many of the Ottoman Empire's minorities and a small Muslim elite embraced Western enlightenment thinking. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938) sought to impose it by force on the new Turkish republic. Later, Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser (1918-1970) rejected Islamism for Arab nationalism, while Baathism (Arab socialism) co-founded by the Greek Orthodox Michel Aflaq (1910-1989) was embraced by the Syrian and Iraqi ruling elites. At a grass-roots level, however, the majority of people came to reject these Western inspired notions—and with it the missionary message which, in their minds, was an integral part of the package. Instead, they turned to Islam.

The importance of this negative response to western cultural impetuses is the fact that in the Muslim mind Christianity is "inextricably linked with the West". Kate Zebiri summarizes it well:

> The West is stigmatized in Islamist discourse as the unacceptable other: morally bankrupt, predatory and unscrupulous; symbolically voiceless, because what is says is not to be believed. In this discourse, Christianity is still inextricably linked with the West and with imperialism, even though the centre of gravity of contemporary Christianity has now shifted away from the West, and the relationship between Western governments and Christianity is generally a tenuous one (2000:1-2).

The missionary—or memory thereof—is, of course, "inextricably linked" to Christianity.

Westerners have relegated the colonial era to history. In the Middle East, however, that is not so easily done. The effects of that era continue to colour the present, including the dialogue between Christian and Muslim.

> Christians view the age of missions and colonialism as a historical phase which has now passed, to give way to an era in which indigenous Church leadership and cultural diversity are taken for granted, and in which Third-World Christianity is itself an active contributor to both the missionary enterprise and the theological tradition. For Muslims, however… the memory of past subjugation is constantly renewed by the manifestations of neo-colonialism in the present (Zebiri 2000:32).

Another factor contributing to the sense of a clash between civilizations is the incompatibility between Islamic theology and Western secularism. In the words of Nasr, the relationship between Christians and Muslims has, since the time of the Enlightenment, been colored by the presence of that silent third partner, anti-religious secularism (1997:26).

> Between the Islamic world and the secularist west there can be no deep harmony and accord… Islam… has always opposed severly any titanic and Promethian view of humanity and has emphasized man's humble state before the grandeur and majesty of the Divine, seeing him at once as the servant of God ('abd Allah) and His viceregent (Khalifat Allah) on earth… The very existence of the Islamic world, which negates so many assumptions of the postmediaeval and modern Western worldview, such as individualism, secular humanism, and the superiority of human rights over divine rights and humanly devised laws over Divine Law, appears as a formidable challenge to a West that considers its own historical development as the only acceptable path to follow for all other people on the globe (Nasr 1997:11).

Huntington, looking at things from a Western perspective, notes that:

> the underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their powers. The problem for Islam is not the CIA or the U.S. Department of Defense. It is the West, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the universality of their culture and believe that their superior, if declining power, imposes on them the obligation to extend that culture throughout the world. These are the basic ingredients that fuel the conflict between Islam and the West (Huntington 1996:218).

Huntington's point touches on a raw nerve. Although in its Western context the church is quick to agitate against the slide into "Post-Christianity", in the context of the Middle East Christians, including missionaries, by and large, advocate a secular state, as it would give them rights and privileges equivalent to those of the Muslim majority (Pikkert 1982-2006).

The image of the Muslim world as portrayed in the Western media is another factor validating our use of the Huntington paradigm. There is a widespread feeling among many Muslims that Islam is largely misunderstood because of media misrepresentation and distortion, combined with the feeling that Westerners—Americans in particular—have little interest in even beginning to understand the aspirations of Muslims. This sense that the American media has, in the course of much of the post-World War II era, distorted the image of Islam and Arabs is important, for missionary recruits are as shaped by the popular media as any one else.

There are numerous other socio-political and cultural issues—some of which will be expanded later—which could be raised to underscore the fact that many on both sides of the divide perceive there to be a clash of civilizations. Many Muslims, for instance, feel that the West's judgments on other parts of the world are determined primarily by its own economic and political interests, or those of powerful lobby groups, such as the Jewish and Christian Zionist lobbies in the States: Israeli terrorism and violence are condoned but Palestinian reaction is condemned as violence, pure and simple. Furthermore, the West, obsessed with its own safety, models of economic development, and political democracy, is perceived as unwilling to let others to discover their own paths to development and democracy (see Ahmad 1992:75-80).

In conclusion, the notion of a clash of civilizations between Islam and Christianity/the West is not just a figment of Mr. Huntington's imagination. The above-mentioned reasons explain why, in Albert Hourani's words, "all these processes have created and maintained an attitude of suspicion and hostility on both sides and still provide, if not a reason for enmity, at least a language in which it can express itself" (Hourani 1980:355).

1.4. Parameters of Study

The Middle East has gone through a series of major transitions, as has the Protestant missionary movement to the region. Using the above-described Bosch/Huntington framework, this thesis traces, era by era, how the particularities of history and culture affected both the communication and reception of the gospel in the Levant. It evaluates the emergence, growth and implications of Christianity's negative reception by the majority population by asking four sets of questions of four consecutive periods through which the area passed.

The first of these four periods lasted from 1800 to 1918. During the late Ottoman era the Protestant missionary enterprise grew very large, only to be curtailed abruptly with the disintegration of the empire after World War I. Attitudes formed during this crucial period about Christian missions continue to throw their long shadow.

The period from 1919 to 1946 was an era of colonialism and nationalism in the Middle East. New countries emerged from the ruins of the Ottoman empire or were wrested from colonial masters. Mission work was largely reduced to a niche effort of dedicated specialists. Syria gained its independence from France in 1946, and hence serves as our cut-off point.

Between 1947 and 1978 the Arab world flexed its muscles. This era saw the creation of—and wars with—the state of Israel, the emergence of the "Palestinian Problem", as well as Western dependence on Near Eastern oil. The oil embargo of 1973 marked the zenith of Arab political clout. The West and, consequently, the Western church, took fresh notice of the

challenges posed by the region. Contemporary evangelical mission agencies made their first tentative beginnings.

The period beginning in 1979 and lasting until 2005 brought Islamic fundamentalism to the fore. When Ayetollah Khomeini overthrew the Shah of Iran in 1979, militant Islam exploded onto the world stage and changed the scene dramatically. Equally dramatic were the 9/11 attacks on New York and the subsequent "War on Terror" and the regime change in Iraq. We are currently embroiled in a clash of civilizations of major proportions. Missionary outreach, particularly of the evangelical variety, grew in leaps and bounds in this period.

The four questions posed of each of these periods are:

1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise?
2. What were the missionary goals and strategies?
3. What was the popular response to the missionary enterprise?
4. What were the missiological implications?

1.5. Methodology

Question #1 lends itself easily to a topically arranged chronological-historical presentation. I draw from both Western and Turkish secondary sources to sketch the parameters within which missionary work was even possible. The reason for consulting both Western and Middle Eastern *secondary* sources is because, with respect to this thesis, the important thing is not determining what actually happened, but what the different versions of events were/are.

When answering question #2, we delve into a great amount of mission literature, notably annual reports and missionary periodicals, to uncover the missionary hopes, aspirations and strategies.

The answer to question #3, the inquiry into the popular response to the missionary enterprise, looks at both positive and negative responses. The information is gleaned largely from mission literature.

When moving to the question of missiological implications we go beyond statistics and interesting conversion accounts to explore the consequences of what took place.

1.6. Literature Review

The literature review only mentions those texts which form the backbone of the research or contribute significantly to conclusions drawn. It does not make mention of every one of the

numerous books and articles consulted nor, for the sake of brevity, does it give full documentation. Footnotes and bibliography serve those purposes.

The review is broken into 5 sections, the first being works pertaining to our paradigm as it relates to our subject, the others dealing with the questions the thesis poses:

1. Works interacting with Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" paradigm as it pertains to the Muslim world;
2. Works which deal with the socio-political and cultural framework which limited the missionaries' options;
3. Works on the missionaries' goals and strategies;
4. Works which examine the response to the missionary enterprise;
5. Works which examine some of the missiological implications.

Obviously, a number of books deal with more than one of the issues mentioned. No one work, however, pulls the socio-political, cultural, theological and missiological issues and implications together into a single framework covering two centuries of Protestant missons. If there had been, there would have been no need for this thesis.

1.6.1. Works interacting with Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" paradigm as it pertains to the Muslim world

This thesis utilizes Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" paradigm as presented in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (1996) to explore the nature of missionary work with respect to the majority Muslim population of the Ottoman Empire and the Levantine countries which emerged from her. The section "Islam and the West", the ninth chapter of Huntington's book, is of particular importance for our purpose, for there he seeks to demonstrate in broad strokes how his thesis applies to Western/Middle East relations. The section also highlights a controversion contention, his identification of Europe as "Christian" when most Westerners would probably identify it as "post-Enlightenment", "modern" or "post-modern", depending on the era in question. The question, unanswered by Huntington, yet pertinent to our investigations, is whether his random interchanging of "Christian" and "Western" is, in fact, how most of the Muslim world perceives the West. At the same time this mythical Christian West sees a threatening, monolithic "Muslim world" of its own imagination looming over the horizon. How have these respective worlds, in the forms in which they exist in the minds of both the missionaries and their target audience, affected the communication and reception of the "gospel message"?

There are numerous books which reflect Huntington's concerns, or have critically engaged his thesis with respect to its ramifications vis-à-vis Christianity's relationship with Islam, though not all allude to him—some because they predate his *The Clash of Civilizations*. Huntington's basic idea was not unique.

A useful, introductory, "big-picture" sweep is J. M. Gaudeul's 2 volume *Encounters & Clashes: Islam and Christianity in History* (2000), of which Volume 1 is a survey and Volume 2 an anthology of original texts which aim to support his statements. The first book's seventh chapter, "Two Worlds Colliding (1800-2000)" is helpful for our purposes inasmuch as it juxtaposes some of the historical, theological and missiological issues which have caused the two worlds to be estranged from each other. Treatment of each point is very brief and without interpretation.

The respected Oxford Islamist Bernhard Lewis also applies the broad constructs of Huntington's model to the Muslim world in such works as *Islam and the West* (1993) and the post 9/11 work *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Reponse* (2002). Lewis differs from the likes of say, John Esposito, whose *The Islamic Threat* (1995) concludes that Islam and most Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American, or anti-democratic. Subsequent events, notably 9/11 and its aftermath, as well as the recent "Cartoon Crisis", have obviously challenged Esposito's conclusions. The weakness of Esposito's argument is his presumption that fundamentalists merely resent current Western policies vis-à-vis the Muslim world. However, such influential thinkers as the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) and the Pakistani Abdul Ala Mawdudi (1903-1979) and their numerous followers in the Middle East do not merely focus on Western policies; they condemn the very essence of Western life, culture and thought. In short, unlike Lewis, Esposito's equally informed and reasoned discussion of Islam in politics doesn't recognize the hostility and ambition of radical fundamentalist Islam to the same degree.

Fred Halliday's *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (1996) also engages critically with Huntington's thesis. Much of Halliday's book sets out to demonstrate that Huntington's thesis is overly broad, vague, ahistorical and lacking in academic rigor. His critique of generalizations and his pursuit of the particularities of situations is summed up as follows: "There cannot be a great 'Islamic challenge' [to the West], not only because the Islamic states are, and will remain, much weaker than those of the West, but also because they do not represent a coherent, internationally constituted alliance" (Halliday 1996:119). This position enables him to dismiss those who write about the region in a generalized way.

When discussing the suitability of our paradigm for the purpose of this thesis a must-read is Kate Zebiri's wonderfully readable and even-handed *Muslims and Christians Face to Face* (2000). She focuses on the way Muslim and Christian writers—both scholars and popular writers—perceive each other. She points out that both Muslims and Christians share a number of faults when evaluating the other, including the fact that both tend to critique the other about issues the other side considers unimportant. Zebiri's contention that Muslim views of Christianity have remained largely static over the centuries, whereas Christian views of Islam have evolved, is also important for our purpose in that it provides a ready answer for those who would critique this thesis as overemphasizing developments in the Christian world. Zebiri points out that Christians are the ones who initiate efforts at dialogue, sponsor ecumenical meetings and undertake the serious study of Islam far more often than Muslims do with respect to the study of Christianity. Substantial Christian institutions exist to study Islam, but not the reverse. Consequently, most Muslim writing on Christianity is polemic and bellicose, whereas many Christian academics have sought to understand the inner genius of Islam. Zebiri notes that few Muslims are willing to explore what makes Christianity attractive to Christians.

An Evangelical Christian writer who engages Huntington critically—without actually mentioning him—is Vinoth Ramachandra. The first chapter of his book *Faiths in Conflict?* (1999), "Islam and the New Religious Wars" restates some of Esposito's and Halliday's concerns and makes selective use of Zebiri to present his own critique of "Islamophobia, Westophobia and 'Christophia'" (Ramachandra 1999:44). The importance of the book is its recognition that many Muslims suffer from "Westophobia" for good reasons. The fact that the author is Sri Lankan undoubtedly makes him more sympathetic to the concerns non-westerners have with respect to the West's attempt at global cultural hegemony.

Colin Chapman's *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the challenge of Islam* (1996) is another Evangelical's attempt to present something of the sad history of Muslim-Western relations. Though he makes no reference to Huntington, or any of the above-mentioned authors for that matter, and though, like Huntington, he is guilty of comparing a culture with a religion, his book is, nevertheless, a commentary on the "Clash of Civilization" paradigm. He challenges us to choose between the three possible states of interaction with Islam open to us today: conflict, co-existence or conversion. For the purpose of this thesis, his critique of Gotlieb Pfander's *Mizan ul-Haq* (1835) is of particular importance.

Those wanting to understand the impact of modern media on the Muslim world can do no better than turn to the series of articles edited by Dale Eickelman and Jon Anderson in *New Media*

in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere (2003). The book relates how fax machines, satelite television and the Internet, along with older media such as cassettes, pulp fiction, the cinema, the telephone and the press are being utilized to shape belief, maintain and challenge authority, and foster a global sense of community among the like-minded.

1.6.2. Works which deal with the socio-political and cultural framework which limited the missionaries' options

The socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise in the Middle East can be divided into two broad categories: works dealing with the framework which the missionaries inherited from their home culture, and works dealing with the issues with which they had to grapple in the Middle East. Both changed over time. We seek to trace how developments in both areas impacted the mindset and ministries of successive generations of missionaries.

1.6.2.1. Works which deal with the socio-political and cultural framework missionaries inherited from their home culture

Whatever labels we give successive generations of missionaries (Veterans, Boomers, GenXers, etc.), David Bosch, in his majesterial *Transforming Missions* (2003), has established that "the entire Western missionary movement of the past three centuries emerged from the matrix of the Enlightenment" (:344). The ninth chapter of his book, "Mission in the Wake of the Enlightenment" is our starting point when evaluating the "baggage" the Enlightenment missionary carried with him to the Ottoman Empire and, later, to Turkey and the Arab world. In fact, this powerful and erudite presentation of the fact that missionaries were caught in the Enlightenment and post-modern webs in which they were nurtured is an underlying theme of this thesis. Bosch recognized, however, that "the Christian missionary enterprise is slowly but irrevocably moving away from the shadow of the Enlightenment" (:344). History moves on, and we must trace its changing pattern into the present and apply it to the Middle East.

We turn to Robert Ellwood's wonderfully readable account of American Christianity in the middle of the 20th century, *1950: Crossroads of American Religious Life* (2000), to help us grasp the pre-Boomer generation and the world they lived in. Hans Finzel's *Help! I'm a Baby Boomer. Battles for Christian Values Inside America's Largest Generation* (1989) and a number of *Evangelical Missionary Quarterly* (EMQ) articles help us paint a picture of the Boomer generation. To help us grasp the mindset of the modern missionary we turn to the slim volume edited by Richard Tiplady, *Postmission: World Mission By a Postmodern Generation* (2002). This series of essays, each composed by a young, post-modern missionary, not only tells us

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List of research project topics and materials

something of the frustrations this generation has with respect to the "Boomer" generation of mission leaders but, more importantly for our purposes, gives us some insight into the character of the current crop of missionaries. We will then have to see if the baggage this generation takes with them to their Muslim peers in the Middle East makes them better equipped to carry out their task than their forefathers were. A number of EMQ and *World Pulse* (WP) articles help out, notably those by Dylhoff and Borthwick.

However, Bosch, Tiplady, et. al. do not apply their findings to the missionary laboring in the Middle East. When the new missionary first leaves for the Middle East his perceptions of Islam and the Muslim world to that point would, in all likelihood, have been shaped in large part by the Western media. The Palestinian Christian intellectual Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (1995) is a classic critique of the West's perception of Islam, a perception the missionary would have been nurtured in. His book *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (1997) goes on to trace how the modern media has often manipulated its message to form anti-Muslim biases in the Western mind.

We also draw from the mainline media, notably *US News & World Report, The Washington Post, National Review* and *The New York Times* to illustrate how Islam has been demonized in the West. We will also refer to work this student did for *Middle East International*, "Christian Zionism: Evangelical Schizophrenia" (1992), to point out that that ideology, which many North American missionaries espouse, is fundamentally antagonistic to the very people they hope to reach with the gospel.

1.6.2.2. Works which deal with issues with which missionaries had to grapple in the Middle East

Before delving too deeply into the particulars, there are a number of excellent works we can consult to enable us to paint a general picture of the socio-political and cultural developments of the region. One of the best introductions to the history of the Middle East is Arthur Goldschmidt's comprehensive *A Concise History of the Middle East* (2004). Bernard Lewis' *The Middle East: 2000 years of History from the Rise of Christianity to the Present Day* (2002) places Islamic history in a yet larger historical context. One of the latter book's virtues is that it seeks to trace the rapid and enforced change which the Levant has undergone in the course of the last two centuries, a process in which missionaries played a large part. Refreshingly, Lewis even manages to resist political correctness with his contention that the legacy of Westernization during the brief period of European imperialism is, in fact, more firmly embraced by greater numbers of people today than ever before, something he interprets as a positive development. In his article "The

Roots of Muslim Rage" (1990), however, he illustrates that the tension between the Christian and Muslim communities is more than just a perception.

Another of the wide-ranging histories of the region enabling us to form a general picture of the world into which the missionary landed is Lord Kinross' *The Ottoman Centuries* (1977). It traces the decline of the empire, and enables us to get a feel of the sense of disintegration which the missionaries of the 1800-1918 era must have sensed. David Fromkin's very readable *A Peace to End All Peace* (1989) is a superb introduction to the complex of events surrounding the birth of the modern Middle East, events which became a watershed for Christian missions to the region. We turn to Erik Zürcher's *Turkey: A Modern History* (2004) to help fill in details.

No study of the birth of the socio-political framework of the Arab world is complete without George Antonius' classic, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (1961). It is particularly pertinent for our purposes because, unlike the above mentioned authors, he relates the roles played by missionaries in the nationalist awaking of the Arab world. Other respected histories which shed light on the Arab world are Albert Hourani's *A History of the Arab Peoples* (1991) and Philip Hitti's *History of the Arabs.*

There are some marvelous travelogues of intrepid travelers whose observations of the Middle East differ radically from missionary reports. James Ellsworth De Kay, "an American traveler… who had predetermined to write a book" (:1) of his adventures is one example. His *Sketches of Turkey in 1831 and 1832,* though written more than 175 years ago, rings true to this student, who has spent many years in Turkey and wrote this thesis on location. De Kay's observations of some of the missionary methods are particularly important, both because they occurred early in the whole enterprise and because they were offered by one who was not disposed to be anti-missionary.

Just as missionaries are prisoners of their own culture, so are Turks and Arabs. To help us grasp some of the cultural fundamentals of the "opposing camp" in the clash of civilizations, we turn to Raphail Patai's *The Arab Mind* (1973). This wide-ranging book covers everything from Arab child-rearing practices to the importance of the Arabic language, Bedouin values, sexual mores, temperament, and the impact of Westernization.

Musk's article, "Honor and Shame" (1996) surveys less understood areas of the Middle Easterners' world view, particularly the importance of loyalty to family and kin leading to the reality that human behavior is directed by concepts of honor and shame. Pertaining to the same subject, *Honor and Shame* (2000), by Roland Muller, with whom I also had the privilege of chatting for over an hour, is an important little book. He elaborates the very interesting thesis that

the nature of Western Christianity, which is largely based on our legal standing before God, is of little relevance in "fear based cultures" and, more importantly for our purposes, in "shame and honor based cultures". The Bible, he maintains, deals with all three issues (i.e, guilt, fear and shame). Since cultures tend to be weighted in one direction or another, however, initial gospel presentations must be tailored accordingly. Missionaries to the Middle East, he says, have gone with the Biblical answer to guilt, not with the Biblical answer to shame. Little wonder they made little headway! Thomas Bruce's article, "The Gospel for Shame Cultures" (1994) also touches on the above-mentioned need to customize the presentation of the gospel.

When wanting to make non-partisan comments on Islam we turn to Fazlur Rahman's balanced and sympathetic book *Islam.* (1979). A. Ahmed's *Postmodernism and Islam* (1992) will help us formulate the Muslim response to post-modernism. Since these books are both authored by highly literate, Western-educated Muslim scholars; they keep us from falling into the trap of having one's enemy explain one's position; i.e., from having Islam explained to us by an orientalist, a Jew, a Christian, or a ranting extremist of the opposite camp. We thus keep Edward Said happy.

Descriptions and critiques of Islam by such missionary writers as Pfander, Tisdall, Zwemer, Gairdner, Cragg, *et al.,*form an integral part of the thesis; we draw heavily from their works to make various points. Kenneth Cragg's *Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence Amid Islam* (1959) is an early example of a sensitive introduction to the Muslim world. Another Christian's very readable and sensitive introduction to the world as experienced by Muslims is Miller's *Muslim Friends, their Faith and Feelings: An Introduction to Islam* (1995).

Rollin Armour Sr.'s *Islam, Christianity and the West* (2003) is also a helpful—and readable—introduction to Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. Although it is drawn entirely from secondary sources, the beauty of this little book lies in the way it counterpoints Christian critiques of Islam with their mirror images in Christianity itself. Chapter 4, "Islam in the Eyes of the Medieval West" and Chapter 5, "The Western Counteroffensive", which deals with the Crusades, are useful introductions to the thesis, as these subjects are not covered in this work.

Geneive Abdo's *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam* (2000) is an informed work that traces the tremendous growth of the hitherto largely non-confrontational Islamic movement which has transformed Egyptian society over the last quarter century, thus creating new parameters within which missionaries have to operate.

We do not cover the views national Christians had/have of Western missionaries—a subject taken up by Nazir Ali, Provost of Lahore, in his somewhat misnamed *Islam: A Christian*

Perspective. Developments outside the Ottoman Empire and the countries which emerged from it are not covered either—Iran, for instance, is outside the parameters of this study.

Of all modern Middle Eastern countries, Turkey is the most appropriate country in which to study the official spin on the subject of Christianity, as a Western orientation has been official government policy since Atatürk established the Republic in 1923. Furthermore, missionary efforts in Anatolia in the 19th century were substantial, and today the country is a serious candidate for E.U. membership. It also boasts a large missionary community. Surely we can expect a reasonably accurate understanding of the main tenets of Christianity there—or can we? How has the missionary message come to be popularly understood there? What kind of heritage did those previous missionaries leave their later colleagues? To help us gauge how well the missionaries managed to communicate their message and to give us an idea of Muslim critiques of Christian teaching and some of the common negative attitudes to Christian teachings we turn to the Turkish writer and personal friend, İsa Karataş' *Gerçekleri Saptıranlar* (1997) (Truth Twisters) and *Ağacı Yaşken Eğdiler* (2000) (Bent Saplings). The first book traces Turkish Muslim perceptions, opinions, and teachings about Christianity in the often polemical press, as well as those of such popular Muslim writers as Edip Yüksel, Abulrahman Dilipak, Fethullah Gülen, and Ali Bulaç. Their works indicate a sense of fear, of being under threat. More important is Karataş' second book. It looks at the often fanciful teachings about Christianity in official textbooks published by Turkey's Ministry of Education for use in Turkish grade- and highschools in the modern period. As such, it reflects the opinions, attitudes and prejudices with which virtually every Turkish citizen approaches Christianity. Tracing this official position will, once again, keep us from falling into the trap of choosing extremist literature to bolster our case.

When reviewing this literature one is struck by the truth of Kate Zebiri's observation that the Qur'an "tends to act as a deterrent to empirical study, so that judgements about Christianity are often based on the Qur'an rather than on a practical knowledge of 'lived' Christianity" (2000:6). The question why, after nearly two centuries of missionary presence, Muslim commentators do not respond to 'lived' Christianity is very pertinent.

1.6.3. Works on the missionaries' goals and strategies.

The amount of primary materials available on this subject is vast. There are surveys, appeals, magazines, reports of individual missionaries and mission societies, historical, religious and geographical studies, tracts, booklets and other evangelistic literature, autobiographies, articles and books written by missionaries. An treasury of such primary sources pertaining directly to our subject matter and going right back to the early 19th century can be found in the American Board

library in Istanbul, Turkey. The *Sağlık ve Eğitim Vakfi* (Health and Education Foundation), successor organization to the American Board in Turkey, kindly granted me unlimited access to the riches contained in their private library, so that from October 2004 to April 2006 I was able to peruse all the *Minutes and Annual Reports of the American Board* from 1840 to 1927, all the back issues of *The Missionary Herald* from 1827 to 1948, of the *International Review of Missions* from 1912 to 1997, of *The Moslem World* from January 1911 to October 1990, and of the *Missionary Review of the World* from 1889 to 1909. The material gleaned from these sources forms the backbone of the research up to the end of the second period. Reading consecutively through the relevant articles, too numerous to list in this short review, I caught a glimpse of how the attitudes and approaches of missionaries to the Middle East evolved in response to the changing social and political climate—and that, of course, takes us to the heart of this thesis.

1.6.3.1. General Missions Strategy and The Great Experiment

A must read is Lyle Vander Werff's *Christian Mission to Muslims, The Record. Anglican and Reformed Approaches in India and the Near East* (1977). The work is well researched, making extensive use of original sources. Along with C. E Padwick's biography on Temple Gairdner, *Temple Gairdner of Cairo* (1929), published a year after Gairdner's death, VanderWerff's book forms the basis of our discussion on this man. Vander Werff also gives a good synopsis of the ministry of Samuel Zwemer, who figures prominently in the 1918-1946 period. Those wanting a introduction to Zwemer's actual works and views can turn to *Islam and the Cross: Selections from the Apostle to Islam* (2002).

We also look at some period histories and evaluations of the missionary enterprise as interpreted by those gave their life to it. Notably among such works is Rufus Anderson's *History of Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. Anderson was the director of the ABCFM during its heyday in the 19th century. As already noted, we draw extensively from the *Annual Reports of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,* and the *Missionary Herald,* the Board's periodical, to complete our picture of the ministry of the period in question. For the first half of the 20th century we refer to *The Moslim World* (*The Muslim World* after 1947), the magazine which Zwemer edited from 1911 to 1938, and co-edited with E. E. Calverly from 1939 to 1947. *The International Review of Missions* also provides much source material. The *Evangelical Missions Quarterly, The International Bulletin of World Missions*, and the bi-weekly *World Pulse* enable us to trace missiological developments and thought in the modern period.

An invaluable and wonderfully readable introduction to the pre-World War I era is Julius Richter's *A History of Protestant Mission in the Near East* (1910). Besides giving us a lucid account of missionary history, the astute German missiologist touches on some of the Board's failures, well before the W.W. I. catastrophe.

The sense that much of the effort of the American Board was, in fact, misdirected, and would have calamitous results in later years is unpacked in Robert Blincoe's *Ethnic Realities and the Church: Lessons from Kurdistan* (1998). This important little book first introduced me to the "Great Experiment", i.e., the fact that the main missionary effort of the 19th century deliberately targeted the ancient churches, in the hope that these could be revived to reach the Muslim majority on the missionaries' behalf. According to Blincoe, this experiment failed with catastrophic results. Unfortunately, his book is a narrow study of Kurdistan and focuses largely on the 19th century. As such it fails to trace the change in the mindset/worldview/culture of the missionaries going to the Middle East and relate these to the also evolving world views of the Arab and Turkish worlds. The latter complaint is, in fact, true of all the books consulted (with the exception of Vander Werff's discussion of the maturing Zwemer and Gairdner) and, in and of itself, constitutes a compelling reason for this thesis.

The Lutheran missionary effort to the Middle East was small but important from our point of view, in that they rejected the "Great Experiment" approach and, despite the obstacles and difficulties, opted to target the Muslim majority directly. The Lutheran's different approach, attitudes and results provide a fascinating counter-point to the massive American Board effort—and give us tantilizing glimpses into what might have been. We turn to Jensen and Oberg's *The Messengers of God: The History of the Lutheran Orient Mission Society* (1985) to help us paint the picture. W.A. Rice's *Crusaders of the Twentieth Century or The Christian Mission and the Muslim. An Introduction to Work among Muhammedans* (1910) gives us the Church Mission Society angle on things. The title of this work is revealing in and of itself.

There are numerous biographies and autobiographies of men and women who spent their lives as missionaries to the region. One period autobiography we will turn to frequently is Joseph Greene's *Leavening the Levant* (1916). Greene was a veteran missionary of 51 years of service with the American Board in Turkey, and editor of several of the newspapers the Board published in Istanbul. His upbeat, extensive evaluation of the work of the American Board in the Ottoman Empire is useful at a number of levels. Firstly, it provides much factual data on the ministries the Board was involved in, particularly its educational and medical efforts. Secondly, and of particular importance for our purposes, the book clearly tells us who these ministries were

directed at and what the results were. Thirdly, Greene provides telling glimpses into the views a respected 19th century missionary and opinion maker held of the majority Muslim population. For the modern period Kraig Meyer's *A Clash of Swords* (1986) plays a somewhat similar role.

1.6.3.2. Debate/Apologetics

In terms of missionary strategies, engaging Muslims in debate has been a time-honored method. Pfander's *The Mizanu'l Haqq (Balance of Truth)* (1835) was the pinnacle of missionary apologetics in its day. Pfander's editor of the 1910 edition of *Balance of Truth*, W. St. Clair Tisdall, continued to develop that courteous but "Enlightenment based" style of apologetics in his *Christian Reply to Muslim Objectives* (1904). Colin Chapman's critique of the book in his *Islam and the West* (1998) is important for our purposes in that it highlights the typical Enlightenment presuppositions from which Pfander, Tisdall, and their numerous followers, operated. During the post-World War II period the works of Kenneth Cragg, notably his *Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence Amid Islam* (1959), present a wonderfully sensitive alternative to some of the aggressive attacks of the past.

1.6.3.3. Spirituality as understood by Muslims

Much ink has been spilt in the course of the last quarter century on the subject of contextualization. Although the theoretical aspects of the subject do not fall within the parameters of this thesis, we evaluate some of ideas which have actually been attempted. We glean something of Temple Gairdner's early attempts at contextualization both from Padwick's biography on the man, *Temple Gairdner of Cairo* (1929), and in articles he wrote for the MW and the IRM. Bill Musk's book *The Unseen Face of Islam: Sharing the Gospel with Ordinary Muslims at Street Level* (2003) looks behind the façade of orthodox Islam to probe the world of folk Islam, i.e., Islam as it is practiced at a grass-roots level. It is an up-to-date, readable and fairly comprehensive treatment of an important theme already tackled in Zwemer's *The Influence of Animism on Islam* (1920). Although the importance of folk Islam in the Middle East has long been recognized, few missionaries appear equipped or willing to confront it.

Richard D. Love, in his two articles, "Church Planting Among Folk Muslims" (1994) and "Power Encounter Among Folk Muslims: An Essential Key of the Kingdom" (1996) points out that more than 3/4 of the Muslim world are Folk Muslims. He goes on to argue that church planting among them must be based upon a theology of the kingdom of God that involves power, truth and cultural encounters. In the second article he argues that power needs to be an essential

factor to effectively evangelize Folk Muslims and to plant the Church of Jesus Christ in their midst.

Patrick Cate's article, "Gospel Communication From Within" (1994) also points out that if we are to successfully open windows and doors in Muslim walls we have to begin from within the Muslim mind and heart, from what they accept and value, not what they reject and despise.

Christine Mallouhi, Australian wife of the Syrian Muslim convert to Christianity and writer/novelist Mazhar Mallouhi, presents a compendium of dos and don'ts for those seeking to communicate spiritual values in a Muslim context in her *Mini-Skirts, Mothers and Muslims: Modelling Spiritual Values in Muslim Culture* (1997). There are many such "practical advice" books, but hers has the value of being written by a woman with something of an insider's view.

David Teeter's article "Dynamic Equivalent Conversion for Tentative Muslim Believers" (1990) notes that conversion to Christianity for a Muslim in the Middle East usually means expulsion from family and community. He suggests an alternative, "Muslim followers of Jesus" concept, in which being "born of the Spirit" is seen as a process, rather than as a crisis event. Some of the Muslims in this "dynamic equivalent conversion process" are best described as "tentative believers," rather than as converts.

Another missionary who has written much on the subject of contextualization, notably in his book *New Paths in Muslim Evangelism* (1980) is Phil Parshall. Although his personal experience has not been in the Middle East, he is not shy about applying his observations across the board in "Applied Spirituality in Ministry among Muslims" (1983), "Contextualized Baptism for Muslim Converts" (1979) and "Other Options for Muslim Evangelism" (1998).

How far should missionaries go in their attempts to model spiritual values in Muslim culture? Can forms embedded in the being of Muslims be retained with Christian integrity? At what point does one slide into syncretism? John Speers probes whether missionaries should keep the Muslim fast in his article, "Ramadan: Should Missionaries Keep the Muslim Fast?" (1991) while Warren Chastain asks, "Should Christians Pray the Muslim Salat?" (1995). Those interested in pursuing the subject might consult David Racey's article, "Contextualization: How Far Is Too Far?" (1996). He presents five principles to guide contextualization from crossing the line into syncretism with specific focus on Islamic contexts and the debates over extremes in Muslim ministry. Richard Heldenbrand also pursues the subject in "Missions to Muslims: Cutting the Nerve?" (1982). Parshall sounds a warning in "Danger! New Directions in Contextualization"

(1998). He maintains that taking on a Muslim identity and praying in the mosque is not a new missionary strategy; legally becoming a Muslim is going too far.

That takes us to the concept of Islamicized Christianity, a subject Don Eenigenberg broaches in his article, "The Pros and Cons of Islamicized Contextualization" (1997). Islamicized contextualization encourages Muslim background believers to remain within the Muslim community, maintain their Muslim identity, learn to practice their faith using Islamic forms and terminology, and meet in congregations culturally distinct from existing Christian congregations in the area.

1.6.3.4. Tentmaking

In the post-World War II era the door largely closed to traditional missionary service, forcing missionaries to devise other strategies to develop platforms for ministry in the Middle East. Missionaries operating from platforms sporting a secular veneer are often referred to as "tentmakers". Roland Allan's book *The Case for Voluntary Clergy* (1930) argues the case for tentmaking for all clergy on the basis of the examples of early church leaders. It was, however, Christy Wilson's book *Today's Tentmakers. Self-support: an alternative model for worldwide witness* (1979) which ignited interest in the concept with respect to reaching Muslims in the "closed" countries of the Middle East. Wilson grasped the idea that missions need not be done by professional clergymen/missionaries, but that "ordinary people" could participate in the Great Commission, particularly in "closed" countries.

Dan Gibson's *Avoiding the Tentmaker Trap* (1997) is full of practical advice and sound warnings for those contemplating missionary work as "tentmakers" in the Middle East. The book's short sixth chapter, "Rationale For Tentmaking" is an important outline of the reasons why missionaries take this approach. Unfortunately, the book does not deal with the question of the response of the Muslim majority to the "tentmaking missionary". C. F. Blair's article "Tentmaking: A Contextualized Approach to Islam" (1983) suggests that tentmaking is a perfectly acceptable contextualized ministry, as the region has traditionally accepted foreign workers, even if as slaves.

1.6.4. Works which look at the response to the missionary enterprise

In every period we catch glimpses of Muslims who, in spite of the obstacles, responded positively to the missionary message. Why did they do so? Were/are particular techniques or presentations

more effective than others? Are more Muslim's responding today than in times past or is that, in fact, an illusion resulting from higher populations?

1.6.4.1. Reports/Testimonies of Converts

For the first period we delve once more into Greene's self-congratulatory *Leavening the Levant* (1916), along with some of the other period histories mentioned, notably the American Board's *Annual Reports* and *Missionary Herald* magazines. Gaudeul's *Called from Islam: Why Muslims Become Christians* (1999) looks at conversion stories and testimonies from across the Muslim world. Miriam Adeney's book, *Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women* (2002) contains various testimonies of how Muslim women from all walks of life came to embrace Christianity. We also consult Ibn Warraq's (ed.) *Leaving Islam: Apostates Speak Out* (2003) to understand why Muslims today leave Islam in the first place for other world-views. With respect to the modern period we interview Christian converts from a Muslim background.

Bill Musk's article, "Dreams and the Ordinary Muslim" (1988) maintains that people from different cultural backgrounds see reality in different ways. Ordinary Muslims, he writes, live in a world in which supernatural beings and powers impinge on everyday life. In that process, the role of dreams is significant. He then looks at the roles dreams have played in the conversion of those coming to Christ from a Muslim background.

The previously mentioned missionary periodicals also publish occasional accounts of Muslim converts to Christianity, while the IBMR's annual "Status of Global Missions" is particularly helpful to get a global picture of what is happening.

Patrick Johnstone's surveys of the world, the *Operation World* books, are global snapshots of the state of missions and the church. By comparing the statistics in the 1978 and the 2001 editions of the book we get a sense of missions and church growth during the modern period for the specific countries under investigation. Utilizing Johnstone's two books enables us to present two sets of facts and statistics based on the same criteria and definitions.

1.6.4.2. An evaluation of the negative responses

Stirring as conversion stories are, the fact remains that the vast majority of Muslims in the Near East have, in the course of history, reacted negatively to the missionary enterprise.

Marcia and Malcolm Steven's *Against the Devil's Current: The Life and Times of Cyrus Hamlin* (1988) contains some devastating conclusions about the impact of the missionary educational enterprise. Martin Goldsmith's article "Community and Controversy: Key Causes in Muslim Resistance" (1976) explores some of the common reasons for the Muslim rejection of

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List of research project topics and materials

Christianity. In his article "Cross-Cultural Models for Muslim Evangelism" (1976), Don McCurry notes that the social structures of Islamic culture predispose Muslims not to convert, a subject we will explore in some depth.

1.6.5. Works which examine missiological implications

Joshua Massay, in "Planting the Church Underground in Muslim Contexts" (1996) looks for a biblical paradigm for fruitful church planting in environments hostile to Christianity. Harvie M. Conn's chapter "The Muslim Convert and His Culture" in *The Gospel and Islam: A 1978 Compendium* (1979) explores whether the barriers to fruitful evangelism are primarily theological or whether they are socio-cultural, before looking at ways in which the missionary can erode those barriers.

John Travis, in "The C1 to C6 Spectrum" (1998), compares and contrasts various types of "Christ-centered communities" in the Muslim world. The spectrum attempts to address the enormous diversity which exists throughout the Muslim world in terms of ethnicity, history, traditions, language, culture, and, in some cases, theology. Mike Brislen also offers "A Model for the Muslim-Culture Church" (1996), while Robert C. Douglas' "Ongoing Strategy Debate in Muslim Missions" (1994) highlights some key areas of ongoing discussion, notably contextualization, social action, tentmaking and human rights.

Zafar Ismail, in "The Muslim Convert and the Church" (1983) explores the ecclesiological implications for Muslims who embrace the Christian faith. He notes that two approaches have been advocated to incorporate converts into the church: bring them into the fellowship of the local existing churches, or organize them separately into a "Muslim church", defined as a company of people completely committed to Jesus Christ and the teachings of Scripture, yet remaining within the community of Islam, and retaining many of the cultural forms of Muslim society. Both approaches emphasize the centrality of the church, but the second bypasses local churches of converts from non-Muslim backgrounds and seeks the formation of a new church of Muslim converts.

Dudley J. Woodberry notes that failure can be one of the missionaries' best teachers in "When Failure is Our Teacher: Lessons from Mission to Muslims" (1996), as it encourages them to keep re-evaluating their approaches rather than blindly carrying on business as usual. Ziya Meral, a Turkish convert to evangelical Christianity, gives a sense of the direction in which Muslim background Protestant theology is beginning to move in an important article, "Toward a Relevant Theology for the Middle East" (2005).

In his article "Must All Muslims Leave 'Islam' to Follow Jesus?" (1998) John Travis asks whether a Muslim can accept Jesus as Savior and Lord, thereby rejecting some elements of normal Islamic theology, and yet remain in his or her family and religious community in order to be a witness among them. Travis maintains that this is an important issue because of the importance Islam places on community, its disdain for those who have become "traitors" by joining Christianity, and because missionaries want to see Muslims come to Christ.

When seeking to formulate our own response to past disappointments we note the theological basis for the failure of para-church missionary efforts as outlined in Harry Boer's *Pentecost and Mission* (1975).

1.7. Deliniation of Chapters

Chapter 1. The Research Problem, Paradigm and Literature Review

Chapter 2. 1800-1918: The Late Ottoman Period and Enlightenment Missionaries

Chapter 3. 1919-1946: Arab Nationalism and the Veterans

Chapter 4. 1947-1978: Pre-Boomers Give Way to Boomers while the Arab World moves onto the World Stage

Chapter 5. 1979-present: Islamic Fundamentalism, Political Frustration, and the Emergence of GenX missionaries

Chapter 6. New Testament Spirituality as a Way Forward

Chapter 2

1800-1918:
The Late Ottoman Period and Enlightenment Missionaries

2.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the Enlightenment missionary enterprise?

Missionaries, like all human beings, are prisoners of their own culture, and the 19th century American and British missionaries to the Ottoman Empire were no exception. Who were these creatures, "Enlightenment Missionaries to the Middle East"? What constituted the "aroma" they carried with them from their home countries? What were the foundational elements of their ministry and what shaped their value system, worldview and theology? Were they ambassadors of Christ, or of Western social values? What molded their thinking and behavior, and what was the context in which they found themselves in Ottoman lands? These are questions of great importance, for the foundations these missonaries laid continue to affect the structure of the modern missionary enterprise and, as such, are basic to our understanding of contemporary efforts to the region.

2.1.1. 19th Century Missionaries' Socio-political, Cultural and Theological Framework

Let us, first of all, look at the worldview of Enlightenment missionaries to the Ottoman Empire.

2.1.1.1. Reasonable Methods Guarantee Progress

The Enlightenment ushered in the age of reason. This elevation of reason led to the idea that all problems were in principle solvable through the free competition of rational individuals pursuing their own happiness. The notion that people could become "reasonable human beings" and that all problems were, in principle, solvable became a source of great missionary optimism; "undeveloped" people could be coaxed to abandon their "backward" state and progress to "modernism", a "unilinear process that would operate naturally in every culture" (Bosch 2003:265). The emphasis on reason meant that missionary methods and endeavors had to "make sense". In 1844, for example, the American Board explained its desire to launch a work in Lebanon because the country was "eminently accessible" and boasted a "healthy climate" (Missions to Syria, AR 1844:123), and because its various sects were clustered in villages, were of a "friendly disposition" (:124) and keen to receive a missionary education (:125). Furthermore, its people enjoyed talking about religion: "if religion is not the subject of conversation, the fault is ours more than theirs", and they "breathe the atmosphere of freedom from their birth" (:125).

> (Its people) understand the principles of organization, control and combination; and can meet and organize and discuss, and devise, and execute, whether it be to open a school, or build a church, or pay a debt… or defend themselves from injustice or oppression. They do all these things, and much more, with tact, skill and efficiency (1844:125).

Even if the people were divided into different sects, they were counted as one race, Arabs, with a common language, and common customs and social conditions (:123). The country, would, it was held, become a gateway to the rest of the Arab world (:125). The reasons seemed to make so much sense, that "it appears to us that to question, and falter, and doubt whether such a community is competent to receive and perpetuate the institutions of the Gospel, is… to betray an unbelief utterly inexcusable in a missionary" (1844:125). Not believing that reasonable action would lead to missionary advance was akin to unbelief.

Reason also dictated the ABCFM's momentous decision to try to reach the Ottoman Empire's Muslim majority by reviving the ancient Orthodox churches. Eli Smith, one of the Board's first missionaries to the region, put the case as follows:

> There are millions of men, sunk in ignorance and sin to a degree that makes the present salvation of any hopeless. Though bearing the same holy name by which you are called, and inhabiting places consecrated by apostle's feet, they are still so degenerate that "the name of God is blasphemed among the gentiles through them," and Moslems confirmed in the errors of the false prophet. The Christianity they profess has lost the essential principles of the gospel; its beneficial influence has ceased; it is despised and oppressed. Need you an array of argument, and power of eloquence to make you listen to their call upon your Christian sensibilities? (Smith MH October 1833:386)

In other words, the need to revive the Orthodox churches before ministering to Muslims was self-evident. The logic of this strategy was underscored in the Board's 1839 Annual Report:

> To think of exerting much salutary influence on the Mohammedan mind, while the native Christian churches remain as they are, is out of the question... The Mohammedan confidently asserts the Koran to be more excellent than the Bible, and his own religion than the gospel. In vain do we reply, that the native Christians have lost the knowledge and spirit of the gospel, and that their immoral lives are therefore in no sense the effect of the gospel. The Mohammedan has never seen any other effect, and he will not read the Bible to correct the evidences of his senses, and perhaps too of his painful experience. He treats that holy book with the contempt he feels for its professed followers. Hence a comprehensive and wise system of effort for the conversion of the Mohammedans of western Asia, will embrace a system of effort for the spiritual renovation of the oriental churches. These churches must be reformed. Lights must be made to burn once more upon those candlesticks that remain. The fire of a pure Christianity must be rekindled upon those Christian altars… In the mind of the Moslem, Christianity must cease to be associated with all that is mean and contemptible (Western Asia, AR 1839:75-76).

Both the Board and, later, the Presbyterians believed that the spread of "Christian knowledge" through education was fundamental toward achieving the desired reforms. The Board attempted to start a school "for the education of Syrian females" as early as 1824 (Palestine

Mission, MH 1827:33), and would, as we will see, build an extensive network of schools in order to "create the conditions for preaching the gospel" by introducing a higher culture which would, it was hoped, "facilitate the acceptance of the higher religion—Christianity" (Bosch 2003:297). This reasoning, applied as it was to the marginalized Orthodox Christian tribes of Anatolia, led to an empowerment which, as we shall see, would have catastrophic results.

2.1.1.2. Ango-Saxon Protestantism > Cultural Superiority > Racial Superiority

Startling scientific and technological advances during the 19th century enabled Western societies to take the lead in virtually every field of inquiry. This led pre-World War I Anglo-Saxon Protestantism to presume the divinely ordained superiority of their culture. That sentiment gradually evolved into the conviction that God, in His providence, had chosen them, because of their unique qualities, to be standard-bearers of His divine purposes to the ends of the world, and that they thus had an exceptional role to play in the advancement of the kingdom of God (Bosch 2003:299). The same gospel which had made Western nations strong and great, would do the same for other nations. The General Secretary of the ABCFM stated the sentiment clearly:

> It is now the English language, saturated with Christian ideas, gathering up into itself the best thought of all the ages, that is the great agent of Christian civilization throughout the world; at this moment affecting the destinies and moulding the character of half the human race. French influence, so dominant in the literary world, has passes away. The encyclopedists have left but the shadow of a name. The Nazarene has triumphed (A Century, AR 1876:xxiii).

The gospel would soften manners, purify social intercourse, and lead to civilized life (Bosch 2003:293). It would open the doors to the "abundant life" available in "Christian countries" which, according to Leslie Newbigin, was interpreted as "the abundance of the good things that modern education, healing and agriculture would provide for the deprived people of the world" (quoted in 2003:293). These virtues would be realized through the efficient implementation of various Western-directed programs run in a business-like manner (:319).

Interestingly, both theological liberals (social gospellers) and conservatives (fundamentalists) shared the assumption that Christianity was essential for a healthy civilization. Although at home the rift between conservatives and liberals would grow ever larger, on the mission field both were committed to the propagation of Western culture (2003:297). The Protestant community, whether in Victorian Britain or 19th century America, made little attempt to differentiate between Western religious and cultural supremacy—what applied to one belonged axiomatically to the other. As early as 1816 the American Board, which would, in time, operate the largest, most sustained and consistent missionary program in the Ottoman Empire, described

its objectives as "civilizing and Christianizing" (:296). S. W. Koelle, for over twenty-five years a CMS missionary to Egypt, Palestine and Turkey during the late Ottoman period, believed that "a spiritual potency so mighty, intense, and salutary, as Christianity… will bring its benefits… to the nation at large as a first-rate public power" (1888:466).

> Surely the national character and political aspect which Christianity assumed in the course of providentially ordered history, was nothing but its natural development, the legitimate outcome of its destiny for the whole world. *Christianity national and political, is Christianity still*, though in a wider circle and with a fuller scope than Christianity personal and ecclesiastical (Koelle 1888:467 italics in original).

The Board sought to enlist not only "Christians" but also those identified as "patriots" because "it was evident to all that American Christians were better equipped for the task than were others" (Bosch 2003:300). In the early years of its existence, it distinguished between darkness, blindness, superstition and ignorance among pagan nations, and light, vision, enlightenment, and knowledge in the West without clearly distinguishing between *culture* and its *religion* (:291-292). "Christianity… in its manhood… sought to pervade with its vigorous life the entire national organism, and to assert itself as a new national force amidst the peoples of mankind" (Koelle 1888:467).

The notion that Christianity would lead to civilization was reinforced by post-millennialism, the dominant eschatological position in virtually all Anglo-Saxon Protestant denominations prior to World War I. It held that God's kingdom would unfold gradually and mature in an organic way. Slowly but steadily evil passions, licentiousness, injustice, strife and dissension would fade away. There would be no more war, famine, oppression, or slavery, whether at home or "on the mission fields". This vision of the end times became a powerful missionary motive, particularly among the ever-optimistic Americans, many of whom saw themselves as inaugurators of a new order, an order which was conceived as a return to a pristine human condition. The kingdom of God was not future or otherworldly, but "here and now"; it was, in fact, already taking shape in the dramatic technical advances of North America (Bosch 2003:283). Thus, when, in the first half of the 19th century, Protestant missionaries headed for the Ottoman empire, they were confident they had something to offer the Sultan's benighted peoples, and that these people would eagerly embrace their charity (:289-290). However, this attitude bred feelings of spiritual superiority which led to a condescending benevolence towards nationals, including national Christians (i.e., the Orthodox churches).

As evangelicalism became a respected power in the U.S. and Britain in the course of the 19th century, missionaries grew in social stature. Universities began graduating growing numbers of missionary volunteers who gradually replaced their predecessors from humbler backgrounds.

This new force, "conscious of its assets and imbued with the desire to save the world, as a matter of course took charge wherever it went" (Bosch 2003:307). They arrived with clear ideas about what was best for the 'young' churches, had a lower esteem of 'native' talents and capabilities, and a greater propensity towards racism than had been evident before the mid-nineteenth century. "Unaware of the 'pagan flaws' in their own culture during this age of the 'white man's burden' the white patrons saw themselves as the guardians of less-developed races whom they would gradually educate to maturity" (:307-308). They, even more than their predecessors, felt responsible for the rest of "uncivilized" humanity (:313).

This introduced a new element into inter-civilization relations, notably the categorization of people according to western-defined levels of civilization, as opposed to the division of people into religious communities. One of the determining factors in that categorization of civilizations was ethnicity or race, an issue which concerned the first wave of missionaries much less. They may have had little appreciation of Islam, but were not racist. The Board's Annual Report of 1814 said, for instance, that "Persians and Arabians rank as high in the scale of intellect as any people in the world; and, if truly converted, would become very useful to the cause of Christianity" (Newell AR 1814:111). As we saw earlier, the Lebanese were also described as intelligent, organized, able to stand up for themselves and to carry a project through to completion "with tact, skill and efficiency" (Mission to Syria, AR 1844:125). The next generation of university educated missionaries were not predisposed that way (Bosch 2003:294). The memoirs of Joseph Greene, a preacher, school administrator and editor of the Board's weekly Armenian newspaper *Avedar* in Istanbul for decades prior to World War I, for example, contain some startingly racist references: "Lack of moral principle is the greatest defect of the Turkish character… the lack of honest, unselfish, trustworthy, and truly patriotic men is the greatest misfortune of Turkey. Turkish children are not taught to be truthful and pure, and in after life they seldom change for the better" (1916:16-17; see also 15). An article in the missionary periodical *The Moslem World* declares, essentially, that Turks are leeches:

> Few will now regret the disappearance of the Turk from Europe. His record is stained with cruelty and oppression. He had learnt little through all the ages, and has never attempted to benefit or to provide with decent conditions of life the people he rules over. He is content to live upon them, so long as he can extract tribute money to condone every form of injustice and oppression… If history teaches any lesson, it is that the Turk should not be allowed to dominate over any alien people. The dominion of Turkey must extend over Turks alone (Whitehouse MW 1916:55).

The author goes on to state that "It is as though all history means nothing to the Turk, or as if the progress of civilization stops before the religion, the philosophy, the fatalism of the Turk"

(:56). The ABCFM missionary Henry Otis Dwight also expressed his very low opinion of the intellectual abilities of 'Mohammedans' (Dwight 1901:49-51), pointing out that "it was an Asiatic to whom God once said 'Thou fool' (:161). He maintained that "the man of Constantinople is the same in essential thought and aim as his fellow in China. The commonplaces of Western civilization are absent in both" (:164). Furthermore, when the Turk compares his own country with the West, "it never occurs to him that, by choosing such types of highest development of man, Asia and Islam are rendering an interesting and suggestive homage to Christianity and the West" (:167).

The Muslim insistence on male-female segregation was a frequent subject of criticism. This was partly due to the fact that the missionary community was ahead of its own culture, indeed, of their own sponsoring churches, with respect to their empowerment of women. In fact the leading role of women in missions, "far earlier than they would in most other walks of life" constituted "the first feminist movement in North America… They went out, literally to the ends of the earth, no longer just as the wives of missionaries but as missionaries in their own right" (Bosch 2003:328). Women, including singles, rose to significant positions as school principals and medical doctors in the American Board. By 1901 they formed the majority of the Board's force in Constantinople (Dwight 1901:270). Missionaries thus naturally found the position of Middle Eastern women irritating: "In the mosque not a single female was to be seen in the whole assembly. Oh how infinitely superior to all other systems is pure Christianity, where there is neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ!" (Temple MH June 1835:221).

> Vital… to the success of the missionary enterprise in the Turkish Empire is the social and moral enfranchisement of woman. The great offense of Islam against the highest civilization of mankind, and constituting a bar to all true progress, is the treatment of woman. Woman, the drudge and slave of man in this life, is denied the hope of immortality, because denied even the possession of a soul (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxiii).

Dwight also took great exception to the position of Muslim women, devoting some 39 pages to "The Woman Question" (1901:86-125). His "fair average view" (:111) of Turkish women is that they are "kept in seclusion" and exist for the sake of the man only" (:101), who views her to be "of scant sense and of less honesty of purpose. To restrain her evil tendencies therefore he encloses her within lattices and throws such barriers about the house as he can devise" (:101). Dwight goes on to describe her as "childish in tastes and thoughts and feelings" (:88), wearing her night-clothes "during the whole time they are occupied with household duties", thus "presenting a spectacle of unkempt carelessness which would scare any self-respecting man from the place" (:106). They "resist with a bitter resistance all that is new and untried" (:89), are

"generally under the sway of superstitions and ancient paganism" (:116), and are viewed by society as "a mere animal to be disposed of at will".

> The more closely she can be led to follow mere animal instincts, the less she will perplex men by the problem of her control… Women, thus degraded, applies herself to development as a mere animal. It is a revenge of which she has no means of knowing the measure (1901:103).

He cites the dowry as proof that "the Oriental man" regards women "like property to be disposed of when she is left a burden on the hands of a man" (:96), and the Amazons and the Israelites at Beer Peor as "proof" of the fact that "Asia has relied on her women to crush the attempt" of a "nobler and sturdier type of manhood to establish itself on the continent" (:89).

Missionaries tended to find the position of Middle Eastern women much more galling than other Westerner observers. In fact, secular residents and travelers of the period cast social relations in an entirely different light. The American traveler James Ellsworth De Kay, one not negatively biased toward the missionary community, goes to great length to compare the state of Ottoman women with those anywhere else in the world. He notes in his 1832 account that "Marriage is highly honored among the Osmanlis" (1832:268) and states that "every person who has been in Turkey, and is not afraid of speaking out his real sentiments… will agree with us when we state that women in Turkey actually enjoy more liberty than in the other countries of Europe or in America… We allude to the middling classes" (De Kay 1832:269). A few years later, another American adventurer, J. L. Stephens, made the following observation about husband-wife relationships among Turks:

> The doors of the harem are thrown open, the black eunuch and the veiled woman are no more, while the honest Turk trudges home from a quiet tea party stripped of his retinue of fair ones, with his one and only wife tucked under his arm, his head drooping between his shoulders, taking a lecture from his better half with an involuntary sigh to the good old days which are now gone (Stephens 1839:220).

The negative judgment by the missionary community can be attributed, in part, to their need to justify their predisposition toward establishing educational enterprises. What, after all, was the point of starting educational programs from scratch if the situation wasn't desperate? Since they had made education, including the education of women, the main pillar of outreach, the situation had to be perceived as bad in order to justify the endeavor. "The work of lifting the women of Asia unto the place which their Creator designed them to occupy is a work which can be done by the women of Christendom" (Dwight 1901:125). They did not grasp that the concept of the independent, liberated Christian woman went deep against both local social mores and religious convictions, where "the greatest dishonor that can befall a man results from the sexual misconduct of his daughter or sister" (Patai 1983:119) and where, consequently, a certain level of

male-female segregation is practiced to make it impossible for a man and woman to be alone unless they are married or first-degree blood relations. The concept of a girl entering unescorted into a man's world was unthinkable (:33, 36). One is left wondering about Greene's assertion that "many of the people of Turkey" viewed the single lady missionaries as "angels":

> What a debt of gratitude Turkey owes to such women! Witness the transformation wrought in the rude girls of the interior of Turkey who were favored to spend a few years in one of the mission boarding schools… in fact, to many of the people of Turkey, especially to the mothers, our lady teachers seemed like angels (1916:183).

Greene's "rude girls" who were "favored" were, in fact, Armenian Christians, not Muslim Turks. The majority of Muslims would have judged these "angels" as morally suspect.

In light of the above, Bosch's seemingly harsh verdict of the "Enlightenment missionary", when applied to the 19th century missionary to the Ottoman Empire, rings true:

> There was a total absence of even the suggestion that the perceptions of others must or could be consulted; they were simply not taken seriously… It was the gospel which had made the Western nations strong and great; it would do the same for other nations. The missionaries' concern therefore was the uplift of peoples deprived of the privileges they themselves were enjoying (2003:292-293).

As a result of their own sense of cultural superiority, the missionaries' failure to consult the perceptions of others is very important. As we will see when answering the question regarding missionary methods, the plan devised looked great and appeared perfectly logical from the missionaries' own perspective; their lack of understanding as to how this plan was perceived by Orthodox Christians, Arabs, Turks and Kurds would have dire consequences.

There was, of course, a persistent minority of mission advocates who questioned the right to impose on others one's own cultural forms, and who recognized the damage the West was doing to other societies. Among the latter was Rufus Anderson, one time general secretary of the American Board, who pointed out that the result of Presbyterian mission work among Syrian students had been "on the whole… to make them foreign in their manners, foreign in their habits, foreign in their sympathies" (Bosch 2003:298). "Western" did not turn out to be the same as "Christian". Although missionary attitudes began changing after the turn of the century, it took the post-World War I re-evaluation of Western society to seriously challenge them.

2.1.1.3. Missionary Attitudes Towards Islam

The missionary tradition of Islamic and Arabic scholarship goes as far back as Raymond Lull (1235-1315). In the 17th century Protestant scholars began producing Arabic grammars, lexicons and Bible translations. In fact, most notable Arabists of the day were devout Christians expressing their concern for the Muslim world. "Interest in missions prompted many a scholarly

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work and that in turn became impetus and instrument for the missionary" (Vander Werff 1977:23). A number of 19th century missionary scholars like Pfander and Tisdall and, later, Zwemer and Gairdner had a profound knowledge of Islam. That, however, was not the only attitude towards Islam in the 19th century. Enlightenment rationalists denigrated Islam and scorned its prophet. Voltaire thought of Muhammad as a fanatic, while Renan believed that "Islam was totally closed to new ideas, science, progress and freedom" (Chapman 1998:11). Enlightenment religion may have been a "tolerant religion" whose role was the opposition of sectarianism, superstition, and fanaticism (Bosch 2003:272), it could be intolerant of ideologies which challenged reason-based worldviews.

Missionary scholars could also exhibit profoundly anti-Islamic dispositions. Koelle writes in his substantial book, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism Critically Considered* (1889) that "we have to look upon Mohammedanism as, in its deepest nature, a reaction and aggression of the Kingdom of Darkness against the Kingdom of Light" (1889:457). He goes on to state that "the innate antagonism and historical warfare of Islam against Christianity… are, in reality, only a revival, under a new form, of the dark opposition and Satanic conflict which had previously proceeded from anti-Christian Judaism and anti-Christian paganism" (:457), and that "Asiatic Islamism, that mysterious compound of a fanatical faith and an iron tyranny, strove, with all its might, to cast Christianity from its political pinnacle and to rule the nations in its stead" (:458).

> By far the most formidable adversary of Christianity, as a national institution and dominant political force in the world, is the politico-religious system ushered in by Mohammed. *Mohammedanism stands forth in history as the great anti-Christian Power, the hereditary enemy of Christendom* (Koelle 1889:468 italics in original).

As for Mohammed, well, he was an Antichrist. "Islam historically has proved itself anti-Christian, because Mohammed personally was an Antichrist" (1888:469). "The anti-Christian character of the religion and policy of the Islamic world derives its origin from the Founder of Islam. Mohammed was diametrically opposed to Christ, both in his religious teaching and in his practical aims" (:468). Koelle took great exception to those scholars who sought to present a more balanced view of Islam. Referring to R. Bosworth Smith's *Lectures on Mohammed and Mohammedanism* (1874), he accuses Smith of being "an advocate" of Islam (1889:452 footnotes), being "under the spell of an illusion" and "indulging in the visionary hope that the two religions will one day agree in brotherly harmony". He concludes by asking rhetorically, "Can a *non*-Christian religion, springing up in the face of Christianity, and with the undeniable intention of displacing it, be anything but *anti*-Christian?" (:454 italics in original).

Dwight, too, had little sympathy for Islam: "the Mohammedan is unique in his doctrine on bloodshed and on the relation between the sexes… there are depths of infamy to which any Mohammedan may plunge to which the most degraded of the Eastern Christians could not stoop" (1901:154). Greene doesn't mince words either:

> The Mohammedan religion when first accepted by the barbarous Turks gave them some new and grand ideas, and inspired them with the zeal of fanatics; but, from the very beginning in its formal worship, in its pernicious customs, in its defective morality, in its arrogance and intellectual stagnation it planted the seeds of decline and decay. The result is seen in a state without progress, in a home where woman has been degraded, in a society where religion and morality have been divorced, and in a people which, by reason of polygamy, concubinage, slavery, and crimes against nature has been steadily diminishing in numbers and strength (1916:10).

He goes on to explain that the root of the expression "Cruel as a Turk" lies in their adherence to Islam (:49). The Qur'an sanctions polygamy, concubinage, unrestrained divorce and slavery (:50) and Mohammed was, "the slave of his sensual passions" who "scrupled not to make use of any and every form of force and violence". He was "vindictive" and the Turks have followed "not Mohammed's good example during his ministry at Mecca, but his bad example during the 10 years of his rule at Medina" (:60). Hence Turks pay "but slight attention… to purity of thought, word and act", lack frankness, sincerity and a regard for the truth, and do not recognize non-Muslims as equals. Their prayers, consisting of a "few Arabic verses", are "recited without word or thought or feeling", their fasting "implies no recognition of sin or of repentance, and while they fast by day they feast by night". Almsgiving is "the acquisition of merit" and "they are taught to be contented with their lot, but this fatalistic contentment leads to inattention to business and a lack of thrift". He then goes on to describe Mohammed's multiple marriages, and the slaughter of the Jewish tribe of "Beni Coreitza" as sanctioning "marauding expeditions" (:15-16). The missionary periodical, *The Moslem World*, notes that

> His (i.e., the Turk's) religious faith must be appreciated before his character can be known. It is the faith of fatalism; a faith without any appeal to constructive effort on behalf of others; a faith without any inspiration to him to extend the arts of peace and goodwill. To the Turk a member of another faith is something outside and beneath him. Something to be either crushed or lived upon, but never something to be helped or protected (Whitehouse MW 1916:55).

When missionary descriptions of Islam are juxtaposed with the reports of secular travelers who did not see Islam as an enemy to be defeated, one might think they were describing entirely different phenomena. The well-connected De Kay, who spent two years in Istanbul in the 1830s, notes that "although it (Islam) is the religion of the state, other creeds are allowed; and it would be difficult to point out the most enlightened country of Christendom where there exists a more

perfect toleration" (1832:362). He is of the opinion that "the Christian reader of the Koran will be gratified to find how closely its moral precepts coincide with those of the New Testament" (:362). He contrasts the "lowly and unaffected manner in which the Turks address their inaudible petitions to the Deity" with prayers overheard in a Christian school, uttered "with a rapidity which rendered them totally unintelligible. The levity and indecent haste with which they were uttered gave the whole affair more the appearance of a regular frolic, than a humble and penitent act of devotion" (:288). While the Board's Annual Report of 1842 states that "Fanaticism is an essential element of the Mohammedan religion" (Mission to Turkey, 1842:105), De Kay begs to differ.

> It only remains to add that its (i.e., Islam's) direct tendency is to counteract and mitigate the severity of despotic governments, which in the East have always found congenial soil. It produces an equalizing effect, and is in fact a sort of religious republicanism, only extending much further than in our country, where a difference of complexion is fatal. It ennobles all who profess it (1832:362).

Missionary descriptions of Islam and the plight of Middle Eastern women, might be discounted if they were drawn from the eccentric fringe of the community. Those quoted were, however, respected missionaries of long standing writing Annual Reports for the mission, articles for such periodicals as *The Moslem World*, and books published with such respectable publishing houses as Fleming H. Revell Co. and Rivingtons. They not only reflect a broad consensus of opinion, they also predisposed their readership, notably supporting churches and new missionary recruits.

The missionary community, by and large, seemed compelled to paint Islam in the worst possible colors to justify its endeavors and, possibly, to explain the lack of success. Islam was an enemy, an antagonist from which nothing good could be expected and which needed to be defeated. This militant attitude shared the same boldness, aggression, and spirit of conquest as the colonial venture. The sense that missions to Muslims was thought of in terms of warfare is evident from numerous asides. Military expressions, such as "peaceful Crusade" and "conquering the world for Christ" were common (Gaudeul 2000:253).

> Remember that you also are soldiers engaged in warfare, and in a war of conquest. And though the contest be spiritual, of mind with mind and heart with heart, and your weapons spiritual and rendered powerful by divine aid; yet is there the same demand for inquiry and information, the same scope and necessity for discretion and forethought, as there was in the military enterprises of Napoleon (Goodell MH 1834:13).

Reports speak of the "moral forces involved in the conflict" (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxvii) when talking about missionaries and their institutions, of their having to "secure our conquests as well as make them" (Asia Minor, MH 1834:16), and of the power of Islam being broken: "And now… Divine Providence interposes to clear away the last hindrances to the free and full

promulgation of the gospel. The power of Islam is broken; her military prestige destroyed (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxvi). This militant attitude led to a general feeling towards Islam and the Muslim majority which can at best be described as loveless.

The importance the Enlightenment accorded to the individual, leading, in time, to the individualization of the Christian faith, is another factor in the failure to appreciate Islam. In the West people came to be regarded as emancipated, autonomous individuals—a significant theological shift. "In Augustine and Luther the individual was… never emancipated and autonomous but was regarded, first and foremost, as standing in relationship to God and the church. Now individuals became important and interesting in and to themselves" (Bosch 2003:267). The most immediately recognizable effect this had on Christianity was the rampant individualism which soon pervaded Protestantism in particular (:267). Missionaries focused on individuals; the personal responsibility of missionaries to proclaim salvation to individuals became the hallmark of nineteenth-century mission—a major shift from the earlier Puritan tradition emphasizing the comprehensiveness of the reign of God (:289).

This emphasis on the individual and personal faith clashed with the Muslim concept of the *ummah*, "the community of believers" which, among Sunnis, is a legitimizing principle in religious affairs, the concept of *ijma'*, or consensus, something "akin to an enlightened public opinion" (Rahman 1966:75), as well as with the cultural trait of "group cohesion". The latter concept means that the price the individual pays in societies where one is lost without the support and protection of his/her extended family is "conformity to the group's code of values and their internalization to the extent of emotionally identifying his own interest with those of the groups, a conformity that is not felt to do violence to individuality" (Patai 1983:78). Consequently, Middle Eastern society—both Muslim and other—affirms those traits which strengthen group cohesion while those construed as being detrimental to the group are discouraged and punished (:78). Only very few missionaries were able to break out of the shell of their own individualism and adapt their missionary praxis to this religio-cultural attribute.

2.1.1.4. Liberal Theological Trends > Ecumenism > Social Renewal > Social Gospel

In the course of the 19th century many mainline theologians abandoned the supernatural aspects of Christianity. The idea of history as warfare between God and Satan was discarded in liberal circles, as was belief in the physical return of Christ. Among liberals sin became identified with ignorance; knowledge and compassion would enable people to "rise above their circumstances and live up to their innate potential" (Bosch 2003:283). These developments led to a lack of urgency about evangelism, since liberal theology did not hold that those untouched by the Gospel

would necessarily go to hell. Missions came to be redefined as "sharing the benefits of the American civilization and way of life with the deprived peoples of the world" (:283), whose religions were no longer considered entirely false. Although the transition did not occur overnight, by the outbreak of World War I Bible-based, Reformed postmillennialism had metamorphosed into the Social Gospel in many mainline denominations. It was these very denominations, notably the Episcopalians, the Lutherans, the Anglicans and the Reformed churches, which shouldered the burden of missions to the Middle East.

By the second half of the 19th century these developments reinforced the trend that mission should consist less of preaching—which got the missionary and his convert into nothing but trouble anyway—and more of "transformational activities". Gradually the accent came to lie more on social involvement and less on evangelism, "less on individual sin and more on society's sinful structures" (Bosch 2003:322). Salvation would come via Western techniques, expertise and culture. "Instead of the gospel, the mainline missionary enterprise ended up exporting the Enlightenment "isms" which had impregnated the mainline churches: rationalism, evolutionism, pragmatism, secularism, and optimism" (:325). Though they did not start that way, the missionary community to the Ottoman Empire came, in the course of the 19th century, to focus predominantly on the establishment of a this-worldly millennium through its uncritical affirmation of American values and blessings, and the conviction that these had to be exported to and shared with people worldwide (cf. :284).

It is, therefore, little wonder that the missionary community would focus on education and health, and would welcome any initiative which spread "European ideas among Musselmans" as a step toward the same goal they themselves were heading. The fact that the Ottoman Empire had a fairly extensive system of free public education in place since the 1870s (see Dwight 1901:216-221) which missionaries might have expected to subordinate their program to was not considered, though government initiatives which promoted a western curriculum were applauded (see Western Turkey, AR 1870:20).

2.1.1.5. Missionary Technological Prowess and Financial Power

One of the things which convinced Westerners of the superiority of their own culture, and which put the western missionary at a huge advantage vis-à-vis both the Muslim majority and the Orthodox churches, was technology (see Bosch 2003:337). Technological superiority was not only held up as proof of the superiority of Western civilization, the transfer of knowledge came to be perceived as part of the missionary mandate:

> If the superiority of western civilization is now recognized by a postal and telegraph system, by the beginnings of railways, be the use of iron-clads and Martini-Henry rifles; if Mohammedan doctors are skillful in expounding the Koran so as to admit of the Code Napoleon in courts of justice, and other innovations in keeping with the spirit of the age; …if a wide-spread interest in education has been awakened among all classes, represented by hundreds of schools, in which our text-books are used and our methods of instruction imitated, -- it is largely due to American missionaries. A higher civilization has followed the introduction of the gospel, compelling the conviction that the truth is with us (The Gospel, AR 1878: xxv-xxvi).

The 19th century missionary community was able to utilize advanced medical skills, steamships, the telegraph, and the printing press at a scale only national governments were able to match. Julius Richter, writing of Cyrus Hamlin, the founder of Robert College (now Bosphorus University), notes that "his inventiveness so terrified the indolent Turks, it is said, that they regarded him as the greatest sheitan (Satan) in Constantinople" (Richter 1910:127).

The question of money is of particular significance. Prior to World War I the missionaries concentrated their efforts on the ancient churches in the hope that these could be revived to share the burden of evangelizing Muslims. These churches consisted in large measure of peasants who were, in effect, bought and sold with the land by their Kurdish and Turkish *aghas* (see also 2.3.2). Thus converts came almost exclusively from among the *dhimmis* (tributary paying non-Muslims). Large numbers were consequently employed by the numerous missionary-run educational and medical institutions that came to dot the Ottoman countryside. This apparently benevolent policy made the missionaries employers, whose financial resources were in a class by itself, and national brothers employees. This undermined awareness of the fact that they were, first and foremost, sisters and brothers to each other in Christ. Furthermore, the fact that such evangelical churches as emerged were structured along similar lines as those in the missionaries' home countries, where a completely different socio-economic system was in vogue, led to an unhealthy financial dependency (Bosch 2003:285). This was belatedly recognized at the Tambaram Conference in 1938, where a report stated that "an enterprise, calling for expensive buildings, western-trained leadership and a duplication of much of the equipment, paraphernalia and supplementary activities that characterize the Church in the West, is beyond the supporting power of the average Asiatic community" (quoted in Bosch 2003:296). By the 1830s, however, exactly that kind of church had been founded in the Ottoman Empire. These churches felt helpless without large infusions of foreign money, a problem recognized as early as 1842 (see Mission to Syria, AR 1842:123).

The original intent was to inculcate the principle of self-support. In spite of the good intentions, however, missionary support of local pastors rose to one-half their salary (Greene

1916:121), demanding that increasingly large sums of money be raised back home. During the 35 year period from 1876-1911 the American Board alone distributed $14,424,211.- for missionary, educational and charitable projects. During 1911 the board disbursed the sum of $614,701 (:132). These figures do not include American donations which came during a cholera outbreak in 1865, during which "money in aid of sufferers amounting in all to several million dollars was sent" to the Board (:134). In spite of the huge sums of money the American Board was not able to prevent 42 churches from the danger of extinction. "If the churches of America had really apprehended the situation of the churches in Turkey… they surely would have supplied the Board with the means to aid those churches" (:122).

*** * * * ***

Before looking at the specific strategies utilized by the well-heeled, well-educated western missionaries, let us look at the socio-political and cultural framework of the Ottoman host culture within which they had to operate.

2.1.2. The Host's Socio-political, Cultural and Theological Framework

For centuries after the debacle of the Crusades the Christian and Muslim worlds had managed to exist side by side without relating in any depth to each other. The dawn of the 19th century, however, produced a combination of factors which enabled the missionary community to "breach aged walls, open gates and construct roadways" (Vander Werff 1977:98) into the lands of the Near East.

2.1.2.1. The Erosion of the Empire, Wars and Massacres

The industrialization of Europe led to a huge expansion of European trade, soon accompanied by increasing use of armed power beyond the confines of the continent. In 1798 a French expeditionary force, led by Napoleon, occupied Egypt for three years. The Islamic historian al-Jabarti, who was living in Cairo at the time, records something of the impact made by French scholars who accompanied the army:

> If any of the Muslims came to them in order to look round they did not prevent him from entering their most cherished places… and if they found in him any appetite or desire for knowledge they showed their friendship and love for him, and they would bring out all kinds of pictures and maps, and animals and birds and plants, and histories of the ancients and of nations and tales of the prophets… I went to them often, and they showed me all that (quoted in Hourani 1991:266).

Napoleon's short-lived invasion of Egypt led to the promotion of French culture in that country; it had received a taste of Europe and became dissatisfied with being an Ottoman milk-cow. Mohammed Ali seized power, rebelled, and might have unseated the Sultan had a British-

Ottoman coalition not stopped him. After the Egyptian navy was destroyed at the Battle of Navarino in 1827, European fleets took control of the Eastern Mediterranean, thus providing new ease of travel for, among others, missionaries. Both Egypt and Syria were increasingly drawn into the European economic orbit. Not only did that make those two provinces less dependent on internal Ottoman economics, Egypt's lucrative cotton-based commercial links with Europe initiated huge social changes. The Suez Canal project became symbolic of both the opening up of the Middle East as well as of the pressure brought to bear on the region (Vander Werf 1977:99; Zürcher 2004:34-35).

The Empire's Greeks, Bulgars and Serbs turned to Russia as their champion. As the Ottoman Empire, the "Sick Man of Europe", declined, various Christian ethnic groups, helped by the European powers, revolted. Greece became independent in 1832, Serbia and Romania in 1878. Bessarabia was annexed by Russia in 1812. The French invaded Algeria in 1830, while the arrival of Europeans in West Africa halted the expansion of such Islamic states as that of Samori Toure (Gaudeul 2000:252). Among the Turks anti-Christian feelings increased as Bulgaria, Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro were separated from Turkey by Russia in 1878, as Tunis was lost to France in 1881, as Thrace was taken over by Greece in the same year, and as Egypt fell to British control in 1882. The losses suffered by the Ottoman Empire by 1878 were huge; it lost about a third of its territory and over 20% of its population (Zürcher 2004:80). Armenian emigrants formed secret societies to agitate, sometimes violently, for Armenian independence (see 2004:83, 114-117 for brief, balanced account of the Armenian issue). In 1822, during the Greek war of independence, the Ottoman reaction resulted in the massacre of 50,000 Greek civilians in Chios. In Lebanon and Damascus about 10,000 Maronites were slaughtered in 1860, again in reaction to political designs among the Christians. About 10,000 Bulgarians also lost their lives for declaring their freedom in 1876 (death statistics from Meyer 1986:51-52).

In eastern Anatolia trouble was also brewing. Before the 1840s the aghas there acted as independent fiefdoms within the Ottoman Empire. They collected their own taxes, ran their own militias, and bought and sold their Christians peasants with the land. In the course of the 1840s, however, the Sultan managed to exercise greater direct control over the region and imposed direct taxation. He banished a number of aghas, replacing them with Turkish governors with whom he could communicate directly by telegraph. In short, the missionaries arrived in the region to empower the Christian tribes at a time when there was a great power struggle going on between the local, mostly Kurdish aghas and the central government. At the Peace of San Stephano (1856), which ended the Crimean War, Turkey was forced to give equality to all its Christian

subjects, a move greeted with suspicion by the Sultan, whose empire had, as seen, already suffered major territorial losses (see Zürcher 2004:30-70).

Furthermore, by 1864 some 1.2 million Tatars, Circassians and other Muslims had been displaced by the Russian advances into the Crimea and Caucasus. Many migrated—or were terrorized into fleeing by the advancing Russian army and/or Georgian or Cossack irregulars—to Ottoman lands. Up to half a million remained as *muhajirs* (refugees), unwilling to live under Christian rulers, and were resettled with great difficulty in various parts of the Empire. These *muhajirs* understandably had strong anti-Christian feelings (2004:80-81).

Thus, during the second half of the 19th century "Christian", to the Turkish authorities, came to mean anything anti-Ottoman, anti-Turkish. They concluded that the Christian minorities in the Empire constituted a political danger, for "Christian" countries were all too ready to "protect" these minorities from their Muslim rulers (see "Capitulations" below). Christian ethnic groups within reach of Constantinople, such as the Armenians, Assyrians, and Maronites "became the pawns, the massacre victims, of a vile game of power politics" (Vander Werff 1977:98). The Muslim majority often harassed the Christian minorities at will. In the "new surge of hatred between communities" (Gaudeul 2000:252) the Druze massacred Lebanese and Syrian Christians in 1860, while the Turks and Kurds nearly exterminated the Armenians in 1895-6 and 1915-16. Massacres of Christians, notably those of 1860, were followed by French-British intervention. Although, in that case, a Christian governor was appointed to the Lebanon, the Ottoman authorities became increasingly stringent regarding Christian activity. This cycle of revolts and repression poisoned the atmosphere between Christians and Muslims more than anything that had taken place during the preceding centuries of restrictive tolerance.

By 1800, just prior to the arrival of the Protestant missionaries, great tensions also emerged within and between the various Christian *millets*, the Greek Orthodox, Armenians, Syriacs, Maronites, and Latin Catholic communities, which segregated into ghettos, each of which sought their own well-being at the expense of the others. Illiteracy, the tyranny and jealousies of the Orthodox ecclesiastics, and the intrigues of papal emissaries also contributed to undermining their credibility among the Muslim majority.

> The Turks, as a body, have never yet seen anything like a fair exhibition of Christian character…. They… look down with contempt on the mummery and nonsense, in the shape of religious rites, which they every where see in the professedly Christian churches of this country; especially when they also see that the most exact performance of these rites does not restrain from the grossest crime (Dwight MH 1830:250).

The European powers hailed the Sultan's signature on the 1878 Treaty of Berlin guaranteeing the rights for Armenians. Muslims, on the other hand, saw it "as a stepping stone

towards the emergence of an independent Armenian state" in eastern Turkey (McDowall 1996:57); the Kurdish chief Obeidullah asked, "What is this I hear, that the Armenians are going to have an independent state in Van, and that the Nestorians are going to hoist the British flag and declare themselves British subjects?" (McDowall 1996:57).

At times missionaries encouraged the Christian *millets* towards independence without seeming to grasp the seditious nature of this encouragement (Blincoe 1998:110; see section 2.3.3). They were rarely able to appreciate the delicate balances between the various communities comprising the Empire (Vander Werff 1977:99, 127).

2.1.2.2. Capitulations

Capitulations were privileges the Ottoman Sultans granted to foreign nations exempting nationals of that country from certain taxes, and placing them under the authority of their consuls rather than that of local Ottoman authorities. The Capitulations also allowed those nations to protect certain categories of Ottoman subjects allegedly linked to the nations concerned. Thus France claimed the right to protect Roman Catholics and Uniate Christians, England the Protestants, and Russia Orthodox Christians. The countries involved sought to use the Capitulations to dominate internal trade and influence political life. This commercial and political interference had implications for missions, "since the European consuls defended the missionaries of their own nationality and assumed the protection of Eastern Christians against abuses of power by the Ottoman authorities" (Gaudeul 2000:252). All this led to a sense that the Islamic community was humiliated by the West.

Prior to the capitulations the missionaries complained of the poor relations between their own government and the Sublime Porte. An early report from the American Board pioneer to Turkey, William Goodell, notes that

> It is much to our disadvantage, that there is, at present, a coldness between England and the Ottoman Porte… We have great reasons for thankfulness that we have thus far been preserved from the insolence of the Turks; but we know not what shall be on the morrow. A man's *hat* is always more safe in America, than a man's *head* in Turkey" (Goodell MH April 1827:109; italics in original).

No missionary ever lost his head. In the year Goodell expressed concern for his head, a colleague in Tyre noted that his host, the British Consular General, a Mr. Chasseaud, "treats us (missionaries) with the greatest civility" and "makes himself very much respected, not to say feared, by the Turks" (King MH 1827:68). De Kay, the American traveler whom we met earlier, comments on the inordinate power of Western ambassadors, something he describes as "disgraceful to the Turkish government". Ambassadorial powers "are precisely such as would be

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asked if a treaty was to be made with a horde of barbarous savages who set at defiance all laws, whether human or divine" (1832:43). It was one's embassy, not the Turkish government, which exercised legal jurisdiction over expatriates, even in cases of murder. "It is not surprising," he goes on to say, "that the ambassadors should fancy themselves to be kings and emperors" (:433, 434). The Capitulations created a symbiotic relationship between the missionary community and their own government's representatives. In 1841 the Board's Annual Report boasted how the mission enjoyed the "shield" of the American government.

> The Turkish government… addressed a note to our minister at Constantinople, requesting him to take measures to have those Americans removed from the country… Commodore Porter very properly declined taking measures against the missionaries, or withdrawing from them the shield of his own government… It is not probable that the affair will proceed any farther (Mission to Syria, 1841:110).

Western Protestant nations came to view their missionaries as allies. Little wonder. "What better agents of its cultural, political, and economic influence could a Western government hope to have than missionaries?" (Bosch 2003:304). As for the missionary community it, by and large, welcomed western intervention; lobbying would, as we will see, be raised to the level of "missionary method". This identification with their own country would have dire consequences for the missionary enterprise throughout the Middle East as these countries, the one after the other, shed their foreign yokes.

2.1.2.3. The Humiliation of Islam > Reform Movements

Orthodox Islamic thought had, by and large, fossilized by the end of the 18th century (Vander Werff 1977:99; Zwemer 1907:179) while unorthodox mystical and backward looking movements flourished. These held that a reversion to a Golden Age, notably that of the lifetime of the Prophet and his Companions would provide the ideal solution to all problems, flourished (Arberry 1969:27; Smith 1959:47-62). To many Muslims the most humiliating aspect of the low state into which the *ummah* had fallen was the fact that Europeans came to judge Islam as a religion of backwardness, fatalism and fanaticism (Bevan Jones 1932:220). Renan's celebrated lecture on Islam and Science, given at the Sorbonne in 1883, in which he attacked Islam as an obstacle to philosophy and science is a case in point. This sense of the humiliation of Islam resulted in many Muslims feeling embittered towards their critics, and increased their opposition to the Christian presence and activity in their midst (Wilson 1916:217-222).

Various advocates of reform denounced the religious and moral abuses disgracing Islam. The maverick Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, "the first genuine Muslim Modernist" (Rahman

1979:216), agreeing with Renan, blamed not just Islam, but any religious dogmatism or fideism that suppressed reason (Gaudeul 2000:254). Others, such as Khalil al Hindi al-Kairanawi (1818-1891), sought to develop an Islamic apologetic and polemic literature, an enterprise which led to a new theological awakening across the world of Islam (see section 2.3.4). Muhammed ‘Abduh (1849-1905) in Egypt and Muhammed bin ‘Ali al-Sanusi (d. 1859) in Libya picked up where al-Afghani left off. Yet others spearheaded a cultural Renaissance in the Arab world, the *Nahda*. Many missionary-educated Christian Arabs, such as Butrus al Bustani (1819-1883), became pioneers in this latter movement (Gaudeul 2003:255). Muhammed bin ‘Abd-al-Wahhab’s puritanical movement (1703-1792) triumphed briefly in the Arabian peninsula from 1803 to 1812, was suppressed, and came back in the 1920s to become Saudi Arabia’s ruling dogma.

2.1.2.4. Brief Periods of Political Reform > Brief Attempts at Muslim Evangelism

Converts from Islam—often even inquirers—could face severe persecution. Baptized believers sometimes disappeared, presumably to their death. Between 1820-1856 the application of the death penalty for apostasy squelched any movement toward Christianity, even among the Druze who, for a season seemed to be open to the missionary message (see Richter 1910:192-193 for this fascinating account). In any case, missionary work targeting Muslims directly, particularly in the Ottoman heartland of Anatolia, was deemed impossible, a fact which contributed to the decision to focus on the revitalization of the Eastern churches. Every so often, however, the Empire experienced *tanzimat*, periods of reform, brief attempts to pull the Empire up to European standards. The freedom resulting from the reform movement of 1841-1846 “swept the nominal Christian intellectuals, awaking in them a desire for more freedom in religious thought” (Meyer 1986:41), though there is no evidence of this period being exploited to reach Muslims. That would have to wait until the Crimean War (1853-1856), during which Turkey was so dependent on French and British support that the Sultan was forced to grant a new, more extensive, freedom of religion. On the 18th of February, 1856, he issued the famous *hatti humayoun*, granting full religious liberty throughout the whole of Turkey.

> This decree opened the way for extensive work among the Muhammedans of Turkey. At once more missionaries were added to the Board’s staff…. In the first few years hopes were of the brightest. Many Turks showed receptivity towards the doctrines of Christianity. Public discourses of the missionaries on religious subjects were well attended. Many came to the houses of the English and American missionaries and had interesting conversations... Conversions and baptisms followed (Richter 1910:173).

The “optimistic spike” lasted about eight years. The missionary community, for the first time, hoped that it might reach Muslims directly.

> Whether it be from a statesmanlike desire to understand a religion, which is becoming such an active and important element among the forces of the empire, or from mere curiosity, or from a feeling of spiritual want, the fact is undeniable, that the Mussulman Turks, the Osmanlis themselves, are extensively and increasingly calling for the means of understanding Protestant Christianity (Northern Armenian Mission, AR 1857:67).

The report notes the increased sale of Bibles "sold openly in the courses of the mosques", increased opportunities for witnessing and preaching to Turks and of their "friendly intercourse and connection with the missionaries… whatever of this kind the Turkish people demand and the Turkish government allows, the mission must furnish" (1857:67). In 1859 missionaries in Constantinople reported encouraging house visitations, frequent discussions, even "in the court of one of the most public mosques of the city," the presence of "Mussulmans" in church and "some cases of true spiritual inquiry and some genuine conversions" (North Armenian Mission, AR 1859:59).

> Divine Providence… calls us unmistakably to this work among the Turks, and has set before us… marvelous opened doors, faster than we can enter them; and is also affording immunity from persecution to as great a degree as infinite wisdom sees to be compatible with the purity of the work (North Armenian Mission, AR 1860:61).

A full-bodied reaction was not long in coming. A storm of hostility (1864-1866) squelched any further efforts at reaching Muslims. The reassertion of Turkish power after the Crimean War, the indecisive wavering of English and European powers, and the aggressiveness of C.M.S. workers in Constantinople—notably Gotlieb Pfander's insistence on publishing his book *The Balance of Truth* (see section 2.3.4)—brought violence to the Muslim converts in the city and made direct Muslim work very difficult, something reflected in the American Board reports as early as 1861: "Disappointments and trials have attended the work among the Turks in Constantinople…. indications of an outbreak of persecution have at times appeared, but no serious acts of that character have occurred (Mission to Western Turkey, AR 1861:47). The massacres which took place outside of Istanbul a few years later, however, dealt a nearly fatal blow to the American Board.

> The costly college buildings in Aintab had been plundered and burned. Hundreds of churches and schools in town and country had been destroyed, the congregations scattered, and the pastors and teachers either killed or crippled. It was as if a destructive hailstorm has passed over a field of ripe grain. No *firman* (i.e., decree) could be secured granting permission to rebuild the ruined houses or even to execute the most necessary repairs. The members of the congregations were not allowed to go to church nor send their children to school (Richter 1910:155-156) .

In response to the crisis the mission brought the pressure of the American government to bear on the Porte. The Ottoman authorities gave in to American demands, but did so sullenly. "To repair the damage and to reorganize the work was a gigantic task, rendered the more difficult

by the enmity and suspicion of the Turkish government, which placed every possible obstacle in the way of the mission" (1910:155).

The subsection entitled "The Mohammedans" in the Annual Reports disappears from the record in 1862. The Mission gave up its efforts at evangelizing Muslims *before* the government brought its full weight to bear on the Christian community. The Annual Report of 1867 displays a brief note of hope, while affirming the work among the Orthodox minorities:

> While the enterprise of spreading the gospel among the Mohammedans is yet one of faith rather than sight, it is manifest that the time has come for entering on its vigorous persecution…. The spiritual life which is extending among the nominal Christians of Turkey must more and more affect its Mohammedan population. The missionary and native laborers among the Armenians in the interior are often brought into contact with Turks (Mission to Western Turkey, AR 1867: 63).

Within two years, however, direct work among Turkish Muslims had been abandoned. "The sleepless vigilance of the government and the consequent timidity of inquirers, have stood in the way of much effort among Mohammedans" (Western Turkey, AR 1869:20). Hopes lingered a little longer in Syria:

> Various facts have impressed the mission with a belief that the time has come for more earnest and comprehensive effort in behalf of the non-Christian population of Syria… We can give to any man who will come a parish of 100,000 pagans, or 75,000 Druzes, or as many Moslems as both together, or a million of Bedouin Arabs, among whom we are now beginning a quiet work… the time has come for aggressive work on the great kingdom of darkness around us (Syrian Mission, AR 1870:35).

When, in 1874, the Nusairiyeh, a Muslim sect living in southern Turkey, began to convert as a result of the impact of American Reformed Presbyterian Mission schools, Turkey closed the schools. The seizure of Bible depots, imprisonment and persecution of converts, and the threat that missionaries would be deported heightened the feelings of alarm.

> The mood had changed. Religious liberty would continue, the government declared, but Christian attacks on the true religion of Islam and all proselytizing were forbidden. Bibles could no longer be sold in open markets or on the streets, but only in legal bookshops. All propaganda with the purpose of converting Muslims to Christianity was declared illegal. Muslims understood very well that their liberty to change religion if they desired had ended. Many of the converts from 1856-1864 were arrested on trumped up charges resulting in imprisonment or death (Meyer 1986:49).

Sultan Abdul Hamid, who acceded to the throne in 1876, shrewdly used constitutional reforms to "disarm" the European powers (Kinross 1977:517). The first Ottoman Parliament met in March 1877, a hopeful development which seemed to answer the prayers of missionaries and the historical churches (Blincoe 1998:109). In reality, however, all individual liberties disappeared. His parliament was "a puppet assembly, manufactured to give an appearance of legal validity and popular assent to such measures as [the Sultan] elected to impose" (Kinross

1977:529). Although the treaty of Berlin guaranteed the rights of Armenians, the Sultan's personal militia, the *Hamidiye*, raided at will in the east. C.M.S. schools for the Druzes near Damascus were closed in 1885. The Syrian Mission also frequently found its school and churches sealed, construction delayed, and applications pigeonholed (Vander Werff 1977:127).

Another attempt at pressuring the government to reform was made around the year 1888, when some seventy-one missionaries and teachers of Protestant bodies petitioned the Turkish government via foreign ambassadors to suspend official persecution. This produced a brief respite, but the Turkish system was so honeycombed by graft and espionage that reform by enlightened officials seemed virtually impossible (1977:127). Eventually the missionaries became disinterested in reaching Muslims, as any movement in that direction seemed blocked as soon at it seemed to bear some fruit (:126). After the revolt of the Young Turks (1908), new freedoms of press, speech and education were granted. American Board leaders like H. H. Jessup, however, observed the dark mood of mullahs and sheikhs and anticipated a struggle between Pan-Islamism and this new republicanism. When the question of Muslim work was raised again in 1910 the will to pursue it appeared to be lacking (:124).

2.1.2.5. Conditions in the Arabian Peninsula

Before the end of the 19th century few European *kafirs* (infidels) had dared to violate Arabia's sacred soil. The church which had once existed in parts of Arabia was long gone, so the question of working with Christian minorities never arose. Missionaries, when they eventually came, could concentrate directly on the evangelization of the Muslims.

Though nominally under the suzerainty of the Turkish Sultan, the socio-political conditions faced by missionaries to the Arabian peninsula differed from those elsewhere. Protected for over a millennium by the extremes of sea and sand, the tribal Arabs developed their own puritanical version of Islam (Wahhabism). In the words of T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) the Bedouin had

> just the heaven above and the unspotted earth beneath. There consciously he came near to God. God was to him not anthropomorphic, not tangible, not moral nor ethical, not concerned with the world or with him, not natural… The Beduin (sic) could not look for God within him; he was too sure that he was within God… who alone was great… He was the most familiar of their words… They were a dogmatic people, despising doubt, our modern crown of thorns. They did not understand our metaphysical difficulties, our introspective questionings. They knew only truth and untruth, belief and unbelief, without our hesitating retinue of finer shades (1952:39, 36).

The British established a presence in Aden in 1839 and had secured agreements with the trucial states. However, these "British residences were far from a guarantee of security.

Missionaries in most cases purposely avoided seeking protection under the flag lest it alienate them from the people of the land" (Vander Werff 1977:170-171).

Missionary work in this forbidding part of the Near East required a strength of conviction and a persevering spirit that matched the environment. As we shall see in the next chapter, men like Samuel Zwemer and Ion Keith-Falconer accepted the challenge.

2.2. What were the Missionary Goals and Strategies?

During the second half of the 19th century a number of mission agencies, including the German Orient Mission, the Muhammadan Mission in Bulgaria, the German Evangelical Benevolent Society, the Friends Society, the American Baptists, and the Disciples of Christ headed for the Ottoman Empire. The Presbyterian Church worked in Syria, Eastern Anatolia and Northern Iraq, mostly among the Nestorians. Quite a few missionaries worked with the eighty thousand Jews in Constantinople, with minimal results. There were also several independent workers and projects scattered throughout the Empire (Meyer 1986:44-45). The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, however, set the tone for much of the 19th century up to the end of World War I. It not only became the largest and most stable missionary enterprise by far, ministries it started were continued by the Presbyterians when, in 1870, the Old and New School Presbyterians in America united to form the Northern Presbyterian Church (USA). At that time New School missionary personnel and finances were transferred from the American Board to the new Presbyterian body, which assumed responsibility for Syria, Persia and, later, Iraq (1892) (see Syria Mission, AR 1870:43). Hence we concentrate on these two bodies.

2.2.1. The ABCFM Strategy: the "Great Experiment"

To obtain information the American Board sponsored a number of extensive explorations and surveys between 1818 and 1831. They initially hoped that Muslims would respond positively to the gospel: "There are … considerations which… seem to furnish a high degree of probability, that the gospel may be spread through these hitherto benighted regions… The Mussulmans are a kind of heretical Christians (Newell AR 1814:111). As early as 1819, however, the idea was floated that the mission not target Muslims directly, but work among the Christian orthodox minorities instead.

> Were proper means employed for their excitement, improvement, and help (some Orthodox Christians) might be roused from their slumbers, become active in doing good, and shine as lights in those darkened regions. It is indeed to be hoped that no small part of those, who bear the Christian name, would willingly and gladly receive into their houses, and do something towards imparting the heavenly treasure, as opportunities should be afforded, to the Jews, Mohammedans, and Pagans (Report, AR 1819:230).

Pliny Fisk, one of the earliest Board missionaries in the Middle East, wrote in a letter in 1825 (in other words, in the middle of the Greek war of independence, 1821-1829) that "the present is the time for a mission to Greece. The nation is roused—the elements of national and individual character are all in motion… The time of political revolutions should also be a period of religious reform. Americans should undertake this mission… There is no time to be lost" (Fisk MH 1827:267). The Ottoman Turks, understandably, had little sympathy for the Greek cause, or for anyone espousing the welfare of restive minorities. That dynamic the missionary community repeatedly failed to appreciate, and became one of the main factors turning Muslims against them. In 1826 William Goodell affirmed Fisk's assertion, but with reference to the Armenians. "The Armenians are evidently ripe for a moral revolution" (Goodell MH 1827:113).

During a two-month long conference held in Malta in 1828 the Board officially decided that the most reasonable way to reach the Muslim majority was by reforming and reviving the Eastern churches. Rufus Anderson, the general secretary, put it as follows:

> We may not hope for the conversion of the Mohammedans unless true Christianity be exemplified before them by the Oriental Churches… Hence a wise plan for the conversion of the Mohammedans of Western Asia necessarily involves first a mission to the Oriental churches (Anderson 1872:I.1).

Eli Smith and Harrison Gray Otis Wright's follow-up report of 1830, *Researches in Armenia*, clinched the matter: first the Greek, Armenian and Nestorian churches had to be reached and revived, only then could anything of note be done for the non-Christians (Vander Werff 1977:106-107). They pointed out that for hundreds of miles in every direction the "dead hand of the Turk" oppressed the Christian minorities but, they felt, God had preserved the ancient ethnic churches of the East for such a time as theirs (Blincoe 1998:30-31). The *Missionary Herald* presented the case in clear terms:

> To think of exerting much influence upon the Mohammedan mind, while the native Christian Churches remain as they are, is out of the question… The ignorance, idolatry and scandalous lives of their members preach louder and more effectually against Christianity than the united voices of all Protestant missionaries in its favor (Object of the Missions, MH 1839:40).

As Secretary Clark put it when he reviewed the policy later, "It soon became evident that there was not (sic) hope of reaching the Moslems so long as the actual Christianity which they saw around them failed to command their respect. The first thing to be done was to attempt a reform of these old churches" (Clark AR 1878:xix; see also Greene 1916:97). Cyrus Hamlin, co-founder of Robert College, the Christian university-college in Istanbul, agreed: "The object of our missions to the Oriental Churches is… to revive the knowledge and spirit of the Gospel and… by

this means to operate upon the Mohammedans… The fire of a pure Christianity must be rekindled upon those Christian altars" (quoted in Greene 1916:99).

One of the rarely stated reasons for this momentous decision was, undoubtedly, that while direct Moslem work was considered difficult, ABCFM missionaries were successful from the start in converting Orthodox Christians to Protestantism. As early as 1827 *The Missionary Herald* published a list of 20 converts who had "for a considerable time given evidence of piety". These consisted of former Maronites, Greeks, Armenians and a European Roman Catholic lady (Goodell MH 1827:179-180; see also Goodell MH 1827:18-21).

The notion that "Mussulmans are a kind of heretical Christians" was later marshaled to justify the decision *not* to reach them directly.

> The Mussulman's religion is the genuine offspring of a deeply corrupted Christianity; and if true piety could be once restored to these churches, from which it has long been expelled; if it could bring back to them the native simplicity and purity of the gospel, one of the greatest impediments to the conversion of Mohammedans to the Christian faith would be taken out of the way (Temple MH June 1835:222).

The Board developed an extensive outreach, in terms of finance and personnel, to the Armenians while limiting their work among Muslims, a policy followed by most other significant missionary enterprises. From 1845 onward (with the exception of the brief period around the Crimean War), the Board's *Annual Reports* would speak of mission to the Armenians, Jews, Nestorians and to Syria, but not to Turks, Arabs or Muslims.

Vander Werff diagrams the objectives and priorities of the various missionary bodies operating in the Ottoman world in the 19th century as follows (1977:102-103):

Denominational Objectives and their Priority

Body	To encourage reform within the Orthodox churches	To reform Orthodox churches by establishing evangelical churches	To evangelize Muslims and form evangelical churches
American Board:	First Intent	Became immediate goal	Ultimate goal
	(hence entitled the "via Eastern Churches" approach")		
Presbyterians from America:	Secondary	Primary	Primary
	(hence entitled the "two-pronged" approach)		
Anglican stages:			
- 1st (1815-1840)	Primary	Disavowed	Ultimate Goal
- 2nd (1841-1890)	Still stated as Primary Goal	Undeclared Goal	Emerged as an immediate goal
- 3rd (1890-1910)	Sought maturing church to church relations	Rejected	Immediate goal
	(hence entitled "Varying relations with Orthodox churches and an emerging mission to Muslims")		
Reformed-Presbyterian action in Arabia:	_____	_____	Primary goal
	(hence entitled "Pioneer mission to Muslims in Arabia")		

All major missionary bodies to the Ottoman Empire had as their ultimate goal the evangelization of the Muslim majority. All—with the exception of the Reformed Presbyterians in Arabia, to whom the option was not open—sought to do so, albeit in varying degrees, through the rejuvenation of the orthodox churches. What were the methods of an approach Blincoe would, much later, call the "Great Experiment"? What were the results?

2.2.1.1. The Establishment of Educational Facilities

The American Board's primary ministry was in education. It developed an extensive network of schools which clearly favored the Christian minorities in general, and Protestant converts from Orthodoxy in particular. Let us take a look this significant effort. First some statistics:

Growth of the Work (Greene 1916:108; see also Salt 1993:31-32)

(Miss = Missionary, NW = Native Worker, CH = Churches, Mem = members, Schl = School)

Year	Miss	NW	CH	Mem	Schl	Pupils
1845	34	12	-	-	7	135
1850	38	25	7	237	7	112
1855	58	77	23	584	38	363
1860	92	156	40	1277	71	2742
1865	89	204	49	2004	114	4160
1870	116	364	69	2553	205	5489
1875	137	460	77	3759	244	8253
1880	146	548	97	6626	331	13095
1885	156	768	105	8259	390	13791
1890	177	791	117	11709	464	16990
1895	176	878	125	12787	423	20496
1900	162	929	127	13379	438	22545
1905	187	1057	132	16009	465	22867
1913	209	1299	163	15348	450	25922

The figures tell us, first of all, that the number of Board missionaries at any given time was not overwhelming—there are around 1300 evangelical missionaries in the modern Republic of Turkey today, over six times the number at the best of times prior to World War I (Pikkert 1982-2006). Secondly, the maximum number of Protestant churches, 163 , was not huge, considering the vast size of the area. Most of these would have been medium-size congregations, the average for 1913 being 94. Most would, in fact, have had fewer members as a few large churches distorted the average. The Evangelical Armenian Church in Talas, for example, had 650 members in 1908 (Greene 1916:195). The Armenian Protestant church of Gedik Pasha, Istanbul, which is still functioning, and the Armenian evangelical churches in Gaziantep and Diyarbakir could seat similar numbers (Pikkert 1982-2006). Thirdly, the number of those educated in the mission schools was significant, totaling well over 100,000 students (simply totaling these

numbers gives an inflated figure, as the annual records note students attending, not those graduating. Students would, of course, attend several years running).

It is clear, in any case, that the missionaries of the American Board and, as we will see, the Presbyterians, became zealous educators, establishing an impressive network of schools in the Turkic, Arabic and Bulgarian parts of the empire. The scope of this enterprise is described in detail in the autobiographies of some key players, including Greene (1916) and Jessup (1910); their accounts readily acknowledge that the schools catered mainly to the Christian minorities. Although there are references to Muslim children attending mission schools, it was unusual enough for them to receive special mention. Greene mentions Marsovan, a territory of more than 250,000, of whom some 50,000 were Armenians, some 100,000 Greeks and the remainder Turks. When the girls' high school opened there in 1865, all eight students were Armenians, but by 1913-14 there were 269 pupils "including six Turkish girls" (Greene 1916:165). The faculty at the Anatolia College in Marsovan that same year consisted of "eight Armenians, nine Greeks, one Swiss, one Russian, and six Americans. The students numbered 405, of whom 194 were Greeks, 157 were Armenians, 32 were Russians and 16 were Turks" (:216). In 1880 there were a mere four Turkish girls in Constantinople College, a girl's school (:189). The Bithinia High School for Boys "met a want which had long been felt both by Protestants and Gregorians" (:192), while the Central Turkey College in Antep "greatly promoted the material, moral, intellectual and spiritual interests of all the Christian peoples" (:211). Of the 204 students who attended the St. Paul Institute in Tarsus in 1902-1903 152 were Armenian, 36 were Greeks, 12 were Arabs, 2 were Turks, 1 a Kurd, and 1 Italian (:228). In 1916 the region around Talas had a population of 800,000, of which 500,000 were Muslims and the rest about equally divided between the Armenians and the Greeks. In 1898 the boys' boarding high school there had 70 pupils, of whom 58 were Armenian and 12 Greeks (:197).

The curriculum was, with the exception of some of the languages, typical of western educational institutions. The girls' high schools' curriculum came to include English, Turkish, Armenian, Greek, mathematics, history, physics, geology, botany psychology, domestic science, needlework and vocal and instrumental music (Greene 1916:166). The simple fact that the high school curriculum included instruction in Armenian and, in the Balkans, Bulgarian (:186), and that much of the teaching staff were Christian minorities, was reason enough for the schools to be perceived as catering to the minorities and, consequently, for Turks to avoid the schools.

At college level, where both the language of instruction and the text books were in English, the Bachelor of Arts program for girls included Armenian, Turkish, English, algebra, the

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natural sciences, physiology, philosophy, art, science, mathematics, psychology, ethics, general history, history of religion, and English literature (1916:186-187, 190-191). The boys' high schools' curriculum consisted of "the principal languages spoken in Turkey, mathematics, science, intellectual philosophy, history and the Bible" (:192). At Robert College, the jewel of the missionary educational enterprise in Turkey (though independent of the Board), the curriculum followed the lines of American colleges, including business studies ("commercial branch") and engineering, but giving greater attention to European languages as well as the vernacular languages of Turkey. English was the language of instruction (:204). Although the vast majority of the high school students came from Protestant families, the student body in the higher institutions was mixed Protestant, Orthodox, Jewish and Muslim (:234-235). Not included in the Greene statistics are the educational institutes the missionaries established in the Arab parts of the empire, because when he was collating his statistics the missionary work in the Arab world had been ceded by the Board to the American Presbyterians.

Both the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics built complete school systems reaching from village school to college in Syria and Lebanon. The Protestant system there had about 100 grade schools at its base, 5 advanced secondary schools for girls and boys, and the Syrian Protestant College (now The American University of Beirut) at the top of the pyramid. Altogether they catered to over 8000 students at any one time, about one quarter Protestant, the rest Orthodox and Catholic. All in all about 100 Muslim students were also educated (Vander Werff 1977:128), a pitifully small number.

The educational enterprise absorbed the bulk of the mission's financial resources. In 1916 the American Board and the Women's Boards, and the colleges affiliated with these organizations, held property in Turkey valued at the time at nearly $2,500,000.-. Seven of the American colleges held endowments in USA amounting to nearly $3,000,000.-. Those colleges' annual expenses amounted to nearly $1,000,000.-. The figures do not include the property values of the Syrian Protestant College, Robert College, Constantinople College and a few other American properties. Mission property came to be worth a fortune. "The property of American missions and foundations in Asia Minor, Syria and Constantinople runs to a value of many millions of dollars—even to millions of sterling, and is ever increasing" (Childs 1917:50). In 1916 these were valued at $8,400,000.-. The total amount of money expended by the missionary societies in Turkey between the period of 1819 and 1916 was almost $40,000,000.- (all figures from Greene 1916:156). This, for the period in question, was a huge amount of money.

The educational enterprises also demanded the attention of the majority of the missionary personnel. In Beirut, the Syrian Protestant College siphoned off top mission personnel, as well as quality Syrian youth (Vander Werff 1977:129). In 1898 American Board secretary Brown mildly rebuked his missionaries for clinging to literary and educational centers and urged more itinerant work, but he met with little result (:128). Building schools, in fact, became an almost "seeker sensitive" enterprise—with the seeker being the Christian minorities seeking to better their lot in this life. Greene complains that "the people of Smyrna have cared more for education than for the preaching of the gospel, and it was found that the most feasible way to reach and impress the rising generation was by means of a Christian school" (1916:225).

These mission-run educational facilities, where Western enlightenment values were taught and modeled, made a great socio-political impact on the Christian minorities. George Antonius, in his classic *The Arab Awakening* (1961), describes the Syrian Protestant College as playing a leading role in the country's drive towards independence: "it may justly be said that its influence on the Arab revival, at any rate in its earlier stage, was greater than that of any other institution" (1961:43). The graduates from the missionary-run American schools and colleges became the Middle East's first generation of modern-style teachers, doctors, lawyers, bankers, merchants, authors, editors, interpreters and civil officials. These educated men and women, a large number of whom, like the famous Syrian educator Butrus al-Bustani, were Protestants "saved from" one or other of the Orthodox churches, sought to improve social and moral conditions by seeking to mold society into the Western image they had imbibed at school.

If the missionary community had high hopes for those they had made in their own image, the Muslim majority failed to appreciate the contribution. "They (those trained in the missionary educational facilities) have helped to enrich and strengthen their native land, and have proved themselves to be one of the most valuable assets of the Turkish empire. For any state not to recognize the worth of such a body of subjects were indeed a stupendous blunder" (Greene 1916:235). "A stupendous blunder" was, indeed, made. But by who? Was it the Turks' failure to recognize the value of the missionaries' labors, or was it the missionaries' "Great Experiment"? That question will be addressed in section 3.

2.2.1.2. Medical Work

Hospitals were initially established for the sake of the missionary community: "Finally the American Board awoke to the necessity of sending medical missionaries, primarily for the sake of the missionary families, and, secondarily, for the general influence of medical practice among the people" (Greene 1916:146). Like the educational enterprise, this ministry became a substantial

effort. The Board ran modern hospitals boasting electricity, surgical wards, out-patient clinics and dispensaries in Marsovan, Sivas, Mezereh (near Harput), Erzurum, Van, Diyarbakir, Mardin, Gaziantep, Adana, Talas, Konya, and Istanbul.

The Syrian Presbyterian Mission maintained a hospital at Tripoli and dispensaries at Hama and Hums, as well as the hospital and medical training facility associated with the Syrian Protestant College, where they cooperated with the German St. John's Hospital and the Kaiserswerth nurses to make it the largest and finest in the region. Scottish, Irish, English and American Reformed Presbyterians and Anglicans also carried on medical programs in Syria. National and overseas Christians cooperated in founding the Asfuriyeh Hospital for the insane in 1896. After the missionary community, it was, once again, the Christian minorities who received the bulk of the care and training. The first medical missionary, Dr. Henry West, "educated 19 young Armenians as physicians" (Greene 1916:147). The title of the biography of one of the early medical pioneers, Asahel Grant, *Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians* (2005), speaks for itself. In time, however, the medical ministry touched Muslims more directly than the educational facilities ever did. In 1914 the hospital at Marsovan treated 340 Armenians, 296 Turks, 241 Greeks and 44 others of 13 different races (Greene 1916:148). Among the 5301 patients who received surgical treatments in the International Hospital in Adana in 1914, 2214 were Armenians, 690 Moslems, 135 Greek, 65 Syrians and 235 people of other races (:152).

In parts of the empire, notably Arabia, there were, of course, no ancient churches left; the missionaries there could concentrate directly on the evangelization of the Muslim population in the hope of forming an indigenous evangelical church. In order to open the way for the gospel, the Arabian Mission (organized in 1889 and later renamed The American Reformed Church Mission) had, by 1913, established hospitals in Bahrain, Kuwait, Musqat, and Basrah along with six medical stations. That year the mission's 34 missionaries and their assistants (numbering between 8 and 27) taught 89 pupils, of whom 36 were Moslems (Greene 1916:32). Greene, the diligent statistician, has neither numbers nor anecdotes of converts to relate as a result of the medical ministry. Since, as late as World War I, he has nothing to present other that the hope that the hospitals "may have softened the hearts of those Muslims whose heart is so bitter and prejudiced" (1916:154), we do not return to the subject during this era.

2.2.1.3. The Formation of Missionary Compounds

The establishment of educational and medical facilities led to the growth of compounds. These developed into isolated Christian communities modeling a form of western Protestantism which might be envied, but which was in no way imitatable by the surrounding people.

The compounds tended to be built on hilltops outside the cities: "the missionaries have purchased those vantage points… and have formed compounds, where the school buildings and missionary homes command beautiful views" (Greene 1916:211-212). One of the most beautiful such "vantage points" is that of Robert College (Bosphorus University), located "on one of the most conspicuous sites on the Bosphorus, where it will be, to all passers-by on that magnificent straight, an imposing monument of American Christian liberality and interest in the welfare of Turkey" (The Missions in Turkey, AR 1870:15). These compounds could take on very quaint characteristics, totally out of character with the surrounding culture. The station at Marsovan was described as "a walled village of another race, established in these surroundings by some unexplained cause… an American walled village at that" (Childs 1917:52).

> It has a Town Gate, West Gate and North Gate, and there is a gatekeeper—or warder, let us say—at each, and the gates are heavily-barred solid pieces of carpentry that more than once have troubled a mob. Its houses are connected by telephone, and you find that electric lighting is mooted; but in spirit it is an old-fashioned village of a well-doing, friendly, hospitable people (1917:53).

Some compounds were established in very remote areas. In 1842 the earlier-mentioned pioneer missionary Asahal Grant moved to the Nestorian village of Ashitha in the Hakkari region, in what is now southeastern Turkey, and built a compound there. News of Grant's building traveled to the curious Kurds who "were more than irritated; in fact, they felt threatened" (Van Bruinessen 1992:180).

One of the most enduring compounds is the "Bible House" in Istanbul. Built in 1872, the large, five storied complex of buildings housed the offices of the American Bible Society, had large store-rooms for Bibles and mission books, and rooms for editors and translators of missionary books and periodicals, as well as residences for missionaries. It was later expanded to include a large printing establishment, a chapel that seated 250, and buildings and shops which were rented out to cover running costs. It was administered by a self-perpetuating board of trustees in New York, organized under the laws of the State of New York, with a local advisory committee selected annually by the board of trustees (Greene 1916:130). The great compound in the heart of the city remained an entirely foreign affair, thus perpetuating the image of missions as a western-controlled enterprise with, ultimately, socio-political aims.

2.2.1.4. Literature Production/Distribution

The missionaries produced vast amounts of literature. The fact that public evangelistic methods were not permitted stimulated the American Presbyterians, in particular, to develop their literary evangelism. Along with the Bible, large amounts of other literature, for which there was a great

demand, were either written or translated into various languages of the Empire. Annual Reports of the 1860s note the demand for Arabic books: "The cry comes from Egypt and Palestine, from Assyria and Northern Africa, from Liberia, and even from Pekin, the capital of China, "Give us Arabic books!…. Never was the call for books, good books, of all kinds, so urgent" (Syrian Mission, AR 1868:47). By 1868 there were sixteen printing presses in Syria, "the American Mission Press being the only one to supply a sound, healthful, religious and general literature" (:47). The need for Christian literature was keenly felt because "Moslems have taken up the pen, and entered the lists to attack Christianity and defend the Koran" (:55). Antonius, writing of the Arab provinces, notes that,

> They (the American missionaries) had the imagination to perceive that a nation's lost inheritance may not be recovered except through its literature… Missionaries even designed a new type, henceforth known as American Arabic. With this addition to its equipment, the American Press was able to undertake a more ambitious programme of Arabic printing… As soon as the books were written and approved, they had them printed in their own establishment and disseminated all over the country. The avidity with which these books were seized upon showed not only that they filled a want, but that minds were awakening to knowledge (1961:41,42).

In spite of censorship, the Beirut Press became the center of Arabic work. Some fifty editions of the Smith/Van Dyck Arabic Bible had been printed by 1910. They also published a weekly Arabic paper, *Neshrah* (The Herald), a popular New Testament commentary, plus much educational and devotional material. Because Arabic was the language of both Muslims and Christians, this was truly a two-pronged endeavor (Vander Werf 1977:128). The earlier mentioned Bible House became the literary center for the Turkish parts of the Empire. The Board turned out vast quantities of literature, both Christian and otherwise, in Armenian, Armeno-turkish, Arabo-Turkish and Bulgarian (see The Armenian Mission, AR 1869:16-17).

> The publication department of the mission, besides translation of the Bible, was engaged from the outset in preparing school books, both for elementary schools and for high schools and colleges. When missionaries first came to Turkey such a thing as a primer to teach children to read was unknown, and the primers prepared by the missionaries were esteemed as a great boon. Then followed text-books in Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Algebra, Geometry, Astronomy, Physiology, Intellectual Philosophy, and Moral Science, Dictionaries, works for theological schools on Apologetics, Church History, Systematic Theology and Christian Doctrine, a Bible Dictionary, Pilgrim's Progress, devotional and doctrinal books, hymn books, tracts, commentaries in Turkish, in Greek, Armenian, and Arabic letters (Greene 1916:138-139).

The Annual Report of 1840 notes that the Christian Press in Smyrna (modern Izmir) had, in the course of 1939, printed 623,600 pages in Armenian, 1,363,000 pages in Armeno-Turkish, and 1,262,000 pages in Modern Greek. No mention is made of plain Turkish (Western Asia, 1840:85-86). In all about 1000 titles and, in the period from 1831-1915 more than 4,000,000

copies of books other than the Bible were published along with 4 million copies of the whole Bible and of parts of the same in various translations (Greene 1916:140). In 1855 the missionaries launched an Armenian weekly newspaper, *Avedaper* ("Bringer of Good News"), which, from 1860 onward, was also published in Turkish written with Armenian letters for Turkish speaking Armenians and, as of 1872, in Turkish written with Greek letters, for Turkish speaking Greeks. A children's version was also published in Armenian, Armeno-Turkish and in Greco-Turkish (:140). There is no record of a paper produced in Turkish for Turks. The editorship of these papers remained in the hands of American missionaries right up to 1911 and were subsidized throughout (:142). In fact, the paper was, for much of the time, under the editorial direction of the same Mr. Greene whose name has appeared repeatedly in the footnoting of the statistics contained in this chapter. The amount of money the American Board spent on the production of literature in Turkey between 1831 and 1915 was $2,804,104 (:137).

There were a small number of Islamic scholars in the missionary community who sought to produce apologetic materials directed at Muslims. Some of their material was at a very high academic level; much of the apologetical material produced since then has, in fact, followed the lines of inquiry laid down by these 19th century Christian missionary scholars and orientalists. The most famous of these missionary orientalists was, undoubtedly, the German Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-65). He originally wrote his magnum opus, *The Balance of Truth* (Mizan ul Haqq), in German in 1829 when he was 26. The book was translated into all the major languages of the Middle East and continues to be published today.

Pfander knew a great deal about Islam. He could quote the Qur'an, the Hadith, and other Muslim sources in the original languages. In spite of the fact that his style was courteous and polite, the *Balance of Truth* roused the feelings of many Muslims because it sought to prove that Islam's claims to be the true revelation could not be substantiated by using arguments based on Islamic sources such as the Qur'an itself, the Hadiths, biographies of the Prophet and the works of such leading interpreters of Islam as al-Ghazali. It invited Muslims "to choose between the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and Muhammed, ibn 'Abdallah, between Him who said, 'Love your enemies' and him who said, 'Slay you enemies and the enemies of God': between Him who prayed for His murderers and him who caused those who lampooned him to be murdered" (Pfander 1910:368). We will take a closer look at the response to this book later.

William Muir (1819-1905), another Christian missionary scholar, focused on the authenticity of the Scriptures. In his *The life of Mahomet and the History of Islam to the era of Hegira* (1877) he submitted the two sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the *Hadith* (the traditions),

to the scrutiny of historical criticism, concluding that the Qur'an was merely a historical document about Muhammed's inner evolution. William St Clair Tisdall (d. 1928) of the Church Missionary Society, published his *Christian Reply to Muslim Objections* (1904) as a compendium of rational answers to the 251 most common objections Muslims have vis-à-vis Christianity. Though focusing largely on the authority of the Bible, the work covers a wide range of subjects. In his *The Sources of Islam* (1901) he seeks to trace parallels between the Qur'an, the Hadith and Arabian pagan sources along with biblical, Judaeo-Christian heretical and apocryphal material. His purpose was to prove that the Qur'an was related to previous human systems and, as such, was of an earthly, not divine nature. The book is a feat of original scholarship (Zebiri 2000:96). Tisdall also revised and enlarged Pfander's *Balance of Truth.*

More prolific than either Pfander, Muir or Tisdall was Samuel Zwemer, a minister of the Reformed Church of America who spent most of his missionary career in Arabia and Egypt. In 1911 he founded the periodical *The Moslem World* (later *The Muslim World*). Although he began ministry toward the end of the period under discussion in this chapter, he belongs more to the next, and will be discussed at length there.

The writing of Pfander, Tisdall, et. al, as well as of the early Zwemer, reflect many of the assumptions prevalent among missionaries of the era: Muslims worship a different God, Muhammed was an insincere opportunist, certainly during his Medinan period, and controversy, so long as done politely, was a suitable method of Muslim evangelism. Islam and Christianity were perceived as rival civilizations, with Islam on the decline (one of Zwemer's books during this period was entitled *The Disintegration of Islam* (1915). This decline, it was held, would open the way for the spreading of the gospel in Muslim countries (Zebiri 2000:97).

2.2.1.5. Clubs and Societies

In 1908 a Mr. and Mrs. Irwin, Board missionaries working in Cesarea (modern Kayseri, Turkey), actually reached Muslims by organizing a boys' club. With the help of an American friend they obtained a house which included a gymnasium and a reading room, and which was open every afternoon and evening to all comers. It drew people from a variety of backgrounds, and in 1909 Mr. Irwin could write that "We have a daily average of 200 to 300 young Moslems with whom we are in constant touch… Many of the younger Turks are very much in favor of our work, and are a constant source of encouragement to us" (quoted in Greene 1916:198). To meet some government objection the "club" had to be disbanded, but was subsequently reorganized under the name of The American Benevolent Institution (:198).

The Irwins were not the first to organize a club for the purpose of reaching beyond the Christian community. Half a century earlier, two Christian Arabs, Nasif al-Yazeji and Butrus al-Bustani approached the American Board and proposed the foundation of a learned society. The *Society for Arts and Sciences* was established in Beirut in January 1847. Yazeji and Bustani were both members as were the Bible translators Eli Smith and Cornelius van Dyck, and several other leading ABCFM missionaries. Within two years of its foundation the Society had fifty members, of whom the majority were Christian Syrians living in Beirut. It had a modest but useful library, and held regular meetings at which learned papers prepared by the members were read. This society lived for five years. During its last year it issued a volume of transactions. The society had no Muslim or Druze members (Antonius 1961:51-52); because it was founded under the auspices of missionaries it was unpalatable to them. Its importance lay in the fact that it pioneered the idea of promoting knowledge by an organized collective effort, as opposed to the tradional method of having students come from great distances to sit at the teacher's feet.

In spite of the society's relatively short existence, it served as a model for other such organizations, some of which would play an important part in the growth of the Arab national movement. "It was, in fact, in one of those early societies, the direct descendant of that which had been founded at the instigation of Yazeji and Bustani, that the first cry of the infant (Arab Nationalist) movement was uttered" (1961:52). Yazeji and Bustani continued to appeal to Arabs of all creeds to unite in the service of their language, and some Muslim intellectuals came forward with a proposal: eliminate missionary influence by forming a new society. This led to the foundation of the *al-Jam'iya al-'Ilmiya al-Suriya* (Syrian Scientific Society) in 1857. Closely modeled on its predecessor of 1847, and gaining official recognition in 1868, it would play an important role in the political development of the Arab nationalist movement. Its members included leading Arabs from across the religious spectrum, as well as "a large number of personalities living outside the country, notably in Constantinople and in Cairo" (:53-64).

> For the first time, probably in the history of Syria, certainly for the first time in the 350 years of the Ottoman domination, a common idea had brought the warring creeds together and united them in an active partnership and for a common end. An interest in the progress of the country as a national unit was now their incentive, a price in the Arab inheritance their bond. The foundation of the Society was the first outward manifestation of a collective consciousness, and its importance in history is that it was the cradle of a new political movement (1961:53-54).

Other, less auspicious clubs were established elsewhere. In the Kumkapi quarter of Istanbul the American Board opened a coffeehouse and reading room in 1886 which was frequented by "Armenians, Greeks, Turks and Jews—and was the one place in the city where

there was preaching for men who come to neither church nor chapel" (Greene 1916:128). There is no record of any Muslims converting to Christianity as a result of this effort.

In Smyrna (Izmir), the Smyrna Rest for Sailors of the World provided simple refreshments, a reading room, and free Scriptures for sailors of all nationalities calling at the port. A similar work began at Constantinople in 1879 (Meyer 1986:45).

2.2.1.6. Courts and Lobbying

The missionaries' own rights as well as those of the peoples they targeted became one of their great concerns. They sought to advance their cause both in the Ottoman courts and by enlisting their own governments' support who, through the Capitulations, had been given certain rights over their "client peoples". Lobbying became a missionary method.

There are numerous accounts of missionary efforts to secure their and/or their client's "rights" as well as the security of their ministries. In 1873 in the city of Marash, for instance, missionaries appealed to the Turkish governor to overturn a "sham marriage" of a Protestant Armenian student at the missionary girls' school to a Gregorian relative. "After 30 days of contention, by a righteous decision of the court, the girl was returned to the school. This was regarded as a great victory for young women in Turkey in the matter of marriage" (Greene 1916:185). In 1895, a single missionary woman named Corine Shattuck living in the southern Turkish city of Urfa complained directly to the governor that Turkish boys threw stones at her and insulted her in the streets. "She was listened to with great respect, and criers were sent through the town to warn the Turks that they would be held personally responsible for the doings of their boys. This put an end to the insults" (:180).

Lord Stratford Canning de Redcliff, the British ambassador during the middle of the 19th century was a particularly valuable ally. "Fortunately for the Protestant cause, the English ambassador at that time, Lord Stratford Canning de Redcliff, understood and warmly interested himself in what was going on" (Richter 1910:113). In 1850 his lobbying resulted in an imperial firman granting a legal status to the Protestants (of whom there were a mere 1007 at the time) as a new ecclesiastical and civic corporation (:113; see also Greene 1916:110). On another occasion the U.S. Navy was marshaled to support the cause. When describing the foundation of Robert College Greene writes,

> Finally, in 1868, by means of a significant inquiry addressed to the Turkish ministers by Admiral Farragut, then on a visit to Constantinople in his flagship, the Hartford, an imperial charter was given to the institution as an American college under the protection of the United States (1916:203).

The missionaries invoked their embassies on behalf of their client churches as well. Referring to the wave of persecution which hit after the era of freedom following the Crimean war, Richter notes that "by the intervention of the British ambassador, backed by his government, most of the prisoners were released or were treated less harshly in prison, and the Bible-depots and the confiscated Bibles… were restored to the missionaries" (1910:174). In the wake of the massacres of 1864, in which nearly all the American Board stations in Eastern Turkey suffered heavily and in which hundreds of churches and schools were destroyed, the American government was called upon to put pressure on the Turkish authorities.

> Happily the American government was at the back of the Board and extended its powerful protection to its unjustly distrusted subjects. After weary and interminable negotiations, which lasted five years, the Turkish government was induced to pay nearly T pounds 20,000 in compensation for the schools destroyed in Aintab and Kharput, and to issue the requisite firmans for their reconstruction (Richter 1910:155).

When the Turkish government reacted to the publication of Pfander's *Balance of Truth* by seizing the missionary printing presses, sealing the bookstore and closing down the Bible society, the missionary community, once again, turned to their governments. "After some delay, the British Ambassador, Sir. Henry Bulwer, sent a remonstrance to the Porte". The bookstore was re-opened and the printing offices "were likewise released from the custody of the police" (Western Turkey, AR 1864:62). The report for the following year notes that "the firm support of the principle of religious freedom by the Christian powers represented at Constantinople, and especially by Great Britain, is indispensable to its protection" and that "the prompt and earnest representations of Mr. Stuart, Secretary of the British Embassy… have been successful in several cases of injustice, inflicted by local officials" (Western Turkey, AR 1865:69). When the Turkish authorities stalled on giving permission for the Turkish Bible to be printed, "the efforts of the English Ambassador and the American Minister… succeeded in obtaining an order from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which it is hoped will now secure it from the Bureau of the Press" (Western Turkey, AR 1875:16). Missionaries in Syria/Lebanon also invoked the help of their embassies during difficult times. The Annual Report of 1870 notes that in Syria and Lebanon "persecutions have become… bitter and excessive", but that "through the efficient aid of the American and English consulates, we hope to secure some degree of protection for the Protestants in their peaceful pursuits" (Syria Missions, AR 1870:40- 41).

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By 1917 the American traveler W. J. Childs could say that "one hears that normally the chief duties of the American Embassy in Constantinople lie in watching over the interests of American citizens and property connected with the missions" (1917:50).

2.2.2. Early attempts to target the Muslim majority directly

Although the overwhelming effort went into the establishment and maintenance of the missionary enterprise to the Christian community, several efforts sought to reach Muslims directly. This was particularly true when political circumstances were favorable for the missionaries, as they were during the Crimean War. Taking advantage of that opportunity the CMS sent four missionaries to Turkey in 1858 to work among Muslims, one of which was the famous Karl Gottlieb Pfander. The effort, as seen earlier, was short-lived. With the death of Dr. Pfander in London in 1865, the death of the most faithful Muslim convert, Selim Efendi, and the closing of the Church Missionary Society work in 1877, missionaries returned to concentrating on the nominal Christians (Meyer 1986:49).

One of the most significant, albeit brief, institutional efforts to reach the Muslim majority was spearheaded by the Lutherans. They deliberately turned their backs on the "Great Experiment" and targeted Muslims in an area where there were Christian minorities to which they could have turned their attention, namely southeastern Anatolia.

2.2.2.1. The Lutheran Orient Mission Society's (LOMS) response to the "Great Experiment"

During the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 a committee recommended that Christian witness to the Kurds be assigned to the Lutherans. L. O. Fossum became the leader of this new thrust (Blincoe 1998:139-140). As latecomers they had the advantage of observing and, hopefully, learning from their predecessors; Fossum was convinced that the Lutherans ought to evangelize the Kurds without using the eastern churches as an intermediary. "They familiarized themselves with the Great Experiment which had cast a spell over the mission in 19th century Kurdistan. Lutherans wanted to break the spell by trying a new experiment" (:136-137, 140). In the first issue of *The Kurdistan Missionary* (1910), Fossum suggested a number of rational reasons why missionaries who targeted the Muslim Kurds directly might expect success:

1. The character of the people. For the most part warm-hearted, quick to make friends, usually loyal in friendship, the love, the friendliness of Jesus would appeal to them; democratic, freedom-loving, the freedom wherewith Christ maketh free would attract them; strong, brave, hardy, the manliness of Christian character would compel them.
2. Social conditions in Kurdistan place men and women on a recognized equality, working together for the common living, holding property with equal rights and administering their

affairs with equal honors, a type of character that has long been produced to which the appeal of the pure and holy life pressing forward to a holy and happy heaven can be made much more hopeful than it can be to the ordinary Moslem, who gives to woman no honor in this life and no place of her own in the next.

3. Then there is the political situation of the people. They have no sovereignty to maintain and it is a mere matter of convenience whether they are subject to any central ruling power or not. Their souls are their own and they can do what they like with them. Married and intermarried, related and double-related throughout the tribe and into the adjoining tribes, the petty persecution that would arise because of a change of faith would be quickly extinguished by mutual friends (Jensen and Oberg 1985:7).

Fossum's much more positive evaluations of Muslim character and culture, and his hopeful attitude toward direct missionary work among them was not typical.

The first LOMS missionaries, including Fossum himself, a medical doctor called Ed Edman and two nurses, arrived in Kurdistan on September 6, 1911. Fossum immersed himself in the language and culture. He was a remarkable linguist, producing a Kurdish grammar and translating into Kurdish the four Gospels, Luther's Smaller Catechism, a hymnbook containing 100 hymns, and a Lutheran liturgy. He also wrote an English-Kurdish lexicon.

> From their arrival in 1911 until forced to leave in the early part of 1916, the missionaries had built up a Kurdish congregation, established an orphanage and medical dispensary. During part of 1915, the (LOM's) Board was unable to reach the missionaries with the needed funds for the work, and when they were obliged to depart, Kurds also supplied them with the funds needed for travel (Lohre 1918, quoted in Blincoe 1998:146)).

The orphanage, dispensary and church were destroyed during World War I. Fossum and his colleagues returned to the United States in 1916 (Blincoe 1998:146). After the war Fossum and other missionaries set sail again for Kurdistan. Sadly, Fossum died on November 10, 1920, near Van, at the age of 41. However, the brief history of the LOMS in Kurdistan demonstrated that direct missionary work among Muslims, in spite of legal and social difficulties, was not only possible, but could bear fruit in a relatively short period of time. They were well received by the local Muslim Kurds who, as seen, dug into their own pockets at critical moments to keep the mission going. The Scottish Mission to Aden proved the same point.

2.2.2.2. The Scottish Mission to Aden

The Scottish Mission to Aden and the Reformed Mission to the Arabian peninula also ministered directly to Muslims. They had no choice, as they worked in areas in which there were no ancient churches left. The former organization was founded in 1885 by Ion Grant Neville Keith-Falconer (1856-1887). This "Cambridge scholar and translator of Syriac texts, (and) a prototype of the Protestant linguist-orientalist-missionary" surveyed Aden in 1885-1886, and chose Sheikh

Othman, an Arab town on the caravan route and away from 'Steamer Point', the port used by the British, as a base for the mission (Vander Werff 1977:172-173).

Falconer wanted his ministry to be clearly perceived as a witness emanating from the church, and not as some kind of personal effort; although he personally financed his station, it operated in the name of the Free Church of Scotland. Convinced of the need to minister to the whole person, he, like the American Board, also sought to establish educational facilities and a medical program. Service had to be combined with proclamation "to remove from the Arab mind misconceptions devised from the evil example set by so many Europeans who live in or pass through Adan", hoping that "such a presentation of *Isa* (Jesus) and the *Injil* (New Testament) conveyed with prudence and self-denial might be welcomed as a message from God" (quoted in 1977:173). Steward Cowen, a surgeon, joined Falconer in 1886. Falconer "who could speak fluent Arabic was soon gathering small groups for Bible reading and visiting homes, coffee shops and outside villages". Then disaster struck, as it had struck the LOMS: the leader died. Falkoner contracted malarial fever and passed away on May 11, 1897 (:173).

The mission, "continued by the sheer determination of a few determined workers", focused on medical work until 1920, at which time an educational program was also established. "The mission has sought to weave Christian teaching into all its activities. Its presence has demonstrated no ambition to worldly power but a quiet effort to testify to the spirit and love of Christ" (1977:174). One worker stated their aim as follows: "It is quite simply, to preach Christ to Arabia by word and deed and life, and by every means within our power. It is not an easy task or one likely to produce quick returns… The real hope of winning Arabia lies in the creation of an indigenous native church" (Jones n.d.:52).

2.2.2.3. The Arabian Mission in the Arabian Peninsula

Another work which targeted Muslims directly was that of The Arabian Mission. Co-founded by Samuel Zwemer and James Cantine, it started ministry in 1891 in Basra and developed into the most extensive endeavor in Arabia. We will turn our attention to the story of the Arabian Mission in the next chapter, because Samuel Zwemer emerged as one of the "veterans" who would contribute to the reformulation of mission strategy after the debacle of World War I.

2.3. The Popular Response to the Missionary Enterprise

The success of an enterprise consists in the accomplishment of a goal or purpose. The American Board had commenced its ministry to the Orthodox Christians of the Middle East "with the

expectation that they could revive the Orthodox Churches which 'would rekindle their ancient missionary spirit'" (Joseph 1961:44). Did it succeed? If not, what did it accomplish?

2.3.1. An Evaluation of the "Great Experiment"

As early as 1832 outside observers questioned the wisdom of the missionaries' strategy, noting that it was not going to work, if only for pragmatic reasons. That year De Kay, after meeting some missionaries and visiting a mission-run Armenian school wrote:

> It is through the Armenians, who are essentially oriental in their habits, tastes, and feelings, that the missionaries hope to make an impression upon the Turks. Judging from my acquaintance with them in Constantinople, I should think them not exactly the best instruments for effecting this change… Such as them as have embraced Catholicism, or something near it, exhibited a narrow, bigoted spirit, far exceeding that of their instructors… My opinion is, as I have elsewhere remarked, that the impression must be made directly upon the Turks themselves (De Kay 1857:500).

Some missionaries noted danger signs around the same time. In 1835 Schneider, a highly respected missionary of long standing with the Board, noted in his journal that the Turks found his "disinterested benevolence" toward the Armenians difficult to comprehend:

> It is known that the school among the Armenians has been opened and thus far supported at my expense. There is much speculation as to my motives, as they never act but for some selfish end… They are exceedingly suspicious, and the very nature of the missionary work, which is one of benevolence from beginning to end, throws an obstacle in our way (Schneider MH 1835:302).

By 1842 other missionaries were also predicting failure. That year a certain W. F. Ainsworth foresaw that Orthodox Christianity would be destroyed because of missionary efforts:

> This sudden interest… on the part of the Christian nations towards a tribe of people (the Nestorian tribes), who have almost solely prolonged their independent existence on account of their remote seclusion and comparative insignificance, has called them forth into a new importance in the eyes of the Mohammedans, and will undoubtedly be the first step to their overthrow (quoted in McDowall 1996:46).

Officially, however, the American Board believed that its mission was succeeding. The Annual Report of 1847 states that

> Many of the Turks are favorably impressed with regard to the reformation (of Armenianism)… A heavenly light has begun to shine among them… Not only among nominal Christians, but among the Mussulmans also, is light going forth. It is probably no exaggeration to say, that within a year past more knowledge of the true gospel has been spread among the Turks, than all which they previously obtained since they first crossed the Euphrates! (Western Asia, AR 1847:93).

The hopes were short lived. Even Rufus Anderson, director of the American Board during its years of rapid growth, came to regard strengthening the existing churches as a substitute for the failure to evangelize Muslims. In his 1872 book *History of Missions*, he wrote, "the main work of

winning races to Christianity must be performed by men of the same race. A Moslem will listen more patiently to a Christian Turk (renegade though he may be) than he will to an Armenian; nor has it been found easy to enlist the Protestant Armenians effectively in labors for the Turks" (1872:484). Thirty years into the mission, Anderson admitted that the Americans may have to do a job that the ethnic churches were unwilling to do: "Gradually, it may be, some of the missionaries now in the field, who are familiar with the Turkish language, and have their Armenian churches supplied with pastors, will turn their attention mainly to the Moslems" (:485). This is tantamount to admitting failure. But Anderson held the course, writing that "the original plan of mission to Turkey has been more promising of good than any other; namely that of operating upon the Mohammedans through regenerated churches" (1872:484). They held the course for another 45 years, only to have their hopes dashed. Greene, writing in 1916, expressed the Board's frustration:

> We had hoped that through the revival of spiritual religion in the Oriental churches and through the living testimony of 60,000 native Protestants, the Moslems of Turkey might get a new and more correct apprehension of Christianity. We had hoped that through the publication and very extensive sale of the Bible and of many other books in the Turkish and Arabic languages… that through the sincere and loyal devotion of Americans to the best interests of the Moslem people and of the Turkish empire for nearly a hundred years; and, finally, that through the genuine sympathy and rejoicing of Americans at the time of the revolution of the Young Turks in 1908; we had hoped, I say, that through these and many other influences and instrumentalities the Americans living in Turkey might have been recognized as the true friends of the Turkish people and the Turkish government (Greene 1916:157).

The original goal had not been the recognition of Americans as "true friends of the Turkish people" but the conversion of Muslims to Christianity. The missionary community failed on both counts. It failed to evangelize and came to be perceived as an enemy, not a friend. What went wrong, and what were the results?

2.3.2. The Missionaries Split the Orthodox Churches

Originally the missionaries wanted to revive the old Orthodox Armenian and Nestorian churches. They did not intend on starting a Protestant movement. In 1839, however, both the Armenian and Greek Orthodox patriarchs forbade contact with the missionaries, as well as the reading of books sold or distributed by them.

> It was not long before the hierarchy discovered that the gospel in its purity was utterly inconsistent with the rites to which they were accustomed and with the prerogatives they had asserted. A sharp and bitter persecution followed. Men who had embraced the truth were subjected to the severest trials, and an order was secured from the Sultan for the expulsion of the missionaries. Armenian, Greek, and Moslem combined to crush out the new religion (The Gospel, AR 1878:xx).

As of 1846 Armenians who maintained relations with the missionaries were excommunicated from their church. There were a number of reasons for this strong reaction, including the missionaries' denigrating view that the members of the ancient churches weren't "really Christian", Protestantism's "low" ecclesiology, their empowering of the laity, and the disappointing political benefits they brought with them. "Feelings of disappointment were mutual" (Blincoe 1998:34). As early as 1826, in fact, "open 'warfare' against the oriental churches was accepted mission policy", and the oriental clergy were referred to as "the enemy" by the missionaries (Scudder 1998:28). After some twenty years of labor, the missionaries felt they had no choice but to organize a separate Protestant Church, a move they felt was "as justifiable as the organization of the first apostolic church in Jerusalem" (Greene 1916:105,106).

> It was no part of their (the missionaries') plan to set up a new organization, but to revive a spiritual life in the old. The higher ecclesiastics, however,… deliberately cut off from their communion all who would not accept the superstitions and errors of the old church, reaffirmed in the most offensive form. There was now no alternative… A separate organization was necessary, and the first evangelical church in Turkey was duly instituted in Constantinople on 1 July 1846, followed immediately by others at Nicodemia, Adabazar, and Trebizone. Protestantism now first flung its banners to the breeze; henceforth a power in the Empire (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxi).

It seems clear that the first American and British missionaries' approach towards the Orthodox churches was to convince them of the superiority of Protestantism rather than actually identifying with them. They "failed utterly to appreciate the power and tenacity of this peculiar oriental spirituality" (Scudder 1998:29, 31).

The office of the British Ambassador, Lord Stratford Canning de Redcliff, lobbied the Sultan to give the Protestants their official legal status as a separated *millet*, or people, and in 1850 a charter was signed by the Sultan, placing Protestants on the same basis as other Christian communities within his domain (The Gospel, AR 1878:xxi). The establishment of this new, Protestant denomination would have far-reaching missiological effects. The problem was that the Sultans ruled their Greek and Armenian *millets* through their respective Patriarchs. Suddenly, all evangelicals ceased to be Armenian or Greek or Arab or Assyrian, and fell into the legal category of "Protestant" (Meyer 1986:41-42). This creation of a separate "Protestant *millet*" would, as we will see, taint the word "Protestant" in the Turkish mind, leaving a negative impression which has lasted into modern times.

In time other evangelical congregations of people "saved" from Orthodoxy and organized along the American individual-congregational pattern appeared. This Orthodox Background Protestant (OBP) movement naturally identified very closely with its American sponsors, which helps explain why it absorbed so much of their educational and medical efforts.

> Between the years 1859 and 1909 remarkable progress was made in the work of the American Board in Turkey. The evangelical churches increased from 40 to 140, including 17 Greek and 19 Bulgarian churches: the number of church members increased from some 1277 to 15748; the registered Protestants increased from 7000 to 54000 (Greene 1916:155).

These triumphant figures hide the fact that although the number of registered Protestants was 54,000, at the best of times only 16,009 of these were actually church members (see section 2.2.1.1.). Furthermore, they cloud the fact that missionaries found themselves on a narrow path that allowed little room for maneuver: they were not welcome in the Orthodox churches and unable to work with "the Mohammedans" directly, at least on their own terms. So they ended up ministering to those Orthodox Christians who "came out" from the ancient tradition to form western-style "evangelical" churches (see Blincoe 1998:34, 62).

From a contemporary perspective one fails to understand how mission leaders failed to foresee that they were bound to split the Orthodox Church. They either did not, or did not want to understand that what the historical churches had wanted was a political ally, not a revival.

> They wanted a Nestorian El Cid or an Armenian Judas Macabees to throw off the chains of Islam and restore their kingdoms. They wanted to take pride in their church again. Pride meant earthly power. The Nestorian priest said he would "accept whatever Church wielded the biggest club" (Joseph 1961:121).

The historic Church seemed to say, "bring an army along with your medicine, and then we shall re-Christianize this region" (Blincoe 1998:107). It did not share the missionaries' vision of Muslim evangelism; in fact, they opposed it. They did not want to share the blessing coming to them from the West with their Muslim neighbors. The "Armenians, Assyrians and Chaldeans were happy when missionaries learned their language, educated their children, employed their graduates, and defended their rights" (:195), but extending these benefits to the Muslim majority was not part of their agenda. "Never did the historical church envision what the missionaries intended, to love their enemies and offer them the Kingdom of God" (:195). As late as 1938, at the World Missionary Conference in Tambaram, the Orthodox Churches' opposition to Muslim evangelism was noted: "Too often [these] churches seem indifferent to Muslim enquirers, or look upon them with suspicion as to their motive in becoming Christians" (Joseph 1961:230). Muslims in their churches was the last thing most Orthodox Christians wanted. They wanted to be rid of Muslims. As long as the Americans appeared as a powerful ally who had come to rescue fellow Christians there was no problem. "But when guns didn't accompany Bibles, they lost interest, for theirs was a tribal Christianity" (Blincoe 1998:111).

The missionaries, of course, did not profess to have earthly power, though their lobbying belied this. For them Christ's power was spiritual, leading to the creation of a "new manhood".

Missionaries complained that their motives were "misunderstood", that they were invariably viewed as forerunners of, say, British conquest (Van Bruinessen 1992:262).

> So a Gordian knot of misunderstanding existed between Muslims and missionaries and between Christians and missionaries. Each saw the other through a fog. Each side needed to misunderstand the other to pursue its own ambitions. It was, as Napoleon said of history, a fable agreed upon. Muslims supposed that missionaries acted as agents of foreign powers. Ethnic Christians supposed that missionaries would deliver them from the rule of Muslims. And missionaries supposed that by educating local Christians, the converts would rise to their privilege of bringing the good news to Kurds. These three—Muslims, Christians, and missionaries—persisted in their courses, like ships that could not be steered after their initial courses were set (Blincoe 1998:112).

The evangelical mission-sponsored churches experienced a marked economic lift for, as noted, the Armenians, Chaldeans and Assyrians who joined the missionaries enjoyed the bulk of the financial, educational and medical advantages that flowed from their close ties to the mostly American missionary community. Hence, they, more than any, gained the benefits that came from a western education, including the embracing of democratic ideals (Eddy 1913:119). However, even in their own evangelical churches the missionaries failed to stimulate a general interest in Muslim evangelism (Vander Werff 1977:125).

The Board's original concept was, of course, a delaying action and a shifting of responsibility. At no time did the Board concentrate on training its own missionaries in Islamics or on procuring evangelists of Muslim background. Instead, they worked to strengthen the Armenian Evangelical Church, the Jacobite Evangelical Church, and the Assyrian Evangelical Church. It became a mission to Christians. Referring to their work in eastern Anatolia, Blincoe maintains that missionaries built Christian schools and churches, brick by brick, while the Muslim Kurds were left to themselves (see Blincoe 1998:35,118). As for the rest of Turkey, Grattan Greary, editor of *The Times of India*, noted while traveling through Turkey in 1878 that

> the missionaries themselves freely admit that they cannot make any impression upon the Mohammedan population in the way of conversion. Their efforts in this direction have hitherto resulted in a failure that would be very discouraging but for the success attained in quickening and strengthening the religious life amongst the native Christians and giving a valuable impulse to education (Greary 1878:174).

Since the missionaries did not model their own ideal of Muslim evangelism in real life, the evangelical congregations which were torn from the Orthodox churches could simply ask, "Do you want us as residents to do what you as missionaries will not attempt?"

Occasionally a missionary or Protestant convert did become a zealous and courageous evangelist to Muslims, but for the vast majority the walls of prejudice and fear which had existed between the Christian and Muslim communities for over a millennium were too high to scale. In

the end, Protestant churches did little more than the Catholic or Orthodox churches had done to confront Muslims with the claims of Christ (Blincoe 1998:193-194). The Great Experiment proved a failure as a means of evangelizing Muslims. It was more than a failure; it led to a clash of civilizations of such proportions that it would contribute to calamity.

2.3.3. The Empowerment of Christian Minorities > Muslim majority felt threatened > massacres

The empowerment of people who, up to that time had managed to survive because they had kept a low profile, created tremendous friction. The missionaries may not have seen themselves as representatives of an earthly power, but the Muslim tribes around them certainly did (see Blincoe 1998:35), a perception re-enforced by the fact that the missionary community was quick to communicate their concerns about the abysmal treatment of the Christian minorities in Anatolia to their own embassies and politicians.

During an unfortunate and complicated series of events between 1843 and 1845 tension between the Kurds and the Christians reached a climax. The issue, described in detail by Newshirwan (1992), pertained to the refusal of the Christian *dhimmis*, who were exempt from military service but had to pay a heavier tax, to pay that tax to their Kurdish overlords who were preparing to fight the Turkish army. Kurdish leaders held the missionaries partly responsible for "this act of betrayal". When the Kurds prepared to resist the Turkish attack, Nur Allah Beg, the Emir of Hakkari, sent a letter to patriarch Mar Shimun to negotiate an agreement. An English missionary named Badger frustrated this attempt; not only did Badger not let Mar Shimun see Nur Allah Beg, he made Mar Shimun ask the Sultan to come and suppress the Kurds (Newshirwan 1992:265). The fact that the British consuls at Van and Mosul also encouraged the Nestorians not to pay their taxes exacerbated matters. In the ensuing tension, the head of the Nestorians asked for help from the Archbishop of Canterbury (:262). The Ottoman authorities, suspecting missionaries such as Asahel Grant and Badger of stirring up a Nestorian separatist movement, then gave their blessing to a Kurdish attack on the Nestorians. Some 800 Nestorians, including members of the patriarchal family, perished immediately and by 1845 some 10,000 Nestorians, a fifth of their number, had perished in the first major conflict between native Christians and Muslims of modern times (Blincoe 1998:44).

Missionary meddling in local political waters continued. As late as 1870 the British consul at Erzurum conveyed to his counterpart in Tabriz the charge by the Turkish governor that "the American missionaries were exciting the hopes of the mountain Nestorians respecting political aid from England" (Joseph 1961:92).

The building of missionary compounds was, at times, seriously misunderstood. In 1842, when Asahal Grant built his compound in Hakkari, news of the building traveled to the surrounding Kurds who "were more than irritated; in fact, they felt threatened" (Van Bruinessen 1992:180). When windows, the first ever seen in the area, were installed local Kurds thought they were seeing a fort (qal'ah) with holes from which the missionary could fire a rifle. Grant himself attributed the "wild reports of my building castles" to "jealousy indulged by surrounding Koords of the influence of foreign Christians". "The Kurds perceived Grant and his friends as government agents protecting the Christians… The unfortunate thing is that Grant's mission was nothing but 'political' in the eyes of both the Kurds and the Turks" (Joseph 1961:59,61).

Local aghas were not the only ones who feared the empowerment of minorities. The Sultan, whose empire was crumbling at the edges, was in no mood to see yet more of his Christian minorities—particularly those who lived in the Anatolian heartland—empowered. He too mistrusted the missionary community and for good reasons. During the summer of 1918, for instance, "indiscreet American missionaries diverted some $100,000 in relief funds to support a 'Christian army'" of refugees to support the British against the Turks (Daniel 1970:158). One of these missionaries, William Shedd, also the American vice-consul at Urumia, "seriously compromised the American government by signing in his capacity as vice consul an offer to pay the bills of the Christian army" (:158) and "issued orders summoning 'every young man who has a rifle' to join the Christian army 'without delay or excuse', an action which Shedd admitted was 'directly in contravention' of orders of the State Department" (:158).

The Sultan was, of course, keenly aware that down in Egypt, Muhammed Ali had created an army more powerful than his own by importing French advisors. The last thing he wanted was that his restive Christian Anatolian minorities and Arab provinces become further educated in Western social values and political thought. That, of course, was exactly what the missionary educational system was doing, along with the promotion, particularly among the Armenians and the Arabs, of their distinctive cultures. Armenians who formerly only spoke Turkish began to use their native tongue while the standardization promoted by the American mission press enabled Armenians across the Empire to communicate more easily with one another. "The American contribution to Armenian and Arab nationalism was cultural, not political, but it was no less effective in making these persons less receptive to the Ottomanization desired… as a means of uniting the disparate subjects of the Sultan" (Daniel 1970:111). This empowerment of the Orthodox minorities led to the missionaries being perceived by the Muslim majority as friends of

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the minorities, agents of western interests, and pawns of their own governments' political agendas. This led to grave consequences, as Newshirwan, a Kurdish writer, notes.

> Among the missionaries were a lot of people seeking goodness, sacrificing themselves and worshipping God… However, all the good attempts of these people in the final evaluation, was part of the strategy of European imperialist countries who were looking to control and occupy the region. In this, the missionaries became pawns, and the Christians of the area the victims without any gains (1992:264).

In 1895 the Turks attempted to destroy the Euphrates College in Harput, "because they regarded it as the means of enlightenment and strength to the Armenians" (Greene 1916:221).

> The outstanding fact in the record of American schools in Turkey, is that they have devoted themselves chiefly to the education of Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians, in other words, to those elements of the population which were always the tacit and often the open enemies of Turkey… As Turkish nationalism developed and finally won a military triumph, the memory of this fact… rendered the Turk oversensitive to any sign on the part of any anti-Turkish national group… The result was two-fold. The Greeks and Armenians were naturally stimulated to work for their political independence, which in turn created the hostility… and the Turks, seeing themselves outstripped in industry and commerce because of the modern education of the Greeks and Armenians, were roused to envy and hatred which easily were fanned into the flames of war and massacre (Ross, Fry & Sibley 1929:164, 165).

With respect to the Arab world Antonius states that "the educational activities of the American missionaries in that early period had… one outstanding merit; they gave the pride of place to Arabic… and because of that, the intellectual effervescence which marked the first stirrings of the Arab revival owes most to their labours" (1961:43). In Istanbul Robert College was particularly effective in preparing non-Turkish people, particularly Bulgarians, for political life. Its Bulgarian graduates were to assume positions of influence—government leaders, majors, diplomats, cabinet ministers and educators (Stevens M & M 1988:406). Sir Edwin Pears noted that "I know of no other instance in history where a single institution has so powerfully affected the life of a nation as Robert College has affected the life of Bulgaria" (quoted 1988:405), while the British journalist and editor W.T. Stead states starkly that "Robert College made Bulgaria" (quoted in :405). Greene agrees: "by reason of the character and influence of its (i.e. Robert College's) graduates, especially of those Bulgarians who had a commanding influence in the new Bulgarian state, the college secured friends, who helped both to meet deficits and erect new buildings" (1916:203). There was another side to this "success":

> As for Robert College, the Bulgarian Affair ended whatever influence it might have had with the Turkish government for decades to come. No more Turkish students attended the college until after the turn of the century. Even today, in the eyes of many Turks, the college is considered the prime mover behind the loss of the Bulgarian provinces (Stevens and Stevens 1988:406).

Although missionaries tried to curb nationalistic fervor in their schools, some students found ways to further their cause in the compounds, thus further implicating the missionary educational enterprise. One of the regulations of the Anatolia College in Marsovan, for instance, stated that no student could belong to a revolutionary society or own a firearm.

> Both regulations are necessary, and both have failed in their purpose from time to time. During the period when Armenian revolutionary societies were active they secured a footing among Armenian students of the College; and these lads and young men, none out of their teens, served the cause with a boldness and secrecy of which they might have been thought incapable… Armenian revolutionaries, desperate men long hunted by the police, reached Marsovan and disappeared there, secreted and fed in the College by student compatriots, their presence not even suspected by others (Childs 1917:55-56).

The students even managed to hide a revolutionary Armenian printing press on the premises. When the Turkish governor got wind of that the staff searched the premises but failed to turn up anything. In spite of repeated searches by the police no press was found. Long afterward it came out that a press that "had been busy throwing off revolutionary matter" had, indeed, existed on the compound, "but was so cunningly hidden, and its operators so loyally screened, that the closest search failed to reveal its whereabouts" (1917:56). Such incidents could only foster the impression that the missionaries were in cahoots with Armenian nationalists. Writing of the Syrian Protestant College (later to become the American University of Beirut), Vander Werff notes that although the school, in its early years, permeated the Near East with revolutionary evangelical and democratic ideas, it did not nurture a Christian ministry or a missionary force willing to reach to Muslims (1977:129).

Belatedly the American Board tried to rectify the situation by establishing a Muslim-friendly girls' schools in Marash. Although it had 17 pupils by 1915 (see Greene 1916:187). the effort was too little, too late. Much too late. Turks and Kurds had turned against both the Christian minorities and the missionary community.

> Trouble first came in the mountain district of Sassun when the Armenians, recently robbed by the Kurds, told the governor they could not pay their taxes. The army, ordered to put down the rebellion, killed more than 900 people in August 1894. When the Sultan saw that the Great Powers could not agree on how to protect the Christians, he went ahead with seemingly deliberate plans to reduce the Armenian population through massacre. From September 1895 until the end of December one massacre followed another throughout the empire… The slaughter of Christians released pent-up hatred and prejudice for the "gavur" or infidel (Meyer 1986:52).

The unilateral empowerment of the minorities was a mistake with dreadful consequences. The details of the Armenian and Nestorian massacres are beyond the scope of this thesis with the exception of one, often overlooked, point: the missionaries' empowerment of Christian minorities

not only failed in terms of evangelizing the Muslim majority, a case can be made that it formed a factor in a series of massacres.

> Kurds slaughtered thousands of Armenians and Nestorians who lived in villages where missionaries labored. This is not to blame the missionaries for the terrorist acts of Kurds. Christians had long suffered the destruction of crops and the loss of their women to raiding Kurds before the missionaries arrived. However, Kurds suspected, and missionaries seemed to confirm, that Christians from the west and Christians in Kurdistan were allying for political purposes (Blincoe 1998:35-36).

A correspondent of a London daily newspaper directly charged that "the American, Catholic and Anglican missionaries were the immediate cause of that outrage" (Joseph 1961:49). British explorer Henry Layard reported that "there are circumstances connected with the massacres of the Nestorians most painful to contemplate" (Van Bruinessen 1992:203).

In 1914 the Young Turks denounced and abrogated the Capitulations, plunged the country into the World War, and implemented their "final solution", the elimination of the Armenians. Until 1914 some 86,000 Armenians lived in the Marash region of southern Turkey; by 1923 none of them remained (Kerr 1973:preface). The Armenian population of the Bitlis region, 150 families, was reduced to zero. In Van, Harput, Diyarbakir, Aintab, Bitlis, Urfa, everywhere in the east, the Armenian population perished. In all, two of every three Armenians perished during World War I. The number of Armenian dead has been put between 750,000 and 1,000,000. The number of Assyrian dead was put at 250,000 (Blincoe 1998:126). Kurds and Turks "fell upon them, especially in the mountains between Mesopotamia and Persia, killed many, and drove others out. Numbers took refuge in Persia" (Latourette 1975:269).

The massacres were a heavy blow to the missionary enterprise. It lost thousands of church members, and hundreds of national workers. "Hence, alas! a Christian people, who were our chief constituency and whose children at great self-sacrifice were sent to our schools and colleges, have, through a most rigorous and cruel deportation, largely disappeared from the sight of men" (Greene 1916:160). The missionary infrastructure (stations, hospitals, schools, and churches) were badly damaged, and no permission was given to rebuild (Meyer 1986:57).

> Congregations could not attend church services nor send their children to school. Those who had been educated at mission schools and survived the massacres and deportations of Christians wanted to leave Turkey. Many went to America. This was a great handicap for the mission. From one college which graduated forty-four theological students, the mission gained for Christian work only four (1986:57).

The relationship between the Armenian massacres and the missionaries was certainly not willful nor necessarily direct. Nevertheless, misunderstandings abounded, and impressions create the type of reality people act on. The missionaries consoled themselves with the notion that

God's time for missionary work among Muslims had not yet come. They seemed not to have comprehended their role in these nasty affairs, placing all the blame on the "unreasoning" Turk for failing to appreciate the empowerment of the Armenian people:

> The Turks, however, observed that of all the races in Turkey the Armenians have profited most from the facilities of education afforded in the schools opened by Americans and that by their intelligence, skill and industry the Armenians have forged ahead. Hence, alas! Certain Turks conceived an unreasoning jealousy and a cruel suspicion of the Armenians… Certain Turks… formed the unholy and awful determination to exterminate those whom they esteemed rivals and whom they suspected of disloyalty. The cruel Sultan Abdul Hamid began the work of extermination in 1895, and others, high in authority, planned to complete the work in 1915 (Greene 1916:160).

The missionaries should not have disturbed such fragile peace, mutual understanding and harmony as there was among the various ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire by focusing only on certain groups. Instead, they should have insisted on reaching all sectors of society equally. In spite of government efforts to establish schools for the Turkish population after 1867, for instance, the ratio of students remained much higher among the Christian communities than among the Muslims (Zürcher 2004:78).

> The population should either have remained at the same level of ignorance or else should have progressed together. But American schools had developed democratic ideals among the Greeks and Armenians in Turkey, had given them modern ideas, aroused their initiative and equipped them with the tools of modern life, while the Turks had been left practically in their medieval state of mind (Ross, Fry & Sibley 1929:165).

When their plan failed, the ABCMF "had no Plan B". By investing almost exclusively in the historical churches "they washed out any bridges they may have made to the Muslim majority" (Blincoe 1998:193).

2.3.4. The Response to Christian Apologetic Literature

Protestantism's bold challenge to Islam was Pfander's *The Balance of Truth*. As it set the tone for so much of the apologetic literature and debate that followed, let us take a closer look at the response it evoked. The book's publication in Turkey was ill-timed, which contributed to its hostile reception as well as exacerbating the overall tension between the government and the missionary community. William Goodell, in a letter in 1864, warned of a backlash:

> The Rev. Dr. Pfander, of the Church Missionary Society, a very worthy and excellent man, came and opened his batteries against Islamism. We earnestly advised him not to publish those books; we entreated him not to do it; we solemnly protested against his doing it. But this good brother having what the great Dr. Edwards attempted to prove nobody can have, viz., a self-determining power of the will, went on and did it; and the effect has been to bring all our missionary and Bible operations into great danger,--the very thing of which we had repeatedly warned him (quoted in Prime 1876:431-432).

The Sublime Port was deeply disturbed by Pfander's apologetics and polemics. "If a few Persian copies, which had come into the hands of Turks, had caused such a stir, it was to be expected that the Turkish translation of the work would be far more disturbing. Violent counter-publications against Pfander and his work were issued with the assistance of the government" (Richter 1910:174; see also Western Turkey, AR 1864:61-62). In typical Enlightenment fashion, Pfander appealed to reason, yet he seemed unaware of developments in biblical criticism and theology in the West. This Muslims used to their advantage in their attacks on Christianity (Chapman 1996:102). The best and most widely known response to *The Balance of Truth* is Rahmatullah b. Khalil al-Hindi al-Kairanawi's (1818-1891) *Izhar ul-Haqq* (The Revelation of Truth), written in 1864 or 1865, published in Constantinople in 1867 and translated and published in English in 1900. It is the first great classic of modern Muslim polemics.

Al-Hindi sought to combine traditional Muslim apologetics with new arguments drawn from "modern" Biblical studies. His book contains numerous purported "contradictions" in the Biblical text, 17 reasons for disbelieving why the Bible is inspired, various "proofs" of falsification and abrogation, refutations of the Trinity and divinity of Christ, "proof" that the Qur'an is miraculous and God's word, and "proof" of Muhammed's prophethood (Gaudeul 2000:263-264). The *Izhar ul-Haqq* has been reprinted many times, and continues to be published in numerous languages, including English, something which indicates a need in the Muslim community to defend their faith against the pervasive influence of a European culture they consider to be Christian inspired (2000:263). Thus the Muslim response to Pfander in *Izhar-ul-Haqq* provided Muslims with a sort of apologetic encyclopedia which, in turn, spawned a huge collection of anti-Christian polemics, particularly in Egypt, where, under Muhammed Ali, there was a certain amount of freedom of expression and intellectual life. A trend of Christian-Muslim dialogue/diatrade as a contest between two Scriptures began and has continued into the present. "The great variety of titles, the multiplication of books and booklets on these subjects show a passionate interest among the public for this type of literature" (:266). It is not possible to study all these books, of which two interesting and early compendiums are *A collection of anti-Christian books and pamphlets found in actual use among Mohammedans of Cairo* (Jeffrey MW 1925:26-37) and *Anti-Christian literature* (Jeffrey MW 1927:216-219). We limit ourselves to a few comments on the most influential responses after the *Izhar*.

The former head of Al-Azhar, Muhammed Abduh's (1849-1905) response to Christianity, which still finds widespread resonance in the Muslim world, is found in *Al-Islam wal-Nasraniyya fil-ilm wal-madaniyya* (Islam and Christianity in their attitude to Science and Civilizaton). This

collection of articles claims to prove that Christianity is anti-scientific and irrational, that it invites people to turn their backs on the world and persecutes scholars. Abduh attributes Europe's scientific progress to secret societies (Freemasons), and its de-Christianization to internal dissent and the French Revolution. Islam, on the other hand, is presented as rational and scientific, even if it went through periods of stagnation. A return to true Islam should, according to Abduh, lead to renewed scientific progress (Gaudeul 2000:268).

Abduh's opinions about Christianity and his link between Islam and science were hugely important in the formation of the Muslim opinion of Christianity, and led to an abundance of popular literature and pamphlets which aimed to show that all scientific discoveries are contained in the Qur'an (an approach similar to that of "Concordism", which was in favor in some Christian circles in the 1850s) (2000:270).

The critique of Christianity would become sharper yet. Abduh's disciple, Rashid Rida's (1865-1935) attitude toward Christianity was even more confrontational and "marked a return to mediaeval (sic) lines of argument strangely presented with a modern vocabulary" (:271). Muhammed Tawfiq Sidqi's (d. 1920) writings are also marked by concordism between Islam and science, a violent hatred of Christianity and, in order to show that the Christian Jesus is not the real Jesus, attacks the person of Jesus himself, something rarely done by Muslim apologists (:272).

In April 1854 Pfander held two public debates with al Hindi al-Kairanawi. Typical of many such debates which followed afterwards, many Christians hailed it as a victory while the Muslim verdict was that Pfander "suffered a humiliating defeat" (Chapman 1998:102).

2.3.5. Positive Responses

So was the enterprise to convert Muslims an unmitigated failure? There is no disputing the fact that throughout this period there were Muslim individuals who converted to Protestantism, particularly during the period of relative freedom during and immediately after the Crimean War (1854-56). While the liberal climate lasted, some Muslims inquired openly about the Christian faith, many bought Bibles, and some converted and lived to tell about it! Hard numbers are impossible to come by and only a few written accounts from the period remain. Writing in 1859 Goodell mentions that some twenty "Mussulmans" had been baptized in Constantinople. One of these, a certain Selim Efendi, changed his name to Edward Williams. He was summoned before the Sultan to answer the charge of apostasy, but the missionaries helped him escape to Malta. When he returned in 1857 government officials carefully examined him and his wife, finally giving them a certificate stating they had become Christians of their own free will. His

subsequent baptism caused a stir. Later an evangelist for the American Board, Selim Efendi, now Edward Williams, witnessed to many Muslims (Prime 1876:426). His obituary was published in the Board's Annual Report for 1865 (Western Turkey Mission, AR 1865:69).

Goodell later states that an increasing number of Turks "seem to be Bible Christians, spiritually minded, who, with no teacher but the Bible, have become wise unto salvation". He is not able to guess "how many hearts are thus affected", but "if they be counted only by hundreds, or even scores, it is still a great work" and notes that "a nephew of one of the pashas here, who lives with his uncle, and who was educated by him to be one of the four great Mollahs of the empire, is a candidate for Christian baptism" (Prime 1876:425-426). The Annual Report of 1860 notes that "At Diarbekir, on the Tigris, a Turk has declared himself a Christian; and in Kharpoot a captain in the army openly proclaims Christ crucified as the only Savior of men. Many Turks in the latter region purchase the New Testament, and some the whole Bible" (Northern Armenian, AR 1860:62). That same report states that

> Six converts from Mohammedanism have been baptized… One was an Imam, seventy years of age. Another… a near relative of one of the late highest ministers of Government. These transactions have taken place openly, with the knowledge of the Government, and without serious disturbances. The whole number of baptized adult converts from Mohammedanism, in Constantinople, is above fifteen (:62).

Cyrus Hamlin describes a remarkable visit of government authorities to a Muslim family recently baptized. After ascertaining their freedom of choice, they were left unmolested (Vander Werff 1977:123). Muslims started visiting the homes of missionaries without fear and in substantial numbers. The Annual Report of 1865 tells of a certain Ahmed who "stood firm against solicitations, tempting offers, severe treatment, and alarming threats". After three months imprisonment he was exiled for two months, lived in Adrianople, "where the Mohammedan population… is distinguished for its liberality of sentiment", and where he "found no hindrance to a free proclamation of his faith, and the reason for it, as a Christian". He was then permitted to return to Constantinople, and "he has not been seriously molested in his labors among his countrymen" (Western Turkey, AR 1865:68).

During the 1860s missionaries in Anatolia also reported conversions and that no trouble ensued. George Herrick of Bebek Seminary wrote, "quite a number of Mohammedans have renounced Islam and become true Christians; many more are soberly inquiring after the truth; and many others are turning unsatisfied from a religion which cannot save, or wavering in a merely nominal devotion to Islamism" (quoted by Vander Werff 1977:123).

Conversions also took place before and after that remarkable, albeit brief, period of freedom after the Crimean War. The Annual Report of 1843 notes that "individual Turks are

occasionally found, who take an interest in the labors of the protestant missionaries, as directed against the image worship and intemperance of the degenerate Christians around them" (Asia, AR 1843:99). The records record a number of such conversion stories, though the number was never sufficient in any one place to allow the formation of a MBP church (with the temporary exception of North Africa; see below). Blincoe tells of the remarkable conversion and martyrdom of a certain Sheikh Baba, who was regarded as a holy man by many fellow Kurds. He was baptized and, as a result of his conversion, opened the villages under his control to missionary work. His conversion was reported to the Turks, and when he refused to deny Christ he was hung to a tree and left there until the birds had picked his body clean (Blincoe 1998:58). Richter tells of a Muhammed Shukri, born in 1861 and still living at the time of Richter's writing in 1910, who was converted, changed his name to Johannes Awetaranian, and became a missionary for the German Orient Mission in Bulgaria (1910:161).

The Presbyterian Syrian Mission made some attempts to reach the Bedouin Arabs of Northern Arabia between 1890 and 1900. In spite of the fact that most of these attempts were frustrated, there were two outstanding Muslim converts to Christianity. Jedaan Owad (baptized Feb. 21, 1889) and Kamil Aietany (baptized Jan. 1890) both received theological training and returned to evangelize the Arab tribes in Syria, near Homs and Hama. Kamil became known as an "apostle to the Muslims". With James Cantine and Samuel Zwemer he explored southern Arabia and the Gulf, and pioneered at Basrah (Vander Werff 1977:127). Another convert from Islam, a certain Fetullah Keiffi Efendi, became an assistant in the newspaper publishing department of the American Board. "He became convinced of the truth of Christianity by reading the Bible… Many Turks know that he was a Christian, but so gentle were his manners and so sweet his spirit that no one molested him" (Greene 1916:313).

The Scottish Mission in Aden baptized a sheikh in 1902 and, in 1908, admitted six more to the church. Others followed. "One of these, Ahmed Sa'eed Affara, baptized at the age of 19, studied medicine in Edinburgh, and returned to witness as a dedicated Christian physician in his home country (Vander Werff 1977:174). Fossum, of the Lutheran Orient Mission, records that

> In a certain village the first baptism stirred up a petty persecution, but nineteen more [baptisms] within a year were passed over with little adverse comment. And in another part of the mountains a young man after having given himself over to Christ brought one by one all the five members of his own immediate family and four more distant relatives. In both these cases the converts remained in their own villages going on with their ordinary occupations (quoted in Blincoe 1998:142).

The American Mission in Egypt, though its ministries were chiefly among the Copts, reported that, by 1907, it had baptized 140 adult Muslims (Zwemer 1907:217). The moving story

of Egypt's most prominent convert from Islam, Makhail Mansur (d. 1918), is described in a eulogy published in *The Moslem World* of 1919. He became an evangelist to Muslims (Hunt MW January 1919:19-23). By 1907 almost all missions stations in North Africa reported of conversions (Zwemer 1907:217). In 1906 in Fez, Morocco, some 30 Muslims converted to Christianity, of which two men and one woman were baptized (:217). Nine or ten converts were employed as colporteurs in that city (:217). Zwemer goes on to tell of various other individuals and small groups of Muslim background believers in North Africa, including a group of 18 at Shebin el Kom, of which 10 members "met around the Lord's Table at midnight, and dedicated themselves afresh to God; seven years ago there was not a single convert there" (:218).

Greene tells about a young Muslim who was so struck by the person and atoning sacrifice of Jesus that he became a Christian. After being arrested and exiled twice he was sent to college in the United States. There he changed his name to Paul Newman. Paul, because he admired the apostle, Newman because he had become a new man in Christ. "Does any one ask, 'Can a Turk be converted?' Paul Newman is the answer. Thanks be to God that there are not a few such Turks, and by the grace of God more are to follow" (Greene 1916:63-65). H. H. Jessup testifies to a regular trickle of former Muslims whom he personally baptized.

> On the 26th of December I baptized a young Mohammedan convert from near Acre. He gave good evidence of being an intelligent and sincere Christian. His Christian name was Naamet-Ullah Abdul Messiah. The statement so often made that there are no converts from Islam is easily refuted. The facts cannot be published at the time, lest the ignorant and fanatical populace, incited by their sheikhs, take the lives of the converts. I have baptized no less than thirty males and females. Some are unmolested, but the majority had to flee from the country. The whole number of converts of whom I have knowledge is between forty and fifty (1910:616-617).

Elsewhere he shares that he baptized "two intelligent Moslems in Beirut, both of whom had to leave the country" (:565). One recanted. Later he baptized two more converts, "one of whom has persevered and become a faithful and exemplary man in his profession" (:572). In 1916 the *Missionary Herald* carried the story of a certain Mahmud, an imam, who became a Christian when studying English with a Christian teacher. He was prosecuted but the case fell through (Barton MH 1916:62-64).

For several years a subsection called "the Mohammedans" appeared in the annual reports. By 1861, however, that section became rather short, noting that "disappointments and trials have attended the work among the Turks in Constantinople…. The whole number baptized is twenty-three, in Constantinople. Some indications of an outbreak of persecution have at times appeared, but no serious acts of that character have occurred" (Mission to Western Turkey, AR 1861:47).

By the following year the section had disappeared altogether. However, in 1867 a Mr. Charles Tracy, an American Board missionary in Marash, wrote the following in a letter:

> If people ask for results we can give them. Protestants are more trusted and respected than anybody else; once they were stoned and spit upon. The pasha now rises up when the missionary visits him, and shows him great deference; once he treated him as a dog. Armenians have to reform their creeds to keep up with the spirit of the times. A born Mohammedan may profess Christianity in the capital and not lose his head. These are results. We are satisfied (quoted in Greene 1916:213).

Only the very last observation was in line with the original goal of seeing large numbers of Muslims won to the Christian faith. The fact that "a born Mohammedan may profess Christianity in the capital and not lose his head" indicates that there were such individuals. That, in the light of everything written about the missionary effort thus far, seems remarkable. Their numbers, in terms of percentage of population, were negligible, and no permanent congregations of MBPs were formed (with the exception of the work in the Arabian Peninsula—see next chapter). Nevertheless, the fact that there *were* conversions seemed to hold out the hope that, one day, there might be a breakthrough.

2.4. What were/are the missiological implications?

Before looking at the missiological implications of this era, it is important to note that the common complaint that it was illegal to target Muslims was not true. During most of the period in question there were certainly strict legal constraints, parameters within which the missionary had to operate. However, these did not make the job impossible. The authorities prohibited public preaching, but they did not prevent private conversations, educational and medical efforts, the establishment of clubs and societies, or the sale of Scriptures. It was only when missionaries aggressively targeted Muslims using methods they themselves were comfortable with that they evoked the violence which "extinguished prospects of a direct approach to Muslims in Turkey" (Vander Werff 1977:123).

Having said that, we return to our original question: Can we attribute the failure of missions to the Muslim world in this period to the "hardness of the Muslim heart" or the notion that "God's time for the Muslim world hasn't yet come"? Or did those 19th century missionaries so inoculate the Muslim world against Christianity that they resist it to this day? Was the basis for the large-scale Muslim's rejection of the Christian message essentially theological, or was it based on a history of socio-political and cultural misunderstandings and clashes?

Huntington states that conflict, rather than blending, seems the norm between cultures today (1996:129). The Ottoman Empire was a cultural mosaic which, for centuries, had lived in

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reasonable harmony. Huntington also asserts that religion seems to be the most powerful source of such conflict (:101). This assertion was particularly true of the missionary community. It was their aggressive export of western Enlightenment values combined with the gospel which the Muslim world reacted against. In other words, Huntington's contention that the clash between Islam and the West is rooted in the contradictory natures of Islam and Christianity (:209-218) is, for this period, true inasmuch as the Christianity exported was an amalgam of Christian and non-Christian values which Westerners, missionaries included, held to be of universal value. The Muslim world reacted strongly against this imposition. What, one wonders, would the reaction have been to a presentation of Christianity shorn of its Enlightenment trappings? What lessons can we learn?

2.4.1. Missionaries Tied their Cart to the Wrong Horses

The first and most obvious lesson is that Christian mission to Muslims cannot be done by proxy, via ministry to other Christians. The Muslim majority just didn't care what went on inside the world of their *millets*. "The Mussulman leaves the missionaries alone, caring as little whether one sect of Christians goes over to another as he does if a dog leaves one street for another" (Childs 1917:151). The fact that Muslims must be targeted directly is also important because missionaries identify with those they minister to, to the point of absorbing their host culture's attitudes toward neighboring peoples. Hence missionaries ministering to Christian minorities tended to have a low view of Muslims and their religion, something compounded by Western derision of Islam, leading them to compare the worst in Islam with the best of the West. Interestingly, those few missionaries, such as the Lutherans, who ministered directly to Muslims were much more positive in their assessment. Although this fact became obvious during the course of the century, the American Board did not attempt to remedy the situation by, for instance, concentrating on training its own missionaries in Islamics (Vander Werff 1977:123).

But the issue went deeper than the failure to train missionaries in Islamics. Even such Islamists as Pfander were incapable of separating Western culture, perceived as equivalent to "Christendom", from Christianity. Certain of the cultural superiority of Western Christendom, they were convinced that Islam would crumble under its weight. As Huntington points out, however, many indigenous cultures, including those of the Middle East, proved to be remarkably resilient (1996:28-29; 110-116). They were sufficiently turned off by major features of Western culture to become careful about what they would accept and what they would reject. Dwight points out that the "moral deterioration" many Turks experienced when in prolonged contact with Westerners resulted in "the strengthening of the repulsion felt by Turks toward the West

(1901:194-195). In other words, by identifying Christianity so closely with Western culture the missionary tied his cart to another wrong horse, for Western civilization failed the missionary—as it was bound to do.

One illustration of this inter-civilizational clash between 19th century Protestantism and Islam was their respective ideas on the importance of the individual vis-à-vis the community, a difference recognized but scorned by missionaries: "The hope of the West is in the aspirations of the individual. The purpose of the East is that the mass shall always repress and overwhelm the aspiring individual" (Dwight 1901:161-162). This focus on the individual, so evident in boarding school environments, where students were totally removed from their community, clashed with Middle Eastern ideas of cultural solidarity. Nationals who spent their formative years in such schools absorbed the values of the sponsoring culture and were thus estranged from their own communities—little wonder there was little appetite among the Muslim majority to send their kids to schools where their sons and daughters would be nurtured to stand emancipated and autonomous against a community soaked in religious values.

Another instance of two cultures clashing was in their view of government. The Middle Easterner typically does not view government as existing for the sake of the people, as the lobbying missionary community did. Although lobbying undoubtedly created short-term results, the pay-off was costly, for missionaries came to be perceived as pioneers of Western imperialistic expansion (Bosch 2003:303-304). Although missionaries denied they were government pawns, once again the Muslim majority perceived it to be so and, "in this case, perceptions made a new reality" (Blincoe 1998:116) with the consequence that in the Muslim mind Christianity became inextricably linked with the West.

Tragically, the missionary community, wedded to Western ways, were loath to accommodate even simple cultural matters. Dwight tells a tragic-comic story about headgear. Before pith helmets were imported from India, Europeans residing in Constantinople wore a type of white turban as sun-hats, and "found themselves treated with marked consideration by the common people." Initially there was "some mystery about the subtle homage and about a tendency to defer questions to them for a decision". It turned out that common people took the turban "to have the same significance when worn by a foreigner as when used by Turks", i.e., as a symbol of being educated, and thus commanding "the respect which knowledge of bookish mysteries always evokes among people who have heard of its power" (Dwight 1901:199). When pith helmets came in vogue turbans were abandoned, and with them the respect of the people. Reason prevailed, inasmuch as pith helmets were cooler and less troublesome to wrap around the

head. However, the missionaries did not seem to grasp that in the Middle East, "the book is judged by its covers", and thus failed to contextualize even in such simple matters of dress and lifestyle. Dwight tells another anecdote about the perception of foreigners as lacking in compassion because they appear not to care about beggars coming door to door:

> Foreigners give to these beggars until they begin to find them out, and then they commonly resort to more systematic methods of charity, giving freely for the really needy whose case has been investigated, but utterly refusing to give to the professionals. As a result—and this illustrates one of the curious phases of Western influence upon the Oriental—the foreigner is understood by the people at large to have no compassion. I have often heard a native say to a beggar who was ringing at the door of a foreigner's house, Don't wait there. It is an English house. They never give alms (Dwight 1901:170)

It wasn't until the turn of the century that some began to realize that the concepts "reason" and "Western civilization" were insufficiently solid bases for missionary work.

> We must therefore turn sadly away from the hope that mere civilization is the redeeming force which will raise the people of this city to the place of importance in the world which they might hold… The wise are hardened and made more bitter in their natural repulsion toward everything spoken to them as in the voice of the West (1901:197).

The carnage of World War I would really drive the point home.

In short, there was no clash of civilizations between nation states, between "West" and "East"; it existed between the missionary community and the host culture. The West did not feel threatened by the Middle East, and the Arab Muslim Middle East (but not the Arab Christian Middle East) by and large rejected Western social values while seeking to adopt its technology. Turkey, under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk, would, after World War I, embrace western secularism while reacting strongly against Christianity in general and the missionary community in particular. More about that in the next chapter.

After World War I missionaries—for a season—turned their back on the notion of Western cultural superiority. But by then the damage had been done. The sense of "cultural imperialism" which came into being prior to the Great War continues to be one of the primary sources of anti-Christian sentiments in the Islamic world. In the light of the above, Bosch's seemingly harsh verdict of the "Enlightenment missionary", when applied to the 19th century missionary to the Ottoman Empire, rings true:

> The most seriously negative aspect was perhaps… the almost total absence of any ability to be critical about their own culture or to appreciate foreign cultures. The problem was that the advocates of mission were blind to their own ethnocentrism. They confused their middle-class ideals and values with the tenets of Christianity. Their views about morality, respectability, order, efficiency, individualism, professionalism, work, and technological progress, having been baptized long before, were without compunction exported to the ends of the earth. They were, therefore, predisposed not to appreciate the cultures of the people to whom they went—the unity of living and learning; the profundity of folk

> wisdom; the proprieties of traditional societies—all these were swept aside by a mentality shaped by the Enlightenment which tended to turn people into objects, reshaping the entire world into the image of the West, separating humans from nature and from one another, and "developing" them according to Western standards and suppositions (2003:294).

2.4.2. The Clash of Apologetics

As we have seen, Pfander began a tradition of tit-for-tat attacks, arguments and polemics which raised important questions about the value of purely religious debate and the role of apologetics in Christian-Muslim dialogue. First of all there is the question of whether religious debate can take place without addressing the many social and political issues (the clash of civilizations issues) between the two communities. Secondly, there is the question of presuppositions. Muslims, for instance, are quick to attack the veracity, inspiration and divine authority of the Bible. Since they usually take the initiative in attacking the Bible, Christians are on the defensive from the start, having to respond to terms they don't necessarily hold, notably the Muslim concept of infallibility. Even theologically conservative Christians will readily concede, for instance, that there are some slight errors in today's copies of the original text. By making that concession, however, they appear to their Muslim protagonist to have conceded that the Biblical text is not infallible. In other words, when Pfander *et al* encouraged Muslims to think that Christians view the Scriptures in Muslim terms, i.e., as the very words of God recited by the Prophet, the Muslim reader has a problem because the Bible is, in fact, radically different from the Qur'an. Thus, by allowing themselves to be drawn into a comparison of competing Scriptures, the missionary makes it much more difficult for himself to explain the fundamental difference between the two faiths with respect to their understanding of God's self-revelation to mankind. The difference, of course, is that Islam holds that God's supreme revelation came in the form of a book, the Qur'an, while Christianity holds that God's supreme revelation came in the form of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The work of Pfander and Tisdall is still sometimes referred to by missionaries who consider religious polemic and debate a desirable method of evangelism (Zebiri 2000:97). Recent examples are the late Ahmed Deedad's verbal conflicts with such evangelical apologists as Josh McDowel in which, once again, debating was used as a weapon, not as an instrument used to pursue mutual understanding (Gaudeul 2000:267). However, many missionaries feel that Pfander's work is outdated. They are critical of the rationalist and polemical methods that his work exemplifies and regret the response that it evoked. "Contemporary missionaries often feel that to disparage Muhammad is both unnecessary and counter-productive, and those who focus on practical ways of 'reaching Muslims' sometimes point out that to win an argument may mean to lose a friend" (Zebiri 2000:98).

2.4.3. There were converts!

There were converts! In spite of everything, converts were won throughout the period, particularly during the brief times when the socio-political climate was more liberal. Child's contention that "the Turk… finds that the missionaries do not try to proselytize among them, and they have not the smallest fear of the Mussulman voluntarily becoming a Christian" (Childs 1917:150) is not altogether true. There were just enough positive responses to keep the flame of hope alive. The venture was not an unmitigated failure! Although the response was greatest when political pressure was lightest, there were converts even at times and in areas where, humanly speaking, the social-political environment did not allow Muslims to respond positively to the Gospel of Christ.

What drew these few into the Christian fold? We explore this subject in Chapter 6. Suffice it to say at this point that many of them evidently had one thing in common: "they were on a personal journey to find God. These few elect souls wanted to know God, and they had an extraordinary desire for the truth" (Blincoe 1998:203). The Muslim convert Ahmet Sa'eed Affara testifies that, for him, it was the attraction of Christ and the true liberty found in Him that prompted faith and obedience (Vander Werff 1977:174). For others it was the words of the Bible itself. The famous Egyptian convert Makhail Mansur, when looking for a worthy Christian opponent with whom he could debate, was given a Bible, which he proceeded to read.

> The words of the Book burned like fire in his soul—an effect which the Koran had never had, though he knew it by heart. He soon became a genuine and earnest seeker for the truth. He grew haggard while he wrestled with doubts and fears and perplexities, and worked his way through theological problems. Like Saul of Tarsus he could see all his past and all his prospects falling in ruins at his feet if he became a Christian. But in the course of time the revolution took place, and the proud Moslem Sheikh became a follower of the lowly Nazarene (Hunt MW 1919: 20)

Later, in his own capacity as a Christian witness to Muslims, many of them students from al-Azhar, Mansur sought to apply the teachings of the Bible to the concerns of his audience (1919:22).

* * * * *

The failure of missions to the Muslim world during the late Ottoman period cannot primarily be attributed to "hardness of the Muslim heart". If anything, their hearts were hardened by a long, tragic history of Christian provocations. A few hardy missionaries survived the debacle of World War I and would try to develop a more contextualized approach along with an ecumenical concern for the world of Islam.

Chapter 3

1919-1946: Arab Nationalism and the Veterans

The harsh reality of the missionary endeavor to the Near East in the post-World War I period was that it suffered a virtual collapse. A decline in personnel in the Ottoman Empire's Arab provinces was already evident prior to World War I. Temple Gairdner, writing in 1912, stated that "since 1904 we have only been asking for one such recruit and in 1912 he is still not in sight" (quoted in Padwick 1929:233). In 1914 he noted that "we are today weaker than we were in 1907, and reinforcements even now not so much as in sight" (:233). During the war various organizations, mostly German, folded, and upon the conclusion of the post-war short-term relief efforts American and British missionaries also left in large numbers. Surveys reveal that such forces as remained were concentrated "in a few main centers resulting in a corresponding neglect of vast areas" and that the "preoccupation of a majority of missionaries with appointed tasks in institutions… leaves the number definitely devoting their whole time to work for Muslims very small indeed (Mott IRM 1924:327, 328).

Organizations working in Turkey, such as the American Board, not only had to reduce their ministries to a fraction of what they were before, they also had to purge what was left of any overt Christian witness in their remaining educational and medical institutions. The government took over control of staff appointments while Parliamentary Bills forbade "all forms of Christian teaching in hospitals, schools or charitable institutions" and forced them "to provide Islamic teaching for their Muslim students" (Morrison IRM 1946:28). The post-war records are poignant testimony to the desperate state of affairs:

> A cursory view of the missionary history of Turkey in the past ten years indicates steady retrogression and the elimination of missionary activities… there has been a most terrible overthrow of Christianity throughout Turkey…. Missionaries, pastors, elders, workers, succumbed to famine and disease; properties were misused; schools were closed: it seemed as though the work of a century were to be destroyed (Gairdner IRM 1923:10-11, 16, 18; see also Oldham & Gollock IRM 1918:36-37, 38).

The new, interdenominational evangelical mission agencies which arose during the latter quarter of the 19th and first quarter of 20th century, such as the China Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, and Heart of Africa Mission (later WEC International, of which more later), channeled most of their energy in other, more promising, directions, notably the Orient and sub-Saharan Africa. "In proportion to their importance and extent Protestant missions to Moslems have received vastly less attention, fewer missionaries, and less adequate financial backing than

those to any other great non-Christian religion (Mott IRM 1924:327). As late as 1925 "(Gairdner) still labours almost alone in Cairo" (Hall IRM 1925:401).

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939 such German missionaries as had gone out were, once again, repatriated or interned, while Anglo-Saxon efforts struggled to maintain what little they had going. "Everywhere the work continues under difficulties; staffs and finances are small; sometimes a handful of missionaries, or even only one, will be found in charge of work that formerly engaged the labours of many" (Paton & Sinclair IRM 1942:89).

> In these terrible war years, missions are passing through a winter period… Communications with the fields difficult… activities restricted, missionaries working to the limit of their strength, with no possibility of securing reinforcements, and in too many instances taken away altogether from their work (Westman IRM 1944:87).

It would take over half a century for missions to the region to recover something of the energy and investment in people and finance it had enjoyed in the century prior to the Great War.

As far as analyzing the period within the framework of Huntington's paradigm, the missionary enterprise declined to such an extent that there was little for the Muslim majority to engage and/or clash with. Such efforts as continued were on too small a scale to change the gravely damaged concepts about Christian missions which had emerged in the Muslim mind. The very word "missionary", defined in the Middle East by 19th century events, left a bitter taste. Missions would not become sufficiently viable to consider changing the perception until the modern period.

Everything that follows in this chapter—and in the next—must be seen in the context of this collapse. The missiological importance of the inter-war period lies in the fact that the few missionaries who survived the W.W.I. melt-down (henceforth referred to as "Veterans") and who tried to rebuild the enterprise recognized the damage, realized that huge mistakes had been made, tried to identify those mistakes and learn the appropriate lessons. They grasped the fact that the Enlightenment missionary paradigm had failed, and searched for a different approach. They themselves did not form a sufficiently critical mass to effect a major change of opinion. They did not, however, only lay an alternative foundation upon which their successors could have built, in a few places their labours were rewarded with the emergence of a few, small Christian fellowships composed largely of Muslim background Protestants (MBPs).

3.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the veterans' missionary enterprise?

Before turning to the veterans' analysis of what went wrong, let us take a brief look at the context in which they had to operate. We will remind ourselves, first of all, of a few key socio-political,

cultural and theological developments in the sending countries for, with the exception of Turkey, difficulties encountered in the Levantine host countries were of less import in limiting the scope of missions than realities at home. It was home realities, more than anything, which kept people from going as missionaries to the Middle East and therefore kept the missionary community negligibly small. We then look at the new context which had taken shapen in the Middle East itself.

3.1.1. Socio-Political and Cultural Develoments in the Sending Countries

The shocks of World War I and the interwar period dealt a tremendous blow to long-held beliefs about the superiority of European culture, to the idea that civilization, particularly when influenced by Christianity, inevitably progresses, and to such doctrines as the uniqueness of the Christian religion and faith in a loving and benevolent God. New academic disciplines, notably anthropology, further undermined the notion of the superiority of Western civilization. Frans Boaz loathed 19th century ideas about the superiority of white Westerners, and sought to "free civilization from its own prejudices" (Watson 2000:277). His disciples, Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, "sought to show that all cultures are relative" (:281). Many other civilizations, they held, were less aggressive and didn't suffer from the various social and sexual hang-ups plaguing Westerners. For a comparatively small science, anthropology helped produce the concept of relativism, one of the biggest ideas of the 20th century (:281). Rapid advances in archeology, comparative religion, paleontology, physics, and biology ("Darwinism") seemed to confirm the relative nature of man and the universe he occupies, as well as undermine the intellectual integrity of Christianity; the famous "Scopes" trial (1925) became an apt illustration of the clash of fundamental and liberal worldviews wrestling for the soul of America.

For America the interwar years divide into two halves: the years of plenty (1918-1929) and the years of want (1929-1939). During the "Roaring Twenties" America experienced a period of general prosperity and cultural ferment unlike anything enjoyed by the rest of the world. Conversely, the depression of the "Dirty Thirties" severely limited the financial resources available for such foreign missionary ventures as there were, while Isolationist tendencies turned the country inward. The great social changes of the 1920s led to a social divide that is still evident in America. In 1922 John Dewey warned of a fissure he foresaw between the "East Coast intelligentsia" of educated opinion, and conservative America, or what would later become known as "Middle America" or "the Silent Majority" (Johnson 1996:222) which longed and agitated for the "old American values". This fissure manifested itself in American Protestantism in the post WWI period as "Liberal" and "Fundamentalist" (see 3.1.2).

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Although there was an upsurge in religious revivalism in the "Fundamentalist" camp, with preachers like the fiery Billy Sunday drawing enthusiastic crowds (see 1996:208-209), this, because of the push for Isolationism, did not translate into a concern for the spiritual welfare for the rest of the world, and thus made little contribution to missions in general and even less to missions to the Middle East. In short, missions ceased to be perceived as a heroic, worthwhile enterprise in the popular mind.

Europe's interwar years were very different from the giddy, then sobering, experience of America. The catastrophe of the War, followed by famine, unemployment and inflation confirmed to many people that Marx was right: "Capitalism would collapse under the weight of its own 'insoluble contradictions'" (Watson 2000:224). Marxism and Fascism became the secular faiths for most Europeans. The influence of the church on society became so negligible that neither the Church of England, nor the Lutheran or Catholic Churches of Germany, nor the Russian Orthodox church were able to prevent the near suicide of the continent.

3.1.2. Theological and missiological ferment in the sending countries

In the course of the 19th century the application of historical and literary criticism and the liberal theologies of Friederich Schleiermacher, David F. Strauss, and Albrecht Ritschl created tremendous ferment, while Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) rocked the world. By the turn of the century Herbert Spencer , T. H. Huxley, H. G. Wells and others were applying Darwin's ideas of development, evolution and progress to other fields of study, including religion, which they came to view as a common human experience whose origins and stages of development could be categorized. The leading exponent of the new discipline of comparative religion, Friedrich Max Muller, was strongly critical of the idea of Christian missions, proposing instead "the sympathetic encouragement of adherents of other religions that they might attain new heights". He believed that all religions should co-exist peacefully "until the true religion of the future would provide the fulfillment of all the religions of the past" (Vander Werff 1977:186).

Subsequently a wide range of opinions on what Christian missions ought to look like polarized into "Liberal" and "Conservative-evangelical" groups. Bernard Lucas believed that missions ought to seek the permeation of other cultures with Christian ideals, as opposed to a call to conversion. J. N. Farquhar held that all religions opened up the possibility of faith in God (see Bosch 1991:479). Albert Schweitzer sacrificed a brilliant career in music and theology to engage in humanitarian work in Africa. In 1931, the Appraisal Commission of seven Protestant denominations redefined mission into social and educational, but no longer evangelistic,

objectives. It declared that Christians should "look forward to the continued co-existence of other religions with Christianity, each stimulating the other in growth toward the ultimate goal—unity in the completest religious truth" (quoted in Blincoe 1998:158). In 1932 the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry issued a report, *Rethinking Missions*, written by the liberal William E. Hocking. In it Hocking argued that Western Christian philanthropic service to the emerging Eastern world should replace traditional missionary programs with social action:

> We believe then that the time has come to set the educational and other philanthropic aspects of mission work free from organized responsibility to the work of conscious and direct evangelism. We must be willing to give largely without any preaching; to cooperate with non-Christian agencies for social improvement and to foster the intiative of the Orient in defining the ways in which we all be invited to help (Hocking 1932:70).

This theological ferment had a major impact on missionary praxis in the Middle East. The United Mission in Mesopotamia, formed in 1924 by the merger of The Reformed Church in the United States (German), the Reformed Church in America (Dutch), and the (Northern) Presbyterian Church in the United States abandoned the term "missionary"; the term "fraternal worker", it was felt, better defined its approach (Blincoe 1998:158-159). The UMM did, however, make room for the maverick missionary, Roger Cumberland, who worked for 12 years among the Kurds in Dohuk, northern Iraq. More about him later.

The above-mentioned paper, *Rethinking Missions,* set the tone for the direction of the American Board. It led to the "weeding out" of missionaries holding to "staunch Biblical theology". Evangelicals interested in "winning Muslims to Christ" were no longer welcomed (Meyer 1986:62-63). The American Board reformulated its goals to focus on education, medical and social service (:62) as opposed to evangelism and church planting.

Indications of this new direction were already evident in the 19th century push to provide a liberal arts education in mission schools. Within a generation, in fact, the educational institutions into which the missionary community had expended so much energy and money and which, it had hoped, would lead to the revival of the Orthodox churches and the Christianization of the region, drifted out of the Christian fold. Robert College became Boğazici University and the Syrian Protestant College became the American University of Beirut (A.U.B.). By 1920 Howard S. Bliss, President of A.U.B. and son of the evangelical founder of the school, Daniel Bliss, described "The Modern Missionary" as

> trained in the scientific method… and the broad aspects of Evolution, in Comparative Religion, in the history and philosophy of religion, in the history of civilization, in the Lower and Higher Criticisms, convinced as never before that man's religious belief powerfully affects… man's happiness, usefulness, progress and salvation… Such a missionary would find truth re-echoed in his own heart, reason, and other religions… He

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> does not believe that Christianity is the sole channel through which divine and saving truth has been conveyed… All men who are themselves seeking God and who are striving to lead others to God become his companions and his fellow workers (quoted in Vander Werff 1977:254-255).

These theological challenges forced the Conservative-Evangelicals to rethink their beliefs on the nature of Scripture as well as their theology of missions. Karl Barth held that in Jesus all religions, including Christianity, are under divine judgement. His *Commentary on Romans* (1919), stressed the utter difference of the transcendent God from a mankind so corrupted by sin that knowledge of God can only come by God's revelation of himself. This took place in the unique revelation of God in the incarnate Christ, and in the redemption which accompanies Jesus Christ in his confrontation with men, cultures and religion. In Barth conservative Protestantism received a new sense of direction. A.G. Hogg and D. S. Cairns clung to Christianity's unique claims vis-à-vis other religions, while John R. Mott and Robert Speer "attempted to steer a mediating position between those who generously praised and those who sharply criticized all non-Christian religions" (1977: 254).

The scholarly examination of other religions by theologically conservative thinkers led to a new appreciation of their inner genius. With respect to Islam, the contributions of Temple Gairdner, Samuel M. Zwemer, Hendrick Kraemer and others would lead to a re-evaluation of the host culture's values as well as a revision of evangelical missiological praxis. There were two key aspects in the debate on "What is Mission?" with respect to the Muslim world. The first pertained to the understanding of the core message, the heart of Christianity itself.

> Stripped of accretions, distinguished from the forms which it has acquired through the ages, what is Christianity? It is not race or nationality, though to many Turks 'Christian' and 'Armenian' are synonyms. It is not government, for Christianity is not to be confused with western diplomacy. It is not ecclesiastical organization. The Roman Catholic Church or any other is not to be thought of as identical with Christianity. It is not form of worship. I have heard the similarity of Christians to the devil-appeasing Yezidees (sic) argued on this basis. It is not creed or theology. It is not morality or law or civilization. It is not even a holy Book. How often Christianity has been identified with one of these, and as these when tested stood or failed, Christianity has been considered to have shown its superiority or to have been discredited. How often the Christian missionary has been looked upon as the representative of his race or nation, his government or Church, his theology or ritual, his civilization or morality, or, best of all, his Book (Merrill IRM 1922:554-555).

The second aspect pertained to understanding Islam and Muslims, so that fundamental Christian truths might be communicated in a manner which would elicit the desired response. This, it was recognized, would require a re-evaluation of and a new approach to Islam.

> The record of opinion about Islam is full of misrepresentation. Even when the facts have been superficially correct, Christians have grasped at the worst as typical, and have not

> been disposed to attempt to understand the religious meaning of Islam in the thought of its founder and in the life of devout Moslems today. What if the tables were turned? Would we justify the Moslems in taking our worst deeds, our inferior characters, as typical of Christianity? Instinctively we demand that they take as standards only our best. May they not demand of us the same? (Merrill IRM 1922:555).

It was to these two issues that Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952) and Temple Gairdner (1873-1928), in particular, turned their attention. Both men sought to develop an apologetic and proclamation based squarely on God's revelation in Christ. Gairdner stressed the trustworthiness of the Gospel accounts with respect to the person and work of Jesus Christ: "Islam conducts us to a book which truly was given forth by its founder. Christianity conducts us to a Christ who truly lived, wrought and died, rose again on the third day and passed alive into the unseen" (quoted in Vander Werff 1977:213). Zwemer's was a robust Reformed expression of the Christian faith. He held that the theoretical, humanistic idealism of, say, Hocking's *Rethinking Missions* was full of irresponsible statements which cut the nerve of missions because it undermined the biblical conviction that the living Christ is the sole mediator between God and men (Gairdner had died 4 years prior to the publication of Hocking's 1932 paper). Zwemer looked beyond the modernist-fundamentalist controversy to focus on man's dilemma: sin, and a holy and sovereign God's answer to it in Christ. "God", he wrote, "has divided the light from the darkness, not only in the world of nature but in the world of grace… The attitude of the apostles toward the non-Christian religions is not expressed in gray or twilight shades" (Zwemer 1933:20). When confronted with Islam both men insisted that one must believe that the incarnation and atonement were realities (see, for instance, Zwemer 1920:3). Having said that, however, we will see in both a re-evaluation of the traditionally negative view of Islam which would push missions to the Muslim world onto a new paradigm.

The collapse of the missionary enterprise combined with the social values of the Muslim world also forced the Veterans to recognize the need for interdenominational cooperation.

> It is a sad, but true comment on Protestantism that it produces outstanding individuals rather than a firmly-knit community, and its fissiparous tendency is manifested not merely in Church divisions, but in all sorts of antagonisms even within the same mission circle. But the answer to the Moslem's strong sense of community is not the formation of more scattered and separated groups, but the growth of a deeper spiritual fellowship which can surmount existing barriers and share triumphantly the burders of the persecuted convert (Morrison MW July 1944:206).

Hope for new ecumenical cooperation among Evangelicals was already in evidence at the 1906 Cairo Conference of Missionaries to Muslims organized by Zwemer and Gairdner. For the first time 62 Christian workers from 29 missions societies sat down together in a Muslim land to "inaugurate a more sympathetic, ecumenical Christian attitude and approach to Islam… to discuss

their mission objectives regarding Muslims" (Vander Werff 1977:231). The conference sought to examine the failures of the past, unite the participants in an evangelistic approach, and challenge the whole church to reach out to the Muslim world. Under Zwemer's leadership the conferees were stimulated not only in the spirit of fellowship, but also towards "a greater concern for Islam, the formation of a central literature committee, a specialized training program for missionaries to Muslims in Cairo, and an educational scheme for qualified converts from Islam" (:194).

In conclusion, then, the post World War I period is marked by three important features:

1. Due to political, theological and financial reasons there was precipitous decline in the numbers of new missionaries heading for the Middle East.
2. A significant number of missionary-founded schools and hospitals which survived the debacle of the War drifted from the Christian fold. But—and this is important—*these institutions continued to be perceived as "Christian" by the Muslim majority*, who could not be expected to keep up with internal Christian theological developments.
3. A number of theologically conservative veterans from the pre-war era led the way in reformulating a new evangelical, inter-mission missions strategy for the Arab world.

We focus on the attempts of two of these veterans, Temple Gairdner and Samuel Zwemer, to formulate new goals and strategies. Before we do so, however, let us look at the new socio-political and cultural environment in which they found themselves in the Middle East.

3.1.3. The Socio-political and cultural framework of the Middle East

The First World War had major consequences for the *Dar ul-Islam* (House of Islam). The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the successful Arab revolt, and President Wilson's heady concepts of national self-determination and the rights of small nations created an entirely new set of circumstances. "He (Wilson) may not have had in mind any other than some of the smaller peoples of Central Europe. But the sound of his voice, so to speak, carried far out over the Mesopotamian desert and there found receptive listeners" (Bilkert MW 1924:399).

Fired by the doctrine of "national self-determination" Mustafa Kemal forged the Republic of Turkey out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. France and Britain, frustrating Arab hopes and aspiration, imposed a new form of colonial rule, mandates over the newly formed countries of Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and Transjordan. Ultra-conservative Wahhabis gained control of most of the Arabian peninsula, attempts at restoring the office of the Caliphate failed, and Jews began migrating to Palestine. Let us, first of all, look at the new, post-war realities in Turkey and its impact on missions.

3.1.3.1. New political framework in Turkey > virtual elimination of missions

The January 1930 issue of *The International Review of Mission* succinctly and soberly summed up missiological developments in Turkey as follows: "The conditions of Turkish life since the revolution have made it inevitable that the record of progress should deal rather with political and social movements in Turkey than with the events of missionary endeavor" (Paton & Underhill IRM 1930:35). Although missions collapsed, not to be seriously attempted again for nearly half a century, the circumstances surrounding the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the birth of the modern republic so marked the Turkish psyche that they continue to determine the way the Turk today views Christianity in general and Christian missions in particular.

Turkey had been an ally of Germany during the Great War. When, in 1918, the country surrendered along with Germany, the allies divided the once mighty empire among themselves, leaving the Sultan a small kingdom in Anatolia. The following year the Greeks occupied Smyrna (Izmir). The Greek army then pushed inland, to be met by Turkish guerrillas.

Turkish resistance against the "Christian" countries who had carved up and divided the empire among themselves (Britain, France, Greece, Russia, Italy) was led by Mustafa Kemal. Kemal and his collegues had called together a series of national congresses, formed a new government and led their rag-tag National Liberation Army from one cliff-hanger victory to another. They defeated the Sultan's army, the Greeks, the Armenian Republican army, as well as the French and English occupation forces (Zürcher 2004:152-154). At this point the missionary community discovered, to its consternation, that it had lost the support of the American government. When the Turks advanced on Smyrna, various American churches called on the American government to send in the troops—and were promptly rebuffed, President Harding noting that "it is difficult for me to be consistently patient with our good friends of the Church who are properly and earnestly zealous in promoting peace until it comes to making warfare on someone of the contending religion" (quoted in Fromkin 1989:547).

By 1922 Mustafa Kemal had liberated Turkey's Anatolian homeland and, on October 29th, 1923, established the Republic of Turkey, with himself as its first President. He then deposed the Sultan and abolished the Caliphate, eliminating the central rallying point of religious fervour in Turkey, and leaving Islam without a supreme head. He ruled Turkey as a legalized dictator until his death in 1938 (see Fromkin 1989:540-48; Zürcher 2004:166-172).

Mustafa Kemal imposed sweeping social, religious, and cultural reforms. He outlawed all forms of religious clothing, banned the fez, forbade the building of new religious buildings—whether mosques or churches—shut down Islamic schools and courts, changed the calender from

Hijri to Gregorian, replaced the Arabic-based Ottoman script with a Latin alphabet, and Islamic law with adapted versions of the Swiss Civil Code and the Italian Penal Code. He made everyone choose a surname, chosing "Atatürk" (Father of Turks) for himself. He also initiated a hugely successful system of popular education based around village schools: in 1928, when he began his educational reforms, about 5% of the population was literate. When he died ten years later nearly half the population could read and write (Meyer 1986:61; Zürcher 2004:172-173).

Atatürk held Islam responsible for Turkey's lack of development, and was determined to break its hold. During the Atatürk years religion tended to be ridiculed as something ignorant and backward, something cultured and educated people could do without. Although the existence of God was never questioned, his necessity in daily life was. Atatürk himself became the object of devotion, adored as the "savior" of the Turks. Even today his statue dominates public parks, city squares and school playgrounds (Pikkert 1982-2006).

> The Turks, by freeing themselves from the settlement imposed by the victors, demonstrated the efficacy of nationalism. The Turkish forces led by Mustafa Kemal achieved the first successful nationalist revolution in Asia or Africa; their victory and their successful defiance of the victorious allies gave new hope to Muslim and indeed other peoples who saw for the first time a way to meet and defeat the West with its own weapons (Lewis 2002:346).

Although Atatürk's victory boosted the aspirations of other Middle Eastern nationalists, his attack on Islam, his attempts at secularizating the state and law, and his goal of turning Turkey into a European country antagonized many Muslims (2002:346). As a result the country's influence on the rest of the Muslim world remained marginal.

Turkey's Christian minorities were, theoretically, equal citizens in the new republic, their allegiance transferred from such religious heads as had represented them before the Sultan to the new government. To Atatürk, however, they still constituted a problem he solved by organizing a population exchange. Excepting those living in Istanbul, the Greeks were forced to go to Greece, while the Turks living in Greece headed for Turkey. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch was permitted to maintain his residence in Fener, Istanbul.

The massacres, deportations and mass exodus of Christian from Anatolia, along with the radical political changes of Atatürk's top-down revolution devastated the work of the American Board. For several years the Board was engaged in relief work and entertained hopes of resurrecting their previous enterprises: "If we were getting into ruts before the war, we now have an opportunity to correct past errors" (The Turkey, AR 1918:173). Next year's report suggested that the old ways were, after all, the best.

> One question was of special moment, namely, should the mission continue its work through the evangelical branch of the church, or should it turn its attention largely to a work within the established Gregorian Church—a question that has been on the docket ever since the work in Turkey began, a hundred years ago… The mission recommended to the Board that the latter do all in its power to reorganize and conserve the evangelical churches and schools. They felt that the evangelical movement within Turkey meant the development of spiritual life within the Old Church and within the Turkish community as well (Bell AR 1919:38).

Nothing had been learned—but that didn't matter any more. New political realities destroyed any lingering hopes. "In Smyrna and Brousa most promising and far-reaching activities were suddenly cut off by the military reverses of the Greeks which swept away the whole of the Christian population" (The American Board, AR 1921-1922:74).

> Now the present Angora government is absolutely determined to exclude all Christian missions from her Empire, and missionaries too in so far as they teach Christianity. She desires our schools, hospitals and other institutions but only on condition that they be absolutely secularized and provided also that all Christian teaching as such be abolished. Turkey wants our education but not our religion. The latest information reaching me indicates that chapel exercises and Bible teaching are now forbidden in our Christian institutions (such as are left), viz., in Constantinople. Practically all of the American Board's work in Asia Minor has been closed indefinitely and missionaries and teachers forbidden to work—notwithstanding the treaties negotiated between Turkey and the United States and other Powers (Anderson MW October 1923:370).

The Board continued to operate on a vastly reduced scale under a "non-proselytism" injunction. As noted earlier, all religious education was forbidden during the early years of the republic; some mission personnel in the 1920s questioned if a mission school without any religious instruction was worth the effort. Although some teachers left for conscience sake, most stayed, believing they could teach secular subjects during school time and witness for Christ during their own time. That illusion was shattered when the school in Bursa was closed and two teachers expelled because they tried to discuss religion outside the classroom. As a result controls over foreign schools in Turkey were tightened further. "Since Muslim children had begun to attend schools formerly committed to Christian education, everyone was watchful that no Christian teaching be given…. By 1935 only four American Board schools remained: in Uskudar, Izmir, Talas and Tarsus. The Talas school closed in 1966" (Meyer 1986:63-64). Stiff competition and, by Turkish standards, expensive tuition mean that today the three remaining schools mainly serve the upper classes. Other than possibly having some expatriate Christian teachers on staff, these schools are not Christian today (Pikkert 1982-2006).

With the organization of a Ministry of Health, the mission's medical work also decreased rapidly. According to the terms of the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, only four western doctors were granted licenses to practice, and by 1928 they could only do so in their own hospitals. A number

of legal charges further discouraged western doctors from practicing in the country. The Great Depression led to further cutbacks. By the outbreak of World War II only the hospital in Gaziantep was still run under mission auspices, though it had a Turkish director (Meyer 1986:63). The very viability of Christian mission to the country was questioned. On the one hand, few missionaries were content to work indefinitely along purely secular lines, while on the other hand few were willing to break the terms by which they could stay by engaging in clandestine activities (Riggs IRM 1938:197).

Practically the only response to such Christian witness as remained in the country was persecution and harrassment. In fact, in the early days of the Republic Christians were commonly blamed for political failures. In 1930, for instance, Muslim dissatisfaction resulted in an uprising which sought to restore Islamic law. The government cracked down harshly, instituting Martial law, hanging 29 people, and putting restrictions on *all* religious activities (Meyer 1986:65). For want of a better scape-goat, blame fell on the Christians, with the newspapers attacking such missionaries as remained in general and the Bible Society in particular. A haphazard pattern of freedom and persecution continued to mark the Turkish state's attitude towards Christianity for the rest of the 20th century. Local authorities would persecute converts to Christianity but when, eventually, the issue came before the courts the hard-pressed believers would win their case and be released, only to be further harrased by the community.

> During 1932 a number of Moslem men and women were reported to the authorities as having forsaken Islam and adopted Christianity. On being called up they frankly confessed their Christian faith. A group of them put their case before the authrorites at Angora, and it was laid down by the Department of the Interior that persecution on account of religious opinion must not take place in the Republic of Turkey, and official persecution of these converts was definitely stopped. At the same time it is reported that when government opposition ceased irresponsible private persecution began, and it is not yet possible for individuals who have been Moslems to profess Christianity in Turkey without the risk of severe opposition (Paton & Underhill IRM 1934:50-51).

One pastor in the south of Turkey was arrested in 1933 for conducting "secret" religious services. The services turned out to be Sunday meetings which had been conducted in that city for over a century. With churches being closed everywhere, a visitor in the interior of Turkey in 1936 was surprised to find one still open; both Orthodox and Protestants were sharing the one remaining church in the province (Meyer 1986:65).

The ties between the American Board and the churches it founded broke in the course of time. While the mission moved increasingly toward liberal theological persuasions, the few churches which survived didn't. The Gedik Paşa and Aynalı Çeşme Evangelical Armenian churches in Istanbul remained theologically evangelical and continue to minister largely—but not

exclusively—to OBPs. The chapel in the "Bible House", the former ABCFM's Turkey Headquarters, was taken over by a clan of xenophobic, conservative Protestant Syriacs (Pikkert 1982-2006). The once mighty American Board continued to run a hospital, three schools, and a publishing house, Redhouse Press, which produces a dictionary and secular books for children. The ABCFM had failed to clash with its own culture and it had failed to adapt to the host culture. One can but speculate what might have been had that formula been reversed.

In 1941 the Turkish Bible Society sponsored a revision of the Bible, with a Turkish scholar, Cemil Bey, transcribing it from old Ottoman into the new Latin script. The Bible Society would also play a role in the translation of the Old Testament (though not the New) into modern Turkish in the 1980s and 1990s. That, however, is the story of a later chapter.

After the post-World War I relief efforts came to an end, there was a virtual hiatus in Christian missions to Turkey until the 1960s. Toward the end of that decade such interdenominational evangelical agencies as OM and WEC International paved the way for the modern missionary effort to the country which, in terms of manpower, has eclipsed anything the American Board fielded in the 19th century. The clash that ensued is the story of chapter 5. For the rest of this chapter, as well as the next, we are left with the Arab world.

3.1.3.2. Developments in the Arab world

By 1890 the Arab world boasted an educated elite, many of whom were graduates of Christian educational institutions. Before independence many of these elites, particularly those of Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, worked towards social reform and the modernization of society in order to prepare their respective regions for eventual existence as independent nations. The majority of this elite was not, however, actively religious, whether Christian or Muslim.

> So far, however, as it is possible to gauge with any accuracy the predominant tendency of this movement away from Islam, it seems more often than not to have issued in a form of religious agnosticism or indifference. The social and political problems of the moment are engaging the attention of the nationalist leaders to such an extent that they have not the freedom of thought or the spiritual disposition to trouble about finding a satisfactory religious foundation for life. Their attitude to any manifestation of religious sentiment is often one of cynicism and contempt (Morrison IRM 1927:202-203).

In fact, many Arabs had been inoculated against Christianity because of its close association with Western culture.

> The missionaries, howsoever they may identify themselves individually with native life, are still foreign: foreign by language, nationality, and culture, and above all foreign incurably in the identification of them as members of the Western community which still exploits Eastern rights and displays Western greed and vice. The negative testimony rendered to Christianity in Moslem lands by secular Europeans and Americans has put the

conversion of Islam by foreign missionaries almost beyond the reach of the imagination (Gairdner MW October 1928:353-354).

Seeing it failed to effect positive moral and social change in the peoples of the West, many of the more broad-minded Arabs perceived Christianity as "impractical" at best; the War and the prevalence of such social ills as divorce proved that much ("Orientalist" MW 1936:40-41). "He (the Muslim) has learned through many disillusioning experiences during the past fifty years that Europe's conscience has gone into decline and that he must constantly be on the lookout to avoid exploitation by the 'ferengi' (i.e., foreigner)" (Young MW 1941:238). Instead, the Arab political elites put their hope for ethical and social progress in education on a non-religious basis (Morrison IRM 1927:203), while paying lip-service to Islam, "not because it is believed in, nor because it constitutes the best basis for a progressive policy, but because it is at present the only common ground suitable as a meeting place for the different Muslim powers which are endeavouring to stem the rising tide of western exploitation" (:204). This elite envisaged an Islamic League of federal independent nations, not some form of pan-Islamism. To accomplish this, however, they first had to lead their nations to independence.

The "colonial era" for most of the Arab world didn't happen until after World War I, when, as seen, Britain and France divided the Ottoman Empire's Arab regions among themselves—not, strictly speaking, into colonies, but into new states which they administered under mandate from the League of Nations to prepare them for eventual independence. Widespread violence against the mandatory powers demonstrated that direct rule was unworkable, so Britain and France granted the regions entrusted to them a degree of independence. At the same time, however, they made them sign treaties safeguarding their privileged positions—including the right to maintain armed forces on the national territory (Lewis 2002:346). Iraq became a British-controlled monarchy. Syria was divided, the central and northern parts going to France, while the south, Palestine, went to Britain. Both the French and the British then subdivided their territories further, the French establishing two republics, Syria and Lebanon. The British divided their region into the Arab kingdom of Transjordan and Palestine, which they continued to rule directly (:343-344).

These arrangements did not satisfy the nationalist Arabs, who lost interest in the liberal democratic notions they might have inherited from their British or French mentors. The governments and institutions these countries had imposed in the course of the 1920 and 1930s were not working very well, did not have a broad basis of support, and were associated with the hated imperial powers of western Europe (2002:348). Any concessions made by the "Mandatory Powers" to nationalist demands were always too small and too late to satisfy demands (:346).

Sustained and eventually successful nationalist liberation movements led to the formal independence from Britain of Iraq in 1932 and of Egypt in a process which culminated in 1936. Syria eventually gained its independence from France in 1946 and, as such, was chosen as the cut-off date for this chapter. Algeria had to wait until 1962.

In spite of their lack of popularity, the Anglo-French domination gave a number of economic and practical benefits to the region so that, by 1939, people were materially considerably better off (2002:355). "The fruits of western civilization are desired and appropriated while the effort is made to reject the ethos and religion with which they are connected" (Gairdner IRM 1923:5). One of these "fruits of western civilization" was linguistic. French and English, previously known only to very few people in the region, became much more widely spoken. With this knowledge came access to modern western culture and science, which some would embrace with enthusiasm, others saw as a mixed blessing, and yet others denounced as an unmixed curse (Lewis 2002:355). Thus even though the period of British and French cultural and economic hegemony in the Middle East and North Africa was relatively brief, it contributed greatly to the "clash of civilizations" between Muslim and Christian, for Christianity became personally associated with western imperialism ("Orientalist" MW 1936:38). This led, almost inevitably, to the perception of the missionary as—once again—an agent of western influence. One can understand why:

> We are protected by the western political powers, our schools teach western languages and culture, and we are frequently charged with encouraging western economic interests to the detriment of native peoples. This has reacted against our religious message. Many a man who has spiritually broken with Islam nevertheless avoids Christianity because of its western implications. Islam as a religion he has abandoned, but he clings to Islam as a social and cultural force because he can use this as a bulwark against westernization. Moreover, the missionary, at least in the Near East, is too frequently associated with disaffected minorities. It is of course inevitable that the missionary would be associated with local indigenous Christian groups, but that in itself is in Muslim eyes a prejudice against us, for it brands us as being, from his point of view, an anti-nationalistic force, whose influence can only be harmful to national aspirations (1936:39).

A number of missionaries responded by espousing Arab nationalism. "Nationalism marks a new stage in the life of a people and with it are born new impulses, new longings, and expectations, the spirit of inquiry and open-mindedness. Would it not be a thousand pities for the missionary enterprise to fail to avail itself of this new force in a country's life?" (Watson IRM 1924:170-171). Gairdner, one of the regions most respected evangelical missionaries, also urged Christians to participate in the budding national movement for "he wanted to stamp out the idea that being or becoming a Christian made one less a nationalist".

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> To denationalize oneself is rather like unsexing oneself. It generally leads to becoming acidly anti one's own nation, and that defeats itself, for ultimately that sort of thing, though it at first flatters the adopted nation, alienates and disgusts even it, while by the other it is rightly judged as a form of matricide (quoted in Vander Werff 1977:214).

Blincoe, with the benefit of hindsight, is strongly critical of this missionary support of the Arab nationalist cause. "Nationalism was the false gospel of some early missionaries in Syria and Lebanon. They, failing to evangelize the Arabs, taught a dignity based on the pride of Arab nationhood. Nationalism is a cult in the Arab world today" (1998:223). Nationalism did, indeed, fail the missionaries very early on:

> Christianity in the eyes of many staunch nationalists represents a foreign and alien religion, the precursor of concession hunters and political intriguers, and a source of national disunion by reason of the Christian minorities in Moslem lands. Hence arises what some consider the anomalous position of men who are bold advocates of religious freedom and social development themselves, displaying a spirit of merciless antagonism both to Christian institutions and to Christian minorities (Morrison IRM 1927:204).

One of the reasons missionaries soon dropped their earlier support for Arab nationalism was because many Arab leaders were inspired by the examples of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, not by France or Britain. The former two states had recently won their independence by forcibly uniting a number of smaller states, something seen by many Arabs as the solution to their own political dilemma. The fact that these countries were also the political, strategic and ideological opponents of the "colonial" enemies, Britain and France, along with the provocative growth of the Jewish presence in Palestine, made their example seem even more attractive (Lewis 2002:348). "Significant numbers of Arabs favoured the Germans, who sent the Jews to Palestine, rather than the British, who tried to keep them out" (:349). The main attraction of the Axis was that it was the implacable enemy of the West, owing "much more to the old and still valid principle that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'" (:350).

Among the new states to emerge Lebanon was a special case. Unlike the others, it was not a new creation; it had a deep sense of its own historic identity and had managed to cling to its autonomy under the Ottomans. The Lebanese heartland, a mountainous region inhabited mainly by Christians, non-Sunni Muslims and the Druze, had been a center of social, intellectual and, to a degree, political independence for centuries. In the course of the 19th century a thriving Christian bourgeousie emerged around the port of Beirut, the home of men such as Butrus al-Bustani and Yazef Yaziji, who, as we saw in the previous chapter, made an enormous contribution to the *Nahda*, the Arab cultural, intellectual and political revival. "While the rise of Muslim nationalism greatly diminished the Christian role, Lebanon for some time continued to fulfil a unique function as the only surviving center of cultural and religious pluralism and of economic and political

freedom within the Arab world" (Lewis 2002:347). After the war the French created a "Great Lebanon" by adding surrounding districts to the original Lebanese heartland, thus setting the stage for the civil wars of the 1970s and 80s (Fromkin 1989:439).

In Palestine the stage was set for an even greater conflict. Jews had lived in Palestine since ancient times, but ceased being the majority in the late Roman era. During the latter decades of the 19th century Zionist inspired young Jews started arriving from Eastern Europe. The settlements they and their successors formed would, in time, become the nucleus of the new state of Israel (Lewis 2002:347-348). Christian support for the Zionist movement would, as we will see in a later chapter, have major implications for the missionary enterprise in the region.

The situation was very different in the Arabian peninsula. With the exception of the British protectorates of the sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf and Aden, most of the peninsula was effectively independent. After the war the strict Wahhab-inspired 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Saud continued a campaign of conquest begun prior to the war. Concentrating on western and southwestern Arabia, he managed to capture Mecca and Medina by the end of 1925, forcing King Hussein, leader of the Arab revolt against the Turks, to leave the country. In 1926 Ibn Saud was proclaimed King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Najd. In 1932 his kingdom was renamed Saudi Arabia. "A period of peaceful consolidation followed, during which Ibn Saud signed treaties of friendship with Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and, finally, after long and bitter disputes, with Transjordan" (Lewis 2002:344). The Saudi regime was not the only religious-inspired movement to make its presence felt in the new Middle East.

Islam became the base ideology for political renewal for some outside the Arabian peninsula as well. The abolition of the caliphate and the anti-Islamic measures of Turkey shook Islam to its foundations, and caused the *ulema* and other leaders of Islam to be even more on guard against outside influences (see Gairdner IRM 1923:47). The Caliphate question briefly became the rallying point against the many-sided encroachments of the West, "part of the general revolt against white predominance on the part of all who felt themselves victimized thereby" (:44). Support for the restoration of the caliphate waned, but Gairdner's observation that an intensification of the Islamic way of looking at things would increase the prestige of the *sharia* was correct (:45). Various new, *sharia*-based pan-Islamic movements sought to create a "world-wide religious brotherhood over against Christendom" (:5).

The most famous of these "brotherhoods" was founded in 1928 when Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. It continues as the Middle East's most venerable pan-Islamist organization. In rejecting, albeit selectively, things Western, al-Banna also

rejected al-Afghani and Muhammed Abdu's ideologies. Instead, he sought political power by force, and agitated for the direct application of religion to political and popular life with the goal of transforming society through proselytization, the application of *sharia*, and *jihad*. (The Brotherhood radicalized during the 1940s and 50s, partly due to the harder-line influence of Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), then renounced violence in the 1980s (cf. Abdo 2000:2-8). However, al-Banna writings, along with those of Sayyid Qutb, remain a potent ideological source for the more radical Islamist groups.) The missionary community was not overly concerned by the new Islam-inspired movements. It was convinced that these new pan-Islamic movements, and even Islam itself, would soon disintegrate under the blows of modernism and nationalism.

> Generally speaking nationalism is taking the place of pan-Islamism. The Turkish Moslem, for example, is becoming more Turk than Moslem. The abolition of the Caliphate has had a profoundly disturbing effect not only in Turkey but throughout the Mohammedan world. There are signs on every hand of the weakening social hold of Islam… Western industrialism and the startling development of the material aspects of modern civilization have had a marked disintegrating influence… A new mentality is being developed as a result of contact with western science and civilization during the war. Above all one is impressed with the religious unsettling among Moslems. Many are sorely perplexed and do not know where they are going. There are multiplying evidences of rebellion against tradition and external authority. Much of the old bigotry and fanaticism have gone. There is a spirit of inquiry abroad combined with a determination to make the most of themselves and of the new day. Many workers bear testimony that no longer do they encounter the proud, self-satisfied Islam which they knew before (Mott IRM 1924:324, 325).

In 1932 *The International Review of Missions* declared that "Pan-Islamism is dead" (Jeffery IRM 1932:498) a conclusion which obviously proved to be wrong.

Another hugely important factor which would, in the long term, affect change in the region was the discovery of oil. This divided the region into "have" and "have-not" countries. The "have" countries, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Arab Emirates and, later, Libya, either were able to develop, or had the potential for developing in ways their "have-not" brothers could only dream about. Still, all countries of the region experienced economic developments. The car and bus transformed overland communications, linking cities and moving persons, commodities and ideas on a previously unimaginable scale and speed.

> The replacement, on a massive scale, of the horse, donkey and camel by car, bus and truck, coupled with rapid economic development and the spread of other Western means of communication such as printing, newspapers, cinema, radio and television, began a far-reaching social transformation and made it visible to all (Lewis 2002:352).

3.2. What were the veteran missionary goals and strategies?

Recognizing that Christianity had, hitherto, largely failed to win over Islam, a number of veteran missionaries to the Arab world, people with experience in the pre-war era, were determined to formulate a new strategy. They sought, first of all, to analyze the reasons for the pre-war failure, and then to provide alternative strategies.

3.2.1. Analysis of the failure

A perusal of mission literature after World War I reveals much soul-searching in the missionary community: "There has been much searching of heart about the progress of Christian work among Muslims" (Paton & Underhill IRM 1940:49). Much earlier Gairdner confessed that "we neither ignore nor are ignorant of the fact that many public men, even those who are heartily in favour of missionary work and outspokenly declare its massive benefits, grow suddenly silent when that work is spoken of as related to Islam" (The Missionary Significance, IRM 1923:3). What had gone wrong? Why had previous methods of evangelism and apologetics failed so miserably? Without using the term, the veterans recognized that the previous approach of Enlightenment missions had led to a culture clash which had produced a counter-productive fall-out. We quote at length:

> In the past Christian apologists have done less than justice to the truth and beauty of other faiths which they have been concerned to compare with Christianity. That has always been a mistaken and disastrous policy. What is more, they have tended to present the interpretation of Christ which has grown up in European thought and life as the whole truth. This has naturally tended to antagonize those who felt that to accept Him meant to accept along with Him much that they would gladly do without and to deny much that they felt to be true in their own traditions (Cockin IRM 1922:245).
>
> The preponderating attitude of Christendom toward Islam has been that of an enemy toward another enemy. It has varied from simple rivalry, through self-defence, to ridicule, condemnation and armed attack… Knowing that enmity can produce and has produced only enmity, all who have at heart the welfare of both the Moslem world and of Christianity are bound to call this attitude in question… This attitude of enmity toward Islam and its adherents is unchristian, because it is not the attitude of love... That Moslems have not loved Christians may not constitute against them an indictment, but that Christians have not loved Moslems does constitute an indictment against Christians, for love, even to enemies, was what Christ preached… After thirteen centuries how little intimate understanding of it (i.e., Islam) we still have! Christians have been content to accept as fact any hearsay, especially when flattering to themselves and unfavourable to Islam… Enmity is largely the result of misunderstanding. The first step to a correction of the attitude of Christendom toward Islam will be the attempt to understand Islam, and not Islam alone but Christianity itself (Merril IRM 1922:551, 552, 553, 554).
>
> What plan are we to follow? Two methods stand out in clear contrast: the polemic and the irenic; the method of argument, debate, contrast and comparison on the one hand, and on the other the method of loving approach along lines of least resistance, not to contrast

> one religion with another but to bring every man face to face with Jesus Christ and let Him make His own winsome appeal. The old method not only seemed natural to us but often seemed to be forced on us by the Moslem himself. We placed in contrast Christianity and Islam, Christ and Mohammed, the Christian worker against the inquirer, and the interview drifted almost inevitably into one of argument and debate. We thus aroused and called into conflict against us all the man's prejudice, his patriotism, his loyalty, his deepest religious experience and everything that he held dear. It was a tug-of-war. If we won the argument we were all the more certain to lose the man. Has not this method been tried by us all and found wanting? (Eddy IRM 1921:262-263).

The veterans came to realize that Christianity is not logical, that "Christian doctrines such as the 'new birth', the Trinity, and the atonement are mystical and thus hard to explain" (Moorhatch MW July 1927:269-278) and therefore cannot be marshaled to win arguments or debates. They also had to come to terms with the fact that Western culture had failed Christianity, that the conduct of so-called Christian nations in general and the barbarism of World War I in particular had turned Muslims off, that practices in national churches were off-putting, and that the missionaries' motives of educating the world remained suspect (:269-278).

> …the Christian Church and the Christian community (failed) to live up to the ideals of their Founder. The bloodstained legacy of the Crusades, the imperialistic policy of European powers, the disloyalty to the local Muslim government of disaffected Christian minorities resident in the Near East have united to embitter and sour relations between Muslims and Christians and to render more difficult the friendly approach of the foreign missionary or the indigenous Christian (Morrison IRM 1938:604).

> The theatre, the cinema, the radio, and the newspaper has exposed to view the seamy side of western civilization and lent some justification to the criticism that Christianity, having failed to redeem the life of European nations, is doomed to similar failure in the East. Whatever the Christian evangelist may say about the redeeming power of Christ, the Muslim cannot shut his eyes to the fact that the majority of beer shops and licensed houses in Egypt are the property of European Christians, that the standards of personal and social morality of many Christians fail to rise higher than their own, and that class and racial prejudice are embedded in the conduct of Christian nations, thus justifying the Muslim's claim that in actual practice Islamic brotherhood is more real, more effective and more penetrating than the Christian… Churches, which should embody and exemplify the Christian message, are at times a stumbling block and an offence through their pictures, symbols and rites, which to the iconoclastic Muslim savour of idolatry, while their natural antagonisms give the lie to the fundamental doctrine of Christian love… The missionary himself do not escape criticism, as in the eyes of many he is but an agent of a foreign power, or has chosen this career to increase his merit before God. Missions are, again, condemned for their attacks on the character of Muhammed and the validity of the Koran, as well as for their habit of taking advantage (as the Muslim sees it) of the immaturity of children in schools and of the weakness of sick folks in hospitals (Morrison IRM 1938:604-605).

The fact that Christianity failed to establish a community in which Muslim Background Protestants (MBPs) would really feel at home was also recognized as one of the reasons why Christianity failed to take hold (Paton & Underhill IRM 1940:49).

> More often than not the convert is dismissed by his employer, whether Muslim or Christian, who soon discovers that the presence of a convert on his staff is a serious handicap to his business. As a result the missionary organization or church which was responsible for his baptism feels under an obligaton to give him employement of some kind, for which he may, or more likely, may not be fitted, thus tending to segregate him from his fellows and to encourage in him the conviction that it is the duty of the mission to protect him from poverty or attack. Boycotted by his former friends and… suspected by his Christian brethren, the convert leads a lonely life, finding it difficult if not impossible to marry, and developing a conviction that every man's hand is against him (Morrison IRM 1938:605-606).

The failure to establish Christian communities welcoming to Muslim converts was never truly addressed. It remains a largely unrealized goal, particularly in the Arab world.

Another reason given for the failure was that many missionaries had not been properly qualified for the job. Missionary preparation had, it was believed, been deficient in two areas: firstly, few missionaries learned to speak Arabic well. "How serious a handicap this is only those know who have had years of experience as evangelists among Muslims" (1938:610). Secondly, few missionaries really understood or appreciated Islam or had much "living contact with the cultural, intellectual and spiritual forces of the day" (:610).

Of the veteran missionaries grappling with these issues the Scot W. H. Temple Gairdner (1873-1928) and Dutch-American Samuel M. Zwemer (1867-1952) are, undoubtedly, the best-known examples. Gairdner, who spent most of his missionary life in Cairo, modeled the best of evangelical Anglican outreach to the Muslim world. Samuel Zwemer spent 23 years building The Arabian Mission's work in Basrah, Bahrain, Muscat and Kuwait. Based on that extensive experience he would make his major academic contributions to missiology in the Muslim world during his Cairo years between 1912 and 1928, working closely with Temple Gairdner. Both men sought to develop a sympathetic understanding of Islam and of Christianity's relation to it without compromising their own mission and message. Their efforts were often experimental, yet the methodology they developed is worthy of study for they laid a new, alternative set of foundations on which future generations of missionaries could have built.

3.2.2. Understand Islam, create apologetic literature

The veterans remained convinced of the importance of literature in missionary outreach to the Arab world. "The whole of the Moslem world is keenly alive to the worth of literature… Hence increasing attention is being paid to the subject of Christian literature for Moslems" (Paton & Underhill IRM 1928:48). Gairdner had already determined that he would produce Christian literature for Muslims before he ever set off for Cairo: "My ideal is to become a master in Arabic

(an awful aim); and perhaps to help in creating a Christian literature in that tongue; and thus to get at the heart of the problem of Islam" (quoted in Padwick 1929:72).

As soon as possible he started writing and polishing succinct articles and tracts in which he sought to answer typical Muslim objections and present the Christian message. He would, in the course of his career, pen over 20 Arabic books and plays. In 1904 he and his early coworker, Douglas Thornton, convinced the C.M.S. to fund a Christian Magazine and, on January 5th of the following year, their Anglo-Arabic magazine *Orient and Occident* first saw the light of day (1929:155). It contained articles on Christian doctrine, Bible expositions, dialogues, apologetics as well as material of more general social and moral interest (Vander Werff 1977:193193). The magazine slowly grew to a circulation of about 3000, large for the time and "won for itself a respect in the moral sphere greater than is given to any other paper" (Padwick 1929:156,157).

The Arabian Mission also poured large amounts of money and energy into literature-based evangelism. Zwemer and his coworker James Cantine, with the help of Christian nationals, began a system of colportage from their base in Basrah, selling and distributing Christian literature to the towns along the Tigris and Euphrates (Vander Werff 1977:175). By 1912 over 8000 Scriptures and several thousand religious books were sold annually, with over 80% of sales to Muslims. Concerned that the volume and quality of Christian literature for Muslims might increase, Zwemer helped found the American Christian Literature Society for Moslems (:176). The Nile Mission Press and the Egypt General Mission also co-operated in publishing a new "strongly evangelistic" magazine, "designed to meet the needs and tastes of Muslim readers" (Paton & Underhill IRM 1937:57).

The early Gairdner still wrote in the polemical vein inherited from Pfander, Tisdall, et. al., in which Islamic and Christian doctrines were pitted against each other. He encouraged Muslims to apply historical criticism to the *hadith* in particular, so as to separate fact from fiction about Muhammed and his teachings, trying to point out that the superstructure of Islam, including the *Shari'a*, lacked historical support and should be discarded (Vander Werff 1977: 212, 213). Zwemer, like Gairdner, was also concerned with the development of literature, though much of his writings were aimed at educating the Christian west. Writing in a popular, yet factually accurate style, he strove to educate and challenge churches, students and missionary recruits on the subject of Islam and their missionary responsibilities. He also produced a corpus of exacting, scholarly works on historical Islam and popular practice based on much original research, and produced a "Factual Survey" on the Muslim World every decade. Like Gairdner, however, Zwemer was also an accomplished Arabist who wrote a number of works in Arabic aimed at

Muslim and Middle Eastern Christians. The early Zwemer (ca. 1890-1915/16) reflected the heritage of the 19th century in his application of ethical-moral arguments, historical criticism and comparative religion to prove Christianity's "superiority". This "radical displacement" mentality is plainly evident from such earlier titles of his such as *Islam, a Challenge to Faith* (1907), *The Disintegration of Islam* (1915) and *Mohammed or Christ* (1916).

> The religion of Christ contains whole fields of morality and whole realms of thought which are outside the religion of Mohammed… Its realized ideals in the various paths of human greatness have been more commanding, more many sided, more holy… Finally, the ideal life of all, is far more elevating, far more majestic, far more inspiring, even as the life of the founder of Mohammedanism is below the life of the Founder of Christianity (Zwemer, quoting R. Bosworth 1907:131-132).

Gairdner and Zwemer allowed their understanding of Islam to evolve. After 1912 (i.e., after the missionary conferences of Edinburgh, Cairo and Lucknow) their approaches became more positive and sympathetic as they strove to discover that which was of value in Islam, and as they sought to reconceptualize interaction, dialogue and debate with Muslims. The "new irenic approach" reflected a fresh awareness of Muslim attitudes while striving to "communicate Christ" without creating unnecessary offence (Vander Werff 1977:204-205).

> We shall try first to discover how much in Islam seems to possess practical religious significance, as distinct from mere formal importance; and then what has been felt by some Moslems to be unsatisfactory in their own religion. This will lead us to consider Christianity with a Moslem's eyes, and to inquire, first, what aspects of Christianity arouse his antagonism—whether unjustly, because they are part of God's truth, or justly, because they arise from man's failure; and then the aspects which gain his sympathy—either because they resemble features of his own religion or because they meet some need which his own religion fails to meet (Gairdner IRM 1912:45).

Gairdner set out his new approach in *The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam* (1912), in which he suggests four areas worthy of respect in Islam. He notes, first of all, that Islam's doctrine of God as a personal force having a definite relationship with the world equips Muslims with a *Weltanshauung* which enables them to stoically face loss, trouble and adversity. Secondly, he recognizes the Muslims' intense devotion, admiration, enthusiasm, even love for their Prophet who, he acknowledges, suffered and sacrificed in loyalty to his mission. He also approves of the Muslims' unabashed pride in their religion, their sense of glory in its triumphs, its sense of fraternity, its literature, learning, saints, and its position as the latest and last of the monotheistic religions. Lastly, Gairdner recognizes the spiritual power of the art of chanting the Qur'an, "an art the delight of which is born half of music and half of word—that gives him that element of aesthetic uplift" (Gairdner IRM 1912:49). He acknowledged that "Islam may be to the Arabs as Judaism was to the Hebrews, a *preparatio evangelica*" (:54). He sought to present Christianity as

"the corrective and fulfillment of Islam, i.e, of the dilemma and needs of the Muslim as a man; and concentrates upon the church as the present expression of new life in Christ and as the agent of Christ's work in the world" (Vander Werff 1977:215).

Others also saw the need for a more loving, caring approach in which the spiritual values of Islam were taken seriously. "The proven futility (with rare exceptions) of the controversial method of approach… and its tendency to produce 'intellectual' rather than 'spiritual' conversions, has led to a recognition of the need for a 'spiritual' approach to the Muslim, accompanied by personal friendship and practical Christian service" (Morrison IRM 1938:613).

> The other method of approach definitely refuses argument, debate, contrast and comparison…. Instead of placing one religion against another, we speak as man to man. We make the approach not on the plane of intellectual argument but we appeal chiefly to the heart and conscience. We speak to him as a man in sin, in need of a Saviour from sin, and bring him face to face with Jesus as the Friend of Sinners. We cannot call it a new method for it was the method of our Lord and the apostles. They were not debaters but witnesses. In every argument there are two persons concerned, the worker and the inquirer. One is pitted against the other. When a man truly witnesses for Christ, however, there are not two but three persons concerned, The Spirit of God, the witness and the inquirer. The whole approach is different... We must speak to… the Moslems as Moslems—if not as Moslems at least as those who understand their attachments and passionate prejudices … Our approach must be gradual, advancing one step at a time as men are able to receive the truth (Eddy IRM 1921:262-263, 264).

> Certainly controversy is not to be the method of the future. The controversial literature of the past prepared by notable men like Pfander, Imad-ud-Din, Valpy, French, Lefroy, Rouse, Tisdall and others led to the exposure of the weaknesses of Islam and the defects in the character of Mohammed at the same time refuting Moslem error about the Bible and Christian doctrines. This approach has not been without its unhappy consequences. It would seem fairly obvious that much of the bitter anti-Christian literature of recent years which has been issued by Moslems has been directly provoked by the anti-Moslem pamphlets of an earlier generation of Christian writers (Young MW July 1941:237).

Instead, "the solvent that removes the prejudices of Moslems is love expressed in beneficent deeds and in unselfish character" (Shedd IRM 1912:288, 289) and an appreciation of the positive in Islam.

> Christians and Moslems are both believers in the Unity, the one God, creator and controller of all things… Islam has one great lesson to teach us, the power of faith in a living God, not an abstraction, but one who rules over the affairs of men. Another lesson is similar to this—the power of the appeal to personal authority. Nothing is more marvelous in Islam than the impress of the personality of the prophet on men of alien races and successive ages (1912:292, 293).

In 1920-1921 a series of missionary meetings convened in five cities across Egypt to "consider the outlook for a friendly approach to our Moslem brethren", as a result of which the following principles pertaining to the production of Christian literature were suggested:

1. That all controversial literature which, it was felt, had a "hindering effect on the Mohammedans", particularly "literature which is unnecessarily offensive, if on the attack, or bad tempered, if on the defensive" be immediately withdrawn.
2. That only literature which a "suasive, informatory type, e.g., invitations to read the Bible, studies of aspects of the redemptive work of Christ" be "suffered to remain".
3. That Mohammed be "left severely alone".
4. That "the style of preaching should follow the same lines as the literature. There must be more conviction concerning the infamy of sin and proportionately less comparison of the respective merits or truth of the religions" (Eddy IRM 1921:264-265).

Another set of instructions which came to represent "virtually unanimous attitude and practice" included injunctions to "avoid all negative and unfruitful controversy and rely on the positive preaching of Christ", to "seek the highest and best in the Moslem peoples… and build on it", and to "seek points of contact in the Moslem's own faith and experience" (Mott IRM 1924:330-331). "The present time is a time for working quietly. The Moslems are pulling down their own house, but they do not want foreigners to do it" (:331).

After about a decade the fruit of these applications was evident in the nature of the Christian literature being produced. "The old controversial type of book has been replaced by a newer type which seeks to meet the difficulties of the Moslem without letting him know that the book is meant for him as a Moslem" (Menzies MW April 1936:167). Missionaries thus began to experiment with a variety of less aggressive genres of literature, including commentaries, novels, and plays (Menzies MW April 1936:167). There was even a travelling picture exibition: "Great success has attended a travelling picture exhibition, a collection of some two thousand photographs, reprints of works of art illustrating the life of Christ" (A Survey, IRM 1937:58).

The presentation of Christianity, it was felt, had to become less remote, more understandable, pragmatic, more accessible to the thinking of ordinary people. It had to be put within the range of things ordinary Muslims could assimilate.

> We have so overloaded our message with a weight of technicalities that Christianity appears… as a very complicated, difficult thing. On the other hand, Islam is very simple. One has to believe that Allah is the only God, and that Muhammed is His prophet. Apart from that there are a few simple ritual prescriptions, and that is all. It is clear, simple and easily understandable, whereas the teaching of the Christian missionary is extraordinarily difficult to grasp. Islam… is pragmatic ("Orientalist" MW 1936:39-40).

Gairdner, recognizing that drama was a medium which appealed to both illiterate villagers and educated Egyptian *effendis*, wrote a number of dramatic sketches, biographical presentations, and musical dramas about Bible characters and events such as Joseph, Abraham, Isaac, King

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Hezekiah, the Old Testament prophets, Saul, Stephen, The Good Samaritan, and the Passover Night. This, he felt, was a natural means of communicating Christian truth, and correcting Muslim misconceptions of biblical accounts (Padwick 1929:255-260). Five presentations of Joseph drew nearly 2000 Muslims and Christians, and Gairdner was hopeful that he would be able to present the gospel on a large scale using drama. However, the C.M.S., fearful "less the idea of plays in church should prove too shocking to supporters of the society and money gifts should be lost" told Gairdner that he had to "confine himself to simple colloquial plays… for peasants at the hospital" (:260-261).

Zwemer also began to adopt a more anthropological, sympathetic, and Christocentric approach. "Without compromising his criticism of Islam as a system, he began a sympathetic study of the Muslim as a man needing a seeking God", something reflected in his use of such terms as "our Muslim brethren" (Vander Werff 1977:235-236). He came to the conclusion that the comparative analysis of Islam and Christianity would break down, and that the ultimate test of the reality of Christianity is Christological, not moral-ethical. As such we see him moving towards a position which foreshadowed Karl Barth. For Zwemer, "the cross of Christ is the missing link in the Moslem's creed", for in it the justice and love of God, sin and salvation come together, and men find reconciliation, true brotherhood (:240). He turned to Islam's names for Christ (such as *kelimat-ullah* [word of God], *ruh allah* [spirit of God], *nabi* [prophet] and *al-Masih* [the Messiah]) as points of contact. Avoiding such controversial descriptions of Jesus as *Ibn Allah* (Son of God), something which Gairdner also started doing; he, for examble, began referring to Christ as God's *Wakeel*, the one with executive authority in his very person, whose sacrificial death was consistent with God's plan (:202).

There were a number of other critical theological themes with which the veterans were forced to wrestle, notably those of revelation/inspiration and prophecy, one of the most important areas of misunderstanding. In this case the same words *wahy* (inspiration) and *tanzil* ("bringing down", revelation) are used in Islam and Christianity to mean different things (Zebiri 2000:9). "No Muslim would accept any other view than that the Qur'an came verbatim from heaven" while, for Christians, the human element in both transmission and retention has generally been taken for granted (:10).

Both Gairdner and Zwemer studied the Muslim mystic al-Ghazali (1058-1128), who sought to wed orthodoxy with an intimate, mystical relationship with God: "Of all the subjects which Western missionaries to Islam have as a whole solidly neglected, the knowledge of Christian and Islamic mysticism is the most notable, and possibly the most significant" (Gairdner

MW 1928:348). Gairdner's translation of al-Ghazali's *Mishkat al Anwar* (A Niche for Lights) was published by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1923 (Padwick 1929:229). Zwemer, for his part, felt that "no one can read the story of al-Ghazali's life, so near and yet so far from the Kingdom, so eager to enter and yet always groping for the doorway, without fervently wishing that al-Ghazali could have met a true ambassador of Christ… Al-Ghazali tried hard but failed to find in Mohammed the ideals of his own heart" (Zwemer MW 1942:51-54).

Lewis Bevan Jones' *The People of the Mosque* (1932) was an early attempt to portray Islamic beliefs and practices accurately and sympathetically, and to see Islam through Muslim eyes while Constance Padwick, Gairdner's biographer, later compiled *Muslim Devotions* (1961), a compilation of Sufi prayer tracts. The new approach was, to Zwemer, hugely liberating in that he no longer saw it as his "duty to make battle against Islam as a system" but could "now concentrate on the message which is Christocentric and eschatological, a message of Good News for the Muslim as man" (Vander Werff 1977:243).

> We should ask Moslems to study the Gospel in any way they like, but with only one object in view, namely that they may come face to face with Jesus Himself; that they may learn to know Him, and see how He has claimed to hold a supreme position in the matter of the attitute of all men toward God, a position which none other has ever claimed. In other words, we should press home the question which Jesus Himself put to His disciples and to the world, "What think ye of the Christ?" (Zwemer 1912:181-185).

3.2.3. Contextualization of life and worship

Confrontation and condescension were out. "Missionary work is no enterprise of pity, in which we of the smug and self-satisfied West take a superior religion, like a red apple on a long fish pole, and hand it down to poor miserable degraded heathen" (Harrison IRM 1924:441). All aspects of witness, including worship and the Christian community were questioned and analyzed to see if they could be made to appeal more to Muslims.

> The proven futility (with rare exceptions) of the controversial method of approach, in preaching and in literature, and its tendency to produce 'intellectual' rather than 'spiritual' conversions, has led to a recognition of the need for a 'spiritual' approach to the Muslim, accompanied by personal friendship and practical Christian service… (and) the importance of sharing our deepest spiritual experiences with the mystically-minded Muslim… It is unfortunate that Protestantism has laid such stress upon the ultimate value of the individual as frequently to overlook the complementary truth that the individual can develop his full personality only in a spirit-controlled group. There is at present far too much individualism in missionary work in the Near East (Morrison IRM 1938:613).

The discussion went far beyond the need to develop a more appropriate literature. Missionary praxis is what mattered. "The convening of prayer meetings for the conversion of

Muslims" wasn't good enough anymore, "unless those participating are prepared for a radical reconsideration of their missionary methods" (1938:613).

> Were such a change to be achieved in an atmosphere of sincere love for individual Muslims, and were there to emerge a Christian fellowship which would provide a home for the convert, there would, we believe, be far more conversions to Christ than we see today (1938:613-614).

The very nature of Christian life in the host culture was called into question: "can the rules of the new faith be applied to native life in the home and society? Or does the change of faith mean such a social as well as moral upheaval as renders it impracticable?" (Warren MW 1916:151-153). In any case the missionary was to be the "exponent of the purest, truest Christian brotherliness, in ideal and in action. The least taint of snobbishness will vitiate all his activities among the people to whom he goes and whom he must regard—the greatest and the least of them—as his brother for whom Christ died" (Walter IRM 1921:543-544). On a grass-roots, nitty-gritty level missionaries had, for starters, to go beyond their immediate missionary duties and learn to enjoy the host culture.

> The question is not so much whether we can preach to the people among whom we go, and attend church with them, and serve on committees with them, and make formal calls upon them; but it is whether, when play-time comes, the hour of relaxation and recreation, we are found among our fellow-nationals or among our new friends on the field… let us seek to possess an enlarged capacity for personal friendship. Friendship is the bridge over the gulf which separates race and race… the paradox, in truth, of the missionary's life is that he must have a liking for his people and their queerest little ways even while he is trying to change them (Walter IRM 1921:547, 548, 549).

They also had to learn to adapt the Christian message to the needs of the individual they were seeking to minister to, and present it in a way that was culturally contextualized so as to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. Missionaries thus had to become more "seeker sensitive", learning to address "the specific needs of the group or the individual".

> In Muslim lands we must not conceive of one single, unvarying message for all. To the sheikh we bring the good news of the love of God, transcending the limitations of a legalist system; the effendi, the experience of spiritual power to transform personal and national life; to a peasant woman, freedom from fear of evil spirits and from the bonds of superstition. Even within each group there will be adaptations of emphasis to meet the needs of different individuals (Morrison IRM 1938:612-613).

In order to inculcate a sense of appreciation for the host culture missionaries began looking for positive things they could incorporate into their lives. In this revision national culture came to be admired: "We little realize how fascinating are the people outside our own little circle and how much our lives would be enriched by association with them (Walter IRM 1921:545-546). Harrison, a doctor with the Arabian Mission, lauds the Arab's sense of independence, "the

finest in the world", which he attributes to their harsh desert environment. "Friendship they know, but subservience never… Once the confidence and affection of such men (Bedouin Arabs) are gained, they show the finest sort of loyalty… (their) devotion to duty is splendid" (Harrison IRM 1924:437). Missionary appreciation had to go beyond cultural matters, however, and embrace Islam itself. "It is in the sphere of religion that the most acrimonious disputes between men occur. And in the presence of dogmatism and proselytism and scorn of a religion other than our own, we are amazed to see how swiftly all our supposed tolerance and sympathy falls away" (Walter IRM 1921:549). As new forms of contextualization were explored Islam was not to be viewed as an enemy anymore but as an ally.

> The Christian Church would gain rather than lose by seeking to conserve all that is good in the faith and practice of other religions. By its insistence on the divine unity, by its repudiation of idolatry, by its emphasis on adoration in worship, by its practical brotherhood, and by its applicaton of religion to every department of human life, Islam has a lesson to teach the Christian Church; and the church, for its part, should endeavor to discover a Christian counterpart for all those elements of Islamic religious experience, such as the Zikr, the reading of the Koran and the formal prayers, which have meant so much in the spiritual life of individual Muslims. The present services of the Christian Church in the Near East are not, we believe, sufficiently related to the religious needs of the Muslim environment or of the Muslim convert (Morrison IRM 1938:614).

> We no longer go forth as those who have come to destroy and supplant, but rather as seeking to discover and fulfill. We rejoice in every evidence we can find of the working of God's Spirit, witnessing to His being and majesty and moving among the nations. Reverently we peruse the pages sacred for many centuries to multitudes of eager, aspiring hearts upon which the supreme manifestation of God's love in Christ has yet to dawn (Walter IRM 1921:551).

George Harris, of the Arabian Mission, laments the fact that fellowship in the Christian church was nothing compared to what is was in the Muslim community. This, he recognized, was a "constant tug" even for Muslims who had been truly converted from Islam. The missionaries have failed "to make the Church a real home for Christian converts from Islam… The Moslem has had scant measures of Christian love" (Harris MW April 1925:162).

Gairdner also recognized that individual missionaries' "contextualizing" by adopting the dress and demeanor of the host culture was not enough. Reflecting Harris' concerns, he held that the entire body of believers had to contextualize. Since "the brotherhood of Islam" meant a great deal to Muslims, "it is obvious that unless we can receive them with a brotherhood that is higher, better, more spiritual, warmer, in a word, truer, they will marvel how we have the face to preach to them at all" (Gairdner MW 1928:354).

> Missions hitherto have been the work of a corps of enthusiasts at home and abroad, rather than of the Church of Christ itself; and also have been carried on indirectly by a small band abroad standing proxy for the Church, or rather for that corps in the Church at home.

> Now Islam, above all other movements, compels us to see the inadequacy of this method. For Islam propagates itself—as Christianity did in the first centuries—by the collective belief of the community in its message and in itself: by the universality and directness of its communal witness: and by the actuality of its brotherhood. Our present methods might well suggest that only a specialist section of Christians fully believes in the universality of the message; that direct witness should, in the opinion of all, be left to a section of that section; and that Christian human brotherhood has first to be submitted to so many racial, national, colour and class considerations that under these violent acids it almost dissolves away altogether. But in the face of the actualized brotherhood of Islam this is simply fatal. And if this is admitted it follows that the indirectness of our present methods is fatal too (Gairdner IRM 1923:54-55).

Until the entire body of believers contextualized "the problem of a real welcome to the Moslem convert, a welcome which would make him feel that he had found his real home, would still be unachieved" (Gairdner MW 1928:354). He held that even the Orthodox church would have to contextualize (:354-355). Gairdner, within the context of OBP church-life, sought to combat the prevalent negative mentality toward Muslim evangelism in that community (see 3.2.8) by promoting a message of Christian hope and courage along with the concepts of the church as "a spiritual brotherhood", and a home for the convert (Vander Werff 1977:221). He believed that preparatory work such as fostering contacts and cultivating friendship would create a hearing for the Gospel within Islam (:207), and thus sought to develop a love for Muslims in the Christian community. According to a friend of his, Yusef Effendi Tadros, "Other teachers taught us how to refute Islam; he taught us how to love Muslims. He made us feel we understood them and felt with them" (Padwick 1929:302). As Canon of the Anglican Church in Boulac, Cairo, Gairdner sought to adapt and contextualize his liturgy. Services he led "were extremely devotional (with him prostrate before the communion in oriental fashion on occasion) and yet equally spontaneous" (Vander Werff 1977:197-198). Contextualizing the devotional aspect of church life was, he felt, extremely important.

> In respect to devotional life, Christianity has too often failed to impress Islam, though it is precisely at this point that we should be able to contribute much. The paradox is a strange one: Moslems, worshipping an inscrutable God, are ever scrupulous to pay Him reverence; prayer is a sacred business not to be attempted without ablutions, executed according to a reverential ritual, with postures of awe, and with absolute concentration and attentions… Christians, on the contrary, often seem to approach their God with less respect than they are accustomed to show in the presence of a government official. That we who claim to know God and to walk with Him, whose church treasuries are rich with mystic experience and glorious liturgy, should fail to make it appear that we delight to honor Him with every known resource of art, and every true sign of awe and reverence, is a real tragedy; and in the neighborhood of critical Moslems, a costly one. Our services are too frequently notable for slovenly or uninspired and uninspiring scripture-reading, the use of low-grade hymn music, and, on the part of the congregation, a painful lack of reverence and attention. In spite of all the fear of ritualism, we shall nevertheless do well to hold fast to

> outward and spiritual reverence, even to the minutest detail in the externals of worship. Let us bring dignified and inspiring music from the West, or none at all. Let us seek for and use the best music of the Orient. Let us apprentice ourselves and our people to the art of reading the Scripture in public with some of the beauty which the Moslem attains with his Koran. As for those who lead in prayer, let them not lead in public prayer if they have not prepared its spirit and its diction with searchings of the heart. When we have such a chance to show Moslems the secret of freedom and spirituality, combined with reverence and order, in public prayer, it is infinitely regrettable that we often give merely the impression of presumptuousness, slovenliness, and irreverence (Gairdner MW 1928:347-348).

Gairdner, who had a good ear, was particularly *avant-garde* with respect to the contextualizaton of Christian worship. As seen in the above quotation, the bad musical taste encouraged by some Western missionaries, who sought to translate Western hymns into Arabic and set them to Western melody, dismayed him. He not only sought to improve the selection of Western music on offer, but wanted the church to discover its own culture's musical heritage. As early as 1906 he started collecting ancient church tunes handed down by ear from one Coptic choir leader to another as well as other melodies from professional singers, dervishes, Nile boatsmen, Syrian peasants or whoever else had a catchy song to offer. He analyzed their modes and structure, which he then wrote down as clearly as possible in Western notation, although "this notation must, as he sadly owed, cause the evaporation of part of the peculiar aroma of the airs composed in Oriental modes." By the time of his death he had prepared some three hundred of these tunes for publication (Padwick 1929:123-124). The reward of this scholarly endeavor "was to have some member of his congregation, (once a Moslem) ring him up begging that a best beloved Eastern tune of his collection might be sung in church next Sunday, or to hear the utterly pure beauty of a few girls' voices as they sang on Good Friday one of his haunting Eastern airs" (:124-125).

Not all missionaries were convinced of the "soft" approach. Pfander, Tisdall, Muir, etc., never went out of print, and every so often one discovers a rant against Islam or Mohammed in the period's missionary literature. "Mohammed Without Camouflage: Ecce Homo Arabicus", which appeared in the January 1919 edition of *The Moslem World,* refers to those who sought to understand the inner genius of Islam as Neo-Muslims. However, during this period these die-hards were on the defensive. Acknowledging that Zwemer and Gairdner's new approach was the way forward was reflected at the 1928 world missionary conference in Jerusalem, which recognized "certain spiritual values in the Muslim's faith" and recommended that Christians approach Islam in a spirit of openness (Joseph 1961:227). Well before then Mott, editor of the IRM, had recognized the importance of the new "irenic and sympathetic" approach:

> The positive, constructive, irenic and sympathetic approach, method and spirit now largely prevail in Christian work among Moslems, as contrasted with the negative, destructive, polemic and unappreciative. Only along the pathway of heroic and sacrificial experience on the part of workers who have devoted all their powers to the task, and who deserve all praise for their prophetic, pioneering ministry, have the deeper lessons been learned and has the way been prepared for the larger fruitage of tomorrow (Mott IRM 1924:330)

3.2.4. Stations, hospitals and schools: institutionalize—or not?

When Gairdner left for Cairo in 1898, he wrote, "Cairo is my destination for the present and perhaps for good… Cairo is *the* centre of Islam, *par excellence*. It is to Islam that I go—not to any particular phase of it" (quoted in Padwick 1929:72). When he got to Cairo, Gairdner and his co-worker in the early years, Douglas M. Thornton, decided to rent a house. Bait Arabi Pasha, the former residence of an erstwhile revolutionary, was located in central Cairo, a prime area for reaching both sheikh and *effendi* (gentlemen) classes. They turned the lower floors into a book-room and lecture hall, sent out invitations, and hung posters around the city and at al-Azhar. The opening of Bait Arabi Pasha to the public took place just before Christmas, 1904.

> A double series of meetings was planned for the new premises; one of these was in English and Arabic, to suit the young English-speaking effendis; and the second in Arabic only, and specially for Azhar men. The audience was invited, either then and there or at the following meetings, to express their opinions on the various topics… Like all young men when debating together, they said exactly what they meant, and thus we were able to learn their thoughts in a perfectly new way. In the case of the religious meetings this could only lead (in Egypt) to one result—controversy, sometimes of a peculiarly "animated" nature (Padwick 1929:135).

Gairdner related well to young *effendis* torn between traditional Islam and the sceptical-naturalistic outlook imported from the west. During lectures at Bait Arabi Pasha he would use a non-religious topic as a jumping-off point to cultivate acquaintances and overcome suspicion. By making extensive use of handbills and tracts audiences for his public lectures grew. The fact that the center attracted Muslims of high education and intelligence testified to the drawing power of Gairdner and Thornton (Vander Werff 1977:205). For new converts "it was a center of prayerful community of Christ, it was a center of prayerful communion with God" (:191-192).

For its part, the Arabian Mission, founded by Samuel Zwemer and James Cantine in 1889, established a base in Basrah in 1891 from which it hoped to evangelize the Arabian peninsula. They also established stations at Amarah on the Tigris River in 1895, Nasiriya on the Euphrates in 1897 and in Kuwait in 1910. Zwemer also rented a place in Bahrain in 1892 as a contact point. "With a stock of Bibles he soon rented a shop from which he entered the lively interchange of conversation and adventure that so marked his life" (Vander Werff 1977:175). The question naturally arose as to whether the work should institutionalize further, i.e., establish schools and

medical facilities—or not. Some, like Gairdner, held that a Christian presence, and not (just) the development of Christian service institutions was important. Consequently he deliberately avoided becoming involved in educational (with the exception of training people for ministry), medical, and/or relief work.

> This was prompted not by insensitivity but the desire to hold presence and proclamation together. The church (according to Gairdner) must not be enslaved to the treatment of immediate symptoms but engaged in conveying the long-range answer of God, the remedy for the human dilemma found in Christ (Vander Werff 1977:207).

Zwemer too was convinced that if the world of Islam would ever changed, it would do so because "new persons in Christ" had permeated it. What the Middle East needed were "ambassadors of Christ with a redemptive message" to effect change (1977:234). In fact, the sympathetic anthropological-Christocentric missiology of the mature Zwemer "springs from his devotion to Christ and his personal affection for many Muslim friends" as much as from his research into actual Muslim beliefs and practices (:244). The pioneer missionary to Kurdistan, Roger Cumberland, wrote, "To me, simply living among them and showing them something better than they have can be had 'without money and without price', perhaps by helping them in methods of cultivating their crops, and certainly speaking the Word in due season, seems the best approach" (Cumberland 1926:157, quoted in Blincoe 1998:163)

In spite of the above sentiments and the drift from the Christian fold by the schools and hospitals established earlier by the ABCFM in Anatolia and by the Presbyterians in Syria, the idea of establishing educational and medical institutions remained alive. This was partly out of a feeling of Christian charity, partly because a number of converts were were first attracted to Christianity by the spiritual life experienced in a Christian school rather than by direct preaching, and partly to serve as examples of Christian community (Morrison MW 1944:206).

In 1893 Peter Zwemer, Samuel's brother, opened a station in Muscat, Oman, where he also established a school for freed slaves. The mission then established primary educational facilities in Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. Lack of staff and financing during World War I and the depression led to their neglect, with the school in Kuwait closing altogether (Vander Werff 1977:178). Their school in Basrah, however, was more effective. Established in 1910 by John Van Ess, coordinator of the Arabian Mission's educational program, he received permission to open both boys' and girls' schools from primary to high school level. More than half the student body of the Basrah schools were Muslims, drawn from all levels of society. The school earned the respect of the Arab governments, and became a model for many Arab educators (:179).

In Jordan most Arabs preferred to "send their children to the newly established government primary schools where the Koran is taught" (A World Survey, IRM 1928:54).

In Egypt the American United Presbyterian Mission (AUPM), the oldest in the country (arriving 1854), had always emphasized education. By 1912 it ran some 180 schools, with about 16,000 pupils, most of whom were Copts. For many years about 2000 Muslims also attended the schools, that number rising to nearly 4000 by 1912. More than 30 of these schools were for girls. The AUPM also ran 3 girls' boarding schools at Assiut, Cairo, and Luxor. The apex of their system was the college at Assiut, which, in 1912, had more than 700 pupils. The Anglicans, who laid the foundation stone for a new cathedral in Cairo in November 1936 (IRM 1938:62) also ran a boys' school, a girls' boarding school, a girls' day school and a training class for teachers. It also had a school for high-class girls at Helouan (Sailer IRM 1912 498-499).

The Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in North Africa, which began ministry in 1907, also pondered the possibility of establishing institutions to reach Muslims directly. Convinced that they should focus their activities on Muslim children, yet finding it impossible to found schools, they decided to establish Christian homes, dormitories in effect, where Moslem boys and girls from outlying areas could stay while they pursued their education throught the government system.

> Between the years 1910 and 1914, six Homes were opened, one for Kabyle boys and one for Arab girls at Constantine, and one each for Arab boys and Arab girls at Tunis. In 1914 the total enrollment of the six Homes was fifty, a remarkable success. Prospects were great, with fifty children growing up under Christian influence and with concentrated religious instruction. At the present time these Homes are caring for as many children as the mission budget will allow, except the home for boys at Tunis, which has been transformed into a Hostel for young men (Douglas MW 1935:283).

By avoiding direct evangelistic work the Methodists managed to avoid direct confrontation with Islam.

> We are not obliged to deal openly with Islam as such, as is usually the case in direct evangelistic work. Beginning with children very young,--in the Constantine Home for boys, for example at the age of four or five, and in the Homes for girls as mere babies,--we have an opportunity to imbue them with Christian ideals at an early age without being hindered by Moslem prejudices (Douglas MW 1935:285).

The Methodists were not the only ones to establish alternative institutions targeting children. As early as 1860 the Lutheran Johan Ludwig Schneller established an orphanage in Palestine. The work was directed by three generations of Schnellers (Ludwig from 1860-1896, son Theodore from 1896 to 1929, and grandson Herman from 1929 onward). The Schneller orphanage was, in time, equipped with an elaborate trade school. "The result for both boys and girls was to be the living of an honest, dependable, Christian life in the face of the infinite

temptation to do less" (Bachmann MW 1939:279). The Egypt General Mission established a camp for Arabic speaking boys at the sea-side in 1937. 5 of the 23 who attended the first camp were Muslims, the rest mainly Copts (A Survey, IRM 1938:62).

The Arabian Mission continued to put effort into its medical ministry. Zwemer had become convinced of the importance of medical work when, one day, "an inquirer came to him wrapped in a pseudo-bandage. The inquirer explained it convinced his Muslim neighbors that he had a legitimate reason for talking with a Christian" (quoted in Vander Werff 1977:177). The arrival of Dr. H. R. Worrall led to the establishment of a medical work for Muslims in Bahrain in 1903. By 1914 the mission operated three hospitals and a number of dispensaries, treated nearly 24,000 new cases, and had a patient load nearly double that (:177). In Iraq there was little opportunity for a medical ministry. "So far as medicine is concerned, there does not seem to be much opportunity in Iraq. Splendid hospitals are being put up with public money, equipped on a scale with which missionaries cannot compete" (Gairdner IRM 1923:34).

3.2.5. The importance of intermission cooperation and a long-haul mentality

The a-millenial veterans had a long-term view of mission work to Muslims—"The missionary needs the patience of assured faith" (Walter IRM 1921:552)—and underlined the importance of long-term commitment. Gairdner's advice is poignant:

> Do not think that moral transformation is quickly reached. I feel that if we can set up a new standard of integrity, of truth, in these men, that alone is a work of even national importance… The eastern mind moves theologically much more quickly than it does ethically. Only gradually does the infinitely high standard of Christian holiness make itself felt, and if it is not seen in those Christians with whom the catechumen has to deal, it will not be deeply felt at all. And as the new ideals grapple with the old habits, through what travail, what struggles, what anguish, what tears is the Kingdom of God won! And alas! sometimes after all these have been freely lavished, the travail is in vain, the strain proves too severe. Some fearful temptation of Satan, or the call of the blood, of the family, of the old social environment proves irresistible, and one beholds a man on whom one's very life has been poured out slip back (Chadwick 1929:142-143).

Gairdner's missiology sustained his perseverance. "If the efforts to evangelize Islam had not resulted in a single conversion, they would have been worth while; for they represent Christianity as a religion that is not afraid, a religion with a message of love and goodwill evinced in deeds of love and goodwill" (1929:145).

Since everyone was working from a position of weakness in terms of personnel, the importance of inter-mission cooperation based on common interests and problems was also stressed. "The Cairo and Lucknow Conferences and their related activities revealed the

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advantages to the missionary cause resulting from more intimate fellowship and collaboration in planning and in effort" (Mott IRM 1924:335).

> Christian mission works in the different countries of the Near East faces certain common problems… for example, the evangelization of Muslims, including the question of religious freedom; relations with the ancient eastern churches and of the place of the younger evangelical churches. The Near East Christian Council, representing most of the missions throughout the area, is the one body in evidence which can hope to deal with these great questions as a whole (Survey, IRM 1936:47).

3.2.6. Prepare the next generation of missionaries

Recognizing that fruit in the Muslim world might be a long time in coming, both Gairdner and Zwemer were concerned that the next generation of missionaries be properly prepared. As a result of suggestions at the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, he and Zwemer, along with others, established the Cairo Study Center (1912), later to become the School of Oriental Studies at the American University of Cairo, to train Christian workers in Arabic and Islamics (Vander Werff 1977:196). Gairdner was a popular and gifted teacher. "You ask me what drew me to him," wrote one of his pupils. "His brilliant mind and scholarly mastery of Arabic, his interpretation of Islamic literature and history, his accuracy, his insight, his poetic and dramatic sense, his power to make grammar one of the most absorbingly interesting studies" (Padwick 1929:226).

To be able to present Christian truth in a manner Muslims would grasp there was a new emphasis on the importance of mastering the language. Few Christians, even OBPs, used Muslim religious vocabulary to express spiritual truths, preferring to use a Christianized vocabularly which had little meaning or significance for Muslims.

> Whenever possible, an Islamic Arabic vocabulary should be employed, and Christian Arabic words used only where the other fails, and then only with adequate explanation… For example, the phraseology of the New Testament concerning sacrifices, propitiatory offerings for sin and other aspects of temple worship, would be readily understood by Jews and pagans of our Lord's day. It is not immediately intelligible to the modern Muslim. In fact, it is naturally repugnant to him… What is urgently required is a restatement of the same truths in modes of thought which the Muslim can understand. Thus some of the Muslim misunderstandings of the meaning of the atonement can be removed. Similarly, many (though not all) of the difficulties centering around the Christian doctrine of the divinity of our Lord can be obviated by the presentation of this truth not in terms of divine Sonship but in those, equally scriptural, of the divine Word. And the same applies to the doctrine of the Trinity and other essential Christian beliefs (Morrison IRM 1938:610-611).

Gairdner wrote a variety of Arabic grammar texts which H. A. R. Gibb, of the London School of Oriental Studies, described as not only taking the tears out of learning Arabic but which filled the process with laughter (Padwick 1929:227-228). Gairdner himself wrote,

> I have to create all my aparatus. I am giving at present the major portion of my time to matters linguistic… In addition to a handbook on Phonetics, etc., I am writing two others, conversation-grammars; further, I am engaged in training some native teachers to use the new methods, and superintending the new students… on whose corpus the new experiments are being made. As these persons are eating up my handbooks as fast as I write them, sheet by sheet, you can imagine the charming time I am having (:224).

The "new method", described by his biographer as a "revolutionary act" is evident from title of his book, *Conversation Grammar* (1917, 2nd ed.1926): "his first revolutionary act… was to gain official consent to teaching the spoken language to the new missionary before the literary form was tackled (Padwick 1929:223). Gairdner's methods are still used by such missionary language schools as Kelsey's in Amman, Jordan, where this student studied in the early 1980s.

3.2.7. Other Initiatives and Methods

The veterans pushed for a number of other intitiatives and methods for reaching Muslims. There was, first of all, a recognition that Muslim evangelism should not be limited to the Middle East. Increasing numbers of Middle Eastern Muslims were traveling to Europe for business or educational purposes and, as such, were an opportunity for the church to reach out to "the stranger within our gates". The church had to reach out in "fraternity and Christian witness" to the "tens of thousands of strangers from the East" (Gairdner IRM 1923:55).

> One thinks of just a few of Mohammedans who, by chance or by the loving arrangement of friends, were received into fellowship—saw Christian family life from the inside, and were taken to attend Christian worship and preaching. Such men never return to the East the same… they have seen that Christian brotherhood is a universal not a closed corporation: the Gospel of the Kingdom has reached even unto them; and so the traditional attitude of Islam to Christian can never be theirs again. Yes and sometimes the experience has actually led to conversion and to baptism (1923:55-56).

Gairdner was also one of the first to float a concept a later generation would dub "tentmaking", i.e., Christian professionals working in secular professions in "closed" countries. "The future must bring with it more direct witness of the part of 'non-professional' Christians in those mission lands themselves" (Gairdner IRM 1923:56). Tentmaking would, as we shall see, become a popular strategy later in the century.

The veterans were firm believers in the power of prayer. Some subscribed to teachings on "spiritual warfare", another "method" which would receive much more attention later. Gairdner, for instance, was convinced of the power of both prayer and of the demonic forces obstructing the kingdom of God (Vander Werff 1977:190). During a particularly difficult week he wrote, "Some of the surface causes I know, but the psychological history of the whole matter I cannot even imagine. It is Satanic. I never felt as I have this week the fact of the hideous existence of a kingdom of darkness and of evil. It has come down on us like night" (quoted in VanderWerff

1977:190). These evil powers, he held, could be overcome through prayer and the application of the way of the cross to every aspect of ministry. One convert, a former Sheikh, Mahmud Bulus er-Rimawi, relates that on the night of his conversion Gairdner and Thornton "had taken no supper but had stayed till three o'clock praying for me" (Padwick 1929:141). With respect to "the power of the cross" Gairdner believed that since Christ had once and for all differentiated between physical and moral power, the "moral results" that would result from allowing "the Cross to dominate our philosophy and theology as well as devotional life" would be incalculable. "Who shall gauge the debt we may yet have to confess to Islam if that great antagonist prove finally to have compelled us to explore unknown depths of the riches of the revelation of the Triune God?" (:179-180).

3.2.8. "Great Experiment" methods linger on

Since the Evangelical churches drawn from the Armenian and Greek Orthodox churches in Anatolia had largely disappeared from the scene, the focus now was on the ethnic Christians of the Arab world, with a special emphasis on the Evangelicals drawn from the Coptic Church of Egypt. Many in the missionary community in Egypt continued to hope that this church could be urged to reach out in an effective, contextualized way to their Muslim neighbours. In fact, some of the old time missionaries in Lebanon "expressed their amazement at the audacity of two novices, Cantine and Zwemer, who intended *direct* evangelism in Arabia" (Scudder 1998:29).

The problems these churches faced were recognized. According to *The Moslem World Today* (1925) Eastern Christians in the Arab world in the 1920s continued to live in fear of

> the age-long pressure of a conquering, a domineering, and an unsparing state-religion… which has made 'proselytism' and even preaching criminal offences; a religion which has barely conceded to the depressed members of other faiths the right to exist, and then only on the express conditions that they kept themselves to themselves" (Mott 1925:282).

The pressure of the environment in which the church was forced to operate had created internal distortions which hampered their effective witness as much as any outside pressure. As so many separate *millets,* they had developed a disinclination to admit outsiders, and denied "the desirability or even possibility of conversion, along with a strong development of those feelings of antipathy and antagonism which are associated with national community feeling" (1925:282). According to Gairdner there were several difficulties pertaining to working with the Orthodox church. These included the fact that their historic development had turned them into exclusive "nationalities", suspicious of converts and "antipathetic to neighboring communities". "Age-long oppression of the Christian minorities by Islamic state authority" made the "native Christian shy of recruits from Islam". Finally, Christian communities were often disappointed by insincere,

unstable converts, "till to-day it is a common experience to find native Christians who disbelieve utterly in the possibility of converting Moslems at all" (Gairdner MW 1928:354-355). Nevertheless, the hope that one day Middle Eastern Christians would reach out to the Muslim majority remained (:354).

> If we may begin with the indigenous churches of the Near East, the conclusion seems inevitable that a revival of the oriental churches is an indispensable condition of successful evangelistic work amongst Muslims. So long as the majority of Christians known personally to individual Muslims give by their life and thought a distorted picture of the Gospel of Christ, it is unlikely that Muslims will be attracted to the Christian message, however winsomely presented them by the missionary or evangelist. All effort to foster the spiritual and ethical life of these churches is an invaluable, if indirect, contribution to the missionary cause (Morrison IRM 1938:607-608).

Gairdner and Thornton, though primarily involved in Muslim evangelism, never gave up hope on the Coptic Church. "They worked more directly with the laity… encouraging biblical exposition and revived societies within the church. Thornton conducted three tours in upper Egypt shortly before his death, holding rallies in Coptic churches which successfully drew large assemblies of Copts, evangelicals and Muslims" (Vander Werff 1977:193-194).

One of the reasons for the continued focus on ethnic Christians was due to the uncertainty which surrounded the future of the missionary movement itself in light of the post-war meltdown. If the missionary enterprise were to collapse entirely and, at times, it looked like it might, the only Christian witness remaining would be the national churches:

> The uncertainly which surrounds the future of the foreign missionary in the Near East accentuates the importance of all movements for the strengthening of the Church, and for training national leaders who can at any time take the missionary's place. Missions are, on the whole, more anxious to co-operate with the great Easter churches… and to lend support to every endeavor for their spiritual revival and reform (Morrison IRM 1946:29).

In 1925 Roger Cumberland, a UMM missionary who had arrived in Mosul two years earlier, went so far as to purchase the Assyrian Christian village of Babillu, some 10 miles east of Dohuk, in the hope of turning it into a model Christian community. "He (the village owner) came to me and offered to sell. We agreed on the price… I expect it (the village) to be an excellent 'hobby' and an actual aid in the work of winning men to the Master as well" (quoted in Young 1939:9). According to Bob Blincoe, who worked in the area after the 1991 Gulf War, old men of the area still remember Cumberlands' experiment in Christian community living which, he had hoped, would become a testimony to all in the area to the power of God to effect change. He started a school in Babillu, employing an Assyrian teacher and planned to "demonstrate the Christian way of life" by improving the agriculture of the region. In 1930 he piped water to the town, laying 4000 feet of inch pipe in two days: "many were skeptical about the possibility of

making water run up-hill… but it came—enough for us and a quarter of the town" (quoted in Blincoe 1998:164).

There was, nevertheless, a sense of ambivalence about working with the Christian minorities: "If we depend largely on the Oriental Churches to meet the situation as it exists today in the Moslem world, we shall miss the present opportunity; nevertheless, faithful and persevering efforts should be put forth to enlist their full cooperation (Mott IRM 1924:334).

> Important, however, as are the revival of the oriental churches and the identification of missionary activity with all that is progressive in national life, as indirect methods of winning the Muslim world to Christ, neither the one nor the other can be a substitute for direct missionary work amongst Muslims. Only too frequently in the past have missionary forces been diverted from the main task of evangelism among Muslims to other less exacting callings (Morrison IRM 1938:610).

3.3. What was the response to the missionary enterprise?

Gairdner sobertly noted that "we do wisely to expect few converts from Islam to Christianity—we do not deserve, we could not assimilate more than a few" (MW 1928:355), and his observation that "missionary work among the Moslem peoples has been for a century a distant ideal rather than an immediate success" (IRM 1923:13) continued, by and large, to hold true. As before, there was a steady trickle of individual converts who "disappeared", left the country or were integrated into existing OBP congregations. Unlike the previous era, however, a few very small indigenous Muslim Background Protestant (MBP) churches did come into being in Muscat and Mutrah in the Arabian Peninsula, where there were no indigenous churches to start with, as well as in North Africa.

The LOM, after the death in Turkish Kurdistan in 1920 of their founder Fossum, moved to Arbil, Iraq, where they saw the conversion of several Yezidies (Blincoe 1998:153). Padwick tells of a number of conversions, as well as of some people whom Gairdner baptized. They ranged from simple *fellahs* to some entire families (Padwick 1929:144). "It is rare indeed anywhere to find a person who sees moral import in the doctrine of the Trinity, who realizes how it bears on the whole question of approach to God and our life in Him. But to see an ignorant Muslim gripping it almost untaught was enough to set the angels singing" (Padwick 1929:160). As before, some of the stories of individual converts are very moving. Roger Cumberland baptized a teacher, an Arab name Aboud, who had become a Christian through another missionary, James Willoughby. Aboud was the brother of the assistant police chief in Dohuk, Iraq. When Aboud was assigned to teach Islam, he refused, and announced he was a Christian. Soon afterwards he was imprisoned for three years, and his wife was ordered to divorce him on the grounds that he

was no longer a Muslim. Later, when Aboud wanted to change his identification card to read "Christian" the court said this was impossible. But Aboud argued that the court had already called him a Christian in the divorce case. In this way he was permitted to change his identification card. While he served time in jail, his two children were taken away from him. They died of neglect. After three years Aboud was released. He remarried and moved to Baghdad, where he became blind. From that time on he was known as "Blind Aboud". He sold Bibles for years in Baghdad for the Bible Society (Blincoe 1998:165.)

With respect to the educational facilities, John Van Ess, the principal of the Arabian Christian school in Muscat reported that,

> Roughly two thousand boys and men have met Christ face to face from two to eight years each, every school day of the year. Many of these now hold posts of responsibility and trust in state and society. I know definitely of only a dozen who have gone wrong. The sons of many of them are now in school profiting by their father's newer outlook and by the home environment of at least friendly attitude toward the Gospel (Vander Werff 1977:180).

However, the fact that governments sought to create a uniform educational standard put pressure on some of the institutions while "the fact that in mission schools a considerable proportion of the teaching staff consists of non-Christians frequently provokes criticism and causes concern to supporters of the work at home" (Waller IRM 1912:511).

The medical enterprises earned the Arabian Mission much respect and appreciation. The Emirs of the Emirates and King Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia facilitated the purchase of properties, and the mission was able to function throughout the upheavals of the Arab uprisings, the massacres, and World War I (Vander Werff 1977:176). Nevertheless questions started being raised during the period about the financial viability of some of the missionary institutions, particularly the medical ministries. Spiraling costs due to higher public expectations and newer techniques requiring specialized equipment and personnel put a tremendous strain on mission budgets. Furthermore, as national governments began to develop so did public health systems. The advent of the petrodollar enabled many countries of the Arabian Peninsula to establish welfare states, thus further undermining the private, under-funded mission clinics and hospitals.

The small congregations that eventually formed in Muscat and Mutrah were mostly comprised of converts from Islam, while the congregations which came into being in Bahrain, Kuwait and Basrah included Arab converts, Assyrian and Armenian Christians, plus Indian and European expatriate Christians. These congregations faced great opposition. "No inquirer escaped some form of persecution. Often those baptized disappeared, presumably to their death.

While neither numbers nor social circumstance warranted the official organization of the church, it was there!" (Vander Werff 1977:180). Other socio-economic factors also proved a challenge.

> A Christian church is emerging in Arabia against a background of political, economic and social change. Difficulties are being encountered through increasing westernization combined with intense nationalism and the effects of foreign influence and a growing material prosperity upon the Arabs are not all good (The Near East, IRM 1940:62).

The Schnellers' orphanage resulted in the establishment of Christian communities in Nazareth, Jaffa and Haifa of orphanage alumni and their families (Bachmann MW 1939:283). The Methodis dormitories in North Africa also bore results. First of all, there was little or no negative reaction to them, in itself progress. "Very rarely do parents or relatives, although they themselves may be earnest Moslems, cause us any trouble because of the fact that we are Christians… In a few instances parents have been known to tell their children to take all that is given but to believe none of our teaching" (Douglas MW 1935:283-284).

> So far as I have been able to observe, the question of following Mohammed is not even entertained. This is not to say that all who leave our Homes are Christian in the highest sense of the word. The majority would like to be called Christian, that is, of those who have remained until having reaching young manhood and young womanhood. Some leave the Homes indifferent to religion. Others go out with a desire to be faithful followers of Christ, although they are sometimes of the type that follows afar off. Still a few others develop a genuine Christian spirit, with an ambition not only to be good, but to be good for something, for the sake of the Master (1935:285).

Douglas goes on to tell the story of a number of converts, some of whom went on to establish Christian homes and play significant roles in society. In fact, the work resulted in the establishment of a number of French, Arab and Kabyle churches in Oran, Algiers, Constantine, Tunis and in the mountains of Kabylia, with a total membership of about 200, and with the backbone of the leadership coming from men and women raised in the homes (:285- 286).

The trickle of converts and the establishment of a few congregations were sufficient reason for a conference of Muslim Sheikhs to be convened in February of 1936 in Jerusalem by the Mufti of Jersusalem to discuss how missionary efforts ought to be countered.

> Among its findings were: proposals for a religious magazine to spread the spirit of Islam; a warning against the harm inflicted on Muslim children by missionary schools 'which destroy faith, character and morals'; proposals for a redoubled effort to prevent land being sold to Jews; a severer censorship of films and theatres; and intensive activity against liquor and gambling; and the improvement of Muslim teaching in schools (The Near East, IRM 1937:52).

Encouraging as the conversion stories are, the Sheikhs need not have worried, for far more people left Christianity for Islam than vice-versa. "The legal position of Islam in Egypt, the economic position of the Copts and their isolation in groups all over the country are among the

causes which have led to the steadily increasing drift of Copts into the Islamic fold. The number is now about 1500 a year" (1937:57; see also IRM 1938:606).

Any efforts aimed at revitalizing the Orthodox church were also largely in vain. By 1938 *The International Review of Missions* noted that they had not yet regained the "pristine spiritual vitality" they once had. "They feared the corrosive effect of evangelical teaching upon the Church's traditional beliefs, they resented the formation of Protestant churches from members of their own community, and they were apprehensive lest missionary activity would jeopardize their position vis-à-vis the Muslim authorities" (1938:606).

The fact that an already severely depleted body of missionaries continued to pour energy into a community which remained suspicious of Muslims in their midst and continued to resent the plans the missionaries had for them would, once again, lead nowhere. Evangelical Protestant churches which, it was still hoped during the period, would, "be by their life and witness a divine instrument of Muslim evangelism" once again disappointed the missionaries. They "have failed to rid themselves of some of the deficiencies and weaknesses of the ancient churches", were afraid of the consequences of evangelism, and suspicious of converts. "Many cling to modes of thought which are more Islamic than Christian. Only occasionally do we discover individuals who are ready to bear witness to their Muslim friends, either as paid evangelists or in a voluntary capacity" (Morrison IRM 1938:607). Old complaints resurfaced as early as 1930:

> The missionaries, finding the Moslems inaccessible, and not willing to pay the price for evangelizing them, have turned to the Armenians, that in a way they might justify their presence in these countries for more than a long century. Protestant Armenians are grateful for the help thus rendered to them. The early Protestant churches among the Armenians were not trained in the missionary spirit, and to expect from them a missionary work without leading them in such a direction will certainly result in disappointments and failures. This fact seems so obvious to these Armenian Protestant churches that they feel rather astonished when they hear that they have not fulfilled the hopes of the missionaries by evangelizing their Moslem neighbors. The Armenian Protestant churches, and in fact all Armenians, have not felt and still do not feel to a large extent that responsibility (Hagopian MW 1930:387).

By the end of the period observers judged missionary efforts to the Middle East to amount to little more than failure. "With the triumphs of the Christian Church in other fields, missions to Muslims give the impression of failure. The results, whether measured in terms of the number of genuine converts or by any other standard, are apparently infinitesimal in proportion to the sacrificial outpouring of human life and material resources" (Morrison IRM 1938:601). "All those who were interested in evangelistic work amongst Muslims" were, once again, urged to engage in an "unprejudiced enquiry into the causes of the relative failure of missionary work in Muslim lands" (:601).

3.4. What were the missiological implications?

There are a number of fundamentals which, it would appear from the above study, need to be in place for the Christian missionary enterprise to break through in the Middle East. These fundamentals, though identified early in the inter-war period were not, and have, by and large, still not been attained. Some, in fact, are barely recognized today.

3.4.1. The need for a pluralistic, free society

Missions to the Arab and Turkish worlds has a greater chance for success in a pluralistic, free society. Tertullian may have believed that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, but that has not proven to be true for the Middle East. The oppressive nature of Islamic law and society depriving converts of their property, family and sometimes of life clearly limited the number of converts. This hostile environment modified but slowly during the period of the veterans, even though much of the Arab world was, for most of the period, ruled by the British and French. In other words, the anti-Christian attitude was a grass-roots issue, not something which was directed by the highest levels of government. Missionary visas were easily obtainable in most countries (Turkey excluded) and ministries could be carried out freely and openly. As Arab countries moved towards independence, national bureaucracies became more and more obstructionist.

> In some areas… the threat to the freedom of the missionary institution has advanced so far that some missionaries have asked whether there will be any future for their institutions at all. If liberty of Christian witness is denied they conscientiously believe that it would be better to close the schools or hospitals altogether… It is not suprising, therefore, that the defence of the principle of religious freedom fills a large place in the thinking of missionary leaders in the Near East. Every effort is being made to ensure its safeguarding in constitutions, legal enactments, and international agreements. Equally important is the defence of the civic rights of the non-Moslim minorities in Muslim lands. To secure the freedom for the convert from Islam—legal, social, economic and civic freedom—is another major task (Morrison IRM 1946:28).

Only as Middle Eastern nations evolved into freer, more pluralistic societies would individuals be able to escape the strictures of their society and be able to choose their faith, Christian or otherwise. In other words, an interplay, a convergence of political and cultural forces, would, it was held, determine the success or failure of the missionary effort:

> Every effort should be made to secure greater religious freedom in Muslim lands…. Whether the future will see an improvement or a deterioration in this respect will depend largely on the interplay of political and cultural forces, over which missions and the churches have little direct control. Nevertheless, indirect influence may be brought to bear for the removal of misunderstandings about the aims of missions and for the production of an atmosphere favourable to religious freedom (Morrison IRM 1938:614).

To effect greater political freedom the need to target leaders as opposed to those on the fringes of the Muslim community was emphasized. Zwemer, in *Heirs of the Prophets* (1946), noted that *ulema* are the heirs of the prophets according to Muhammed and, as such, are the authorized interpreters of *ijma*, or consensus. It is thus within their power to re-interpret Islamic law in practice which could result in greater political, social and religious liberty. Zwemer stated that the missionary community should seek to target the religious leadership of Islam to inculcate in them a proper understanding of Christian doctrine and encouraged "personal friendship with their clergy, the so-called imams, mullahs and sheikhs" realizing what impact these men could have on the future. He was amazed at the numbers of converts who came from their ranks (Vander Werff 1977:248).

3.4.2. The need for a contextualized theology and Christian communities

The church, if it was to communicate effectively to the leadership of Islam, would need to develop a contextualized theology. The veterans did, as seen, wrestle with a number of critical theological themes. However, even though foundational theological issues appear to be at the heart of the Christian-Muslim debate, Western philosophical or theological apologetics and arguments dealing with these issues did not—even when presented in contextualized packages by the veterans—cut much ice with devout Muslims. That may have been due simply to the fact that, in the post-WWI meltdown, the missionary presentation did not form a sufficiently critical mass to effect change.

Along with a contextualized theology was the other recognized but unrealized need for a contextualized Christian community. The missionaries, in spite of their desire to contextualize, remained foreigners. The Moslem convert needed a culturally relevant Christian environment to grow in, something the missionary could not supply. With some great exceptions, they often continued to lived apart from the "native" community and so were not in intimate touch with them. "The most a missionary can do is to furnish leadership, but he cannot be a Christian environment to the Moslem convert" (Hagopian MW 1930:389). Consequenlty missions to the Middle East was dogged by the criticism that it forced people to break from the prevailing culture, but failed to provide a viable alternative.

> Conversion has too often been regarded as completed when a person formally breaks with his non-Christian background. But actually, as far as livelihood and sanctification are concerned, this is only the beginning. There must be a community of believers into which the convert may be brought. In that moment the need for fellowship is far beyond what the stay-at-home Christian can readily imagine (Bachmann MW 1939:283).

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The church had to avoid the pitfalls of simply being another humanitarian agency on the one hand, and of escaping into pious isolationism on the other, if she was to fulfill her mission to her Muslim neighbours (Vander Werff 1977:181). The church in mission, as a whole, had to take the world, including its cultures and religions, seriously, and seek to adapt the presentation of the message accordingly.

3.4.3. The need for perseverance and inter-mission cooperation

One area which the veterans modeled well was that of perseverance. Recognizing that any effort among Muslims called for a sustained, long-range program, these men were in it for the long haul. As a result they placed great importance on giving missionary recruits the best available training both in his given profession and in linguistic skills, so that they might be able to sustain their Christian witness in culturally sensitive ways.

The other lesson from the era is the importance of intermission cooperation. The veterans realized that the fragmented nature of missions to Muslims was counterproductive, and worked hard to forge a united, conservative/evangelical force. Their efforts were, as we shall see, shortlived.

A last observation: missionaries make poor prophets. Their predictions as to how the socio-political developments would unfold could be very wrong. The prediction by many prominent missionaries, including Gairdner and Zwemer, that Islam would soon disintegrate was obviously wrong. "Many have thought that with the loss of political and military power Islam would soon distintegrate. They have not appreciated its social and religious vitality" (Cockin IRM 1922:555).

Chapter 4

1947-1979: Pre-Boomers Give Way to Boomers and the Arab World Moves onto the World Stage

During the quarter century following World War II the missionary enterprise to the Muslim Middle East slipped into an even deeper malaise than it was in before. Not only did the precipitous fall in recruitment which began after World War I continue, strategic thinking stultified.

War had, once again, caused the various German missions who, "had been doing very good work of various kinds" to collapse (Watt IRM 1947:155). But it wasn't just German missions which folded. Europe, devastated once again, was in no position to send missionaries. The Americans, who had emerged from World War II as winners, might have been expected to do so, but didn't either; the idea of missions to the Muslim world simply was not on their agenda. Anglo-Saxon Protestantism, by and large, gave up on the region. It was just too difficult. "Evangelism for Mohammedans is probably the most difficult of all missionary tasks" (Wilson MW 1946:288).

> The churches, Eastern and Western, are not showing any desire… that Moslems should be won… One missionary society has announced that there can be no recruits for the next two years and meanwhile the harvest is languishing for want of workers. Work among pagans seems to offer more inducements and mass movement areas make a strong appeal (Hargreaves MW 1947:255-256).

Missionaries to the region were disheartened: "Most of us who have spent years in this work could claim to be charter members in the brotherhood made up of those who have fished all night and taken nothing" (Wilson MW 1946:288). Sub-Saharan Africa, the Orient and later Latin America, where there was significant church growth, received the bulk of the attention. Various agencies shut down their ministries to the Middle East which, in turn, made it increasingly difficult for those still interested in the region to obtain reliable information, channel funds, or find sponsoring agencies.

> After more than a century of missionary endeavor in the Near East from Morocco to Iran, only eleven American Protestant denominations have work there, and five of these are smaller bodies with only a few missionaries on the field. Canada has no missions in the area. Thus millions of Christian people have had no direct channel for their prayers and gifts to reach their brothers in the Near East, and perhaps the most difficult missionary task in the world is being undertaken by only a small segment of the Christian forces of the Western hemisphere (Wysham MW 1950:233).

By the late 1940s, throughout the 1950s, and for most of the 1960s the missionary enterprise to the Middle East stalled. We must ask why, and how that affected the subsequent missionary movement.

4.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise?

Broad descriptions, whether of specific nationalities or of generations, inevitably run the risk of turning into stereotypes. Despite that risk it is, nevertheless, important to catch something of the "spirit of the age" in order to understand why a particular generation of a particular period in a particular culture behaved as it did. The post-World War II-to-the-present period spans three generations of potential missionaries; in this chapter we look at two of them. The American pre-Boomers failed to engage meaningfully with the Middle East. Their children, the Baby Boomers, those born during the temporary increase in the birth rate following World War Two, would return to the region in significant numbers. We limit ourselves to America, as the evangelical movement which emerged first failed, and then, starting in the late 1960s, formed the backbone of a new thrust to the region.

4.1.1. The pre-Boomers and their world

The importance of the pre-Boomer generation with respect to missions to the Middle East is indirect. Although, as noted, they did not launch new initiatives of significance, attitudes they modeled were either inherited by or reacted against by the Baby Boomers. Thus, while actual missionary outreach to the Middle East during the 1950s and 1960s amounted to very little, the era was important inasmuch as it helped shape the next generations' world-view, a generation that boldly went where their parents had feared to go.

Haunted by depression and war memories, life was serous business for white pre-Boomer Protestants. Taking advantage of the post World War II GI Bill many went to school and, upon graduation, settled down to start a family and obtain many of the things they were finally in a position to acquire: a "decent" job, financial security, a Chevy or a Ford, an annual holiday, and a pleasant home. Pre-Boomers became risk-averse as life became increasingly comfortable in the era of Elvis, Disneyland and hula-hoops, the beats and now-classic television.

There was, however, an ominous edge to life. People not only remembered Auschwitz and Hiroshima, but a new conflict with "godless communism" loomed ahead. A Cold War of tension with the Soviet Union threw dark shadows in the form of the Soviet A-bomb and Gulags, the Korean War, and Sputnik. As Catholic Senator Joseph McCarthy told the nation in 1950, the communist threat was close to home, had, in fact, infiltrated the highest levels of the State

Department, American education, and the entertainment industry. A profound pessimism "which anticipated the imminent end of the world" (Ellwood 2000:6) became a significant strand of thought. Even if not every Christian in the pew suffered from *angst* and fretted about war, concern was real and widespread.

Communism became the era's preoccupation. The more conservative evangelicals agreed so strongly with McCarthy and his conservative Catholic anti-communism that they set aside theological differences to confront the common enemy, an alliance that would be perpetuated in future crusades against abortion, the civil rights movement, and radical feminism (2000:91). The conflict was often cast in theological terms as a "religious war between light and darkness on a cosmic, apocalyptic scale", a war of faith against faith, of the American way of life against other ways, of the cross against diabolical evil. The unprecedented postwar affluence suggested divine blessing and the superiority of American democracy and capitalism in this conflict: "the 'American way of life' was the antithesis of godless communism and was to be preserved at all costs" (:11). Americans became used both to thinking in war terms and to viewing their nation as playing a "redemptive role" in the world, a mentality which gave rise to a new intellectual conservatism. In fact, the U.S.'s persistent religious character in modern times stems in large part from its vehement rejection of communism (:1, 17, 42, 60, 224).

Pre-Boomers became exceptionally active religiously. Church attendance was at near-high records, as was church construction, often as part of an evolving suburban lifestyle. During 1950 alone Protestantism increased by 4.15% (compared to 1.68% increase in the overall population) (2000:x; 1-2). Churches grew partly because they were seen as a bulwark against the communist threat. Many had been convinced by pastors and politicians that having some kind of faith and being committed to a religious institution was an important part of being American, something even more so in times of war and conflict (:104).

Pre-Boomer 1950s' Protestantism, seemingly so vigorous, had a traditional, antimodern bent. It was, by and large, a religion of nostalgia, not of innovation, "not ready for new constructions" (:72-73). Consequently 1950s' Christian America was bereft of spiritual creativity; the theological ferment which followed World War I was largely absent after World War II. The Pre-Boomer Protestantism neither had nor wanted truly new ideas, nor was it ready to launch new, ambitious ventures. "What was wanted was for the church to be a rock, not Peter's barque setting out for new shores" (:5).

1950s white American Protestantism consisted of several streams. Firstly, there were the "respectable", liberal-leaning, mainstream Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists

who had played a leading role in missions to the Middle East in the previous century. Though numerically small (less that 5% of the population), their membership included many of the nation's temporal and spiritual elite (2000:31). In terms of missions to the Middle East they continued to support a few educational institutions and hospitals, but launched no new ventures of note. Secondly, the Methodists and Baptists of the South and Mid-West belonging to the National Council of Churches (NCC) saw themselves increasingly as "the normative strand of American spiritual and moral life" (2000:31). The focus of their ministry was the new suburbs. Young parents far from home could find support networks in traditional churches, the upwardly mobile tried to make "important contacts", and everyone could have their spiritual needs met (:100, 104). Such risky business as missions to Muslims was not high on the agenda. Thirdly there were "Bible-thumping, hard-core evangelicals, fundamentalists, and Pentecostals" regarded by their NCC cousins "with an open disdain that bordered on bitterness" (2000:32). While the NCC churches were, for the moment, on the center of the national stage, evangelicalism was evolving from being on the losing side of the "traumatic modernist-fundamentalist wars of the 1920s" and the "nativist anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism" of the 1930s into a new force of national significance, into the "quintessential American religion" (:185, :194). The intellectual center of the new evangelicalism was Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Unlike the old evangelicalism, it was tolerant in nonessentials, well informed with respect to science and culture, able and willing both to examine itself and to accept social responsibility, and "serious about building a rational philosophical foundation for traditional Christianity" (:186).

In the course of the 1950s and 60s evangelicalism became an inter-denominational mass cultural movement birthing numerous parachurch organizations, including publishing houses, magazines (notably *Christianity Today*), summer camps, educational institutions, radio—and later television—ministries, student ministries such as Youth for Christ, free lance evangelists and inter-denominational evangelical mission organizations. Initially almost unnoticed by the mainstream, the movement not only enabled evangelicalism to survive, it would thrive later in the century. From it a new push for global missions in general, and to the Middle East in particular, emerged. As such, it deserves closer scrutiny, for the characteristics it developed would be taken from Morocco to the Persian Gulf.

The new evangelicalism had several defining characteristics. Firstly, it held that the "gospel message" was supra-cultural: certain key doctrines and terms (inspiration of Scripture, atonement, redemption in Christ, repentance, personal faith, regeneration, heaven, hell) which

comprise the gospel "are not cultural but transcendent, standing above all cultures in judgment and with a call to individuals to come out of the world to eternal salvation" (Ellwood 2000:191).

Secondly, most of American evangelicalism was heavily influenced by the pietistic Wesleyan/Baptist belief that religious experience is a hallmark of genuine faith. Conversion experiences, "receiving the Holy Spirit", and a joyous "walk with Jesus" were the marks of a "born again" Christian. Evangelization was sharply distinguished from Christianization. The neglect of the social aspect of the Gospel was explained, if not excused, by the desire to make disciples of unbelievers as quickly as possible. The focus was on church planting.

This led, thirdly, to conservative evangelicalism making sharp distinctions between itself and culture-at-large. If the old Fundamentalists condemned Jews, Catholics and modernism, the anti-Christ of 1950s' evangelicalism was, as seen, communism. Even if the "new" evangelicalism was softer, more outgoing, more mission-minded than its strict, legalistic Fundamentalist predecessors, it continued to fight various culture wars: along with communism the enemy became secular humanism, the New Age movement and, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Islam.

Evangelicalism's star was Billy Graham. Staunchly anti-communist, he was hugely instrumental in bringing evangelicalism to the center of American consciousness. "Without diluting its core… Graham tamed and updated the timeless call for decision for Christ into something quite compatible with living in a suburban home and driving a late-model car" (Ellwood 2000:200).

> His Christian integrity backed up a forthright and earnest presentation of the good news to many countries around the world. He restored respect to the ministry of evangelism and gained credibility for Evangelicals. Evangelicalism steadily gained the initiative in the Church worldwide over the following decades when all other mainline Christian streams were stagnant or in decline. Graham also poured much effort, prayer and finances into a succession of global conferences, the first of which was the Berlin Conference on World Evangelism in 1966 which then brought mission and the Great Commission to the centre stage in the Christian world (Johnstone 1998:27).

It finally dawned on the Christian Boomer generation that missions to the Muslim world ought to become a priority.

4.1.2. The Baby Boomers and their World

The Middle East had to wait for two decades, the 1950s and 1960s, for evangelicalism and Christian Baby Boomers to grown up. Starting in the late 1960s hundreds of Boomers joined interdenominational evangelical missions to launch a new thrust to the Middle East. By and large, however, they were barely aware of what had gone on before. If they did, they questioned the relevance of earlier, mostly denominational efforts.

To understand Boomer impact we have to grasp something of their character and world. What were they like? What shaped their values? What context were they forced to operate in? What structures did they create, and what methods did they utilize?

Birthrates in America had skyrocketed during the post-war years. U.S. government demographers bracket this unique baby boom between 1946 and 1964 when, on average, American women gave birth to 4 million babies per year. 1957, when 4.3 million American babies entered society, was the peak year (Baker EMQ 1997:70; Finzel 1989:16). Put another way, between 1946 and 1964 an average 250 women out of every 1,000 were having babies, as compared to, say, 1988, when 150 women out of every 1000 had a child (Johnson 1988:790 & Finzel 1989:15).

The Boomers became the most labeled generation in U.S. history, probably because no single label fitted. They have been dubbed Baby Boomers, the TV Generation, the Love Generation, the Now Generation, the Spock Generation, the Vietnam Generation and the Me Generation, just to name a few (Finzel 1989:18-19; Baker EMQ 1997:70). There is no end of labels for the various boomer subgroups of the 1960s and 70s either. The “Drug Culture”, referred to drug-users who formed a society within society, while the “Counterculture” was a generic label grouping campus activists and hippies. Flower Children were peace activists who placed flowers in the barrels of National Guard rifles during campus protests (flower power) while swinging singles lived for partying. Yippies was a self-styled label of radical activists while Yuppies became an acronym for the “young urban professionals” of the '80s who enjoyed the good life that came with a good job. New Collar Voters, on the other hand, were middle-class baby boomers who did not have the education or salaries of either Yuppies or “Bright Collar Workers”, the best-educated Baby Boomers who snagged the best-paying jobs as managers and professionals. Dinks were double-income-no-kids couples boasting high-powered jobs and expensive lifestyles while Tweeners were well educated, young professionals “caught between their low-rent roots and high-paying careers” (Finzer 1989:19, 20). More about them later…

During the late 1950s Boomers began to emerge as a cultural and economic force. Early traces of their counter-culturalism could be seen in the growing interest in eastern religions, occultism, and books by Carl Jung, Aldous Huxley, Alan Watt, and Jack Kerouac. Boomers were the first to grow up with television, space exploration, the Pill, LSD, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust.

The early Boomers, those born during or before “peak year” 1957 was the group most deeply affected by the events and social movements of the ‘60s and early '70s (Finzel 1989:16).

They remember the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and were powerfully impacted by such things as the 1969 landing on the moon and Woodstock in the summer of that same year. Vietnam, the war "that sparked our rebellion as a generation" (Simon 1988:3), claimed 58,000, mostly early baby boomer, lives. 300,000 of them came home wounded, and 75,000 were permanently disabled. Many in this youth culture, raised on slogans such as "Don't trust anyone over thirty" (Borthwick EMQ 2003:437), looked at their pre-Boomer parents' values with disdain. During the early 1970s Watergate completed the cynicism of many toward the comfortable status quo their parents had created.

It is these earlier Boomers which first come to mind when people think of Boomers. "They were the youth society, the protesters. They had the sense that youth could take over the world, that rock and roll would bind us" (Finzel 1989:17). In spite of their rebellious streak, these earlier Boomers tended to get the "better treatment in their childhood, better education in college, and the pick of jobs while there was still an abundance to choose from." (:16). They ended up having lots of clout in society in general, in business, and in politics. Ironically, it is the early boomers that began with such anti-materialistic zeal and ended up with all the "goodies" of affluence in the 1980s (:17; Tiplady 2002:96.).

The late Boomers were a different breed. They had diminished expectations. When, in the 1970s and 1980s, they hit the job market they found it glutted with the early Boomers. Forced to be more realistic they saw the world as a crowded place in which nothing would be handed to them on a platter. "For them, rock and roll is taken for granted, and youth is something you had to pass through" (Finzel 1989:17). It tends to be thought of as the "Me Generation", "lacking a deeply developed social consciousness and seeking the American dream full steam ahead" (:18).

Cutting through both early and late Boomers are the Tweeners, a label coined by ABC News (a tweener being a baseball term referring to a hit that lands between two outfields) (1989:21). Tweeners are Boomers who eschew the conspicuous yuppie lifestyle. They are sensible, well-educated, moderately successful young professionals. This massive subgroup of Boomers works hard and is committed to the family. They hold to many traditional values and have strong loyalty and commitment to the heartland of America (:21).

> Tweeners have been around all the time but have not gotten all the attention... One of the characteristics of this new classification of baby boomers is a strong tie to their roots… Tweeners are proud of their roots, want to be like their parents, and enjoy old-style, traditional American values. They enjoy frequent trips back home to see Mom and Dad when they get vacation time—rather than flights to some exotic Caribbean island for a tan fest… Tweeners have a strong commitment to altruism. They like doing volunteer work and serving the needs of the community. This is good news for local churches, always in search for volunteers (Finzel 1989:21).

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Although the interdenominational, evangelical missionary societies which would relaunch missionary outreach to the Middle East in the late sixties and early seventies drew from a wide variety of Boomers, it was conservative, evangelical "Tweeners" who formed the back-bone of the enterprise.

> It is especially important in the missionary context to recognize how large a proportion of such work is engaged in and supported by Christians who would class themselves as 'Conservative Evangelical'. No attempt at theological evaluation of the Christian-Muslim encounter, in particular, is adequate without recognition of the persistent power of this stream in the Christian Church (Douglas IRM 1966:423).

What were the specifically Boomer values that molded their missiology? When considering missions service, they tended to think in terms of limited time commitment, something expressed through a preference for short-term service. Even "career" missionaries did not necessarily commit to lifetime service. Few Boomers believed they would do the same thing for their entire lives; missions was just one part of a number of meaningful careers they hoped to accomplish, each of which was perceived as part of God's will. The Christian Baby Boomer was committed to a lifetime of spiritual usefulness. When a Boomer was "thoroughly convinced his present role meshes with this transcendent purpose he is equally committed to this task, for the time being. However, quitting is always an option. Boomers have been conditioned by change and, therefore, expect it" (Baker EMQ 1997:72-73).

Boomer missionaries placed a high value on personal significance, on the recognition of their personal ministry, self-fulfillment and self-development. "It is quite common for them to refer to their work as 'my ministry' using 'my gifts'" (1997:73). The desire for self-development meant that Boomers tended to seek to relate missionary service to their own lifetime goals.

> Mission as well as the assigned task are viewed as stepping-stones of opportunity toward more meaningful experiences, whether within or beyond that particular organization. That is, each role or ministry opportunity must contribute to the overall development of the baby boomer and his family. So, for Boomers to begin and sustain a missions career (whatever length this may be), it is crucial that their role provide personal development for the present and the future (1997:73-74).

Boomers expected to be included from the start, to be kept in the know, to participate in the decision-making process. "It is not so much that they demand their opinions be adopted as much as they feel the need to share what they think, plus be assured someone is listening and taking them seriously" (:73).

Boomers thought in more egalitarian terms. They had a generational tendency to question authority, to openly challenge tradition and convention. They questioned leadership and promoted innovation and change. Position and titles were of less import than the influence

flowing from a person's character, wisdom, and relational abilities. "If Boomer missionaries believe this personal power is lacking in a leader, they will usually seek help and guidance from another source they perceive to be more capable and qualified." (:73)

Being more likely to have personally experienced a "bruised" background, many evangelical Baby Boomers became pre-occupied with their own nuclear family. Such para-church organization as Focus On The Family and Promisekeepers raised the importance of family matters in evangelical Boomer consciousness to almost iconic levels. "Being more categorical in outlook, Boomers do not view the mission, ministry, and family as an integrated package. Instead, they perceive these roles in declining priorities: God, ministry to family, ministry to others" (Elder IJFM 1991:51). Boomers will go where there are good educational and social options for their kids.

> The family has become so "enshrined" that it has taken the place of supremacy and dominates every aspect of the young missionary's life. Baby Boomers tend to make a decision based on how it will affect their families, treating it as a watershed for determining God's will… the family's will has superseded God's will… There is a deep belief that God would not ask parents to do something which would be a threat to family well-being. That is, God would not, or cannot, lead one's family where adequate assurance for basic needs would not be met (Baker EMQ 1997:74).

Along with this is Boomer concern for member care. When shopping for a mission agency they were more likely than their predecessors to look beyond ministry opportunities and compare retirement plans, financial policies, Missionary Kid (MK) educational opportunities, and other logistical aspects of missions. "The latter (i.e., previous generations of missionaries) just went out with a maverick, make do approach that is largely foreign to the younger generation… the work was considered more important than the worker, whereas now, the worker is seen as more important than the work" (1997:75-76).

In spite of their 1960s background, many Christian boomers became politically conservative. This developed into the New Religious Right, a theologically and politically conservative, socially influential, and missiologically active movement which colored the socio-political and religious views of many boomer evangelical American Protestant missionaries. The close association many of them had with the neo-cons in Republican politics would have marked effects on their view of the Muslim world (see sections 4.1.4; 4.1.5)

Unlike their predecessors, however, Boomers headed for the Middle East in significant numbers, taking their idiosyncrasies with them. Instead of joining the more established denominational missions, they gravitated toward interdenominational evangelical agencies. By

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1978 there were some 1300 of them in the region (including 130 in Iran and some 200 in Israel) (Johnstone 1978:134).

4.1.3. New Structures: interdenominational evangelical agencies in the Middle East

Unlike the mission agencies of the previous area, the interdenominational evangelical missions, which launched the new thrust into the Middle East, were mostly organized on a voluntary basis and depended on their members' contribution of time, energy and money. A few "faith missions" of the type pioneered by Hudson Taylor, had been around since the 19th century but had focused their energy elsewhere. They first made their presence felt in the Middle East when one of Taylor's erstwhile disciples, C.T. Studd, formed a mission, which came to be known as Worldwide Evangelization for Christ International (WEC). It first sent personnel to the Levant in 1921, but functioned there on a very small scale until the modern era (Pikkert 1982-2006). Emphasizing the simple gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ (Bosch 2003:333) and the establishment of local national churches, agencies like WEC, along with younger organizations such as Operation Mobilization (OM), Youth With a Mission (YWAM), Middle East Christian Outreach (MECO), Red Sea Mission Team (RSMT), The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), Gospel Missionary Union (GMU), and North Africa Mission (NAM) would play a leading role in outreach to the Muslim world (Johnstone 1978:134-136). OM was particularly effective in channeling young Boomer energy early on.

> The tremendous enthusiasm, courage and dedication of the Christian young people of many lands comprising 'Operation Mobilization' is a particularly dramatic example. In their first summer (1963) two thousand young people gave a part or all of their holiday time to take part in this militant evangelistic work. And they have taken the Muslim lands as a special challenge. Even independent mission groups have been embarrassed by the activities of these zealous evangelists (Douglas IRM 1966:423).

As the above quote intimates, such missions as had struggled on in the Middle East watched the new evangelical phenomena with a certain amount of trepidation, for the Boomer evangelicals were, by and large, unwilling to work within the frameworks created by their predecessors. Consequently the remnants of the older missions did not know what to make of this invasion, this "take over". Some considered them schismatics who stole the sheep of other Christian congregations (McMullen IRM 1957:57).

> No one can try to understand the Christian situation in the Near East… without being disturbed afresh by the tragic penalties of Christian disunity… the infinite variety of 'Evangelicals' whose differences cannot, with the greatest charity, be ascribed solely to the rich diversities inherent in a unifying Evangel. (There is a street in Jerusalem, Israel… in which almost every other house is the field headquarters of some overseas organization whose adherents pray for the peace of Jerusalem but who seldom recognize or co-operate

> with one another)… Naughtiness, cantankerousness and many of the viler outcrops of original sin have contributed to it (Goodall IRM 1957:7).

In spite of this no one could deny that the new generation of evangelicals brought new energy to the task: "While it is true that many Christians of this theological outlook betray a psychological insecurity, are intractable, uncooperative and occasionally quite un-Christian in their behavior, it must… be gladly acknowledged that it is in these same theological circles that the greatest dedication to the work of evangelism is to be found" (Douglas IRM 1966:423).

The evangelicals' theology had tremendous motivational power, even if it was considered simplistic and one-dimensional by the old-timers: "This theology may be too schematic and mechanical, and is certainly over-simplified, but its motivation power is tremendous" because it "enshrines basic facts of the Christian gospel which are never lost sight of" (1966:423). It did not attempt to adapt the basic gospel message to any "special circumstances of Christian witness within Muslim communities" but focused on individual conversions. "Conservative missionary theory assumes that the nature of the Gospel presupposes proselytism and any good means to this end is justifiable and desirable" (:423).

4.1.4. The Christian Zionist Movement

Christian Zionism, a pro-Israel, anti-Islamic/anti-Arab teaching became a central plank in the program espoused by the politically influential, theologically conservative, and missionary orientated evangelical Baby Boomers. The proponents of Christian Zionism are organized into such assemblages and pressure groups as the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, Christians' Israel Public Action Campaign, Friends of Jerusalem, and Bridges of Peace. Certain eschatological teachings motivate these groups to unswervingly support Israel and, conversely, to demonize Islam and Arabs.

Israel's Likud did not fail to recognize the benefits of a coalition with the powerful Christian Zionist movement. In 1980, in fact, the then Prime Minister of Israel, Menachim Begin, presented the Rev. Jerry Falwell with the Jabotinsky Award (Sidey CT 1992:47). The award was well earned; after the Jewish lobby, the Christian Zionists are one of the most powerful forces preventing US administrations from approaching "the Middle East problem" evenhandedly. A full page advertisement in the January 27, 1992, edition of the *Washington Times* shows just how much influence the movement lays claim to: "Seventy Million Christians Urge President Bush to Approve Loan Guarantees for Israel." Seventy million is a lot of votes. When the Muslim world became aware of the bonds between Evangelicalism, Israel and the Republican Party, it added one more complication to missionary efforts to the region.

The eschatological foundations for Christian Zionism are confirmed by the *Washington Times* advertisement: "We deeply believe in the biblical, prophetic vision of the ingathering of exiles to Israel, a miracle we are now seeing fulfilled." Rooted in "pre-millennialism", it asserts that upon His second coming Christ will take up residence in the city of Jerusalem and reign over this physical world for a thousand years. A number of portentous signs, most notably the creation of a Jewish homeland, would precede this event. Based on Revelations 20 and various symbolic passages and a few verses that possibly refer to the return of the Jews from their Babylonian exile, this doctrine was resurrected in the 19th century and has been embraced by much of North American Evangelicalism (though with notable exceptions). Consequently, the Balfour Declaration, the creation of the state of Israel and the recapture of Jerusalem in 1967 were all construed as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, harbingers of the second coming of Christ. The rebuilding of the temple was perceived as another pre-requisite. In short, Christian Zionists saw themselves as "speeding up Christ's return" by supporting Israeli expansionism. Their support for Israel would come to be translated into anti-Islamism, particularly in the modern period, in which Islam would be deemed as Western civilization and—once again—Christian mission's greatest challenge (see 5.1.1.3).

4.1.5. Perceptions of Islam

In the immediate post-war years Islam was perceived as a spent force, "moving towards an intellectual crisis", even "complete shipwreck" (Watt IRM 1947:76,77) because of developments in "the new science of historical criticism" according to which "much of what is prominent in Islam (though possibly not the fundamentals) has to be rejected as false" (:76). "Since the first World War we have seen the sanctions of Islam broken down in several of the Moslem lands far more than we had expected might happen during our lifetime" (Wilson MW 1946:294). Since Islam was considered to be on the wane, it was not yet demonized, as it would be later. In fact, Islam received little attention in western thought. The fear was a resurgent, powerful Arab world, not Islam.

The notion that "Islam is now put on the defensive" (Cragg MW 1952:117) and might collapse had a long life. Kenneth Cragg, one of the few missionary intellectuals who grappled seriously with the claims of Islam during the 1950s and 60s, stated that:

> No time need be spent in saying that the modern challenge to religion presses heavily upon the Islamic faith. It is evident…. The aeroplane has joined the pyramid on the Egyptian skyline. The stream of Fords and Cadillacs flows by the minaret and the camel, supercilious as ever, sees pipes of oil as well as the eternal sands. The new transforms the old in a hundred ways… Applied science is everywhere educative in new outlooks,

> disruptive of old patterns and corrosive to ancient habits of thought and behavior… In some respects it becomes even physically difficult to continue the old practices. The chorus of mechanical noise competes with the muezzin in the soul as well as in the street… Unhappily mosque and people are mutually estranged. Only the poor and the aged are attracted to the mosque, while the rich and the young throng the cinema down the road. But does the mosque deserve respect?... Hardly. Mosque sermons are dull and unchanging. Their message is: "Be pious towards God"—*ittaqu 'llaha*—with no further elaboration. The living problems and bewilderments of men find no place there. Preachers do not know how people talk, nor how they pray in their own hearts. So people have reason for alienation. If the mosques offered a true spiritual home and religious and social satisfaction, they would be thronged (Cragg 1952a:114-116, 118).

Cragg even entertained the hope that since "Islam is now put on the defensive most urgently" it would come to regard its "erstwhile and putative rival" i.e., Christianity, "tentatively perhaps but gratefully, as a source of light, of understanding and of salvation" (:116, 117). As late as 1959 he concluded that "the pressure of contemporary realities may leave the (Muslim) conservative with nothing to conserve unless he can creatively transcend a mere assertive conservatism" (Cragg 1959:71).

4.1.6. Developments in the Arab world

Missiological developments in Turkey during this period were so minimal that we postpone comment on the country until chapter 5. We concentrate here on the Arab world, where a number of important developments took place, each of which helped shape the framework within which missions had to operate. Note that there is an element of artificiality in dividing the points below into developments at home and developments in the Arab world. The world was shrinking rapidly into a global village where one place could instantly set off a chain of cause and effect events around the world. The oil crisis of 1973-74 was a clear example.

4.1.6.1. The Retreat of Colonialism and the rise of Arab Nationalism

The retreat of Western neo-colonialism began slowly in the 1920s and 1930s and accelerated dramatically in the aftermath of World War II. For Algeria, the struggle to get rid of colonial imposition took on epic proportions, lasted until 1962, and would have a marked impact on the national psyche (Narbeth MW 1947:273-274). As one country after another gained independence, the painful experience of foreign domination gave way to euphoria, optimism and a fresh resurgence of Arabic nationalism and racial consciousness among the Arabs. "The strange aberration represented by nineteenth-century tutelage to non-Muslim power (or powers) is ended and with its termination has come… a great new sense of release and élan" (Cragg 1959:62). The Arabs became aware of their strategic position in relation to oil supplies as well as to world trade routes by land, sea and air. The Arab League gave rise to the hope that Arab States would be able

to “stand together and become a powerful force in world affairs” (Dalenberg MW 1946:66). One of the reasons why many missionaries thought they detected a decline in Islam was because of this rise in Arab Nationalism, a sentiment that fired the imagination of both Christian and Muslim Arabs.

> With the passing of religious fanaticism, however, nationalism and secularism have formed a shell almost impossible to penetrate, and even when direct faith in Islam is gone there remains fierce devotion to the group and any attempt to break the barriers of the organism is resented with a fervent and white-hot patriotic ardor to maintain the body politic and the social structure, in the name of the religion of which these are a part (Wilson MW 1946:294).

Arab nationalism reached its peak in Syrian Ba’athism (a form of Arab socialism) and Nasser’s pan-Arabism. It was held that because foreign imperialists had split the Arabic-speaking world into more than a dozen countries they remained subject to the machinations of outsiders. Political unification, however, would increase Arab wealth and power. In 1958 Syria and Egypt formed such a union, the United Arab Republic which, it was hoped, other Arab states would eventually join. In the event, 1958 proved to be the zenith of pan-Arab nationalism. Heavy handed measures by Nasser led to the union’s rupture in 1961 (Goldschmidt 2004:304-309). Arab nationalism received a brief boost when, in early 1963, Ba’ath army officers staged coups in Syria and Iraq respectively. “Soon Iraq and Syria adopted identical flags, swore eternal Arab brotherhood, and sent delegates to Cairo to negotiate with Nasir for a new United Arab Republic” (:310). Although the three states published plans for a new union, Nasir and the Ba’athists failed to agree how the new state should be led. “For the rest of the year disillusioned Arab governments, newspapers, and broadcasters hurled invectives at one another” (:310).

Just as after World War I, some felt that Christianity would not flourish if it did not support the Nationalist cause: “Altogether Arab nationalism is a factor of primary importance, and whether Christianity expands among the Arabs or declines may depend on the attitude which western Christians adopt to Arab nationalism” (Watt 1947:154). Cragg, for his part, recognized a relationship between Muslim thinking and contemporary Arab politics:

> For reasons built into its origins, Islam has always been a confidently political religion… Muslims, by definition, were never meant to be alien-ruled. Their state was an inseparable part of their religion… To have forfeited that ruling status was a sting, the disquiet, the misery of nineteenth-century history across the Islamic world. By the same token, to have reversed that distressful pattern and ousted the alien empires was like coming home into authenticity… the recovered amalgam of faith and power within Islamic societies is almost everywhere complete. This renewed and effective politicization is the most important single fact of the new century (Cragg 1986:6-8).

He did not think that this was necessarily a bad thing, believing that in the post-colonial world Christianity would become disassociated from Western political, economic and cultural aggression and lead to new opportunities for witness: "Here is our great new opportunity, even though it may well be an opportunity to witness through suffering" (Cragg 1959:9).

Church leaders of those Protestant denominations that had been founded by converts from the Orthodox churches in the course of the previous century (i.e., Presbyterian, Episcopalian and Lutheran churches) tended to become more interested in politics than religion: "One cannot altogether blame them for this; it has been the tradition in the Near East since before the time of Christ that religious leaders should also lead in politics" (Watt 1947:156).

Even to Christians, Muslim heroes from the "golden age of Islam" became heroes, even if they were redefined as nationalist and not religious heroes.

> When a Christian Arab is fired with nationalistic enthusiasm, he automatically comes to adopt towards Islam an attitude radically different from that of the great majority of western missionaries. He now inevitably comes to take pride in Muhammed as the great national hero, and to take pride in the ancient Arabic literature, much of which is definitely Muslim. These are problems which are now agitating the minds and souls of young Christian Arabs, problems from which there is no easy escape; and we from the West on whom these problems do not press so heavily will need to have great tact, sympathy and patience if we are not to alienate our young Arab friends. They need to be allowed to work out their Christian faith *in their own specific way*; and the chief thing we can say about it is that it will be quite unlike ours (Watt IRM 1947:160).

Another huge catalyst to Arab nationalism, uniting Palestinian Muslims and Christian in particular (Watt IRM 1947:156, 158) was the "Zionist threat", following the creation of the state of Israel.

4.1.6.2. The Creation of the State of Israel, the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, and the formation of a Palestinian National Identity.

Of the wars that were fought in the region during this period the series of short, sharp conflicts between Israel and various Arab states were of great import from a missiological perspective. Let us begin with the basic facts of the conflict before looking at the way many American Boomer evangelicals—i.e., the same group which would attempt to pioneer a new outreach to the Muslim world—interpreted them.

The struggle between Jew and Arab began during Ottoman times, when Arabs tried to stem the flow of Jews into Palestine. During the British mandate this struggle became more acute, for the Balfour Declaration (1917) recognized in principle the eventual establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine. Nazi anti-Semitism in the 1930s and 40s confirmed to Jews the need for their own homeland; they simply had no other place to go. Most of Europe

became unbearable for them, while countries that had previously accepted immigrants shut the door because of the Depression. After the war many of such East European Jews as had survived the Holocaust opted for new life in the Promised Land, irrespective of the risks.

The flood of Jewish refugees and immigrants to Palestine was a dilemma for a weakened and impoverished post-war British government struggling to keep its empire from falling apart. For nearly two years it tried to stem the tide, but to little avail. The West, appalled by the Holocaust, was sympathetic to the plight of the Jews. Even the Soviet Union, which regarded Britain as its primary enemy during the immediate post-war era, supported them diplomatically. With India set to gain its independence there remained little reason for the British government to maintain its presence in Palestine. In 1947 it announced that it would return the Palestine Mandate back to the United Nations on 15 May 1948 (Lewis 2002:362).

The UN General Assembly decided to partition Palestine into three entities: a Jewish and an Arab state, with Jerusalem under international jurisdiction. The Council of the Arab League opposed the plan; Jewish leadership accepted it. The UN Assembly, however, made no provision for the execution or enforcement of its plan. On May 14 the Jews announced the establishment of the state of Israel within the territory granted them by the UN partition plan. It was immediately recognized *de facto* by the USA and *de jure* by the Soviet Union (2002:363). Syrian, Jordanian and Egyptian armies reinforced Palestinian forces and attacked the new state. "The struggle for Palestine was now an Israel-Arab war" (:363). The chances of the new state surviving seemed remote, but after a few weeks of desperate struggle the situation changed dramatically. The Israelis not only withstood the first assault, they managed to extend their territory. When, in 1949, a truce was negotiated, various regions of Palestine were subject to four different nations. Israel controlled the area granted it by the UN plus some, Egypt held the Gaza Strip, Jordan the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and Syria the Golan Heights.

During the war huge numbers of Palestinian Arabs either fled from or were forcibly driven from their homes by the Israelis, to become refugees scattered over West and East Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Egypt and within Israel. The number of refugees created at the time range from United Nations estimates of 726,000 (Lewis 2002:364) to 900,000 by missionary researchers (Survey: the Near East, IRM 1955:36). Unlike other refugees, the Palestinians in Arab countries were neither resettled elsewhere nor repatriated to their home country. They and their descendents after them were left in camps to exist as stateless refugees. Only Jordan, which annexed the West Bank, granted them full citizenship.

The 1956 Suez crisis is of little importance for our purposes except to show that the US did not yet champion the cause of Israel to the extent it does today; it was strong American pressure which compelled the French, British and Israelis to withdraw from the Canal Zone (Lewis 2002:366). The next defining Arab-Israeli conflict was the war of 1967, commonly known as the Six Day War, during which Israel routed Egypt, Jordan, Syria and an Iraqi expeditionary force. By the end of the week Israel had taken all of the West Bank from Jordan, including Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights from Syria. Egypt had not only lost the Gaza Strip, but also the entire Sinai Peninsula. When, in 1979, Israel signed a peace agreement with Egypt—the first with an Arab country—it returned the Sinai.

The Six Day War created an entirely new situation on the ground for the Palestinians. Firstly, the total defeat of the Arab regimes utterly discredited them. Secondly, instead of having four enemies, the Palestinians now only had one, Israel, to contend with. "As the advancing guerilla replaced the retreating soldier as the symbol of Arab opposition to Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization rapidly became a major international player" (Lewis 2002:365). The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), founded in 1964, had been a tool of Arab regimes until 1967. After 1967 it evolved from a liberation organization into the Palestinian people's *de facto* government. Besides fighting Israel, the financial aid given it by Arab states to do their fighting for them enabled the PLO to run schools, hospitals, an industrial cooperative, various social services and a Palestinian Red Crescent.

After 1973 foreign countries, hoping to improve their relationship with the Arabs, started backing the PLO more than before. The Palestinians were also increasing their leverage over Arab governments. Many of them migrated to the oil-rich Gulf states, contributing heavily to their economic development. Palestinians would, for instance, come to make up one-fourth of the population of Kuwait (Goldschmidt 2004:344). In 1974 Arab states recognized the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on any liberated Palestinian territory" (:344). King Hussein of Jordan ceded the West Bank to the PLO and Yassir Arafat, the PLO Chairman, was invited to address the United Nations, which later recognized the Palestinians' right to independence and granted the PLO observer status (:344).

The PLO first operated from Jordan. By 1970, however, it threatened the balance of power in the kingdom, and King Hussein drove it from the country. From there they moved to southern Lebanon, where civil war and a weak central government allowed them to establish a virtual state-within-a-state. This ended in 1982, when Israeli forces invaded the country and expelled the PLO. The organization's leadership then moved to Tunis.

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Within evangelical, prophecy-oriented, conservative Christian circles the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 was "universally regarded… as a supernatural sign of immense importance" (Ellwood 2000:185). The children of Abraham obviously had a hugely important role to play these last days, when "the doomsday clock ticked towards the consummation of all things" (:185). On the other hand, the *fait accompli* of the State of Israel brought the Arab world "to a state of questioning bitterness towards the sincerity of the West, and of disturbing apprehensiveness as to the next move" (Bishop IRM 1951:282). This bitterness was keenly felt by such few missionary institutions as sought to serve the Arabs during this period.

> There is hardly a country in which the expression of Arab hostility to the western nations which supported the partition of Palestine was not also to some extent directed towards Christian missions and their workers from the West. The missionary enterprise has to take realistic account of the sharp increase in Arab solidarity and unity which the Palestine issue had brought about and of the intensification of Islamic propaganda which has accompanied it (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1949:32).

The creation of the State of Israel also created a rift between Jewish and Arab Christians. Even where the clergy urged a spirit of reconciliation "both Hebrew and Arab Christians identify themselves… with the cause of their respective compatriots" (1949:34).

As a result of the Palestinian refugee crisis virtually the whole church in East Jordan came to be composed of refugees (Coate IRM 1951:449). It was an OBP church which "gagged" on the word Israel which, in turn, led to a reaction against the Old Testament focus on Israel as the people of God, leading many churches "to carefully expurgated readings of the Old Testament and in some cases to an almost complete rejection… The associations are so bitter as to preclude the use of any scripture which contains the word or suggests the idea of Israel" (McMullen IRM 1957:54).

4.1.6.3. The Cold War: Soviet Support of Arab States

Turkey and Iran, both of whom had long histories as independent, sovereign states, were keenly aware of the ongoing threat posed by the bellicose Russian bear to their north, and turned to the United States for support against Soviet threats and enticements. The US responded positively, and was thus drawn into Middle Eastern politics. In 1952 Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and in 1955 Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Britain formed an alliance known as the Baghdad Pact. Turkey's membership of NATO was a step on a long, rocky road, which, it was hoped, would eventually lead to full integration into the European community. As such, the country started moving in a very different direction from those taken by the Arab world.

The Baghdad Pact was short-lived. The recent history of the newly formed Arab states consisted largely of attempts to free themselves of Western European rule and interference; they had no experience of Russian/Soviet meddling in their affairs. In Iraq, as well as in other Arab countries, notably Nasser's Egypt, the Baghdad Pact was perceived as a step backwards, a return to western European entanglement. Consequently, the Soviet plan to skip over the front-line states of Turkey and Iran and establish alliances with various Arab regimes was generally welcomed by the latter, particularly by Egypt, Syria and Southern Yemen. Soviet support for the Arabs from the mid-1950s onward consisted of diplomatic support against Israel, the sale of sophisticated military hardware, and technical and logistical support for Arab armies. This, in turn, led the United States to establish "a new and closer strategic relationship with Israel, of which it became the principal source of diplomatic, strategic, and in time also financial, support" (Lewis 2002:367). In other words, America became the enemy's friend and Americans, including missionaries, came to be viewed with ambivalence at best.

4.1.6.4. Arab Oil Wealth > Economic Development and Political Clout

During World War II the stationing of large numbers of allied troops in the Levantine states in particular had a dramatic impact on both society and the economy. The fact that "a good many women" started finding employment, giving them "a freedom not previously experienced, had a significance of its own" (Survey: the Near East, IRM 1947:36). Large sums of allied money were spent in the region during the course of the war. "The cost of living rose on average something like 400 percent, but despite this fact the nationals of the various countries were mostly better off than before the war" (Watt IRM 1947:153). Interestingly—and unusually—it was the missionaries, whose incomes did not keep up with inflation, who felt the squeeze (:153). However, by the summer of 1946 allied money had left along with the allied armies from Syria and Lebanon, leading to fears of an economic crisis (:154). It was not the more cosmopolitan, Levantine states, with their long heritage of missionary input, but the oil-rich, missionary-poor Arabian Peninsula which would experience sustained economic development. Oil wealth enabled such formerly backward nations as Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, to develop modern social service systems and become full participants in the contemporary world. American experts employed local Arab (Bedouin), as well as Iraqi and Indian labor. "The desert Arabs learn to be machinists and in an incredibly short time they become semi-skilled laborers" (Dalenberg MW 1946:66). Foreign labor, initially highly specialized Westerners, were brought in to develop the infrastructure. Later, as the standard of living in the oil-rich countries rose, domestic and other help from South East Asia arrived. These

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expatriates would come to play a significant role in terms of Christian witness (Gaudeul 2000: 257).

By 1945 the American Arabian Oil Company invested about $100,000,000 in the Peninsula, a figure which was expected to expand tenfold during the next decade. America was also involved in the development of commercial air bases, banking, shipping, trading, mining and prospecting. The United States Government sent an agricultural mission to study irrigation and agricultural possibilities. "American villages" of modern, furnished, air-conditioned bungalows housing American experts sprung up along the Persian Gulf coast opposite the Bahrain Islands and at Ras Tanura where the oil company built a new refinery (Dalenberg MW 1946:65-66). All this led to rapid development in "a country which fifty years ago had only six post offices on its entire four-thousand-mile coastline!" (:66).

By 1970 Iran and Arab countries were pumping 70% of the world's oil. Saudi Arabian, Kuwaiti, Iraqi, Libyan, and U.A.E. economic power rapidly evolved into political and military clout. As a response to Western support of Israel in the 1973 war they decided to test that strength. The day after the commencement of a massive American arms-supply airlift to Israel, Arab oil producing states announced that they would reduce their production by 5% that month, and that cutbacks would continue until Israel had withdrawn from the occupied territories and recognized the Palestinian's national rights (Goldschmidt 2004:338-339). Some OPEC members raised the price of oil by 50%. Arab states agreed to an oil embargo on the United States. Oil supplies in the West dwindled and, with winter coming, many Western governments adopted austerity measures to avert a crisis (:339).

The increase in oil prices led to another major transfer of wealth into the region, giving such countries as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, and Libya new opportunities for economic development and political leverage (2004:343). Western businessmen filled the hotels and waiting rooms of government officials while ships loaded with machinery and consumer goods unloaded at the Arabian peninsula's insufficient ports. Arabs and Iranians started investing heavily in Western stocks, bonds and real estate, raising fears that they would eventually own most of the world's assets. The United States started selling huge amounts of arms (US$7 billion in 1977) to Middle Eastern rulers to help pay for oil purchases (:343).

The two Yemens, the Sudan, Jordan and other have-not Middle Eastern states with little or no oil reserve, had to shelve development plans just to pay for oil. Egyptians, Yemenis, Palestinians and Lebanese moved in large number to the newly rich oil countries to work and send much of their salary back to their families, changing their lifestyles as well.

Missionaries initially expected that this rapid development and increased contact with the West would lead to materialism, which would, in turn, further weaken Islam's hold.

> The tendency to materialism… has been strengthened by the economic prosperity of the last few years and by the effect of contacts with the West in dissolving much of the old belief in God. There is a general agreement on this point in missionary circles. Materialism, not Islam, would become "Enemy Number One" here (Watt IRM 1947:154).

"The fact that thousands of Bedouins now work as mechanics in the Bahrain oil refinery, exposed to a form of civilization entirely foreign to them" was viewed as a great opportunity for reaching them with the gospel (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:36). Two "evangelistic families" were stationed in Muscat in 1950 "for the first time in many years" (The Near East, IRM Jan 1951:33). The development of a modern social service system relieved "the Reformed Church mission of some share of the total responsibility which it has hitherto carried, particularly in the medical field" (:33).

The existence of large expatriate communities led to the formation of a network of "International Churches" ministering to expatriates across the region. The Arabian Mission's Reformed Church in Kuwait, for instance, felt challenged to "demonstrate how the power of Christ unites and reconciles men of many tongues, races and nationalities" and, sought to present "a multi-lingual Protestant witness to this modern Arab city" (Vander Werff 1977:180). Its ministry of racial reconciliation led it to cooperate with Orthodox and Roman Catholic groups as a testimony of "what God is effecting in Christ as well as provide worship and fellowship for all who would come" (:181).

4.1.6.5. Arab Protestantism

Just because the foreign missionary enterprise virtually collapsed during the 1940s and 50s did not mean that there was no Protestant Christian witness in the Arab world. Along with the old Orthodox Churches, there was the newer, Protestant presence created out of it by previous generations of missionaries. These "new" Arab Protestant churches of the Levantine states numbered about 15,000 members in 1947 (Watt IRM 1947:159). This included about 5000 Presbyterians, 4000 Lutherans, and 1500 Anglicans (:156). Some of the missionaries were unhappy about the official recognition of distinct Protestant religious communities, as they feared that it would lead the church to be "content with the old millet status and the non-proselytizing attitude that accompanies it" (:156)). They were right. Recognition squelched evangelistic outreach to Muslims: "It must be confessed that there is little zeal among the Christian Arabs to go out to convert their Muslim brother" (:157). Furthermore, in spite of their paltry numbers, Arab Protestant denominations were unable or unwilling to work together. "Much more serious

than numerical smallness, however, is the 'divisiveness' of the Church" (Bishop IRM 1951:278; see also Watt IRM 1947:162).

Things became so bad in places that there were missionaries who sought to keep any Muslim converts from contact with the Protestant church established by their predecessors:

> At one spot in Iraq I met an American missionary who is shepherding a tiny group of Muslim converts in the most pronounced isolation from the rest of an all-to-small Iraqi Christian community. Sad experience had convinced him that the only way of ensuring the converts' growth in the faith was by insulating them from a church in which they could only be regarded as an embarrassment (Goodall IRM 1957:6).

Both the Orthodox and Protestant populations of certain Arab countries, notably Palestine, but also those in Lebanon and Syria began a precipitous decline due to emigration from the region. "The years of the Mandate saw the Christian population dwindling. It is probably true that there has not been so small a Christian minority in Palestine… since the years immediately preceding the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman armies in A.D. 70" (Bishop IRM 1951:278).

4.1.6.6. Muslim view of Protestantism and Christian Missions

What, in the course of a century and a half, was the image with which the Muslim majority had come to view Arab Protestantism and the Protestant missionary enterprise? Trying to paint that kind of picture "must necessarily be a caricature emphasizing certain features beyond their natural size because they are the features which seize the attention of the observer" (Kretzmann IRM 1966:411-412). Having said that, however, we can note a number of points which many Muslims had come to equate with Protestantism.

Protestant missionaries were viewed as representing competing branches of the Christian church which had no significant relationship to each other but whose main purpose was to gain the Muslim as a member of his particular organization (1966:411). Their method was to discredit the Qur'an and malign Muhammed so as to undermine the Muslim's faith. Since they did not allow possibility that Islam had any truth in it or that it offered the possibility of any relationship with God, they sought to destroy it (:411, 412). To accomplish this task they were perceived as presenting their faith as a series of philosophical propositions "with the intention of proving that these are more truthful than those held by the Muslims", and bringing with him "a great many things which are derived from his alien culture and absolutizes them to the point that the Muslim must become deculturated and alienated from his own people if he wishes to embrace the Christian faith" (1966:411-412). This led Muslims to fear that their acceptance of the Christian faith would bring them into a wilderness of personal isolation where there was no real sense of community and fellowship.

> In its Christian ministry to Islam today, the Church is continually met by the paradox that its Western-ness is at odds with its Christian-ness, that its geographical associations (in the minds of the Muslim) have compromised its theological relevance, that, in a word, Christendom has forestalled Christ (Cragg MW 1952b:209).

Christianity was also perceived as having a distorted sense of values with regard to material things, which Christians were free to pursue. This was because Christianity only had significance for a small segment of life, "the major portion of it being devoid of religious meaning". Even if the missionary paid lip-service to the equality of all men, Christianity was "guilty of perpetuating racial and social distinctions" (Kretzmann 1966:412). As a result, "the necessary temper needed for the Muslim to want to study Christianity in depth does not exist in any strength" (Cragg MW 1952b:120). Instead, he wanted to be rid of the foreign missionary, if not of the national Christian presence.

There were, of course, regional differences. In the 1940s the Arabian Mission, which had "very pleasant and cordial relations" with "this most remarkable man (king Abdul Aziz), his government and his people" was still welcome to do medical work in Saudi Arabia. The relationship was, however, unofficial. It was not between a government and a Non-Government Organization (NGO), but only between government officials and such missions personnel as they liked and approved of (Van Peursem MW 1948:6-11). There was, in other words, an inbuilt deadline in these arrangements.

Although under the Mandates Lebanon and Syria had religious freedom, in Syria, "quite apart from any government action, social feeling is so strong that it would be impossible for a convert from Islam to remain in his home" (Watt IRM 1947:154). Muslims came to consider western Christian missions to Islamic countries as a "preposterous audacity, if not sheer hypocrisy, covering political or imperialistic aims" (Nielson IRM 1955:263).

This belief that the Christian evangelist was out to destroy Islam led "to another disquieting feature of the present mentality", the fact that Muslims "tend to regard all criticism as malicious and all difference as willful" (Cragg MW 1952a:120). This hypersensitivity toward criticism made the Arab suspicious even of "impartial orientalists, who have no witness they wish to communicate and no purpose save the academic" (:120).

* * * * *

The quarter century following the Second World War saw several critical shifts and developments which combined to create a new missiological framework for the Middle East. The older mission agencies declined to virtual insignificance. A new movement, largely driven by interdenominational, evangelical parachurch mission organizations, emerged. The hiatus between

the two movements, the theological shift accompanying the organizational change, and the generation gap between pre-Boomer and Boomer missionaries created a major disconnect. When the Boomers laid the foundations of the new missionary thrust to the Middle East in the late 1960 and 1970s, they had little sense of being part of a heritage going back a century and a half.

The Arabs and Turks, however, saw no such disconnect. The image of Protestant Christian missions, formed over the course of generations, was firmly embedded in the popular Muslim mind. As far as they could see missionaries remained Western sponsored agents bent on forming the Middle East into their own image. American evangelicalism's theologically driven support for Israel underscored that impression.

In the post-war period political and economic developments within the Middle East itself, notably Arab (pan)nationalism and rapid economic development in oil-rich countries raised these countries' political confidence. The Arab world moved rapidly from being an international backwater to being a main player on the world stage. By and large, it felt it could do without Western aid and development; in fact, it could threaten global economic stablility.

Although several countries, notably Lebanon and Jordan, allowed the church to sponsor a few foreign workers to help it maintain its operations, or allowed foreign teachers or medical personnel to help staff mission-founded educational or medical institutions, obtaining missionary visas became difficult. Boomer missionaries who wanted to reach Muslims with the gospel had to develop new methods. Their approaches would, by and large, not form a critical mass until the modern era (1979-present) and will thus be covered in the next chapter. What follows is a look at such post-war approaches and ministries which constitute a link, albeit a tenuous one, between two eras of Christian outreach to the region's Muslims.

4.2. What were the missionary goals and strategies?

Along with across-the-board staff shortages (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:37), such missionaries as remained were very unevenly distributed and tended to work, as before, with existing Christian communities: "most of the missionaries of the Levant states are working among the Christians of Palestine and the Lebanon. There are comparatively few in Syria and the Transjordan, predominantly Muslim areas" (Watt IRM 1947:161). In 1951, for instance, there were 70 missionaries living in Beirut. East Jordan, which had received a huge influx in Palestinian refugees in 1948, had less than 15 missionaries, no orphanages, schools for the blind or the deaf and dumb, nor homes for cripples or incurables. Hospital accommodation was insufficient and there was no T.B. sanatorium, though one was being built by the government (Coate IRM 1951:446-447). Lack of staff also prevented the extension of medical services in

Arabia, where, in any case, it was doubted whether such services would, in future, be wanted (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:37).

The missionary community recognized once again that past methods had not achieved the desired response: "the old policy has produced some fine, devout individuals, but it has not produced a self-propagating community" (Watt IRM 1947:159). Some acknowledged "with deep humility and penitence" that the missionary community had "failed to understand the Moslem people and their religion" (Wilson MW 1946:290). Others felt that a reorganization in mission and church work in Moslem lands should be made to meet the demands of the new era (:293). However, little creative thought and few initiatives were actually developed which sought to grapple with "this most difficult of arts, the winning of disciples to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ" (:293). Hence Christian ministry to the region consisted largely of maintaining structures—notably schools and hospitals which survived nationalization—which previous generations of missionaries had established, and of working with the OBP churches. Christian relief work among Palestinian refugees was one of the few new and significant ministries which, for a season, targeted Muslims directly.

Writing in 1950, one observer noted that "not since 1938 have the denominations cooperating in the Missionary Education Movement made a special study of Islam and the people who profess that faith" (Wysham MW 1950:233).

> As a visitor tries to sense the mood of missions and churches in this area in relation to the real encounter between Christianity and Islam, it is a sober and chastened mood which meets him. The visible conquests have been few… It is accompanied by the most searching questions as to policy and, with a few notable exceptions, by admissions of failure to build a Christian community in which converts from Islam can find a natural place… Almost everywhere I met either bewilderment in face of frustration or eager questioning as to the right missionary policy towards Islam (Goodall IRM 1957:6).

Things would not get better. Other than inclusion in the World Survey published every January, years would pass through the late 1940s and 1950s—the pre-Boomer era—without a single article pertaining to the Middle East or Islam appearing in, say, the *International Review of Missions*. From a missiological perspective, it was the virtual intellectual black-out which sets most of the period apart from the post World War I period, when Gairdner, Zwemer and others sought to form a new paradigm of outreach to Muslims. In the post Second World War era, however, there were a couple of pre-Boomers, notably Christy Wilson and Kenneth Cragg, who sought to build on the heritage of their predecessors. First, however, at look at some pragmatic responses to the conditions of the period.

4.2.1. Relief Work among Palestinians

As noted earlier, the Israeli war of Independence created up to 900,000 Palestinian refugees scattered over West and East Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Egypt and within Israel (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:36). In the post-war period such Christian medical services as were not taken over by central authorities were engaged largely in ministering to these refugees and war victims: "Those of the hospitals which have remained open have encountered much pressure from casualties on both sides" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1949:34). Arab refugee relief work was, at least in part, done in cooperation with or on behalf of various United Nations organizations. Christian agencies were primarily involved in giving supplementary relief, such as distributing clothes and milk, supplementing meager food rations, and "offering many kinds of personal service and help, especially in care of individuals" (Coate IRM 1951:444). Some agencies introduced a system of loans without interest, to enable individuals or groups to embark on some enterprise, an initiative which "played a positive part in the challenge to the creation of an attitude of hope" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:36). These ministries developed into the most substantial direct outreach to Muslims during 1940s and 1950s.

> Ninety percent of the help from voluntary agencies issues from Christian groups. It goes to help people who are ninety per cent non-Christian. And there is little thought of distinction between Christian and non-Christian. The Muslim knows that, for reasons he cannot quite understand, he has friends who respond to need. To some extent the homelessness and despair which he feels are mitigated and the way is open for a further, deeper word (McMullen IRM 1957:58).

Christian agencies also got involved in retraining programs for refugees, many of whom suffered from a "deadly lack of employment" since their displacement (Survey, The Near East, IRM 1955:36). Teaching training courses along with various "courses of instruction leading to a variety of livelihoods" were launched (:36). This takes us into the realm of missionary education. Once the crown jewel of the missionary enterprise, the mission school as outreach to Muslims had lost its luster.

4.2.2. Education

Although Christian schools and hospitals continued to play a role in Christian witness (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:36), the question of their value was raised with increasing frequency. What real contribution had they made toward the ultimate goal of establishing a strong indigenous Church? They not only consumed much of the limited missionary resources available at the time but their impact, both with respect to creating a positive attitude towards Christianity in general, as well as with respect to providing an educated, "enlightened elite", continued to decline.

> The majority of the influential section of the community study in government schools. These have increased by leaps and bounds in late years. Government, culture, economics, public opinion, religious freedom, relationships with other nations, are very largely in the hands of men who have been educated in Government institutions (Smith MW 1946:284).

War in the wake of the creation of the state of Israel seriously disrupted missionary-run institutions in Palestine. Because many of the Christian schools and hospitals were located in mixed Jewish/Palestinian areas they were either evacuated or access to them became difficult (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1949:33). Many of the remaining mission schools were taken over for other purposes, while those in Transjordan were crowded with refugees (:34). In post-independent Syria there was a deliberate attempt to remove French influence (Watt IRM 1947:155).

In Egypt, however, the demand for Christian educational facilities remained high, in spite of competition from government schools. "Christian schools show no diminution in the number of pupils admitted, and good results in government examinations have enhanced their reputation" even if uncertainty as to the freedom of Christian activity continued to color the life of these schools (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:39). The four schools which the American Board continued to run in Turkey also had full complements of students (:39). All mission-run schools, however, increasingly felt the strictures of closer government supervision and direction, "whether in a direction that limits full freedom of movement, choice of text-books, appointments of staff, (or) expansion of buildings" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1954:33).

Faced with these realities, the focus shifted from providing a general education to providing theological education to train people for ministry: "Basic to the whole trend towards indigenization of church life in the Near East is the growing demand for the extension of facilities for the training of the ministry" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:38). Although the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut, established in 1932 and operating as a college of the American University of Beirut, continued to grow in importance (:38), the college catered mainly to the Armenian community. It had no Arabs on staff, and Arab students there tended to feel out of place (Watt IRM 1947:157). Schools more amenable to Arabs, such as the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo catered, of course, to the Othodox background Protestant (OBP) church. The push for theological education where Muslim background Protestants (MBPs) were welcome would not become a concern until the modern period.

4.2.3. Medical Work

A few mission hospitals, such as the Mason Memorial Hospital, founded in 1903 in Bahrain by the Arabian Mission, not only continued to function, but expanded.

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> The demands on the (Mason Memorial) Hospital have grown beyond all previous dreams… Wards are always crowded: a 75-bed hospital houses 127 patients… Last year 1,100 major and 1,700 minor operations were performed… The clergyman accompanied the doctor and was accepted cordially by the King and the people (Dalenberg MW 1946:66).

The hospital and two clinics maintained by the American Board in Turkey were also filled to capacity (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:37), but had passed from being missions hospitals to secular private hospitals catering to the wealthy. In Saudi Arabia periodic visits into the interior by American Reformed Missions doctors, undertaken at the request of King Ib'n Saud, "continue to attract patients on a scale that is little short of embarrassing" (:37).

In spite of government initiatives in Egypt, medical missions continued to play a role there as well (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:37). Elsewhere other mission-run hospitals, such as the Annour Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Mafraq, Jordan, continued to provide services, in its case to the Bedouin. It became increasingly difficult, however, for mission hospitals to compete with national health programs. Official pressure to raise the standards and new government medical facilities able to provide both superior and a wider range of services, raised the question of the redundancy of mission-run institutions in a number of countries (Browne IRM 1956:279). "Whereas in many, if not in most, fields medical missions were formerly in the vanguard, they are now in the process of being outdistanced by their secular companion-in-arms" (:282).

The same problem faced mission-sponsored medical training programs. If "a few short years ago" missions offered the only or best medical training in many countries of the region, national training programs overtook them.

> High cost of buildings and equipment; commitment of a larger proportion of a dwindling missionary staff to a work making large demands on time; the wastage during training; the small percentage of qualified auxiliaries or doctors who are willing to work directly under missions or who could be adequately paid from mission funds if they were so willing; the gravitation of qualified men to the big centers; the real doubts on the part of many as to whether higher medical training, in these days of stringency in finance and staff, is a work that should be undertaken if it means that other tasks are left undone (Browne IRM 1956:280-281).

Missions responded to this situation by retreating to the less rapidly developing parts of the Arab world, and starting hospitals or clinics there, notably in Yemen (WorldWide Services Hospital in Sa'ada), Fujaira (WorldWide Services's midwifery hospital, founded 1960), and Abu Dhabi (TEAM's Hospital in Al Ain), and by focusing on preventative medicine.

4.2.4. Clubs

The collapse and/or nationalization of many mission-initiated educational institutions led to the establishment of some less formal organizational structures aimed at ministering to young people.

Reaching the increasingly politically and socially aware students became a priority for a number of Christian clubs and community centers sponsoring discussion and fellowship with a goal to evangelism (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:35). It was hoped that "community centers for converts" would demonstrate the reality of Christian community in non-Christian surroundings as well as contribute "to the growing emphasis on the rooting of the Church in an indigenous environment" (:35). Such hostel and club activities played a particularly large part in Christian work in Algeria and Tunisia where, under the French, there was full religious freedom on the one hand, and comprehensive government educational and medical services on the other hand (:35).

The North African Dormitories started during the interwar period by the Methodists (see Chapter 3) continued their ministry, though questions were being raised as to their viability due to financial and personnel constraints (Narbert MW 1947:26).

In Tunis an American missionary started a "missions and baseball" campaign in order to reach youths (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:36). During the 1950s the North Africa Mission started organizing camps in Morocco and Tunisia, while the Reformed Mission in Arabia tried, for a season, to do the same in Iraq. In Egypt the Y.W.C.A. also organized camps, in which as many as half the participants came from Muslim background (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:38).

4.2.5. Christian Literature/Media

Although a film on the life of Christ, along with some visual-aid methods, was used to reach women in Bahrain in the early 1950s (The Near East, IRM 1951:33), the need for good Christian literature was never in doubt, and was much discussed in the missionary community (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:40; see also Whitby, IRM 1948:17).

> The importance of the evangelistic function in Christian literature can hardly be over-emphasized. The great value of the printed page has been realized for many years by workers in Moslem lands… A truly great Christian literature has been developed in the main languages of the Mohammedan world, which ranges all the way from single-page tracts to books like a Bible dictionary of a thousand pages (Wilson MW 1946:300).

However, the production of Christian Arabic literature dropped sharply in the wake of the war. The three chief literature production societies, the American Mission press in Beirut, the Nile Mission presses in Cairo and Jerusalem, and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge presses in Cairo, Jerusalem and Baghdad, were starved of personnel (Padwick MW 1946:336). None had people with the skills to enable them to produce attractive-looking, good quality materials. Their technical equipment was antiquated (:334). Virtually nothing at all was being printed in Turkish (:333; see also Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:40).

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Problems were exacerbated by a temporary paper famine after the war, by stringent export regulations in Egypt, the chief producing country (Padwick 1946:334), and by distribution problems, notably "the difficulty of finding enough suitably qualified men of good standing in the Church, to join those engaged in colportage work" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:38). The lack of ongoing production of Christian literature was thrown into sharper relief by the "marked growth in the Arabic Press in certain countries… (and) the readiness with which non-Christian philosophic literature, widely distributed over the area, is absorbed" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:40). The three societies mentioned above formed a cooperative to pool resources and into which they sought to draw church groups and missions interested in the development of Christian literature (Padwick 1946:334).

By the mid 1950s discussions focused on the production of a Christian newspaper. It was hoped that such a production, "aiming at 10,000 as a start" would serve as "a channel of advertisement for Christian books, would find a warm welcome among people who have become keen news-paper readers" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1955:38). It wouldn't be until the modern era, however, that there was sufficient missionary mass to start a regular Christian publication, *Al Magalla* (see 5.2.2).

4.2.6. Debate and Dialogue

It is in the realm of debate and dialogue that the differing approaches between the older generation of missionaries and the new generation of early Baby Boomers is most clearly seen—though, in the modern period, Boomers would mature their views. The older generation continued to seek common ground with Islam: "Islam has perceptions and values which are worth preserving… Christianity will never truly take root among the Arabs unless these perceptions and values are preserved" (Watt IRM 1947:77). They rejoiced that "opportunities for religious fellowship are increasing", even if these only "occur chiefly with Muslims who have received a western education of university standard". It was expected that "mutual respect may be expected to grow, and with it a deeper understanding of the inner essence of the other religion; and this is something which will be helpful on both sides" (:75)

> Islam has a deep apprehension of the transcendence of God, and of His supremacy in His world, together with man's creatureliness…. Another important conception is that of 'Islam' or 'surrender' to God… one might go on to mention other values, such as the brotherhood of Muslims, and the preference of personal to impersonal relations (1947:78).

Personal evangelism, or one-on-one dialogue done in a spirit of "humble, tolerant, self-forgetful love; not of hate, or fear or pride or self-seeking or revenge, or any sort of ill will" would, it was hoped, produce better results than public ministry (Wilson MW 1946:290). "Far

more fish are caught with a single hook and line in the Moslem world than by throwing the Gospel net and enclosing a multitude. Personal evangelism is the method which produces results rather than public preaching" (:302). It was felt that the spirit in which the Christian carried out his debate was as important as the communication of Christian truths. "The Muslim world… reacts to what is done to it from the outside. This means that the attitude of Christians… is vitally important" (Bishop IRM 1955:168).

It was particularly vis-à-vis the perceived common threats posed by "godless Communism" and pervading materialism accompanying economic development that some thought Christianity and Islam could form a common front (Watt IRM 1947:76).

> The primary effort of the Church (in the face of Middle Eastern materialism) should be towards the regaining of lost ground and the recovery of a vital belief in God; and that therefore nothing should be done to weaken those bodies which still retain some belief in God, such as… the Muslim community as far as it is genuinely religious (1947:154).

Nurturing fellowship between the two religions in an increasingly secular, post-religious world would "help the Muslim to deepen his faith as a Muslim, to become a better Muslim" (1947:75). "The western Christian through friendships with Muslims at the religious level can both help the educated Muslim see more clearly what is good in Islam, and also can himself learn to appreciate more fully the valuable perceptions of Islam" (:78).

> A simple example would be a Muslim student of philosophy who had lost his faith in God through reading Nietzsche; we should try to help him recover that faith in God, simply as faith in God without thrusting upon him any specifically Christian arguments about the Holy Trinity… The suggestion is merely that… the proximate aim should be to help Muslims to be better Muslims, rather than to make converts and to force the challenge of Christ upon them (1947:75, 76).

This was going too far for the British scholar-missionary Kenneth Cragg (1913-), arguably the best known representative of Christian interaction with Islam during the era. The fact that his books were still in print during the 1970s and 1980s turned his poignant advocacy of a more sensitive attitude and approach towards Islam into a reminder to Boomers that missions was neither managing an enterprise, nor waging a war.

Born in 1913, Cragg was raised in an Evangelical home, studied modern history at Oxford, and later studied theology, philosophy, Arabic and Islamics. In 1937 he became an ordained Anglican priest. He lived for many years in the Middle East, was professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary (CT) in the 1950s, and became assistant Bishop of Jerusalem in the early 1970s. Before his retirement he served as Archbishop of Oxford. When he started writing in the 1950s he built on the sympathetic approach of such predecessors as Zwemer and Gairdner.

> The Christian Church has not yet seriously faced the theological problem of "co-existence" with other religions… Are we then shut up to the alternative of what in some disguise or other must be an aggressive attack on the deeply held convictions of those who live by other faiths than our own? (Cragg 1959:8-9).

As the title of one of his books, *Sandals at the Mosque* (1959), indicates, the study of other religions was, for him, like "walking on holy ground"; one should, figuratively, take off one's shoes when doing so (see Exodus 3:5).

> Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy…. God was there before our arrival. We have, then, to ask what is the authentic religious content in the experience of the Muslim... We must not arrive at our judgment from outside their religious situation. We have to try to sit where they sit, to enter sympathetically into the pains and griefs and joys of their history and see how those pains and griefs and joys have determined the premises of their argument (Cragg 1959:9-10).

In order to truly understand and relate to Islam Cragg felt that it was better to expose oneself to living Islam than to engage in a purely academic study of the subject, and to do so in a spirit which expected God to reveal a new understanding of Himself. In 1970 he published an anthology of Muslim and Christian prayers "intended to be used by members of both traditions, to encourage them to pray together" (Zebiri 2000:186). Cragg was not, however, uncritical of Islam: "We may… still reach the conclusion that our brothers have started from a false premise and reached a faulty conclusion" (Cragg 1959:10).

> Islam has been traditionally the most possessive of all religions over its community, the most ready and confident in state-reliance, the most forthright again "apostasy", the most prone to believe itself in God's hands in a reciprocal purpose. May it not be that this characteristic has oversimplified the cause, the goal, of a right worship, has underrated the complexity involved in "religion being wholly God's"? The urge to go forward in the custody of revelation with the patterns of authority familiar to this world may easily miss the measure of the human problem, the length of men's self-idolatry, the chronic pride and defiance of the Divine, the insistent autonomy of mankind (Cragg 1968:129).

His critique of Islam's use of force is particularly powerful. Cragg sees the *hijra*, Muhammed's move to Medina, as "the historical fulcrum", the major transition point in Islamic development. It was the *hijra* which led to Muhammed's great decision, "formative of all else in Islam: that decision for community, for resistance, for external victory, for pacification and rule" which turned Muhammed from a "preacher into a ruler, the 'warner' into a warrior" (Cragg 1956:93, 72) and, as such, chose a radically different way from the decision Christ opted for, the way of the cross (:93). Cragg expressed his "reservations about a religion which espoused power" and questioned the compatibility of forced, external conformity with "a free and voluntary response to God on the part of the individual" (Zebiri 2000:198-199). Acknowledging that historically Christianity has fallen short of its ideals, he upholds the distinction between ideals and

realities. Unlike Christianity, "the military dimensions of original Islam and its uninhibited embrace of the political arm are… crucial factors in deterring the Christian from a positive response to Muhammad" (quoted in Zebiri 2000:199).

Others also recognized the limits of dialogue and debate: "There are certain fundamental Christian things which Islam cannot perhaps grasp fully for many a day, but which Christianity can never surrender, and which Islam, for the most part, consistently refused" (Bishop IRM 1955:168). Muslims had to "give up conveying the impression that they are either incapable of understanding or unwilling to appreciate what we mean by phrases which have stood the test of two thousand years of Christian experience, eastern and western" and should be prepared to "meet us half-way and refuse to judge Christianity either by the Crusades or by the more recent laceration of the Holy Land or by the internecine European conflicts… Islam needs to… differentiate the leading religion of the West from various expressions of westernism" (:167).

Some believed that Muslims should be challenged to interact directly with the Biblical text so that the debate could take place on a more equal footing. "Western scholarship has shown far more interest in the Koran and the beginnings of Islam than the latter has ever displayed in the beginnings of Christianity" (1955:167).

> Muslim scholars should be asked to undertake a fresh perusal of the New Testament. Muslim studies in the New Testament have been infrequent enough, despite the obvious importance of the contents of the New Testament for the claims and teachings of Islam. Ultimately the admission must be made that the sources of which the Koran was forced to draw for its knowledge of Christian beginnings were almost entirely extra-canonical. In particular Islam should set on foot an examination of the life and influence of St Paul—about whom it knows next to nothing. By this means there would be opened an almost unknown vista of interest in what personal religion means, and meant in the development, intellectually and devotionally, of one of the ancient scholars whom the world knows best… It would be enough for Muslim friends to concentrate on the New Testament for the rest of this century (Bishop 1955:167).

With Cragg Christian-Muslim dialogue reached its zenith, particularly in his exchanges with Isma'il al-Faruqi at The Chambesy Consultation, held in June 1976 in Chambesy, Switzerland. The debates between the two men focused on four issues. The first concerned the meaning of revelation, with al-Faruqi stating orthodox Islam's traditional understanding of divine revelation in an uncompromising way:

> God does not reveal Himself. He does not reveal Himself to anyone in any way. God reveals only His will… Christians talk about the revelation of God Himself—by God of God—that is the great difference between Christianity and Islam. God is transcendent, and once you talk about self-revelation you have hierophancy and immanence, and then the transcendence of God is compromised. You may not have complete transcendence and self-revelation at the same time (quoted in Chapman 1998:105).

Cragg noted that al-Faruqi's understanding of transcendence is inconsistent with the idea of creation: "The creation of man is an involvement of the divine will with the human answer… Theism… must mean divine involvement, for this… is implicit in creation itself" (:105).

The second topic concerned God's response to human sin. God's way of dealing with sin, according to al-Faruqi, was to reveal His will in the Qur'an, thus offering humankind a comprehensive law covering every aspect of life: "Islam recognizes the universality of sin and God deals with it by sending down the Qur'an." (:105). The Christian understanding, according to Cragg, is that law, exhortation and argument are not enough, since "they may provoke the very disobedience they condemn" (:105).

The third subject pertained to the incarnation. Al-Faruqi was emphatic that incarnation compromises God's transcendence, while Cragg believed that it does not: "We have a marvelous example of kingship in Henry V, when the king lays the crown aside and shows a simple concern to get alongside the common soldier in a dire situation. Is this less kingly than sitting in a palace on a throne? I think most of us would agree that it is not" (:105-106).

The fourth subject was that of freedom and apostasy, in which Cragg challenged the traditional understanding of the Law of Apostasy presented by al-Faruqi with the comment: "A faith which you are not free to leave becomes a prison, and no self-respecting faith should be a prison for those within it" (:106).

Although the Chambesy Consultation came close to Cragg's ideal of a dialogue which involved openness at a deep level to what the other is saying, such dialogues have been difficult to repeat. The themes of subsequent debates (such as the Josh McDowell-Ahmet Deedat debates of 1981) ended up settling on a number of topics with predictable responses. These concerned, first of all, the Unity of God versus the doctrine of the Trinity, in which the Christian would point to the Bible and use various analogies to try to convince the opponent. The Muslim would characterize Trinitariansim as some kind of irrational, abstract idea invented by Christians, undermine the analogies, and present the Qur'an's teaching on the oneness of God.

A second point of dispute revolved around the person and work of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The Christian would point out that Jesus is the Son of God in a spiritual, not a physical sense, and that in Jesus God "puts on" human nature. He might go on to describe the life and mission of Christ as outlined in the gospels: his preaching, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension would be presented as proof and basis of His role as the Savior from sin through whom one received unending life. The cross would be described as a sign of God's love. To the Muslim Jesus was only a prophet: God has neither child nor spouse and cannot "become" man; Jesus was

a monotheist, a "servant" known through the Qur'an as someone who performed miracles. He was neither killed nor crucified, nor raised by God (Qur'an, al-Nisa 4:157). In any case, there is no need for salvation of sin in a Christian sense, for there is no such thing as original sin or a fallen human nature. Self-salvation came by the law (Gaudeul 2000:291,292).

A third area of debate revolved around the nature of the Scriptures. The Christian would point out that, according to the Qur'an, the Bible is Light and Guidance, and that any textual nuances and variants are neither lies nor contradictions. The Qur'an might be attacked as a forgery, a human book, parts of which could only be understood if one knows the Biblical background. Muhammed might be dismissed as either a false prophet or as a fallible man who gave some oracles. There were no prophecies predicting his appearance and no miracles attesting his veracity. The Muslim, for his part, would hold that the Bible has been falsified and is full of contradictions. He would then present the Qur'an as God's word, dictated by the angel Gabriel, and confirming previous revelations. The miracle of the Qur'an is, according to him, the fact that it cannot be imitated (*i'jaz*). Muhammed, God's messenger, was infallible, even impeccable.

Another area of debate was the nature of "true" religion. The Christian position would be that successive revelations had to agree with previous revelations, and that, as such, the Gospel fulfills the Law. The Qur'an, on the other hand, contradicts the *Tevrat* and *Zebur* (i.e., the Old Testament) in various places, and regresses to the old law. Furthermore, Islam had to resort to compulsion for its success in gaining and holding its adherents. Success, in any case, doesn't prove anything. The Muslim would respond by saying that Christians have given up the law while Islam continues the teaching of the prophets, and that God allowed recourse to a "holy war" to spread the faith. Muslim successes are signs of God's favor (Gaudeul 2000:297).

The area of debate might, on occasion, leave the realm of the purely doctrinal and stoop to mutual condemnations of the other community's customs and rituals. The Christian would condemn as immoral such practices as polygamy, the oppression of others in *jihad*, and the creation of *dhimmis*, second class citizens. The Muslim prayer ritual would be dismissed as meaningless and Muslims accused of trying to save themselves from eternal condemnation by their own efforts, of fatalism, of indolence, and of believing in a sensual and materialistic paradise. The Muslim, for his or her part, might claim that the Christian evaluation of Islam is completely wrong, and that the Christian position is hypocritical: secular Western society is godless, corrupt, and socially incapable of controlling the passions of men. Christians worship the cross, statues, and icons, and are imperialists who encourage the oppressed to concentrate on the next world.

In a nutshell, debate did not prove to be the "key" to opening the Muslim world to greater receptivity to the Christian message. If anything, it sharpened and confirmed differences. Hence recognition grew afresh during the modern period that missionaries had to grapple with deeper aspects of Muslim culture in order to create contextualized forms of communication—developments pursued in the next chapter.

4.2.7. "Great Experiment" Methods Linger in the Arab World

World War I led, as seen in chapter 2, to the virtual elimination of the church, whether Orthodox or Protestant, in Anatolia. The continued existence of significant Christian churches in many Arab countries henceforth marked the great difference between Turkey and the Arab world. However, in terms of seeing greater acceptance of Christianity among Muslims, the presence of such a Protestant body had a negative impact due to the hatred of many Protestant Armenians towards Muslim Turks and Arabs. This would have an ongoing negative effect.

> The Armenian in general thinks of the Muslim (primarily Turk, but secondarily Arab) as the hated oppressor; centuries of persecution are not readily effaced from the Armenian consciousness—he tends to think of himself as essentially superior but materially weaker. This attitude is unhelpful to the Christian Arab in meeting his particular problems. There is a deep cleavage between the mentality of the two groups; to the Armenian the Arab appears to be a materialist, while to the Arab the Armenian is a strange, unworldly dualist in certain respects (Watt IRM 1947:157).

In Turkey, the temptation for missionaries to work within the framework of existing OBP churches was reduced in proportion to the elimination of these bodies, while the desire to work within them continued to exert a corresponding pull in the Arab world, even though these Protestant works, many of them evangelical theologically, showed little desire to reach out to the Muslim majority. The evangelical missionary movement's conservative theology struck a cord with national Christians, who were theologically more conservative than their mainline mother churches in the West: "There are innumerable national Christians and missionaries whose theology is of the same type" (Douglas IRM 1966:423).

Early in the period some missionaries advocated a return to the Great Experiment, suggesting that, once again, missionaries focus on regenerating the old Orthodox church: "The efforts of foreign Christians in the Levant states should be directed first and foremost to the strengthening of existing groups there; and in speaking of 'existing groups' one is thinking of the ancient churches even more than of the 'new churches' (Watt IRM 1947:161). The reasons given remained the same as those given more than a century earlier: "In almost every instance where ancient Oriental churches exist the low state of morality and spirituality in these churches is

regarded as a chief hindrance to Moslems… These are all too frequently a travesty of the ideals and doctrines the Christian missionary is representing" (Watson MW 1947:20).

> These ancient churches in Moslem countries present before our eyes an example of what happens to a Christian body when it ceases to be evangelistic in outreach and fails to preach the Gospel to Moslem neighbors, retiring to an encystment within its own communion (Wilson MW 1946:291).

Some even entertained the hope that OBP Churches might re-unite with the Orthodox churches: "in which the traditions of the ancient churches would predominate" (Watson MW 1947:161). In fact, the Anglican mission of the Jerusalem bishopric "adopted a policy of friendship towards the eastern churches, which involved the complete abandonment of efforts to make converts from their members" in order to foster friendly relations with "the leaders of these churches and so to influence them gradually from within" (Watt IRM 1947:159). The effort was not "able to produce any spectacular results"

> They (i.e., missionairies) have had to carry out simple tasks at first, such as teaching English to theological students, until they had shown in practice that they could be trusted. And even when they were trusted, they had to give up all aims of changing their eastern brethren in their own likeness (as if that were ever possible!), and be content with sharing with the easterners whatever western learning they felt inclined to take (:159).

Other, more evangelically minded missionaries, felt that the new, Protestant churches had to be "filled with evangelistic zeal", even as they ought to "win the ancient churches in Moslem lands to a new spirit of evangelism", perceiving the latter as a negative example (Wilson MW 1946:291). In spite of the apparent hopelessness of working with the Orthodox church in Muslim Evangelism, hope, based "on signs of spiritual awakening in these historic churches of the Near East" remained alive, "though practical steps toward this goal were not forthcoming" (:291).

4.3. What was the Popular Response to the Missionary Enterprise?

Positive responses from Islam were so minimal that some expressed despair: "Given the situation in most Islamic lands today, the institutional expression of a body of Muslims desiring to follow Christ seems to be an impossibility" (Speight IRM 1965:204).

In light of the fact that the region received very little of Protestantism's missionary resources and that, with few exceptions, little strategic thinking was expended on it, it is remarkable that there were any converts at all. Yet, in spite of everthing, there were some, although no new and lasting church of MBPs appeared—even if, early in the period, some entertained hopes that it might happen on the Arabian peninsula.

> Growth has been slow and there have been many disappointments, but we have faith to believe that here too, "a new current is stirring," and that along with all the developments in the political, economic, and social phases of life in Arabia, there is evidence of the

> dawning of the day of religious freedom. Then we shall see converts coming in families, not by ones and twos. Then we shall see an organized church with national leadership (Dalenberg MW 1946:68).

All in all, there were just enough stirrings to keep missionary faith and hope alive. One report notes that "the conversion of Muslims seems still far in the future in most Near East countries, but that barrier may crumble much sooner than many now have faith to believe" (Wysham MW 1950:234). Although those hopes were not realized, several ministries were, nevertheless, considered effective.

4.3.1. Positive Responses

The ministry to Palestinian refugees during the 1950s resulted in a changed opinion about Christianity among some of them. Although confused about the fact that the State of Israel had come into being with the aid of "Christian" nations, the fact that Christian groups were "most actively offering aid to the refugees… made a deep and positive impact on the Muslim mind" (McMullen IRM 1957:58). One group of Muslim parents wrote a letter of gratitude for a school established among refugees in southern Lebanon which closed with the following words: "If Jesus Christ means so much to you that you will do this for our children, then we believe that you have a wonderful faith" (:58). However, such responses were few, not enough to overcome the doubts about educational enterprises as an effective evangelistic or church planting strategy.

At the youth camps in Morocco and Tunisia "the first seeds of enquiry into the Christian life" were sown and "led in several instances to boys embarking on further training". Some of the Y.W.C.A. camps were "as much as fifty per cent non-Christian in their composition" and, as such, helped nurture fellowship and break down inter-communal barriers (Survey: The Near East, IRM January 1955:38).

At the North African Dormitories a number of the young men were baptized and became members of the French Reformed Church (Narbert MW 1947:26). This was probably the most effective ministry in seeing Muslims come into the Christian faith during the era.

> The question has been raised often, "Is it worth while to continue the Homes? Is the tremendous outlay of missionary strength and money justified in the face of the results?" This question is very hard to answer. It is without doubt a task which ties down a missionary staff to a few individuals. As some express it, "it is a long way 'round". It is, however, a concentrated piece of work which yields more thorough and lasting results than any other type of work undertaken in North Africa. It is very wearing to have to battle with difficult and often violent characters and yet it is wonderful to see these characters yield to Christ and His saving power (1947:26).

A diligent search of missionary literature will turn up other positive responses, sometimes from unexpected places. The unnamed American missionary nurturing a tiny group of Iraq

Muslim converts in the Mosul area has already been mentioned. A 1947 report notes that churches had a "special responsibility… for a convert's well-being, not only spiritual but often economic too, in the first six months after his conversion, when he has probably cut himself off from his Muslim background and possibly from his means of livelihood" (Whitby, IRM 1948:17). In other words, there were converts who needed looking after!

In the 1950s two Yezidi boys, Sadiq Shammi and Elias Hammo, became Christians at the the Swedish Mission school in Bahsiqa, Iraq. They both went on to become ministers of the gospel. The UPCUSA minutes of 1953 note that "a most effective co-worker [in Iraq] is a Yezidie (sic) convert who uses a reading room as a base of operations for Bible classes and personal interviews" probably refers to Shammi (quoted in Blincoe 1998:168). After missionaries were forced from Iraq in the wake of the 1958 coup Shammi kept a small meeting going which, however, never organized into a congregation. The group consisted mostly of children and a few adults (:168). By October 1993, when Marvin Palmquist of the LOMS visited Arbil, nothing was left of the work (:168-169).

Another report speaks of "thrilling stories" coming "from some of the most difficult fields as to little groups of converts who are openly braving persecution and actively propagating their new faith" (Wysham MW 1950:234). There is no elaboration, and there are no follow-up reports. Modest hopes with respect to reaching Bahraini women using visual aids, a film on the life of Jesus, and personal visitation were also entertained: "The visiting of homes also shows promising results in the difficult matter of establishing contact with women" (The Near East, IRM 1951:33). Once again, the trail goes cold.

The effect of Christian educational institutions, as far as seeing Muslims becoming Christians, was disappointing. Early in the period progress was measured in terms of personal growth and changed ideals. Graduates were, for instance, seen to grow in tolerance and morality:

> They gradually change, and while they may not become Christians, they become tolerant Moslems and show it… Under Christian influences the Moslem student becomes a moral creature. He rises above the common Moslem attitude of self-interest, of being diplomatic, of following the crowd, of doing what is popular. A new motive, the Christian motive of 'doing what is right' comes in, and there is something dynamic about it. The Moslem student often is unconscious of the change, but it means much to his future and to the world (Watson MW 1947:19-20).

Changed attitudes towards women, the outside community, and other nations were also noted. "These changed ideals constitute the hope of the future, for only a changed Moslem can change the Moslem world" (:20). With respect to schools, disappointment was more common than of expectancy. This disappointment would, in the modern period, lead to the virtual

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abandonment of schools by the evangelical Boomers. In the meantime, and in spite of glimmers of hope, the small missionary community lived by faith more than by sight.

4.3.2. Negative Responses

The greatest disappointment at this time was the very minimal response to the Gospel via the medical and educational institutions into which so much money and energy had been poured: "The justification for Christian institutions on the field clearly does not lie in the number of baptized converts they have or have had" (Watson MW 1947:19). Not only was the response to mission-sponsored Christian education disillusioning in terms of converts and in terms of permeating society with a leading class sympathetic to Christianity, the liberal education taught at many Christian schools was not ideologically robust enough to counter other teachings entering the region: Christians "are not giving the refugees definite teaching comparable to that of the Communist propagandists" (Coate IRM 1951:447-448).

Graduates from government schools were more likely to advance in government than those educated in Christian schools because "leading families" tended to send their children to government institutions. In places preference also tended to go to graduates of government secondary schools with respect to university entrance (Smith MW 1946:286). Sheer numbers were also a factor in minimizing the impact of Christian education on society, as was recognized early on:

> So far as the Moslem portion of the world is concerned, leaders will come from Government schools in immensely greater numbers than from mission or Christian schools; in their hands will be greater power; and in their numbers will be the backlog of those who in subordinate official posts and in business, education, journalism, social and recreational life, remake the culture patterns and set up the signposts by which their people will express their relationships to their neighbors of other faiths and other cultures (Smith MW 1946:287).

Sometimes graduates from Christian schools turned against the places in which they were nurtured and ended up doing more harm than good: "graduates, when they become embittered against Christianity, leave only the better equipped to defend Islam and the better equipped to show up the weak points of Christianity" (Watson MW 1947:20).

With respect to medical missions, Donald McGavran made the following startling observation in 1955:

> The largest, most famous missionary medical centers seem to have grown up where there are no great growing churches; where great populations have not turned to Christ, there are great Hospitals; where great populations have turned to Christ, there are few great Hospitals (McGavran 1955, quoted in Browne 1956:280).

Although a report from Egypt states that "the value of the medical mission is attested by the experience… that evangelistic progress among the villages fluctuates according to whether the dispensaries are open or not" (Survey: The Near East, IRM 1947:37), the report does not state whether these are, as is likely, Coptic villages, nor does it comment on the nature of an interest in Christianity which rises and falls in tandem with dispensary hours. The fact remains that responses, in terms of actual conversions to Christianity through medical ministry, remained virtually nonexistent. The World Wide Services Maternity Clinic in Fujaira, for instance, has not seen a single Muslim convert to Christianity in nearly 40 years of ministry (Pikkert 1982-2006). Such dismal results led some to call the entire mission-run medical enterprise into question: "the closing of an expensive institution doing excellent medical work of little value as an evangelistic or church-building agency may release resources for situations of greater strategic value" (Browne IRM 1956:278).

> We should never be mesmerized by magnitude; a bigger institution, considered as an evangelistic and church-building agency, is not necessarily a better one. And the risk of becoming static and 'institutionally-minded' is not confined to the large or co-operative medical and training centers; it may affect a small work where those in charge have no wide vision of the part that medicine can play in commending the Gospel to the people (1956:280).

All in all then, a period marked by lack of personnel and strategic thinking reaped what it sowed: very little. It took time for the Boomers to reorganize, learn Arabic or Turkish, adapt to the culture and begin to bear fruit. They started doing so in the modern period.

4.4. What were/are the Missiological Implications?

Although there was, overall, little original missiological thought with respect to reaching the Arab and Turkish worlds during the period, there were, nevertheless, a few far-seeing thinkers drew some important missiological lessons. These lessons were, by and large, not heeded.

4.4.1. Critique of the relationship between Christianity and Western Culture

As seen in chapter 2, the superiority of Western Culture, in part because it was considered "Christian", was taken for granted prior to World War I. This notion, seriously undermined by the bloodletting of World War I, had led the inter-war Veterans to grapple with Islam in order to understand its inner genius and to present Christianity in culturally acceptable ways. In the wake of World War II, such missionary thinkers as thought deeply about the relationship of Christianity and Islam became increasingly critical of various aspects of their own, post-World War II culture, notably its materialism and its politics.

The recognition grew that the Western world was, essentially, secular as opposed to "founded on Christian principles" and that Christianity, in its most vital expression, ought to be a "force independent of human culture… ever standing in judgment on it and ever existing in tension with it" (Speight IRM 1965:203). The question as to whether the West owed anything at all to Christianity was even mooted: "We…desire that our Muslim friends should distinguish between genuine Christianity and Western civilization. It is a matter of controversy between East and West as to how much, if anything, Western civilization, including democracy, owes to Christianity" (Goodsell MW 1951:78).

Cragg's verdict on western materialism was equally uncompromising: "This irrepressible export of the West has within it that which no Customs barrier can exclude—an attitude, an ethos, a relationship to things" (Cragg MW 1952b:210).

> In the world of this generation Christendom is too much disqualified by neglect of worship. What it thus withholds from God is wasted upon itself. The ubiquity of Western modes of life and of its applied science means that the impact of its disloyalty to the Spirit is also worldwide… It is a factor of universal import. This is the penalty of world leadership in industrial power and of a long start in the mechanization which makes the modern age. Not the techniques only, but the temptations, of the West are everywhere (Cragg MW 1952b:209-210).

Even Cragg, however, expected "the Arab East to see the problem of confronting the new situation of Soviet expansion, made possible by Hitlerism, in solely Western terms" (Cragg MW 1952b:212). Some felt that the proper response was to support the United Nations, as opposed to their own western nation states, in the hope for a "true world government" (Wysham MW 1949:91). Hendrick Kraemer held that "the whole process of secularization is one of the ironic ways of God to call the Church back to its true nature and calling, to… assert Christ's claims of Kingship over all realms of life, but to do this… not as a power dependent on rights and privileges" (quoted in Speight IRM 1965:203).

In any case, the need to totally disassociate Christianity from Western politics was once again underscored. For missions to be effective in the Muslim world, Christian theology, including Eschatology, had to be disassociated from politics, notably from pre-millennial evangelicalism's tendency to support Israel: "We have to clarify the dissociation of Christianity from western politics, despite the theological presuppositions of some smaller Christian bodies over the whole subject of Palestine and prophecy" (Bishop IRM 1955:164). According to Cragg, "Christendom, in its relatedness to Islam on political and commercial levels, has the reputation of Christianity in its hands" (Cragg MW 1952b:216). The Christian's attitude to a wide range of social and political issues, including Arab Palestine and its history since 1948, the conflicts in

French North Africa, racial issues in Africa and elsewhere, are all "occasions definitive of the West and accordingly definitive also of what we made of Christianity, or what we make despite it" (:216).

> We are a source of much misrepresentation of Christianity and the occasion of much confusion and disservice to the problems of our Muslim neighbors. Can it be doubted that to brand these misrepresentations, to labor for their removal and to combat their consequences are duties inseparable from the missionary vocation? We cannot accept the suggestion that the organized missionary enterprise has no duty toward the political and other contacts of the West with Islam. If he declines such responsibility, the missionary will find himself a lonely preacher of Christian piety, calling souls to an allegiance which is belied by many of those who, for his hearers, are its representatives. By all means let us press forward with a humble commendation of Christ to ordinary folk everywhere. But let us not miss the parallel duty to militate on every level against every disavowal of Christ, explicit or unconscious, in our Western society and life (1952b:216-217).

This advice would, as we shall see, be tragically discarded in the modern era.

One important result of the questioning of the relationship between Western culture and Christianity which did effect change in mission strategy in the modern era was the undermining of the *raison-d'etre* of mission schools. Since these schools tended to be conduits of western culture more than they built up the church, what was the point? (Watt IRM 1947:161). If educational work did not actually contribute much—if anything—to the building up of the church (and that certainly seemed to be the case) they might as well be closed or handed over to national secular bodies: "The question that might be asked here… is whether work of this sort (i.e., education work) could not be done as well, or nearly as well, by secular bodies" (:162). As we will see, missions to the Middle East in the modern period gave up on the idea of establishing more general educational facilities for nationals. Such schools as were established were either theological institutions or schools for missionary children (with the notable exception of a new educational venture in Northern Iraq [see 5.2.7]).

4.4.2.2. Evaluation of missionary support of national politics

In spite of national Christian support for Arab nationalism, the revolt against Western domination presented a challenge to the spread of Christianity. Critical evaluation of Christianity caused it to be rejected by the Muslim masses as something inherently Western which failed to meet the needs of the Middle East.

> Christianity is, in such judgment, altogether too Western in its character and in the form which it assumes in its local manifestations. This rejection is the more serious in that Asian and African peoples are themselves, like us in the West, confronted by the bewildering demands of the modern world. All the old landmarks are disappearing. Everywhere there is a desperate search for some inner basis of security, some inner assurance which can enable men and women to face the storm… the people of these

> countries are seeking to find this psychic security by digging deep into their own past. This is at once an expression of their revolt against the West and one explanation of the renaissance of the great ethnic religions. Further to this it is to be noted that in a new way these ancient religions are becoming themselves missionary. No longer content to be on the defensive, they are offering themselves as answers to the questionings of mankind (Cragg 1959:6-7).

And so, while the missionary community, by and large, thought that Arab nationalism would lead to the demise of Islam, the opposite took place. Arab nationalism ended up elevating the role of Muhammed in Arab history, not just as the founder of a religion, but also as the founder of the Arab Empire. No Arab could simply "write him off" anymore (Watt IRM 1947:77).

> Another major hindrance at the present time is Nationalism, for Islam is a political term and not like Christianity a purely religious term. To break away from the Moslem State and become a Christian is therefore to be disloyal to the State itself. So to yield to Christian ways, even without being a Christian, carried with it a measure of obloquy attached to disloyalty. This is a natural deterrent to any Moslem. His attitude is to view favorably the good points of Christianity but to consider them always as something to be incorporated into Islamic life without changing its outward status (Watson MW 1947:21).

Since even young Christian Arabs started looking to Muhammed as a great national hero, some missionaries felt it was important develop a "positive attitude towards Mohammad and the Qur'an" (Watt IRM 1947:77). That advice too, made little difference. The nationalist spirit led, in many instances, to limitations imposed on Christian missions not because they were under Christian management, but because they were considered foreign (Whitby, IRM 1948:18).

4.4.2.3. Evaluation of Dialogue and Apologetics

The high point of Missionary-Muslim dialogue during the period was undoubtedly reached by Kenneth Cragg. From a Christian position he so identified with the object of his studies that he not only brought to light some of the values and profundities of Islam, but introduced an element of understanding and sympathy which a Muslim contemporary referred to as "a fourth dimension" in inter-religious dialogue (see Speight IRM 1965:193). It became difficult to see how dialogue could move beyond Cragg and still be authentically Christian. Indeed, after him the very notion of dialogue came under attack. Dialogue, it was held, was not evangelism because perfect objectivity, required for true dialogue, was deemed impossible. Since cultural and linguistic differences limit the way truth is objectified, and because the various parties engage in dialogue for different purposes, artificiality and a spirit of competition inevitably cloud things from the start (:194):

> Certainly it is difficult to imagine the Christian mission being carried on in terms of such an attitude. In general, there are two alternatives to this ideal, objective dialogue situation.

> Either, failing mutual objectivity, one side takes a selfish, unfair advantage of the other by out-talking, or convincing or brow-beating; or else the erstwhile peaceable, rational meeting of minds degenerates into a deceptive, ambiguous and paralyzing struggle (1965:195).

In any case, the history of Muslim-Christian relations testifies to the barrenness of an approach which pits "a dogmatic Islam with a dogmatic Christianity" (1965:198) in which you end up comparing two books, the Bible and the Qur'an in which, in Arabic at least, the Qur'an would emerge as superior from a literary perspective (:198).

* * * * *

By 1979 missionary outreach to Muslims by mainline churches was virtually over. True, some of those churches continued to cooperate with the denominations they had created at the expense of Orthodox churches in previous eras. Various American Presbyterian bodies, for instance, continued to work closely with Egypt's Synod of the Nile, particularly in the field of theological education at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo. In terms of reaching Muslims, however, neither the mainline missions nor their client churches mounted any significant efforts. It wasn't until the new structures created by the interdenominational evangelical Boomers to target Muslims directly had matured, that a steadily growing number of people started moving from Islam to Christianity. By the turn of the century a sufficiently critical mass of such Muslim Background Protestants (MBPs) had appeared in Turkey and Kurdish Northern Iraq that small but viable and slowly growing MBP churches had appeared in a number of major cities. That exciting, complex, and sometimes heartbreaking tale is the subject of the next chapter, as is the attendant question: Why Turkey and Northern Iraq?

Chapter 5

1979-2005: Islamic Fundamentalism, Political Frustration, and the Emergence of GenX Missionaries

From the 1970s onward the Middle East thrust itself time and again onto the Western consciousness. There were the oil-price shocks of 1973-1974, the Iranian embassy debacle, the Iran-Iraq war, the Lebanese civil war, kidnappings of Westerners, attacks on US Marines in Beirut, the invasion of Kuwait and Islamist attacks on the USS Cole, US embassies and military bases in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and East Africa. And, of course, there was the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001 and the subsequent "War on Terror" culminating in the occupation of Iraq. Throughout the period a stream of unsettling media images floated across the world's television screens: from self-flagellating crowds of bearded men with deep-set, glinting eyes and screaming women in purdah to the aftermath of suicide bombers. Muslims appeared to have equated the West in general and "Christian" America in particular with the "Great Satan". This, in turn, led to the demonization of Islam in the West (see 5.1.1.3).

5.1. What was the socio-political and cultural framework limiting the options of the missionary enterprise?

We look, first of all, at some key social, political and cultural developments of Western society which moulded the attitudes and approaches of the Boomer and, later, GenX Western missionary recruits and which, wittingly or not, were carried with them to the Middle East. We then introduce a new dimension, notably the arrival of non-Western missionaries in significant numbers. As before, we go on to note some of the social and political developments of the Middle East itself to try and understand the environment in which the missionary community had to operate.

5.1.1. Socio-political and cultural developments in the sending countries

North American Baby Boomers became the driving force behind an unprecedented missionary thrust into the region. Towards the end of the 20th century, however, Boomers were starting to age, and began giving way to the postmodern missionaries, the GenXers, the generation born between the mid 1960s and the mid 1970s.

We begin, however, by looking at one of the most notable changes in the socio-cultural landscape, the evangelical comeback in America. After that we consider the emergence of the U.S. as the sole superpower and the impact that had on Muslim perceptions of Christianity. We

then trace the changed perceptions about Islam in the West and in the western missionary community. If the previous era thought of Islam as a spent force, the modern era came to perceive it a national threat and the greatest challenge to Christendom: "You do not have to agree in full with (Huntington's) thesis to argue that *religion* is going to be a major cause of massive conflict in the twenty-first century" (Catherwood 2003:173). Lastly, we look at some of the characteristics of the GenX postmodern missionaries, and the entry of non-Western missionaries to the region.

5.1.1.1. The Revival of Religion

Hans Küng noted as early as 1974 that the secularization process had been overstated by both sociologists and theologians (1978:61). Indeed, the last quarter of the 20th century saw a "return to transcendental values" in many parts of the world, among Muslims as well as among Christians and Jews (Goldschmidt 2004:357). Although in America there was a wide-spread retreat from mainline established churches which had sought to rationalize faith and harmonize their programs with society's non-religious expectations, Evangelical Christianity, though not by-passing reason, stressed faith and revelation, and continued to grow steadily both in America and elsewhere. Johnstone, author of the *Operation World* series and *The Church is Bigger Than You Think* (1998) points out that one of the great untold stories of this century is the astonishing growth of vital, indigenous Christianity in nearly every country of the world (1998:109).

> Evangelicals are growing at over three times the population growth rate and are the world's only body of religious adherents growing rapidly by means of conversion… The growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations since 1960 has been even more striking (:112).

Building on foundations laid by orthodox (and in the case of Karl Barth, neo-orthodox) reformed theologians, there was a revival of evangelical theology. Led by such men as Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987) and Francis Schaeffer (1912-1984), such areas as systematic theology and apologetics, in particular, were reclaimed for Protestant Christian orthodoxy. In Wolfhart Pannenberg (b. 1928), the later Jurgen Moltmann (b. 1926) and Helmut Thielicke (1905-1985) even 20th century Germany started producing theologians who returned to the central themes of biblical and historical Christianity. Traditional "other-worldly" Mennonites began grappling with their social responsibilities, and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement clarified a theology of the Holy Spirit which sees God working miraculously today through the church to minister to the needs of mankind. In the Anglo-Saxon world "Reformed Evangelical" or "Reformed Baptist" churches grew steadily. They combine "five-point Calvinist" teaching with a Baptist ecclesiology—in the tradition of the 19th century preacher Charles Spurgeon (1834-92) and the

20th century preacher Martin Lloyd Jones (1899-1981). In short, the evangelical response to liberalism's man-centered, academic theology was to emphasize a theology based on a God who revealed Himself in the Bible and in the person of Christ. This theology included the fact that man is a sinner and, as such, an object of a holy God's righteous wrath, that the death of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, was an atonement sufficient to appease God's wrath, as attested by Christ's resurrection, and that this substitutionary atonement quickens a desire in true believers to glorify the Triune God. This is done by showing concern for the welfare of others, by sharing the good news of forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus, and by living in the realization that there will be a day of judgment.

Evangelical Christianity in America in particular would, during the modern period, prove to be a remarkably forceful socio-political as well as a spiritual force, partly in response, it seems, to the social liberation of the 1960s and 70s. The 1960s appeared to be marked by free love, drugs, rising crime rates, hippies, Kent State, Woodstock, incomprehensible music, with the Cold War at its height and Vietnam at its depth. The 1970s did not appear much better: Watergate, the defeat in Vietnam, the oil crisis, the Iranian hostage crisis; Arabs and Ayatollahs appeared to be pushing a no longer self sufficient America around. It all seemed wrong, depraved. The world "out there" was scary, diseased. During the 1970s a perception grew in conservative America that the wholesome "American way of life", was under attack (see, for instance, Johnson 1996:641-642; 781-782). There was a sense of impending doom, a climate in which religion thrives. And flourish it did. The rise of televangelism in the 1970s and 1980s proved that much empirically.

Millions of viewers began supporting one (or several) of a wide variety of televangelists. There were the perennial optimists (Robert Schuller; Jim and Tammy Fay Bakker), the fear-mongerers (Jack Van Impe), the healers (Kathryn Kuhlman; Ernest Angley), the charismatics (David Terrell, Jimmy Swaggart), the political hopefuls (Pat Robertson), as well as presenters of the orthodox Protestant message (Back to the Bible, the Back to God Hour, Ravi Zacharias). The honorable among them were undoubtedly, driven by Christ's Great Commission statements, their message shaped by the Bible's injunction to be "in the world but not of it". Seeking to address society while condemning it at the same time, they made a distinction between the ideal community—their own—and the rest of a profane, carnal world. In other words, society at large provided a context which nurtured the development of a communal identity by providing a foil. Social critique, combined with eloquent articulation of how the communities the televangelists represented differed from the immoral society all around, tapped into a commonly felt need for security and community at a time when society underwent its moral revolution.

As noted, Evangelical Christianity also became a global force. Between 1988 and 1998 more people were added to the evangelical community through conversion and birth into evangelical families than the population of the earth was on the day of Pentecost (Johnstone 1998:86, 102). During the 1970s and 1980s, evangelicalism experienced exponential growth in Latin America, when the concordats with the Catholic church, which had prohibited proselytizing, were lifted. Protestant missionary activity, mainly directed and financed from the United States, and utilizing television and radio on an unprecedented scale, made huge advances in Central America, Colombia, Brazil and Venezuela. By the 1980s native Latin American evangelists, such as Luis Palau, were filling stadiums and emulating the grand old man of evangelicalism, Billy Graham.

By the 1990s America's deeply religious streak once again played a significant role on a national level. "Born Again" President George W. Bush successfully tapped into this vein to win his presidencies by introducing religious conservatism into such social policies as the ban on "partial-birth" abortions, his stance against gay marriage, the encouragement of sexual abstinence before marriage, his support for the teaching of "intelligent design", and making funding available for promoting "healthy marriages". All these initiatives proved popular with the powerful religious right, giving him the necessary edge to win the White House twice.

The missions statisticians Dr. David Barrett, Patrick Johnstone, Todd Johnson and Dr. Ralph Winter collate statistics on these "great breakthroughs". The numbers are remarkable, yet quickly overtaken; here are some for the year 2004 (source: Barret, Johnson & Winter IBWM 2005:29). About 2,136 million people believed in Christianity in some form (of a global population of bout 6,453 million). There were 2,026 million members of churches, another 1,432 million attended church. There were about 25,000 mission organizations collecting some US$210 billion per year, and there were 5,357 million people in full time ministry. About 4000 Christian radio and TV stations together had a "footprint" which enabled them to reach about 2.4 billion people. A total of $340 billion annually was spent on Christian purposes. The *Jesus* film had been translated into 675 languages and seen by 4 billion people. Every language with more than 5 million had the entire Bible and every language with more than half a million speakers had the entire New Testament.

Of the world's 237 countries and territories 150 had a majority of their populations professing one form or another of Christianity (although about 70 or these are mini-states whose total population doesn't exceed 10 million) (Johnstone 1998:218). By the year 2000 Evangelical Christianity was growing 3.5 times faster than the world's population, while Pentecostal and

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Charismatic churches were growing 4.5 times faster. The most rapid growth occurred in such non-western countries as Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, India, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and China. That made Evangelical Christianity, with 645 million members, or 11% of the population, the world's fastest growing religious movement *through conversion by people from a non-Christian background* (Islam's higher birthrate makes it the world's fastest growing religion). Virtually all of these statistics have since been overtaken by further growth.

The missionary impulse, too, became international. Indeed, a generation of non-Anglo-Saxon missionaries—Latin Americans, Koreans, Indians and Africans—moved to the cutting edge of the missionary enterprise, targeting not only other parts of the developing world, but "secular" Europe and North America as well. In short, Evangelical Christianity became a grass-roots people's movement in many parts of the world. Outside of the Middle East people managed to repudiate missionary paternalism without rejecting the core beliefs of Christianity, thus stimulating a great expansion of indigenous initiatives (Robert IBWM 2000:53). While Western missionaries did not necessarily enjoy the welcome they might have received in the past, people worldwide were re-translating the gospel message into their own cultural grids and worldviews to meet their own needs. This was possible because, outside the Middle East, Christianity was already indigenizing before the colonialists left. In other words, Christianity was as healthy as it has ever been; it also became more fragmented than ever.

> Even as the Christian faith has surged around the world, establishing what one would like to think of as a truly universal religion, close observers detect more fragmentation than ever. If mission leaders once worried about the divisiveness that Western denominations brought to their ministries in non-Western lands, what are we to think today when distinctives between Christian communities are further multiplied as indigenization plays itself out around the globe?… What at first glance appear to be the largest world religion is in fact the ultimate local religion (Global, IBMR 2000:1).

Nevertheless, world Protestantism had a number of things in common: an indigenous, grass-roots leadership, an ability to adapt to local cultural modes, and a reliance on vernacular translations of the Bible.

Along with this revival of evangelical Christianity contextualizing itself to local situations—with the glaring exception of the Middle East—certain traditional "Christian" values also began making a comeback in the West. One such value was the sense of individual responsibility for one's actions before God, as opposed to individualism as independence from such corporate bodies as the church, state or family. The importance of the family, in particular, became clear. Even if it lost some of its members, as in the face of Nazi and Communist perversion, it could close its ranks and support and sustain the individual in the face of

tremendous odds. A society in which the family—as opposed to the political party and the ideological program—was the starting point for social reconstruction became a view which various large evangelical para-church organizations such as Focus on the Family and Promise Keepers promote. This newly confident and energized evangelical movement came to view Islam as the next great challenge to conquer, and would organize the greatest missionary thrust to the Middle East since the Crusades.

5.1.1.2. America, the Sole Superpower

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990-91 the United States remained the only superpower. In this unipolar world no other country could begin to match its military and economic clout. "Never before in history has one such power held such a global predominance, not even the British Empire at its height in the nineteenth century" (Catherwood 2003:171). Although the threat of a nuclear holocaust was lifted, the world actually became a more violent place as a result. "War entered the world of the possible again, just as before the Cold War…. The stability that bipolar superpower M.A.D. (Mutually Assured Destruction) brought has vanished" (:170). This was in large part because America increasingly used its unilateral military strength to intervene in countries it deemed strategic for its own interests. By early 2003 polls taken in various parts of the world indicated that the USA was increasingly perceived as the most dangerous of all countries (Lifton 2003:154).

In America itself, on the other hand, many took seriously the notion that the essence of western civilization had shifted to their country. It was an image which the religious right was keen to foster (Harding 2004:2). As a result of President Bush's use of the word "Crusade", his belief that God had placed him in the White House to carry out a divine mission, his contention that "God is not neutral" and other post 9/11 mixing of religion and nationalism into belligerent rhetoric, many Muslims came to believe he was leading a crusade against Islamic nations to secure American geopolitical superpower supremacy and guaranteed supplies of oil (see Harding 2004:36-37; 47). Whatever the truth of that contention, the oil-rich and ideologically different Middle East became the focus of American geopolitics. As a result, grievances about American "cultural imperialism", the presence of its troops on Saudi Arabia's "holy soil", and its support for Israel created great tensions in Arab societies (:4).

In light of the above, America's role as "honest broker" between Arab and Jew appeared ludicrous to most Muslims. In fact, its posture as honest broker in the Middle East had been a sham for decades. It took Ronald Reagan one week in office to declare, at his first press conference, that West Bank settlements were "not illegal". In 1982 there were about 20,000

Jewish settlers on the West Bank, by 1998 there were about 140,000, excluding East Jerusalem. US aid to Israel in 1998 had risen to about $5500 per capita; to the Palestinian Authority it was $41.60 per capita (Khalidi MEI 1998:17). For all the talk of the need for the democratization of the Middle East, America handed Kuwait back to its former sheikhs to continue oil production without inducing it to become more democratic (Harding 2004:48).

Furthermore, collapsing into one policy the co-called "war on terrorism" with the 2003 invasion of Iraq (which proved to have neither weapons of mass destruction nor have anything to do with 9/11), the disgusting human rights abuses at the Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prisons, Marine attacks on "rebel strongholds" without regard for civilian casualties, and other abuses gave credence to the view that America could and would act arrogantly, unilaterally and with no regard for internationally acceptable norms and values (2004:15). These kinds of abuses have had a negative impact on missions because, as we will see, America is still perceived in the Middle East as a "Christian" country. Suffice it to say at this point that the fact that Western Christian spokespersons—and mission leaders in particular—are rarely heard challenging their own governments on human rights issues, weapons of mass destruction, American unilateralism, etc, undermined their credibility in the Middle East in much the same way missionary involvement in 19th century imperialism did.

5.1.1.3. "Islamophobia": The Demonization of Islam

Newspaper headlines are important inasmuch as they both reflect and help shape the Western Christian's understanding of the Middle East. During the modern era the Western media has consistently portrayed the Middle East as lurching from one political crisis to another. Hostile dictators apparently run the place; indolent monarchs turn the oil tap on and off at whim; colorful graphs show a proliferation of conventional and non-conventional arms; pundits prophesy wars about water resources. The region's culture and value system, evidently utterly incomprehensible to most westerners, Christians included, seemed diametrically opposed to ours: they embrace death, we don't. They force everyone into their *sharia* mold; we treasure the free inquiring mind. It was as if "The West" won the Cold War to be embroiled in a new spiral of conflicts, a "global intifada" issuing from the "Crescent of Crisis" (Krauthammer WAP 1990:A23). A headline in the January 21, 1996, edition of the *New York Times* eloquently verbalized the fear: "The Red Menace is Gone. But Here's Islam" (Scioline NYT 1996:41).

The *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, the *Washington Post, Near East Report*, and a host of other magazines and newspapers regularly demonized Islam in order to re-enforce the image of Israel as America's sole reliable friend in the area, the only bastion of reason and

democracy in an irrational and frightening region upon whose sole natural resource, oil, we depend. A steady barrage of articles and features in the mainline press even before 9/11 relentlessly attributed the aggression emanating from the Middle East as coming from Islam, because "that is what Islam is" (Said 1997:XXII). Edward Said, in his book *Covering Islam* (1997), chronicles an endless array of books and articles disseminating malevolent slurs and pseudo-facts about Islam. A scathing indictment of magazine and newspaper owners and their writers, the book is a virtual "Who's Who" of the mainstream media. They include Morton Zuckerman, owner of *The Atlantic* and *US News and World Report*, Charles Krauthammer of the *Washington Post,* A.M. Rosenthal, Serge Schmemann, and Judith Miller of the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, CBS, ABC, and a host of press and TV personalities. Take Martin Peretz, owner of *The New Republic*. He has, over the years, presented a thoroughly skewed view of Islam and Middle Eastern culture:

> Arab countries have no cultural disposition for scientific and industrial takeoff. Alas, these societies cannot make a brick, let alone a microchip… They are historically doomed to inferiority… This widening gap will produce deep, perhaps intractable resentment against Israel. And while it may not lead to war in the traditional sense, it may well produce more of what Israel has experienced over the past years: terror and ongoing riot (quoted in Said 1997:XXIV)

According to Milton Viorst, contributor of numerous articles for the *New Yorker*, "Islam succeeded where Christianity failed in shackling man's power of reasoning… a basic antagonism has come increasingly to characterize Islam" (quoted in Said 1997:XXV). Peter Rodman, a former National Security Council member, wrote the following in the May 11, 1992, edition of the *National Review*:

> Yet now the West finds itself challenged from the outside by a militant, atavistic force driven by a hatred of all Western political thought, harking back to age-old grievances against Christendom… the notion of co-existing peacefully is more our notion than theirs. Their rage is too great, as is the concrete threat of the nuclear, conventional and terrorist weapons it continues to marshal in the service of this rage (Rodman 1992:28).

The Media tended to portray both Islamic militancy and acts of legitimate resistance, whether in South Lebanon before the Israeli pullout, or in occupied Palestine, or against the American invading forces in Iraq, as a single phenomenon in the "War on Terror" as though these were indicative of a global conflict between radical Islam and the West. Fuad Ajami entitled his September 7, 1998, *US News and World Report* article "Mr. Bin Laden's Neighborhood". This neighborhood encompassed Karachi, Lahore, Khartoum, Tripoli, Tehran, Kabul and Cairo (Ajami 1998:26). A Zuckerman editorial in the same magazine entitled "It's Time to Fight Back" stated

that "the marriage of religious fanaticism and advanced technology creates a potential worldwide threat. Everyone… is at risk" (1998:92). According to Professor Jack Shaheen of the University of Southern Illinois and author of *The TV Arab*, Hollywood has produced over 700 films whose contents vilify Islam and Arabs (quoted in Tash 1997). Feature films such as *True Lies* and *Delta Force*, for instance, present Muslims as evil and violent, dangerous gangsters whom the American hero has to kill in order to save the day. As a result Muslims, to many Americans, came to be perceived *en masse* as potential terrorists and fanatics. During the 1991 Gulf War, for instance, numerous Arab community leaders were victimized. There were various cases in which Muslim immigrants were targeted for deportations on the basis of "secret evidence" purporting links to a "terrorist" organization without the FBI or the INS divulging the name of the suspect organization. Some immigrants, denied bail as national security threats, were imprisoned for over a year, with no trial date in sight (Hunter 1998:19-21). After 9/11 hundreds of Muslim suspects have been held for years without legal resort or due process at the Guantanamo Bay prison facilities.

The resultant image imposed by the three-fold pressure of lobbies like The American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the Christian Zionist movement, and much of the mainline press is responsible, in large measure, for the fact that both the American Congress and the general public—and particularly the powerful evangelical world—is super-sensitive to the perceived needs of Israel (1998:19). The campaign to distort Islam in the effort to drum up support for Israel has led to such a warped understanding about Muslims and the Middle East that efforts to supply a factual account of the unquestionably deplorable events emanating from the area are subconsciously negated by ingrained patterns of thinking.

9/11 and attacks in Madrid, London and elsewhere have not enhanced Islam's popular image in the West. They did unleash another flood of books and articles on "Islamic values", the Qur'an, the life of Muhammed, etc. Some media personalities, like the Italian Oriana Fallaci, saw Islam as a root of all kinds of evil. This led Muslims to "evince a profound distrust of the Western study of Islam" (Zebiri 2000:1). "The Western discourse of a violent and threatening Islam is inverted in a growing discourse of victimization on the part of Muslims, who see in international political events ongoing evidence of an inveterate Western hostility to Islam" (:1). Muslims complained that Islam is systematically portrayed as a 'demon', a 'threat', as an 'evil empire' in order to make Middle Eastern nations legitimate targets for war in order to keep the political and economic power of the West intact. According to some, in fact, the whole "Clash of

Civilizations" theory was nothing but a way to project "Islam and the values it stands for as the 'new threat' to the West" (Ahmad 1992:66-67).

The Muslim accusation that Islam was systematically demonized is particularly true with respect to Evangelical Christians. The sense of "waging warfare" with Islam, and the resulting lovelessness towards Muslims, once again hounded the missionary community in subtle and not so subtle ways, much as it did in the pre-World War I era. Many Evangelicals, such as Christopher Catherwood, interpreted current events in the light of a centuries old struggle for spiritual dominance: "If we are to understand this new global order we *must* understand religion, for it is religiously based" (Catherwood 2003:121 italics in original); "the struggle between Christianity and Islam… has been going on in one form or another since the 7th century, and only to the West's advantage since the twentieth" (:20); "America joined a struggle in 2001 that is over 1300 years old" (:30).

> So the struggle between Christianity and Islam can be seen as part of this bigger picture, as between the forces of God and his people on the one hand, and those of Satan on the other. There really is a spiritual battle going on. Furthermore, as Christians we are automatically part of it, from the moment of our conversion onwards. There is no opt-out clause; in terms of the cosmic conflict, everyone is a soldier on one side or the other (2003:147).

The predominantly negative image of Islam could not help but affect the views of missionary recruits heading for the region, whose understanding of it was, by and large, supplied by their own popular media and evangelical interpretations, which went so far as to suggests that Islam is satanic and uniquely evil (:147): "Islam is so blatantly a threat to the Christian faith that Satan can hardly hide the fact from us" (:149); "Is Islam uniquely evil? From a spiritual point of view the answer must be yes" (:162).

> Many Christians portray Islam as "the last great enemy to be conquered". The images are often militant—from capturing Islamic strongholds to reclaiming the land. Of course all this is meant within the spiritual realm. However, the images they project to Islam, particularly of its relations with Christianity, are often unbalanced, one-sided, and can even be mythical—presenting Muslims as a dangerous people. There is rarely a positive description of a Muslim. The oft-held idea of conversions taking place by the sword from the Middle Ages on is, for example an inaccurate depiction much propagated in anti-Islamic literature (Chandler EMQ 2002:429).

We must probe behind media bombast to try to understand the realities on the ground, both in the West and in the Middle East, and attempt to gauge their impact on Christian missions to the region. First, however, a word about post-modern missionaries.

5.1.1.4. The GenX/Postmodern Missionary

Boomers started giving birth between 1965 and 1981 (Baker EMQ 1997:72). Although they did so less often than their parents, they still ushered some 80 million babies into American society

(:72). Known initially as Baby Busters, this generation came to be dubbed Generation X, after a 1991 Douglas Copeland novel. By the 1980s and 1990s thousands of older Boomers, together with newly arriving GenXers, were seeking to serve together in missions (:71-72).

Although Boomers continued to dominate the missionary landscape, the postmodern GenXers had their own identity and put their own mark on the missionary edifice their predecessors had established. As products of a changed culture, they differed from their Boomer predecessors in some key areas so that the early 1980s, in particular, "were somewhat turbulent as the old school mentality clashed with new school innovation" (Baker EMQ 1997:75-76; Tiplady 2002:14). What were the salient characteristics, which set these postmodern missionaries apart from those "old school" Baby Boomer missionaries? What is this skeptical, networking, mobile, generation searching for principles and hungry for relationships like, and how did that affect their ministry to Muslims?

GenXers tend to be technologically savvy, hyper-informed and confronting a huge array of competing choices. Cyberspace not only provided them with more information than ever before, it enabled many of them to break out of older paradigms: "music tastes include small bands from countries never visited. Research can be done entirely on-line, degrees can be learned without attending school" (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:448). According to Alvin Toffler, this became the age of "over-choice". Numerous things, many of them potentially good, clamor for attention, each presenting Christian young people with "an ocean of need and opportunity" (Borthwick EMQ 2003:441)—but how could one determine what was really important, really significant, and what is not? "The underbelly of Generation X is its potential to slide into information agnosticism" (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:448, 449). Huge amounts of information did not make GenXers more hopeful of the future; for them Boomer optimism was "a lie which produced pain and disillusionment" (Hart 2000:14). As far as they were concerned, the development programs initiated by the previous generation saw the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer, and were "little short of disastrous" (Bosch 2003:357). "We have little allegiance to corporations or educational institutions. Many of us dislike the big businesses that the boomers before us made great" (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:448).

> My generation trusts its friends, because they can usually be counted on not to rip us off. Big corporations, while providing important products, can usually be counted on to go for our gold, providing my generation with another reason not to trust them. Nonetheless, we need both the information they provide and the products they produce. Just stay at arm's reach, and keep your hands where I can see them (2003:449).

GenXers were "concerned with environmental issues, family breakups, corruption, war, refugees, debt, loans, media, corruption in the first world, loneliness, drugs, AIDS, racism, unemployment" (Hart 2000:14).

> Since the seventies the horizon has progressively darkened. People are again becoming conscious of the reality of evil—in human beings and in the structures of society. The horizon is no longer limitless… The West's grand schemes, at home and in the Third World, have virtually all failed dismally. The dream of a unified world in which all would enjoy peace, liberty, and justice, has turned into a nightmare of conflict, bondage, and injustice. The disappointment is so fundamental and pervasive that it cannot possibly be ignored or suppressed (Bosch 2003:361).

GenXers were slow to make long-term commitments. Instead, they valued ease of movement: "We are… a mobile generation"; "we are free agents and act like ones"; "we are a nomadic generation"; "the world is our job market"; "Our most permanent address is an e-mail address" (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:447, 448, 449). For missions this meant a further decline in "long-term" missionary commitment (a concept already shortened by the Boomers), and an explosion of the "short-term" missionary phenomena, amounting to overseas "missionary trips" lasting little more than a few weeks, each of which might nudge the individual to deeper involvement—if the experience proved positive (Borthwick EMQ 2003:442). GenX missionaries often had to operate with limited resources. In fact, the first problem many of them faced is cash. "Indebtedness after college or university is perhaps the greatest practical hindrance to students pursuing cross-cultural missions. What do we do with a potential candidate who is ten or forty thousand dollars in debt at age twenty-two?" (2003:440). As a result of all this the GenX missionary did not necessarily feel obliged to live by established patterns. "Xers have been landed with too many unanswered questions… We don't just believe what people say, we wait and see what they live" (Tiplady 2002:7, 9). If previous missionaries were concerned with truth and results ("does it work?"), GenXers were more likely to ask "does it matter?" or "what difference does it make?".

> My generation's favorite question is "What's the point"?… Answer this question, and you have our attention. Time is a precious commodity to my generation. If you convince me that something is worth my time, however, you will suddenly find my attention span is no longer a problem (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:448-449).

The postmodern GenX mindset sought a more holistic, as opposed to solely rational, analytical approach to the "big questions" facing modern man. Nature, and especially people, were not viewed as manipulable objects, nor did he hold that everything operates according the unchanging laws of cause and effect (Bosch 2003:356).

> Postmodernity calls us back to a more holistic and community-based understanding of what it means to be human, and postmodern Christians have enthusiastically welcomed

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> this return to scriptural values. In turn, postmodern Christians, missionaries included, are likely to be more concerned with moral issues such as weapons of mass destruction, environmental destruction, women's rights, Third World debt, racism, exploitation of child labor, and so on (Tiplady 2002:23).

What really mattered were relationships. "Community is perhaps the greatest value of this generation. They react emotionally to the materialistic, technological, impersonal world that they have inherited with a cry for community. Friendships and relationships are top priorities" (Borthwick EMQ 2003:436).

> GenXers are deconstructionists. They take apart what they inherited from their Boomer predecessors, including mission structures, methods and goals, and invite them to put it back together—with them. For the GenXers a sense of community is important. If the Enlightenment Boomer, held, along with Descartes, "I think, therefore I am", the post-sixties Generation would state, "I belong, therefore I am". For GenXers, therefore, the necessity of community is hugely important (Hart 2000:14).

This search for community, fellowship, a sense of family, a group to which one belongs, could take shape and be sustained in ways Boomers are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with, such as chat rooms, "MSNing", blogging etc. (Borthwick EMQ 2003:436, Dylhoff 2003:449). "My generation has friends literally around the world with whom we keep in contact via instant messaging or e-mail… We never know when we may have to call on the help of a friend in Finland, or be asked to host a friend's friend from Rwanda" (:449). "GenXers are characterized by honesty, openness, and want to feel part of the process. They are suspicious of authority, non-organisational, pessimistic, live for the day, slow to commit, loyal to friends, need to be listened to, respected, and understood" (Hart 2000:14).

The spirituality of GenX missionaries was likely to be quite different in a number of ways from that of their Boomer predecessors, and "may appear quite threatening to modernist missionaries, or else very lax" (Tiplady 2002:25). The important issues for the GenX missionary recruit were "reality, relationships, and relevance… The programs and word-based teaching of the Enlightenment missionary is less relevant than actually engaging in prayer, 'spiritual warfare', and the establishment of mutually supportive house groups" (Hart 2000:14). Unlike their Boomer predecessors many were theologically fuzzy. This was partly a result of inadequate preparation and poor teaching (Borthwick EMQ 2003:438) and partly due to the downside of being relational yet suspicious of the previous generation. "If an unknown person talks to a GenXer about objective truths (including theology) they risk being tuned out because they are unknown" (Dylhoff EMQ 2003:449-450). The virtue of tolerance also tended to dull GenX's doctrinal edges. Not only did postmodernism have grave doubts about the capacity of human reason to grasp objective truth (Tiplady 2002:27), its virtue of "toleration often belies an implicit

theological pluralism" (Borthwick EMQ 2003:440). Although many Christian GenXers might not say they Jesus is just one of many ways to God, "their lack of concern for missions and evangelism reflects a theology that … (believes that) people who have never heard of Jesus will be saved somehow without our involvement as evangelists or missionaries" (:440). This diminishing conviction with respect to the uniqueness of Christ was reflected in a 'me-centered' Christianity: "Our worship centers around how Jesus makes me feel rather than 'We've a story to tell to the nations'" (:440).

If GenX missionary candidates tend to be suspicious of Boomers, they—unlike Boomers—tended to respect age. This led to great teachability under the right circumstances.

> Generation X respects age and the wisdom and maturity it implies… Older people have credibility the boomers don't have. They are the sages who have been there, done that and taken a few on the chin in the process. They're not selling anything. They don't have anything to prove (Dylhoff 2003:449-450).

As such, they were prepared to be challenged by those who earned their respect, who "walked the walk". "Don't be afraid to set the bar high…. Whether we're challenging them on their convictions of their economic lifestyles, young people respond best when confronted with truth" (Borthwick 2003:437). Rather than being overwhelmed by statistics and needs, "the younger generation is saying, "show me how to make a difference. I want to do something. Don't just tell me about Islam; help me reach out to my co-worker from Morocco" (:439).

GenX, as seen, was only two-thirds the size of the Boomer generation which led, once again, to a scarcity of missionary recruits. It also foreshadowed an aging financial basis, which meant that a reduction in the amount of resources available for missions loomed in North America (Baker EMQ 1997:77). The smaller GenX force thus inherited Boomer structures, some of which they did not wholeheartedly embrace, which required financing and personnel not readily available. This led various agencies to lower the standards for those entering the missionary profession in order to keep up recruitment, and with it, the attendant finances. During the Boomer 1970 and 1980s, for instance, such major players in the Middle East as WEC International required a 3 or 4-year diploma or degree in theology from a residential seminary or Bible school. By 2003 "1 year of Bible or its equivalent" to be obtained during the first 5 years on the field was deemed sufficient for accepting GenXers as career missionaries (Pikkert 1982-2006). This dumbing down of missions had major implications as people headed overseas for "Christian ministry" without knowledge of basic Christian doctrines, nor of the principles of contextualization, the history of missions in their region, or of basic language learning techniques. A large number of missionaries in Turkey and the Arab world did not, for instance, learn the

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national language well enough to preach or teach in it and/or failed to develop meaningful relationships with nationals or fruitful ministries within the context of national led, national language churches. Furthermore, the lack of theological and missiological training also resulted in missionaries being side tracked into purely social services, developing ministries to other expatriates, or returning home defeated (1982-2006).

5.1.1.5. Non-Anglo Missionaries Arrived in Force

Until the 1990s missionary/Muslim "clash of civilization" issues ran almost exclusively along the Western missionary/Muslim fault line. That changed. Although the USA remained the largest foreign-missionary sending nation (Johnstone 2001:6), the arrival of increasing numbers of Latin American and Asian missionaries to the region in the course of the 1990s enriched the dynamic by adding fault lines within the missionary community, between the missionary community and the national church, and between the missionary and Muslim communities. The issue of Western/non-Western missionary cooperation on the field (or lack thereof) is beyond the scope of this work. The perception of and reaction to the arrival of these non-Western missionaries by Middle Eastern Muslims is not.

By 1997 over 60% of the 4000+ and growing Latin American missionary force worked in other Hispanic countries. A mere 11% were spread across the so-called 10/40 window, the huge Eurasian area between the 10th and 40th parallels into which the Middle East falls (Miller WP 1997:1). In other words, though Hispanics started appearing in the Middle East, they remained thin on the ground and tended to be integrated into, seconded to, or working in cooperation with existing western agencies. Consequently any uniquely Protestant Latin American cultural impact on the region remained minimal. It was the arrival, in the course of the 1990s, of increasing numbers of Asian missionaries, notably Philippine, Korean and, hitherto in lesser numbers, Chinese, Indonesian, and Chinese Malay, which is now changing the nature of Christian witness in the Muslim world.

Philippine Christians have been at the forefront of missionary outreach in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. In fact, the Philippines has sent the largest numbers of Christians to the Muslim world by entering countries such as Saudi Arabia as "tentmakers" (see section 5.2.1.), or guest laborers, often in menial jobs (Johnson and Scoggins 2004:4). Many of these Christians have been very bold in their Christian witness. A number of them were arrested for their activities, some even faced beheading. Their bold witness challenged the perception that Christianity is a Western religion (:4).

Korean missionaries also began making an impact. Rapid economic development in the Pacific Rim enabled the church there to seriously consider its missionary obligations. Unlike the poorer Philippine church, the Korean church was able to send better-educated missionaries on full support. By the year 2000 Korean Protestantism boasted some 7000 career missionaries laboring in 145 countries supported by an undetermined number of short term workers and Christian professionals overseas (Alford WP 2000:1). It projected a missionary enterprise of about 20,000 missionaries partnering with a global network of Korean churches by the year 2010 (:2). After the USA, it sent out more missionaries than any other country, including Britain (Johnstone 2001:6); about 1000 new Korean missionaries headed overseas every year. They identified the Muslim world as a "new frontier" have sent large numbers of missionaries to "targeted cities" across the Middle East (Scanion BBC 2004).

Korean missionaries, even more so than their other Pacific Rim colleagues, brought a new cultural dimension to the enterprise. Korea, unlike many modern Western countries, is not culturally pluralistic. Having no immediate experience of other cultures, coming from a county where Christianity has grown faster than virtually anywhere else in the course of the last century, and being theologically conservative, many Korean evangelical missionaries tended to assume, possibly subconsciously, that the aggressive evangelism which bore fruit at home would work elsewhere, including the Middle East. Coming from a country with half of the world's biggest churches, one of the foremost problems for its missionaries has been the tendency to stress quantity. Furthermore, though often bold and adventurous, many Korean missionaries have lacked cultural sensitivity: "The crusading zeal of Korean Christians knows no bounds" (Scanion BBC 2004).

Those Korean missionaries who went out under the auspices of evangelical Western agencies with established works in the region (notably WEC International and Operation Mobilization) integrated into Western-founded structures, learned to speak (some) English, began to develop an appreciation for the greater missionary enterprise, and were more likely to integrate into existing ministries. Korean missionaries sent directly from Korea under the auspices of their own mission agencies, on the other hand, had considerably more difficulty integrating into and learning from the larger missionary community. The simple fact that few of them speak English led to reduced cooperation with previously established Western organizations and a consequent lack of opportunity to learn from the mistakes of their predecessors. Furthermore, their application of aggressive evangelistic tactics evidently successful at home (Scanion 2004), their slowness to recognize their social responsibility to the poor (Alford WP 2000:2), and an

expectation from supporting churches to "produce results", reintroduced "culture clash" issues to the region which western agencies had recognized and dealt with, and which created a backlash from both the Muslim community and from Muslim converts to Christianity, particularly in Turkey (Pikkert 1982-2006).

5.1.2. The Socio-political Framework of the Near East

In the modern period a fragmentation took place in the Near East, which makes commenting about the region more difficult than ever before. We identify some general movements before briefly noting some country-specific developments.

5.1.2.1. Population Growth

Populations have grown much faster than the region's traditional structures and economies can integrate. Between 1978 and 2000, for instance, Egypt's population grew from about 38.1 million to nearly 68.5 million, and is expected to top 80 million by 2010 (compare Johnstone 1978:137 & 2001:233). Iraq's 1978 population of 11.4 million grew to over 23 million, and is expected to top 30 million by 2010 (:143 & :355). The little country of Jordan, which had a mere 2.8 million people in 1978, including 600,000 West Bank Palestinians, grew to over 6.6 million by 2000, excluding the West Bank, a huge annual growth of 3.07% (:144 & :375). Between 1978 and 2000 Syria grew from 7.6 million to 16.1 million (:151 & :610). Saudi Arabia had the second highest population growth of the region: the average Saudi woman bore 7 children. Between 1978 and 2000 the country grew from 6.4 million to over 21.6 million and is expected to reach 28.7 million by 2010, a staggering 3.43% annual growth rate (:149 & 556). With a 4% annual growth rate in 2000, Palestine has the fastest growing population. The combined population of the West Bank and Gaza strip nearly quadrupled from about 1 million in 1978 to over 3.9 million in 2000 (:140 & :504). Turkey grew from 40.2 to 66.59 million during the same period, and is expected to reach 76 million in 2010 (:153 & :633). The only country that barely registered any growth was Lebanon. It had a population of 3.1 million in 1978, and 3.28 million in 2000 (:145 & 399).

Since agricultural land in most of the Middle East has little expansion potential, virtually all these people are crowded into already densely populated cities. A third of Egyptians and over a quarter of Jordanians live in poverty (Johnstone 2001:233; 375). Oil rich countries strained at the seams; even Saudi Arabia developed a yawning gap between rich and poor, and has had to enforce austerity measures (:557). According to Huntington the huge numbers of unemployed and disaffected young people became recruits to Islamist causes, exerted pressure on neighboring societies, and migrated to the West (1996:211).

5.1.2.2. Islamic Resurgence

Turkish and Arab national leaders, as seen earlier, bypassed Muslim political theory and generally espoused secular nationalism—with the exception, of course, of Saudi Arabia. However, this ideology came to be perceived as a failure by most Middle Easterners as it did not prevent the pervasive influence of the West, nor the exploitation of the poor or local minorities. "Instead, nationalism sapped popular institutions and exalted dictators" such as Atatürk, Nasser, Qadhafi, Hussein or Assad (Goldschmidt 2004:358). With the exception of Atatürk, none of the leaders had led their countries to independence, nor did they manage to build national unity or defeat their enemies. Muslim defeats—like those of the Arabs by Israel in 1948, 1956, and 1967—were traumatic. If nationalism failed to deliver, other imported ideologies were no better: "Fascism degraded the individual to exalt the state, and communism denied the basic tenets of Islam altogether. People attain freedom not by aping others but by affirming what is true within themselves" (:358). And so people turned back to Islam.

The terms "Islamic resurgence" and "Islamic revival" refer to the re-emergence of Islam as an ideological force in Middle Eastern politics since the late 1960s and 1970s. Islamic activism of those decades, leading to the successful Iranian revolution of 1979, gave Muslims a "renewed confidence in the distinctive character and worth of their civilization and values compared to those of the West" (Huntington 1996:211). As such, it led to a resurgence of Islam throughout the region, sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world and brought Islam and Islamist movements to the attention of the centre of the world's media (Ramchandra 1999:17). With newfound confidence, Islamic organizations aimed to spread Islam and support Muslim minorities in Western countries through the establishment of Islamic centers and foundations (Gaudeul 2000:256).

Charismatic religious leaders in touch with poor rural villagers had largely driven earlier Islamic socio-political activity. The modern Islamic resurgence, on the other hand, has managed to harness the politically marginalized students and city dwellers who reject at least certain of their states' western orientated policies. Azmy Bishara, professor of Philosophy at Bir Zeit University in Palestine, describes them as:

> Young adults who have left the villages (and who) usually live in slums on the outskirts of the metropolis. There, in the mosques of the suburban slums whose very architecture proclaims a terrible loss of identity, the migrants find a welcome and begin organizing themselves. Structural barriers keep these embittered students from integrating into the affluent classes that are reaping the fruits of modernization. But modernity itself, higher education, the demand for political organization—these are what provide them with the means to do battle against the status quo. They take up an offensive posture, looking back to a past utopia. This escape is not conducted as a retreat but as an attack. Those who

> espouse it are not conservatives but rather a unique product of modernity: modern individuals with a split and alienated consciousness, enlightened persons alienated from 'enlightenment' (Bishara 1995:109-110).

Thus, initially, Islamism was at least partly a bottom-up rejection of the failed economic policies and forced secularization imposed by the elite. It challenged their states' secular social and religious norms in non-political yet socially potent ways (Abdo 2000:8). In other words, Islamist agitation was, initially at least, less a direct rejection of the "Christian West" than of "godless western policies" which, in its opinion, their own ruling elites espoused. The "threat of Islam" was directed more at the Muslim elite than at the West.

There was, nevertheless, an anti-Western edge to it. Even though by the late 1970s most Middle Easterners had known formal independence for a generation, "old complexes about colonialism lingered" making people particularly sensitive to the "Coca-Colanization of their values and way of life" (Goldschmidt 2004:357).

> Because of the economic power of multinational corporations and the pervasive influence of U.S. pop culture, some forms of dependence have lately grown stronger… In the late twentieth century, the West's influence was cultural, economic, intellectual, and social; its threats were as virulent as those of the political and military imperialism of the late nineteenth century (2004:357).

Contact with the West had improved education, transport, and commerce. However, it had also replaced old customs with new ones, created economic upheaval for artisans and small traders, and increased government despotism and corruption. Furthermore, it had displaced, but not really replaced, the role of the *ulama* (Muslim clergy) in society, "for the new westernized elites lacked the ulama's rapport with the people" (2004:358). Middle Eastern regimes appealed to this Islamic resurgence in a variety of ways to garner popular support and legitimize their policies. Countries were consequently divided into "progressive" (or "secular") regimes, where Islamist organizations became major opposition groups (such as Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, Palestine, and "fundamentalist" (such as Iran, Sudan and Lybia) which espoused violence to bring about Islamic revolutions elsewhere. Islam also became a potent force in Afghanistan's war of liberation against the Soviet Union and in the communal politics of Lebanon. Saudi Arabia tried, increasingly un-successfully, to adhere to a fundamentalist theology without endorsing violent forms of *jihad*.

During the last quarter of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century conflict between certain Islamic idealists and the West grew to alarming proportions, as the attack on New York's Twin Towers on November 9, 2001 demonstrated. That attack also highlighted the extremes that existed within Middle Eastern societies as well as inflame anti-Muslim feelings

in the United States. Mission agencies responded by pulling their personnel from areas considered high-risk (Reapstone WP 2001:1).

In Turkey the religious based AK Party received an absolute parliamentary majority in 2003. Having to operate within the strictures of an army-imposed secular state, the AK Party sought to repackage itself as "social conservative" and moved the country towards integration into the European Union. Nevertheless, a grass-roots push to move the country towards more religious conservativism at the same time became almost irresistible (Pikkert 1982-2006).

5.1.2.3. The Response to perceived American Neo-colonialism

As seen, initially the Islamic resurgence was directed primarily against the regimes of the region. From the 1980s onward, however, it increasingly embraced anti-Westernism, and particularly anti-Americanism. Anti-Westernism became especially virulent after the collapse of communism. It was as though the removal of a common enemy left the West and Islam facing each other. "In the Cold War the West labeled its opponent 'godless communism'; in the post-Cold War conflict of civilizations Muslims see their opponent as 'the godless West'" (Huntington 1996:213-214).

The prospect of a single super-power following the cold war raised the specter of a "new colonial era" in Muslim minds, particularly in terms of cultural and economic domination (Ahmad 1992:65-66). Writing in 1994, a leading Egyptian journalist, Mohammed Sid-Ahmed, noted that "there are unmistakable signs of a growing clash between the Judeo-Christian Western ethic and the Islamic revival movement, which is now stretching from the Atlantic in the west to China in the east" (quoted in Huntington 1996:213). This clash was, in particular, a reaction to "Westoxication", the perception of Western pressure to completely dominate Muslim societies culturally, and to the perception that Western countries were seeking to dictate the political agendas of Islamic countries. Hence the complaint that the West judges Muslim countries "only on the basis of the extent to which they accept passing Western norms, now called, euphemistically, 'global'" (Nasr 1997:11). Huntington concurred: "Western civilization's attempt at universalizing its Enlightenment values and Democratic institutions, its efforts at maintaining military and economic superiority, and its unwonted intervention in conflicts within the Muslim world have generated intense resentment among Muslims" (1996:211).

Along with Western cultural colonialism, the West's economic domination also irked Muslims: "Many nations in the West not only control the most important economic asset of much of the Islamic world—oil—but also want in a thousand and one ways to recover the money they have paid for it, whether through the sale of arms or the creation of safe markets" (Nasr 1997:12).

> There is no common measure between the threats that the modern West poses for the whole existence of Islam and its civilization and the threats, in reality and not as propaganda carried out by some of the media, that Islam poses for the West… the Islamic world cannot and does not threaten the West militarily, politically, or even economically in any conceivable way. On the contrary, the West controls the most vital economic resources of Muslim nations, benefits from all conflicts in that world through the sale of vast quantities of arms, and practically dictates its wish in many parts of the Islamic world (Nasr 1996-97:11).

Muslims were forced to recognize that, in many ways, Western societies are more developed than Middle Eastern and/or Islamic ones. Politically, militarily, economically, scientifically, and technologically the Muslim world was weak and/or dependent on the West, as the stationing of American troops to defend Saudi Arabia in 1990 from a feared invasion by Iraq graphically illustrated. Conflicts between the West and Islam have come to focus on "intercivilizational issues such as weapons proliferation, human rights and democracy, control of oil, migration, Islamist terrorism and Western intervention" (Huntington 1996:213).

The second American invasion of Iraq in 2003 to topple Saddam Hussein's regime, justified by identifying the "War on Terror" with Iraqi obstructionism, further inflamed anti-American feelings in the Middle East. US forces' flagrant abuse of human rights, inhumane tortures and disgusting humiliation of prisoners further sharpened the difference of opinion Americans have of themselves and the way they are perceived elsewhere. Soon after the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, for instance, 64% of Americans believed that their country was "exceptional, being generally fair and decent". Muslims in the Middle East, for their part, combined in their minds American policy in Iraq and Israel's use of American military hardware in Palestine "as all part of a Christian crusade to destroy Muslims" (McDowell 2004). In their eyes America continued to be perceived as a Christian country, and not without reason: President Bush and a majority of the members of Congress are, after all, professing Christians. "What our country does is seen as reflecting what Christians do. For many in the Muslim world our invasion of Iraq is seen as another Crusade to take over Muslim lands rather than as liberation from a tyrannical dictator" (:2004). Media reports of Christian organizations entering Iraq in the wake of the American army to convert it to Christianity underlined the image of Americans coming not only to take their oil, but also their religion (:2004). One of the few ways in which frustrated Muslims felt they could retaliate was through the reaffirmation of Islam along with the organization of terrorist attacks as a means of establishing legitimacy. Thus the reaffirmation of Islam, whatever its specific sectarian form, came to mean, among other things, the repudiation of certain aspects of European and American influence on Middle Eastern societies, politics and morals (Huntington 1996:213).

> They instead stress the differences between their civilization and Western civilization, the superiority of their culture, and the need to maintain the integrity of that culture against Western onslaught. Muslims fear and resent Western power and the threat, which this poses to their society and beliefs. They see Western culture as materialistic, corrupt, decadent, and immoral. They also see it as seductive, and hence stress all the more the need to resist its impact on their way of life (1996:213-214).

In the past Muslims may have criticized westerners because they were perceived to be Christians who clung to an imperfect and superceded religion, even if it is a "religion of the book" (see section 5.1.2.5). Now, however, Muslims started attacking the West not only for its apparent crusading spirit, but also because they perceived it as the fount of secularism, irreligiosity, and immorality, all of which were considered worse evils than the Western Christianity from which these things were thought to have flowed.

> The crudest products of Western pop culture are invading the East, while Western secularism is seeking in a virulently aggressive manner to impose not only its technology, but also it half-dying worldview, through that technology, upon the non-Western world, especially the Islamic (Nasr 1997:12).

Nasr sees no hope of understanding between Islam and the West unless the West realizes how its arrogant and superior attitudes and behaviour are perceived (:12).

Interestingly, in a world of mass travel (in actual fact a prerogative limited to an affluent minority) increasing cultural and social contact between Muslims and Westerners only served, by and large, to create in each other a fresh sense of their own identity and how they differ from the other. Tourism to the region for many westerners means luxury hotels or holiday homes on Turkey's Mediterranean Riviera, Egypt's Sharm el-Sheikh, or North Africa's beaches. It rarely led to a deeper appreciation of non-Western peoples (Ramachandra 1999:10-11). Within both Muslim and Christian societies, tolerance for the other declined sharply in the 1980s and 1990s (Huntington 1996:211). Although a shrinking world created more opportunities for friendly relations than ever before, the relations became more difficult instead (Gaudeul 2000:257).

5.1.2.4. Media in Middle East

One of the defining characteristics of the GenX generation was that it was in tune with new technology. It was one characteristic they shared with many of their Middle Eastern peers. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of the modern era for the region was the proliferation of information technology. Audio- and videocassettes lent themselves to the largely oral Middle Eastern societies and, by the 1970s, they were ubiquitous. Such media as fax machines, considered innovative in the 1980s, were soon overtaken by the internet and email in the 1990s. The explosion of cheap and instant media and means of communication greatly increased the ability of like-minded people to find and interact with each other, thus creating new communities

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and networks. Affordable and easily distributed, they contained both popular music—some of it subversive—as well as religious sermons, chants and instructions. Unlike the old communication technologies, "which were easy to control (presses could be confiscated, publication subsidies withheld, distribution channels thwarted) and led to self-censorship by the mainline press" (Eickelman and Anderson 2003:34-35), the new "small media" was difficult to control. Low-circulation desktop publishing and photocopying enabled those seeking to challenge official views to reach select audiences with non-official information, while email and websites were even harder to control (:9,34).

Most Middle Eastern countries recognized the potential for subversion by cassettes and imposed strict scrutiny at the borders. One of the hugely important facts of cyberspace, however, is that it was difficult for governments to censor or control. "Objectionable" information that was previously passed on by hand among people who knew each other, could now be launched into the public realm with little cost or effort. Much as central governments tried, it became virtually impossible to control fax machines, small-scale desktop publishing ventures, the duplication and distribution of video and audiocassettes and, later, CDs and DVDs.

> In countries such as Saudi Arabia, the same fax machines that rapidly disseminate criticisms of the regime are also essential to the conduct of business. The state is powerless to limit their use without disrupting the economy. Audiocassette tapes spread the sermons of Ayatollah Khomeini and others in the pre-revolutionary Iran of the 1970s, just as videotapes of anti-regime preachers and demonstrations today circulate in some countries of the Arabian peninsula (Eickelman and Anderson 2003:3).

During the late 1980s and 1990s privately owned local radio and television took off in Turkey, until it became "one of the most media-saturated Muslim countries in the world. It has 10 national newspapers; 20 national, 35 regional, and 350 local television stations; 41 national, 120 regional and 1234 local radio stations" (2003:180-181). Talk shows freely discuss formerly taboo subjects, such as Alewite practices, homosexuality, feminism, and Kurdish nationalism (:181). As recently as the spring of 2005 a series of talk shows on national television, articles in the national press, and a slew of poorly researched, biased books discussed the demerits of Christian missionary activity in the country (Pikkert 1982-2006). Even though the Arab world does not allow that embarrassment of media riches, satellite television managed to circumvent government attempts at control and censorship.

Technology thus greatly increased the ability of almost anyone to communicate anything to anyone, creating an alternative media and eroding "the ability of authorities to censor and repress, to project an uncontested 'central' message defining political and religious issues for

large numbers of people" (Eickelman and Anderson 2003:33-34). Even if censors still restricted what the mainstream media broadcasted, it didn't have the exclusivity it once had.

As noted, the internet created a new public space, particularly for the younger generation of Muslim youths, in which to investigate, communicate and research. It enabled them to circulate alternative views and interpretations of Islam as well as access information about other worldviews, including Christianity. Thus the fast and flexible internet created a worldwide alternative discourse of "conversations, expressions, and representation of and about Islam that were previously confined to coffee houses, university dormitories, cells, peer circles and other off-hours sites of discussion and debate" (2003:52, :56).

Many Muslim thinkers expressed fear at the pervasive influence of western media:

> Nothing in history has threatened Muslims like the western media; neither gunpowder in the Middle Ages… nor trains and the telephone in the last century, which helped colonize them, nor even planes earlier in this century… The western media are everywhere and present all the time; never resting, never allowing respite. They probe and attack ceaselessly, showing no mercy for weakness or frailty (Ahmed 1992:22-23).

Although the growth in importance of alternative means of communication was immense, books continued to be viewed as the "authoritative" form of communication (Eickelman and Anderson 2003:35). Even if most people were not readers themselves, ideas launched in books were discussed in living rooms, coffee houses and the "small media". Both Turkey and the Arab world saw a huge increase in inexpensive, colourful Islamic popular books. Often bypassing official distribution channels, they are sold on sidewalks, book tables at train- and bus stations, kiosks, and corner stores (2003:35; Pikkert 1982-2006).

> The style of these books is usually a breezy mix of literary and colloquial diction; the covers are eye-catching. Some of the books deal with religious themes and the afterlife or answer questions on how to be Muslim in the modern world; others deal directly with the political questions of the day. (Eickelman and Anderson 2003:37)

Let us look at some of the notions conveyed about Christianity in this sea of official and unofficial media.

5.1.2.5. Muslim portrayal of Christianity

We have already noted that Western Christian scholarship has made much greater efforts to understand Islam than the other way around. Christian study centers, some located in the Middle East, regularly include Muslims on their teaching and research faculty in order to properly inform the student of Islam (Zebiri 2000:184). Interestingly, there is but little written on Islam by Middle Eastern Christians, who, after centuries of minority status, developed a defensive mentality. "The often delicate state of intercommunal relations has an inhibiting effect on academic or quasi-

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academic study of Islam on the part of Christians there, and interfaith initiatives, when they occur, tend to be low-key" (:4). At the same time, there are but few Muslims scholars who have dedicated their lives to the study of Christianity, and are consequently capable of writing an authoritative work on the subject acceptable by the church or recognized by scholars. Rather than study the inner genius of Christianity itself, both Muslim popular and so-called academic literature on the subject tends to harp on the same themes to draw out favorable comparisons with Islam. One of the few Muslims who has made a serious study of Christianity is the Palestinian exile Isma'il al-Faruqi (b. 1921), whom we met in Chapter 4 as Kenneth Cragg's debating partner. Al-Faruqi, who spent most of his academic career in the United States, sought to explore the origins of Christianity as well as critique the development of Christian theology. His book *Christian Ethics: A Historical and Systematic Analysis of its Dominant Ideas* (1967), has been described as "perhaps the first sustained critique by a modern Muslim of Christianity in general and Christian ethics in particular, and nothing of a comparable standard has been produced by a Muslim since" (2000:139). In spite of a vigorous effort by this student in the summer of 2005 to locate either English, Arabic or Turkish versions of the book in Cairo and Istanbul, the book is unavailable. Not even the American University of Cairo bookstore could obtain a copy; the Middle Eastern market for books on Christianity really is dominated by pseudo-intellectual misinformation.

According to Kate Zebiri, Islam's self-isolation from Christianity "is one of the most important acts of radical discontinuity that occurred in history" (2000:137). The great inhibitor preventing Muslims from studying Christianity on its own terms is the Qur'an. Considered the most authoritative source on Christianity, it takes precedence over other sources. It thus "tends to act as a deterrent to empirical study, so that judgments about Christianity are often based on the Qur'an rather than on a practical knowledge of 'lived' Christianity. Finding out what the facts really are is less important than shoring up perceived history; if a fact doesn't square with the Qur'an, it is ignored or reinterpreted" (:6). As a result, the empirical study of Christian doctrine, worship, forms of organization and spirituality are largely absent in Middle Eastern academic circles which tend to favour generalizations or references to isolated incidents and anecdotal evidence perceived as discrediting Christianity (:87). The influence of certain seminal works such as al-Hindi Kairanawi's *Izhar ul Haqq* remains evident. Authors familiar with European languages draw from 19th century Biblical critical scholarship to bolster their case. Some of their bibliographies and footnotes bear witness to extensive, if selective, use of Western sources, chosen because they reflect what the author is looking for. Harnack, Bertrand Russell, and the

blacker pages of Christian history in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* are favorites (:3, 85).

It is extremely easy to find the most outlandish and ridiculous ideas about Christianity in the Turkish and Arab media. The Turkish Christian writer İsa Karataş has traced popular Turkish notions about Christianity in *Gerçeği Saptıranlar* (Truth Twisters) (1997) and *Ağacı Yaşken Eğdiler* (Bent Saplings) (2000). The latter book surveys the publications approved by the Turkish Ministry of Education for use in the country's grade- and high schools. In other words, these are not the extreme opinions of Islamic ideologues, but what is taught to the entire population in the Middle East's most secular state. The following notions about Christianity are all drawn from *Bent Saplings* and represent ideas common throughout the region.

- The Biblical text has been tampered with. This is often presumed to have taken place at the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325), at which time the Bible was supposed to have been put together. Sometimes the idea is presented that the "original gospel which Jesus wrote" was lost and replaced by four fake gospels which do not harmonize. Even if the original gospel hasn't been lost altogether, it has been changed. There are, however, various verses in the Bible predicting the coming of Muhammed, which should be taken seriously.
- Christians worship three gods (the Father, the Son, and the angel Gabriel). The doctrines of the Trinity and the deity of Christ were foisted onto Christianity by Paul. This led to a break between Paul on the one hand, and Peter and James on the other. Paul prevailed.
- Christ was not killed or crucified. The Romans mistakenly crucified someone in Christ's place who looked like him.
- Christians believe in original sin that is washed away at baptism. Christian religious men (priests) have the authority to forgive other men's sins. These same priests can excommunicate people from the faith.
- The word "Christian" doesn't occur in the Bible.

Little, if any, distinction is made between Christianity and Western civilization. Christianity creates different classes of people, because it distinguishes between "holy men", priests who can't marry, and saints.

One theme that Muslim writers have been developing in recent years consists of presenting Jesus as a type of proto-Muslim, "a Muslim before Islam".

> Traditionally, Muslim writers have always held that Jesus was a prophet of the one God and that he would return before the Hour to manifest his agreement with Islam. Here, the new element lies in the deliberate distortion of history, events and texts to forge the picture of a Muslim Jesus that is then offered to Muslims and to Christian readers (Gaudeul 2000:273).

Jesus, a prophet of Islam (1979) by the Pakistani writer Muhammed Ata-ur-Rahim (d. 1978) is one well-known example of this genre. The book, translated into both Turkish and Arabic, states that Jesus and the first disciples preached monotheism, that throughout history there were "Unitarian Christians", that the doctrine of the trinity was invented by Paul, that it was imposed on the Church by Constantine at the Council of Nicaea, and maintained by force ever since. The book is full of inaccurate and unsubstantiated historical claims.

Many other authors could be quoted whose books take the same approach. The al-Azhar professor Muhammed Abu Zahra, author of *Lectures on Christianity* (Muhadarat fil-Nasraniyya) (first published in 1942), for instance, claimed that the dogma of the Trinity had its roots in Egyptian paganism and was introduced into Christianity by Athanasius.

There are a very small number of older books still in print in which Muslim novelists, though remaining faithful to Islam, try to respect the gospels' presentation of Jesus as reliable historical documents. Kamil Husayn's *City of Wrongs* (1954) describes the moral behaviour of those who took part in the events of Good Friday. Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad's *The Genius of the Messiah* (1952) presents Jesus as a prophet and a defender of the poor, a social reformer. Poets and singers sometimes invoke the Passion as a symbol of mankind's suffering, particularly the suffering of the Palestinian people. "For the time being, it is by and large in literature, poetry and mystical writings that Christians may expect to encounter the greatest degree of imaginative sympathy" (Zebiri 2000:175).

The popular press' views about Christianity are much more extreme than the above. During the winter of 2004-05 maligning Christianity and Christian missions was raised to a feverish pitch in Turkey. One newspaper, *Üsküdar Gazetesi*, not only published a series of "exposes" maligning Christianity, it also distributed free of charge over 500,000 copies of a particularly savage book, *Dikkat Misyoner Geliyor* (2004) (Beware, the Missionary is Coming) from a roving bus with the book's title emblazoned on the side (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Although the Turkish Ministry of Education books don't mention Christian missions, the popular press regularly depicts modern missionaries as nothing but harbingers of Western cultural and political hegemony, agents of secularization serving Western political interests. Missions is "frequently characterized in Muslim discourse in precisely the same terms as colonialism: as oppressive, exploitative, unscrupulous as to methodology, ruthless, arrogant, immoral, and destructive of indigenous cultures" (Zebiri 2000:30).

In short, most Islamic teaching and polemic on Christianity are a hodge-podge of fiction, falsehood and the worst of Christian history. More than anything else it reflects the strength of

the reaction against colonialism and Christian missions and the depth this has become embedded in the consciousness of most Muslims (2000:30). This negative pseudo-scholarship has gone largely unnoticed in the West "because it occurs within an almost exclusively Muslim market and is rarely subject to critical scrutiny" (:89). It is, however, one of the main reasons for the sometimes virulent anti-Christian and anti-Western attitudes displayed by sometimes surprisingly well-educated people. So long as such mis-information continues to be purveyed to the virtual exclusion of widely distributed books and magazines providing objective information about Christianity, there is almost no way the interested Muslim can obtain a more balanced account of Christian history and doctrine.

5.1.2.6. The Persecution of Christians

Government sponsored levels of persecution of the existing Orthodox and OBP churches range from "state interference and obstruction" (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Turkey, Yemen) to "discrimination of minorities" (Bahrain, Syria), to "limited political restriction" (Oman, Palestine, United Arab Emirates), to "state hostility and prohibition" (Libya, Northern Cyprus, Saudi Arabia) (Johnson & Scoggins 2004:5).

Persecuting Christian converts and harassing or deporting Christian missionaries, particularly if they target Muslims remains official government policy in many countries of the region. Throughout the region converts from Islam face tremendous pressure.

> Even in countries where executions of apostates have been abolished, the renegade's life is far from secure. An act of apostasy brings shame and social disgrace on the family of the apostate, who must be killed by family members to restore family honor and to expiate the collective humiliation. Even if the apostate survives attempts at poisoning, he will suffer from continuous social persecution and ostracism, and be treated as a traitor to his religion, his nation, his culture (Ibn Warraq 2003:90).

Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Morocco, Iran, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt are in the top 10 of countries which persecute Christians in general and converts to Christianity in particular, with Saudi Arabia being the world's worst. Although some 600,000 expatriate Christians live and work in the Kingdom, officially it does not permit the open practice of the Christian faith (Wooding WP 1999:4).

> No Christian workers are permitted and all Christian "propaganda" banned… Saudi Arabia probably has the world's worst record on religious freedom and human rights. This has been achieved through a corrupt judicial system, arrogant religious police (mutawwa), and the corroboration of the government… Christian expatriates live under strict surveillance. Secret gatherings are hunted down with diligence and leaders sometimes subjected to humiliating beatings, imprisonment, expulsion and even execution. This is particularly so for Asian Christians who have often been the most

> effective witnesses and whose governments have the least international clout (Johnstone 2001:557).

Egyptian Christians, both Protestants and Copts are discriminated against with apparent impunity by local police officials (Jones WP 2002:3). Few Egyptian Christians risk witnessing to a Muslim because of the possible consequences (Johnstone 2001:234).

> Persecution of Christians (in Egypt) steadily increased in intensity during the 1980s and 1990s. Harassment, severe application of ancient discriminatory laws, destruction of churches and financial incentives for Christians to adopt Islam have all been extensively used to break the morale of Christians. In some areas, especially in Upper Egypt, Muslims have even sought to displace local Christian communities to "purify" their society… It is reckoned that between 12,000 and 15,000 people annually are coerced or enticed to become Muslims. There are cases of young girls being kidnapped, violated and forced to marry Muslims (2001:235).

The last missionary outpost in Libya was closed in 1960, and no open evangelism has been possible since. Hence the country's entire indigenous population remains unreached and remains off limits for evangelism by "tentmakers". An elaborate secret police network makes any approach to Libyians dangerous to both parties (Johnstone 2001:409). In Palestine Christians from a Muslim background have been specifically targeted by Islamists (:505).

Although seeking entry into the European Union, Turkey's treatment of both Christian converts and Christian missionaries remains pathetic. The problem there is not so much the judiciary, which almost inevitably sets free people convicted of "religious propaganda", but harassment of converts by police, employers, family, neighbours and/or extreme Muslim and Nationalist gangs. Those suspected of engaging in missionary activities continue to be deported or refused re-entry into Turkey after visits to their home country (Pikkert 1982-2006). Threats are not uncommon; this student regularly received death threats when serving as editor of a Christian magazine. At a 1997 book fair in the city of Gaziantep Muslim fundamentalists bombed the Bible stand, leaving a little boy dead and 24 injured (Meroff WP 1999:5; Pikkert 1982-2006). The Zeytinburnu Protestant Church in Istanbul was bombed in 2003 and raked with gunfire during the recent cartoon crisis. That event also resulted in the severe beating of several converts and cost a Roman Catholic priest his life. Nationalist youths regularly harass Christians at books stands. Those interested in more information can consult the Christian news agency Compass Direct, which has a network of journalists who track the persecution of Christians (see www.compassdirect.org).

5.1.2.7. Country-specific Socio-political Situations

Missionaries end up serving in specific countries that, by the last quarter of the 20th century, had independent histories spanning at least a generation. During that period these nations evolved in

different ways and developed country-specific attitudes towards the world at large, as well as towards Christianity in general and missionary work in particular. This gave the nature of missionary work—what was possible and the reaction to it—a different flavor from one country to the next. We give very brief sketches of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Turkey to give a sense of the wide variety of frameworks which had developed and within which Boomer and GenX missionaries had to operate. The descriptions of the state of missions and the church are largely limited to what they were in 1978, thus giving us a benchmark from which to trace progress in section 5.3.

5.1.2.7.1. Egypt

On November 19, 1977, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat flew to Israel. Addressing the Knesset on the following day, he offered the country a peace deal. A spectacular summit at Camp David in September 1978 eventually produced a framework for peace, which the rest of the Arab world promptly rejected. Another complex round of negotiations led to the signing of a peace treaty on the White House lawn on March 26, 1979. Nearly all other Arab governments and most of their people rejected its terms as well (Goldschmidt 2004:350-352). In spite of an Arab boycott Egypt experienced a much-needed economic lift. The regaining of the Sinai peninsula opened up new opportunities for settlement and development, and revenues from Egyptian oil sales, Suez Canal tolls, tourism and emigrants' remittances gave the country a balance of payment surplus in 1980 for the first time in years. However, the boom benefited only a small group of newly rich entrepreneurs, not the poor masses (:373).

Egypt's villain, as already seen, is overpopulation. Its agriculture could not feed its masses, nor could it its deteriorating infrastructure properly house or employ its burgeoning population (2004:373). Hence frustration levels remained high. In the early 1980s many Egyptians felt that Sadat's policies would not help them. They turned to religion, particularly after the 1967 defeat against Israel (:374), until Islamic groups eventually permeated nearly all aspects of Egyptian life. "The Muslim Brotherhood survived Nasir's purges, and new secret societies arose. Some resorted to terrorist acts, inspired by the Iranian revolution" (:374). Violent communal strife between Islamists and Copts, who make up about 11% of Egypt's population, broke out in Cairo in July 1981. In September of that year Sadat banned the Brotherhood and locked up 1500 alleged opponents without trial (:373). On 6 October he was assassinated while reviewing his troops. Subsequent police investigations unearthed a large network of Islamic terrorist groups. Various Arab leaders rejoiced at his death, few Egyptians mourned him (:375). Husni Mubarak, who succeeded Sadat, immediately declared a state of emergency and managed

to restore some public trust in the government. Relations between Israel and Egypt turned into a "cold peace" (2004:375). Other Arab governments eventually restored diplomatic ties with Egypt, and the country was readmitted to the Arab league. Mubarak continues to rule the country with a firm hand.

Islam is the country's state religion. Christians are free to worship, but not to evangelize Muslims. Back in 1978 Protestants numbered about 0.4% of the population, or some 150,000 people (Johnstone 1978:137). Some 20 mission agencies had about 80 missionaries in the country (:138). Most worked with various national Protestant churches, such as the Presbyterian Synod of the Nile, or were involved in the production of Christian literature, which could be freely printed and sold. There were a significant number of Christian book stores (10 in Cairo alone). However, Protestantism had seen little growth. Nominalism had been growing, and there was a considerable drift back to the Coptic church (:138).

5.1.2.7.2. Iraq

The British installed monarchy (1932) was overthrown in a violent revolution in 1958 to be replaced by a Ba'athist inspired military regime espousing secularist pan-Arab socialism. By 1975, the Ba'athists had won a ruthless civil war against the Kurds, who had hoped to end Arab exploitation and win recognition as a national entity. In 1979 Saddam Hussein officially took over power and, using the oil based economy along with the help of other Arab countries and Western powers greedy for petrodollars, he built a massive military machine with which he protected his repressive dictatorship, repressed the Kurds and Shi'as, launched a war against Iran (1980-88) and invaded Kuwait (1990). Although the Iran-Iraq war ended in a stalemate and Iraq was evicted from Kuwait in 1991, suffering heavy damage, the country was not totally defeated. "Sophisticated propaganda, ruthless suppression of dissent and cunning evasion of UN sanctions have enabled the regime to survive despite its isolation and the military 'no-fly' zones in both the north and south maintained by the USA and UK" (Johnstone 2001:356).

War with Iran and Kuwait halted economic development. Public debt rose to 174%, income per person dropped to $520 a year (2% of USA) in 2000; it had been $6,600 in 1980 (:356). Hunger and hyperinflation led to anger with the West. By 1995 nearly 4500 children under the age of 5 were dying every month and more than 4 million Iraqis were "at severe nutritional risk". The 1990s decade of UN sanctions devastated the economy and impoverished ordinary people. By 1995 Hussein, once a staunch secularist, was courting the sheikhs and imams at home and the leaders of other fundamentalist states, hoping to use religion to curb growing social ills and garner some international support (World Beat, WP 1995:6).

In 1978 the Protestant community, mostly Presbyterians and Evangelicals consisted of a mere 0.2%, or 2,300 people out of a population of 11.4 million. Since 1968 Christians received increasing freedom for worship and witness but still suffered from discrimination (Johnstone & Mandryk 2001:356). That freedom came under renewed pressure during the 1970s. If, initially, religious minorities received favour from Saddam Hussein after he came to power—if they demonstrated political loyalty—it soon became dangerous for Christians to make contact with foreigners. A number of Iraq Christians were executed in the 1970s. Although several Christian bookrooms stocking literature brought in from Jordan managed to stay open, the land was closed to missionary work. Virtually the only way the vast majority of Iraqis could learn about Christianity was through Arabic radio broadcasts to the region by Trans World Radio (TWR) and the Far East Broadcasting Association (FEBA) (Johnstone 1978:143).

The no-fly zone imposed by the Allies on Iraq's north after the country was driven out of Kuwait in 1991 enabled the region's Kurds to develop a virtual state-within-a state. The region was open for western aid and development agencies, including Christian missions, which were able to develop and maintain a variety of ministries and, as we will see, be rewarded with some success for their labours. The American invasion of Iraq in 2003 led to Hussein's overthrow but, due to unstable and dangerous conditions, have not allowed for a significant expansion of missionary work in the rest of the country. Elections held in December 2005 offer the country the possibility of political stability. At the time of writing, however, the Sunni insurgency in most of the non-Kurdish parts of the country makes it unsafe to establish a public Christian witness. The Kurdish region, on the other hand, developed rapidly in economic and political terms. It was the one place in the Middle East (other than Israel) where Americans received popular acclaim.

Though still only numbering a mere 6000 people in 2000, when Iraq's total population was over 23 million, Protestantism was growing at 3.4% annually, as opposed to a population growth of 2.84% and the growth of Islam at 2.9% (Johnstone & Mandryk 2001:355-356).

5.1.2.7.3. Lebanon

Lebanon was the commercial hub of the Middle East until the civil war, which broke out in 1975 and lasted until 1990. The war caused tremendous upheaval both to the country as a whole and to Christian outreach to the Levant. Large areas of Beirut were reduced to rubble, and its profitable trading, banking, and tourist industries were ruined. Recovery began in 1992 but was slowed by both the Israeli occupation of the south and successions of retaliatory bombings (Johnstone & Mandryk 2001:399).

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After the Palestinians were driven from Jordan in 1970 they moved their bases to southern Lebanon, only to have their power there broken by Israeli invasion and occupation (1982-1985). During the years of bitter fighting and hostage taking Shi'a Muslim and Druze militias managed to improve their political leverage at the expense of the Christian community. The Syrians imposed a measure of peace in 1990 and opened the way for the Taif agreement of 1990/91 and the installation of a new Lebanese government. Lebanon regained a measure of peace, but only nominal internal independence with the Syrian army controlling 90% and Israel controlling 10% of the country (Johnstone 2001:400). In 2005 the Syrian forces were finally forced to leave after the assassination of Rafik Hariri, a leading light in Lebanese politics.

150,000 people were killed during the civil war and Christian-Muslim relations were destroyed. Entire populations were uprooted in a Lebanese form of ethnic cleaning; as many as 80% of Lebanon's people were displaced at one time or another and resettled in Christian, Muslim and Druze cantons. Thus, different communities, instead of living together, were regrouped according to religious affiliation. Christians in East Beirut and Muslims in West Beirut were separated by the "Green Line" (Guthrie WP 1996:1). A generation of Middle Eastern Christians grew up who did not know a Muslim personally. According to Julien Accad, general secretary of the Lebanese Bible Society, many of these young Christians had not so much as heard the call of prayer from the mosque: "imagine living in an Arab country and never hearing the call to pray!" (:1).

Until 1975 Lebanon had been the main base for Christian missionary activities to the Arab world. The war led nearly all Christian literature, radio and evangelistic organizations based in the country to move elsewhere, notably Cyprus. Many national Christians also fled to other lands, along with their pastors. By 1978 Protestants were a mere 1.4% of the population, or a community of about 40,000 of a population of 3,1 million. The largest Protestant denominations present were the Presbyterians (18,000), Baptists (6,000) and the National Evangelical Church (6000) (Johnstone 1978:145-146).

After the war thousands of displaced people, overcoming fear, returned to their home villages to try to rebuild their lives (Accad WP 1996:5). Reintegration released a "tremendous spirit of solidarity" (:5) and opened new avenues of ministry, particularly in relief and development, to help people rebuild homes, churches, mosques, schools, etc. However, the Christian community had been deeply traumatized, having lost their political and economic dominance and a large part of their population through emigration. Their population percentage has dropped from 62% in 1970 to under 32% in 2000 (Johnstone & Mandryk 2001:401).

5.1.2.7.4. Saudi Arabia

The Saudi government has been consistently committed to preserving its strict Wahhabi form of Islam, even as the country's vast oil wealth was used both to develop its infrastructure and propagate Islam globally. Numerous mosques all over the world have been built with Saudi money (Johnstone 1978:149). By the mid 1990s, however, the country was facing a convergence of economic and social problems along with internal opposition by Muslim extremists. Annual per-capita income plunged from $14,000 in 1982 to $4000 in 1996, and youth unemployment stood at 25 percent (World Beat, WP 1996:6). Resentment of "infidels" on Muslim soil, i.e., American soldiers shipped there to protect the country from invasion by Iraq, stirred the anger of the devout (:6).

Although in 1978 1% of the population of 6,4 million was Christian, virtually all were expatriates from Pakistan, Southeast Asia, or the West. There were no known national Christians; any convert would probably be killed. The authorities denied all non-Muslim expatriates the right to hold meetings or to propagate their faith (Johnstone 1978:149).

5.1.2.7.5. Turkey

The previous chapter skipped developments in Turkey because it virtually dropped off the missionary radar screen for a generation. That "relative isolation of Turkey" (Survey, The Near East, IRM 1947:35) changed during the last quarter of the 20th century. Since the Second World War socio-political developments set the stage for the ideological climate into which Boomer missionaries entered in the modern period they deserve explanation.

The important fact to grasp about Turkey is that the country polarized ideologically into secularist, communist, socialist, nationalist, and Islamist camps, each of which tended to fragment into competing splinter groups. The central government also fought a long-running civil war with Kurdish insurrectionists.

The Republican People's Party, originally founded by the secular, indeed, anti-religious Atatürk, was defeated at the polls in 1950 by the Democratic Party. It won because it promised people what they wanted, notably greater freedom to practice their religion. Under the new prime-minister, Adnan Menderes, new mosques were constructed, the call to prayer was changed back to Arabic, Islamic religious publications freely circulated, the Qur'an was translated into Turkish and widely distributed, and the annual *haj* was resumed; for some years more Turks visited Mecca than from any other country. In 1956 the Ministry of Education introduced Islamic religious classes to all middle schools. When, on 17 February 1959 Menderes survived a plane crash which killed most other passengers his miraculous escape, fully exploited by the Turkish

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radio and the party, "convinced many religious Turks that Menderes was a superhuman figure, chosen by God to lead his people" (Zürcher 2004:240).

The army, using constitutionally guaranteed powers as "defenders of the Turkish republic" ousted the party in 1960, hanged Menderes and a few other leaders, and drafted a new constitution which, at least on paper, offered greater freedom of thought and religion than before. Article 19 stated that "Every individual has freedom of conscience, religious faith and opinions" while Article 20 went on to say that "Every individual is free to express his thoughts and opinions singly, or collectively, through word of mouth, in writing, through pictures, or through other media" (Meyer 1986:67; see also Shaw & Shaw 1977:409). The 1961 constitution laid the basis for much greater political and religious diversity, "opportunities that were only fully exploited from the mid-1960s onwards" (Zürcher 2004:253).

The new freedom allowed the formation of extreme left and right wing organizations, the former agitating for a communist takeover, the latter for a Muslim state with a Caliph at its head. By the late 1960 major clashes broke out between these groups, and by 1971 there was a breakdown of law and order. Radical student groups kidnapped and murdered members of opposing groups, foreign diplomats were held for ransom, and university campuses were in chaos. That year the military brass ordered Prime Minister Demirel to step down and imposed martial law: for two years public meetings and the production and distribution of any kind of propaganda was forbidden (Meyer 1986:68; Goldschmidt 2004:222; Zürcher 2004:255-258).

Most young people were left in an ideological vacuum: the Left was too radical and had failed to deliver, Islam appeared backwards and reactionary. Left-wing students were left either bitter and disillusioned, though the more extreme were hardened in their communism. Many formerly extreme right-wing students moved toward the *Nurju* (Enlightened) Islamic movement (Meyer 1986:68). During the second half of the 1970s these two ideological extremes once again brought the country to the brink of civil war. Weak central governments rose and fell in rapid succession, the two main political parties trading the prime minister's seat 5 times between 1974 and 1980. The economy was in a shambles. Hyper inflation, a declining economic growth rate, and the shock of the 1973 oil price increases led to long electricity and water cuts and the rationing or disappearance of many basic items from store shelves (:81). To protest against Turkey's membership in NATO the radical left-wing organization DEV-SOL started shooting American army personnel (Zürcher 2004:258-265). Foreign Christians were also targeted: on June 2, 1979, David Goodman, an OM missionary, was shot in Adana (Meyer 1986:82).

By 1980 street violence reached unprecedented levels and on September 12 the army intervened once again. For the second time the hapless Demirel was removed from government. Millions of Turks cheered at the news, hoping that the army would introduce stability (1986:82). Martial law was introduced across the country, Parliament was dissolved, political parties were declared illegal, labour unions shut down. Inflation was reduced by half and salaries for state employees increased by 70%. Droves of terrorist suspects (some 24,000 in the first year) were arrested or held for questioning; the daily number of killings dropped dramatically (Zürcher 2004:279). It looked like Turks had traded liberty for security. A new constitution was drawn up giving vast powers to the president (i.e., to General Kenan Evren, who had engineered the coup) and "curtailing the rights of academics, labor unions, journalists, and anyone who had been active in politics before 1980" (Goldschmidt 2004:222). A referendum approved the document and Turgut Özal's newly formed Motherland Party won a general election held in 1982. Özal's administration led the country towards greater political stability and economic growth, as he opened the hitherto largely closed economy to foreign investment and competition. He also began lifting the bans on political freedom imposed by the military and started the process which would, eventually, lead to Turkey's serious consideration as a potential member of the European Union (Zürcher 2004:280-288).

During the 1990s a number of weak coalition governments followed the Özal era, including one in 1995 which was headed briefly by Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Islamist Welfare Party, whom the army eased out of office to bring back the secularists (Goldschmidt 2004:223). In 2003 the AK Party won an absolute majority in parliament. Although it is a party with strong Islamic roots, it has introduced a whole slate of economic and judicial reforms to prepare the country for eventual membership of the European Union. Entry negotiations with the EU began on October 3, 2005.

> The country remains divided on religious issues. This problem is part of Atatürk's legacy. His westernizing reforms split the mind of Turkey between acceptance of secular values and a desire to go back to Muslim principles and institutions. Turkey is stronger now than it was before 1980. Beneath the surface, though, it is a troubled country (Goldschmidt 2004:223).

In terms of Protestant Christian presence in the country, it is estimated that during the 1950s there were a mere 10 Turkish converts to Christianity. In 1959 the American Board opened a bookstore on the ground floor of the American Board compound, the old "Bible House" in Eminönü, Istanbul, where it sold dictionaries, children's books, and various books on philosophy, history and literature (Pikkert 1982-2006). However, in 2002 the Board handed over its remaining 4 schools and hospital to a secular, Turkish-run board of directors. Its name was

changed to *Sağlık ve Eğitim Vakfı* (Health and Education Foundation). One of the 3 buildings on the compound of the former "Bible House" contains a library in which much of this thesis was written, as well as the offices of the Turkish Bible Society. A very conservative group of mostly Protestant Syriacs and Armenians with anti-Muslim antipathies uses the chapel. The rest of the compound is empty, derelict (Pikkert 1982-2006).

The first evangelical missionaries, two young Boomers with Operation Mobilization, arrived in Istanbul in 1961 to survey the situation, learn Turkish, and prepare the ground for future work. They decided to focus on personal evangelism and the development of Christian literature (Meyer 1986:68). WEC International, TEAM, and some independent workers soon followed OM so that by 1966 Turkey was, once again, "on the map of mission agencies and of the churches of Western countries" (Gunduz 2001:47).

Finding ways of staying in the country for extended periods of time became a primary concern for Christian missionaries right through to the end of the century. In spite of the freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution, the police kept arresting and deporting Christian missionaries, charging them with "religious propaganda". The turnover rate of personnel was high, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite many arrests—more than one hundred between 1974 and 1986—no Christian missionary was ever found guilty on the charge of making illegal religious propaganda. Although in every case Turkish judges have upheld constitutional law, virtually all of those who had come to Turkey in the 1960s and early 1970s were expelled as *persona non grata* (Pikkert 1982-2006).

In 1978 Turkey was still described as the world's largest unreached country. In that year, when the country boasted a population of 40.2 million, there were barely 1000 Protestants, most of them from non-Muslim minorities; there were an estimated 50 Muslim converts (Johnstone 1978:153). Although legally there was freedom of religion, deep-seated official and public resistance to Christian witness remained. Extreme pressure was also applied by family and employers on anyone who became a Christian. The Bible Society had one store in Istanbul, from which about 1000 Bibles in archaic Turkish were sold annually. There were no Muslim Background Turkish speaking Protestant churches, "only 3–4 very small and unstable fellowships in several cities" (:154). Missionaries were not permitted, though there were openings for Christian professionals, particularly in teaching English.

Since the late 1970s both the Protestant missionary movement and the MBP church has grown significantly. More about that later.

5.2. What were the Missionary Goals and Strategies?

The fact that few Middle Eastern countries grant missionary visas led to a profound shift in the nature of Christian missionary work. "For obvious pragmatic and diplomatic reasons" the hostile Muslim context of the region led to "direct, oral proclamation coming to represent a smaller than usual proportion of the missionary's activity" (Zebiri 2000:95). As a result, "very few missionaries in the Muslim world are simply planting Christian churches" (Johnson and Scoggins 2004:4). Nevertheless, the increasingly varied, international missionary community which launched and developed the modern missionary thrust would, in spite of the obstacles, eventually mature and begin to bear some fruit. Let us look at some of the methods utilized.

5.2.1. "Tentmaking"

By the term "tentmaking" we mean the use of secular skills by Christian missionaries to enable them to enter countries closed to traditional missionary work. In the modern Middle East most long-term Christian missionaries are "tentmakers", i.e., they obtain a residence visa by working in some kind of secular vocation, and seek to witness in the workplace or run their ministries in their spare time.

Initially "tentmaking" was presented not so much as a strategy to enter "closed" countries but, in that pre-Boomer era of low recruitment, as a way of involving the whole laity in "the provision of an adequate supply of ministries" for the "church militant" in its calling as the "agent though which (Christ) continues His redemption of the cosmos" (Welbourn IRM 1951:421-425). Later, however, Christy Wilson's book *Today's Tentmaker. Self-support: an alternative model for worldwide witness* (1979) encouraged mission minded Boomers to develop marketable secular skills that would enable them to enter otherwise closed countries. By that time many mission minded Boomer professionals, as well as several mission agencies, had already taken up the challenge, particularly with respect to the communist and Muslim worlds. By the early 1980s, however, hundreds of tentmakers dribbled back to their home countries. "They had developed successful careers and had seen fellow expatriates come to Christ but few of them had made any significant impact among the national people" (Gibson 1997:43).

Tentmaking was bedeviled by a number of issues, including lack of integrity, i.e., of living by a double standard, of saying you are one thing, but are really seeking to do something else. Some "tentmakers" passed themselves off as "foreign experts" while lacking the qualifications. There was a lack of on-field accountability and support networks. Insufficient time or opportunity to learn Arabic or Turkish led to an insufficient understanding of the culture, which in turn led to few meaningful relationships with nationals. Being forced to live on compounds in Saudi Arabia

limited contact with nationals there even further. Even if one's job did allow interaction with nationals, most employers assumed you were there to work hard—12-15 hours a day for a couple of years—and to return home after that. This, along with the fact that life simply takes more time in the Middle East (new ways of shopping, traveling, interacting with people, endless red tape) left hardly any time for language learning, visiting people and the development of some kind of ministry. Although host governments were often happy to have expatriate workers, even Christians, they could become very unhappy if these Christians tried to convert Muslims. Since most Middle Eastern countries monitor foreign resident's emails, faxes and phones in and out of the country, a siege mentality could develop in the tentmaker community as well (1997:52-64).

Nevertheless, there really was little alternative to tentmaking if missions were to keep long-term workers in the region. By the early 1990s the main problems had been identified and solutions worked out. Rather than moving straight into a profession, for instance, many missionaries now spend the first couple of years in language school or at a local university. Instead of seeking employment at national schools or companies, many tentmakers either started viable businesses of their own, or operate branch or liaison offices for western companies, often owned by sympathetic Christians. Some got involved in "religious tourism", others in teaching English. The "professional tourist" route was also popular: leave the country every couple of months to re-enter on a new tourist visa (1997:66-69; Pikkert 1982-2006).

Besides maintaining a Christian presence, what ministries did the largely tentmaking Baby Boomer missionary community develop and seek to hand over to their GenX successors?

5.2.2. Literature Production

Even during Turkey's "forgotten period" the Turkish Bible Society had been trying to get the Bible into people's hands. Though forbidden to distribute scripture portions gratis (Meyer 1986:65), they could sell the Bible in bookshops. Lyle MacCallum, the Turkish Bible Society's director from 1925 to 1953, tried to advertise the availability of the Bible in newspapers, "but because of fear only a few newspapers would print his advertisements" (:65). He then sponsored the translation of the Turkish Bible into Braille, and sent copies of his Braille Bible portions, the first ever in Turkish, to the Society of the Blind in Istanbul. The reaction was typical: "Look at these missionaries, so eager to make converts that they are not ashamed to take advantage of blind folk!" (:65). MacCallum was also responsible for sending thousands of New Testaments to the soldiers of the Turkish Brigade fighting in Korea (:66).

In the course of the 1970s and 1980s the emerging Boomer evangelical missionary community expended great efforts on the production of Christian literature. In Turkey they

produced a New Testament translation in contemporary Turkish (1987), as well as translations of such books as John Stott's *Basic Christianity*, Belkis Sheikh's biography *I Dared to Call Him Father*, David Wilkerson's *The Cross and the Switchblade*, Joni Erikson's *Joni* and Walter Trobisch's *I Married You*. From the 1990s onwards the trickle of Christian books became a stream. By the turn of the century at least five Christian publishing houses beside the Bible Society, *Gerçeğe Doğru Kitapları* (Toward the Truth Books), *Yeni Yaşam Yayınları* (New Life Publications), *Müjde Yayıncılık* (Good News Publications), *Haberci* (Herald), and *Zirve* (Mountain Top) were turning out a steady flow of books. Most were translations from English paid for by various missionaries or their agencies.

In the Arab world a similar phenomenon occurred, though on a somewhat smaller scale—probably due to the greater difficulty of Arabic, which fewer missionaries master well enough to translate into or to supervise translation projects. The Cairo based *Dar al-Thaqafa* (House of Culture) has taken the lead in the translation and production of Arabic Protestant literature. Both the burgeoning Turkish and Arabic Christian literatures represent a wide range of theological views falling into such categories as evangelistic tracts, apologetics, Christological works, works on Christian witness, church history, a variety of systematic theologies, Bible commentaries, pastoral works, and charismatic literature focusing on "inner healing" and the work of the Holy Spirit (Pikkert:1982-2006).

Realizing that Christian books were unlikely to reach significant numbers of Muslim youths, the Christian agency Middle East Media (MEM) launched the successful Arabic Christian magazine *Magalla* (Magazine) in 1977. By the end of the 20th century the magazine had a circulation of about 60,000 copies per month, "though estimates of readership are closer to half a million, since each issue is read by six or seven people. It circulates in 15 countries, always with official permission" (Andrews WP 1999:4). It is compiled by a staff of 35 Christians, both western missionaries involved in administration, fund raising and the gathering of articles, and nationals who actually run the publication. It is the No. 2 magazine of newsstand sales in some areas (:4).

Magalla has a "soft sell" approach. It does not mention that it is Christian, but speaks of salvation in such Christian terms as repentance, new birth and the Holy Spirit. The organization states: "While the magazine is not conspicuously Christian (something that would keep most Muslims from ever buying their first copy), it is obviously not Muslim. Because it is religious and not Muslim, the Christian identity soon filters down to our readers" (1999:4). The magazine contains no advertisements for cigarettes or liquor, and no pictures with sexual content.

> A typical issue of Magalla includes competitions, a "Problems" page, men's and women's sections, English lessons, a series on career planning and time management, and feature articles. Articles that speak to the monthly theme do so from a spiritual perspective. The back page is a poster-size final prayer, and the writers frequently quote Davidic Psalms and include other prayers, which are acceptable in the Muslim world (1999:4).

Magalla, though the biggest, is not the Middle East's only Christian magazine. An evangelical Armenian, Misak Gunay, who wrote several books on Christian apologetics in Turkish, also published a little magazine *Sevgi Yolu* (The Way of Love) in the 1980s. From 1988 to 1995 the writer of this thesis produced the 24 page Turkish/Kurdish quarterly *Yeni Yaklaşım* (New Approach). Arab World Ministries (AWM) publishes *Key to Knowledge*, "a magazine filled with stories, testimonies, Bible studies, and responses to readers' letters". The magazine is sent to those who respond to its radio broadcasts (Baurain WP 1995:5).

With the exception of *Magalla* which, because of its soft approach, has managed to be sold off the newsstands, the main problem in Christian literature production is distribution. Translating and printing books is easy, distributing them is another matter. Distribution teams, smuggling, book fairs and Christian bookshops are the main means of dissemination.

From 1963 onwards OM sent teams of 15 to 30 young people to Turkey to distribute literature. In spite of arrests and expulsions, by the mid-1980s the teams were distributing about 500,000 pieces of literature a year. "During the day they sold Christian books door-to-door, and at night Gospel tracts were purposefully 'lost' on streets and roads where they could be found the next day" (Meyer 1986:68-69). There are also a number of agencies such as Open Doors which smuggle Bibles into countries like Saudi Arabia, which has banned the book. "Techniques range from loading boxes of Bibles into cars to carrying them inside clothing. Thousands of Bibles get through every year" (Long WP 1997:4).

Book fairs were another means of getting Christian literature to the general public. At the 2002 Cairo Book Festival, for instance, The Bible Society had 60 staff members working at four large booths spread around the hall, offering "an exciting array of Christian resources in Arabic and English". Although foreigners were not allowed to sell books and official staff at booths were forbidden to share their faith, national Christians distributed "several hundred" Arabic New Testaments and "several thousands" of leaflets (Jones WP 2002:2).

> Low-priced sets of dramatized Bible cassettes also went fast… An official ban on selling videos and cassettes was lifted after the first three days due to strong protests from publishers and fair-goers. One booth alone was selling 400 Bibles the first week, many of them to Muslims. "This book fair is a golden chance for Arabs from the Gulf and other areas to buy," explained one worker. "Sometimes they ask for Bibles without any lettering on the cover" (2002:2).

A number of major Levantine, Turkish and North African cities have Christian bookstores. The national Bible Societies run some stores, while others are sponsored by foreign mission agencies. A few are run entirely by nationals. Most are small operations. A few, however, such as *Manara* Book Store in Amman Jordan, the *Dar at-Thaqafa* bookstore in Cairo and the Green House in Istanbul have reasonable facilities and stock not just locally produced Christian books but Arab Christian literature produced in other Arab countries or, in the case of the Green House, a wide selection of English Christian literature along with one of the most complete stocks of Turkish Christian literature available in the country (Pikkert 1982-2006). Since these stores are rarely economically viable they need outside help to survive.

The three Christian bookstores in Amman, Jordan, are also the focal point of a successful Bible and Christian literature ministry in which The Bible Society, the Carmel Mission, Agape and *Manara* are all actively involved (Johnstone 2001:377). Dire circumstances, such as in war-torn Iraq, evidently create a greater demand for Christian literature; in the 7 years following the 1991 Gulf War the Bible Society in Jordan shipped over 20 tons of Bibles and religious literature to Iraq annually (Robertson WP 1998:5).

5.2.3. Bible Correspondence Courses (BCC)

Bible correspondence courses have been—and continue to be—used in both the Turkish and Arab worlds. Arab World Ministries (AWM) started such a ministry in 1964 as a means of following up those who wrote in response to its Radio School of the Bible. By 1995 the mission was offering over 30 different correspondence courses (Baurain WP 1995:5).

The Bible correspondence course is also one of the most long-lived ministries in Turkey. In 1964, the same year AWM started its course, missionaries translated a simple course from English into Turkish. It traced God's plan of salvation from Adam and Eve through the Old Testament Patriarchs and prophets to Jesus Christ. They then mailed out invitations for the free course at the rate of between ten and twenty thousand per year for the next 10 years (Meyer 1986:69). They also started advertising the availability of free correspondence courses in such newspapers as would accept the advertisements. More courses were developed and, by 1986 about 6000 people had enrolled in one or more courses (:69). Nine years later some 75000 Turks had contacted the BCC to receive a free New Testament and other Christian literature (BCC brochure, 2005). In 1992 Good News Ministries took the BCC under its wing, paying for all its literature. Invitations for the courses started going out not only through newspaper advertisements but also at Christian concerts and sports events, book tables and book fairs. In

1997 a Turkish Christian fellowship began supporting one of its members for full-time work with the BCC (Meroff WP 1999:5).

5.2.4. Exploiting Technology: Long Distance Missions

Boomer missionaries were an electronically savvy lot, quick to apply technological advances to "the spread of the gospel". This led to a number of missions establishing Arab and/or Turkish media centers outside the Middle East, usually in Germany, France, Spain or Cyprus. If expensive, such technologically dependent ministries were one of the easiest and most risk-free methods of reaching significant numbers of peoples in the Middle East (Long WP 1997:4).

The production of cassettes, videos, DVDs, the beaming of Christian radio and satellite TV programs into the region and, from the 1990s onward, the internet, are all utilized to propagate the faith. In the early 1960s Gospel Recordings became one of the first organizations to produce Christian audiotapes in Turkish (Meyer 1986:84). During the 1970s the German missionary society, Orientdienst, started producing Christian cassettes in Turkish containing both music and messages. Some Christian films had Turkish sound tracks added (:84).

Radio became one of the first large scale ministries to reach into the Arab world; in 1994 Arab World Ministries' Radio School of the Bible celebrated its 30th anniversary. Many Arabic language programs "continue to permeate Muslim culture, offering seekers of Jesus privacy" (Schmidt WP 2000:2). By 2000 over 146 hours of broadcasting weekly in Arabic was available through FEBA, High Adventure, IBRA, HCJB (Johnstone & Mandryk 2001:558). The breakdown of regulatory controls in Turkey during the late 1980s opened the way for a 24 hour Christian radio station, *Müjde FM* (Good News FM), in Istanbul (:636).

During the 1990s media starting being produced in local Arab dialects. By 1998, for instance a team of Iraqis and others developed a series of cassettes in the Baghdadi accent called "The Stories of the Prophets" (Robertson WP 1998:5). Campus Crusade for Christ's "Jesus" film was dubbed into Turkish, and various Arabic and Kurdish dialects and shown by film teams, in theaters, and on television. The video version saw wide distribution in the region. "In some areas fascination with the West leads to rampant video piracy… creating a unique distribution network for Christian video tapes" (Long WP 1997:4). Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" saw a similar response in 2005 (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Since 95% of homes in the Middle East own at least one television, and since television is a "primary means of information and entertainment in the Arab world" (Schmidt WP 2000:2), it is considered a very important method of reaching the otherwise unreachable. The interdenominational Christian satellite TV station SAT 7, which began two hours of broadcasting

per week in 1996, is today broadcasting Christian programming 24 hours a day, 7 day a week. In 1999 it opened production studios in Beirut and Cairo operated by local Christians producing "culturally appropriate Arabic programs… Half the broadcast schedule is original Arabic programming; the other segment is comprised of Christian films and programs dubbed into Arabic" (:2). Sat-7 branched into Turkish in 2006; Türk 7 started broadcasting in Turkish on January 10 of that year (Pikkert 1982-2006). Other channels, such as The Bible Channel and CBN also broadcast into the Arab world.

As of the 1990s various individuals, churches and agencies using the internet have used a variety of approaches. The internet's "communal nature" has made it attractive to both western GenXers and Middle Eastern youths. Internet cafes are ubiquitous both in Turkey and the Arab world (Pikkert 1982-2006). As such, the internet has been viewed as the answer to the problem many agencies face with respect to connecting with isolated seekers and new believers. It appears to provide a means of establishing a timely two-way connection to the seeker, answering questions and providing regular input and direct access to the Bible and real people (The Internet, WP 2000:5).

Some Christian sites use a low-key "friendship" or "informational" approach, others are more overt or controversial. "This simply parallels the divergent strategies found in more traditional approaches to Muslims—some walk softly while others carry a big stick" (2000:5). Some websites offer Muslims the opportunity to connect with Christian "netpals", some are chat lines for questions and discussions, some host personal testimonies, others simply make the Scriptures available online—with a sound card you can hear Bible passages read out loud—and allow browsers to enroll in correspondence courses, order books, or give them directions to the nearest church. Yet other sites are apologetical in nature, and/or compare Christianity with Islam (:5; also Meroff WP 1999:5).

Telephone ministries also got off the ground. In 2001 OM launched "Alo Dua" (Hello, Prayer) in Turkey. Advertisements in local newspapers invite people to phone in with problems, receive prayer in Jesus' name and discover biblical solutions. Within a year hundreds of people called in every month searching for truth and willing to say, "I have a problem and need help" (Feuser 2002:2).

5.2.5. Other non-residential approaches

From the late 1960s onward many Turks and Arabs, fascinated by the Western way of life, "were lured away from their countries" (Gaudeul 2000:256) and headed for Europe, North America and Australia. Many immigrated, some went on business, many others as students to return home

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after their studies. Many, notably Kurds, Turkish Alewites, and Iraqis, also went as refugees. Major West European cities developed sprawling districts full of Middle Eastern and North African guest workers, creating resentment among the autochthonous population and fuelling far-right parties in Germany, Belgium, France, Austria and The Netherlands. However, a number of ministries, like Orientdienst in Germany, sought to reach these people with the gospel, in the hope that they would return to their own lands as Christians.

Such non-residential ministries avoid the difficulty of living "under cover" in a closed country. Non-residential missionaries, many of whom lived at one time as missionaries in Turkey or the Arab world and had to leave, occasionally returned to the region as tourists to visit the families of their Muslim friends in the West, do follow-up for radio and television ministries, and to identify new ministry options (Long WP 1997:4).

5.2.6. Short-term work

As noted earlier, both Boomers and GenXers had a penchant for short-term work. Short-term teams who go door to door distributing literature have already been mentioned. These teams, often warned not to contact local Christians, attempt to distribute lots of Christian literature in particular areas, taking deportation risks long-term resident Christian workers could not take.

Another type of short-term ministry consisted of Christian music groups holding concerts in various cities across the Middle East. A Turkey-based Christian arts group, TACO (Turkish Afrasian Creative Outreach), for instance, specialized in arranging venues for such Christian groups. The concerts are followed by testimonies and the distribution of select literature, such as translations of the lyrics, Bible correspondence courses and directions to the nearest church (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Prayer walks became another type of short-term ministry. Even though they may have little or no knowledge of the language or culture, both individuals and teams of people, particularly those of a more Pentecostal/charismatic persuasion, started coming to the Middle East simply to pray for people they saw and Christians and churches they visited. Some came to "confess the sins of past generations". Launched in 1995, a "reconciliation walk" retraced the steps of the Crusaders, seeking forgiveness from various Islamic leaders along the way. They were, by and large, well received (Dixon MW 1997:4). Some of the more extreme and/or adventurous of these prayer walkers traveled from one crumbling Arab, Ottoman and Crusader castle to another to pray against "spiritual strongholds" and to "bind the local territorial spirits" they believed were preventing a breakthrough of the gospel in the particular region (Pikkert 1982-2006)

Another configuration short term work took was in the form of disaster relief which various Evangelical relief and development agencies offered in response to the wars and natural disasters which plague the region. Disaster relief to the region was not new; there had been a huge American sponsored relief effort aimed at the Armenian people in the wake of the First World War. As seen in the previous chapter, Christian agencies also made a significant difference in the relief effort for displaced Palestinians. The Lebanese civil war, the 1990-1991 Gulf War, and the devastating 1999 earthquake in Turkey furnished three more opportunities for Christian relief agencies.

During the Lebanese civil war direct Christian relief towards Palestinians, Shiites, Sunnis or Druze was very limited. When the war ended in 1996, however, various opportunities arose for redevelopment and relief targeting Muslims directly, as people headed out of their enclaves and back to their villages. The lead was taken by the executive committee of the Council of Evangelical Churches in Syria and Lebanon, which coordinated relief assistance to all needy people, irrespective of their religious affiliation; it was the first time a variety of Lebanese churches joined forces for such a program (Accad WP 1996:5).

> Appeals were sent to churches, inside and outside the country, to provide money and people to assist. Groups of volunteers began researching the numbers of people affected… and the practical needs in terms of blankets, mattresses, cooking equipment, food, from baby food to basic adult food… From the first day, basic necessities have been purchased and packages prepared. Shiite political leaders from the Lebanese government as well as other leaders were contacted. The Muslim Shiite population was in great majority among the refugees, but there were also a number of Christian families (1996:5).

Various evangelical parachurch groups got involved in this relief and reconstruction effort. All of Lebanon's villages were visited to assess need and provide help.

The second Gulf War, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and was driven out by an American-led coalition in 1990-1991, displaced hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, both Kurds and Arabs. Many Kurds fled to southeastern Turkey as Saddam's forces headed north after crushing the Shiite revolt in the south, upon the Allies failure to advance to Baghdad. The Kurdish refugee crisis in the spring of 1991 allowed Christian relief agencies such as Operation Mercy to minister to Kurds along with their secular counterparts. Both Christian and secular agencies followed the Kurds down the mountains back to Iraq after the creation of a Kurdish "safe haven" in the north of the country. There has been an ongoing missionary presence ever since ministering to the physical, educational and social needs of Iraqi Kurds. Missionaries ran sheep inoculation programs, work programs (WEC International even ran a brick factory for war widows in Northern Iraq during the

1990s), English language centers, placement of teachers at institutes of higher learning and a variety of other ministries (Pikkert 1982-2006).

That war also brought thousands of Arab Iraqi refugees to Jordan, since it was the only land route open to them. Between 1991 and 1998 the number of Iraqis temporarily resident in Jordan at any one time while trying to arrange visas to other countries was estimated at between 100,000 and 200,000. "Many of the evangelical churches in Jordan, particularly in the capital of Amman, have been in the forefront of assimilating them and offering both material and spiritual aid" (Robertson WP 1998:5).

The earthquake which struck western Turkey on August 17, 1999, and which killed some 17000 people, created another opportunity to provide relief to Muslims in the name of Christ. According to World Relief's coordinator in Turkey, Stephen Hansen, the evangelical Turkish church "recognized this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for them to gain credibility in the eyes of their predominantly Muslim community" (Evangelicals React, WP 1999:3). Both Evangelical relief and development agencies, as well as the Turkish Protestant church, moved quickly. In the first days following the quake, the Southern Baptists sent a 10-member disaster relief team along with food, water, and medical supplies, and a mobile field kitchen for one of the tent cities (1999:3). Numerous other agencies, notably Dorcas Aid, the Netherlands Reformed Church, Operation Mercy, TEAR Fund Netherlands, TEAR Fund UK, World Relief Canada, World Vision Canada, and World Vision USA also provided medical supplies, food, blankets and clothing (Turkey Earthquake, WP 2000:7). World Concern and its partnering agencies sent financial aid, food, shelter, and medicine. Operation Mercy sent a 14 strong team of German, Canadian, American, and Swedish relief workers giving first aid, tents for over 2800 people, food, and clothing to victims (Evangelicals React, WP 1999:3).

The small evangelical Turkish Protestant church also demonstrated great initiative. It quickly turned its brand new and unharmed İzmit church into a distribution point for relief aid (1999:3), and sought to coordinate its efforts with the foreign Christian relief agencies. The result was that, instead of each organization unfurling its own flag to a society that would have no idea who they were, it was clear that the indigenous Turkish church, with its own identity, was ministering effectively to the victims (Turkey Earthquake, WP 2000:7). The Turkish churches asked World Relief to help them manage the overall relief efforts as well as establish a winterized camp at the church camp of Derince for survivors who lost their homes.

> Currently there are 151 families living in prefabricated units at the camp in Derince. When work is complete, there should be capacity for 270 families. Volunteers from local churches welcome and orient newcomers to the camp as well as determine which families

have specialized needs. Northwest Medical Teams operates a medical clinic on the campsite. The camp in Derince is designed to care for survivors for several years until more permanent housing can be rebuilt (2000:7).

5.2.7. Children's Work

Although most Middle Eastern countries forbid the proselytism of children, several ministries seeking to reach out to children emerged. Most of these ministries worked within the framework of existing churches, and, as such, were not directly involved in the evangelization of Muslims. Independent Swiss missionaries Raymond and Sophie Perret started a ministry in Palestine called King's Kids in 1994. It seeks to bring Christian Arab and Messianic Jewish children together at summer camps. The fact that Arab and Jewish Christians can work, play, worship and grow together in their faith is, in itself, considered a public testimony. By 2005 fifty youths met year-round to grow in their faith. "Those who are mature move to an outreach of faith, love and compassion through praise and worship, Bible studies, games, pantomimes and drama in hospitals, rest homes, orphanages, schools, churches and sometimes on the streets" (Mansour WP 2002:5).

In Lebanon there are a number of orphanages run jointly by local evangelical churches and missionary agencies. Many of these orphanages, such as the *Dar al Eytham* in Mansouria, sponsored by Kids Alive, have Muslim children in them (Pikkert 1982-2006). Another Lebanese Christian organization, "Home of the Harvest," with US missionary help, constructed a new orphanage near a Muslim village in volatile southern Lebanon for specifically evangelistic purposes: "The purpose of the project is more than simply taking children off the street. It is to try and build bridges between those who believe the message of Jesus Christ and those who have never had that experience of new life" (Guthrie WP 1996:2).

Kucak (Embrace) was started in 1990 in Turkey by a Dutch missionary couple as a 3-day camp with 13 children, ages 7-15. The following year 50 children attended the camp, and the year after that 100. "The ministry soon attracted so many children that three summer camps have now been established—one in the east, one in the west, and a teen camp" (Meroff WP 2000:5). In order to encourage campers throughout the year they decided to publish a magazine, also called *Kucak*. At first a simple, photocopied production was distributed in limited numbers. *Kucak* became a company in 1994 and "today the magazine is produced 6 times a year by a staff of five Turkish believers. Hundreds of children around the country enjoy its stories, puzzles, and craft ideas" (:5). The company has produced evangelistic book-lets for children, Sunday school lessons, and the first Turkish children's New Testament (:5). A large project targetting children—and reminiscent of the 19th century educational efforts of the American Board—is being developed in

the Kurdish area of Northern Iraq by the Nashville TN based agency Servant Group International (SGI). The Group has established three English-language grade-school level "Christian Classical Schools", each dubbed "Classical School of the Medes". The first school opened in early 2001, and by 2005 they had three campuses in Suleymania, Irbil and Dohuk, with a total enrolment of over 700 students. SGI views the schools as a vehicle to help create fertile ground in the hearts of students and teachers (www.csmedes.org, April 26, 2006).

5.2.8. Understand "Muslim Culture" > create contextualized forms of communication

Interreligious dialogue between Christians and Muslims was still considered important and attempts to enter into debate continued. Various approaches were tried. Through "friendship evangelism", a very common method, the missionary seeks to win the trust and friendship of Muslims so as to acquaint them with Christian truths and values. The informal contact between a Christian and a Muslim family is often a happy setting for dialogue in which people exchange information about each other's beliefs and customs. When the "Muslim contact" discovers, however, that the reason for the friendship has ulterior, religious motives, the relationship can become very strained (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Small communities desiring to develop Muslim-Christian contacts initiated more formal dialogues. One example of such an effort was a study centre in Cairo which seeks to promote Muslim-Christian dialogue at the level of academic research. "Their aim is to present an 'in-depth' view of Islam to the Christian and, on the other hand, to present Christianity accurately and lovingly to the Muslim" (Nazir-Ali 1983:149-150).

Other forms of dialogue involved making polemical comparisons between Christianity and Islam. Some, like Geisler and Saleeb in *Answering Islam: The Crescent in the Light of the Cross* (1993) hark back to Pfander's days, by seeking to refute Islam on the basis of rational and evidential methods. Others, like Parshall, recognize the limits of the rational approach: "if Christianity stood only on unquestionable and totally verifiable propositions, what need would there be for humble faith linkage between the created and the Creator?" (quoted in Zebiri 2000:100-101). Thus, in spite of the anti-Islamic media barrage, some missionaries and academics sought, as in the days of Cragg, to understand Islam's appeal, "although it would be difficult to gauge how far this has affected ordinary Muslims on a grass-roots level" (:7).

Although the various old methods of polemics, dialogue and debate lived on, the search for contextualized approaches and a fresh understanding of "Muslim Culture" continued. This led to a realization that there was more to Middle Eastern religious culture than certain orthodox

Islamic schools of thought, something which Zwemer had drawn attention to back in 1920 in his book, *The Influence of Animism on Islam: An Account of Popular Superstitions.* In the modern period missionaries recognized afresh the reality and pervasiveness of popular Islam, also known as "folk Islam", in the lives of many Muslims.

Popular, or folk, Islam refers to a wide variety of non-orthodox ways of placating supernatural powers, as well as to various ways of cursing and warding off curses. In order to ward off evil many people, including well-educated urbanites, wear amulets, blue beads, or Qur'anic inscriptions, hang them from their office walls and dangle them in their vehicles. In Turkey, for instance, every newborn baby is given a *nazar boncuk*, a special blue bead to protect it from the "evil eye". Almost every bus or truck boasts such a *nazar boncuk* and/or the word *maşallah* ("What God has willed"). Alewites post the "hand of Fatima" in prominent places to ward off evil. Chanting a special poem about Muhammed (*Mevlut*) or having an imam chant a section from the Qur'an brings blessings to a new marriage, home, or job. People of every Muslim persuasion travel from afar to visit the shrines of Job and Abraham in Urfa, or Mauvlana Rumi in Konya, or Eyüp in Istanbul or any one of numerous holy sites, for the graves of Muslim saints are believed to be places of healing (Pikkert 1982-2006).

> The worldview of popular Islam is built upon and integrates with the everyday stresses and joys of ordinary people. There is a lack of cognitive dissonance with the alternative, official Islamic worldview simply because the popular view of the world is more appropriate, more mundane, and more pervasive. Without a dynamic, divine involvement, contradictory of its own systematic tenets, official Islam cannot hope to compete for the uncompromising patronization of most Muslims, for it cannot meet their most fundamental needs. Islam has few resources for dealing with the everyday concerns and nightly dreads of ordinary Muslims; popular Islam, on the contrary, knows an abundance of remedies. Each local community recognizes practitioners who can provide the charms and ceremonies necessary to effect peace of mind and to restore equilibrium (Musk 2003:215-216).

Some missionaries, particularly those of a more charismatic persuasion, sought to respond to the challenge of folk Islam by "power encounters". Holding to the idea that there was a demonic aspect in the evident power resident in many folk Islamic practices, such power encounters and exorcisms would, it was held, prove the superior power of "the name of Jesus" to help Muslims when in need or when under threat. "Mission to Muslims is not necessarily so much a matter of trying to convey intellectual information, against most of which the Muslim is already 'inoculated'. It is a question, rather, of preaching the gospel with power" (2003:227). Although the rationalistic spirit in which missionaries are nurtured has ill-equipped them for such a task, they are challenged to become more adept at engaging in power encounters to free people

from various bondages in the name of Christ so that "perhaps there is a chance of Muslims to bypass the usual miscommunication problems in learning about Jesus" (:228).

Missionaries also began isolating Islam, the religion itself, from Middle Eastern or Muslim culture. A distinction was made within Muslim culture, between such cultural issues as male/female roles, the individual versus the family/clan, issues of honour and shame, hospitality and violence, time and space, the importance of the Arabic language, poetry, storytelling, concepts about fate and resignation to one's lot. Islam could be debunked, even as the missionary professed a "deep and constraining love" for Muslims. "For a missionary, it would not necessarily be a contradiction in terms to say that censure of Islam was motivated by a concern for Muslims" (Zebiri 2000:126).

Much was made by both secular sociologists and missionaries of the shame/honour axis which was seen to run through Middle Eastern culture. "What pressures the Arab to behave in an honorable manner is not guilt, but shame, or, more precisely, the psychological drive to escape or prevent negative judgment by others" (Patai 1983:106).

> Honor in the Arab world is a generic concept which embraces many different forms. To mention only a few: there is the kind of honor a man derives from his virility as manifested in having numerous sons; another comes from engaging in certain types of work and refraining from others… Hospitality and generosity are matters of honor. To be inhospitable or ungenerous is shameful. It is honorable to have pure Arab blood… It is honorable to exhibit a strong sense of kin group adherence. It is honorable to behave with dignity… Cost what it may, one must defend one's public image. Any injury done to a man's honor must be revenged, or else he becomes permanently dishonored. And, of course, there is the sexual honor of the woman, through which her entire paternal family is constantly and dangerously exposed to the possibility of becoming dishonored. The honor concept is easily extended from the individual, the family, and the tribe to the nation as a whole (:90-91).

Picking up on Patai's contention that "one of the important differences between the Arab and the Western personality is that in the Arab culture, shame is more pronounced than guilt" (1983:106), the contemporary missionary writers Bill Musk and Roland Muller suggest the idea that cultures are weighted in different directions.

According to Musk Western cultures, being committed to individualism, tend to coalesce around concepts of law and guilt, rather than loyalty and shame. Westerners are more concerned about obeying the law than about saving face. "A strictly Law-based, guilt-oriented expression of the gospel may be appropriate within Western culture, but it doesn't make the most sense for cultures that operate by different convictions" (Musk 1995:85).

Muller notes three types of underlying cultural religious values. The nature of Western Christianity is largely based on our legal standing before God and is, as such, of little relevance to

"fear based cultures" (i.e., animistic cultures) and, more importantly for our purposes, to "shame and honor based cultures" such as oriental and Middle Eastern cultures. The Bible, he maintains, deals with all three issues (i.e, guilt, fear and shame) so initial gospel presentations must be tailored accordingly. Missionaries to the Middle East, he says, have gone with the Biblical answer to guilt, not with the Biblical answer to shame. Often missionaries from guilt-based cultures have busied themselves with pointing out the sin of people living in shame-based cultures. But the people they are addressing never felt guilty. Little wonder they made little headway! (Muller 2000:106). Both Musk and Muller suggest that the presentation of the gospel must be contextualized to meet these cultural-driven needs by focusing on Christianity's answer to issues of honor and shame.

5.2.9. Working With the National OBP church

The Turkish Protestant church which came into being in the last quarter of the 20th century evolved into a different entity from that which existed in the Arab world. The underlying reason for this is simple: after World War I both the Orthodox and the OBP church had largely been eliminated in Turkey. When, starting in the 1960s, missionaries began arriving again in significant numbers, the temptation to work with an existing Protestant body was virtually nil. Since there was hardly any alternative, missionaries were forced to target Muslims directly and, by the 1980s, a national Turkish Protestant entity of MBPs had come into being.

In the Arab world, on the other hand, the existing OBP churches exerted a tremendous pull on missions and missionaries' resources. These churches were often able to sponsor missionary visas for western workers, but then expected these western contributions to flow largely towards their own constituencies.

One Coptic ministry which has drawn evangelicals, Orthodox and Catholics together as well as catch the notice of the Muslim majority is Cairo's Muqattam Cave Church. One of the few Coptic pulpits open to invited evangelicals, the church draws people from all backgrounds (Wooding 1999:1). In the 1970s a Coptic layman, now known as Father Sama'an, was challenged to minister to the city's 30,000 Coptic *zabballeen* (garbage collectors). The complex, sitting on a hilltop and approachable only by negotiating the terrible poverty and stench of the garbage collectors' district, now consists of offices, meetings rooms, a bookroom, a restaurant, a small park-like oasis for refreshments, and a series of chapels blasted into the side of the mountain, some with beautiful reliefs carved into the rock. There is even a tiny, badly kept zoo, the monkeys providing comic relief for young and old. The main "cave cathedral", a cavernous amphitheatre under a huge, overhanging rock, seats 20,000 people. Services have a distinct

"evangelical" flavour both in terms of the Bible-based gospel messages preached and in terms of worship style: a worship band leads the congregation in contemporary Christian songs and choruses, the words of which are projected by PowerPoint onto a huge screen (Pikkert 1982-2006; see also Wooding WP 1999:1). Beside the "big" meetings, such as the Thursday evening Bible study, numerous other meetings seek to minister to people's needs. 700 women attend a Monday morning meeting. There are also prayer meetings, young men's meetings, and family meetings (Wooding WP 1999:2). Muslims, viewing it as a holy place, come for prayer and spiritual edification (Pikkert 1982-2006).

By and large, however, Protestant missionaries in the Arab world sought to develop their ministries together with the national Protestant church. Such endeavors as orphanages, Christian bookstores, publishing houses, Christian magazines, seminaries and Arabic language schools, such as "Kelsey's" in Jordan (where this student learnt his Arabic) are virtually all joint church-mission projects. The national church provides the board of directors and some of the personnel, while the mission agency provides both financial aid and foreign personnel.

Christian theological education, notably the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS), the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo, and the Jordan based Theological Education by Extension program, became big-ticket church-mission joint projects. Although they cater to "Arabs" from across the Middle East, in fact the schools tend to be loath to accept MBPs for fear of a negative reaction from society or the government. Some MBPs have been allowed to study for brief periods at some of these institutions, but have had to keep their identity secret. Hence, in spite of courses in "Islamic thought", etc., which might be taught at such places, and in spite of the tremendous outlay in terms of missionary personnel and finance, they barely figure in outreach to Muslims or in terms of building up a MBP church (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Once again, the exception is Turkey. The joint church-mission theological training program there, *Hasat Kilise Hizmetleri* (Harvest Church Services), ministers to significant number of MBPs. Hasat offers two levels of studies: foundational courses which seek to equip church members for Christian life and service in church and community, and more academic courses for potential church leaders accredited by the International Christian College of Glasgow (ICC). Hasat has managed to keep a low profile by not developing a central campus; it offers its courses as seminars at local churches across the country (Pikkert 1982-2006).

5.3. What was the popular response to the missionary enterprise?

"Christianity is seeping subtly into Islamic countries in the Middle East" (Schmidt WP 2000:1). Although conversion rates in both the Turkish and Arab worlds remained low, there was, as has

already been alluded, a marked difference between Turkish and Arab Muslims actually embracing Christianity, going public, and establishing MBP churches. Hence we take separate looks at the two worlds.

5.3.1. Positive responses in the Arab world

Responses in terms of letters, faxes, e-mails, and hits on websites are easiest to measure, and create the encouraging impression that there is a lot of interest in Christianity. By the turn of the century one Christian website claimed to get 15-17,000 hits per month, 7% of them from Saudi Arabia (The Internet, WP 2000:5). A growing number of e-mail inquiries about how one can become a Christian illustrate the fact that many Muslims are not so much "resistant" to the gospel as ignorant of it "due to lack of access to Christians, the church and the Bible", a situation which the internet, satellite TV and various other, more traditional approaches are seeking to change (:5).

Back in 1995 AWM's Radio School of the Bible was estimated to have an estimated 70-90 million listeners. Bible correspondence courses were mailed out to over a quarter million students in Muslim countries who responded to the radio programs (Baurain WP 1995:5). Although the mission has no idea how many Muslims have become Christians through the courses, AWM's office in Marseille, France, claimed that there were "several thousand" Christians in North Africa. "We do know that, as a general rule, when you meet a North African Christian you will find that his first contact was with Christian Radio and Bible correspondence courses" (Baurain WP 1995:5). A bilingual English-Arabic radio program sponsored by Trans World Radio, "Leading the Way", which airs after midnight, has also drawn a strong audience, especially among college students. In 2000 it generated 200 to 300 listener responses each month (Schmidt WP 2000:2). The *Magalla* magazine doesn't know for certain how many seekers they have helped either. They do know, however, that an average monthly mailbag contains 3000-4000 letters (Andrews WP 1999:4).

At such events as the Cairo bookfair "several hundred" Arabic New Testaments and "several thousands" of leaflets are distributed.

> Very few were trashed… due to the Muslim reluctance to throw anything away that bears God's name… Conversations often led to appointments to meet interested persons again in other places around the city. After personal Bible studies, some of these people placed their faith in Christ (Jones WP 2002:2).

It is not clear what percentage of these were Muslim and what percentage Coptic background.

King's Kids in Israel reported that involvement in their ministry was often a "life changing event" for participants. The kids involved were, however, from Christian families. In terms of

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positive audience response to their street ministry the group admitted that they "do not always stick around long enough to see the change in those people's lives. We leave them in the care of a church or a pastor at the place where we performed" (Mansour WP 2002:5).

The presence of expatriate Christian communities opened the way for Christianity to "seep subtly" into the region, particularly through the notable Christian expatriate presence in the Arabian Peninsula. Formal permission for the building of the first Catholic church in the oil-rich country of Qatar was given in 2000 (Schmidt WP 2000:1). When one of the OM ships was allowed to dock there in 2000, "Qataris carried off basket loads of Christian literature, and people recognized that the people on the ship have something they don't" (:1).

Post civil war ministries in Lebanon also reported positive results. The country's Muslim, Druze, and Christian communities displayed a remarkable openness to spiritual things in the 1990s (Johnstone 2001:400). The country is one of two in the Middle East where anyone is legally free to change their religious affiliation (Turkey is the other). It was possible for converts from other Arab countries to come to Lebanon for theological training (:400). As mission agencies transferred their regional offices back to the country, Lebanon regained something of its position as a center for Christian outreach to the whole region (:401). It is also unique in that Christian schools and orphanages there gained in credibility as a result of the war. "Many children from all communities heard the gospel and some came to Christ. Many Lebanese political and societal leaders have been to an evangelical school" (:401).

Christians found their new Muslim neighbours "surprisingly receptive to Jesus". Lucian Accad, head of the Lebanese Bible Society, believed in 1996 that "people really are tired of the poor, unfulfilled promises of the past" (Guthrie May 1996:1). According to Accad, Christian and Muslim young people, formerly enemies, discovered not only that they could become friends, but also that Muslims are both "finding answers" and enjoying fellowship in Christian churches (:2). In the summer of 1994 Shiite Muslims asked the Bible Society to supply their schools with Bibles. If initially some Christians were reluctant to distribute Scriptures or Christian booklets, they were pleasantly surprised when they first met a group of displaced people who asked them for a copy of the New Testament. "Anybody can give us relief assistance, but not everyone can give us a message of hope" they were told (Accad WP 1996:5). In another village Muslim leaders told the Christians who had helped build it to "please come back and start your school in our village. The building, the land, the property will be given back to you, but please come back" (Guthrie WP 1996:2). Accad marveled at the "climate of freedom, which I think is very unique in the Middle East… I find it amazing what is happening at the moment in Lebanon" (quoted in :2).

There was some evidence of a growing number of MBPs in Egypt (Jones WP 2002:3). A series of interviews and meetings with church leaders and seminarians during three visits to the country in 2004-2005 by this student revealed not just a small but growing movement within the Synod of the Nile to develop ministries focused on reaching Muslims, but also the consensus that there were "probably some 500" Egyptian MBPs scattered across the country.

There is also anecdotal evidence of Muslim women from a variety of social and ethical backgrounds coming to faith in Christ. Adeney has 15 such biographical accounts in her book *Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women* (2002). She notes that "there are all sorts of specific paths by which Muslim women come to the Lord Jesus Christ" (:18). Some do so by reading the New Testament, some are affected by visions or dreams, some "during a struggle with demons or spirits, find that the name of Jesus brings liberation and help" (:18). Others, who have been abused in dysfunctional relationships, find healing and dignity in Jesus, while others find in Jesus' affirmation of women the power they need to fight for ideals of righteousness and justice in their society. Formerly promiscuous women "cry out for a moral foundation for their own lives", others long for the assurance of paradise or because their family "has decided jointly to follow Jesus". "Two women whom I interviewed hungered for God almost single-mindedly from earliest childhood" (:18). Recurring themes in the testimonies of women who have become Christians are "Scripture, spiritual power encounters, the love of Christians, sex and beauty issues, social justice issues" (:19).

Twenty years of war, diplomatic isolation and economic disasters in Iraq seem to have brought about both a lowering of prejudices towards Christianity among Muslims as well as a greater openness to reading Scriptures. (Johnstone 2001:356). Although the country's Christian community has suffered as much as the general population, and although Muslim extremists have bombed several churches, nearly every denomination has experienced some renewal, revival and hunger for Scriptural truths. Hundreds of tons of Bibles and Christian literature have been legally imported into the country or printed there (:356). The Bible Society, active in the county since 1985, has coordinated massive imports of Scriptures from Lebanon and Jordan and overseen the printing of thousands of New Testaments. Many Iraqis are enrolled in Bible correspondence courses (:358). Kurdish translations of the New Testament in both the Sorani and Kurmanji dialects were completed and made available (Pikkert 1982-2006). Although converts have suffered intimidation and several have been martyred, a viable, if still small, Kurdish church has become a reality. It is growing with new converts being added (Johnstone 2001:358). By the turn of the century there were five known congregations of Kurdish believers in the Kurdish north of

the country, as well as a scattered sprinkling of MBPs elsewhere. There was even a local radio station in the region run by Christians and broadcasting 8 hours a day (:356).

More than 20 agencies engaged in a wide range of activities in Jordan, though most were involved in "supporting and enhancing the national church" which is, of course, OBP (2001:376). Through Theological Education by Extension courses and JETS Arab leaders were being trained for service in Jordan and in the wider Arab world. "Youth work and camp ministries by Manara and others have been fruitful in recent years; a strategic ministry considering that 50% of Jordan's population is younger than 15" (:376).

Missionaries were not allowed to reside in Syria (2001:612), but there is a small "tentmaking" presence (Pikkert 1982-2006). There is a Protestant presence in most of Syria's towns and cities, and churches are growing slowly, though the majority of converts come from an Orthodox or Catholic background. Even if conversions out of Islam were few, they are increasing partly as a result of Bible correspondence courses and student outreach. However, most churches in Syria are not yet ready to evangelize Muslims, let alone receive Muslim background Christians (Johnstone 2001:611).

As the United Arab Emirates and other Arabian Gulf states become more international, freedom for expatriate Christians is growing, increasing their opportunities for "discreet witness and worship". The American Mission Hospital in Al Ain is well known and highly regarded in the region, and boasts the area's largest Arab Christian community (Johnstone 2001:93). There are also many English, Arabic, Urdu, Filipino and Indian language worship groups and congregations, and the government has granted several parcels of land for the development of Christian compounds (:648). In 2000 the Emir of Qatar also granted land for a Christian compound to be built for the purpose of holding services (:533).

Not only is Christianity becoming more visible, there have been converts from among Gulf Arabs (2001:648) as well as isolated radio converts in Saudi Arabia (:558). There are several hundred known Kuwaiti Christians (:391), the most famous of whom is Robert Hussein, whose plight sparked an international campaign (Hussein 1998). Oman may have a handful of indigenous believers, though none dare profess their Christianity openly (Johnstone 2001:499). Several Qataris have become Christians since 1985 while outside the country. Some "have suffered much for Him (i.e., Jesus Christ)" (:533).

Although Yemen remains one of the world's least evangelized countries, a church in Aden has been restored to Christians for worship and wider community service. Though it remains illegal for non-Muslims to proselytize Yemenis and for Muslims to become Christians, radio

broadcasts and tactful "faith-sharing" had led some 100 Yemenis to convert to Christianity by the end of the century (:681).

There are also signs of interest in Christianity in North Africa. In 1991 an entire Algerian village accepted Christ after its leaders had visions (Jones WP 1995:4). By the end of the 20th century there were about 200 committed indigenous Christian believers in Tunisia, though only about half that number met together regularly for worship (Johnstone 2001:631-632). There are no more than a handful of Libyan converts, "all facing many obstacles to fellowship, including fear of infiltration" (:409). In Morocco, however, there is an emerging church and a "widespread and growing interest in the gospel". It is estimated that there were some 500 MBPs in the country in 2000 meeting in about 20 small fellowship groups (:456). Western Sahara is virtually 100% Muslim, but Christians are emerging in response to discreet missionary work (:458). Ibn Warraq, in his *Leaving Islam: Apostates Speak Out* (2003) has various other testimonies of converts from Islam to Christianity. J. M. Gaudeul's *Called from Islam to Christ* (1999) also contains many stirring conversion stories from across the Muslim world. Other testimonies of converts from Islam can be read at www.answering-islam.org/testimonies/index.html.

5.3.2. Positive Responses in Turkey

Over 1300 missionaries serving with some 50 agencies from over 20 countries were present in Turkey in 2005 (Silas 2005). As a result of their labours a small but significant national Protestant evangelical church has emerged. Turkish MBPs probably numbered about 10 in 1960. By the year 2000 this number had risen to about 2000 meeting in 14 Turkish language Protestant evangelical churches and a number of house churches (Turkish Earthquake, WP 2000:7). By 2005 the number of fellowship had risen to just over 90, the vast majority of them being tiny house groups. The number of believers had risen to between 2500 and 3000 (Pikkert 1982-2006; Silas 2005). The large increase in fellowships reflects the increasingly fragmented nature of the Turkish Evangelical missionary enterprise. In 2005 the Istanbul district of Kadiköy, for instance, boasted a Presbyterian, a Charismatic, two Pentecostal (one Korean), and a GenX American led youth-orientated house church, all within a 10 minutes walk of each other (Pikkert 1982-2006). A Turkish Protestant Christian Council seeks to link the evangelical fellowships (Johnstone 2001:635).

During the years following the 1980 military take-over there were more conversions to Christianity than there had been since the modern missionary period in Turkey got going in the 1960s (Meyer 1986:84). Responses to the Turkish broadcasts of Trans World Radio increased 300% and Bible sales also increased (:83). The free Bible correspondonce course (BCC) was also

effectively reaching Turks with the gospel. By 1986 about 6000 people had enrolled as a result of invitations distributed from within Turkey or mailed from abroad. One or more of the six courses available at that time played a role in a large proportion of the MBP Turks who came to faith in Jesus Christ during the first half of the 1980s (Meyer 1986:69). At the 1998 Istanbul book fair 500 people signed up for a course, while a Sunday afternoon book table at an open-air market "never fails to attract people who stop to talk, ask questions, and take away a first Bible lesson". Although police questioned those manning the stand, they have not attempted to close them down (Meroff WP 1999:5). The BCC continued to grow, and in 1997 6511 people asked for courses, while at the 1998 Istanbul book fair 500 people signed up. A national survey in 2003 showed that almost half of all Turkish believers came to faith at least in part because of information learned through the BCC. In one city in eastern Turkey 5 of the 7 regular church attenders were BCC contacts (BBC Brochure 2005).

Some non-resident ministries have also been effective in reaching Turks. Students who came into contact with Christianity in the West became Christians and returned to Turkey, some with Western Christian spouses. In fact, a high percentage of mature Protestant Turkish church leaders today are men married to western Christian women (Pikkert 1982-2006).

The post-earthquake relief work placed Turkish indigenous Protestantism in the public eye. One radio announcer even claimed that the most organized group engaged in relief work were the "Protestant churches of Turkey" (Evangelicals React, 1999:3). Though maligned since then in the popular press, both the government and the general public have at least come to recognize the existence of a Turkish Protestant entity. The church is becoming proactive by having appointed spokespersons accept appearances on talk shows (Pikkert 1982-2006), by pressing libel cases, and by pushing for legal recognition of the Protestant Church as a whole (Cengiz 2002). Although the latter goal has yet to be gained, a number of individual churches have been legally recognized, thus enabling them to build or buy property. Christian literature is becoming increasingly well received, even if distributors are sometimes threatened by Islamic extremists (Johnstone 2001:636). A small group of about 20 Turkish believers has come into being in the self-styled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (:219).

5.3.3. Negative Responses

The existence of thriving evangelical OBP churches in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and even Syria, along with the development of the wide variety of ministries described earlier could fool the observer into believing that significant progress has been made. Although there has been some success, it has been limited. Much apparent growth consists of the transfer of Christians from one

allegiance to another, leaving the world of Islam virtually unaffected. As seen, past mission efforts created a western client church which sought its inspiration from contemporary Western evangelicalism. Even in modern times this transfer continues. Many hundreds of nominally Christian Iraqi's who fled to Jordan during the 1990s, for example, have joined OBP evangelical churches there (Robertson WP 1998:5).

The sad, ongoing reality is that native OBPs distrust MBPs. Being on the defense for centuries has inhibited the development of loving, caring outreach to the Muslim majority (Zebiri 2000:4). This meant that missionary efforts to the region which focused on Orthodox churches were misplaced in terms of reaching Muslims. Entire mission agencies, such as MECO (Middle East Christian Outreach), whose ethos involves working through existing churches (MECO 2005) have, consequently, failed to have significant input into reaching the Muslim majority population. Hence Zebiri's observation that "a perusal of the biographies of… missionaries shows that often a lifetime's effort yielded at most a handful of converts" (Zebiri 2000:95) remains true. Once again, there are thrilling stories of individual conversions but, in the Arab world at least, no full-fledged MBP churches. House groups yes, but, as yet, no full-blooded churches with a public venue, elected or appointed elders, church membership, effective church discipline, regular administration of the sacraments, etc.

Furthermore, no matter how positive a spin one puts on things, the fact remains that both the number of missionaries who are theologically, linguistically and culturally properly equipped to share their faith with the Muslim majority, and the number of MBPs in the Arab world remains pathetically small. When compared to the burgeoning population, this number is shrinking in real terms. "Unsurprisingly, few… Muslims have had an opportunity to hear a believer's testimony" (Jones WP 2002:3).

The establishment of MBP Christian homes are few, while unequal marriages between Christians and Muslims are a major cause of backsliding (Johnstone 2001:45). In Egypt the flow from Christianity to Islam is much greater than the other way around. "Many thousands (of Egyptian Copts) each year buckle under the pressure and convert to Islam" (Jones WP 2002:3). Although a Turkish MBP church has, at last, become a visible reality, it still only constitutes 0.003% of the ethnic Turkish population. There has been no real breakthrough yet; in fact, in 2001 Johnstone described Turkey as "the largest unreached nation in the world" (2001:634). The Turks' long association with Islam, the fact that their country was on the forefront of over a millennium of bitter wars with "Christian" Europe, and their negative memories of Protestantism during the critical declining years of the Ottoman Empire have created a deep-seated resistance to

anything Christian. Evangelicals are lumped with Armenian terrorists and Jehovah's Witnesses. Sensationalist negative press reports and skewed television programmes reflect Muslim misconceptions about Christian doctrines and spread untruths about Christians, thus hardening attitudes, making witnessing even more difficult, and making conversion appear almost an act of treachery (Johnstone 2001:634-635). "To be a Turk is to be a Muslim, even if only nominally so. Family pressure, police intimidation and threats from Muslim extremists keep many from coming to Christ, and force others to remain secret believers (:634).

> Even educated Turks tend to be emotional rather than logical when it comes to the explosive subject of religion. Turks who understand the moral implications of the Christian message for their personal lives often react vehemently. Because Islam is more than just a religion, it is a way of life, Muslims feel personally affronted when anyone speaks of it critically (Meyer 1986:96).

56 of the country's 80 provinces have no missionaries and there is virtually no campus outreach at it's 80+ universities (Pikkert 1982-2006).

5.4. What were/are the missiological implications?

We started by asking whether the basis for the Muslims' rejection of the Christian message is essentially theological, or whether it is based on a history of socio-political and cultural misunderstandings and clashes. Can we attribute the failure, hitherto, to establish a viable MBP church in the Arab world and the tremendous struggle to do so in Turkey to "the hardness of the Muslim heart" and other theological factors, or did historical heavy handedness and insensitivity turn Muslims against Christianity? Is the Muslim evaluation of Christianity a fair one, or are they rejecting a straw man of their own creation and to their own detriment? Under what circumstances was there fruitful convergence? How does one explain the greater success in Turkey in the modern era, in terms of actually seeing a MBP church come into being, when the country had virtually no national OBP church to start with? What issues contributed to the present dynamic for which the missionary community cannot be held responsible, and for what should it acknowledge ownership? Before delving into these issues let us underscore the important fact that there were, once again, converts.

5.4.1. There were converts!

Why did individual Muslims convert to Christianity at all? In fact, few MBPs convert directly from Islam to Christianity. A perusal of converts' stories more often than not reveals a journey, a pilgrimage: disillusion with Islam followed by a search for alternatives, which can range from communism to Jehovah's Witnesses, followed by subsequent disillusionment with that, and then entry into Christianity. Christianity as such, for all the reasons covered in this treatise, is not an

immediately attractive option. Converts to Christianity come via "personal experiences and meditations, and not from controversies with Christians, as if, in fact, controversies were—and to my mind they are—obstacles to inner peace needed for such maturations" (Gaudeul 2000:276). Not historical Christianity, but the person of Christ, the doctrine of the love of God, and the attractive testimony of individual Christians are the attractions.

> Many are attracted by the figure of Jesus, others find the Christian dogma of forgiveness of sin comforting, and still others are impressed by the charitable behavior of individual Christians around them. But if there is a common thread running through these conversion testimonies, it is that Christianity preaches the love of Christ and God, whereas Islam is forever threatening hellfire for disobeying, and obsessively holds up the wrath of God in front of the believer. In other words, the two religions have two totally different conceptions of God: In the former, God is near, loving and protective, God the Father; in the latter, God is a remote, angry tyrannical figure to be obeyed blindly (Ibn Warraq 2003:92).

We pursue this subject further in Chapter Six.

5.4.2. Issues outside missionary control

Individual converts do not make a local church. The failure, to date, to plant a significant MBP church in the Arab world, and the very limited success in Turkey and the Kurdish region of Northern Iraq cannot, however, be blamed entirely on missionary incompetence. Various external factors, notably emigration, lack of trust, persecution, a conceptual inability to separate religion from politics, and other inherent cultural issues have kept an MBP church from becoming a factor of note in Middle Eastern societies.

Emigration is a "disease" of the church throughout the Middle East for both potential MBP church plants and the existing OBP church. Although the OBP church does have Protestant seminaries in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt, even it has trouble retaining leaders. In Jordan, for instance, only 20% of churches have a full time pastor. The problem is compounded by the fact that lay leadership is virtually non-existent (Johnstone 2001:376). In Lebanon, where the Evangelical church has been growing at 3.4%, mostly from those of an Armenian background, conversions barely replace losses through emigration (:401). Potential MBP church plants struggle with the same problem, one compounded by the fact that MBPs do not fit easily back into their own society. They do not fit easily into the fragmented and divided OBP church either, which tends to distrust them. In fact, distrust among MBPs themselves is also common, making it very difficult for new believers to be accepted by other MBPs. "In many places the foreign workers are the only ones trusted by all" (Meyer 1986:84).

As Zwemer pointed out back in 1924 in *The Law of Apostasy in Islam*, persecution continues to act as a powerful deterrent. As such, the observation that Islam is a prison which holds its members by force still rings true. Even if the state permits religious freedom, as in Lebanon and Turkey, societal and family pressures and the activities of Islamic fanatics have limited church growth. The latter even troll the internet posing as "brothers in Christ" in order to catch and report Muslim inquirers (The Internet, WP 2000:5).

> The immediate future for Christianity in the Middle East will turn on what is done by, and to, a reawakened Islam. The ancient churches may continue to rest secure in their status as dhimmis, religious minorities tolerated with a measure of cultural community, provided they concede—as the Maronites in Lebanon tragically ceased to do—the Islamic identity of the nation. The more recent small denominations of Western origin will be much more precarious if Muslim fundamentalism grows more militant. Membership of all the churches outside Iran is predominantly Arab, in sympathy as well as race, so whether "Arabism" demands being a Muslim will be increasingly under debate. All Christians will suffer a degree of psychic insecurity, inhibiting the influence they might have on the thought or the welfare of their society (McManners 1993: 666-667).

There is hope that, with respect to a few countries, that may change. As Turkey, for instance, moves toward EU membership it is forced to grant greater freedom of religion and of religious propagation. If it does, eventually, become a member of the European Union, the playing field will be much more level. Thus the movement towards a more liberal democratic society may herald a new age for missions in that country. In fact, a liberal democratic Middle East appears to be a prerequisite for greater inter-religious harmony. In other words, democracy may be good for Middle Eastern Christianity. If such Arab countries as Bahrain and Iraq succeed in their democratic experiments, others may follow in their footsteps. Whether Islam can be fused with liberal democracy is, however, still an open question—even in Turkey.

Various other socio-cultural issues in Muslim society have also inhibited church growth. For instance, a Middle Eastern penchant for conspiracy theories and subsuming history to ideology prevents rational discussion of numerous issues. The subject of the Armenian genocides of 1915-16 remain taboo in Turkey. Palestinian textbooks defend such spurious documents as the anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The lie that four thousand Jews were warned not to turn up for work in New York on 9/11 because the Israelis and CIA were behind the Twin Tower attacks, is firmly believed throughout the Middle East by otherwise sane and normal people (Catherwood 2003:193).

Muslims' conceptual and theological difficulty of separating religion from politics also hinders the acceptance of Christianity. America and Britain continue to be viewed as "Christian" countries, hence "there is a very real sense in which anti-American hatred hinders the spread of

the Gospel" (2003:194). "*Everything* that is wrong in the West… is blamed on Christianity and its supposed weaknesses. Christian faith is therefore judged on behaviour patterns abhorrent to most practicing Christians, who are held responsible for them" (:194-195 italics in original). Once the West has been linked with Christianity, identifying American expansionism with the Crusades is a small step.

Another important Middle Eastern cultural trait which inhibits religious reorientation is the importance of maintaining honor at virtually any price. Muslim converts to Christianity are often viewed as "siding with the enemy" and dishonoring their families. "A strong sense of shame opens the door to frustration, doubt and fear. These are very draining emotions, ones that are often the main cause of backsliding to the old religion (Meral 2005:215).

An educational system which discourages critical thinking, along with the sheer refusal to consider the viability of another worldview is also an inhibiting factor. Western logic simply fails to dent the Muslims' unshakeable faith in the fact that obedience to God's will as revealed to Muhammed is what ultimately matters—hence debate and apologetics don't cut it with them. Although the crucifixion of Jesus, for instance, is an accepted historical fact, most Muslims simply refuse to accept it as true. One Muslim professor of theology summed up this attitude when he noted that even if someone produced an authentic photograph of Jesus hanging on the cross he still wouldn't believe that Christ was crucified (Meyer 1986:95-96).

Islam's theologically ambivalent attitude towards violence is another inherent cultural issue outside of missionary control. Various conflicts in Lebanon, the Philippines, Nigeria, Sudan, Chad, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, India and other countries, are given religious overtones. For instance, the World Congress for Islamic *Da'wah* (mission) held in Khartoum, March-April 1981, expressed a number of violent attitudes concerning the relations between Christians and Muslims, as if Islamic *da'wah* could only be conceived in terms of war against Christianity (Gaudeul 2000:283). The Muslim notion of abrogation, which holds that some Suras in the Qur'an can supersede others, makes it that more difficult to reach a doctrinal consensus on such subjects as the idea of *jihad*.

> If you are on the moderate side, then what you might describe as the friendlier suras have superseded the more warlike ones, because the situation necessitating them no longer applies. If, however, like most present-day Islamic terrorists or their rage-filled but not actually violent supporters, you take a different interpretation, then the violent suras *have superseded* the friendlier ones. And in this case actual large-scale physical violence against both total infidels (like us in the West) and fellow Muslims who have gone soft (like President Anwar Sadat of Egypt) becomes entirely legitimate. In fact, it goes further than that: Such aggression actually becomes a *necessary holy act*. Violence becomes duty, not even an option! (Catherwood 2003:141 italics in original).

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Narrow nationalism is another inherent cultural resistor to change. "Proud and nationalistic, they (i.e., Turks) do not readily accept new ideas" (Meyer 1986:95). In fact, the concept of a Christian Turk is, to many Turks, an oxymoron. "One may speak of Christian Arabs—but a Christian Turk is an absurdity and a contradiction in terms… A non-Muslim in Turkey may be called a Turkish citizen, but never a Turk" (Lewis 1961:15). Even today, in what is supposed to be a secular society, Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayıp Erdoğan, refers to Islam as the cement that binds the Turkish nation together (Din Çimentomuz, 2005:1).

5.4.3. Issues under missionary control

If there were a number of socio-cultural and political factors which played their part in preventing Muslims from embracing Christianity, were there other, missionary-induced factors which confirmed the Muslim in his or her predisposition? What did the missionary community do wrong?

Certainly the introduction of the best of Western culture has not born fruit. Neither the mission hospitals which sought to minister to the Muslim's physical needs, nor the schools which introduced western culture and which undoubtedly westernized a section of society—particularly during Ottoman times—opened the "Muslim heart" to embrace Christianity. Much as individuals have benefited from the sacrificial services of these institutions, they have not had sufficient appeal to effect a change in religious affiliation. During Ottoman times missionary institutions benefited the Christian *millets* more than the Muslim majority, thus causing the work to be identified with the empowerment of minorities at a particularly sensitive time in the region's social development. Since then even kindness has become suspect. Muslims fear that Christians co-operate in social and educational development projects merely for the sake of proselytizing. In fact, simple fraternization between young people with Christian and Muslim backgrounds is often interpreted as a concerted attempt "at corrupting our youth and converting them" (Gaudeul 2000:282). Institutional kindness, such as aid given by Christian missionaries, NGOs or western governments, and even grants offered to students of poor countries, comes in for even harsher criticism:

> Western Christian missionary activity in the Islamic world is accompanied often, but not always, by enticements of the most worldly kind, usually relying upon the products of the very civilization that has marginalized Christianity. There is usually the Bible in one hand and syringes or sacks of rice in the other, along with a schooling system that is more successful in secularizing than Christianizing its students… in many areas missionary activity continues to be the instrument of Western secular interests, as it was during the colonial period (Nasr 1996-97:41).

Interreligious dialogue is also at a theological impasse. Muslims have real difficulty with the fact that Christians are reluctant to accept the authenticity of Muhammed as a post-Christ prophet who received a major message from heaven (Nasr 1996-97:13). Christians, on the other hand, feel that the Muslims' recognition of Jesus does not really cost them anything, while a "corresponding recognition of Muhammad by Christians would go against everything they are told by the weightiest religious documents in their possession" (Zebiri 2000:5). Thus, instead of dialogue and debate leading to mutual understanding, discord between Christians and Muslims has been growing, with many Christians, once again, portraying Islam as the last great enemy to be conquered. Reminiscent of the militant imagery used by 19th century missionaries, such contemporary terminology as "capturing Islamic strongholds" and "reclaiming the land" may be meant as spiritual imagery by the Christian community, but is readily misunderstood. Images of Islam, "particularly of its relations with Christianity, are often unbalanced, one-sided, and can even be mythical—presenting Muslims as a dangerous people. There is rarely a positive description of a Muslim" (Chandler EMQ 2002:429). Hence western attempts to understand Islam are distrusted by Muslims, and are indiscriminately branded as 'orientalism' (Zebiri 2000:1). Little wonder that interreligious dialogue has not led to greater understanding of Christianity.

Attempts at contextualization have not led to any breakthroughs either. Both Christianity and Islam claim to be global messages, and neither religion can demand from the other that it discontinue 'preaching unto nations' (Nasr 1996-97:41). Both hold an exclusivist view of truth, in that they believe that their religion is true to a degree that others are not (Zebiri 2000:175). Both sides stand accused of not respecting the freedom of others and of using unfair means to make converts, though the notion of 'unfair means' has varied in history and, more particularly, according to the two religion's relative position in the contest for power (Gaudeul 2000:281). Essentially, dialogue has been superseded by a struggle between two sets of values. Islam and Christianity are simply too different in both doctrine and worship styles to build a contextual bridge from one to the other. The simple fact that Christian worship incorporates communal singing, for instance, makes it a radically different experience in itself. Hence even the most contextualized of churches will not look like a mosque. It will not have that "Muslim flavour" which is supposed to ease entry into Christianity.

Sending unprepared people has also had a deconstructive impact. People with little to contribute, who have not mastered the language nor incorporated simple cultural norms into their private lives are flooding small, struggling national churches and home groups. This introduction

of Western and Korean culture more than of the Biblical Christ changes the tenor of (potential) church life and can have a negative impact on the spiritual growth of new believers. Naïve political opinions, critical attitudes and "ministries" considered useless cause some national believers to despise missionaries (Pikkert 1982-2006). Missionary immaturity subtly communicates that Christianity does not, in fact, have the power to make a transforming difference. Few teachings can be more devastating for newly emerging churches.

* * * * *

In conclusion, it is fair to say that Muslim culture is innately averse to Protestant Christianity. There are deep, internal factors which prohibit Muslims from examining Christianity on its own merits. The Muslim heart is, indeed, resistant. It is a resistance which historical factors, fear, and Western cultural imperialism have increased. In this the missionary community has played both a witting and unwitting part.

> For centuries, Christians have been humiliated by Muslims, while for the past 200 years it is the Muslims who have suffered and been humiliated at the hands of "Christian" nations. All of this still rankles. Both sides harbour grudges and sincerely believe in their own innocence and in the malice of the "Other" (Gaudeul 2000:257).

Nevertheless, throughout the period a steady trickle of Muslims converted to Christianity. Furthermore an MBP church has, at long last, emerged in Turkey and in Kurdish northern Iraq. There is, once again, just enough happening to keep the faith and hope of the current generation of missionaries alive.

Chapter 6
The Way Forward:
Church-Centered, New Testament Spirituality

We have inquired into the socio-cultural background, presuppositions, worldview, goals and strategies of various generations of Protestant missions to the Near East from the early 1800s to 2005, and placed them in the fluctuating social, cultural and political context of the region. We then asked what the popular response—both positive and negative—to their endeavors was. Utilizing paradigms supplied by Bosch and Huntington, we sought to interpret events through the prism of clashing civilizations: Enlightenment Europe versus the Ottoman Empire; tired West versus pan-Arab Nationalism; modern West versus fragmented Near East; post-modern world verses resurgent Islam, etc. After tracking confrontations between the macrocosm of the Middle East and the microcosm of its missionaries over a period of nearly two centuries we conclude that, hitherto, Protestant mission has, by and large, been disappointing in terms of its effectiveness; at times the enterprise has even led to fiasco. What, on the basis of all this, might we advise those pursuing Christian missions to Near Eastern Muslims today?

Before presuming to do so we must first give a definition of Christian missions—something few of the earlier, action-orientated, Great Commission-driven evangelicals attempted (see Vander Werff 1977:25-26; Boer 1975:27). Now, however, we need a definition so that the point of any tentative suggestions is clear. We cast a brief look at a few contemporary attempts to define Christian mission before seeking to provide our own formulation.

Bosch notes that the traditional theological synopsis of mission consists of "(a) propagation of the faith, (b) expansion of the reign of God, (c) conversion of the heathen, (d) the founding of new churches" (Bosch 2003:1). He then points out that since the 1950s the concept of mission has significantly broadened (:1); in fact, the subject becomes so rich and multi-faceted that "ultimately, mission remains undefinable… the most we can hope for is to formulate some approximations of what mission is all about" (:9). D.T. Niles of Sri Lanka, equating mission with evangelism, coined one famous approximation when he stated famously—and succinctly—that "it is one beggar telling another beggar where to get food", meaning that Christians "do not offer out of their bounty" but "stand alongside the non-Christian and point to the Gospel, the holy action of God" (Niles 1951:96).

Orlando Costas highlighted the trinitarian foundation for missions: "the Gospel is not only the story of the sending of the Son by the Father to redeem the world, but also of the Holy Spirit bringing the world to God through the Son for the glory of the Father" (Thomas, ed. 1996:118).

In terms of mission praxis this concept of *Missio Dei* means that "contextual evangelization implies witnessing everywhere and at all times in the presence of the total activity of the triune God" (:118). In other words, the communication of the gospel involves relating it to "God's involvement in all the spheres of human life and to the totality of God's concern for the well-being of our planet and the universe" (:119). Samuel Escobar underlined the wholistic nature of the missions and, together with René Padilla, warned against the presentation of a gospel which made no daily social, political and economic demands; they secured the Lausane Covenant affirmation that "evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty" (International Congress, 1975:5). Kirk in *What is Mission? Theological Explorations* (2000) also maintains that mission, theology and social ethics are inseparable. According to him a theology of missions involves a hermeneutic of the gospel pertaining to such issues as cultural identity and change, justice for the poor, the encounter with other religious traditions, peace-making, stewardship of nature, and the shared experiences of life, issues to which he devotes chapters.

Both an overemphasis on mission as *Missio Dei*, as well as an overcommitment to saving the world in a social and/or political sense can, however, undermine the role of the fledgling national church in missions, causing it to deal with issues of secondary importance too soon. I have concluded that the primary focus of the missionary community in the Middle East, in particular, must be the establishment of a loving, accepting community of Muslim background Christians while avoiding as much as possible any direct, personal socio-political involvement; such issues must be left for national believers to work out themselves in due course. With this in mind, let us seek a definition of missions which is historically and theologically acceptable, yet suited for the unique dynamics of the region.

Many of the first generation of evangelical, pioneering missionaries to the Ottoman Empire, the post-World War I veterans, and today's evangelicals would, undoubtedly, identify with the following statement: *Missions is the church's God-given, Holy Spirit-empowered task to so present the person of Jesus Christ to those unreached with the Gospel that they face a solemn, personal decision to accept or reject Him as their Lord and Saviour, to disciple new believers by teaching and modeling Christian truth and values, and to plant local churches according to the New Testament pattern so that believers are established in the teachings of the Christian Scriptures, develop Christian graces, and become equipped to minister and witness to society.*

Note how this definition incorporates the trinitarian nature of missions, the evangelical emphasis on the free offer of grace and the need for a personal decision, the need for modeling Christian values in society on a personal level, and the importance accorded to a transformed life

on both a personal and societal level. The focus shifts, however, with respect to the responsibility pertaining to Christian involvement in Middle Eastern socio-poitical affairs. Escobar, Padilla, Kirk, et al. would place a greater emphasis on the need for this kind of involvement in actual mission praxis, something which, in the Middle East, has, as we have amply demonstrated and explained, backfired badly. Hence the emphasis in my formulation on the ultimate goal, the "so that" of missions, shifts much of that responsibility to the fledgling church. New believers are to be discipled and local churches planted so that *they* can develop such Christian graces as will enable *them* to become properly equipped to minister and witness to their own societies at large. In other words, meaningful Christian political and social interaction is to flow, primarily, from the nationally lead churches. The local church, and not the missionary community, is to become the social conscience of whatever society it finds itself. Sadly, not even the Lausane Muslim Paper recognizes the importance of the Muslim convert in the formulation of outreach to his or her own community, going no further than noting that missionaries in training would do well to learn from the experience of Muslim converts (Lausane 1980:7). None of the training institutes it recommends is located in a Muslim country.

As this thesis has shown, the missionary community to the Middle East is too tainted by its own culture to presume to initiate change on social and political issues. Hence its primary task must be to present the person of Jesus Christ in all his winsomeness, even as it trusts the Spirit to draw people to the Saviour. It must then teach and disciple new believers in core Biblical truths, and draw them into a loving fellowship of believers, but will, once again, have to defer to the Spirit with respect to the nitty-gritty application of Christian truth to socio-political and cultural specifics. In other words, the local community of believers, responding to and wrestling with Biblical truths must, ultimately, be entrusted with the job of forging a church-centered New Testament spirituality applicable to their own culture. The missionary can, at best, guide at the level of basic Biblical principles.

To enable us formulate a model, a paradigm, of missions for Near Eastern Muslims within these parameters we look at three areas: some empirical data on reasons why Muslims convert, the reason for the importance of the mission enterprise being church-centered, and aspects of New Testament spirituality which have resonance in the region.

6.1. Reasons why Muslims convert

As seen, individual Muslims did embrace Christ and become members of the church in every period and under a wide variety of circumstances, testifying to the fact that God, in His grace, does sometimes bless the efforts of missionaries, even if these are weak or misguided. By 2005

hundreds, at the very least, had converted in various Arab countries, and between 3 and 4 thousand had done so in Turkey, enough to form a network of nationally run Turkish Protestant churches. What drove these former Muslims to make that "solemn, personal decision"? Ibn Warraq questions whether any one theory can explain the psychology of conversion:

> I doubt there is any one theory that would account for all the phenomena. A Muslim abandoning his faith for humanism or atheism is likely to give rational explanations why belief in any of the tenets of Islam is no longer intellectually tenable, and her reasons would differ substantially from a Muslim who converted to Christianity (Ibn Warraq 2003:91).

We have already made some passing, superficial references to what might have motivated dissatisfied Muslims to embrace Christianity as opposed to, say, secular humanism or atheism. Let us now examine this complex subject in more detail, beginning with a brief review of those who, in recent years, have analyzed the subject before me.

6.1.1. Contemporary analysis of Muslim conversions to Christianity

During the early 1990s Dr. Woodberry of Fuller Theological Seminary conducted a survey of converts from Islam who converted to Christianity, asking them what attracted or influenced them to become a Christian. The results, based on 105 questionnaires, were listed as follows:

1. A Christian lifestyle and witness.
2. Desire to experience forgiveness – lack of certainty in the Qur'an
3. Desire for love – God loves those who love him.
4. Literature, especially the Gospels and the Bible
5. Supernatural power – visions, dreams, healing, answered prayer before persecution (deliverance)
6. Dissatisfaction with Islam – hypocrisy, intolerance.
7. Trauma – political or natural – coup, tidal wave, earthquake, etc. (Woodberry 1994)

In an early evaluation of this survey, a third of the respondents cited dissatisfaction with Islam as a prime reason for their turning to Christianity (Guthry 1993:25). The study was subsequently expanded and by 2001 some 600 Muslim-background believers from 39 different countries and over 50 different ethnic groups had been surveyed. Woodberry lists assurance of salvation, the person of Jesus Christ, the plausability and power of the Bible, dreams and visions, and the possibility of having a personal relationship with God, and comfort from Christian scriptures, particularly in the face of persecution as reasons. According to him the most compelling reason, however, was love. "Nearly half of all Muslims who have made a shift of faith allegiance have affirmed that the love of God was a critical key in their decision" (Woodberry & Shubin 2001:5). In about a third of the conversion stories dreams and vision were primary factors (Guthry, 2002). Wilson, former professor of missions at Gorden-Conwell Theological Seminary, goes a step further, stating that physical healings are a key element in the

conversion of Muslims: "Muslims love to argue. Yet when they see the power of God made manifest and the sick healed in the Name of Jesus, they come to Christ more readily" (Wilson (1994:9). Other factors "include the breaking of anti-Christian stereotypes through contact with believers; hearing Christian truth through print and radio ministries; and displays of God's presence through dreams, visions, and miraculous events" (Guthry 1993:25). Guthry later cites the idea that Christian worship music available in some of the North African Arabic dialects and indigenous languages of North Africa was instrumental in conversions among the Kabyle Berbers of the region (Guthry, 2002).

Greenham surveyed 11 Palestinian male and 11 Palestinian female converts from Islam and charted the factors which led to their conversion. Both the male and female conversion stories had a number of factors in common. The person of Jesus, for instance, figured prominently in all 22 respondents, while such factors as the truth of the Christian message, the lives/roles of believers, and God's miraculous involvement in their lives also played important roles. Political instability, rejection of Islam, personal crisis and reading the Bible played a greater role in the decision-making process of the men than in those of the women. The women, on the other hand, were touched more, albeit marginally so, by God's honor, a sense of community, and Christian teaching on women (Greenham 2004:184).

Adeney, in her book *Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women* lists the following "milestones" in the spiritual journey of converted Muslim women whom she interviewed: The Christian scripture, spiritual power encounters, the love of Christians, sex and beauty issues, and social justice issues (Adeney 2002:19). Interestingly, the latter claim appears to clash at a certain level with Greenham's survey inasmuch as his data precludes politics altogether as a motivating force for women in terms of abandoning Islam for Christianity. Karen White, adjunct professor of missions at Criswell College, holds that Middle Eastern politics are, indeed, a driving force behind the "new openness" in the Islamic world: "the new openness in the Islamic world is a result of the crisis caused by secularism and the rise of Western civilization there… The very foundations of Islam are being challenged and eroded" (White 1998:161-162).

Maurer explores the reasons why people convert in an unpublished thesis for the University of South Africa. The "significant claims" he sites focus on the possibility of a relationship with God as opened up through the person of Jesus Christ, the experience of church life, and the ability to understand the Bible.

The main issue which Christian converts found in Christianity and which they had not felt while being Muslims was the love displayed in the Bible through Jesus and also the warmth in the

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church among Christians. The converts also found 'hope and assurance' which they didn't have before. Islam was basically perceived as a religion with meaningless ritualistic practices and utterances… By contrast, converts expressed their joy of having a 'living relationship' with Jesus and guidance from the Holy Spirit… These converts state that their earlier religion failed to satisfy their deepest longings; that there were deficiencies, questions and problems to which they found the answer only in Christianity (Maurer 1999:208-209).

There are dozens of articles and booklets of testimonies by Muslims on why they became Christians. Dr. Jean-Marie Gaudeul's *Called from Islam to Christ: why Muslims become Christians* (1999) is a collection of such testimonies of Muslim background Christians, both Protestant and Catholic, from across the Muslim world, and an inquiry into what motivated their conversion. However, by drawing from his research, as well as that of most of the abovementioned missiologists, we risk moving beyond the strictures to which we have hitherto limited ourselves: Protestantism in the Ottoman Empire and the countries which emerged from her. This we counter by providing testimonies of converts to Protestantism alone from people within the region under discussion. In order to protect the individuals involved, they are referred to only by the capitalized first letter of their first names. Unless otherwise indicated, all are Muslim Background Protestants of many years' standing. Their full names are known to this student—all are personal acquaintances, some long-time friends. They include Turks, Kurds and Arabs from every walk of life and from a wide range of educational and economic backgrounds.

Although the delineation of these people's reasons into separate subheadings is somewhat artificial, in that there was usually more than a single factor which led to their eventual conversion (as the above mentioned Christian researchers show), there tended to be one specific thing which stopped them in their tracks and caused them to examine Christianity in a new light. This event then led them to embark on their sometimes complex, diverse spiritual journeys—in the course of which they often received encouragement at critical junctions—until they made their solemn decision to embrace the Christ of Christianity. We will, once again, endeavor to trace empirically the nature of those key initial sparks in an effort at forming the broad outline of a workable theology of missions to the Muslim world for today.

6.1.2. Fascination with the person of Jesus Christ

The most common reason why Muslims become Christians is the person of Jesus Christ, sometimes through fascination by the Qur'an's testimony about him. The Qur'an gives *Isa bin Meryem* (Jesus son of Miriam) mysterious titles given to none other, notably *Kelimat Allah* (Word

of God) and *Ruh Allah* (Spirit of God) (see Surah 4:171), and calls him "illustrious in the world and in the hereafter and one of those brought near unto Allah" (Surah 3:45). It testifies that he was born of a virgin (Surah 21:91, 56:12), performed miracles, healed the sick and raised the dead (Surah 2:253; 3:49; 5:110). Furthermore, Islam, which affirms the sins of other prophets, testifies to the purity and sinlessness of the prophet Jesus (see Mishkat Bk. I, Ch. 3, quoted in Zwemer 1912:124), and that he was raised bodily into heaven (Surah 4:158). Heeding the Qur'an's recognition of the *Injil* (New Testament) as guidance, light, revelation and admonition (Surah 5:44-48), some Muslims try to get a copy of it, sometimes at great risk or expense. It then leads them towards the biblical Christ (see section 6.1.3).

T. became fascinated by Jesus through Islam's assertion that he did not die but was taken directly to heaven—itself an unbiblical claim. He interpreted this elevation to mean that Jesus was superior to the other prophets. To learn more T. obtained a New Testament, eventually met Christian missionaries and began a long spiritual journey. He became a Christian, was later disillusioned with the missionary community, and returned to Islam. The person of Jesus Christ continued to haunt him, however, and he was consequently led to leave Islam a second time. Today he is a church leader.

Not all stories are equally complex. Accounts emerge, time and again, of Muslims who, "while remaining within their own religious community, fix their attention on Jesus until eventually their heart perceives something of his mystery as it is revealed in the Gospels" (Gaudeul 1999:33). Some of these people never find their way to a church—there may not be one in their vicinity—yet live "a solitary faith in which Jesus is their support and their way to God" (:34). When some of them do, eventually, come into contact with institutional Christianity they recognize that it contains that which they have come to recognize as true (:34).

Sometimes Muslims become fascinated by Jesus through the media. Such films as *Quo Vadis*, *Ben Hur*, *Jesus of Nazareth*, *Jesus*, and, more recently, *The Passion of the Christ*, offer portraits attractive to those sensitive to the kind of religious dimensions these types of films reflect (Pikkert 1982-2006, Gaudeul 1999:46). As such, they have been used as stepping stones in people's spiritual journeys. N#1. and her daughter M., for instance, were greatly moved by the *Passion of The Christ*. They procured a New Testament, and have shown sympathy towards Christianity since, though neither has, as yet, taken that solemn, personal decision. There have also been Muslim mystics who, in search of an ideal of disinterested love beyond any law, found that ideal, magnified, in Jesus (1999:177).

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Other Muslims come to recognize a power in the name of Jesus Christ to answer specific prayers—sometimes miraculously so—which they did not find in Islam. In a culture which tends to view miracles as proof of dogma (1999:141), an answer to prayer can spur the individual to discover more about Jesus himself. A#1, now an old woman, came from a very conservative Muslim family. She was introduced to Christianity through a women's meeting she was invited to attend as a single 18 year old. The happy, welcoming spirit of these women differed so markedly with her home life that it led her to question the veracity of Islam. One day she took a withered grape vine, walked to the church where the meetings were held, shoved it into ground and prayed, "Jesus, if this shoot flourishes in this soil I will become a Christian." Within a week the vine was green and budding whereupon she became a Christian. Years later her son-in-law founded an evangelical church in one of Istanbul's suburbs.

K. was a young woman employed in a textile factory. One day she inadvertently poured the wrong dye into a vat of cloth, something which would certainly cost her her job. She cried out, "Jesus help me!". The dye did not set, the cloth was not lost, and K. did not lose her job. The incident sparked an interest in this prayer-answering Jesus who helped her in her moment of need and, eventually, she too became a Christian.

Thus, in different ways, Jesus Christ reveals himself as a living person who invites people to put aside their preconceived ideas about him and to begin exploring who he really is. About one in four Muslim converts testify to the role the character of Jesus played in launching them on their spiritual pilgrimage to Christianity (Gaudeul 1999:32).

6.1.3. A Thirst for Truth

A "substantial number" of Muslims testify that their conversion to Christianity is the result of "a search for truth" (1999:57). A number of things might create dissatisfaction with Islam, notably the divisions and sometimes bitter conflicts within the Muslim community, the challenges of the modern world, Islamic extremism and fundamentalism, terrorism, censorship, attacks on unveiled women and suicide bombings. When the community responds to the questioning individual by attempting to impose orthodoxy by authority it can force the question: "what kind of a truth is it which cannot compel assent through its own power?" (:61). That, in turn, serves as a catalyst in the search for truth. The question of evil, or the conviction that evil perpetrated in the name of Islam has discredited the religion, has led some to abandon it.

D. was a member of an Arab Sunni fundamentalist militia. A Christian invited him to a meeting, and he went in order to argue the cause of Islam. Although he argued for Islam vociferously, he was touched by both the character of the Christians he met, as well as by their

compelling case for Christ. He started attending the meetings regularly. Though he continued to argue the case for Islam, he was assailed by doubts. For a season he stopped going to the meetings, fearing the influence they were having on him. Eventually, however, his desire for truth overcame all reservations and he returned to the meetings, this time to learn. Upon his conversion to Christianity he was promptly imprisoned. Eventually released, he is currently studying for the Christian ministry.

As already pointed out in the previous chapter, many Muslim converts do not, in fact, convert directly from Islam to Christianity. Disillusionment with Islam causes them to search for ideological alternatives which may not be Christianity in the first instance. M. is an example of someone who gave up on Islam early in life to join the Communist Party. During the late 1970s he became a terrorist, masterminding a number of bank robberies. He rose high in the party's ranks and was invited by the Ceauşescu regime to Romania to address various rallies. While there he became disillusioned with what he saw. Upon his return to Turkey he slowly gave up on communism, but was left struggling in an ideological vacuum. While walking in an Istanbul park one day he came across a Turkish Christian manning a book table. The Christian sold him a New Testament which M. began to read. It sparked the beginning of a new journey which, eventually, led to Christ. He subsequently became a Bible Translator.

A#2 also testifies that the hypocrisy he saw in Islam drove him toward communism. For 12 years he served the party, but eventually became disillusioned with it. He ended up in Germany, where he found a New Testament. Reading it was a key factor to his turning from communism towards Christianity. He eventually returned to the Middle East and, like M., also became a Bible translator.

6.1.4. The Bible Speaks

As already seen in M. and A#2's testimonies, the Bible, in and of itself, sometimes speaks to hearts seeking truth. There are various testimonies of Muslims who start reading the Christian scriptures in order to critique it, "but sooner or later the Scriptures pierces their armour and knocks on the door of their heart with God's eternal question: 'And you, how are you responding to this summons?'" (Gaudeul 1999:70). As Nazir-Ali puts it,

> The Gospel carries its own power to convince and to change, and this has been demonstrated again and again throughout history. Men and women have become Christians without any incentive of material benefit and have often lost heavily in a material sense because of their commitment (1983:149).

Virtually all the MBPs this student canvassed confirm Gaudeul's observation that, in comparison to the Qur'an, the Bible spoke to them in a way the former book did not: "Many

converts speak of a moment when the Islamic scriptures, hitherto experienced as so spiritually nourishing, seemed in need of a new light which can only be found in the Bible" (Gaudeul 1999:45, see also 70-77). When comparing conflicting truth claims, the internal consistency of the Christian message has spoken to some Muslims, forcing them to make that solemn, personal choice (:77, 83).

The book *Sweet First Fruit: a tale of the 19th century on the truth and virtues of the Christian Religion*, edited by W. Muir, is the story of a national Christian in Aleppo, Syria, who, in 1861 sent a letter to a sheikh Ahmed Abdul Hadi, drawing attention to the fact that the Bible could not have been altered since the Qur'an itself confirmed its teaching and recommended it be read (see Surah 5:44-48). Sheikh Abdul Hadi then invited some learned Muslim friends to discuss the letter's contents and formulate a response. They began studying the Bible, and several of them became convinced of the truthfulness of its message. One of them was eventually beheaded for having converted to Christianity, the others were exiled (Muir, ed. 1993).

E. comes from a wealthy, upper-class Turkish family. His parents are secular, anti-Islamist Turks. While a teenager E. felt that, in spite of his parents' strongly anti-religious sentiments, there had to be a God. He tried to read the Qur'an, but that did not speak to him in any way. Buddhist and Hindu literature also left him dissatisfied. One day he came across a New Testament while browsing in a bookstore. As he read it he was struck by the book's internal consistency, and became convinced that what it said was true.

While in prison N#2 saw an advertisement for a free *Injil* in a newspaper. He responded to the advert and in due course received his New Testament. He read it with interest, but was stopped in his tracks when he got to Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us". The claim that God would love him unconditionally stirred something deep in his soul. Upon his release he found a church, converted, and was eventually baptized.

C., a modern career woman, had heard so much negative publicity about the *Injil* (New Testament), that she decided to get one to see if all the hype was true. When she started reading it she discovered that the four gospels did not contradict but, in fact, "they were almost photocopies of each other. They complemented each other in the details". If, the first time around, she read the book simply to satisfy her curiosity, it warmed her heart in a way no other book had done before when she read it the second time. She soon became a Christian.

6.1.5. Dreams also Speak

Dreams and visions are a common element in the testimonies of Muslims coming to faith in Christ. They sometimes occur as an encouragement for the inquirer, and sometimes to solidify the faith of the individual convert (Jones WP 1995:4; see also Gaudeul 1999:223; Meyer 1986:79). Gairdner testifies,

> And as for the machine man (i.e., the press operator of *Orient and Occident*), Hamuda, on whom we rely for pushing through the work, he has had a strange experience. He hurt his hand one day in the machine and Mr. Thornton sent him down to our hospital. There the Christian mode of prayer affected him greatly… One night he had a dream. He thought he saw Christ come to him—tall, white-skinned (as Hamuda told me afterwards), with head, neck and shoulders swathed (oriental fashion) with wrappings. The Figure came to him and said, "Do not fear, Hamuda, for no harm shall happen to your hand." Then It touched his hand and Hamuda at once awoke. "I was not excited," he told me, "but full of fear… I said (to myself)… 'these people have the truth with them.'" When Hamuda went back to the press it was to witness in the teeth of contradiction to the truth he had heard. I see him in the press nearly every day, and a glad face he wears (Padwick 1929:155-156).

C. and I., are a MBP married couple. C. was a member of a *tarikat* (Muslim fraternity) for over seven years. One night his wife I. had a vision of Jesus in pure white clothes. Next to him stood a man in dirty clothes. She knew the other man was Muhammed. Six months later her husband C. had the same vision. Both eventually became Christians.

A#3 was on the hajj in Mecca when, night after night, he started having dreams of Jesus. He began wondering what he was doing in Mecca, packed his bags and returned home. When people asked him why he returned early, he announced that he was a Christian, though he had, as yet, little inkling of what biblical Christianity was all about. He eventually found a New Testament and a Christian church and was soundly converted. He has since completed a degree in philosophy and today runs an apologetics network.

A#3's story is unusual in that dreams and visions tend not to occur in a vacuum. A Christian will either have told them about Jesus, or prayed directly for a specific need of theirs, or they have personally read some kind of Christian literature or parts of the New Testament before the dream occurred (Jones 1995:4-5). Musk, for instance, tells the story of a sick Middle Eastern Muslim man admitted to a regional hospital, where he whiled away the hours by reading such newspapers and magazines as he could get. His reading material included "a popular Christian magazine". One night he had a dream in which he

> recognized his night visitor as 'Isa, the Jesus of the Christians'. The next day, the doctors found to their amazement that their patient was completely cured. Astonished they asked the man what had happened. The gentleman pointed to the Christian magazine and declared, 'The secret is in reading this!' (Musk 2003:248).

Post-Enlightenment Western thought, with its rationalism and emphasis on empirical scientific proof, tends to dismiss or be suspicious of dreams and visions. In the Middle East, however, where the cultural background is closer to that of the Bible, these are considered normal phenomena, even a revered and regularly reported part of life (Jones 1995:4). Dreams "offer a viable entrance to the centre of the worldview of popular Islam, for dreams already function in a significant way within Muslim's lives" (Musk 2003:246). They are considered very significant, strongly motivational forces (:148, 176-168). In 1991, as noted in the previous chapter, an entire Algerian village is reported to have accepted Christ after its leaders had a vision (Jones 1995:4).

Interestingly, in the Muslim world the frequency of reported dreams and visions about Christ seems to have risen dramatically since 1990 (Jones 1995:4). One of the reasons for this may be that as basic Bible-based information about Christianity becomes more widely available more people face the sobering personal consequences:

> The Christian vocation (call) of these converts from Islam was often accompanied by anguish, as they contemplated the inevitable hostility and the probability of rejection, even by their own family… It is perfectly understandable that these secret debates in the depths of the spirit, these repressed appeals, finally burst out in the form of symbols, dreams, visions, and other phenomena which are familiar to modern psychology, however disturbing they may for our conscious and rational mind (Gaudeul 1999:223).

Sharing a dream or a vision also enables the individual to present their change in religious orientation as an act of obedience to a divine call. "They are not acting on some personal caprice, but on the authority of God himself. God has taken the initiative. In this way the subjects are relieved of responsibility for their actions. If people want to complain, they should address their complaints to God" (:224-225).

6.1.6. Attraction to Individual Christians and/or a Christian Community

Much is made of the strong sense of community in Islam as opposed to Protestantism's rampant individualism. As noted, however, Muslims can become disappointed with the yawning gap between Islam's ideal and grass-roots realities. Violence, polygamy, corruption, social trauma, and institutional inequalities can create disgust with the Muslim community, spurring some to embark on a search for alternatives. The discovery of a caring Christian, or a loving Christian community, can make a great impact on such seekers. Many converts testify that it was "finding real Christians, in whom the grace of God was truly present" that led them to eventual faith in Christ (Gaudeul 1999:127, 128).

We have already met A#1, the woman who was led to challenge God to perform a miracle after she met a group of accepting Christian women. R. and A#4, both Turks, testify that while

reading the New Testament played a critical role in their respective journeys toward Christianity, it was their discovery of a caring Christian community that enabled them to finally make their solemn decision to break with Islam.

E., whom we also met earlier, was cruising in his car with some friends when they passed a church building. A sign saying "Worship Services in Turkish" struck him: Christian worship had to be in Armenian or Greek, not Turkish, he thought. He visited the little Presbyterian church the following Sunday and discovered not only that Christian worship could happen in Turkish, but that a good number of the worshippers whom he met after the service had typically Turkish names: these were Christian Turks! The warm welcome he received encouraged him to come back, and he soon became a Christian himself. He is currently involved in a new church plant in Istanbul.

D. was a drug addict who managed to make her way to London, where she worked as a barmaid. Somehow she ended up lodging with a Christian family. That loving environment created in her a desire to have what they possessed, namely a relationship with Christ. Upon her conversion she went to Bible school and returned to her home country in the Middle East. A scar across her neck testifies to the violent reception she received back home. She eventually married Y., another convert, who was drawn by the loving testimony of a local Protestant fellowship to which a missionary invited him.

K., from an affluent, upper-middle class Turkish family, traces the beginning of his spiritual journey to a Christian roommate. He went to the United States to study for his Masters degree. His roommate there was a Roman Catholic Christian who reached out to him with love and concern. Over time, K. grew to envy his roommate's peace and tranquility. He obtained a New Testament, began reading it, and upon his return to Istanbul made his way to a small, missionary-led Protestant fellowship. He was, once again, struck by the group's caring attitude and, in 1996, converted. Today he is the group's leading elder, having taken over responsibility from the missionaries.

Sometimes Muslims who initially turned to Christian acquaintances for explanations of difficult texts in the Bible are struck by the personalities, more than by the ideas of the Christians they meet (Gaudeul 1999:45, 69). M., the former communist terrorist, sought out the man who sold him the New Testament for further explanation. This individual eventually led him to Christ. Later he had the opportunity to spend some months in the United States, where he discovered what he was looking for in communism: love and fellowship.

Some Muslims enjoy this warmth of fellowship within the framework of the liturgical aspect of church life. "They find it strangely exotic in comparison with the sobriety of Islam. Sacred art, religious music, liturgical hymns, and vestments: all these things can be a beginning of a journey towards Christ" (1999:117, 142). A#4 testifies that his initial interest in Christianity was sparked by the beauty of the liturgy; while still a Muslim he would sneak into an Orthodox church to revel in the experience. Someone offered him a New Testament, he became a Christian, and today is providing leadership to a new church-plant.

All in all, about two-thirds of converts to Christianity are attracted to the faith by the testimony of either individual Christians or of a local church (1999:105). "Christians who invite, Christians who radiate their faith and made others want to be transformed and be like them, a community which sings and celebrates and in which one feels at home: in all these ways, and in many others, the visible Church attracts" (:147).

Although interaction with a Christian community may have been the beginning of their spiritual journey, "for most converts the irresistible personality of Jesus eventually takes over as incomparably more important than the community. The Church has meaning only as the people of Jesus" (:148). The Scriptures, the individual Christian, the Christian community, must eventually lead seekers to a Biblical understanding of Christ before they can make their solemn decision.

6.1.7. The Desire for a Personal Encounter with God

God in Islam tends to be a distant deity, removed from the immediate concerns of ordinary people. "In ideal Islam, the focus of revelation is upon a word 'sent down'. The God who sends that word remains mostly remote, even unknowable" (Musk 2003:213). "God does not reveal Himself to anyone in any way. God reveals only His will" (Al-Faruqi 1976:405). As Musk makes clear, the desire for personal contact with the divine then opens the door to a vast world of animistic folk Islamic practices for people who "require help close at hand, on a daily basis" (2003:213). Those who scorn such practices, however, are left in an almost impossible situation, "torn between an irresistible desire for a personal encounter with God and a loyal desire to respect the official veto on any such encounter" (Gaudeul 1999:186).

Some Muslims discover in Christianity the reconciliation between these two aspirations (:186), for Christianity proves to be more than a set of doctrines which much be adhered to. It is the belief that the Spirit of God can speak to anyone, that anyone can have a personal encounter with God in Jesus Christ (:203). One of the ways in which Christianity testifies to intimacy with

God is through the character of Christian prayer. Although prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam, the experience differs greatly between the two religions:

> Christians are invited to pray informally, either privately or in groups. Indeed the word 'prayer' in Christian circles means in the very first place a personal and informal dialogue between the believer and his or her God; only secondarily does it designate liturgy in its official and collective dimension. It is precisely the discovery of informal prayer which strikes a number of Muslim believers when they first make contact with the Christian tradition (Gaudeul 1999:208).

The ability to communicate with God without having to adhere to strictures "drove these Muslims out onto the Pilgrim road". In so doing they discover a personal God who "wishes to be known and loved in himself; a God who is a Father, to whom one can speak like a son or daughter… and to hope for a reply" (1999:215).

Some Muslims who despair that their lives could ever change for the better are attracted by the discovery that Christ does not just offer a series of commands, but the presence of the Holy Spirit to indwell and work secretly in the heart effecting internal transformation. Orthodox Islam has no doctrine of an indwelling, sanctifying Holy Spirit of God who is always present with believers in a personal way to strengthen, comfort, and change them.

* * * * *

The empirical evidence for a model of missions which has born some fruit in terms of seeing Muslims convert to Christianity thus consists of fascination with the person and life of Jesus Christ, a thirst for truth, the voice of Scriptures and dreams, the radiant witness of individual Christians and/or a Christian community, and the desire for regular personal encounters with God. The data essentially confirms the heart of our definition of Christian missions as a community of believers teaching and modeling Christian truth and values so as to plant local churches. The paradigm which emerges is, quite simply, Church-centered, New Testament spirituality.

6.2 Why Church-centered?

When the missionary community sought to exercise a Christian influence on society by establishing educational and medical facilities, it lost sight of the fact that missions had to emerge directly from the church itself. They forgot that missions is a task which God gave to the church and for which He uniquely equipped it. It is the church, and not various and sundry para-church ministries, which is the God-ordained means through which the Great Commission was expected to be fulfilled. Boer helps us to understand why:

> It is to this body (i.e., the church) that the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost has been given. He was poured out on the apostles and on the disciples who stood under the

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> spiritual authority of the apostles. Through the witness of the apostles, through the witness of men appointed by the apostles, and through the witness recognized by the apostles, the Church expanded. Because the Spirit indwells the Church, the Church is a witnessing Church. Because He indwells the Church, he indwells every member of the Church, whether officially and corporately through the offices of the institute or through her members personally and individually (Boer 1975:213)

Although originally established in order to create a sympathetic understanding of Christianity, para-church institutions thus proved to be failures in terms of Christianizing the Near East. Instead of leading to the establishment of a viable, independent MBP church, they became channels of Western culture which, when reacted against, contributed to the clash of civilizations still playing itself out in the region.

This Christian-institution induced clash of civilizations thus has its roots in theological considerations pertaining to the praxis of Christian missions. Those earlier generations of missionaries saw the Great Commission as a command to be obeyed, and sacrificed heroically to that end, harnessing such methods and establishing such institutions as they deemed necessary. However, by and large, they did not grasp that missions is "a law that expressed the nature and that governs the life of the church" (Boer 1975:217) and, as such, cannot be replicated by or ceded to other institutions without it losing its essential character.

> The institutions that we have established on the mission field have invited a very different use of them than was intended. In the effort to exemplify the gospel and in the hope of finding an entrance for it we have offered education and know-how of all sorts which drew to our institutions men who desired least of all to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. They often desired and found only intellectual and material advancement. We hoped through our institutions to spread through the regions of their service a "Christian spirit", a "sympathetic understanding of Christianity", we hoped that everywhere a "Christian influence" would be diffused…. It was forgotten that a Christian influence that bears no or only little relationship to the Church and is therefore not constantly renewed and strengthened through the administration of the word and the sacraments cannot be a living and enduring influence (1975:229).

Thus from a theological perspective the failure of para-church medical, educational and developmental institutions and their relatively rapid drift from the Christian fold was due to the fact that they operated largely outside the parameters of the Church; a Christian influence that has a tangential relationship to the Church does not generally maintain itself as an ongoing Christian witness. In light of this it will be interesting to see how long the newly established Christian Classical Schools in Iraqi Kurdistan (see 5.2.7) will be able to maintain their evangelical identity. Will they realize their goal of being vehicles to help create receptivity towards Christianity in its students, or will Boer's contention that the opposite is likely to happen prove true? Will the majority of graduates lose their faith in the Western culture they imbibed at school, use the

knowledge they gained of Christianity to denounce it, or drift into some kind of "Christian movement" outside the corporate life and discipline of the church? (Boer 1975:229-230).

Boer makes the point that the underlying reason for the missiological failure of past efforts to educate and heal is because, ultimately, educating and healing are part of the created order, social phenomena which occur in one shape or form in all cultures. The church, on the other hand, is the one institution which arises out of the redemptive as opposed to the created order. As such, "it is not her function to educate, or to farm, or to heal, or to pursue scientific investigations. The Spirit that is in her is a Spirit expressing Himself exclusively in *witness* and in *life*" (:231, italics in original).

> Education has a character and urge of its own and cannot with impunity be made a mere instrument of evangelism or a servant of organizational Church requirements. Education is found in one form or another in every society and seeks to serve the total needs of the society. Human institutions arise out of the created order, and their functions are conditioned by this fact. The proper function of schools is to mold minds and character, of farms to produce food, of hospitals to heal bodies. Redemption so renews the human agents who are engaged in these activities that the educating and the farming and the healing will be done out of motives and for the ends envisioned in the created order. Redemption intends to permiate mens' natural activities with spiritual motives and ends. It does not intend that these activities so reclaimed, *in casu* Christian institutions, shall, without serious qualification, be subordinated and made an instrument of the missionary witness of the Church (Boer 1975:231).

In other words, the means of missions is as important as its goal. Missionaries are not free to choose willy-nilly whatever they think may lead to the desired end. Hence attempts to introduce western culture and education (as well as attempts to carry out the Great Commission by proxy) proved largely unproductive in terms of attaining the desired goal for both cultural and theological reasons. God, in his grace, has chosen the preaching and teaching of the gospel and acts of love and mercy by individual Christians or arising directly from the community of believers, the church of Jesus Christ—and not the ministrations of para-church schools, hospitals, or development agencies—as the Spirit's primary means to reveal Christ to the world.

> An ecclesiastical missionary administration that functions apart from or in relative indifference to the Church as an organism has neither right nor reason to suppose that it is standing in the New Testament tradition of missionary witness (1975:216).

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16); God has entrusted the preaching and communication of that gospel to the church, whose members are counted a "chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" for the purpose of "declaring the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

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List of research project topics and materials

6.3. Church-centered New Testament Spirituality as a Missionary Method

Most missionaries throughout the four periods we have examined undoubtedly held that their methods were in line with New Testament injunctions. There is, however, a big difference between seeking to be obedient to the Great Commission and recognizing church-based New Testament spirituality in and of itself as a missionary method. *The criteria of this paradigm of missions is that it must be clearly rooted in New Testament teachings and precedent, be church-based and focused, and be recognized as truly Christian by fellow Christians from any country—democratic or otherwise—and of any race, any culture or any economic background.* As such it is a paradigm which clashes at a theological level with Islam, particularly with respect to the person and work of Christ. Furthermore, much as it seeks to present its message in culturally acceptable ways, it cannot avoid certain frictions at a civilizational level. Christianity is, after all, not just supracultural. In the Middle East it is experienced as a tiny counter-culture with an alternative set of values which stands in condemnation of many of the region's dominant worldviews, whether that be ultra-nationalism, untrammeled materialism, state-sponsored terrorism, Islamic extremism or any of a host of other ideologies.

Before we unpack the broad outlines of what this model of missions might involve for the Near East we need to make an obvious preliminary point: for any model of missions to have any hope of making a real impact in the region it will need to have a significant and qualified missionary presence on the ground. At present the Middle East still has the lowest number of missionaries of any region in the world. Patrick Johnstone estimated the total number of missionaries globally at the end of the millennium to be 201,928 (Johnstone 2001b). Zebiri, looking at the entire Muslim world, calculates that "approximately two percent of missions are currently deployed in missions to Muslims, who make up about a sixth of the world's population" (Zebiri 2000:94-95). Although the number of missionaries to the region covered by this thesis is not in the public domain, it certainly does not exceed the 2% of the total missionary community. Clearly, for any missionary paradigm to work missionary recruitment or redeployment must increase.

The problem is aggravated by the fact that a large percentage of the small group of missionaries actually resident in the Near East is either working with the OBP church, engaged in support ministries and/or doesn't know Arabic or Turkish sufficiently well to carry on an in-depth conversation, let alone teach in it (Pikkert 1982-2006). Hence the chance of a Middle Eastern Muslim actually meeting a Christian able to communicate the Gospel message effectively is simply too low.

In-depth knowledge of the language and culture are not gained through short-term forays to the region. Though useful in terms of raising missions awareness and, possibly, with respect to distributing Christian literature, such glorified tourist trips are of little value with respect to achieving the goals of a New Testament paradigm of missions: presenting Christ convincingly, discipling new believers, and planting local churches. It takes time—lots of it—to learn the language, to quell the suspicion of neighbours, to develop cultural understanding, to build relationships and to earn the right to be heard, whether by the local church or by the Muslim majority.

> We want to get in, do the job and then get out… we might wonder if the present enthrallment with short term missions… isn't part of the same quick fix syndrome… We must resist the temptation to think there are short-term solutions to complex issues. Nothing can replace the seasoned veteran who learns the language, becomes involved in the adopted cultures and gives her or his life to incarnate the truth of the gospel over the long haul (Thompson EMQ 2002:425-426).

Having made that point, let us conclude by identifying some contours of this New Testament paradigm of missions which all authentic Christians living and working in the Middle East today might be expected to recognize as both truly Christian and as appropriate for the region.

6.3.1. Presenting the Christian message in a clear and culturally appropriate way

"Proclaim the mystery of Christ… pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should"
(Colossians 4:3,4)

Even as they pray for the Lord of the harvest to send more workers (Matthew 9:37, 38) the church must recognize that not just any warm body will do. Sending young people into very sensitive situations without the preparation and seasoning required must be avoided. Such irresponsible behaviour merely increases the incidence of first-term casualties and the stories we often hear of ineffectiveness (Thompson EMQ 2002:426).

First of all, missionaries must have a clear-cut idea of the Christian message. What they present must be "in accord with sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). Hence it is essential that they receive adequate theological training before they arrive. They need to clearly understand the message that they are seeking to communicate; its essentials must be firmly etched on their minds. "The notions of repentance and conversion, of vision, of responsibility… long submerged by the suffocating logic or rigid cause and effect thinking have surfaced again and are inspiring people who have long lost hope, at the same time giving a new relevance to the Christian mission" (Bosch 2003:356).

Hope is built on a firm, Christocentric theology, not on liberal notions, for which Muslims have little sympathy. Viewing religious matters from a more static position, it is difficult for them to grasp how Christians from the same *mezhep* ("walk", i.e., Protestantism) can seem prepared to compromise seemingly fundamental beliefs. Nasr's plaintive cry is convicting:

> From the Islamic point of view, what is difficult to understand is how various tenets of Christianity are changing so rapidly to the extent that some want to change the name and gender of Christ, whom they now call Christa... many voices in the churches have become accomplices to the spread of the very ideas that have opposed the most fundamental tenets of the authentic Christian faith, so that it is difficult to understand with whom one is dialoguing (Nasr 1996:41).

Muslims can, however, appreciate the Christian who has clear and distinct beliefs. Hence missionaries much teach their certainties, not their doubts.

> They might actually appreciate the fact that you, as a Christian, really do believe something!… They will discover that you are against drugs and premarital sex, for example, and share their sorrow at the moral vacuity of the MTV generation. They will discover that the words Western and Christian are not always coterminous (Catherwood 2003:132).

The undoubtedly well-intentioned trend towards contextualizing the Christian message and worship forms into Muslim molds in order to make them more socially acceptable runs the risk of fudging foundational truths which are perceived as abhorrent to the Muslim community. Bible translation projects which obscure fundamental concepts, such as the divine sonship of Christ, or the merging of the four gospels into one, or the re-translation of Christian prayer and worship practice into Muslim forms are not helpful. An example of the latter are efforts to incorporate the Muslim prayer ritual in Christian worship, and dispense with communal singing and extemporaneous, public prayer in order to make services more palatable to Muslims. If Muslims know anything about Christianity from, say, their own media, they know it believes in the deity of Christ, that there are four gospels, that we don't wash before going through a set prayer ritual, and that Christian worship involves communal singing.

> Many contextual theologians risk losing sight of the universal truths in the scriptures. The goal of contextualization is not to create a new God, a new soteriology or a new gospel message. Rather it is simply to understand, teach, live and express the gospel in a way that is relevant to a particular context (Meral EMQ 2005:212).

While extreme contextualization is to be avoided, the mere presentation of truth is insufficient; it must be done with cultural sensitivity, disassociated from obnoxious western cultural practices yet without sliding into syncretism. If that seems a tall order, small steps at a grass-roots level can make a big difference. Missionaries might, for instance, resist translating their own choruses and hymns into national languages and have trained ethnomusicologists sift

through local music to find forms of prose and poetry to convey fundamental Christian truths (c.f. Blincoe 1998:216).

One often effective, Christ-sanctioned way of communicating spiritual truths is through the use of parables and stories. This student has published a series of parables and short stories in Turkish which illustrate various biblical truths, and which he can deliver orally, accompanied with the appropriate body language, when the opportunity arises (Piccard 2004).

> A foreigner who learns local stories and proverbs will delight his Muslim friends. A notebook and pencil will unlock the doors leading to Muslim thoughts and feelings about friends, loyalty, enemies, generosity, suffering, hypocrisy, minorities, mercy, injustice, power, women, and, in short, their entire worldview (Blincoe 1998:217).

Blincoe testifies that when he translated a brief summary of Don Richardson's *Peace Child* (1974) into Kurdish the effect on his listeners was immediate and profound (1998:217). One of the great strength of communicating truth through story telling, aside from its cultural appropriateness, is the fact that the speaker is not interrupted until he or she has made their point.

Presentation of the gospel in the Muslim world also requires an understanding of the differences between the basic tenets of the two religions. Although both Islam and Christianity recognize the need for restoration in mankind's relationship with God, the basis on which this might take place differs greatly. Evangelical hamartiology holds that no amount of meritorious action can restore mankind's broken relationship with the Creator—even righteous acts are regarded as filthy rags by Christianity's holy and triune concept of God (see Isaiah 64:6). Forgiveness flows from unmerited grace based on the atoning life and death of the second person of the Trinity. Islam's concept of forgiveness differs because, according to al-Faruqi, it does not view man as being religiously and ethically fallen in the same way as Christianity does, and hence does not view him as being in need of salvation in the same way:

> Assuming all men necessarily to be "fallen", to stand in the predicament of "original sin", or "alienation from God", or self-contradiction, self-centeredness, or of "falling short of the perfection of God", Christian mission seeks to ransom and save. Islam holds man to be not in need of any salvation (Al-Faruqi 1976:339).

Instead, "man is appointed *Kalifah* (viceregent) of Allah, perfect in form, endowed with all that is necessary to fulfill the divine will, indeed, even loaded with the grace of revelation! 'Salvation' is hence not in the vocabulary of Islam" (:399; see also Gaudeul 1999:153). The central issue in Islam is man's "need for *hidaya* (divine guidance) to enable him to know the will of God and to try to live in obedience to it. Islam means complete submission to the will of God and to try to live in obedience to it" (Ahmad 1976:400).

The Western, logical presentation of the Gospel focuses on salvation from the guilt and penalty of sin. A more culturally appropriate focus in the Near East is shame and honour, and holds that missionaries must address the Christian implications of these when seeking to present the Gospel: "A Christology relevant to the region will present Jesus as the one who restores our honor with God" (Meral 2005:213). Repentance, for instance, includes turning from pride (pursuing one's own honor) and accepting what God has done for us. The implications of Christ's sacrifice on the cross for human shame and fear would be communicated. Reconciliation includes God's bringing us into a personal father/son relationship with Himself, in which he removes our shame and restores us to a position of honour with him (Muller 2000:101-102).

6.3.2. Living Lives Consistent with the Message

"Live a life worthy of the calling you have received" (Ephesians 4:1)

There is a difference between living a decent life much like one's Muslim neighbours are likely to be doing, and reflecting the love of Christ. Without the fundamental characteristic of Christian sacrifical love, described in detail in 1 Corinthians 13, a merely verbal presentation of the message is reduced to the hollow sounds of a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

At its most fundamental level love does not view the other as an enemy. "What Muslims need from us is love. We must be involved today in an effort to help them, not by 'conquering them', by good-will, appreciation and sympathy—in the spirit of Christ (Chandler 2002:430). Love speaks volumes, as the testimonies of R., K, A#4 and others illustrate. If Christianity is to flourish in the Middle East, the missionary community, the OBP church and the emerging MBP church must firmly reject attitudes and methods which undermine the nurture of love and respect for Muslims. "It is still an undeniable fact that there can still be found a number of organizations and individuals who try to propagate Christianity or Islam by unfair means, or with a polemical, intolerant approach towards the beliefs of others" (Gaudeul 2000:283). By focusing on the weaknesses of the host culture and religion we miss both its strengths and beauties as well as the sins in our own culture—Muslims, for example, are appalled at Western family life when they hear about abortions, promiscuity, disrespect for parents and neglect of the elderly.

Loving your neighbour goes beyond making hair-line distinctions between Islam and the Muslim, regarding the one as an enemy while avowing love for the other because, for Muslims, Islam is such an integral part of their identity that aspersions cast on their religion are likely to be taken personally (Zebiri 2000:126); the international furore in early 2006 over cartoon drawings of Muhammed illustrated that much. Loving your neighbour means seeking to relate to them on

their level, inasmuch as it is not sinful. What is written or preached is of little import if it is not first lived.

Love, as 1 Corinthians 13 points out, is a very practical, nitty-gritty thing. In the Middle Eastern context one of the ways it is reflected is through hospitality, a virtue in which many time- and task orientated Boomer missionaries are severely deficient. They usually have something to do, a business to accomplish. The Middle Easterner has something to be, and that is being either a guest or a host. "Woe to the testimony of the foreigner whose energy runs out after dinner is cleared and a guest shows up at the door" (Blincoe 1998:215).

At a primary level this means that missionaries must be committed to mastering the local language. As Parshal notes, "it is the ultimate compliment to the Muslim to learn his language well" (1980:107). Along with a concentrated, ongoing effort to master the language, missionaries must engage in a life-long process of shedding their westernness and adopting positive and neutral Middle Eastern cultural values. This is especially true with respect to the importance it places on appearances, hospitality, and family relationships if they are going to communicate Christian values through imitatable life styles (see Mallouhi 1997:103). The outsider who loves and understands is rare enough to be noticed; through their long-term, day-to-day interaction with foreign Christians Muslims should see that their stereotypes of Western Christians are wrong.

This student, who has spent most of his adult life in the Middle East and with his wife raised two children there, can testify that people notice and evaluate everything, down to the smallest details of home life and family dynamics. Their acceptance or rejection of any invitation to visit your home or church is, in fact, largely based on this evaluation; the book is judged by its covers. Hence spiritual values must not just be taught but also be demonstrated in ways understood by Muslims. Much of this takes place at the down-to-earth level of home life. In the ideal Muslim family, "the husband/father is respected, gender-associated roles are distinct, women are modest, children are obedient… (yet) the wife is valued for herself, not just as a mother, and… is treated with respect by her husband and children" (Mallouhi 1997:103). Adeney underscores the need for ministry to Muslim women, in particular, to be pragmatic: "women's ministry has tended to be holistic, involving body, mind and spirit, as opposed to a mere cerebral presentation of theological propositions… As women have worked together, rested together, laughed together and cried together, de facto empathy has grown (2002:19, 20).

This kind of personal involvement in the lives of Muslims does not come easily to the project-orientated Boomer generation.

> Wouldn't it be nice to do our evangelism and church planting from a carpeted air-conditioned office somewhere in the US…? While radio, TV, email and distance

> education are all-important tools, we cannot rely on them to demonstrate the truth of the message. The gospel must be seen and touched and demonstrated as well as told (Thompson EMQ 2002:426).

6.3.3. Building a Muslim Background Protestant Church

"Excel in gifts that build up the church" (1 Corinthians 14:12)

The patterns of church growth in the New Testament is simple: "the Church grew by the addition of converts to existing congregations and by the organization of converts into new and fully independent congregations" (Boer 1975:221). Thus the importance of a loving community of believers is paramount. As noted before, a New Testament paradigm of missions for the Middle East must focus on the community of faith; it must, in other words, have an ecclesiastical base. Any ministry which does not seek to draw new converts into "the fellowship of the children of God", that is, the church, must be eschewed.

The great problem of OBP churches is their inability to truly integrate Muslim background converts. Ultimate authority in, say, Armenian evangelical churches remains in the hands of Armenians and hence, in Turkey, the growing number of MBPs were eventually forced to form their own union of *Türk Protestan Kiliseleri* (Turkish Protestant Churches) in which OBP churches are welcome to participate but in which they do not excerise undiluted authority (Pikkert 1982-2006).

Missionaries seeking to reach Muslims directly have struggled to develop loving, caring New Testament MBP churches. Reasons for this failure include linguistic inability, an orientation towards projects (notably parachurch organizations and the translation of foreign Christian literature), an inability to incorporate simple cultural norms into daily life, the fear of being taken advantage of, and incorrigible western individualism (Borthwick 2003:436). Yet the importance of such a body cannot be overstated, both in terms of proclaiming and in terms of incarnating Biblical truths.

Bosch's contention that "we need to retrieve togetherness, interdependence, 'symbiosis'… (that) the 'me generation' has to be superseded by the 'us generation' (Bosch 2000:362) is particularly true for the Middle East, where the decision making process tends to take place in a group, not as individuals, and where people believe, "we are, therefore I am" (Blincoe 1998:201).

> The concept of "I" hardly exists in the context of a tribal culture's value system: "we" (the tribe) predominates. Individuals define themselves entirely in terms of their tribe. They are first member of this or that tribe, then a Muslim, a Yezidi or a Christian… we should wait for multiple conversions that will happen in extended families… This group loyalty is normative, and need not be negativized. Muslims should normally become followers of Jesus in company with others in their group (Blincoe 1998:201)

Whether Blincoe's hopes for group conversion to provide instant support are realistic is debatable. What is certain is the vital importance of the community for the growth and nurture of new believers as a testimony to society. As R., K., and others testify, they need the caring support of a group of people who have also experienced some of the intimidation, threats, ostracism and even physical danger in order to stand firm in the faith (see Johnstone 2001:45). This new family of fellow believers may also need to assist them in finding employment or a marriage partner, former responsibilities of their blood families.

Interestingly, the house church movement has not really taken off in the Middle East. Many a missionary has started a little house group but, when feasible, converts eventually want an official place of worship—even if at missionary expense. They are more comfortable worshiping in a place designated for such a purpose than in a home. This is partly because the state tends to view secret religious meetings with suspicion, and partly because, traditionally, the mosque and, for Alawites, the *cemevi* (meeting house), as opposed to the home, is the place for worship as well as for communal activities on behalf of the larger body of believers. Bosch points out that "in a very real sense mission, in Paul's understanding, is saying to people from all backgrounds, 'Welcome to the new community, in which all are members of one family and bound together by love" (2003:168). That, at the very least and if at all possible, means having a public profile as a community of believers.

6.3.4. Discipling, Training and Relinquishing Responsibility

"Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19)
"Appoint elders in every town" (Titus 1:5)

From among those who come to faith missionaries must select a few key individuals to disciple if they are to move towards the goal of establishing a national fellowship of believers, i.e., a church with mature national eldership able to introduce Christianity into society at large. Bosch notes that the apostle Paul didn't "rush breathlessly through the Roman Empire as an announcer of the imminent end of the world", but founded local churches which he nurtured through occasional pastoral visits, lengthy letters, by sending coworkers, by interceding and counseling them on a great variety of practical matters, waiting for them to grow in their spiritual maturity (Bosch 2003:130-131). In other words, Paul was dedicated to training a mature national leadership, not simply to evangelism, and certainly not to becoming the minister of a congregation himself.

Today, too, modern missionaries must focus sharply on the nurturing of national believers who will give leadership to an emerging indigenous MBP movement. Informal but time consuming one-on-one discipleship and then more formal training programs through theological

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education by extension or at regional theological seminaries must equip potential church leadership for ministry. Just as missionaries need a clear understanding of the Christian message and its implications, so do MBPs seeking to reach their Muslim neighbours.

Attention must be given not only to the teaching that is given, but to the teachers themselves. "In the Islamic context, being a theologian means being a teacher whose life is carefully observed. Piety and the intellect are united. Thus theological education in the Middle East is not simply a transferring of knowledge, but also the emulation of exemplary teachers" (Meral 2005:212). The Western distinction between theology and applied theology cannot be maintained in the Middle East, where all theology is applied, where theology becomes convincing when it is lived more than when it makes sense.

Authentic development cannot take place without the eventual transfer of power. Emergent church leaders must be taken seriously, even if they take the church in directions with which missionaries may be uncomfortable. The missionary attitude should be one of "they must increase, we decrease". Too often, however, western missionaries appear "either unwilling or unable to transfer power to poor third-world peoples" (Bosch 2003:357). St. Paul was quick to transfer responsibility to local believers, in spite of the risks this entailed. This leads us to our last point…

6.3.5. Trusting God to Lead the National Church into all Truth

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth"
(John 16:13)

Missionaries must recognize that the same Holy Spirit whom they assume is guiding them into all truth (John 16:13) is doing the same with national church leaders, who see things from a different perspective, have had a different history, and who look at reality through the eyes of a different culture. They will, in other words, move in directions foreigners, cannot always fully comprehend. It takes a big missionary to work within such a structure and it takes faith in a big God (Thompson 2002:428).

The fact that the missionary community is internationalizing, and that national converts—and in some places national churches—are emerging are wholesome developments, checks and balances enabling the emerging Christian community to test the "Christianness" of its missionary actions on an ongoing basis. The input of national converts into how New Testament teachings should be applied at the grass-roots level of strategy formulation, and their involvement in consequent implementation must be taken seriously. Only then can the missionary "make sure

that Christ, not American culture and politics with either its good or its bad points, is our message to a lost world" (McDowel 2004).

The results can be refreshing. For example, national church leadership will, in all probability, give a different shape to the formation and teaching of Christian theology. Certain challenging realities are already beginning to take shape. According to Meral an MBP theology would, in the first place, be more concrete.

> One of the main reasons cited by converts from Christianity to Islam has been the felt lack of clear direction and simplicity in the Christian religion… Accustomed to living by a clear and direct religion, the Muslim background believer has to adjust to a more spiritually-oriented faith system. Yet Christian tradition has given us many spiritual disciplines which can help solve this problem. Practices such as lectio divina, chanting of biblical passages and fasting can greatly benefit converts from Islam. Middle Eastern theology will focus more on practical rather than the prepositional dimensions of Christianity. Converts will ask, "How can I live my faith?" rather than "What is saving faith?" (Meral 2005:213-214)

The Western tradition of isolating theology to the critical detachment of an academic discipline is didactically unacceptable to the Muslim mind.

> Middle Eastern Christians will do theology very different from their counterparts in the West. The Middle Eastern mind is not exclusively linear like the Western or cyclical like the Indian. Though it certainly includes aspects from both, the Middle Eastern mind is mainly romantic. Knowledge is not processed at the practical level but at the ideological or heart level. This mindset helps to explain, in part, why the Middle East has produced so many suicide bombers. We (Middle Easterners) give our lives to ideologies which speak to our hearts, regardless of the practical consequences. Thus a Middle Eastern theology will be directed primarily at the heart. It will use poetry, heart-felt stories and spiritual reflections. Instead of being systematic, it will be a romantic theology written in the tradition of the Confessions of St. Augustine. Systematic dogmatism will have to be replaced with a methodology that is not alien (Meral EMQ 2005:213).

Unlike the Western, post-Enlightenment mindset that radically dichotomized the sacred and secular, the Middle Eastern worldview is still open to the interconnectedness of the transcendent and physical worlds—hence its openness to leading and guidance though such phenomena as dreams and visions. One can argue that theology, in the biblical sense, was never meant to be mere abstract argument limited to the religious sphere, but an all-encompassing life system. Thus a Middle Eastern theology will arguably be much closer to the biblical understanding of theology. Everyone in the region frequently discusses theology and no one sees it as irrelevant to public affairs. A Middle Eastern theology will never be imprisoned in classrooms and difficult books full of words from other languages, but it will move freely in the market place and affect every aspect of life (Meral 2005:212-213).

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However important—if little acknowledged—the missionary heritage is as part of the Middle East's socio-cultural heritage, we conclude with the somewhat sobering observation that in the course of two centuries missionaries seemed to play but an indirect role in Muslims embracing the Protestant expression of the Christian faith. Even the testimonies of converts during the modern era rarely make mention of them; conversions often take forms that baffle the missionary. In the end, missionaries are forced to confess that any success is not due to their superior methods but to the sovereign grace of God whose Holy Spirit causes people to put their hope in the atoning life and death of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Christian Scriptures.

> If there has been much disobedience perpetrated in the spirit of obedience, if there have been missions by the sword, by political power, by privileged position, by dollars, pounds, guilders, francs and Reichsmarks, if there have been, and if there are, missions based on the notion of white superiority, of western individualism, of the finality of western Christendom, if our methods have often quenched and grieved the Spirit—all this God forgives and overcomes, and even uses, because there was in it all an element of obedience which He does not despise. It is not we who gather the Church, but He, through His word and Spirit. We may be bound by our limited vision, the Spirit is not bound. The perfect Means, availing Himself of our very imperfect means, will achieve the perfect End that lies very far beyond the horizon of the imperfect ends we envision. This is the hope of the missionary community (Boer 1975:208).

Ultimately, Muslims, for their part, become Christians because they sense it is an act of obedience to God. "Converts… are convinced that they are guided by God, called by him, in the strict sense of the term" (Gaudeul 1999:219). Looked at from another perspective, the Spirit, through a variety of means, draws these people to Himself to give them eternal life.

We have assumed that all missionaries are men and women of prayer and faith who will pursue their calling, even in the face of few tangible results. Mission work in the Near East is, in Zebiri's words, not for the fainthearted (2000:95). They must never lose sight of the truth that God has promised to call a people to Himself and to build His church. Faith in the sovereignty of God, by His Spirit, to achieve this purposes will dispel the notion that Muslims are too hard, too resistant to embrace the Christian message. That, however, tends to happen only in places where—to the best of its understanding and ability, and within the parameters open to it—the community of faith seeks to preach, live core Christian truths, and strives to create local, loving and well-taught New Testament-like churches.

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