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# “No, indeed, we do not go there for the liking of the thing at all”

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The representation of the Ottoman Empire in the memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell

Pro gradu

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Tässä tutkielmassa tarkastelen kahden amerikkalaisen lähetysaarnaan, Pliny Fiskin ja William Goodellin, muistelmien välittämää representaatiota Ottomaanien valtakunnasta. Ottomaanien valtakunta oli 1800-luvulla, jolloin myös tutkimuskohteena olevien muistelmien päähenkilöt olivat aktiivisia, tuore lähetyskenttä amerikkalaisille ja ylipäänsä protestanteille. Lähetystyöntekijät toimivat lähetysjärjestönsä <i>American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM)</i> kautta, liittyen näin osaksi laajempaa ilmiötä, kun amerikkalaiset lähetystyöntekijät levittäytyivät Lähi-itään ja muualle maailmaan. Heidän muistelmansa tarjoavat Ottomaanien valtakunnan kuvauksia, jotka vaikuttivat ymmärrykseen, joka syntyi Yhdysvalloissa Ottomaanien valtakunnasta. Sekä Fiskin ja Goodellin arvostettu asema lähetystyöntekijöinä että heidän ajoituksensa eräänä ensimmäisistä amerikkalaisista Ottomaanien valtakunnassa voimistavat heidän muistelmiensa vaikutusvaltaisuutta.</p> <p>Tutkielmassani analysoin muistelmien sisältöä, niin katkemia lähetystyöntekijöiden kirjeistä kuin toimittajan huomautuksia, niiden Ottomaanien valtakunnasta luomien representaatioiden kautta. Tutkielma vertailee muistelmien esittämää representaatiota Ottomaanien valtakunnasta Edward W. Saidin kritisoimaan orientalismin representaatioon. Tutkielmassani tarkastelen Ottomaanien valtakuntaa valtiona ja ottomaanien hallitsemana yhteiskuntana, minkä lisäksi analysoin suurimpien muistelmassa esiintyvien etnisten ja uskonnollisten ryhmien eli muslimien, kreikkalaisten, juutalaisten, armenialaisten ja katolilaisten representaatioita.</p> <p>Tutkielmassani totean, että muistelmien representaatio Ottomaanien valtakunnasta noudattaa joiltain osin Saidin kritisoimaa orientalismin representaatiota, mutta siihen löytyy myös poikkeuksia. Ottomaanien valtakuntaa kuvataan julmaksi ja barbaariseksi paikaksi, jossa länsimainen kristitty oleskelee vain velvollisuudesta. Ottomaanin hallintoa myös kehuaan uskonnonvapauden ja kansalaisoikeuksien parantamisesta, ja muutamat ottomaanin hallinnon edustajat esitetään positiivisessa valossa. Muslimit kuvataan pääosin väkivaltaisina ja tietämättöminä, mutta islam saa osakseen myös hyväksyviä kommentteja. Juutalaiset kuvataan erillisenä ryhmänä, jonka penseyttä lähetysaarnaanien oppia kohtaan korostetaan. Kreikkalaiset ja armenialaiset kuvataan "nimellisinä" kristittyinä, joiden kirkot suhtautuvat pääosin vihamielisesti uuteen oppiin. Katoliset kuvataan lähetystyöntekijöiden pääasiallisina vastustajina, jotka pyrkivät vaikeuttamaan lähetystyötä kaikin keinoin.</p>	
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Sources, research questions and context to the study

This study is going to examine the representations of the Ottoman Empire in the memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell, who were both missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABFCM) in the Ottoman Empire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Fisk's work lasted from 1820 until his death in 1825, and Goodell's work in the Empire spanned from 1823 to 1865, with his two years' visit in the United States (1851-1853) included within this period.

This study's focus on the representations has themes that link it to the ideas introduced in Edward W. Said's classic work "*Orientalism*". The idea of "the Orient" was prominent in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the time when the missionary memoirs analyzed in this study were published. Said's argument is that the Europeans constructed a representation of "the Orient" as "East", which resembled "the other" to the European's understanding of the West. The "East" was seen as something inferior to the understanding of the "West" the Europeans promoted. Lord Cromer's view on Arabs and "Orientals", presented in Said's work, is a good example of this phenomenon, as Cromer sees them in general as lazy, cruel, born liars and unable to even grasp the function of walkways with the same aptitude Cromer attributed to Western people. In the same way the characterization of Arab psyche by Harold W. Glidden portray all Arabs as inhabiting traits that are opposite to the traits of rationality, liberality, peacefulness and logicity he attributes to Western people. Said's critique of the concept of "the East" as a constructed representation by Europeans finds resonance within these memoirs, as they were part of the material out of which the concept of "the Orient" was formed.

There have been several studies of the missionary activity of the ABCFM in the Ottoman Empire. John Hubers' work on Pliny Fisk, *I Am a Pilgrim, a Traveler, a Stranger: Exploring the Life and Mind of the First American Missionary to the Middle East, the Rev. Pliny Fisk (1792-1825)*, is an extensive study of the intellectual development of Fisk before and after he started his missionary work.

At the writing of this study, there is no study focusing exclusively on William Goodell, but his life and work have been studied by Bilal Ozaslan in his work titled *The Quest for a New Reformation: Re-Making of Religious Perceptions in the Early History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Ottoman Near East, 1820-1870*, which is an extensive work on the period when both Fisk and Goodell worked in the Ottoman Empire.

Another work of importance regarding the work of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell is Ussama S. Makdisi's study, titled *American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East*. Its focus on the death of As'ad Shidyaq as a singular event of great importance that contributed to changes in the relations between the Americans and the Arabs discusses the changes the American missionaries introduced to the Ottoman lands by their arrival and work, pointing out the long-lasting effects of the missionaries of the ABCFM, including Fisk and Goodell.

All of these works study the missionaries of the American Board, but there are none which study the representations the memoirs of the said missionaries offer. The concept of representation is part of Said's book, which links this study to the larger discussion about the representation of "the Orient", which has been going on at various intensity since the late 1970's. Another perspective for the justification of this study is the concept of "reflex influence", studied by Charles A. Maxfield in his thesis *The Reflex influence of missions: the domestic operations of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1850*.

The concept of "reflex influence" originated within the American missionary establishment, meaning the influence missionary literature and the promotion of missionary work had on public opinion. As the missionary enterprise was publicized to a growing degree, this was thought to influence more people to take part in the work of the missionary enterprise. The missionary memoirs had another goal in addition to celebrating and preserving the names of the missionaries. They included fascinating stories from the Orient and commentaries and observations of the Ottoman Empire, which attracted more people to issues regarding the missionary work, thus offering the possibility of

increased funding and interest towards missionary work. While these were their main objectives, the memoirs also offered a representation of the Ottoman Empire to the American and, to a degree, the British public.

The literature employed in this work also includes Mehmet Ali Dogan's dissertation "*American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) and 'Nominal Christians': Elias Riggs (1810-1901) and American Missionary Activities in the Ottoman Empire*", on the grounds that Dogan presents the history of the ABCFM in logical and comprehensive manner, and while the dissertation focuses on different aspects of missionary work than this study does, the information and background provided by Dogan's work are used in this study as well. For the background of this chapter, this study also includes two monographs which focus on the history and actions of the ABCFM. The first is William E. Strong's "*The Story of the American Board*", and the second is "*History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*" by Joseph Tracy. Both were written from within the missionary establishment, so their presentation of the history of the Board should be examined critically, with the understanding that they present the self-understanding of the missionary establishment and are not to be treated as objective research on the subject.

This study is driven by two research questions. The first is "*What kind of representation do the memoirs Pliny Fisk and William Goodell offer of the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants?*" and the second is "*How do the representations of two memoirs differ from each other, and in what ways are they similar?*".

In this study, the primary sources are the two memoirs, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M., Late Missionary to Palestine and Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell, D.D., Late missionary of the A.B.C.F.M in Constantinople*. Both memoirs were published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century after the death of the missionaries in question, Fisk's memoirs three years after his death in 1828 and Goodell's memoirs ten years after his death in 1877. While they both include a swathe of extracts from letters and other papers authored by the missionaries, they are edited versions, with the editors acting as the narrators, offering their

own thoughts and information on various issues from missionary stations to minaret calls. The editors, Alvan Bond<sup>1</sup> and Edward Dorr Griffin Prime<sup>2</sup>, note that they do not include everything authored by the missionaries in the memoirs for keeping the memoirs under a page limit. While the memoirs are not a complete representation of the missionaries' work, they filled that role in the missionary community, offering a representation of the Ottoman Empire in the process. Both of the editors are familiar with the missionary establishment in Northeastern United States, with their work as editors of two known missionaries from the region acting as evidence. Prime included some of his own experiences of the Ottoman Empire within the memoirs of Goodell, while Bond settled for providing background information on Fisk's work. It needs to be noted that the memoirs also offer representations of other religious and ethnic groups of the Empire besides those of Muslims, Greeks, Jews and Catholics that are discussed in the memoirs, but these four groups are the focus in this study because of the limited space in this study.

## 1.2. Method

To research the history of missionary work, it is essential to understand its fundamental dynamics. In this paper all missionary work is discussed in the framework of Protestant Christianity.

Missionary work is a term used of actions done by missionaries. Missionaries are persons who work in foreign lands, with a certain aim or objective which they wish to achieve. Their motivation is religious, and so is the nature of their actions. They usually work in an unfamiliar cultural environment with a populace and government/authorities that are either indifferent or hostile towards them and their task as a missionary. The Christian missionaries' religious motivation stems from

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<sup>1</sup> Alvan Bond (1793-1882) was a clergyman from Connecticut. In addition to the memoirs discussed in this study, he also wrote two histories of the Bible, and some addresses regarding the Second Congregational Church, of which he was the pastor.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Dorr Griffin Prime (1814-1891) was clergyman and a journalist from New York. He worked as an editor of the New York Observer, and traveled much on his time, including a trip around the world. His works contain a paper on the state of Ottoman Empire's civil and religious liberties. His brother, Samuel Irenaeus Prime, was an associate of William Goodell.

the basic tenets of Christianity. Christianity is a religion heavily weighted towards missionary work, in other words spreading the Christian religion to other people all around the world. For Christians, believing in Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven and to form a connection with God. That is the reason why Christians travel to foreign lands to spread their religion: to spread the knowledge about Jesus to the whole world<sup>3</sup>.

The nature of the missionary work can be investigated in various ways. In this study, it is dissected into four fundamental parts:

First, how is the missionary enterprise organized? The missionaries usually belong to a larger religious organization or society that assists the missionaries with their material and mental support. Material needs are usually funds or other equipment and tools. These tools can include a variety of things, for example an organ and a bell to a church in need of these. The missionaries are expected to report back and act according to the orders and instructions of the organization that sent them, which creates a situation where the community, for example the ABCFM, exerts influence over the individual missionaries. Missionaries also have influence on the Board as the primary workforce, granting them some independence in making decisions in the field. It should also be noted that the long distance between the missionaries and the Board and the technological standards of the 19<sup>th</sup> century meant that the communication by correspondence took time as the letters were being delivered, with periods of several weeks and even months before a letter reached its destination. This long interval gave both the missionaries and the missionary organization time to take independent action, such as make decisions on how the work should be prosecuted on their end.

Secondly, what is the relationship between the missionaries and other religious factions? This question is at the heart of the ideological thought in missionary work. The Ottoman Empire was historically a land of Islamic faith but there was also large minority of Christians belonging to either the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic or Oriental Orthodox churches. The missionaries were on a mission to

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<sup>3</sup> The missionaries' motivation for mission stems heavily from the Bible, see for example Matt. 28:18-20 and Mark. 16:15-16.



convert the non-Christian populace and reform all of the Christian churches that existed there prior to the arrival of the American missionaries.

Thirdly, how do the missionaries conduct themselves while prosecuting their mission? Missionary work is a task that has a conflictual nature. The missionaries' task is to spread their own faith, its tenets and teachings as the one and only way to salvation. This, naturally, leads missionaries to claim that religious thought that is not compatible with their faith is false, creating religious tension and conflict within the society in which the missionaries are active.

Lastly, what are regarded as the missionaries' objectives? The missionaries were on a mission to spread the Christian Gospel, to build churches and to bring people into the Christian faith. For many missionaries, this was seen as their life's purpose. Missionary work is regarded in most Christian teachings as something every Christian should be advancing so that eventually all people have heard the Christian Gospel, an objective set by Jesus Christ himself in the Bible.

Now that the fundamentals of missionary work have been expounded upon, and questions that should be considered in historical research involving missionary sources have been answered, the actual methods that should be employed with the missionary sources and research question should be looked at.

### **1.2.1. The missionary language**

This study employs the concept of *missionary language*, developed by the Congolese philosopher V.Y. Mudimbe and employed by Markku Hokkanen in his doctoral dissertation titled *Quests for health in colonial society: Scottish missionaries and medical culture in the Northern Malawi region, 1875-1930*. While Mudimbe's thoughts are thought-provoking, they do not fit into the framework of this study as well as those employed in Hokkanen's doctorate thesis. That is because Mudimbe talks about missionaries in the context of Africa and colonial power, whereas this study focuses on missionary work in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire.

According to Mudimbe, it should be considered that missionaries on average spend a long time with the native population, learning the language and gaining an existential understanding of local habits and customs<sup>4</sup>. On this point Mudimbe argues that “missionaries can be, to some degree, reliable witnesses of historical events in an African community, although their statements must be considered in the context of their mission and the framework of missionary language.”<sup>5</sup>

In addition to Mudimbe’s argument, there is also an essential point to which Hokkanen refers to as “tainted sources”<sup>6</sup>. Both Hokkanen and Seija Jalagin assert that official and published documents in the missionary field are always censored, first by the missionaries themselves when writing the letter, and then by the editor of the missionary journal in question<sup>7</sup>. This must be considered, and the historian must be careful when drawing conclusions from the sources.

This nature of official memoirs strengthens the justification of this study, as the imagery found in the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell is edited, with both memoirs being posthumous, thus giving the editor major control over the representation the memoirs offer of missionary work. While the memoirs’ adherence to objective presentation of the missionary work can and should be questioned, they offer a representation of the missionary life that the editors of the memoirs saw as something worth publishing to the audience of the missionary memoirs. When analyzing these representations, it is essential to understand that the missionaries had their own understanding of “the Orient”, as did their editors. The memoirs offer an influential representation of the Ottoman Empire to the readership of the missionary memoirs at least in the United States, and possibly in much of the English-speaking world.

This study is structured in the following way: first, chapter 2 provides background information on the lives of the missionaries and their missionary organization, the ABCFM. After this there are two chapters which focus on analyzing the representation of the Ottoman Empire from two different angles. In chapter 3, the

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<sup>4</sup> Hokkanen 2006, 36.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Hokkanen 2006, 36.

<sup>7</sup> Hokkanen 2006, 37-38; Jalagin 2007, 40-41.

focus is on the representation of the Ottoman government and those who represent it, while in chapter 4 the representation of the major groups of people in the Empire is discussed. Finally, the conclusions from the analysis are offered in chapter 5.

## 2. Background

In this chapter I aim to give the background of both the American Board and the missionaries Fisk and Goodell. I will give a general overview of the Board's history and activities, while focusing more on the area and timeline in which Fisk and Goodell worked. The events in the missionaries' lives that can be found in this chapter are arranged in a chronological order and they are based on the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell, complemented by other sources and research literature. The purpose of the background chapter is to give a general overview on the subjects of this study and their missionary organization, which explains the lack of analysis in this chapter.

### 2.1. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM)

Both Pliny Fisk and William Goodell were American missionaries working for a missionary organization called the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, abbreviated ABCFM. The Board was founded in 1810, and it would be followed by 24 other missionary societies within 60 years, all founded by evangelical Americans for the purpose of distributing Bibles, tracts and general work to further evangelical Christianity<sup>8</sup>.

The critical events for the founding of these organizations, with the ABCFM among them, were the major religious revivals in the United States dubbed "the Great Awakenings". These revivals swept over the American lands and caused the people to gather in religious meetings, found churches and lift the Christian religion to newfound heights in America.<sup>9</sup>

The history of the Board has been recorded in multiple letters, newspaper articles and documents. These include William E. Strong's monograph, entitled "*The Story of the American Board, An Account of The First Hundred Years of The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*" as well as Joseph

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<sup>8</sup> Dogan 2013, 21.

<sup>9</sup> Strong 1910, 8-9; Dogan 2013, 20-22.

Tracy's *"The History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission"*. ABCFM, the first missionary board in America, was founded in Massachusetts by a group of students of Andover Theological Seminary<sup>10</sup>, led by pastors Samuel Worcester<sup>11</sup> and Dr. Samuel Spring<sup>12</sup>. They established a group to discuss the formation of a missionary society.<sup>13</sup> With the help of the General Association of Massachusetts Proper<sup>14</sup>, the Board held its founding meeting in September 1810<sup>15</sup>.

The Board's theological doctrine was interdenominational. At the start it was composed of Massachusetts and Connecticut Congregationalists, but the Board quickly gathered members from Presbyterian and Reformed churches as well. While these churches founded their own foreign missionary boards in time, the Board continued to act as an interdenominational missionary society.<sup>16</sup>

According to the founders, the purpose of the Board was "to devise, adopt and prosecute ways and means for propagating the gospel among those who are destitute of the knowledge of Christianity."<sup>17</sup> The Board was organized in a simple way: the Board would have officers to act on its behalf: these positions changed over time, but at the beginning there were a president and a vice president of the Board, a recording secretary for making notes of meeting outcomes, a corresponding secretary to manage the correspondence of the Board, a treasurer to manage the funds and an auditor to supervise the Board's actions. The decision-making body of the Board was the Prudential Committee, comprised of three members at the start, which made the decisions regarding the Board's

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<sup>10</sup> Dogan 2013, 26. Andover would become a central institution in training the missionaries of the Board.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Austin Worcester (1778-1859) was a Presbyterian minister and a missionary of the Board to the Cherokees in Georgia and Oklahoma.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Spring (1746-1819) was a Congregationalist minister and one of the founders of Andover Theology Seminar.

<sup>13</sup> Strong 1910, 5; Dogan 2013, 25. Among this group were the students of Andover who had initiated the founding of the Board: Adoniram Judson Jr., Samuel Nott Jr., Samuel J. Mills and Samuel Newell.

<sup>14</sup> Strong 1910, 3. The Association was a body of conservative Congregational ministers in New England.

<sup>15</sup> Strong 1910, 7; Dogan 2013, 26,

<sup>16</sup> Dogan 2013, 26.

<sup>17</sup> Tracy 1842, 27.

course of action. The Board consisted of nine members at the start.<sup>18</sup> The Board would grow fast, amassing funds as a testament to the religious fervor felt by a large group of Americans, both wealthy and poor, as well as by various societies and organizations. Acquiring donations would become the Board's financial backbone for decades to come, as with most missionary organizations.<sup>19</sup>

The Board's missionary activities began with the sending of the Judsons and the Newells to Calcutta, India in 1811. From here on out, the Board's area of operation would grow from the Sandwich Isles (Hawaii) to China and Africa, not to forget the missionary work aimed towards native American tribes<sup>20</sup>. ACFM's presence in the Near East began in 1819 with the sending of Levi Parsons and Pliny Fisk, the pioneers to the region. The Board chose the area for their new mission for multiple reasons: some agents of the Board had urged the Board to open missionary stations there, the Board had travelers of the region describing the region as devoid of evangelical Christianity and there were Muslims, oriental Christians and Jews for the Board to reach out to<sup>21</sup>.

The mission of the Board grew in the Near East. Many missionaries labored in the region at the Board's behest, establishing schools, colleges and churches.<sup>22</sup> The Board's work, like all missionary work in the Ottoman lands, declined heavily with the start of the First World War, when missionary enterprises in the region were closed or heavily restricted<sup>23</sup>.

### **3.2. Pliny Fisk**

The future missionary pioneer to the lands of the Ottoman Empire, Pliny Fisk, was born 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1792 in Shelburne, Massachusetts. Fisk's parents were regarded as pious Christians, and their son as an excellent student, especially in mathematics. Fisk reportedly became a self-realized Christian at the age of sixteen in 1808 after a deep inspection of himself and reflections on his faith. Fisk deemed himself to be cured by God from an illness when he was young, although

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<sup>18</sup> Tracy 1842, 26-27.

<sup>19</sup> Dogan 2013, 30.

<sup>20</sup> Strong 1910, 165; Dogan 2013, 31.

<sup>21</sup> Strong 1910, 80-81; Dogan 2013, 31-34.

<sup>22</sup> Dogan 2013, 167.

<sup>23</sup> Dogan 2013, 179.

it is not clear what he was afflicted with. Fisk's father noted he had an interest towards missionary work from a young age, holding faith in high regard since he was young. After finishing his preparatory studies, Fisk was accepted to Middlebury College in Vermont in 1811.<sup>24</sup>

Fisk is noted to have been interested in natural sciences, not classical languages like Latin or Greek, as would be expected of a theologian. Piety was still his highest interest, and his fear of distancing himself from God made him to not pursue natural sciences farther, instead focusing on theology. Fisk was not from a wealthy family, but he managed to educate himself despite the lack of financial support. Although he graduated from college in 1814, he could not attend a theological seminar because of the debt he had accumulated. He studied theology under Reverend Packard, and after being examined by an association of Congregational ministers called the Franklin Association, Fisk was granted the license to preach the Gospel.<sup>25</sup>

Fisk entered the Andover Theological Seminary in 1815 with the help of charity funds. In the seminary Fisk was noted to be a devout Christian who studied his Scripture fervently, prayed in silence for a long period of time and fasted regularly. He also founded several Bible study groups while at Andover. His studies at Andover ended in September 1818, and he and Levi Parsons were appointed to the Palestine missionary station of the ABCFM in the same month. It was decided by the Board that Fisk should work one year as an agent of the Board, touring the southern United States promoting missionary causes and gathering funds for the endeavor. After his ordination for this task in November 1818, he sailed to Savannah, Georgia to begin his work.<sup>26</sup>

Fisk's sojourn in the South commenced with visits to Savannah, St. Mary and Raleigh. His welcome was not warm, but he managed to gather donations for the Board and establish societies to support schools. He also conversed with slaves numerous times and met John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State, in

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<sup>24</sup> Bond 1828, 1-20.

<sup>25</sup> Bond 1828, 20-27.

<sup>26</sup> Bond 1828, 31-87.

Washington D.C. Adams promised to furnish Fisk with letters of introduction for his journey to the Ottoman Empire. In July 1819 Fisk returned to Andover to study before his departure to the Empire. After Fisk and Parsons had met each other, they traveled to Boston in October to prepare for their voyage. They departed aboard *Sally Ann* from Boston in November 1819 towards Smyrna (Izmir). The ship reached Malta in 1819 and after setting sail a second time they landed in Smyrna in 1820.<sup>27</sup>

The missionaries met with English priests and European merchants and began their work almost immediately. They stayed in Smyrna for a few months while commencing missionary work but in May they traveled to the island of Scio (Chios) in search of a summer residence. The missionaries' first months in Smyrna and Scio consisted of learning languages, collecting information from the region and distributing Bibles and tracts<sup>28</sup>. A Greek bishop named Bambas helped them learn modern Greek, and a printing press in Scio allowed them to print tracts. Fisk had to visit a doctor in August about some health issues. They visited schools and taught children on Scio, had theological debates with the Catholics and Greeks and visiting monasteries and nunneries. After five months they departed Scio for Smyrna in October.<sup>29</sup>

Fisk and Parsons embarked on a journey to visit the Seven Churches of Asia<sup>30</sup>, the trip encompassing approximately 300 miles. On their travels they used the letters of introduction they had been granted from the United States, Smyrna and Scio, obtaining help and new letters of introduction to be used in the future. They visited Pergamon, Thyatira (Akhisar), Sardis and Philadelphia (Alasehir). They had planned to visit Laodicea and Ephesus, but Parsons was so heavily afflicted with illness that they were forced to head straight back to Smyrna. Afterwards Fisk visited Ephesus without Parsons.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Bond 1828, 88-107.

<sup>28</sup> The distribution of religious literature usually consisted of giving away tracts and selling of Bibles, New Testaments and Psalters.

<sup>29</sup> Bond 1828, 108-120.

<sup>30</sup> The Seven Churches of Asia are mentioned in the New Testament as the churches the Apostle John writes to in Revelations regarding the second coming of Christ.

<sup>31</sup> Bond 1828, 121-139.



After some thought Fisk and Parsons decided to split from each other: Fisk stayed in Smyrna to study while Parsons traveled to Jerusalem in order to find a place for a permanent missionary post. The first months of the following year Fisk worked by distributing religious literature while visiting schools and villages in and around Smyrna. The anticipation and commencement of the Greek War of Independence, which commenced in 1821<sup>32</sup>, caused difficulties in his work and he witnessed ethnic violence all around him. In June 1821 Fisk heard of a massacre of Europeans that had commenced in the village of Bournabat<sup>33</sup>. After this the European consuls in Smyrna urged the European expatriates to board ships for safety. Fisk did so and later heard tales of villages being burnt and women being sold on a market in Smyrna.<sup>34</sup>

A plague crept into Smyrna, and Fisk and others were forced into a quarantine. Fisk continued working, now preaching sermons among his other activities. Parsons had been very ill while they had been separated but had recovered from his disease and he arrived in Smyrna in December 1821. When the English chaplain who had ministered for the English in Smyrna returned to England, Fisk preached in the English chapel in his stead. The missionaries decided to travel to somewhere with a warmer climate to help with Parsons' feeble health, and so they boarded a ship bound for Egypt. Fisk took care of Parsons for the first weeks of their journey. They took all these measures to restore Parsons' health, but to no avail, as Parsons perished in Alexandria in 1822.<sup>35</sup>

Fisk continued to work in Egypt: he preached, distributed religious literature and discussed religious matters with Copts<sup>36</sup>, Jews and other people of interest. Fisk moved to Cairo and contemplated a journey to Judea, Jaffa or Damietta. When the news of Daniel Temple's arrival to Malta reached him, he decided to travel

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<sup>32</sup> The Greek War of Independence (1821-1832), also known as the Greek Revolution, was a successful war of independence waged by the Greek revolutionaries. Aiding the Greeks were also several European powers, notably England and France.

<sup>33</sup> Bond 1828, 153. It was later learned the report was exaggerated.

<sup>34</sup> Bond 1828, 140-153.

<sup>35</sup> Bond 1828, 154-182.

<sup>36</sup> The Copts are an ethnoreligious group who primarily inhabit the modern Egypt. Most Copts are members of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, which is part of the Oriental Orthodox communion, while the Coptic Catholic Church is an Eastern Catholic church in full communion with the Catholic Church.

there instead. While in Malta, Fisk commenced missionary work in the same way as he had done before. After meeting Jonas King, the missionary the Board had sent to replace Parsons, they departed for Egypt in 1823 accompanied with Wolff, a Polish Jew had converted to Christianity and had come to Ottoman lands as a missionary to the Jews. After ten days in Alexandria they left for Cairo and Rosetta.<sup>37</sup>

After working in Cairo, they decided to visit Upper Egypt via the Nile. They reached Thebes and stayed there a couple of days, sailing back to Cairo after visiting Gornon by land.<sup>38</sup>

The missionaries met the emir Bashir Shihab II of Lebanon in a retreat near Cairo, accompanied by Druze<sup>39</sup> and Maronite<sup>40</sup> servants and soldiers. The missionaries embarked on their journey to Jerusalem through the desert in 1823. They assembled with other travelers into a caravan which numbered 74 people. After they entered Palestine the caravan split in half. The part of the caravan with the missionaries headed for Gaza. They were harassed by Bedouins, safely reaching Gaza on the next day, continuing to Jaffa and Ramla afterwards.<sup>41</sup>

After a few days of travel, they entered the city of Jerusalem. The missionaries visited the biblical sites of the city and distributed religious literature. They visited Bethlehem and explored the surroundings of Jerusalem, but in May they were brought in front of a judge in Jerusalem. They were accused by a dervish<sup>42</sup> they had met on the caravan of having stolen an item from him, but they were acquitted of all charges. They visited the Dead Sea, the Jordan and the city of Jericho while visiting numerous churches, convents and other religious sites. After this, Fisk and King started their journey towards Beirut and Mount Lebanon.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Bond 1828, 183-238.

<sup>38</sup> Bond 1828, 239-259.

<sup>39</sup> The Druze are an ethnoreligious group found mainly in Lebanon and southern Syria, who practice the Druze faith, for more see Chatty 2013.

<sup>40</sup> The Maronite Church is an Eastern Catholic Church, officially known as the Syriac Maronite Church of Antioch. The patriarch acts as the head of the church, and the church ministers the Levant and especially the area around Mount Lebanon.

<sup>41</sup> Bond 1828, 260-278.

<sup>42</sup> A dervish is an ascetic Muslim associated with Sufism, the branch of mysticism in Islam.

<sup>43</sup> Bond 1828, 279-313.

King and Fisk traveled through Ramla, Jaffa, Acre, Tyre (Sour) and Sidon (Saide) before they reached Beirut. They established a missionary post in Beirut and met with the emir Bashir Shihab on Mount Lebanon. Fisk, Wolff and King traveled to Tripoli on the coast of Lebanon, Fisk and King returning to Jerusalem afterwards. During their travels they visited places of interest in the area around Nazareth, including the ruined city of Capernaum. They also encountered Samaritans and discussed the Samaritan faith<sup>44,45</sup>

While in Jerusalem, the missionaries received a large shipment of literature from the printing press at Malta. However, they had gathered an opposition in the city, and they were brought before a judge for distributing religious literature. After a long investigation and a series of discussions with the officials, the missionaries were permitted to continue their work. They traveled to Beirut, and Fisk was afflicted by an illness which left him in physically weak.<sup>46</sup>

King and Fisk journeyed to Damascus where they lodged with Maronites. The missionaries continued their travels to Aleppo, visiting also the cities of Homs and Hamah. Fisk was occupied by his studies in Arabic during this time, as the missionaries had more time on their hands since owning and distributing missionary religious literature was forbidden in most cities at the time by the order of the Sultan. The missionaries left Aleppo for Beirut visiting Antioch and Latakia on their way there. The missionaries could not travel from Latakia to Tripoli because of hostilities between Muslims and Ansareahs<sup>47</sup>. They chose to travel by water, but storms forced them to eventually land in the city of Tartous, from where they finally reached Tripoli. They arrived in Beirut, with Fisk and King deciding to head to Jerusalem for the winter, stopping on the way at Jaffa. They arrived in Jerusalem, welcomed with warm greetings by the Greeks. The pasha of Damascus entered the city in April to gather tribute, and his soldiers induced chaos in the city, entering houses by force, abusing the people. Pasha's soldiers

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<sup>44</sup> The Samaritans are an ethnoreligious group found in the Levant. The religion the Samaritans practice is called Samaritanism which shares many religious tenets with Judaism.

<sup>45</sup> Bond 1828, 314-358.

<sup>46</sup> Bond 1828, 359-379.

<sup>47</sup> "Ansareahs" (Ansaris), better known as Alawites or Alawis, are an ethnoreligious group found in Syria. Alawism encompasses a separate religion from Islam, although it has strong roots in Shi'a Islam.

threatened the missionaries with violence as they were attending their monthly concert of prayer, an event where Christians gathered to pray and worship together. There was a conflict among the Muslims which led to the detainment of Fisk and King. The conflict was soon resolved, and Fisk left the city for the last time.<sup>48</sup>

After arriving to Beirut, Fisk studied Arabic and worked to establish a grammatical school for those learning Arabic. A swath of illness engulfed Beirut, claiming many lives. Among those who succumbed to the disease was Pliny Fisk, who had taken care of those who had died before him, including his colleague Isaac Bird. After a period of illness, Pliny Fisk parted this world on 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1825, with many people left to mourn his passing.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.2. William Goodell

William Goodell, who was born 14<sup>th</sup> of February 1792 in Templeton, Massachusetts<sup>50</sup>, was a long-time missionary of the Board at Constantinople. He hailed from the Northeastern United States, which he without fault referred to as New England. He was born in an evidently religious home:

*"In looking back to the days of my boyhood, few scenes come up so vividly to my mind as those connected with our Sabbath days and our going to church. Although we lived three miles from the house of God, we were never absent on the Sabbath day. Be it wet or dry, cold or hot, we were always there, and the more tempestuous the weather, the earlier we were found in our places."<sup>51</sup>*

The religiosity of his parents is further evidenced in that he was taught the prayers "Our Father" and "As I lay me", and he had to learn the Assembly's Catechism<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Bond 1828, 380-404.

<sup>49</sup> Bond 1828, 405-437.

<sup>50</sup> Prime 1877, 1-2; Dogan 2013, 199.

<sup>51</sup> Prime 1877, 14.

<sup>52</sup> i.e. The Westminster Shorter Catechism: a catechism created by English and Scottish theologians for the Church of England, complete version was published in 1648.

by heart. Although it was probably standard at the time, Goodell placed a great emphasis on them:

*"When dinner was over, we were all summoned to the Assembly's Catechism, which we were expected to repeat verbatim et literatim from "What is the chief end of man?" to the end of the primer. Our father asked the questions with book in hand, and we were expected to answer as promptly without the book as he asked with it. And, indeed, we were so familiar with the Catechism, that we could not only repeat the Ten Commandments, with all that was required, and all that was forbidden, together with the reasons annexed, but would also answer the three great questions: What is justification? adoption? and sanctification? and tell also 'the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them. When these recitations were ended, we had family prayers, and by that time we were sufficiently fatigued to retire to our slumbers."<sup>53</sup>*

He gave emotional obituaries to both his father and mother, the former in a tract titled "The Missionary's Father"<sup>54</sup>. Goodell adored his father, as can be evidenced by his recollection of him:

*"In all his intercourse with his neighbors, in the way of barter and trade, he always seemed to be more careful lest their interests should suffer than lest his own should, —looking on their side with his good eye, if one was better than the other, and on his own side with his evil one. And the same conscientiousness he observed in his dealings with a stranger. And judging from my early impressions, I should think that he never spoke to a stranger, or seldom saw one, without lifting up his heart in prayer for him. He was full of the millennium and of the missionary spirit long before the existence of*

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<sup>53</sup> Prime 1877, 15.

<sup>54</sup> Prime 1877, 2-10.

*the " Missionary Herald," or of the American Board, or of the " Panoplist" even, —*<sup>55</sup>

As for Goodell's siblings, the information about them is scarce. Goodell attests there were four sons and four daughters that were alive at the time of their mother's death<sup>56</sup>. Some of them died before Goodell. Joel, Nathan, Phebe and Lydia are mentioned by name in the memoirs<sup>57</sup>. On Goodell's wider family Prime offers some descriptions. Most notable of them is Solomon Goodell, Goodell's great-uncle, who donated funds for the work of the ABCFM and helped Goodell with financing his studies and sending him to the Phillips Academy<sup>58</sup>.

Goodell found himself as part of Christian revival in 1811. This event marked the start of his public Christian life and devotion to Christianity, as described by Prime:

*"A revival in his native town the early part of the year 1811 was the occasion of his publicly declaring himself on the Lord's side; but even then he did not seem to become fully awake to the great ends of a Christian life. It was not until he was brought in contact with educated minds devoted to the service of the Redeemer that he began to exhibit that consecration of spirit which so signally marked his subsequent career."*<sup>59</sup>

Goodell attested that his body was so weak from an early age that he could not work in any manual labor. Goodell's family pushed him towards attaining an education. It was thought that he could teach little children, because *"I could read with fluency, and my memory was so retentive that I readily learned any thing (sic) by heart."*<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Prime 1877, 8-9.

<sup>56</sup> Prime 1877, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Prime 1877, 193, 394-395, 462.

<sup>58</sup> Prime 1877, 11-14.

<sup>59</sup> Prime 1877, 22.

<sup>60</sup> Prime 1877, 23.

Goodell was taken into Phillips Academy<sup>61</sup> by the preceptor John Adams. Goodell impressed Adams with his work, and Goodell thought highly of Adams and his family<sup>62</sup>. While in the Academy, Goodell befriended Daniel Temple, his future colleague. He was recommended to enter Dartmouth College<sup>63</sup> after the completion of his preparatory studies, and with Adams' help he and Temple started attending Dartmouth in 1813<sup>64</sup>. Goodell's financial worries eased at Dartmouth because he earned the money that he needed teaching in schools during the winter breaks. Goodell graduated from Dartmouth in 1817 with the appointment of Greek Oratory, meaning he was the third-highest graduate that year. Goodell claimed that his feeble strength and lack of studying restrained him as a student<sup>65</sup>. Goodell attended two ordinations of missionaries in Massachusetts: first in Tabernacle Church in Salem<sup>66</sup> and then at Newburyport in 1815. These ordinations had a deep impact on him and roused his interest towards the missionary life. The death of Harriet Newell, one of the Board's first missionaries, also influenced him.<sup>67</sup>

When his studies were complete in Dartmouth College, he left for the Theology Seminar at Andover, starting his studies in 1815. This event was one of the pivotal moments of Goodell's life: In Andover he found his path as a missionary and formed many friendships that would endure his whole life. He also attended the ordination of missionaries, Pliny Fisk and Levi Spaulding among others, at Salem in 1818.<sup>68</sup>

While visiting Holden in Massachusetts, Goodell met a young woman named Abigail Perkins Davis. Goodell was smitten with her, and they got married in 1822, after four years of mutual correspondence and visitations<sup>69</sup>. Abigail Goodell,

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<sup>61</sup> Phillips Academy is the oldest incorporated high school in the United States (founded 1778), and it is considered as an elite and prestigious school that boasts notable alumni, such as two Presidents of the United States: George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush.

<sup>62</sup> Prime 1877, 28.

<sup>63</sup> Dartmouth College is now one of the elite and prestigious Ivy League institutions, founded in 1769. At Goodell's time it was, however, a small and relatively unnoted college.

<sup>64</sup> Prime 1877, 31.

<sup>65</sup> Prime 1877, 32-42.

<sup>66</sup> This was the ordination of the Board's first missionaries: Newells and Judsons.

<sup>67</sup> Prime 1877, 43-46.

<sup>68</sup> Prime 1877, 47-51.

<sup>69</sup> Prime 1877, 52-53.

hereafter exclusively referred to as Mrs. Goodell in the memoirs, was a woman who stayed with Goodell for the rest of his life, being a great asset in missionary work. Or as Prime more eloquently put it:

*"The beloved wife of his youth was the cherished companion of his whole subsequent life, the faithful and efficient helper in all his labors, and such an earthly consolation and joy as is rarely given to man in this vale of tears."*<sup>70</sup>

Goodell worked as a home missionary of the Board during his years at the Theological Seminary. He was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1820, a short time before completing his studies at the Seminary<sup>71</sup>. He wrote an article to the first issue of "The Missionary", detailing the state of Armenia as a missionary field<sup>72</sup>. Goodell felt that he would be ready to start missionary work, but the Board's financial condition did not allow it. He agreed to act as an agent of the Board for the year 1821, visiting churches to spread information about the foreign missions of the Board and gathering donations towards executing these missionary endeavors. After completing his studies at Andover in the fall of 1820, he spent the rest of the year at Dartmouth attending medical lectures. At the start of the new year, Goodell traveled from Massachusetts from town to town, visiting the states of New York, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. He arrived at the missionary stations of Mayhew and Brainerd and from there accompanied the corresponding secretary Jeremiah Evarts back to Massachusetts in 1822.

Goodell was ordained as a missionary of the Board to Palestine in September 1822. The Goodells, married not even a month earlier, set sail from New York. Their destination was the island of Malta. where they arrived in January 1823<sup>73</sup>. In Malta, the missionaries embarking to the missionary stations in the Ottoman

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<sup>70</sup> Prime 1877, 72.

<sup>71</sup> Prime 1877, 62-63.

<sup>72</sup> Prime 1877, 64.

<sup>73</sup> Prime 1877, 72-74.



Empire were given training and time to study before beginning their task. The Goodells arrived in Beirut in November 1823. On their way they passed Cyprus, endured a storm and were stopped by a Greek privateer. The missionaries endured no harm and distributed evangelical tracts to the Greeks.<sup>74</sup>

In Beirut, the missionaries lodged within the English ambassador's home and met with Jonas King, while Pliny Fisk was at Jerusalem. Goodell heard that the Jerusalem area, where they had set their destination, was restless and so they decided to stay the winter in Beirut. While in Beirut, Goodell studied the local languages and preached the Gospel where he could, mingling with the local populace.<sup>75</sup>

The Greek War of Independence was ongoing during the missionaries' stay, with the war reaching Beirut. The city was set upon by Greek vessels, and chaos ensued. Goodell noted a blessing in these events: the Maronite bishop who had prepared a universal excommunication order was interrupted and forced to flee, while the Armenian patriarch who had been granted a firman<sup>76</sup> against the missionaries had his property destroyed in Constantinople.<sup>77</sup>

After these dramatic events, the missionaries' work continued in similar conditions as before the incident. The missionaries opened schools as planned<sup>78</sup>: before close of the year 1826, 13 schools operated with 700 pupils, 100 of them girls. The case of "Asaad Shidiak" (As'ad Shidyaq) was discussed by the missionaries at the time. He was a Maronite scholar and the first Arab convert to Protestantism, who became a well-publicized martyr for the Protestants, who became an important figure to the Protestants of the Empire. The people the missionaries had worked with were ordered to end all communication with them by Catholic and Greek churches, with Greek threats of excommunication and bastinadoing, which is a punishment involving the caning of a person's feet. A

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<sup>74</sup> Prime 1877, 74-79.

<sup>75</sup> Prime 1877, 79-84.

<sup>76</sup> An edict from Sultan himself, which modifies national policy to the desired effect.

<sup>77</sup> Prime 1877, 85-93.

<sup>78</sup> See Dogan 2013, Makdisi 2006, Ozaslan 2010.

plague descended on Beirut in May 1827 and this, together with fears of Muhammad Ali's possible invasion, eased the persecution. After the battle of Navarino, where the Greeks were victorious with support from Western powers, the missionaries' situation in the Ottoman Empire worsened. The missionaries moved to a retreat the Goodell called "Mansooreea"<sup>79</sup> although his wife Abigail was very ill. The plague emerged for a second time in Beirut, and with the straining of diplomatic relationships between the Ottoman Empire and the Western powers, the missionaries were forced to relocate back to Malta in May 1828.<sup>80</sup>

In Malta the missionaries were quarantined for a month. After this Goodell worked at the printing press, while Temple was visiting the States and Bird traveled the Barbary Coast. He also focused on translation work and his family, living undisturbed for some time. The missionary families of Birds and Whitings sailed to Beirut in 1830, while Goodell was left to work in Malta. Goodell had started the translation of the New Testament into Armeno-Turkish<sup>81</sup>, finishing the work in Malta in 1830, with printing started in the same year.<sup>82</sup>

The Goodells were ordered by the Board to sail to Constantinople in April 1831 to commence the missionary work within the Armenian populace. The Goodells settled in a suburb of the city of Pera. Soon after arrival they suffered a great fire which stripped them of almost all their belongings, with Pera almost entirely destroyed. The Goodells received financial aid from American merchants in Smyrna and friends in the United States. In the aftermath of the fire they moved to a village called Buyuk-Déré. Goodell befriended Commodore David Porter, the American diplomat in the Ottoman capital. When the Goodells' son Constantine Washington was born, they moved to live with the Commodore until Porter's death in 1843. The city was engulfed by fires and struck with plague at times, while Goodell worked with the Armenians, Greeks and Turks. He established

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<sup>79</sup> Possibly Mansourieh of modern Beirut.

<sup>80</sup> Prime 1877, 94-102.

<sup>81</sup> Armeno-Turkish is Armenian language written using the Turkish alphabet.

<sup>82</sup> Prime 1877, 103-108.

schools and conversed with people about religion. The Greeks resisted the teachings of the missionaries, with Prime asserting that Catholic clergy tried to hinder the missionaries' work.<sup>83</sup>

The city of Constantinople, according to Prime, had around one million inhabitants at the time Goodell moved into the city. The Turks and other Muslims made up more than half of the city. There were estimated to be 150,000 Armenians, with Greeks equaling that amount and Jews numbered around 50,000, the rest being French and other nationalities<sup>84</sup>. The Christians who lived in the Ottoman Empire were divided into multiple churches: The Greeks belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, which is a collaboration of churches and the head of the church is the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. The Armenians belonged to two churches: The Armenian Apostolic Church and the Armenian Catholic Church. The Armenian Apostolic Church, known as the Armenian Church, is an ancient church which was founded in the 4<sup>th</sup> century in Armenia and is regarded as the national church of Armenia. The Apostolic Church is part of Oriental Orthodoxy<sup>85</sup>. The Armenian Catholic Church is part of the Roman Catholic Church, with the Pope acting as the head of the church. The missionaries called the Apostolic Church "the Armenian Church"<sup>86</sup>, while the other Armenians were referred to as Catholics. There were also the Maronites of Syria mentioned earlier.

The Ottoman government had employed a system called "millet" to govern the many religious groups that lived in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan was the head of the government, but he only directly ruled the Muslims of the Empire. The Greeks, Armenians and Jews all had their own government (millet) with leaders

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<sup>83</sup> Prime 1877, 109-129.

<sup>84</sup> Prime 1877, 126-127.

<sup>85</sup> Oriental Orthodoxy is a communion of autocephalous churches and its members consist of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church and Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

<sup>86</sup> The Armenian Apostolic Church has as its spiritual head a Catholicos, with the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople overseeing their Patriarchates. The Catholicos is not in a higher position than the Patriarchs.

(millet bashi) who were subject to the Sultan. In this system, the missionaries had to work with each individual government to solve the issues the missionaries encountered with the different millets.<sup>87</sup>

Goodell familiarized himself with the society and the different ethnic groups in Constantinople. Goodell and Porter visited the city of Bursa in May 1832. Goodell founded a school for girls, after founding numerous schools for boys. This drew the ire of the Greek populace, who declared those who decided to participate in the schools excommunicated, also attacking the Greek bishop who promulgated the opening of the school. While the Armenians and Greeks had a dispute concerning the schools founded by the missionaries, the Muslims expressed their interest in founding a school for their children. The missionary family of Dwights arrived to assist in the work, and Schaffler, who had arrived at the same time, started working with the Jews.<sup>88</sup>

In the summer of 1832, the missionaries endured troubled times. Goodell moved to the village of Orta Keny, which was hit by a plague and a cholera epidemic. Muhammad Ali's rebellion drove the Empire into civil war<sup>89</sup>. Goodell also noted in his journal the visit of St. Simonians, French missionaries with socialistic views, and how they had to leave the country after angering the Sultan<sup>90</sup>. Goodell and Porter visited the Sultan two times, accompanied by American diplomats. The

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<sup>87</sup> Prime 1877, 229-231. The leaders of the millet wielded great power over their community, with the ability to influence governors and other civil leaders in touch with the members of the millet. For more see Masters 2001.

<sup>88</sup> Prime 1877, 130-148.

<sup>89</sup> Muhammad Ali was the viceroy of Egypt. His rebellion against the Sultan is known as the First Turko-Egyptian War, in which Ali's son Ibrahim Pasha soundly defeated the Grand Vizier Reshid Pasha. Ali's ambitions were checked by the intervention of the European forces and the war ended with the Convention of Kutahya, for more see Dodwell 2011.

<sup>90</sup> These men were followers of Saint-Simonianism, a French political and social movement that was inspired by the ideas of Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825). Saint-Simon predicted that industrialization and science would transform society. After his death his followers differed on how to advance Saint-Simon's thinking. One of them was Barthélemy Prosper Enfantin (1796-1864) a social reformer. Enfantin led his followers to Constantinople, who were the same people whose visit Goodell witnessed. The Simonians did not respect the Sultan in the way they should have, not bowing to him and instead bowing to women in the street. Their wish, according to Goodell, was to find the female messiah by comparing the women to an idol in their possession. Enfantin later led his followers to Egypt to discuss with Mohammed Ali about building the Suez Canal, but Ali disagreed, for more see Karabell 2003.

Greeks were livid because of the missionary schools, and the Greek patriarch reluctantly ordered the Greek schools to be closed. The Armenians were also stirred by the public conversions of some Armenians to the Protestant faith. The patriarch was replaced by a successor who had a harsher policy towards the Protestants, although some Greeks opposed this.<sup>91</sup>

The number of Armenian converts rose steadily, causing accusations of heresy within the church. The Protestant side won the argument, and the estimate of Protestant Armenians in the Empire was over 800 in April 1836. There was a conference of missionaries in spring of 1836 at Smyrna.<sup>92</sup>

The missionaries were set on by the plague in the summer of 1836, and its influence was so great that it stopped all missionary activity. Dwight's wife and one of his children died of the plague in the summer of 1837, and the disease caused great concern amidst the missionaries. At the start of the year 1839 the Armenian Church started to persecute those who had converted to Protestantism. The Patriarch and the clergy held all the power in the Armenian millet, which gave them the authority to deprive those cut of the community of almost everything, including food and work. The church's influence made possible the imprisonment and banishment of several important Armenians who had ties to the missionaries. The Greek and Armenian patriarchs also issued a bull against those with connections to the missionaries.<sup>93</sup>

The missionaries' situation was precarious, and they were accused of acting against the Ottoman government and the Sultan. The missionaries were scattered at the time this accusation was formally made in such a way that only Temple and Goodell were at Constantinople. They were prepared to be banished, with Goodell hiding his writings and correspondence to keep them from being destroyed. While all seemed lost, Muhammad Ali rose again in rebellion against the Sultan. The attention of the authorities shifted from the missionaries towards

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<sup>91</sup> Prime 1877, 149-181.

<sup>92</sup> Prime 1877, 182-201.

<sup>93</sup> Prime 1877, 202-233.

this new threat, with conscriptions from the Armenian and Greek communities. The Sultan's army of 80 000 men was defeated by Ali's forces at the battle of Nezib in 1839. The Sultan died at the same time the battle was fought, and his 17-year old son Abdulmejid ascended to the throne. There was another devastating fire in Pera in August which destroyed 3000-4000 houses. The Armenian leadership decided to recall the banished people, end their actions against the missionaries and restore the old patriarch to power.<sup>94</sup>

Sickness found its way to the Goodell family, with two years passing in a situation where at least one member of the family was sick. Their son Constantine Washington died of typhoid fever in April 1841, and this event shook their family to the core. In the fall of 1841 Goodell completed his translation of the Old Testament and thus the whole Bible into Armeno-Turkish. After this Goodell held a series of lectures about the Scripture. In 1842 the Armenian Protestant community grew, as did the persecution: priests were thrown in jail and the Armenian Protestants had to meet in secret. Goodell completed his revision of the New Testament into Armeno-Turkish in January 1843.<sup>95</sup>

Goodell became a member of the American-Oriental society, and Rufus Anderson visited the Near East as the corresponding secretary of the Board. Temple had to move to America after the Board continued his mission to the Greeks in Smyrna in the spring of 1844. Goodell sent his two eldest daughters to America with the Temples so that they could be educated in accordance with Western standards, and this was hard for him. Persecution of the Protestant Armenians and the missionaries persisted, although it quieted down some in 1844. The Armenian authorities attacked in a quieter way than before by depriving the Protestants of economic stability and sustainability in the Armenian community, to which the Protestants still belonged. This involved the denial of work, housing, food and drinking water by the Armenian community.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Prime 1877, 234-239.

<sup>95</sup> Prime 1877, 240-290.

<sup>96</sup> Prime 1877, 291-303.

Goodell opened a female boarding school in his home in 1845, where Abigail Goodell bore major responsibility before Harriet Jowell arrived to be the principal of the school. In 1846 the missionaries' work became more public, and the persecution also increased. The center of the persecution was a man named Vertanes<sup>97</sup>. Western ambassadors asked the Sultan to protect the Protestants, and the Sultan agreed. The protection of the government was not enough, and many lived on charity. The Protestants organized into an independent church called the First Evangelical Armenian Church of Constantinople on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1846.<sup>98</sup>

The missionaries helped to organize the church in contradiction with their teachings about executing missionary work. Instead of reforming the Oriental churches, they had now called for a new organization, with reasons explained in a paper<sup>99</sup>. The Armenian Protestants acquired an independent standing in the Empire from a firman issued by the grand vizier and advocated by an English diplomat. Goodell's eldest son William left for Williams College in the spring of 1847. Goodell's health had failed to such a degree that he considered himself an invalid in 1848. Goodell was chosen to be the pastor of the missionary group, and he very reluctantly accepted.<sup>100</sup>

There was a fire and a small earthquake in Constantinople in 1849, the fire being the sixth in a short while in the city. The Sultan issued a charter in 1850, known as the "Protestant Charter", which formally recognized the Protestant community as an official religious group in the Empire. Goodell and his wife visited the United States by the Board's request in 1851, leaving their children in the care of other missionaries. Goodell met Temple on his deathbed and preached at his funeral. Goodell spent two years in America traveling to promote missionary work and the Christian faith in America and wrote a work titled "The Old and the New; or The Changes of Thirty Years in the East". After returning to Constantinople in 1853,

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<sup>97</sup> Vertanes was a priest of the Armenian Church, who showed interest towards Protestantism.

<sup>98</sup> Prime 1877, 304-318.

<sup>99</sup> Prime 1877, 318-322.

<sup>100</sup> Prime 1877, 323-348.

Goodell was granted the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity by both Rutgers College and Hamilton College in 1854.<sup>101</sup>

After their return, the Goodells resided in Hass Keny near Constantinople, and the Goodell were made honorary members of the American Baptist Missionary Union. After returning, Goodell advocated aggressive evangelizing and criticized the patriarchs for their actions, The Crimean War started in 1853, and it brought peace and quiet to the Protestants despite fears to the contrary. The English diplomat Sir Stratford de Redcliffe<sup>102</sup> managed to obtain a new charter from the Sultan known as the Imperial Edict of 1856<sup>103</sup>. This charter had recognition from England, France, Russia, Sardinia and the Ottoman Empire, promising religious freedom to all subjects of the Sultan. The missionaries held the edict to be a true recognition of religious freedom and pressed de Redcliffe hard for it to be published.<sup>104</sup>

Goodell wrote a paper arguing for more focus of both spiritual and material investments in Constantinople instead of other missionary fields. The Great Revivals of 1857 and 1858 were greeted with joy by the missionaries for having a visible effect on the missions as well. Goodell wrote to the “New York Observer”, urging people to donate themselves and their belongings for the benefit of missionary work. The Board celebrated its jubilee in 1860 and Goodell wrote a historical address for the event. The missionaries enjoyed the changes in the Ottoman government caused by the imperial edict of 1856, with persecution easing. Goodell reached 70 years of age in 1862.<sup>105</sup>

Goodell received a velvet cap with Arabic inscriptions as a gift from some of his female students which he treasured to the end of his days. Goodell was also invited to London but refused to go because of his declining health. He completed his revised translation of the Armeno-Turkish Bible in 1863. The missionaries

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<sup>101</sup> Prime 1877, 349-368.

<sup>102</sup> Formerly known as sir Stratford Canning.

<sup>103</sup> Known also as Hatti Sherif (Sacred Edict) and Hatti Humayoun (Imperial Edict).

<sup>104</sup> Prime 1877, 369-386.

<sup>105</sup> Prime 1877, 387-407.



celebrated Thanksgiving in 1863 with inspiration taken from the American Civil War which was raging on at the time. The missionaries sympathized with the side of the Union, with some of their sons fighting on that side of the war, Goodell's son included.<sup>106</sup>

The missionaries had started to proselytize the Muslim population after Hatti Humayoun was in effect, although in low profile out of fear of the Ottoman government's actions if the Christian conversions started to seem like a threat to the authorities. Two British missionaries did not heed the warnings, and the authorities imprisoned some Muslim converts. The missionaries were angry with the British diplomat Henry Bulwer for not acting on behalf of the Protestants like de Redcliffe had done. The issue was solved in time with missionaries left happy as their religious freedom seemed to be secure. Goodell started to anticipate his time in the Empire was coming to an end and published 48 of his sermons in Turkish with translations in Bulgarian, Armenian and English and with an accompanying letter to the Protestants in the Empire.<sup>107</sup>

Goodell reported his decision to return to America because of his old age and infirmity in March 1865. The Goodells were given an emotional sending off and they left in June 1865. After returning to the United States, Goodell attended the 56<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Board in Chicago. The Goodells moved in with their son William and his wife who lived in Philadelphia. Goodell helped at the Central Congregational Church in Philadelphia, holding large Bible classes, among other things. He broke his arm but recovered and spent time promoting the missionary cause and meeting family and friends. Goodell had "a violent attack" in his sleep in February 1867, receiving "small attacks" and episodes of illness during the next day. He passed away on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> of February 1867 and his funeral was held in the Central Congregational Church with his burial in Woodlands Cemetery in Philadelphia. Abigail lived on until 1871, expiring in the same room in which she had lived with her husband.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Prime 1877, 408-424.

<sup>107</sup> Prime 1877, 425-441.

<sup>108</sup> Prime 1877, 442-468.

### **3. The representation of the Ottoman government in the memoirs of Pliny Fisk**

The memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell offer similar representations of the Ottoman Government, although they differ in some respects.

Both memoirs represent the Ottoman government as a tyrannical one, devoid of any virtues they value in the liberal governments of the West. The Ottoman government is represented as a cruel, barbarous and wholly corrupt administration where bribes are treated as the foremost political influence, cruel violence is widespread, and abuse of power is built into the organization of government. This is clearly visible in the memoirs' remarks regarding the treatment of Ottoman subjects, decisions by the court of law and the violent power-mongering within the government. The visible difference on this issue is the way Goodell's memoirs shift the blame for the persecution and wrongdoings against missionaries on the other Christian churches, placing larger scrutiny on them than on the Ottoman government.

Some stark differences can be discerned between the memoirs regarding the representation of the governance and 'the court of law. While Fisk's memoirs contain two detailed court cases which display the Ottoman justice system, Goodell's memoirs only complain about the absence of due process when punishments are being carried out by the authorities. On the other hand, Goodell's memoirs contain a detailed explanation of how the Ottoman millet system works and an evaluation of the system, while Fisk's memoirs make no mention of the millet system.

#### **3.1. The Ottoman government in the time of national crisis: the Greek War of Independence (1821-1830)**

The Ottoman Empire was shaken by the War of Greek Independence (1821-1830) with conflicts between the Greeks and the Turks throughout the Empire. Although the Ottoman Empire experienced many wars and internal conflicts, this war and the governmental reaction to it is well documented in both memoirs. The reactions to the uprising in the city of Smyrna in 1821 were recorded by Fisk in

much detail. Even before any bloodshed, Fisk recorded the fear of the Greeks that shines as evidence to the troubled history between the two groups:

*“Alarming rumors were often in circulation, which occasioned among the Greeks the fearful apprehension, that they should become the victims of Turkish violence. So great was the consternation produced among them even by a slight disturbance, that they repeatedly fled to vessels in the harbor, or concealed themselves in other places.”*<sup>109</sup>

It can be concluded from the following excerpt that the management of the city was normally the duty of civilian officials, but after the events the military seized control. The pasha, with the powers bestowed upon him, might have reminded the reader of the dictators of ancient Rome:

*“Several Greeks have been assassinated. A short time since the janizaries [esteemed bodyguards of the Sultan who commanded great authority] assumed the government of the town, which had previously been in the hands of the moslem. Three days ago a pasha arrived, and took possession of the government. Such is his rank, that he has liberty, according to the laws of the Ottoman empire, to execute seven men daily, without giving the privilege of a trial, or assigning any reason for his conduct. Half the people of the place have been trembling for their lives.”*<sup>110</sup>

The memoirs relay events filled with carnage, presenting the Turkish soldiers as bloodthirsty murderers, who paid little heed to their victims or their nationality, attacking even their own in their frenzy. The women and children were shown mercy in some instances, at the cost of being enslaved:

*“(…) he records little else but scenes of consternation, oppression and bloodshed. On the night of the 16th, there were sixteen or eighteen assassinations. (....) The Turks were moving along in companies in search of Greeks whom they designed to kill. The consul hailed one company,*

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<sup>109</sup> Bond 1828, 151.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

*and asked them where they had been. They made answer; — "We have been sacrificing."<sup>111</sup>*

*"The Turkish mob during the day put to death the moolah, or judge of the city, and some other officers, because they had suffered so many Greeks to escape. A previous order had been given, that none of them should be suffered to leave the place."<sup>112</sup>*

Fisk also recorded an event which portrays the Ottoman government in a somewhat different manner:

*"At a moment when the danger seemed less imminent, one of the consul's janizaries assisted a number of Greeks, men, women and children, on board a boat, that they might escape to the vessels, just as they were putting off from the shore a company of Turks came up, presented their muskets. and would have instantly killed most or all the poor Greeks, had not the janizary at that moment stepped before them, and prevented their firing. I stood at the window, and trembled for the fate of those who were fleeing for life; and when I saw the humane and courageous conduct of the janizary, I could have embraced him as a brother: —and yet (who could have supposed it?) this same man has since boasted of having killed six Greeks in the streets himself."<sup>113</sup>*

The actions of the janissary are ambivalent in nature. The man first saves many Greeks from certain death, and later openly boasts of inflicting the same fate on others. It could be possible that the janissary had some ulterior motive in helping the Greeks, or that he wished to hide his compassionate attitude towards them by vaunting about false deeds. He could have also just lied about the killings to appear tough. Whatever the truth may be, this excerpt brings forth the chaotic nature of the events Fisk witnessed in Smyrna, and how even the janissaries were able to do good deeds.

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<sup>111</sup> Bond 1828, 151-152.

<sup>112</sup> Bond 1828, 153.

<sup>113</sup> Bond 1828, 152-153.

The last two excerpts demonstrate the disregard of the Ottoman government for laws and justice:

*“About this time a vessel under Genoese colors was seized by the Turks, in consequence of having afforded protection to the Greeks. She had been formerly under Turkish colors. When this fact was ascertained, the captain was immediately beheaded or hung, and all on board, except six whom the English consul obtained from the pasha.”<sup>114</sup>*

*“(…) And what encourages these outrages is, that the Turkish authority is not much disposed to punish a Mussulman for any acts of violence of which he may be guilty.”<sup>115</sup>*

The seizure of the foreign ship as an action faced diplomatic ramifications, not to mention the executions of the crewmembers. The English consul is presented as a saving grace amid the Turkish cruelty. The injustice of not punishing the Muslims for their crimes points out a deep flaw in the judiciary system of the Ottoman government.

During the crisis that was presented by the Greek War of Independence, the Ottoman government is presented as an indiscriminately violent and malevolent entity. The attacks upon the Greeks, the missionaries and other Christians create a sorrowful display of extreme abuse of power, depicting the Ottoman government as a despotic and barbarous state.

### **3.2. The representation of the Ottoman government regarding education**

A focus on education was crucial to the missionaries as a method of influencing society, and this endeavor was seen as a moral obligation as well<sup>116</sup>. The memoirs of Fisk contain two mentions of education administered by the government, namely the educational efforts of the pasha of Egypt, Muhammed

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<sup>114</sup> Bond 1828, 154.

<sup>115</sup> Bond 1828, 155.

<sup>116</sup> Missionary education is studied in many papers, for a study focusing on the missionary education and schools see Yetkiner (2011).

Ali. The first is a simple note from Fisk's travels while the second one concerns the pasha's college:

*"To hear a learned Turk speak deliberately of attempting to civilize his countrymen, produced a peculiar effect on my mind."<sup>117</sup>*

*"Called on Osman Nureddin, the President of the pasha's college. We gave him some literary pamphlets, and Erskine on the Evidences of Christianity in French. He treated us very politely, but received Erskine's work with a look which showed that it was not very acceptable."<sup>118</sup>*

As is evident from the excerpts, the memoirs of Pliny Fisk offer few mentions of the Empire's educational undertakings, and all of those focus on the ones made by Muhammad Ali, the viceroy of Egypt. From this we can conclude that, according to the presentation of Fisk's memoirs, the cities beside Cairo had no centers for education, or even attempts to better the state of education in the Empire.

On the contrary, the Ottoman government's efforts to improve education in the Empire are abundantly presented in the memoirs of Goodell:

*"I am happy to say that two more Lancasterian schools are just going into operation at Constantinople, under the direction of the Seraskier Pasha himself. (...) It is truly matter of most fervent gratitude that so many doors of usefulness are now opening before us, and that we are permitted to exert, directly and indirectly, so important an influence in the changes that are taking place, and that seem destined to give an entirely new impression to the character of the different people dwelling in these countries."<sup>119</sup>*

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<sup>117</sup> Bond 1828, 209.

<sup>118</sup> Bond 1828, 264.

<sup>119</sup> Prime 1877, 164-165. Named after the schooling system's father, Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), the Lancastrian schooling system was based on the idea of advanced pupils acting as helpers to the teacher in teaching the other children, i.e. peer tutoring. The system and its other versions were popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain and America.

The following excerpt is a speech made by the Ottoman official Azim Bey on celebrating the opening of the schools in 1834:

*"His most sublime Majesty, Sultan Mahmoud, desires your good. These schools are no benefit to him, but he designs them for your benefit. (...) In the old Mussulman schools nothing of any value was learned; men were asses; but here asses may become men. (...) The terrible conflagrations which, you see, consume almost every thing (sic) else, cannot burn it; nor can the floods overwhelm it, or tempest sweep it away. Knowledge, therefore, young men, knowledge is the best property you can possess."<sup>120</sup>*

The Lancastrian schools that were opened by the government granted almost 3000 boys a place to study<sup>121</sup>. The missionaries strongly lobbied on behalf of the Lancastrian school system, as education was one of the areas integral to their mission in the Ottoman Empire. The speech made by Azim Bey is very interesting, as the transcript Goodell offers on it resonates strongly with the missionary thought, especially his comment on the old schooling system. Azim Bey was a son of a former ambassador to Britain, which might explain his ardent denunciation of the old school system. Nevertheless, as these excerpts point out, the memoirs do not hesitate to celebrate the Ottoman state when its goals align with those of the missionaries.

While Fisk's memoir focuses solely on the educational advancements supervised by Muhammad Ali, Goodell concentrates on praising the Ottoman eagerness for applying missionary education policies in the Empire. This difference in the volume and style of representation is somewhat explained by the different lives of these two missionaries, as Goodell worked in the Ottoman Empire eight times longer than Fisk did. Goodell's work encompassed establishing numerous schools, while Fisk only grazed the subject in comparison.

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<sup>120</sup> Prime 1877, 144.

<sup>121</sup> Prime 1877, 164-165.

### 3.3. The representation of the relationship between the Ottoman government and the missionaries

Both memoirs include some mentions of the interaction between the missionaries and Ottoman officials, ranging from threats by common soldiers to a meeting with a governor and an emir. The memoirs also mention some violent encounters between the missionaries and representatives of the government, although there are meetings of a benevolent nature as well.

According to the memoirs, the Turkish soldiers threatened the missionaries in some instances. The soldiers acted without supervision and there was no threat of physical danger to the missionaries. However, these instances show that the soldiers regularly tried to abuse their power, even with foreigners under protection. The following event came to be during the missionaries' journey to Upper Egypt:

*“A Turkish soldier from the shore called to our men, and wished to come on board and go to Cairo. We did not stop for him, and he fired his musket to intimidate our men; but we were sailing so fast, he could not overtake us.”<sup>122</sup>*

The missionaries also had encounters with soldiers acting on official duty, with the following excerpt, set during Fisk's travel from Egypt to Palestine, as an example:

*“This forenoon the passports of the different companies were thrice demanded by Arab soldiers, who patrol this part of the desert for the purpose of stopping travellers who are destitute of passports.”<sup>123</sup>*

There was also a mention of a meeting with a governor in February 1823, which went smoothly. It should be noted that there was an Arab revolt under way, for some underlying reasons are given for this course of action later in this chapter:

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<sup>122</sup> Bond 1828, 236.

<sup>123</sup> Bond 1828, 269.



*“Ahmed Pasha is now the governor. (...) We found the pasha himself was gone to quell an insurrection among the Arabs in the country. (...) He received the letter, ordered coffee, conversed a little while with us, and then called a writer, and commanded a passport to be made out for the rest of the journey.”<sup>124</sup>*

The missionaries' encounter with the pasha of Tripoli demonstrates the missionaries' attitude in dealing with the high officials, with preference to be unseen rather than interact with them. The encounter also contains some smaller nuances: the pasha is on the move to ease the travel of Muslim pilgrims, and the Christian missionaries must face the uncomfortable weather because of it. This juxtaposition presented in the memoirs is rather poignant:

*“In the afternoon the pasha of Tripoli arrived (...) on his way to meet the pilgrims who return from Mecca, in order to supply them with provisions. As he encamped likewise near the tomb, Mr. Fisk and his company concluded, it was best to remove. They were now obliged to take seat in the open air, which was filled with sand and dust, and heated with the intense rays of the sun.”<sup>125</sup>*

The missionaries were also witness to the second-class status the Christians in the Ottoman Empire were subject to:

*“On reaching the gate they all dismounted, except Mr. K. who was soon ordered by an armed Turk to do the same, as no Christian is allowed to ride within the city.”<sup>126</sup>*

The Ottoman officials held great power, and they could greatly hinder the missionary work if they wished so:

*“The arrival of these missionaries produced in that city an immediate alarm among the Mussulman authorities; and on the very next day the consul received a message from the pasha, stating that a firman*

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<sup>124</sup> Bond 1828, 243.

<sup>125</sup> Bond 1828, 383-384.

<sup>126</sup> Bond 1828, 381.

*had been received by him, prohibiting the distribution of the Holy Scriptures among the grand signor's subjects."*<sup>127</sup>

It should be noted that the events are told with a suspicious undertone: it is possible that the consul acted without any instructions from the pasha, as the memoirs seem to let on.

According to the memories of Fisk, the missionaries encountered Ibrahim Abu Ghosh, a local chief with a bad reputation, during their departure from Jerusalem in 1823:

*"The pasha of Damascus arrested Abel Er Rahman, and demanded a large sum as his ransom. His brother, the notorious Aboo Ghoosh, at the head of a party of soldiers resolved to collect it by force of arms (...) He demanded the sum of the convents to pay the pasha. He proclaimed his determination not to permit the roads in that vicinity to be travelled in safety, till every para of the sum was received. (...) Aboo Ghoosh, much to their surprise, entered the convent where they were, and sternly said; —"Why were you afraid to come to my village?" After conversing with them a few moments, and receiving some trifling presents, he became pleasant; and calling for ink and paper, wrote for them a letter of introduction to his brother."*<sup>128</sup>

The memoirs let on that Ibrahim Abu Ghosh was not someone the missionaries wanted to deal with, fearing what he might do. The pasha's actions were less than commendable, but the same can be said about Abu Ghosh. As often seems to be the case in the memoirs, the Christians end up suffering for the fights among the ruling Muslims. Abu Ghosh's conduct with the missionaries seems to show that one can succeed in dangerous situation with gifts and bribes, at least in the Ottoman Empire.

Lastly, included in the memoirs is an extensive description of the ruler of Mount Lebanon, Emir Bashir. The mentions of him are in two parts: when the

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<sup>127</sup> Bond 1828, 386.

<sup>128</sup> Bond 1828, 400-401.

missionaries meet him in Egypt, and when they meet him in Mount Lebanon. The first encounter is also a detailed presentation of the relationship between the emirs and the Sublime Porte<sup>129</sup>:

*“He incurred, some time since, the displeasure of the Porte and an order was sent for his head. He, however, found a safe retreat with the pasha of Egypt, through whose mediation, and, if our information is correct, by means of a present of 100,000 dollars, he has obtained pardon, and a firman restoring him to his former authority. He received us very favorably. He knew something of America, and when we told him we were Americans, he gave us a salutation, and an expressive look, which flattered our national pride. When he learned that we intended going to Mount Lebanon, he said he should expect to see us there, named a place which he said would be the best for learning Arabic, and promised to give us a letter for that place.”<sup>130</sup>*

The memoirs present the Ottoman government as a ruling body which is both violently tyrannical and easily bribed, while wielding supreme power over the Sultan’s subjects, whatever their rank. The emir is presented in a warm and friendly way, noticeably different from other meetings with the Ottoman officials. This could be attributed to the Emir’s friendly demeanor towards the missionaries, as he showed respect to them and helped them in their work without bribes

The memoirs introduce the emir with greater details when the missionaries meet him in Lebanon:

*“The present emeer is the first reigning prince who has professed the Christian religion, though some branches of the family have for a long time been Christian. We came here to visit Emeer Besheer, the prince of the Druses and Christians, who inhabit these mountains. He is almost a king, though he is subject to the grand signor, and also under the pasha of Acre. The family were formerly Mahommedans, but they have embraced*

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<sup>129</sup> A metonym for the central government in the Ottoman Empire, literally translated from French as the “Magnificent Gate”.

<sup>130</sup> Bond 1828, 263-264.

*Christianity; though they still keep up the appearance of Mussulmans when among the Turks. We have had an interview with him to-day. and he has given us a letter to visit the different places in the mountains, and reside, to learn Arabic, wherever we choose."*<sup>131</sup>

With the description of emir Bashir, the memoirs of Fisk offer information on the place of the emir in the Ottoman government and his standing as a Christian among Muslim rulers. The emir is portrayed in an altogether friendly manner, while his low-profile Christianity raises questions about the status of Christians in the government. Nevertheless, his role as a lone Christian ruler in the Ottoman Empire almost certainly contributed to the positive portrayal the memoirs of Fisk give to him.

As could be expected, the memoirs of Goodell also contain several mentions of the missionaries meeting representatives of the Ottoman government, providing accounts of the missionaries facing both possible and actual danger. The first two excerpts are of the former type:

*"At various intervals, and for long periods, the missionaries in Turkey lived in great apprehension of personal danger, owing to the violent hostility awakened by their presence and their teachings. (...) Against open violence they were protected by their nationality, but often did they have reason to fear secret assaults instigated by Moslem fanaticism, Armenian and Greek bigotry, and Jesuitical intrigue."*<sup>132</sup>

*"The Turks were more and more exasperated with every fresh rumor in regard to the war, and the situation of the missionaries became exceedingly perilous."*<sup>133</sup>

Aside from general events of the missionaries being suspect to violence, even as there is no mention of these fears coming to fruition, there is one account of the missionaries enduring violence and attacks on themselves, taking place in 1862:

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<sup>131</sup> Bond 1828, 318-320.

<sup>132</sup> Prime 1877, 301-302.

<sup>133</sup> Prime 1877, 99.

*“Together they set out on the overland journey to Aleppo, tarrying for a day at Antioch, where they were to be joined by other missionaries. As they were about to engage in their morning worship, before resuming their journey, on Wednesday, the 26th of March, a messenger came in with the tidings that the Rev. Mr. Coffing, of Adana, whom they were expecting to meet, had been shot by robbers or assassins near Alexandretta, and mortally wounded. Mr. Calhoun immediately returned to the place and found him dead. Within about an hour of Alexandretta, Mr. Coffing and his two attendants had been fired on, and all of them wounded. (...) The assassins were apprehended after long delay, and one of them executed; the other made his escape.”<sup>134</sup>*

This is the only account of murder regarding the missionaries that was included in the memoirs. The proponents of the deed are first described as either robbers or assassins, while after this they are called assassins. It is not clear if the motive of the robbers really was to assassinate the missionary and his attendants and not a simple robbery. If they were assassins, the missionaries had a reason to fear for their lives, but if they were not, this incident was the outcome of the men being in the wrong place at the wrong time. There is no way to determine which possibility was the right one.

There was one other account which contains an attempt on a missionary's life. It is a part of a letter written about Goodell after his death:

*“The trials of childhood and youth, his struggles into the work to which he was called, perils by land and sea, plundered by Arabs, his life attempted by poison among the Turks, living in the midst of the plague that killed a thousand and more daily, and fires that swept off every house but eight where he dwelt.”<sup>135</sup>*

The mention about a poisoning attempt is something that did not come up anywhere else in the memoirs, and no more information is offered on it. As these two accounts are the only assassination attempts recorded in the memoirs, it can

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<sup>134</sup> Prime 1877, 408.

<sup>135</sup> Prime 1877, 459.

be assumed that the missionaries' fears of being personally attacked were somewhat exaggerated.

The last account of personal violence is set during the chaos in Beirut in 1821, as a group of Bedouins belonging to an Ottoman army attempted to enter Goodell's house:

*"At this moment four or five respectable Turks of the city passed along, and exerted their influence in my favor, protesting to the Bedouins that I was an English consul, and that, if they broke into my house, it would be at their peril. They listened a moment, and then renewed their attempts, saying they knew neither consul nor sultan. Not being able to break open the door, they cut it down with their hatchets, and rushed upstairs like so many tigers eager for their prey. The Turks from the city hastened after them, and took their station at the door of Mrs. Goodell's room, not allowing a single Bedouin to enter. (...) Seeing it was vain to reason with them, I assumed a tone of authority, and ordered them to leave the house immediately, telling them that I had already sent a message to the city, and that the pasha would surely take off their heads if the case was represented to him. This had the desired effect. They became calm, and listened to a long and severe reproof from me. (...) One of them also came to claim some tobacco which he said I stole from him while he was plundering my house."<sup>136</sup>*

The English consul had asked for protection for Goodell from the pasha, but according to Goodell the men the pasha sent went pillaging themselves. He was later granted opportunities by the authorities to identify the pillagers, and he was reimbursed by the authorities for his losses.<sup>137</sup>

The actions of the Bedouins, and those of pasha's reinforcements, are condemnable, and enforce the undisciplined image associated with the Oriental soldiers in both memoirs. The actions of the Turkish men are commendable, as

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<sup>136</sup> Prime 1877, 90.

<sup>137</sup> Prime 1877, 90-92.

is the support pasha grants him. While there is a possibility of violence present in this excerpt, the missionaries emerge unscathed both physically and materially.

There is one rather emotional scene in the memoirs regarding the Ottoman officials and Goodell regarding the death and burial of his son, Constantine Washington:

*“On account of the encroachments of the Turks on the Frank burying-ground, I had to remove the body of our beloved boy. The grave, contrary to the custom of the country, had been dug deep, and the coffin was scarcely damp. Every thing (sic) was sweet and still. The new grave which we have prepared a few rods distant was also deep and dry; and there we laid the body to rest in its quiet bed till the resurrection morning.”<sup>138</sup>*

The event of a parent having to open his little son’s grave soon after the funeral depicts the Ottoman officials as heartless, demonstrating the second-class status of the Christians in the Empire as well.

In the following excerpt a meeting between the Ottoman government and the missionaries is portrayed positively in the memoirs, although Goodell’s ending remark weakens the occasion:

*“It was gratifying to us as Americans to see the respect in which our country is held by the Ottoman government. The high officers of the empire seemed to vie with each other in doing honor to it. And, indeed, how could it be otherwise when the grand seignior himself set the example? (...) The Turkish officers were also delighted, and declared at the time, as they have frequently told me since, that they had seen English, French, Russians, &c., but that they had never seen friends, real friends, till they saw the Americans. Such complimentary expressions, however, weigh not so much here as they would in the United States.”<sup>139</sup>*

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<sup>138</sup> Prime 1877, 275.

<sup>139</sup> Prime 1877, 164.

The missionaries witnessed threatening behavior from the representatives of the Ottoman government. There was also a fear for the safety of the missionaries throughout the memoirs of Goodell, while Fisk's description of emir Beshir is a remarkably positive one. Overall, the Ottoman government is presented as fickle to a point of violence, even towards the high-ranking officials of the Empire.

### **3.4. General descriptions of the Ottoman government**

The memoirs include several remarks of a general nature towards the Ottoman government, describing it with words of distaste and grievance. For Goodell, the aspect of returning to the Empire after his visit to United States in 1853 was devoid of any joy or pleasure, as can be seen from the quotations of Goodell included in this subchapter.

The memoirs of Fisk hold a couple of judgmental descriptions of the Ottoman government:

*"The adjacent hills would furnish many delightful situations for villages, if the difficulties were removed which are thrown in the way by a despotic government, oppressive agas, and wandering banditti."*<sup>140</sup>

*"This plain, if properly cultivated, would no doubt support thirty or forty villages, of two or three thousand souls each. Yet in crossing the plain, we could see only four or five miserably inhabited, mean villages. It is easy to imagine what effects would be produced here, should the country fall into the hands of a liberal, Christian government."*<sup>141</sup>

These remarks convey the message that the Ottoman lands itself are fruitful and offer many possibilities of prospering, but the rulers of the land effectively obstruct it. The memoirs of Goodell also contain several descriptions about the Empire:

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<sup>140</sup> Bond 1828, 140. The term "aga" literally means "lord" in Turkish. It is used as a title for men in senior position or those acting as military commanders and officials.

<sup>141</sup> Bond 1828, 349.



*“Malta was then a sort of school-house, where the missionaries bound for the Orient prepared for their future labors, and from which they made some aggressive movements upon the kingdom of darkness.”<sup>142</sup>*

Goodell’s commentary on Malta presents the Empire as an entity which is governed by forces opposite to those missionaries thought they themselves represented, depicting the Empire as malevolent and evil in general. The following remark was made following a ravaging fire in Constantinople, during which Goodell was robbed:

*“In such times of calamity it is not in these countries as it is in America, where the sufferers meet everywhere with sympathy and assistance. Many persons here will, indeed, ‘take you in,’ but it is generally in the wrong sense. Almost everyone with whom you have to do hopes and endeavors to profit by your losses.”<sup>143</sup>*

Goodell asserts with clarity that the people living here cannot be trusted, and he made no distinction between different groups or religions. According to the memoirs of Goodell, some of the worst traits of humanity are exhibited by the inhabitants of the Ottoman lands.

The following two remarks were made by Goodell when his visit to the United States by the invitation of the Board (1851-1853) was at its end:

*“This visit has been a very refreshing one to our spirits. (...) We have loved to look upon your godly-minded farms, as they might almost be called, that, is, farms cultivated with honesty, industry, and economy, and in many cases, too, ‘sanctified by the word of God and prayer,’ so unlike the dishonesty and indolence, the shiftlessness and oppression, with which all land in the East IS ploughed and every field IS reaped. And after having for so many years seen scarcely a face which was not more or less distorted by arrogance or cringing servility, by intolerance, bigotry, selfishness, or unjust suffering, — we have gazed with delight on the tens*

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<sup>142</sup> Prime 1877, 74.

<sup>143</sup> Prime 1877, 119.

*of thousands of happy countenances, in this happy land, which are lighted up with such bright expressions of kindness, benevolence, and Christian hope.*"<sup>144</sup>

*"From the West we now turn our faces again towards the rising sun. And 'I suppose you like living there better than you do here,' many have said to us. No, indeed, we do not go there for the liking of the thing at all; for if we sought our own comfort or pleasure, we should most certainly remain in this good land. (...) No, it is only a strong sense of duty that urges us to return.*"<sup>145</sup>

In these two excerpts, Goodell's thoughts on the Empire are expressed with clarity. He thinks nothing good of the Empire, at least when compared to the United States, forming a powerful picture of the woes the Empire exhibits, according to him. As he asserts, he only returns because of his duty to serve his cause and would not return by his own volition, even after living there for roughly 28 years.

### **3.5 The representation of the relationship between the Ottoman government and its subjects**

While the missionaries are the center of attention in the memoirs, there can also be found many mentions of the relationship between the government and those it governed. The memoirs of Fisk contain several mentions of oppression by the government, which are all presented in a very severe manner. The first one took place in 1824:

*"Mr. Fisk speaks of the oppressive system of Turkish exactions, under which the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the neighboring villages were groaning. He mentions an affray which took place between the government of Jerusalem, and the villages in the neighborhood of Bethlehem, in consequence of their refusing to meet the exorbitant demands made upon them. Preparations were accordingly made for war.*

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<sup>144</sup> Prime 1877, 361.

<sup>145</sup> Prime 1877, 362.

*Some of the governor's soldiers found a poor, infirm old peasant, from Bait Jailah cultivating his field. One of them shot him, and they cut off his head, brought it to Jerusalem, and stuck it up on the wall just within Jaffa gate, where it remained two days. I saw Turkish boys pass by and throw stones at it. Christians looked at it with a melancholy countenance, and tears stole down their cheeks. (...) They [the soldiers] pitched their tents on the plain, and commenced firing on the village.*"<sup>146</sup>

There is little information on the villagers offered by the memoirs, but it can be deducted that they most possibly were Arabs, who were presumably Muslims and Christians. The treatment of the villagers by the authorities consisted of brutish extortion, murder of a man in a vengeful way and an outright assault on the villagers. The memoirs fail to inform about how the issue was concluded, but it would seem that the armed conflict between the villagers and the authorities would last for some time.

The next excerpt is from Fisk's voyage on the Nile, when they heard people wailing at the event of lunar eclipse. The message is clear:

*"We asked the Arab boatman, what they thought of it. They supposed it denoted a revolution, and was in consequence of the oppression inflicted by the pasha on the Arabs in exacting money."*<sup>147</sup>

Extraction of money was not the only form of oppression inflicted upon the Arabs:

*"Near Shoobreh we met a crowd in the street composed principally of women and children following some soldiers, who were leading along a number of Arabs with their hands bound. The women were weeping, and shrieking, and crying, 'My liver! my liver!' We found, on inquiry, that the young men had been pressed as soldiers by order of government. The process is this. Government sends out men to the villages with orders to return with a certain number of soldiers. They go and seize the first promising young men they can find. One young man had fainted, and an*

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<sup>146</sup> Bond 1828, 369.

<sup>147</sup> Bond 1828, 238.

*old man was carrying him off, followed by women who rent the air with their cries. (...) The whole was a piteous and affecting scene.”<sup>148</sup>*

The pasha of Damascus' visit to Jerusalem in 1823 to collect tribute presents yet another example of how the memoirs display the relationship between the ruler and the subjects:

*“The pasha of Damascus, with two or three thousand soldiers, arrived April 1st, to collect tribute. His arrival was ever considered the precursor of oppression and distress, and of the days of vengeance.”<sup>149</sup>*

*“On returning to Jerusalem; it was found that the pasha's soldiers had been about the city, breaking open houses, taking men prisoners, binding them, beating them, and thrusting them into prison. The whole city was filled with consternation. (...) The scenes which were witnessed, while these Turkish marauders prowled around the city, were such as caused the heart to sicken, and humanity to shudder,”<sup>150</sup>*

The memoirs also contain mentions of internal conflicts within the Empire:

*“The feelings of the Turks are excited to a high degree of fanaticism by the present state of their political affairs, and the Arab tribes in the different parts of Syria are at war with each other. Foreigners are to a considerable degree respected, and we hope we shall be permitted to pass in safety.”<sup>151</sup>*

These excerpts display an Empire which is full of danger and war, even for the missionaries, who travelled the country under the diplomatic protection of the British.

For those who had no such protection, the Empire seems a cruel place in the memoirs. Cases of torture and the public display of bodies executed by the authorities are mentioned more than once in the memoirs:

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<sup>148</sup> Bond 1828, 263.

<sup>149</sup> Bond 1828, 397.

<sup>150</sup> Bond 1828, 398.

<sup>151</sup> Bond 1828, 277.

*“During September Mr. Fisk visited Hadet, the native place of Asaad Shidiak, and had conversation with two emeers, whose eyes had been burnt out, and tongues cut off, by the prince of Mount Lebanon. He learnt from the unfortunate emeers, that their eyes were put out by having a red hot (sic) iron thrust into them. Notwithstanding a part of their tongues was cut off, they could articulate intelligibly. They were punished in this cruel manner for having taken some part with Sheik Bushir in the disturbances, which, in the previous winter, had been occasioned in Mount Lebanon.”<sup>152</sup>*

*“It is not easy to describe the horror which is excited, by seeing the body of a fellow being suspended in the street of a city, which is not more than ten feet wide, where people are constantly passing, and in front of a shop, where business is constantly transacted.”<sup>153</sup>*

According to these excerpts, torture was commonplace, and punishments ordered by the authorities were cruel, leaving lasting marks on the tortured.

The memoirs of Goodell contain many remarks about the relationship between the Ottoman officials and their subjects. The first two excerpts are set in the chaos of Beirut in 1821:

*“Just at this time a large number of troops arrived from the Pasha of Acre, consisting principally of Albanians and Bedouins. These, finding the Greeks out of reach, immediately poured forth into all that part of the country which had been (...) in possession of the Greeks, and commenced plundering every house.”<sup>154</sup>*

*“The revolution was still in progress; and when it became known that the European powers had determined to interfere in behalf of Greece and against Turkey, all who enjoyed English protection (including the American missionaries) were in great embarrassment. Many of the Franks left the city, and the native Christians fled in alarm to the mountains.”<sup>155</sup>*

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<sup>152</sup> Bond 1828, 408-409.

<sup>153</sup> Bond 1828, 150.

<sup>154</sup> Prime 1877, 89.

<sup>155</sup> Prime 1877, 99.

The Ottoman troops are not displayed as saviors for the residents of Beirut. Rather, they are presented as a second wave of pillagers and bandits, robbing and assaulting those in the city. When the situation deteriorates for the Ottoman Empire because of foreign Christian governments' action, those who can be seen as scapegoats escape their fate with full knowledge of what could happen to them. The memoirs include Goodell's sorrowful description of the aftermath in Beirut after the Greeks' withdrawal from the city in 1821:

*"It is impossible to describe the system of falsehood, injustice, oppression, and robbery which has been in operation here for the last two months. Human beings, whose guilt is no greater than that of their proud oppressors, are condemned without a trial, their flesh trembling for fear, their religion blasphemed, their Saviour insulted, their comforts despoiled, their lives threatened, and their bodies tilled with pain, and deeply marked with the blows inflicted by Turkish barbarity. Some of them were so badly beaten that they could not walk, but were carried by soldiers, as they went from house to house to obtain a trifle here and a trifle there towards paying the enormous exactions made upon them. (...) I have never known before what it was to see 'all faces gather darkness, men's hearts failing them,' every bosom tortured with the most gloomy forebodings and the deepest distress."<sup>156</sup>*

The Christians of Beirut suffered the wrath of their rulers, stirred by the Greek attack on the city. This description of violence and extortion by the officials presents the Ottoman state as an outright villain, full of injustice, violence and greed. The memoirs of Goodell are full of descriptions of Ottoman injustice and cruelty, especially for the Christians of the Empire. This is visible from several accounts, of which the story of an old Armenian is the first:

*"His previous history had been remarkable. He had been once saved from the sword of the Janizaries when they ranged the city altogether without law. When a comparatively young man, as he was going home one evening from the bazaars, he passed two of the Janizaries, who*

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<sup>156</sup> Prime 1877, 91.

*sat in front of a coffee-shop admiring a new yataghan, or sword, that one of them held in his hand. Seeing the Armenian, he ordered him to come to him, and then told him he had just bought a new yataghan, the metal of which he was going to try by cutting off his head; which he would have done with as little compunction as he would have cut off the head of a dog, and with as perfect impunity, so abject at that time was the subjection of the Christians to the Mohammedans. It was only by humbling himself at the feet of the blood-thirsty Janizary, and pleading, not so much for his own sake as for that of his family, dependent on him for daily bread, that the Armenian's life was spared at the entreaty of the other Janizary, who said, "Let the hog live."<sup>157</sup>*

The Janissaries are depicted as utterly ruthless and heartless men, who murder Christians without any remorse. As the bodyguards of the Sultan, they held power in the Empire for centuries, until Mahmud II massacred them as the result of a struggle for power in 1826 in an event known as the Auspicious Incident<sup>158</sup>.

Lastly, there is an account in the memoirs set in Goodell's journey to Nicomedia and Ada Bazar which took place in 1849:

*"No wonder, then, that the rage of the enemy should be excessive, and that in the usual way of bribes they should instigate the governor of the city to acts of violence. In the evening, after the ordination, we learned that all our brethren from Nicomedia were thrown into prison, and that all their horses and most of ours were seized and taken away, and that even the cafegee, a Turk who took care of our horses, was beaten and his feet made fast in the stocks for daring to harbor even the animals of such thieves and robbers as ourselves. It was only after repeated remonstrances to the governor, and strong representations of the sad consequences to himself, of this course, that we and our friends were able to leave the place at ten o'clock the next morning."<sup>159</sup>*

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<sup>157</sup> Prime 1877, 322-323.

<sup>158</sup> Prime 1877, 240.

<sup>159</sup> Prime 1877, 348.

The event is a display of the injustice on the governor's part, especially concerning the treatment of the "cafegee". The main antagonist is not the governor, however, who is presented as a tool of the bribe-wielding "enemy". This mysterious "enemy" is revealed to be the non-Protestant churches, according to Goodell's memoirs. This point is discussed more in chapter 3.7.

The memoirs of Goodell mention periods of instability in the Empire. One of the greatest causes of instability were the actions of the viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Ali, as is demonstrated in the memoirs:

*"The ambitious Viceroy of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, having exterminated the Mamelukes and extended his conquests in Arabia, sent an army into Syria under command of his adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, took Acre by storm, and on the 20th of December, 1832, gained a complete victory over the Turkish forces, routing the entire army and taking the grand vizier prisoner."*<sup>160</sup>

After some years of peace, Muhammad Ali attacked the Sultan's forces again, decimating them. Ali's conquest of the Empire was only stopped by the intervention of the Western powers in 1840<sup>161</sup>. His actions, as reported in the memoirs, demonstrated the fragility of the Ottoman system, as it heavily depended on the loyalty of the Sultan's high-ranking officials. On the subject of Muhammad Ali, the memoirs are in unison in their representation. He is portrayed as a dynamic and strong leader, who skillfully both furthers the education in his lands and seizes more power through a superior military.

The description of emir Bashir, contained in Goodell's memoirs, on the event of the Greek attack on Beirut in 1821, offered no reassurance concerning the loyalty of the Sultan's subjects:

*"The Emir Beshir, head of the mountain tribes, has come down from the mountain with his troops, and encamped about half an hour's distance to the south of us; and whether he will assist the Greeks or the Turks, or*

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<sup>160</sup> Prime 1877, 149.

<sup>161</sup> Prime 1877, 237-238.



*attempt to become master of the city himself, in opposition to both, is a perfect secret.”<sup>162</sup>*

The memoirs paint the emir in a shady light, as a man whose loyalties were unknown. It is evident from these descriptions that the memoirs represent the Ottoman officials as disloyal and untrustworthy subjects of the Sultan. The representation of emir Bashir of Mount Lebanon differs between the memoirs: Fisk describes him in a curious and respectful tone, as was pointed out in chapter 3.3, while Goodell paints him as a very disloyal subject of the Sultan, suggesting this to be common knowledge. This is one of the results of the memoirs being two different works: While they are unison in some representations, the missionaries experienced different things in their lives in the Ottoman Empire, and this is reflected in the material in the memoirs.

The single most important person in the Ottoman Empire was the Sultan, who had supreme rule on all matters of the Empire. The memoirs of Goodell contain several remarks about him, as Goodell wrote about the Sultan on some occasions. First, the memoirs describe the Sultan Mahmud II visiting a mosque:

*“He was attended with much less pomp and ceremony than when I have seen him on former occasions; but I observed what I never did before, that, on his leaving the mosque, and appearing on horseback in the presence of the multitude, two persons burnt incense before him as though he were a deity. Perhaps, however, no idea of that kind was intended to be conveyed, as the custom of burning incense prevails in all the Oriental churches.”<sup>163</sup>*

The next excerpt concerns the first defeat the Ottoman army suffered to Muhammad Ali in 1832:

*“On receiving the news of this disaster, the Sultan in his great rage, it is said, broke one of the splendid mirrors of his palace; but this is certainly better than to break men's heads, according to the ancient custom of this*

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<sup>162</sup> Prime 1877, 89.

<sup>163</sup> Prime 1877, 136.

*most ungracious government. (...) You will be able to form some idea of the feelings of the divan (council of government), when I tell you that they have strictly forbidden any person in the street to speak with his neighbor or friend of the weather, of the course or change of the wind, of the time of day, of his own health, or of that of anybody else : all which, strange as it may seem, is actually carried into effect ; and we are told that an individual in this village, for a slight and unintentional violation of the order, was immediately hurried off to the bagnio. Now the meaning, or hint given, is simply this, that no person is to lisp a word about the affairs of government; for if he is not permitted to utter a syllable even on his own most common affairs, how shall he presume to whisper, or even to think, about the great concerns of the vast empire of mighty Sultan Mahmoud."*<sup>164</sup>

The last remark is made regarding an issue which arose from the careless wording of a paper commenting on the missionaries' actions:

*"Some time last week one of the hermits put up a paper on the door of the Greek church in Pera, railing upon all the people to rise and utterly exterminate the corrupter of their youth and the destroyer of their religion. One of the principal citizens, passing by, saw it, and informed the bishop, in order that it might be immediately taken down; for, said he, should it, come to the ears of the Sultan, as no individual is specified, he will very naturally think himself intended. (...) The Sublime Porte also subsequently took cognizance of the paper, interpreting it, of course, in the very natural way suggested above; and the Greek patriarch found it very difficult to give a satisfactory account of the business."*<sup>165</sup>

These remarks found in the memoirs concerning the Sultan all cast him as a figure who exhibits popular sins: namely pride to an extreme degree and violent anger, not to mention his behavior worthy of a paranoid and control-hungry tyrant. However, when Mahmud passed away, he was described in the memoirs in the following fashion:

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<sup>164</sup> Prime 1877, 150.

<sup>165</sup> Prime 1877, 195.

*"The old Sultan is sincerely lamented by many, especially the Christians. Many of the Christians wept, as, indeed, they had reason to, for all his measures were for their good. But he will soon be forgotten."*<sup>166</sup>

For all the demonizing attributes he was characterized with, Goodell held Mahmud II as a benevolent ruler of his Christian subjects. This is surprising, given the former remarks embedded in the memoirs. This manner of depicting Mahmud II conveys the message that he was a desirable ruler compared to the others present in the Ottoman government.

The Ottoman government is presented as despotic state in the two memoirs, fully capable of inflicting most grievous harm to its subjects with minimal regard for justice. While some of the individual representatives of the government are benevolent towards the missionaries and some gather their praise for other reasons, the Ottoman state is regarded as a barbarous society full of needless cruelty, with the subjects of the government living in incessant agony and constant threat of malevolence from their rulers.

### **3.6. The representation of the Ottoman court of law**

As for justice, the memoirs of Fisk contain two cases of the missionaries having to answer in an Ottoman court of law for their actions. The first is a case where a dervish accused the missionaries of stealing a manuscript. It was quickly concluded that the dervish was lying, and he was saved from being severely punished by the missionaries. The notable thing in the case was the governor's role; he took the lead and acquitted the missionaries before the judge could give his verdict. The governor's role in overruling the court's decisions cast deep doubts about Ottoman judicial body's ability to deliver just verdicts without the meddling of the Ottoman officials.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Prime 1877, 238.

<sup>167</sup> The whole case can be accessed in Bond 1828, 295-298.

The second case<sup>168</sup> was one where the missionaries were brought to court because of their distribution of religious literature. The following account is narrated by Fisk:

*“A little after noon, as I was reading Arabic with Jar Allah and Cesar, Moosa Beg, the head of the police, came into my room, accompanied by eight or ten Turks, most of them armed soldiers. They were all strangers to us, and we had at first no suspicion of their object in visiting us; as soldiers and other Turks had often before called to visit us. We received them civilly, and treated them with pipes and coffee. They pretended to be in search of the dragoman of the Latin convent; and Moosa Beg went out, and, as I afterwards learned, held a consultation with the Latin priests. (...) We were hurried out of our rooms, the keys were taken from us, and the doors sealed up. We were conducted, not to the governor, but to the moollah or judge.”*

The missionaries were interrogated by the judge. Then the judge asked why the missionaries distributed books that were not recognized by any religion.

*“We replied, ‘The books that we distribute are the Law, the Psalms, the Prophets, and the Gospel; such as Christians have always received as their Holy Books.’ His reply deserves to be remembered, ‘The Latins’ say these are not Christian books. Very little else was said, and we were sent away to the musselim, with information that we should be kept in confinement, until the matter could be referred to the pasha at Damascus, and an answer received.”*

The missionaries met with the governor, who pointed out the Catholics’ statement as well. The governor sent the missionaries to the Latin convent, where they were turned away. They headed next to the missionaries’ house, where the Turkish soldiers rummaged through the missionaries’ belongings.

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<sup>168</sup> The whole case can be accessed in Bond 1828, 359-369.

*“At last we were told that we must return to the governor’s house to sleep. (...) On our entering the governor’s room, he saluted us with uncommon civility, invited us to a seat near him, and ordered coffee for us.*

The missionaries answered the governor about why they distributed these books, especially about the distribution to the Muslims.

*“He said that was all very well, begged us not to be offended, told us he had no knowledge of the affair when we were arrested, but the whole was done by the judge (...) We knew that Greeks, priests as well as others, and Jews, some of whom were Europeans, and had passports and timians; had been put in prison and in chains, on the most frivolous pretences, until they paid large sums of money to their oppressors. It was at least possible that we might receive the same treatment, and have the same demands made upon us. We knew that Turks are accustomed to inflict (sic) corporeal punishment, in order to extort money, or some confession which they wash to obtain; (...) After waiting a while to receive some present, but finding they were not to receive any thing, they went away in very ill humor. (...) It is probably the first time that they have done all this for nothing, for the poor Greeks and Jews always have to pay dearly for being insulted and abused. This affair gave us new information about Turks, Turkish government, and Turkish justice. (...) The judge sent to him to put us in prison and in chains, but when he read our firman, he said that could not be done.”*

The judge acknowledged the rights of the missionaries, but spoke contemptuously about their books, prohibiting the missionaries from distributing them to the Muslims.

*“When they returned with the papers, Joseph told us, that the governor, on hearing that the judge denied having given orders to imprison us, fell into a great rage, and talked most outrageously against the judge before all his attendants (...) Since our arrival at Beyrout, we have learned that the ex-governor, on his return to Damascus, complained that he had lost his office through the influence of the judge, because he did not*

*imprison us, as the judge commanded. "We have no means of ascertaining what is true in this case, but I believe all parties regretted that they had meddled with us, and I believe that a general impression was made, that men under English protection are not to be trifled with."*

From this report embedded in the memoirs, several issues about the Ottoman judicial system and society can be gathered. The governor tried to use his position to influence the judgement issued by the court of law. In this case, the governor lost his position when he tried to upend the judge's decision, unlike in the one mentioned earlier. The second issue was the treatment of the Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, as noted by Fisk. The missionaries' fears of being unjustly punished and extorted seemed to have a basis in the general treatment of Jews and Christians in the Empire, and the missionaries might even have heard about some specific cases regarding their fears. The last issue was the amount of attempted bribery, where the missionaries have to rebuff all advices on advancing their case with bribes to the governor and the soldiers. The case was presented as a victory for the missionaries and all others who suffered from the injustices of Ottoman society.

### **3.7. The Ottoman millet in the memoirs of William Goodell**

The memoirs of William Goodell place some focus on the millet system that was in use in the Ottoman Empire from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, entirely covering the duration of stay of both missionaries within the Empire. The millet system has been explained previously in this thesis in chapter 2.

The points made by Goodell in his explanation are reinforced by an excerpt from the memoirs:

*"Fiercer and still more fierce raged the persecution against the missionaries and against all who were under their instructions. The former could not be molested legally; but all sects and classes were aroused against them, and whatever power the various ecclesiastical authorities possessed over their own people was used to the uttermost to break up*

*their intercourse with the mission families. To give the ordinary salutation to one of the missionaries, or to render them any service whatsoever, was made a penal offence. For such offences some were thrown into prison, others were beaten, others had soldiers quartered on them, and one was persecuted onto death.”<sup>169</sup>*

This excerpt, together with the explanation by Goodell, forms a rather critical depiction of the Ottoman state. The millet system is heavily criticized for the amount of abuse it allowed for those in authority. Even things the ecclesiastical authorities had no power to do, they accomplished with bribery. It is nevertheless clear that the memoirs depict the Ottoman state as full of corruption, with no care for the rights or wellbeing of its subjects.

Governmental reforms that increased religious freedom in the Empire are abundantly mentioned in the memoirs. They were very important in order to successfully execute missionary work in the Empire and were sources of heartfelt joy to the missionaries and the Protestant community. The first of these reforms was the Hatti Sherif of Gül Hané, issued by the Sultan in 1839. It was followed by pledges from the Sultan to abstain from the death penalty for apostasy. A Protestant Charter was given, granting the Protestants their own millet in 1847, and the decision was reaffirmed in 1850. Adhering to the Charter was enforced by a firman in 1853, and the death penalty was decidedly abolished with Hatti Humayoun of 1856, which was granted with the influence of the European Powers participating in the Crimean War.<sup>170</sup>

While the memoirs of Goodell praise the reforms highly, they also offer some doubts about their implementation. First, a positive remark:

*“Heretofore its principal use was to secure us from the molestation of these corrupt churches, but we have now begun to test its importance with reference to the Mohammedans themselves. Only a few years since the headless bodies of apostates from the Mohammedan faith might be*

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<sup>169</sup> Prime 1877, 96-97. The one who was “persecuted to death” is none other than As’ad Shidyag, the Armenian scholar mentioned earlier in this paper.

<sup>170</sup> All of these documents can be accessed in the Appendix of the memoirs of William Goodell, see Prime 1877, Appendix.

*seen 'lying in the streets of the great city; (...) But now such apostates may be seen at all hours of the day, walking these same streets without any apparent danger, urging the claims of Christianity even in the very courts of the royal mosques, and teaching and preaching in the chapel, and in the private circle, and sometimes even in the palaces of the great, (...) And all this wonderful security is, under God, owing entirely to the Hatti Humayoun.'*<sup>171</sup>

It is clear from this excerpt that the changes are welcomed with open arms in the memoirs, as they convey an impression of a great change in religious freedom, with customs of the land affected as well. Hatti Humayoun is seen as the defining article responsible for the change the memoirs report. The opposition to Protestantism is mentioned, with strong criticism of Islam and the Ottoman state. However, the memoirs contain a commentary by Goodell which suggests that the Ottoman government was not the chief enemy of the missionaries:

*"Again, it is said that the Turks are insincere in their professions of toleration, and that it is only under foreign pressure they are ever brought to act in favor of it. But it would be much more in accordance with truth to say that, so far as Protestantism is concerned, it is only under such pressure that they have ever been brought to act against it. (...) Whoever has read the 'Missionary Herald' for the last forty years must have seen that in perhaps ninety-nine cases out of a hundred our persecutions have come not from the Turks, hut from these corrupt churches, — the Turks never of themselves showing a disposition to molest us, and being drawn in to side with our persecutors only when under this terrible outside pressure to which we have alluded."*<sup>172</sup>

In his commentary, Goodell places the mantle of antagonists on the Oriental as well as the Greek Orthodox and Catholic churches, revealing them as the "enemy" mentioned earlier. In his memoirs, Goodell places the blame for most of the bribes on them and their supporters, and he also alludes to other ways in

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<sup>171</sup> Prime 1877, 403-404.

<sup>172</sup> Prime 1877, 402-403.



which they influence the Ottoman government. It should be noted that, according to the memoirs, while the Ottoman government was not friendly towards the missionaries, the malevolent actions they carried out did not stem from the government itself.

While these pledges, and particularly Hatti Humayoun, were a source of joy to the Protestants, they also harbored doubts about the outcome. The following comments were made regarding the pledges of protection the government gave to the Protestants:

*“But it has always been questionable whether the Turkish government, whose dealings are so often marked by duplicity, the prevailing sin of Orientals, really intended that it should have such an unlimited significance. Events of more recent occurrence give greater strength to such doubts, if they do not prove that the Porte intended only to make more secure the rights and privileges of those who were nominal Christians before.”<sup>173</sup>*

While the memoirs, through Goodell’s commentary, placed most of the blame for the persecution of Protestants on the other Christian churches and their supporters, the memoirs convey that the earlier doubts proved to be true in some respect:

*“The Turkish government was still jealous over its Mohammedan subjects, and any thing (sic) like the noise of a revolution, even of a religious revolution, was peculiarly distasteful to the ruling powers. (...) Two missionaries or agents of the Church Missionary Society of England, in the warmth of their zeal, and presuming perhaps on the influence of their government, favored a bold assault upon Mohammedanism. Great excitement among the fanatical Turks ensued, and it soon became evident that whatever were the terms of the Hatti Humayoun, and however it was understood by others, the Turkish government was not disposed to regard it as an unqualified permission to Mohammedans to change their religion.*

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<sup>173</sup> Prime 1877, 384-385.

*After this state of things had continued for some time, the Turkish officials, in the month of July, 1864, acting under orders from the Porte, seized eight or ten Mohammedan converts, and thrust them into prison. The prisoners were kept in close confinement, and were not allowed to have any intercourse with their friends.”<sup>174</sup>*

The events in the excerpt happened after the issuing of the Hatti Humayoun. The two missionaries’ open attack on Islam caused unrest, as would be expected. Still, the government’s actions were against the pledge of Hatti Humayoun and are conveyed as the presentation of the “duplicity” mentioned earlier in the memoirs.

The last excerpt found in the memoirs regarding the issue can be seen as a concluding note, summarizing the memoirs’ representation of the advancement of religious freedom in the Ottoman Empire. While, according to the memoirs, the Empire was full of intolerance and bigotry, the pledges given by the government eased the religious persecution, especially on the part of the Protestants:

*“This storm of persecution and excitement, though violent for a time, was not long in passing over and its occurrence was the means of defining more clearly the true character of the religious charter which the Sultan had granted to his subjects, and of making them more secure in the enjoyment of the privileges which had been guaranteed. It is simply wonderful that this Mohammedan power, which by the creed of Islam is pledged to intolerance, if not to persecution, has given so many and such strong pledges, binding itself to carry out the principles of toleration and protection toward those of other religions.”<sup>175</sup>*

While Fisk’s memoirs focus more exclusively on the abuses committed by the government, Goodell’s memoirs also document improvements in the Empire, especially in the increase of religious freedom. While change does not surge from

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<sup>174</sup> Prime 1877, 425-427.

<sup>175</sup> Prime 1877, 433.

within the Ottoman government, Goodell's memoirs present an Empire which was possibly capable of reforming itself, if only through external pressure.

The memoirs of Fisk and Goodell offer a representation of the Ottoman Empire from various points of view. The Greek War of Independence, missionary education, observations of relations between the government and their subjects, missionaries' encounters with the Ottoman officials, reports of the missionaries' cases in the Ottoman court of law and descriptions of the millet system all point out several things, which generally support the universal representation of the Ottoman Empire being a nation which lacked civilization, knowledge and understanding. The government is shown to be cruel to the Greeks in unjustifiable proportions, their low level of education is noted, and the Ottoman officials are shown to be capable of cruelty, with bribery present in place of justice. The people are shown to suffer under the Ottoman government, and according to the memoirs the implementation of civil rights is mainly introduced by the Western powers. The lack of justice in the Ottoman society pointed out by the memoirs is apparent by the power the native churches possess, as their persecution of the Protestants is pointed out as result of the weakness of the Ottoman government. The Ottoman government is represented by the memoirs as weak, unjust and cruel. The representation of the people this government ruled over is a different question, and it is discussed in the following chapter.

## 4. The representation of the people in the Ottoman lands

### 4.1. Representation of Muslims in the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell

The memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell represent the Muslims groups of the Ottoman Empire in an ambivalent way. The Muslims are criticized for their religious beliefs and actions, while some aspects of the Islamic faith are observed uncritically or even with some amount of praise. While there are conflicts with Muslims, especially with Bedouins, the memoirs also contain records of the Muslim inhabitants of the Empire acting benevolently towards the missionaries and other people of the Empire. While all the Muslims groups, especially the Persians, are targets of scolding in the memoirs, some praise is also offered to them. Especially Goodell's commentary on the Turkish people and his notes on the circumcision of Ali Bey's son<sup>176</sup> contain some thought-out praise on the Muslim population. Many of the observations included in the memoirs are free of judging, with simple referrals to Muslims as experienced by the missionaries.

There are a lot of remarks regarding Muslims generally, and Turks, Arabs, Persians and Bedouins specifically. Not all members of these groups were Muslim, but the memoirs make no clear distinctions about which Arabs and Turks are Christian, and which are not. It is therefore reasonable to assume that those who are not mentioned to be Christian in the memoirs are presumably Muslims. As the representation of these groups differ somewhat in the memoirs, each one of them is discussed in this subchapter.

This letter to a friend, where Goodell describes the Turks in a way much praised by Prime in the memoirs<sup>177</sup>, is central to the representation of the Turkish people:

*“There is but little in this part of the Old World that looks like the industry, virtue, thrift, enterprise, rising greatness, and moral dignity of your*

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<sup>176</sup> Ali Bey was, according to the memoirs, a high-ranking official of the Ottoman government and a neighbor to Commodore Porter, who attended the event with the missionaries.

<sup>177</sup> The complete letter with the accompanying praise can be found in Prime 1877, 153-158.

*part of the New. A striking trait in the character of the Turks, as you probably know, is indolence. They seem, in general, to have almost a mortal antipathy to labor and to the exertion of muscular strength, and even to masculine exercises, except such as they take on horseback and in the use of arms. Hence they neglect agriculture; and large tracts of most fertile and beautiful country are left comparatively a desert. Their manufactures, too, are generally in a languishing state; (...) But the Turkish character is not altogether a compound of ignorance, grossness, barbarism, and ferocity, as it has been sometimes represented, for they have certainly some redeeming qualities. As a nation, they are temperate and very frugal. They make much less use of animal food than is common with ourselves; and it is only within a few years that they have begun in some places to transgress the laws of their prophet by indulging in wine. They are hospitable, but ceremonious; very easy and dignified in their manners, but, if report be true, vicious and beastly in their habits; extremely kind to their domestics, and especially to their slaves; exercising unbounded benevolence towards the whole canine race, and not unfrequently a moderate degree towards some of their fellow-men; but furious in anger, and in executing vengeance on their enemies, terrible. They are much inclined to superstition, and, in general, attend strictly to the externals of their religion. Their natural gravity and taciturnity give them, in the view of strangers, the appearance of being haughty and disdainful; and, indeed, they have a lofty national pride, which is in some instances so prominent as to be extremely offensive. But, after all, there is something in the Turkish character which I always admire; (...) Their children have fine healthy countenances, and are in general neatly dressed and well-behaved (...) the Turk reclines on his soft cushions with all composure; (...) troubles himself little with politics, and, if possible, still less about the weather; is easily reconciled by the doctrine of fate to all the calamities that may befall his neighbors or his country; knows nothing of hypochondria; and, if he wishes any excitement, the Jews and Greeks will*

*do any thing for money to amuse him. or he has only to take a few grains of opium, and he is at once in an ecstasy.”*

This rather lengthy excerpt included in the memoirs provides a multi-faceted and detailed description of the Turkish people, although it describes mostly the men. This can be attributed to Goodell meeting the women rarely compared to meeting men, and his description reflects this condition, not to forget that the missionaries probably saw men as more important than women in society in general. In his description Goodell explains the sorry state of agriculture and industry by the traits of the people, and remarks on the poor qualities he associates with the Turks. from ignorance and barbarism to violence, superstition and a prominent national pride. But Goodell takes it upon himself to remind the reader that the Turkish people also possess redeeming qualities, such as temperance, frugality, hospitality and ability at raising children. Goodell observes the fatalism he associates with the Turks, with the last rather snide remarks of the inequality of the different groups in the Empire and the use of opium. While raising some positive qualities, Goodell's letter still possesses a critical undertone regarding the Turks as a nationality and people. There are some remarks on the religious conduct of the Turks, as he mentions the Turkish adhering to the “externals” of Islam, and that drinking of wine has become more common, contrary to the teachings of Islam. It can be gathered from the undertone of these remarks that Goodell values devotion to religious commandments, even if they are not those of Christianity.

The letter continues with the description of the event of the circumcision of a son of Ali Bey, a high-ranking official of the Ottoman government, which took place in 1832:

*“He was thirteen years of age, which is a later period than usual for the performance of the rite ; for up to this time they are considered as belonging to the harem, — the hair of their head is suffered to grow, and is plaited by the women with much neatness, but after this time their head is shaved, according to Turkish usage, and they are taken from the women's apartments, and admitted only to the society of men. (...) Ali Bey*

*conducted himself with great dignity and propriety, manifesting no levity, nor giving utterance to an idle or unnecessary word, showing much affection and tenderness for his children, and appearing to consult the comfort and happiness of his friends. Many of his guests were equally courteous and dignified; and, indeed, almost every one maintained a decorum, both of speech and behavior, which it would be well for some who boast of their superior civilization to imitate. I was amused and gratified to see the spirit of equality that seemed to animate them all: the poor and the rich met together; the slave sat down in the presence of his master; and every one that entered received a salaam from one and another all round the room, which he returned with the same easy and graceful manner with which it was given, and with the same apparent consciousness of being a man among men. But, though they did not condescend to be foolish themselves, yet, I am sorry to say, Ali Bey hired others to play the fool for them. I say nothing now of their music, except that it is always rude, nor of the sentiments of their songs, except that in most cases it is well that so few of the words can be even understood, from the barbarous manner of singing;”*

Goodell offers high praise to the decoration of the main room with a sense of wonderment, commenting also on the wives of Ali Bey not being permitted to mingle with the guests, but staying in another room.

*“We dined (...) and (...) portions were sent to the needy, — not the fragments, or the refuse, as is the custom with us, but whole plates of pilaff and other savory dishes, of which none of the guests, hungry as we all were, had yet been permitted to taste. (...) The food was excellent and abundant; (...) The table was also furnished with wine, of which Ali Bey and his brother Turk drank as freely as any other person at the table; and, indeed, the latter of the two manifested a fondness for it which I was not gratified in seeing, as he seemed to me to be in danger of exchanging one of the best virtues known in Turkey, viz., temperance, for one of the worst vices prevalent in Christendom, viz., intemperance. (...) This man was treated by all with marked attention and respect. (...) He at first expressed*

*the opinion that we were to be pitied in being confined to one wife; but, on my telling him that ours could read and write, and enlarging on the ten thousand other good qualities they are allowed to possess, he at length acknowledged that one good wife was worth a dozen poor ones, and that, in this respect as well as many others, the people of Turkey were, to use his own expression, barbarians and brutes. (...) On returning home, I could not but reflect that those people, in common with ourselves, belong to the race that has rebelled against their Maker;"*

In his long and detailed description of the event Goodell ends up painting a vivid picture of the Turkish culture prevalent in the high class of the society. His observations contain both praising and disapproving remarks, and the commentary seems to be quite balanced. Goodell even quips that there are some aspects in the social conduct of the Turks worth imitating by the people in the West. His sense of amazement on the feeding of the needy, even before the guests have eaten, is tangible, while his disapproval of the music can be seen as personal preference. His remarks on the use of wine in the party are devoid of a reference to the commandments of Islam regarding alcohol, which he mentioned earlier in the letter. Rather, he views the use of wine from the Christian perspective, where the amount of alcohol imbibed is key. The conversation with Ali Bey's brother brings about a large amount of criticism of Turkish culture, but in the end Goodell asserts that he views the Turkish as an equal, not inferior, people despite his disapproval of some aspects of their culture.

The memoirs of Fisk also comment on the Turks on a general level:

*"The Turks exalt the name of their impious prophet above the name of Jesus, and are pre-eminent for hypocrisy, oppression, and falsehood."<sup>178</sup>*

*"Their Turkish guide, who led them up the mountains, amused them with a fabulous history of the ancient Tartosa. His conduct towards them, from the time he fell into their company, was peculiarly civil and obliging.*

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<sup>178</sup> Bond 1828, 294.



*As they were unacquainted with the country, he accompanied them without being solicited; and for this purpose went several hours out of his way. And as the road from Tartosa to Tripoli was dangerous for strangers, he went on with them, till they came in sight of the city to which they were destined. And for his very acceptable services he asked no reward. And when they made him a small present, he received it gratefully, and left them, satisfied with his compensation.”<sup>179</sup>*

The first quotation is scathing remark on the Turks on the grounds of them being generally Muslims. The second one, however, offers a different presentation, as Fisk praises the actions of a Turkish man who acted as their guide in their time of need out of sincere goodwill.

The next two excerpts from the memoirs of Fisk display the way the Turks saw the Jews, according to the memoirs:

*“A Jew accompanied us. In the market a Turk, too lazy to light his own pipe, called on the Jew to do it for him. The Jew refused, and the Turk was rising in a rage to pursue him, when perceiving that the Jew was accompanying us, he desisted. Soon after this a Turkish peasant, who was carrying a sack of water, called to the Jew in a very domineering manner, to assist in emptying the water into a vessel. We interfered, and nothing more was said.”<sup>180</sup>*

These excerpts offer a scathing view on how the Muslims acted towards the Jews, as the Jews were forced to do the bidding of the Turkish, being seen as no more than slaves to the Turks. It can be concluded from this remarks that the Muslims viewed the Jews as a lesser people, whom they could abuse as they wished.

There are some detailed presentations of the Arabs in both memoirs. The following excerpt is from the time Goodell arrived in the Ottoman lands:

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<sup>179</sup> Bond 1828, 392-393.

<sup>180</sup> Bond 1828, 310-311.

*“There is no wharf at Beyrout, and when the boat struck, the half-naked, barbarous Arabs leaped out, and carried us, one at a time, through the billows to the dry land, amidst the multitude who ran to witness so novel a scene (...) Many Arabs followed in the train to see what the end would be; and the boys and girls frequently ran across the street before us, in order to see the color of our eyes and the cut of our garments to better advantage.”<sup>181</sup>*

This excerpt is interesting in the way it demonstrates that the missionaries were as foreign and exotic to the people in the Ottoman lands as the local people were to the missionaries.

The memoirs of Fisk contain a scene where the missionaries and their attendants end up in a brawl with some Arabs who had stolen baggage from them when they were on their way from Jerusalem to Beirut in 1825:

*About midnight there was a terrible outcry, and firing of guns, which alarmed the whole company. From the noise it was supposed, that they were attacked by robbers, and that the engagement with the muleteers had actually commenced. All was consternation and confusion, till the noise having subsided, they learned that a trunk had been stolen by two Arabs. (...) Two men, supposed to be the thieves, were seized in the morning by a part of our company, to be carried to the governor of Nazareth. We had proceeded but a short distance, when a horde of Arabs arrived, and with muskets, swords, and clubs attacked our caravan. The attack was furious and wild as the whirlwind of the desert. Had it been their design to take our lives or our property, we were completely in their power. One man in our train received a slight sabre-wound in the arm. Many received heavy blows over the head and back. A heavy blow of a bludgeon grazed my head and spent its force on my arm, which was in consequence lame for several days. The baggage was scattered in every direction. Men tumbled from their beasts, and all was perfect confusion and terror. At length the assailants retired with the prisoners, and to our grateful*

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<sup>181</sup> Prime 1877, 79.

*astonishment we found that all our party were safe, and that even of the baggage, only a few trifling articles were missing.*"<sup>182</sup>

Fisk asserts that the Arabs were not going to inflict any serious harm or death, their sole objective seeming to be to free the captives. This is supported by the claim that the travelers were at the attackers' mercy, but some luck can be attributed to the fact no one suffered serious injuries. Fisk seems to harbor no ill will towards the Arabs who attacked them, and the tale of the brawl seems to be more of a travel story with no deliberate moral teaching. The following excerpt is the last excerpt in Fisk's memoirs regarding the Arabs:

*"Some of the Arabs," says Mr. G., "were deeply affected, as they stood around his [Fisk's] dying bed. They were amazed at his peace of mind, and could not conceive it possible, how any one could be so willing to die. They wept."*<sup>183</sup>

The emotional reaction of the Arabs to Fisk's death presents the Arabs as humane people capable of feeling affection for those different to them. While Fisk had his share of negative encounters with the Arabs of the Ottoman lands, this remark asserts that there was still hope for them.

The memoirs of Goodell also contain some accounts of Muslim benevolence, with the following excerpt as an example, set in 1837 as plague ravaged Constantinople:

*"Let it suffice to mention one poor German woman, who, on being seized with the plague was cast out into the open street. She begged here, and begged there, but no one would receive her. She staggered out to the burying-ground, and lay down between two graves, where she continued two days and a night. At length a Mussulman passed by, "and when he saw her, he had compassion on her, and went" and took her to a hospital, and demanded admittance for her. And the woman lived; and she is now in one of our families, receiving Christian instruction. (...) It is not common*

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<sup>182</sup> Bond 1828, 401-402.

<sup>183</sup> Bond 1828, 425-426.

*for the Turks generally to ask, or speak, or even think, of plague and death. I have seen them pass by or step over the dead body of a man, as they would pass by or step over the dead body of any brute animal. It is like the unconcern of the blind, or rather the insensibility of the dead.*"<sup>184</sup>

In this case a European expatriate is cruelly, but maybe understandably, cast out to die of the plague. Her savior is a Muslim who acts with untold compassion for her, making sure she is taken care for. It is reasonable to assume Goodell's remark is made regarding the fatalism of the Muslims, where calamities have to just be accepted as part of God's plan<sup>185</sup>. The Muslim's actions might remind the reader of the tale of the Good Samaritan as told by Jesus in New Testament, where a person least likely to perform good deeds acts with untold kindness. Goodell's observation of the fatalism exhibited by the Turks is not meant to lessen the praise due to the Muslim man for his actions; rather, it is a separate observation.

The missionaries tried to proselytize the Muslims on their journey through introducing missionary literature to them. Some of these attempts, with the Muslims' reactions, are included in Fisk's memoirs:

*"Suleiman read the title page, and then turning to Matt. v. he read and replied; "Very good." The Testament was presented to him, which he received with expressions of gratitude.*"<sup>186</sup>

*"Mohammed read in Genesis, and said it was very good. Another Turk then took it and read that God rested on the seventh day, and said angrily that it was infidelity to say that God rested. Mr. Wolff tried to explain, but to no purpose, till he said he had given such a book to the mufti of Jerusalem, who said it was good. This argument silenced him at once.*"<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Prime 1877, 205.

<sup>185</sup> The fatalism of Muslims is mentioned in the memoirs elsewhere, Prime 1877, 202: "True to their belief in fatalism, the Mohammedans allowed it to come and go, without lifting a finger to prevent it. "What Allah wills must be," was one of the prominent articles of their creed."

<sup>186</sup> Bond 1828, 149.

<sup>187</sup> Bond 1828, 269-270.

*“At dinner Mr. Lee read to us a letter from his dragoman at Alexandria, giving the information, that a high degree of fanaticism had been excited among the Mussulmans at that place, by our conversation, preaching, and the distribution of books; that immediately after our departure, the musselim gave orders to collect all the books we had distributed; and that, if we had remained a few days longer, we should probably have been in personal danger.”<sup>188</sup>*

These three excerpts display three different reactions the Muslims expressed when they were introduced to missionary literature, more specifically to parts of the Christian Bible. In the first there is grateful acceptance, in the second tempers flared until the missionaries were able to calm people down by referring to the authorities, and in the third the Muslim populace’s reaction is the one the missionaries most feared.

It should be noted that a courteous way of acting and speaking was the custom in the Ottoman lands, where a contemptuous reaction was frowned upon, even when there was a disagreement. This should be kept in mind when thinking about Suleiman’s reaction to the New Testament. The difference in the presentation of God in Islam and Christianity is the root cause of the tempers flaring in the second excerpt, as the description of God in Genesis was not akin to what the Muslims were accustomed to, and that is why referring to the mufti, as the ecclesiastical authority for Muslims, calmed the Turkish man. In the third one, the missionaries’ absence might have contributed to the reported anger of the Muslim populace, but the missionaries seem to think a crowd’s anger might amplify out of control, turning the crowd in to a violent mob. There is no mention in the memoirs of a mob ever posing a danger to the missionaries, so this fear might be somewhat exaggerated. The missionaries also probably had knowledge of the dangers an angry mob might pose, so their fears were justified to a degree.

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<sup>188</sup> Bond 1828, 240.

Both memoirs also contain many commentaries on the beliefs and customs the Muslims exhibited, including explanations of the religious terms of the Muslims<sup>189</sup>. The next excerpt is an example of the commentaries offered on the faith of the Muslims, containing both a theological argument and information on the Muslims' belief regarding the end of the world:

*"A Turkish effendi, Jar Allah, denied what had been sometimes said respecting Mussulmans' praying to Mahommed —The practice is not authorized by the Koran, and is a corruption. The existence of the Koran, and the style in which it is written, were the grand arguments he adduced, to prove that Mahommed was a prophet. "The existence and style of the Iliad," Mr. Fisk observed, "furnish an argument equally good in favor of Homer's theology, and in proof of his inspiration. I learned from Jar Allah that the Mussulmans expect the appearance of an extraordinary personage, whom they call Dajal, which means the False, or the Impostor. Sometimes he is called the False Messiah. He will be a Jew, and the Jews, as a body, will follow him. He will also draw after him great multitudes of the Mussulmans; will make war against the true religion; and will go on prosperously, till he shall have subdued nearly the whole world. Then our Lord Jesus, (who, instead of being crucified as Christians suppose, was taken up to heaven by Gabriel, while Judas was crucified in his place,) will descend from Heaven, wage war with Dajal, overcome and kill him, and establish the Mussulman religion throughout the world. As among Christians, some pretend to calculate the precise time when the millennium shall commence, so among Mussulmans, there are some who pretend to have ascertained when the Dajal will appear. Jar Allah more prudently says, it will be when God sees fit."<sup>190</sup>*

Fisk's response to Jar Allah on the proof of Muhammad being a prophet is a logical, albeit a snide one. Jar Allah's response is not included, so the reader is left with the impression that Fisk had the last word in the argument. The

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<sup>189</sup> On the explanation of the term "soofi", see Bond 1828, 239-240. On the explanation of the term "dervish", Bond 1828, 268. On the explanation of Ramadan, see Bond 1828, 304.

<sup>190</sup> Bond 1828, 357-358.

explanation of Dajal is treated the same as the other terms before, being informative yet without evaluation. When discussing the timetable for the arrival of Dajal or the Christian millennium, Fisk contently agrees with the dervish's stance on the issue. The following is an example of different attitudes and interpretations regarding sacred texts:

*"(...) the place is called Nabi Yoanas, because tradition says it was here that the fish 'vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.' We talked with the dervish about the Prophet. He told most of the story correctly, but added, that God prepared two trees to shelter him when he was thrown upon the dry ground. We showed him the book of Jonah in the Arabic Bible. He read, kissed the book, read again, kissed the book again, and so on eight or ten times. Mussulmans often treat the Bible thus when we show it to them, thus acknowledging it as a sacred book."*<sup>191</sup>

The dervish's reaction to Fisk's objection is interesting. Fisk seems to think of the argument as a simple case of discerning the true explanation, while the dervish seems more eager to show his respect for the Bible, rather than argue about whose version of the story is right. There is no mention of the outcome of this argument, aside from frustration expressed by Fisk about the dervish's approach to the issue. In Goodell's memoirs, there is a fairly positive commentary on the Muslim prayer calls issued from the minarets:

*"To a stranger visiting Mohammedan countries few incidents are more impressive than the cry from the minaret, calling the people to prayer at regular periods by day and during the night. The musical voice of the trained muezzin, the liquid intonations of the Arabic tongue, together with the sentiments expressed in the call, all make it to a reflecting mind seem like a voice from heaven, especially when heard in the stillness of night: —"God is great! God is great! I testify that there is no god but God. Come to peace! come to happiness! Come to the garden of delights! God is great!"*<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Bond 1828, 336.

<sup>192</sup> Prime 1877, 146-147.

It is surprising how much Goodell praises the calls from minarets, as they can also be seen as an annoyance by the people not adhering to Islam. This might be because Goodell understands the call and its message of joy, and/or other aspects of it. Nevertheless, this is a rare occurrence of the memoirs praising the religious practices of Islam<sup>193</sup>.

The memoirs also include remarks which are critical of Islam and the religious conduct of Muslims. Goodell focuses on specific things, like the untranslatable nature of the Quran<sup>194</sup> and the Muslims' strict adherence to prayer times:

*“When the Mussulmans, whether Persians or Turks, rose up to their prayers, I felt that it was a special call on me to attend to mine (...) The Mussulmans on other occasions as well as this have been frequently pointed out to me by Europeans as being a most sincere, devout, and praiseworthy people in respect to their devotions; and their punctilious observance of them, anywhere and everywhere, has been held up as an example for Protestant Christians to imitate. And yet these same Europeans would call us bigots, fanatics, hypocrites (...) were we to pray in that way (...) wherever we might happen to be. 'But see! they are not ashamed to pray anywhere.' Yes, I see. (...) He would be ashamed not to do it. It is the custom to do it. Everybody does it. No one could be admitted into good society without doing it. (...) Everybody prays. It is the custom to pray; it is the law to pray; a man would be ashamed not to pray, he would, in fact, be hissed out of society, if nothing worse, should he refuse to pray. And his prayer implies no more as to his moral character than the custom with us of washing one's hands, or shaving one's beard. (...) Nothing is farther from his own thoughts, or the thoughts of the bystanders, than that his prayer should exert any transforming influence upon his character.”<sup>195</sup>*

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<sup>193</sup> For an example of the missionaries lamenting Muslim pilgrims, see Bond 1828, 254.

<sup>194</sup> Prime 1877, 369-370.

<sup>195</sup> Prime 1877, 218-219.



From this excerpt, it is clear that Goodell felt personal anguish over the admiration of Muslims' strict observance of prayer, which also explains his frustrated tone when commenting on the practice. His remarks heavily emphasize his perception that this adherence stems from peer pressure, not religious devotion. This commentary on the prayer also offers information on the importance of prayer to Muslims and how prayer is present in the everyday life of the Ottoman lands.

Both memoirs contain some mentions of the customs of the Muslim population. The following excerpts offer two examples:

*"Just as we were entering the town, we learned, that the musselim died this morning. A company of 'mourning women' and children at the gate were shrieking and beating their breasts. Other companies were doing the same in other parts of the city. Sometimes their screams were very dolorous, and they beat their breasts severely. At other times, their music had so much of a cheerful air, that, had I not known the occasion of it, I should have taken it for a demonstration of joy, rather than of grief; then again succeeded the most dolorous shrieks, and violent beatings of the breast. These women are hired to mourn thus."<sup>196</sup>*

*"To go to the graveyard to make kaif, i.e., to have a jollification, — to dance, drink coffee, tell love-stories, and show their gayest dresses and liveliest manners and most beauteous forms, is very common in Constantinople, and with others besides Greeks."<sup>197</sup>*

These remarks, the first from Fisk's memoirs and the second from Goodell's, offer representations of seemingly contradictory reactions to death. In this case, the most plausible explanation is that the missionaries' experienced different moments of mourning. In the first one, the missionaries' witnessed the funeral of an important man in the village, which can be expected to be an event of some magnitude. In the second one, the cultural affiliation with graveyards is different from that in America, where the people come to cemeteries to respect the dead

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<sup>196</sup> Bond 1828, 349-350.

<sup>197</sup> Prime 1877, 137.

in quiet solemnity. It seems that the cemeteries in Constantinople were public places at the time, fit for public gatherings and events.

Some descriptions of the superstition of the Muslim population regarding the missionaries are also included in the memoirs:

*“While they [the missionaries] remained in this city, singular reports were circulated respecting them among both Christians and Mussulmans. It was reported, that they induced people to embrace their faith by money; and that each conversion cost ten piastres, which the convert received, and which would always remain with him, however much he might spend. It was reported, that they took the picture of every convert to their faith, and that in case of subsequent apostacy, by shooting the picture, the person would die. The man, in whose house they lodged, said to them one day, that a moslem told him, that he understood, the men whom he lodged hired people to worship the devil, and inquired, if it were true; saying that if it were, he would come and join the company, and bring a hundred others with him. “What, would you worship the devil?” said Signer D. “Yes, for the sake of money,” replied the moslem. By some it was reported, that they had caused a great shaking in the city, meaning a moral commotion; while among Mussulmans it was said; that they had actually caused an earthquake; and that the great earthquake at Aleppo was to be attributed to their influence. Two learned sheiks came one day to Mr. Fisk’s teacher to ascertain, whether it were true, that Messrs. Fisk and King had caused an earthquake.”<sup>198</sup>*

This excerpt is underlined with the knowledge that these beliefs were not founded on any proof, and while they are delivered without any evaluation in the memoirs, they are prone to be ridiculed by the readership. The Muslim population is presented as an archetype of foolish greed and immorality for the willingness to worship the devil for the sake of money alone.

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<sup>198</sup> Bond 1828, 394-395.

The Bedouins and Persians had a strong representation in the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell respectively, although far fewer in number than the Turks or the Arabs. The following excerpt is an example of the missionaries' encounters with the Bedouins on their travels:

*“Here we were continually harassed by the Bedouins, who seem to spring up like hydras in every corner. First came ten or twelve armed with swords and matchlocks. Their dress was merely a turban on the head and a piece of cloth tied round the waist. They met our guide and camel drivers, took each other's hands, kissed, and had all the appearance of friends. It was, however, soon found that they wanted money. Our guide told them they must exact nothing from us (....) The name of Englishman is so much respected even among Bedouins, that we were not molested. For two hours, however, as we moved along, our attendants were engaged in loud and violent disputes with these and other companies of Bedouins, who came up after they went away. They extorted a few dollars from the Armenians and Greeks, and at last took an ass from one of the Arabs. Our shekh knew all these free-booters, and it is probably owing to his acquaintance with them, and his faithfulness to us, that they were so easily satisfied, and that we met with so little trouble from them. He says most of the Bedouins are much worse than these, and yet he called these satans (shaitan.)”<sup>199</sup>*

The memoirs' presentation of the Bedouins is a strong portrayal of brazen robbers, scoundrels and thieves whose reported dress reminds the reader of the stereotypical savage. Even the sheikh calls them satans while reminding the missionaries that these ones aren't even bad when compared to the rest of them. The Bedouins low social standing could have also contributed to the sheikh's attitude towards them. This representation of Bedouins as insolent thieves is supported by the missionaries' policy in dealing with them:

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<sup>199</sup> Bond 1828, 275. The memoirs also contain other, similar mentions of the Bedouins, see Bond 1828, 394-395 and Bond 1828, 278-279.

*“At St. Saba it was thought prudent, to engage the shekh of the Bedouins to accompany them. ‘Hire the captain of the robbers to go with you,’ said one, ‘and the rest of the gang will not molest you.’”<sup>200</sup>*

The memoirs also include positive presentations of the Bedouins, where one or two of them offer their assistance to the missionaries<sup>201</sup>:

*“Coming to the river Abrash, they passed it in safety by the help of a hardy Bedouin.”<sup>202</sup>*

It is striking that such positive encounters occurred with Bedouins who were not in a large group. Still, to say that the Bedouins were cowards who harassed travelers only when they outnumbered them is wrong, as in these encounters the missionaries were helped without promise of pay, out of sheer goodwill. This makes the representation of Bedouins in the memoirs rather ambivalent.

Regarding Persians, there is an instance, set in 1838 aboard a steamer” where Goodell first rebukes the Persians’ claim of them being superior to the Turks, and then question them on their beliefs:

*“Persians and Turks, who urged me to decide the great dispute between them, whether we shall see God in the future world, — as the latter affirm and the former deny. The former never united with the latter in their devotions, but expressed a great abhorrence of them, and repeatedly asked me whether their prayers were not an abomination, — assuring me at the same time, with all the self-complacency imaginable, that their own prayers were acceptable; and requiring me to say if I did not think they prayed better than the Turks. (...) They said that the Persians were good and the Turks bad. I replied that travellers gave a very different account of them. They would not admit this as any evidence, because I had not been in their country and seen for myself. (...) In answer to my questions they afterwards admitted that there were prisons throughout all Persia; (...) their own confession furnished proof that they were a nation of thieves and*

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<sup>200</sup> Bond 1828, 305.

<sup>201</sup> For another mention of the Bedouins helping the missionaries, see Bond 1828, 390.

<sup>202</sup> Bond 1828, 393.

*robbers (...) The Turks were all awake to these arguments, and gathered round, while I demanded further of the Persians whether they did not wish to live long in this world (....) and whether all, universally, did not consider it a great misfortune to die, and especially to die early. This too they were forced to admit, although their own sacred books declare that paradise, to which all faithful Mussulmans go, is an infinitely better place than this world, — thus proving themselves to be a nation of infidels. For if you believe not your own sacred books, I added, pray tell me what is there that you do believe?”<sup>203</sup>*

The Persians are not portrayed positively at all, Goodell asserting that they indeed are a nation of thieves and robbers. This harsh and generalizing argument by Goodell is made in a context of the Persians' claim of being better than the Turkish, while Goodell seems to strive to prove that both are equally bad. And while at it, Goodell also forces the Persians to admit that they wish to live on earth instead of striving for the paradise promised to Muslims in the Quran, pointing out the disbelief of the Persians. In this excerpt, the Persians are presented as worse than the Turks, as the Turks' belief is not questioned by Goodell. In this way, the memoirs represent the Persians in an altogether negative way.

Both memoirs represent the Muslims in a critical way. They are seen as ignorant and violent people, and the missionaries have violent encounters with them several times in either memoirs. While the Muslim's faith is sometimes observed in a non-judgmental way, and the prayer calls are even praised in Goodell's memoirs, the religious state of the Muslims is lamented, as can be expected to be the view of missionaries on those who do not share their Christian faith. The several different groups of the Muslims population are represented in somewhat differing ways and, the focus given to each group varies between the memoirs. Notable differences are Goodell's great focus on the Turks, with a long letter of his providing a detailed characterization of them. Fisk's seemingly common violent encounters with the Muslims are partly explained by his many travels during his stay in the Ottoman lands. Both memoirs evaluate the Muslim populace

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<sup>203</sup> Prime 1877, 217-218.

on their virtues and vices of Protestant ethics, lamenting the spiritual and material state of the Muslims in the Empire in general.

## **4.2 The representation of the Greeks in the memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell**

In the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell, the term “the Greeks” refers to those belonging to the Greek Orthodox church. Being a Greek is also a matter of ethnic and national identity, and the memoirs do not make this separation clear, the only instance being Papas Issa Petros’ identity as an “Arab Christian of the Greek rite”. Even if the missionaries do not refer to ethnic Greeks, much less to those of that nationality, their writings still form the representation of “the Greeks” in the memoirs. On this basis, all mentions regarding “the Greeks” are included in the representation of the Greeks in the memoirs.<sup>204</sup>

There are numerous mentions of the Greeks in the memoirs of the missionaries. These include descriptions of complex rituals, lamentations of the ignorance exhibited by the laymen and the ecclesiastics alike, of Greeks who worked as assistants to the missionaries and of the warm welcome the missionaries received in many Greek convents and villages, with offers of lodgings they happily accepted. Their status as “nominal” Christians is also discussed, as well the presumably hypocritical actions the missionaries witnessed among them. The influence of Russia and the Russian Orthodox church is also mentioned. There is a focus on the division of Greeks regarding the Lancastrian schools in the memoirs of Goodell, while Fisk’s memoirs contain some special focus on the possibilities of missionary work among the Greeks.

The memoirs of Fisk contain many remarks and comments concerning the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire. A paper written by Fisk near the end of his life,

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<sup>204</sup> In addition to this argument, all Orthodox Christians of the Empire belonged to the Rum Millet, and their *millet bashi* was the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. The missionaries refer to Eastern Orthodox Church as the “Greek church”, which makes it presumable the missionaries referred to all people belonging to this “Greek church” as “Greeks”, even if their ethnic identity or nationality was not Greek.

some excerpts of which are included in his memoirs, encompasses most of the points made by Fisk and the editor regarding the Greeks<sup>205</sup>:

*"The Greeks need missionaries; for, though nominal Christians, they pay an idolatrous regard to pictures, holy places and saints. Their clergy are ignorant in the extreme. Out of hundreds, you will scarcely find one who is capable of preaching a sermon. Of course, there is little preaching; and that little is oftener an eulogium on some saint, than an exhibition of Christ's Gospel. The people are consequently ignorant and vicious. Before the Bible Society began its work, the Scriptures were rare, and in most of the schools that exist, the children merely learn to read ancient Greek, without understanding it. Greece offers to view an extensive missionary field; (...) convents innumerable, thousands of schools, now almost useless, but needing only a proper organization and suitable books, to render them nurseries of sound learning.*

Fisk names the Greeks as "nominal Christians", a term the missionaries reserved for the native Christians of the Empire. They are described as "nominal" because, from the missionaries' view, they exhibited only some of the traits the missionaries assigned to a "true" Christian, while non-Protestant teachings were treated as wholly erroneous. As the term implies, the missionaries saw the native Christians as Christians in name only. The Greek population was described as being very large, and easily introduced to Protestant teachings if such actions would be pursued. It should be noted, however, that as the paper under discussion was written by Fisk to persuade the Americans to pour more resources to the missionary work among the Greeks, Fisk's arguments stem from this point of view.

*"Nor should it be forgotten that the Greek church is intimately connected with the predominant church in the immense and rising empire of Russia—and has more or less direct or indirect influence upon all the oriental churches — (...) The Greeks offer to missionaries many excellent materials to be wrought into the great spiritual building — powerful*

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<sup>205</sup> The whole paper can be accessed in Bond 1828, 410-413.

*intellect, lively imagination, zeal, energy, enterprise, enthusiasm, love of learning and liberty, which four hundred years of barbarous slavery have not been able to destroy, an earnest desire for civilization, a remembrance of what their fathers were, and the hope of being what England and America now are, and all these traits of character brought into action by the idea, that the present is the period of their national regeneration.”*

Russia’s importance to the Greeks is well-pronounced in the memoirs, here more clearly than elsewhere. And in connection with that, the Greek church is presented as holding influence over the other Christian churches in the region. Fisk’s argument seems counter-intuitive here, for if the Greek church would become Protestant, would its influence stay the same? Even more so as far as the Russian Orthodox Church is concerned, for their backing stems from the Greek church’s Orthodox nature, and would likely lessen if they became Protestants. Fisk also praises the traits of the Greeks, which seem to be coincidentally the traits valued by the Protestant West at large. Fisk comments on the Greeks as a nation, referencing the Greek War of Independence with his comments on national regeneration. The act of putting America and Great Britain on a pedestal seems to stem partly from Fisk’s endeavor to persuade his audience, and partly from the attitudes he had witnessed, as can be seen from this excerpt, where the editor comments on Greeks sending their youth to America:

*“Besides the two Greek youth mentioned above, a number of others were afterwards sent to this country through the agency of Mr. Fisk and his missionary brethren, who are now receiving a classical education. They give evidence of possessing intellectual powers of superior order.”<sup>206</sup>*

Next, Fisk’s paper discusses the attitudes of the Greek church and the Greek people towards the missionaries:

*“The Greek church itself opens the door to missionaries. It has always allowed the distribution of the Scriptures, and has had disputes*

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<sup>206</sup> Bond 1828, 225.



*with papists on this point. The Greek patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, have generally favored the cause of the Bible Society, and have more than once written pastoral letters to recommend its object. (...) To the schools and convents we have free access for the distribution of Scriptures and Tracts, and do not often meet with Greeks who oppose our work. Several important errors of the papists have never been admitted by the Greeks, such as papal supremacy, purgatory, selling indulgences, the inquisition, forbidding the Scriptures, and giving the Lord's Supper in only one kind. The Greeks, however, pray to saints, and enjoin auricular confession, and pray for the dead, and know of no other regeneration than baptism.”*

While Fisk argues that the missionaries have been met with a notably positive attitude on behalf of the Greeks, he reminds his readers that the Greeks are still “Nominal Christians”. The memoirs offer some scrutiny towards the Greek clergy, first by a Rhodesian merchant and then by Fisk himself:

*“He then spoke in very strong terms against the ignorance and bigotry of their priests. 'If a young man,' said he, 'wishes to become a priest, he has only to go to the bishop, and give him about 100 piastres, more or less, according to circumstances, and all is finished.' (...) In conversations with the priests, I have uniformly found them more interested in the progress and issue of the present war between their countrymen and the Turks, than in any thing which concerns the Redeemer's kingdom.”<sup>207</sup>*

While the Greek church's reception of the missionaries was rather positive, the Greek clergy were presented as having some serious faults. As for the Greek church's reaction to Protestantism, the missionaries were not always welcome to the Greeks:

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<sup>207</sup> Bond 1828, 190-191.

*"It was with some difficulty that lodgings were found, as letters had been received by the highest ecclesiastical authorities, ordering them not to admit to their convents any of those men who distributed Bibles."*<sup>208</sup>

As Fisk traveled within the Ottoman Empire, he also came to witness some of the Greek rituals. One of the rituals which was commented upon in detail in the memoirs was the ritual of Holy Fire in the Church of Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, which Fisk observed in May 1823:

*"He went again the next day to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was found to be crowded with a distracted mob, whose hideous clamor seemed very unsuitable for that sacred place. Around the sepulchre a company of youth were running in the most ridiculous and frantic manner, clapping their hands, shouting, singing, dancing, and scuffling. (...) Suddenly they were seen around the sepulchre, looking up, pointing with their hands, with out-cries and shoutings. The fire had appeared in a lamp, suspended from the dome of the church. "This part of the heaven-daring imposition," continues Mr. Fisk, "was contrived with some skill, and it is not strange that the credulous, ignorant multitude should be led to believe, as they do, that the fire is miraculous. "Soon the fire was brought out of the sepulchre, and the congregation rushed forward to light their candles, and in a moment the whole temple seemed in a blaze. Many again commenced shouting, jumping, and swinging their torches, putting their hands into the blaze, and passing it quickly across their faces. "We retired from the church," the journal proceeds, "wearied and disgusted with beholding such impious scenes."*<sup>209</sup>

The presentation of the ritual in the memoirs is less than excited, as can be gathered from the excerpt. The negative and condemning tone in which the ritual is presented, with all the adjectives filled with distaste, present the ritual as a form of corruption among the Greeks. Fisk's role as an observer separates the Greek crowd, that "credulous, ignorant multitude", from the cool and critical rationale of

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<sup>208</sup> Bond 1828, 381.

<sup>209</sup> Bond 1828, 293-294.

the Protestant missionary. Fisk later returned to examine more closely the appearance of the fire, but he was denied by the Greek priests<sup>210</sup>.

Some of the Greeks acted as helpers to the missionaries, and some of them are mentioned in Fisk's memoirs. The most prominent one is Papas Issa Petros, Fisk Arabic teacher:

*"He is a man of more learning, probably, than any other Christian in Jerusalem. He speaks fluently in four or five languages; and reads more or less of about fifteen. He has also a considerable knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, and constructs globes for his own use. He has attained to better views of justification, of the excellency and sufficiency of Scripture, and of the spiritual nature of religion, than any other oriental Christian with whom I am acquainted; but he has not yet learned the corruption of his own heart, nor has he taken the first step in self-abasement and humiliation. Being, however, fully sensible of the ignorance and superstition of Christians around him, and of the superiority of Protestant doctrines and customs, he is very ready to assist us in our work."*<sup>211</sup>

Petros is described as an intellectual of considerable notice, whose intellect surpasses other native Christians, maybe even that of Fisk. His fault is, however, his lack of self-humility, a quality seen as central to being a Christian by Fisk. Nevertheless, he holds the Protestant teachings superior to those native to the Ottoman lands. Framing Petros' motivation in such a way, the memoirs present the Protestant teachings as superior to all those who are smart enough to realize it, with no need to become Protestant in order to come to this conclusion.

While the Greeks were a powerful community within the Ottoman Empire, they, like other Ottoman subjects, were subject to the abuse of Ottoman officials. The following excerpt is set in 1823, as the pasha of Damascus sacked Jerusalem:

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<sup>210</sup> Bond 1828, 374-375.

<sup>211</sup> Bond 1828, 354-355.

*“The following instance of torture is related, as a specimen of others. The Superior of the Greek convent of Mar Elias was seized, and bastinadoed under the pretence, that he knew of concealed treasures, which he would not open to the pasha. He was raised by his feet, which were confined between a cord and a pole, till his head rested on the ground. In this position ten men fell to beating him on the soles of his feet with staves, which they clenched with both hands, so as to strike them harder. After these had beat him awhile, ten fresh hands were called. Thus they were changed four times, so that forty were employed in beating him, till they had inflicted five hundred blows, when they left him on the ground, bare-headed, in the open air, without any sustenance but water. After permission was obtained to bring him to the convent. Dr. Dalton was called, and went immediately to his relief. He found his feet greatly swollen, and bruised to a pulp.”<sup>212</sup>*

The memoirs of Goodell offer multiple mentions of the Greeks within the Ottoman Empire. The memoirs include commentary on the Greek Orthodox beliefs, Greek assistants and internal division among Greeks regarding the Lancastrian schools founded by the missionaries. The memoirs' first presentation of Greeks, however, is one of Greek privateers who stopped the missionaries' ship as they were on their way to Beirut in 1823:

*“Were hailed at four this morning by a Greek privateer. (....) The poor Turk, quaking with fear, threw off his turban, supplying its place with an English cap, and concealed himself in the hold. (...) Our captain was ordered to set his sails, and wait till the morning light. When he made some objection, the reply, 'If you do not obey, we will sink you to the bottom,' was an argument of sufficient weight in our circumstances. (...) the commander, with four or five others, came on deck. They looked more like savage (sic) than civilized men, were miserably clad, and appeared half famished; but they conducted themselves in a very honorable manner,*

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<sup>212</sup> Bond 1828, 398-399.

*made inquiries about our voyage, and what Turkish vessels we had seen, and wished to purchase tobacco and provisions. When we offered them some of our Greek tracts, they seized them with great avidity; and we only regretted that we had not a greater variety at command.”*<sup>213</sup>

The missionaries were stopped by the privateer in November 1823, so the Greek War of Independence was on at the time, which explains the privateers' actions. The Greeks inflicted no harm on the passengers, instead initiating trade with those on the ship. The missionaries were greatly pleased by the eager attitude the Greeks had for their tracts, and Goodell's comments on the Greeks' appearance and conduct present them as a group deserving of some praise. The Turks' reaction and actions before the Greeks boarded the ship was understandable, as the relationship between the two groups was full of malevolence and distrust.

Goodell's memoirs offer some commentary on the religiousness of the Greeks through a description of two Greek pirates whom he observed in 1829:

*“Two Greek pirates are to be executed to-morrow morning at Florian. They appear to be deeply criminal and awfully hardened. (...) It appeared that the beef and anchovies on board one of the English vessels which they pirated were left untouched, and (...) the culprits were asked the cause. They promptly answered that it was at the time of the great fast, when the church allows neither meat or fish to be eaten. They appeared to be hardened and abandoned wretches, enemies alike to their own and every other nation, and yet rigidly maintaining their religious character, and, while robbing, plundering, murdering, and stealing the women and children of their countrymen and selling them to the Turks (...) they would have us understand that they were not so wicked as to taste of meat or fish when prohibited by (...) their church. The religion of these countries has nothing to do with moral character. The priests do not and dare not, interfere with this, their business being only with religion.”*<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Prime 1877, 78.

<sup>214</sup> Prime 1877, 108-109.

In this excerpt, the Greek pirates are presented as religious men, adhering to the teachings of the Greek church with a serious attitude. Goodell mocks the Greek Orthodox faith for its faithful seemingly having no problem with inflicting grievous harm to others while paying heed to religious fasts of their church. Goodell argued that this is because of the separation of religion and morality in the Ottoman Empire, at least among the Greeks, priests performing religious duties without teaching about right or wrong to the members of the church. The lack of a bond between faith and moral character in the Greek faith is presented with clarity in the memoirs, although Goodell's conclusion that the pirates are good candidates for being representatives of the Greek Orthodox faith is questionable.

Goodell also had a long-time helper from the Greek community, a man named Panayotes Constantinides, who worked as a book-binder before Goodell arrived in the Ottoman lands. He understood both Greek and Turkish and, after becoming a Protestant, worked with the missionaries until his death in 1861. The memoirs present Panayotes' work as a major factor in the missionaries being as successful as they were, and he is raised as an example of the Protestant virtues:

*"During this time he was variously employed, (...) but more generally as a teacher, a translator, or a preacher of the Gospel of Christ, under the direction of the missionaries of the American Board. Some of the best of the Armeno-Turkish hymns were composed by him. All the early petitions which the Protestants presented to the Porte, in the terrible persecutions they suffered, setting forth their grievances and asking for redress, were drawn up by him. (...) But his most important, and what may be called the crowning work of his life, was the help he afforded in translating the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments into Armeno-Turkish. "*<sup>215</sup>

Goodell's memoirs, like Fisk's, contain descriptions of the Greek church's rituals. In Goodell's case, the prime example is the Greek's celebration of Epiphany<sup>216</sup>, which Goodell observed in January 1832:

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<sup>215</sup> Prime 1877, 404-406.

<sup>216</sup> The ritual Goodell described in his memoirs is known as the Great Blessing of Waters.

*"Went to the Greek church (...) while it was yet dark, and found a great crowd assembled in the yard or inclosure of the church, and the priests chanting their service over a barrel or large firkin of water, with the cross planted by the side of it. As soon as they had finished blessing and consecrating it, and were retiring to the church, there was a universal rush of the people for some of the holy water to drink, and to carry away in bottles; and such pushing, pulling, scrambling, bawling ensued as I have seldom seen even at football."<sup>217</sup>*

Goodell notes the complex ceremonies performed by the Greeks inside the church, including the crowd marching to the shore of the Bosphorus. There a priest threw the cross into the sea for naked swimmers to retrieve, and the winner was celebrated. Naked women on boats called for the cross' retriever to come to them so they could kiss the cross, and then all of them joined the elders and priests on the shore and marched back to the church to continue the festivities. Goodell comments on this procession:

*"The aga [the senior of the village] of the village was present to keep order on the occasion! a Mussulman, with a whip in his hand, to keep Christians from devouring one another, or committing any excesses during their religious solemnities! The whole appeared like a farce."<sup>218</sup>*

Goodell's description of the Epiphany celebration is delivered in a tone of reprehensive confusion, as he seemingly is not sure what he is witnessing. The Greeks' actions when acquiring holy water and retrieving the cross are frowned upon by Goodell, as is the aga's role as a peacekeeper. In this excerpt, the memoirs represent the Greeks' religious events as filled with chaotic violence and nudity, so lacking in restraint that a Turkish official has to keep them in check so that they would not hurt each other seriously.

Goodell's work in establishing Lancastrian schools in the Empire included schools for Greeks as well. These schools were initially welcomed by the Greek

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<sup>217</sup> Prime 1877, 133.

<sup>218</sup> Prime 1877, 134.

community, but divisions soon appeared in their stance towards these schools<sup>219</sup>. The following commentary was given in 1835, when the Greek synod replaced the missionary-friendly patriarch by one who opposed the missionaries and started a critical examination of the Lancastrian schools:

*“He applied to the Porte for authority to dismiss from the schools all the teachers who were not forward to carry out the views of the Synod against the heresy that was beginning to spread. He sent a priest to in-  
each in the churches, who denounced the former patriarch as a Protestant, and declared that, had he continued in office but three years longer, he would have made the whole Greek Church Protestant by means of the Lancasterian schools. The effect of all this has been very different from what the patriarch expected and intended, for the reaction was tremendous. (...) The fact is, there have been so many examinations into this system of school operations, and all without discovering any thing treasonable, that the people are heartily tired of it, and seem determined to submit to no more vexations of the kind; and they have taken a stand, which looks very much like the attitude, of defiance. I am perfectly astonished at the advance they have made, and the degree of influence and independence they have acquired, while the dignitaries of the church have lost in the same proportion. (...) Every struggle they make shows more and more their weakness instead of their strength.”<sup>220</sup>*

Goodell’s commentary is made in calm observation with a sense of awe for the strong support of the Greek people for the missionaries. Goodell presents the division of the Greek community as between the ecclesiastical party and the laymen, with the latter supporting the missionaries. He also asserts that there have been at least several examinations of the Lancastrian schools, which underlines the persistent opposition of the Greek ecclesiastics. The missionaries

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<sup>219</sup> For an example of how the Greek bishop regarded the missionaries’ policy to open schools for girls also, see Prime 1877, 104.

<sup>220</sup> Prime 1877, 180-181.



are represented in the memoirs as those who had won the people's hearts, so that the struggle of the opposition is futile on this issue.

Like Fisk's, Goodell's memoirs also include some mentions of the Ottoman abuses towards the Greeks. The following comment, made by Goodell in 1837 as he shared a voyage with Greeks pressed into the Ottoman navy, conveys this presentation well:

*"I was on board when those who had been impressed were brought from the prison. They were pinioned and chained two together. Their mothers and other female relatives rushed to the water's edge to give them the last embrace. Their cries rent the air. One mother fainted away; another tore the flesh with her teeth from off her own arm; another threw herself into the sea, and was pulled out by the soldiers. Some of the prisoners, too, sobbed and wept like children, and some danced and sung, while the tears were still streaming down their cheeks!"<sup>221</sup>*

The scene is described in a truly emotional way, the suffering of the Greeks displayed in a manner ideal to invoke pity and sorrow. These kinds of scenes represent the Greeks as a people who, despite their faults, are in need of help and hope for a better life. The missionaries' role in the memoirs is to be the deliverer of hope for them.

The Greeks are represented to be largely ignorant people, although some Greeks are noted by the missionaries of possessing considerable intellect, a trait the missionaries strongly associated with the Greeks, presumably as a result of their classical education. The memoirs differ on some aspects of their representation of Greeks: While Fisk testifies the Greeks' reception of the missionaries as having been positive, Goodell's memoirs include several mentions of opposition against the missionaries and their work stemming from the Greeks. A notable difference is the fact that, when the missionaries describe the Greeks in the memoirs, Fisk uses stronger adjectives than Goodell.

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<sup>221</sup> Prime 1877, 199-201.

### 4.3 The representation of Jews in the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell

The representation of Jews is heavily focused on conversations regarding the viability of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, which the Jews find difficult to accept in general. The memoirs contain mentions of the different Jewish communities, but the missionaries have no noticeable effect in any of them. Goodell's memoirs sideline the Jews, with only a few detailed encounters with them, while by comparison Fisk's memoirs are much more focused on the work among them. This difference can be partly explained by the introduction of Joseph Wolff, who, while not a missionary of the Board, worked among the Jews tirelessly, according to the memoirs. The memoirs contain some remarks on the Jewish faith and customs, including the importance of the Mosaic law and the centrality of the Talmud. Fisk's memoirs also contain a lengthy and detailed account of a Jewish wedding ceremony<sup>222</sup>. The memoirs' representation of the Jews is unison in presenting them as group who value learning and knowledge, with the assertion that many of them are in the same poor state as many/most of the other people in the Empire. They are disaffected with the Gospel, and the frustration of the missionaries is visible in the contents of both memoirs.

It should be acknowledged that most references to the Jews are mentions of conversations with the missionaries, with nothing of the contents of these discussions being elaborated. The memoirs of Fisk contain many mentions of work among the Jews, and some of them can be attributed to the presence of an interesting companion on many of his travels:

*"We have been cheered and encouraged lately by the arrival in this part of the world of a fellow laborer, from whose exertions we hope for great good, especially among the Jews. I refer to the Rev. Joseph Wolff, a Polish Jew, who embraced Christianity some years ago, resided awhile at Cambridge, England, and has lately come to this country to preach the Gospel to his brethren according to the flesh. (...). He has sent to us*

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<sup>222</sup> Bond 1828, 260-263.

*several times, expressing a wish that our labors might be united in the common cause.*"<sup>223</sup>

The memoirs present Wolff as an ardent worker, discussing religion with Jews every time he can do so, pursuing his work day and night if given the possibility. When Wolff and Fisk joined forces in the field, Fisk was also drawn more into work with the Jews, and many of the commentaries regarding Jews stem from discussions in which Fisk and Wolff both participated. The first Jew Fisk met in the Ottoman lands was a man named Cohen, with whom they had a discussion in 1821:

*"Mr. Cohen (...) came to visit me. In the course of conversation, he said the Jews here never kindle a fire on the Sabbath, but often employ Turks or Christians to do it for them. I inquired what they believe respecting a future state. He says they believe, that all atheists and idolaters will be damned forever; but all, who believe in one God, will be finally saved; though, if they live in any known sin, they must suffer in hell until they have expiated it. He says Jews hold to 613 commandments, besides the decalogue, and if they obey all these, they will be rewarded in proportion; whereas Christians, who hold to only ten commandments, even if they keep those ten, will have a proportionably small reward. After reading some time in the Hebrew Bible, and conversing about different places, I offered him a Hebrew Testament which he very gladly accepted. I told him he must read it, and pray that God would show him what was right, and dispose him to embrace it. He said he would do so."*<sup>224</sup>

This excerpt of their meeting contains much information on the Jews, presenting them as a group focused on the Mosaic law they are called to obey, with their whole moral philosophy revolving around it. The mention of the Jewish circumventing the issue of not working on the Sabbath provides a good example of the importance the Jews placed on obeying the orders of the law. While Cohen's reaction to the New Testament is positive one, there is no mention of

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<sup>223</sup> Bond 1828, 171.

<sup>224</sup> Bond 1828, 146.

Cohen's change of beliefs. The Jews were hard to convert to the missionaries' cause, as this excerpt from the memoirs, made by Goodell at Constantinople in February 1840, demonstrates:

*“There is at present some stir among the Jews of this capital. Their chief rabbies had led them to expect that, according to their books, the Messiah must absolutely appear some time during the present year; but several months of their year are already gone, and still there are no signs of His coming. A learned rabbi, who assisted Mr. Schaffler in his translation of the Scriptures, occasionally visits me and almost the first, sometimes the very first question I always ask him, as he enters the door is, ‘Has He come?’ ‘Not yet.’ has always been his reply, till his last visit a few days ago, when, laying his hand on his heart, he said in a low and solemn tone, ‘If you ask me, I say He has come; and if you will show me a safe place, I will bring you ten thousand Jews to-morrow, who will make the same confession.’ I replied, ‘The apostles and prophets had no safe place shown them to confess truth in; but? they made the confession in the very face of stripes, imprisonment, and death. (...) But, alas! they know too little of Christ, and feel too little interest in the subject to venture all consequences for His sake. How can men believe whose hearts are altogether worldly!”<sup>225</sup>*

Fisk commented on the Jews several times in the memoirs, with this excerpt on Doctor Marpurgo being a good example. Like other commentaries, it is mostly concerned with the Jewish faith in the Messiah, but also touches subjects like Marpurgo's character, his view of the Talmud and of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire and his thoughts on the morality of the non-Jews as well:

*“The most interesting part of my labors in Alexandria, has been among the Jews. (...) One of them is Dr. M. who was Mr. Parsons' physician. He is a native of Germany, but has been many years in this place. He is reputed skillful in his profession, is one of the pasha's physicians, and is a man of extensive learning and very respectable*

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<sup>225</sup> Prime 1877, 241-242.

*talents. He has a library of about 2,000 volumes, among which are the Scriptures in different languages, and several valuable theological books. (...) We then entered into conversation concerning the Jews. (...) Their language is Arabic; they read Hebrew, but understand very little of it; and are exceedingly ignorant, barbarous, and superstitious. I then said, 'Are they still waiting for the Messiah?' He replied, 'Yes; but they care very little about the Messiah that has come, or any one that will come. They might easily be hired to consent that there should never be a Messiah.' Speaking of the Talmud, which he studied a long time while young, he said, 'It is a perfect Babel, a confusion of language, a confusion of logic, theology, and every thing else. In a whole volume, you will scarcely find twelve sentences worth reading. (...) 'The way to make Jews Christians, is to give them the privilege of citizens, and let them intermarry with Christians.' ”<sup>226</sup>*

Marpurgo is presented as very learned man, even as an intellectual, with many talents and skills. Most of the Jews of the Empire are described as the opposite, Marpurgo even asserting that their religious beliefs could be changed with ease. Marpurgo himself does not care for the Talmud, one of the religious texts central to the Jewish faith. Through Marpurgo, the memoirs present the state of Jews as poor, the Jewish faith as incomprehensible and disinteresting.

The rabbis, who are the teachers and religious authorities among the Jews, are presented with a snide undertone:

*“They gave a forced and fanciful interpretation which was easily answered, by simply reading the passage in its connexion. They made the following reply; —'My lord, we are come from a distant land, and by sea were sick with a great sickness; and therefore our mind is a little confused with confusion, and we cannot therefore speak to-day words of wisdom and understanding and skill; for you must know, my lord, that we are wise with wisdom, and we are comely men, and honored with great honor, and sit in the first seat at the table of the rich. We will return unto you, and open our mouth with wisdom, and speak about the Holy One, blessed be He,*

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<sup>226</sup> Bond 1828, 191-197.

*and blessed be his name; and then you will be astonished with great astonishment.*"<sup>227</sup>

The rabbis are presented as unprepared and incompetent when compared to the missionaries in terms of interpreting the Old Testament, and their embarrassment is made tenfold by the rather arrogant explanation they offered, according to the memoirs. This impression of the rabbis is underlined by the fact that they are never mentioned in the memoirs again.

The representation of the Jews focuses on their image as a community that values knowledge and intellectuals, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

*"Spoke with a Jew who said, this is no time to make proselytes; but if the Jews would all agree to renounce their religion, he would gladly do it; as he considered the question at issue merely a point in metaphysics."*<sup>228</sup>

The man in question seems to hold the thought that religion is meaningless, and his reference to the concept of metaphysics makes it reasonable to regard him as a learned man. While the other groups of the Empire are presented as holding very different attitudes towards the importance of religion, this kind of leaning towards atheism and non-religiousness is unrepresented in groups other than the Jews. The missionaries became increasingly frustrated with the attitude the Jews exhibited toward their attempts to proselytize them:

*"In company with his associates he called upon the high-priest of the Talmudist Jews, and discussed at considerable length the meaning of various passages of Scripture. (...) It was found that the only oracle on which the high-priest depended for his views of interpretation, was the Talmud."*<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Bond 1828, 232.

<sup>228</sup> Bond 1828, 234.

<sup>229</sup> Bond 1828, 239.

After this, the high priest offered his explanation about Fisk's questions made with the intention of introducing the argument that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, and the subject was sidelined:

*"Such," observes Mr. Fisk, "is the stupid nonsense, such the foolish absurdities, which learned Rabbies advance, in order to evade the truth as it is in Jesus."<sup>230</sup>*

The representation of the Jews in the memoirs is characterized with the difficulty of affecting the Jewish communities of the Empire, as there are no mentions of Jewish converts in either memoir, aside from Wolff. The memoirs' message regarding the Jews is that of lamentation and frustration:

*"My daily walks lead me through a large Jewish cemetery, containing, I should judge, not less than a hundred acres of graves. Slabs of white marble cover the whole ground. From the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, when the Jews were expelled from Catholic Spain and found a refuge at the capital of the bigoted Moslem, this great field has been for the most part their place of interment. Here lie buried hundreds of thousands of that rejected race who, while they lived, spat at the name of Jesus, and died with curses on their lips. (...) Some seventy or eighty thousand Spanish Jews, the descendants of those who lived in the days of Columbus, still reside in Constantinople and its suburbs; and among them all it is to be feared that not ten can be found who feel the need of any such Saviour as God has provided."<sup>231</sup>*

#### **4.4. The representation of the Armenians in the memoirs of Fisk and Goodell**

The memoirs of Goodell hold a swathe of mentions regarding the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, while Fisk's memoirs only contain a few in total. Much of the detailed representation of the Armenians can therefore be found in Goodell's memoirs, while Fisk's representation of them is positive but very lightweight.

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid. On the missionaries' low opinion on the Talmud, see Bond 1828, 232.

<sup>231</sup> Prime 1877, 390.

Goodell's representation offers a long timeline of the missionaries' work within the Armenian community and of the subsequent forming of the missionary-friendly First Evangelical Armenian Church of Constantinople in 1846. Goodell's memoirs recognize several helpers with an Armenian background, including the bishop Carabet among others. They also contain observations of the status of the Armenians within the Empire, as well as notes on the customs and teachings of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Goodell's memoirs devote many pages to commentary on the Armenians. This is reasonable, given that work with the Armenians was his primary task, based on the directions by the Board<sup>232</sup>. The central theme in the representation of the Armenians is the division between the Protestant Armenians and those who oppose the missionaries' work. Before Goodell started his work, Fisk had a few encounters with the Armenians. He lodged with them at least on one occasion in June 1823<sup>233</sup> and witnessed the Armenians, similar to the Greeks, offering prayers for the dead<sup>234</sup>. The following two excerpts, accompanied with the encounters noted earlier, embody the presentation of the Armenians in Fisk's memoirs:

*"I showed him an Armenian and a Turko-Armenian Testament. He said a bishop had just set out for Armenia, who wished for some very much; and as he would rest a while at Menimen, they could be sent to him there. I requested him to send these two, which he promised to do without delay."*<sup>235</sup>

*"With the Armenians I could have but little conversation, for want of a common language. There is not a single person among them, who can speak any European language; and very few of them can speak Arabic. Generally, they are acquainted only with Turkish and Armenian."*<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Prime 1877, 112. Goodell had written a study regarding the Armenians, which was taken into consideration by the Board in directing him to work with them, see Prime 1877, 64. There was some time before the work was started, see Prime 1877, 128.

<sup>233</sup> Bond 1828, 314.

<sup>234</sup> Bond 1828, 311-312.

<sup>235</sup> Bond 1828, 148-149.

<sup>236</sup> Bond 1828, 355.



In the memoirs of Fisk, the Armenians are portrayed as interested and friendly towards the missionaries, gladly accepting their literature. The scarcity of mentions about encounters with Armenians in Fisk's memoirs can be traced to the issue of communication, as the missionaries and the Armenians did not generally speak the same languages. With Goodell, this barrier did not exist as he studied Turkish and used it in his everyday life during his stay in the Empire. When Goodell commenced his work among the Armenians in the first years of 1830's, the missionaries faced opposition to some degree at first<sup>237</sup>, but their growing influence reassured them that their work would continue unopposed:

*"Perhaps, by and by, the patriarch himself will give you a church, where you can worship God in spirit and in truth. (...) The excitement has been certainly great, (...) and, what is truly wonderful, scarcely any opposition has been heard of from any quarter. It is difficult to account for this except from the fact that the bishops are really more enlightened than the people. Should the latter begin to take the lead, and the former to fall in the rear, then it will 'be impossible but that offences should come;' and, according to human view, there is but one way to prevent it, and that is by endeavoring to enlighten equally the clergy and the laity, and to bring them all forward together. (...) We are careful to say nothing which shall inflame the people against the priests, or the priests against the people; and we take as much pains to avoid an open rupture with either as General Washington ever did to avoid exposing the lives of his few hardy but ragged half-accoutred soldiers by risking a general battle."<sup>238</sup>*

The memoirs' presentation of the situation with the Armenians is one which came true in the sense that when those with power offer opposition, there will be conflict. The missionaries' policy in their work within the Armenians is presented

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<sup>237</sup> When missionaries were still staying in Beirut, the Armenian patriarch is presented as ready to issue a firman against them, see Prime 1877, 93. The Armenian patriarch and his vicar questioned Goodell on the missionaries' faith and work in detail, see Prime 1877, 132-133, 138-140.

<sup>238</sup> Prime 1877, 178-179. For an example of the support the missionaries had from the bishops, see Prime 1877, 185-186.

as wise, with Goodell's reference to the successful strategy employed by the most celebrated American war hero in history underlining this portrayal.

The missionaries' hope was for naught, as active opposition from a powerful body within the Armenian community soon emerged. The Armenian millet enjoyed large amounts of power within the Empire because of the Armenian bankers. These bankers were a very strong economic force within the Empire, and their influence on the Ottoman government and individual officials was strong. The memoirs state that these bankers were in opposition to the missionaries, and the bankers used their influence to change the patriarch to one opposed to the missionaries and their teachings<sup>239</sup>:

*“Such was the state of things at the commencement of the year 1839, when the assistant patriarch, sustained by nearly all the Armenian clergy, and urged on by the bankers, determined upon decisive measures for extirpating the novel heresy. (...) Mr. Sahakian, an evangelical Armenian, who had been in the employ of the American mission, and who was then at the head of the most important school was arrested, and, without even being informed of the charges made against him, was thrown into prison. He was a man of the purest and most inoffensive character, and the only accusation that could with truth be brought against him was that he had renounced the superstitious rites and ceremonies of the Armenian Church, and become a humble follower of the Saviour. (...) He was accused of sorcery, and of having the power to bewitch others. Soon after, another man of the same character (...) was seized and thrown into the patriarch's prison. Within four days an order was obtained from the Turkish government for sending them into exile, four hundred miles from the capital; and they were hurried away under charge of officers who treated them with the greatest cruelty. (...) The following month, Der Kevork, the pious priest already mentioned, was cast into prison, and, with other leading men who had embraced evangelical sentiments, was banished. The patriarch, who had previously promulgated an order*

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<sup>239</sup> Prime 1877, 231-232.

*forbidding all intercourse with the missionaries, or even reading their books, and requiring all who had any in their possession to deliver them up to their bishop or confessor, now issued a bull, threatening with terrible anathemas all who should have any thing (sic) to do with the foreign teachers. (...) Many persons were arrested on mere suspicion of having adopted heretical opinions, their business was broken up. and their families were in distress for want even of the necessaries of life.”<sup>240</sup>*

The persecution of those who had accepted Protestant theology was severe, and the missionaries feared that their work would be stopped by the Turkish authorities on behalf of the Armenian leaders<sup>241</sup>. The excerpt casts the bankers as the chief enemy of the missionaries, with them enjoying strong/extensive support from the Armenian clergy as well. The division was clear, with the powerful elite of the Armenian community arranged to oppose the missionaries' efforts. However, Muhammad Ali's second invasion in 1839 cast the Empire into disarray at that exact time, which struck the Armenian elite, enabling the missionaries' work to continue:

*“In addition to these public calamities, the Armenians were visited with severe personal afflictions. In the sudden reverses of the government and the country some of the wealthiest bankers were reduced to poverty, one of them in the extremity of his misfortunes committing suicide. (...) In the shadow of all these public and domestic calamities a council of the Armenian leaders was called, at which it was resolved that those who had been sent into exile should be recalled, and that the rigorous measures against the evangelical converts should be suspended. There was no real change in the feelings of the leaders, but they were awed. (...) The old patriarch, who was friendly to the missionaries, was reinstated, and the assistant, who had been appointed to the office for the purpose of carrying out the most rigorous measures, was dismissed.”<sup>242</sup>*

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<sup>240</sup> Prime 1877, 232-233.

<sup>241</sup> Prime 1877, 236-237.

<sup>242</sup> Prime 1877, 239.

Judging from the situation Ali's invasion in which cast the bankers, it can be deemed almost godsent, which is the presentation literally offered by the memoirs. With the former patriarch restored and the persecution's effects reversed, the Protestants in Constantinople enjoyed relative peace. This was not the case for those in the interior who embraced the missionaries' teaching, as they faced persecution of various degrees<sup>243</sup>. The Protestants' rest in Constantinople was not for long, however, for in 1846 the Armenians were forced to endure persecution, noted by Prime to have been the most severe of them all<sup>244</sup>. The memoirs contain a commentary by Goodell on this period of oppression, regarding the conflict between the Protestant Armenians and the rest of the Armenian community:

*“The aspect of the two parties was, and is still, one of great moral sublimity. On the one side were all the power, influence, wealth, and numbers of a great nation; on the other, fewness, feebleness and poverty. (...) They sent to the Sublime Porte, to give notice of their situation, a document drawn up with so much care and judgment as to secure the immediate attention of the whole Turkish divan, and to command the admiration of some of the very ablest diplomatists in the political world. To individuals known to be friendly(...)they wrote a long letter, calling upon them either to stand up in their own church and protest against the superstitions and wickedness of the times, or else to leave at once, and take their open stand with the persecuted friends of truth, choosing rather to suffer affliction with them than enjoy all the pleasantries of sin and the honors of the world, with the divine indignation resting upon them. (...) Their songs (...) reminded me of the singing of the ancient Bohemian brethren amidst the raging fires of persecution.”<sup>245</sup>*

The presentation of the conflict within the Armenian community in the memoirs continues to focus on the disparity of power and ability between the two sides. The persecutors denied the supporters of the missionaries everything in their

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<sup>243</sup> For more information, see Prime 1877, 279-281, 303-304.

<sup>244</sup> Prime 1877, 307-309, 311-314.

<sup>245</sup> Prime 1877, 309- 311.

power, from water to protection and from housing to freedom. Their suffering is presented as utterly unjust and cruel, cast on them because they valued the truth offered by the missionaries. While, according to Goodell, the Protestants were successful in garnering support from notable diplomats, their resources were nothing compared with those of the other side. Goodell compares them to “the ancient Bohemians”, most likely referencing the Hussites of the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, who are seen as precursors to the Protestant reformation. In the severe situation at hand the Protestant Armenians, with the support of the missionaries, left the Armenian Apostolic Church and founded their own church, named the First Evangelical Armenian Church of Constantinople in July 1846<sup>246</sup>. Goodell’s remarks on the occasion are included in the memoirs:

*"I did not expect to live to see this day, but I have seen it and am glad. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made, and we will rejoice and be glad in it.' When I removed to Constantinople fifteen years ago, I felt assured either that this day would come, or that the Armenian Church as a body would be reformed; and I never had any anxiety as to the result. (...) Even the Mussulmans have said, 'This is the miracle of 1262' (1846). It is all wonderful. I often walk the room, and lift up my hands and say to myself, 'Wonderful! Wonderful!' (...) He has in this great work condescended to make use not so much of our wisdom as of our folly; not so much of our strength as of our weakness. And more than this, He has made use of the strength, the pride, the high looks, the malice, the evil intentions, the 'violent dealings' of opposers, and thus has he 'stilled the enemy and the avenger,' and covered their faces with confusion."<sup>247</sup>*

Goodell is clearly happy with the establishment of the new church. It is evident that Goodell held this event to be a crucial step in lessening the persecution and easing the lives of the Protestants in the Empire. The protection for Protestants improved from this point onward with the issuing of Hatti Humayoun in 1856, as has been formerly noted. In this excerpt the Protestants continue to be presented

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<sup>246</sup> Prime 1877, 315-320. On Goodell’s reasoning on why they decided to help the Protestant Armenians to establish their own church. see Prime 1877, 321-322.

<sup>247</sup> Prime 1877, 317-318.

as those who are weak and their opposers mighty, with the assertion that God had favored them in the Biblical theme of “The meek shall inherit the land”, with God taking the side of the righteous Protestants against the malevolent Armenian church.

The members of this newfound church were subject to attacks and persecution from the Armenian community, which lessened only after the reforms on religious freedom mentioned earlier in chapter 3.7. included in the memoirs for the express purpose of “(...) *showing the extend (sic) to which the spirit of persecution was carried on the part of their former brethren. These aged saints, who died in the faith and triumph of the Gospel, were hounded to their very graves by their persecutors.*”<sup>248</sup>

While the Protestant Armenians were persecuted, the clergy of the Armenian church started to imitate the missionaries’ sermons<sup>249</sup>. It is not clear if this was done to win back some of the Armenians who had left the church, or if the missionaries had succeeded in inducing some change in the Armenian church. Nonetheless, despite the growing similarities between the teachings of the Armenian church and the Protestants, the members of the new church still faced persecution. The events were reported by Goodell, and they can be found in the following excerpt<sup>250</sup>:

*“On the occasion of his [an old Armenian whose funeral was the first one in the new Protestant church] burial an immense mob of hostile Armenians assembled at the cemetery, shouting and hooting at the company of evangelical brethren who attended his remains, assailing them not only with abusive and filthy language, but with stones. Mr. Dwight and many of the native brethren were struck with the stones. The other case was that of a shopkeeper, who had formerly been an opposer. When he received the Gospel, he was called to take the spoiling of his goods, and to suffer violence. he (sic) was driven from his father's house, and*

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<sup>248</sup> Prime 1877, 322.

<sup>249</sup> Prime 1877, 387-388.

<sup>250</sup> In addition to the funerals mentioned in the excerpt, there are mentions of a young girl’s funeral and a wedding in the Protestant Armenian community, see Prime 1877, 327.

*never permitted to return. He was once attacked in the streets, knocked down and beaten. As he was seated one day in his shop, he was assailed by one of the patriarch's men, who had previously threatened to take his life. The assault brought on a hemorrhage of the lungs, which soon after proved fatal. (...) When he could no longer speak, he looked upward, and pointed toward heaven as the home to which he was going. The pastor of the church, Mr. Apisoghom, was not long in following these first-garnered fruits. It was thought that the injuries he received from the mob at the funeral of the aged disciple who was first called home were among the immediate causes of the attack that resulted in his death.”<sup>251</sup>*

The Protestant Armenians endured physical attacks capable of causing deadly injuries, even at a funeral procession. This reinforces the impression and presentation of the members of the Armenian church as (being) bloodthirsty and violent to the highest degree. The mention of Goodell's farewell party in Constantinople contains a remarkably symbolic ending note regarding the persecution he had witnessed during his time with the Armenians:

*“The day that he was to leave, many of the old Armenians, as well as the Protestants, came to his house; and among the crowd that followed him, weeping, to the wharf, were some who had stoned him and spat upon him in the days of the persecution.”<sup>252</sup>*

Even after the injuries the Protestants, both Armenians and the missionaries, had been forced to endure, this excerpt conveys the message that the work of the missionaries was not in vain. During the many years of his affiliation with the Armenian community, Goodell encountered many who became helpers for the missionaries. Among them was an Armenian bishop the missionaries referred to as Carabet:

*“Within the first year of their entrance into the country, a kind providence sent to their house an Armenian bishop, a man of extensive learning, who had spent the most of his life in the Armenian convent at*

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<sup>251</sup> Prime 1877, 323-324.

<sup>252</sup> Prime 1877, 450.

*Jerusalem. He had become disgusted with the superstitions of his church, and, coming to Beyrout, he met with Mr. Goodell, who took him into his service as interpreter and assistant in translating. He was known in his own church by the name of Dionysius, but was called in the mission Carabet. When he first came to Mr. Goodell he was far from being a serious-minded person, — he was even profane in his language; but he soon became impressed with the truth as he learned it for the first time from the teachings of evangelical ministers. He subsequently gave evidence of being truly converted, and was of great assistance to the mission. (...) he renounced all connection with the Armenian church, and, in token of his renunciation of its orders, he took to himself a wife.”<sup>253</sup>*

As was earlier established, Goodell worked among the Armenian populace almost as long as he lived in the Ottoman lands. In addition to the commentary on Goodell’s work with the Armenian community, the memoirs offer information on the organization and customs of the Armenian Apostolic church<sup>254</sup>, with a separate mention of the harsh self-denial the newly-ordained Armenian priests had to endure<sup>255</sup>. While the missionaries established Lancastrian schools among the Armenians, the mentions about them are scarce in the memoirs. The following excerpt contains a summarizing mention of the missionaries’ educational undertakings among the Armenians:

*“Our efforts have been directed rather to enlighten, improve, and elevate the whole community by means of books and schools, and in our earlier efforts we had the sanction of these ecclesiastics, and had intercourse with their patriarchs and bishops. But as the people became enlightened, and some of them began to take a lively interest in the things they were learning, persecutions began to take place.”<sup>256</sup>*

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<sup>253</sup> Prime 1877, 83-84. For mention about the other helpers, see Prime 1877, 84 (Wortabet), Prime 1877, 159-162 (Sarkis Varjabed, Der Kevork, Hohannes & Senakerim and Peshtimaljian).

<sup>254</sup> Prime 1877, 126-127. The Armenian clergy were allowed to marry only once, and the theology of the Armenians had much in common with the Catholic Church, with the examples of praying to the saints and transubstantiation.

<sup>255</sup> Prime 1877, 159-160.

<sup>256</sup> Prime 1877, 321-322.



Goodell's memoirs represent the Armenians as a powerful part of the Ottoman Empire, with a detailed testimony on the hardships and persecution the Armenian converts to Christianity had to endure. To him, the Armenians are a real-life example of how a native Christian community of the Ottoman Empire reacted to the missionaries' teachings, and how the missionaries adapted to the changes around them. Combined with the improvements on religious freedom, which are closely linked to the persecution of the Protestant Armenians, the memoirs assert that missionary work can create change and improve the lives of the people in the Empire, at least from the view of the Christians in America.

#### **4.5 The representation of the Catholics in the Ottoman Empire**

Both memoirs mention the Catholics in several instances. Many of them are critical remarks on the Catholic faith. Many of the encounters happen in Catholic convents, and there is discussion between a Jesuit and Goodell as well. Some of the remarks are made in a general manner, without a context of the conversation or meeting, albeit they are of a critical nature as well. There is also a lone benevolent remark concerning the Catholics in both memoirs. Each of them includes long commentaries regarding discussions the missionaries had with Catholics, who were usually ecclesiastics<sup>257</sup>. These discussions are recorded in the memoirs with full transcripts made by the missionaries after the discussions. This one-sided nature of the discussions' recording must be considered when analyzing them.

The first excerpt is a description of a discussion with a Catholic regarding the teachings of his church which took place in 1821<sup>258</sup>:

*“He gives an account of one of these discussions with a Catholic gentleman of intelligence and learning, to whom he had given a Bible more than a year before. On the subject of the infallibility of the pope he adduced the arguments of Paschal, who, to prove that the decisions of the pope, as to matters of fact, may be erroneous, brings examples, in which one pope*

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<sup>257</sup> For some mentions of these discussions, see Bond 1828, 208.

<sup>258</sup> For an observation regarding the pope's infallibility, see Bond 1828, 315.

*had contradicted and set aside the opinions of his predecessor. "All the morality of the Romish church," said the Catholic gentleman, "changes according to convenience; and what is right at one time, is wrong at another." (...) Respecting prayers made to the virgin Mary, to other saints, and to angels, and also respecting confession to the priests, Mr. Fisk found this enlightened Catholic favoring correct views, and differing from the opinions of his church. He appeared to have learnt from the Bible which had been given him, that many of the religious views held by Catholics were unscriptural and unreasonable. Light seemed to be dawning upon his mind; and it is not improbable, that one thus led to renounce his papal errors, may one day be brought not only to understand, but love the truth as it is in Jesus."<sup>259</sup>*

This excerpt is a rare case among the discussions, as the "Catholic gentleman of learning and knowledge" in question seems to heartily agree with the missionaries' arguments, heavily criticizing the Catholic Church while doing so. His strong condemnation of the Catholic Church, while talking about "the Catholics" in a way that he does not seem to regard himself as one of them, makes this excerpt feel more like a confession than an act of repentance. It is important to note that, according to the excerpt, the man was given a Bible by the missionaries a year earlier, and it is strongly indicated that through reading the Bible the man started to "see the light" and agree with the missionaries. Catholic faith is represented as wholly unbiblical and full of errors.

According to the memoirs, Fisk also had a long discussion with Padre G, his Arabic teacher that took place in 1822. They discussed the Lord's day, the role of purgatory and indulgences<sup>260</sup>, the priests' ability to pronounce sins forgiven and the praying to saints and Virgin Mary<sup>261</sup>. Fisk and Padre disagreed on all

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<sup>259</sup> Bond 1828, 164-165.

<sup>260</sup> For an observance regarding the indulgences and praying to Virgin Mary and Joseph, see Bond 1828, 341-342.

<sup>261</sup> For an observance of praying to images, see Bond 1828, 303, 397. For an argument by Goodell against worshipping saints, see Prime 1877, 214.

these points, and the description of Padre's conduct during the discussions is remarked upon in the memoirs:

*"He was more calm and dispassionate than usual; for though he always lavishes compliments with unbounded prodigality, yet, in dispute he is very dogmatical and vociferous, and, what is still more unpleasant, almost totally incapable of feeling the force of an argument. (...) "After much further conversation in which I endeavored to explain, as well as I could, the nature of true repentance and real religion, he left me with a profusion of compliments, saying, 'We differ very little, only in some points of discipline.' This kind of discussion was resumed at subsequent periods, and conducted in an animated and interesting manner; but instead of inserting it entire we must, for want of room, refer the reader to the Missionary Herald, vol. xix. p. 174. The communication thus concludes."*<sup>262</sup>

Fisk's commentary on Padre and their discussions is underlined with the feeling of frustration<sup>263</sup>. Fisk seems to press on the fact that his arguments are superior to those of Padre, but Padre seems to actively convey that they have much on which they agree. From this excerpt it is clear that the memoirs, as well the Missionary Herald, acted as an instrument of display of how the Catholic theological position differed from those the missionaries held. This can be seen both as an example of the Catholic faith and a method of teaching the readers how to counter the Catholic arguments they might themselves face.

In Fisk's memoirs, there is one other interesting excerpt of an argument between the missionaries and Catholics which took place in a convent in 1823. The missionaries argued with monks who belonged to the Catholic convent of Terra Santa on the issue of praying to the saints, and read to them 1. Tim 4:1-3<sup>264</sup>, which the monks denied as being from the Bible:

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<sup>262</sup> Bond 1828, 219-223.

<sup>263</sup> For another description of frustration regarding the Catholics, see Bond 1828, 395-396.

<sup>264</sup> This is the content of the passages: "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth."

*“We assured them, that it was the language of St. Paul, and a true prediction of some who would apostatize from the faith, who were to be known by two signs, viz. ‘forbidding to marry,’ and ‘commanding to abstain from meats,’—two signs which exactly described them and their Church.” Being over-heard by the curate, he sent a request to have us come to him. We went, and meeting us at the door, he asked, if we had come there to dispute. We told him we came to see the Superior, and were disappointed in not finding him at home. He began to rail loudly against the English, saying, they were all ‘excommunicated, without a priesthood, and going to the house of the devil.’*

The missionaries were able to calm the curate, but he became enraged again, and the missionaries preached to him on the importance of introspection, reminding him that he would need to stand before Jesus in the end:

*“He interrupted us, and demanded, why we preached to him. We replied; —‘Because we cannot but feel, that you have perverted the Scriptures, and received instead of them the traditions of men. We are acquainted with many of your Church, and find that your influence is not good; and you must stand before God, and give an account.’ At that which we uttered as mildly as we could, he assumed the appearance of a mad-man, and walked hastily across the room, saying; ‘We are the true Church; —we are illuminated by the Holy Ghost. I can teach you, and not you me.’ We then asked him, if he were not sensible, that he did not exhibit the meek and humble spirit of Christ. He replied; ‘When men go about in this way, vomiting poison, I would crush them under my feet’ — and stamping violently on the floor, he pointed to the door, and said; ‘You had better go.’ Finding all attempts to obtain a calm discussion in vain, we left the unhappy man in the midst of his rage, grieved that any one, who could manifest such a spirit, should ever be called a minister of the Prince of peace.”<sup>265</sup>*

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<sup>265</sup> Bond 1828, 233-234.

This excerpt is highly interesting in multiple ways. The first thing that the reader notices is the curate's anger which manifests itself in notable outbursts of strong language and gestures of a violent nature. But it is noticeable how the missionaries conduct themselves while in the convent: First, they start to argue with the monks on theology, then asserting that the Bible itself points out the Catholics as those who have abandoned the true faith. This is a highly insulting stance, which the curate seems to have heard, causing his anger. The missionaries continue to assert that the Catholics should repent on account of their faith, chastising the curate. The curate's anger manifests itself again, rather understandably. While the curate is presented as one wholly undeserving of the Christian ministry, the missionaries' lack of self-awareness is somewhat astounding.

There are some excerpts of discussion with Catholics included in Goodell's memoirs as well<sup>266</sup>. The following excerpt is a description of an encounter with a Jesuit in 1834 who desired to convert Goodell into Catholicism:

*" He began by lamenting the divisions in the Christian Church, and by showing how sincere was his desire and how great the importance of union; (...) He then lost no time in introducing the Church of Rome, and at once urged me to become a member of it. I told him that I needed no urging at all, for that I was as ready as he could wish me to be to do whatever he could convince me was right, and that the only thing I required of him was sufficient reasons; let him produce these, and the work was done. I then proposed this question: 'What excuse shall I offer at the day of judgment for taking such a step as you are now pressing me to take?' As he appeared to be confused, or hurt, by the interrogation, and as I felt that, if he was really seeking my good, I ought not to confound him at the outset, but rather to encourage him, and give him every advantage. I retracted the question, and requested him to take his own way. His reasons were then produced, and I attempted to answer them, till from his whole manner it*

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<sup>266</sup> For a mention of suspicious Armenian Catholic woman trying to join the church of the Protestant Armenians, see Prime 1877, 196.

*was to me as clear as the sun that he was not thinking of the honor of Christ, or of my conformity to His image and advancement in holiness, but only of the strength of his own party and the glory of the Church of Rome, — an object which appeared to me so infinitely mean and unworthy, that I could endure it no longer. (...) In conclusion, I told him that (...) I could not, I dared not (...) give myself to the guidance of the Roman Catholic Church. And if this is to be a heretic, he certainly left me a more confirmed one than he found me."*<sup>267</sup>

The whole encounter is underlined with Goodell's self-confidence that he could not be converted to Catholicism, but he seemed interested enough to see what arguments the Jesuit would introduce. This discussion is presented in the arrangement of the Jesuit being a novice and Goodell the master in terms of argument. When Goodell felt he had heard enough, he shut down the argument, accompanied by a sense of disgust towards the Jesuit's alleged true aim. In this excerpt, the Jesuit, one supposed to be a missionary and of high knowledge and skill among the Catholics, is presented as wholly dishonest and incompetent.

Both memoirs include mentions of the Catholic faith made on various occasions. Remarks about the Catholic inhabitants of Malta can be found in both memoirs<sup>268</sup>:

*"In regard to religion, I presume the Maltese must be considered among the most dutiful and devoted sons of the Church of Rome. In the bishop's catechism, in reply to the question, 'What do you believe?' the child answers, 'I believe all that which our Holy Mother Catholic Roman Church believes and teaches.' Probably few of the Maltese could express their creed more correctly, or assign any better reason for it. (...) A certain course of study is requisite, as preparatory to the office; but after being once ordained, study seems to be very generally neglected. I have sometimes asked the Maltese, why their priests, since they are so numerous, do not establish schools, and teach all the children and give them a good education. The answer generally is, either that they are too*

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<sup>267</sup> Prime 1877, 166-169.

<sup>268</sup> For the mention of Maltese priests forbidding reading the Bible, see Prime 1877, 74-75.

*ignorant, or too lazy. (...) In vain do they worship teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*<sup>269</sup>

This excerpt, found in the memoirs of Fisk, presents the Maltese as exerting religious thought befitting of children, with no critical examination of their faith. The Catholic clergy on Malta are berated for their lack of study after being ordained, and their failure to pursue education is scorned. They are presented as truly lacking the traits the missionaries value. The following excerpt is from a description of a Syrian Catholic convent:

*"I learn from the bishops that they baptize thus: The child is placed in the font so that a part of the body is in the water; then the officiating priest three times takes water in his hands and pours it on the child's head, repeating at each time the name of one person of the Trinity. After this the body is immersed; but when I inquired whether the immersion was an essential part of the baptism, they said, 'No—the baptism would be valid and perfect without it.'"*<sup>270</sup>

As can be gathered from the excerpt, this encounter seems to be devoid of any evaluation of the Catholic baptism. On a closer look, the answer to Goodell's question can be seen in a different light, as it induces more questions. Why do they immerse the child, if there is no need for it? The questions are left unasked in the memoirs, to demonstrate how the clueless bishops did not notice the seemingly irrational part of the ritual, conveying how large a part of the Catholic faith consists of things the memoirs represent as embodying no real meaning or making no sense, existing only because of tradition.

The Catholics wielded a remarkable amount of influence within the Empire, which they exerted against the missionaries a number of times, according to the memoirs<sup>271</sup>:

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<sup>269</sup> Bond 1828, 218-219.

<sup>270</sup> Bond 1828, 326.

<sup>271</sup> On mentions about the Catholic opposition towards the missionaries' work, see Bond 1828, 235-236, 383, 397.

*"The Malta Bible Society have lately received letters from Mr. Barker, the Bible Society's agent at Aleppo, giving information, that he received, some time since, about 1,000 Arabic Psalters and New Testaments, printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society after the edition of the Propaganda at Rome, and that he sold the whole within three days! The reason why these were sold so much more rapidly than copies, which the Society had formerly sent into Syria, is, that this translation has the sanction of the Church of Rome."*<sup>272</sup>

This excerpt presents an example of the Catholics' influence: There was a world of difference between their approval and lack of thereof regarding the demand for Christian religious literature in the Empire.

The following excerpt is from the time Fisk was charged in court of law for distributing religious literature, discussed in chapter 3.6.

*"His [the judge's] reply deserves to be remembered, 'The Latins' say these are not Christian books."*<sup>273</sup>

This commentary by Fisk highlights the notion found in the description of the aforementioned case, where the missionaries were brought to a court of law because "the Latins", meaning the Catholics, were guilty of perjury. This puts the chief blame of the whole situation on the Catholics, provoking anti-Catholic sentiments in the reader of the memoirs. Anti-Catholic sentiments overall are openly pronounced in both memoirs<sup>274</sup>. The following excerpt is a commentary by Goodell on the event of the Armenian persecution which took place in 1846:

*"To put them in prison, or destroy them by fire and sword, would be persecution, and would not be tolerated; but to prevent them from laboring, and thus virtually to starve them to death, is in their estimation a master-stroke of policy, such as Nero and the Jesuits never thought of."*<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Bond 1828, 223-224.

<sup>273</sup> Bond 1828, 360.

<sup>274</sup> For other commentaries with anti-Catholic sentiments, see Bond 1828, 334, 103; Prime 1877, 87, 176.

<sup>275</sup> Prime 1877, 313.



Here, Goodell nonchalantly holds one of the most notorious persecutors of early Christians and one of the most respected Catholic organizations as equals in their methods to obstruct missionary work. The next excerpt continues with the Armenian persecution<sup>276</sup>:

*“There was still another class of the Armenian race, the most bigoted of all, from whom sprang a great part of the opposition which the missionaries and their disciples had to encounter. A small part of the nation were (sic) subject to the pope in religious matters, in communion with the Church of Rome, and breathed the true spirit of popery. They were intensely hostile to evangelical truth, and used all their influence, openly and by intrigue, to stir up the whole nation against the missionaries and their work. Not that they loved the Armenian Church, but they hated the Gospel more. Nearly all the interference that the American missionaries met with in prosecuting their work in the Turkish empire had its origin with these emissaries of Rome, or was sedulously fostered and promoted by this universal enemy of the truth.”<sup>277</sup>*

This commentary from Goodell leaves little to be said, as he casts the Catholic Church as the supreme enemy of the missionaries. All of the troubles, conflicts and sorrows the missionaries faced in their work were provoked by the Catholics, according to the memoirs.

Both memoirs contain some excerpts which are at least somewhat positive in nature vis-à-vis Catholics. In the memoirs of Fisk, the missionaries visited a seminar of the Armenian Catholics in 1823:

*“It is rather a theological seminary than a convent. About twenty young men are here pursuing studies preparatory to the ministry. I was informed, that their studies consisted of grammar, rhetoric, logic, metaphysics, and Theology. I have seen no convents so good or so neat as this; nor have I, in any of the monastic establishments that I have*

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<sup>276</sup> For a mention of a Catholic priest instigating an Armenian jeweler to act against the Protestants, see Prime 1877, 161-162.

<sup>277</sup> Prime 1877, 232.

*visited, met with men of equal talents and acquisitions. They are agreeable, enterprising and persevering. They made many inquiries about the expense that would attend the purchase and establishment of a press. From their inquiries I infer that the establishment of a press is a part of their plan.*"<sup>278</sup>

Fisk' remarks seem to have been made in awe, which is rather rare when the memoirs offer commentary on the Catholic faith or institutions. It should be noted that Fisk compares this convent to others he has seen, and as such this comment should be placed in the context of the general condition of the convents Fisk had in mind when making this remark.

The memoirs of Goodell also have some positive things to say about Catholics, be it regarding distributing literature to the Catholic clergy or the absence of opposition to the conversion of Catholics<sup>279</sup>. The memoirs also include a mention of a benevolent Catholic Goodell encountered while he was still in the United States and had just arrived on the island of Newcastle in New Hampshire in 1819:

*"He had hardly entered upon his work at this place before he found a coadjutor in an unexpected quarter. Colonel Wallack, a Roman Catholic, who was in command of the fort on the island, warmly seconded his efforts for the religious improvement of the people, attended with his family the public services which Mr. Goodell had inaugurated, and required all the soldiers composing the garrison to attend."*<sup>280</sup>

According to Prime, Goodell was the first priest to work on the island in the course of twenty years, and this might have contributed to the colonel's hearty welcome. Nevertheless, this alliance of the colonel and Goodell in furthering the case of religion on the island is a rare positive reference to Catholics in Goodell's memoirs.

The memoirs represent the Catholics of the Empire and Malta in a very critical way. Their teachings and actions are mocked, lamented and argued against time

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<sup>278</sup> Bond 1828, 326-327.

<sup>279</sup> On the former, see Prime 1877, 82. On the latter, see Prime 1877, 197.

<sup>280</sup> Prime 1877, 62-63.

and time again, and the Catholics' behavior when meeting the missionaries is presented as either frustrating or downright aggressive. There are few positive mentions of the Catholic Church or its representatives, while they are openly claimed to be the supreme enemies of the missionary work in the Ottoman Empire both here and in chapter 3.7.

The memoirs of Fisk and Goodell offer differing representations of the ethnic and religious groups of the Ottoman Empire. The Muslims are represented as a barbarous and violent, but their actions and faith are also praised in the memoirs. The different groups of Muslims are represented in differing ways, some more negatively than others. The Greeks status as "nominal" Christians is the focus of their representation in the memoirs, while their great potential is also brought up. The representation of Jews is focused on their lack of interest toward the missionaries' teachings, and mentions regarding them are lesser compared to the other groups discussed in this study. The Catholics are represented in a heavily negative light, as they are casted as the main adversaries of the missionaries. The representation of these groups is discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter, along with other findings of this study.

## 5. Conclusion

The representations of the government and the people of the Ottoman Empire in the memoirs of Pliny Fisk and William Goodell contain both shared aspects and stark differences. The Ottoman government is represented in both memoirs as a tyranny that lacked all the beneficial traits and aspects the missionaries associated with the liberal Western governments. The Ottoman government is represented as an archaically cruel, barbarous and truly corrupt administration where bribes were treated as the foremost political influence, violence of deadly proportions was widespread, and abuse of power had been crafted into the organization of government.

The aforementioned representations are evident in the memoirs' commentaries concerning the treatment of Ottoman subjects, decisions by the courts of law and the crude power-mongering within the government. The most notable difference on this issue between the memoirs is the way in which Goodell's memoirs shift the blame for the persecution and wrongdoings against missionaries to the other Christian churches, and the Catholic church in particular, placing larger scrutiny on them than on the Ottoman government. The Ottoman government is presented by Goodell as a malevolent construct bereft of any significant virtues, but its acts against the missionaries are born out of the pressure that the other Christian churches apply to it through bribes and political action.

Some stark differences can be discerned between the memoirs in the representation of the Ottoman governance and the courts of law. While Fisk's memoirs contain two detailed court cases which describe the Ottoman justice system, Goodell's memoirs only complain about the absence of due process when punishments are being carried out by the authorities. On the other hand, Goodell's memoirs contain a detailed explanation on how the Ottoman millet system works and an evaluation of it, while Fisk's memoirs make no mention of the millet system. The representation of the emir Beshir of Mount Lebanon is a good example of the differences between the memoirs, as he is represented by Fisk as benevolent Christian ruler, while Goodell represents him only as a disloyal subject of the Sultan.

The memoirs represent the Muslims groups of the Ottoman Empire in an ambivalent way. Both memoirs offer critiques of their religious beliefs and actions, while some aspects of the Islamic faith are observed uncritically or even with some amount of praise. While there are portrayals of conflicts between the Muslims and the missionaries in both memoirs, especially with the Bedouins in Fisk's memoirs, they also contain mentions of the Muslims acting benevolently towards the missionaries and others. While all the Muslims groups are targets of scolding in the memoirs for their actions and faith, especially the Persians in Goodell's memoirs, the memoirs' representation of them also includes aspects of praise. Especially Goodell's commentary on the Turkish people and the circumcision of Ali Bey's son include some positive aspects of the Turkish people. Several of the observations of Muslims included in the memoirs are free of judgement, but in the end both memoirs represent the Muslims as a violent group of bigots, whose ignorance is heavily lamented, with only a few of them exhibiting Protestant virtues of enterprise and hard work.

The Greeks are represented in both memoirs as ignorant people, whose religion is full of faults and irrationalities. Their religious rituals are heavily criticized, and their assigned status as "nominal Christians" is on display through scathing remarks and commentaries on their teachings and the actions of individual Greeks. Their division on the Lancastrian schools is palpable in Goodell's memoirs, and the Greek Orthodox church is represented as corrupt and incredulous to the apparent shortcomings of the Greek church. However, Greeks are also praised in the memoirs through the example of those who worked as assistants to the missionaries, and Fisk's memoirs heavily endorse missionary work among the Greeks as they are seen as a group full of potential. The Greeks are represented as a hospitable people, who, in the best cases, embody many of the Protestant virtues in addition to their representation as a group of high intellect. The Greeks are represented as a group not restrained within the lands of the Empire, as their links to the Russian Orthodox Church are openly mentioned in the memoirs, not to forget the multitudes of the members of the Greek Orthodox Church living in Greece and elsewhere outside the Empire. The memoirs differ on some aspects of the representation of the Greeks, with Fisk

testifying that the Greeks' reception of the missionaries has been positive, while Goodell's memoirs contend that the Greeks offer considerable opposition against the missionaries' work. The somewhat different wording of the missionaries should be noted, as Fisk uses stronger adjectives than Goodell when describing the Greeks, particularly pejoratively.

The representation of Jews is in general focused on conversations regarding the viability of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, which the Jews find difficult to accept every time the issue is mentioned in the memoirs. Goodell's memoirs take only a light interest in the Jews, while the memoirs of Fisk include plenty of mentions of the Jews. This can be attributed to remarks about Joseph Wolff's work included in his memoirs. The memoirs' representations of the Jews find common ground in presenting them as group with a high concentration of intellectuals. The Jews' nonchalant attitude towards the missionary work visibly frustrates Fisk and Goodell, and this issue with them is pointed out several times in the memoirs.

Goodell's memoirs represent the Armenians as a powerful part of the Ottoman Empire, with a detailed testimony of the hardships and persecution the Armenian converts had to endure. The issues the Protestant Armenians face act as case evidence of how a "nominal" Christian church could react to the work of Protestant missionaries. The memoirs' representation of the Armenians conveys the idea that missionary work can induce change within the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire, allowing the Protestant faith to embark to these new lands, given a sufficient amount of work, funding and willpower. The rift within the Armenian community is presented as an acceptable price to pay for this change of religious landscape within the Empire.

Both the memoirs represent the Catholics with a critical attitude. The teachings of the Catholic church are scornfully remarked upon, ecclesiastics from monks to Jesuits are frowned upon every time they are mentioned, and the Catholics are presented to be incompetent debaters and malevolent manipulators. The memoirs include few positive comments regarding them, while the Catholic faith is openly called the greatest enemy of missionary work the Americans faced during their stay in the Empire.

The memoirs of Goodell and Fisk contain many similarities, as well as differences. The representation of the Ottoman Empire is “shallower” in the memoirs of Fisk, as he acted as a “pioneer” in this region, together with Levi Parsons. Their task was to begin the work of the ABCFM, acting as much as travelers and explorers as missionaries. Both men perished during their work, which contributed to the lighter analysis found in Fisk’s memoirs. On the contrary, Goodell worked in the Ottoman Empire for forty years, and his memoirs’ commentaries reflect this wealth of experience he accumulated within the Ottoman lands. His long-lasting work in Constantinople is in stark difference with Fisk’s life of travel, his well-established connections with the people of all positions as the most notable result.

The memoirs also have some resonance with the idea of “the Orient” discussed by Said. The inhabitants of the Ottoman lands are presented as cruel and barbarous people, whose customs are exotic from a European view. The Muslims are generally referred to with pejorative terms such as “Mussulman” or “Mohammedan”, which Said noted were part of the representation of Islam. However, the memoirs are not a textbook example of the representation of “the Orient”, as Muslim customs are also just observed, or even praised. This runs contrary to some of Said’s argument about the representation of the Muslims, and it acts as evidence for the notion that missionary memoirs and literature cannot be simplified as universally arguing for a certain representation of Muslims. The memoirs of Fisk and Goodell, despite their critique of Muslims, also present an effort to understand the faith and religious culture associated with Islam.

The memoirs present the missionaries as the voice of reason, who critically examine and generally cast non-Western cultural excerpts as inferior to the societies and cultures of the West, particularly Protestant Europe and the United States. The Ottoman Empire is represented as part of the idea of “the Orient”, which is presented as something altogether different and inferior to the idea of the “West”, of which the missionaries are the representatives. It is notable that the memoirs do not criticize Islam any more than the “nominal” Christians they encountered within the Empire. The Ottoman government, for all the negative

representation it is subject, to is also periodically praised by the memoirs. The Ottoman government's actions to improve the civil and religious liberties are noticeably applauded in Goodell's memoirs, and efforts to improve the level of education in the Empire are similarly praised as well. The sympathetic representation of emir Bashir in Fisk's memoirs conveys the message that there is something of positive value within the Ottoman Empire, after all.

The "reflex influence" that was mentioned in chapter 1 should be kept in mind when considering the significance of the memoirs' to the readership. The representation offered by these memoirs was introduced in communities which regarded the memoirs as an authority on the Ottoman Empire. The memoirs' imagery most probably helped to cultivate a representation of the Empire which could have lasted for years, or even decades if nothing counter-productive to it was introduced to the readership by other seriously-taken publications. While the "reflex influence" is argued to have been an empowering phenomenon for the mission by those of the missionary establishment, its supposed strength could have also been its weakness. When missionary memoirs are studied by the readership, who arguably also constitute a major part of the people with interest in the missionary endeavor, they are also subject to the representations cast by these memoirs concerning the various regions affected by missionary undertakings, e.g. the Ottoman Empire. These representations could become matters of fact to the readership, and it can be argued that when new missionaries emerge from the audience they, together with the editors and other members of the missionary establishment, would in turn strengthen the skewed understanding cultivated by the imagery of the missionary memoirs they had read. In this way, the missionary memoirs and missionary literature overall could be "building material" for the misrepresentations regarding the Ottoman Empire and other missionary fields. They most certainly empowered the representation of the Ottoman Empire as part of the "Orient", as critiqued by Said.

To summarize, the representation of the Ottoman Empire in the two memoirs is altogether very negative. The Empire and its inhabitants are portrayed in general as ignorant barbarians, who do not possess knowledge of any worth. The Ottoman state is the object of many lamentations and scathing remarks and



commentaries, presented as an abysmal tyranny. Life in the Ottoman lands claimed the lives of several missionaries, including that of Pliny Fisk. Goodell grew to detest the Empire during his long stay, only returning there to resume the work he felt to be his duty. The missionaries witnessed religious persecution during their stay in the Ottoman lands, but rather surprisingly such persecution did not originate within the Ottoman government, according to the memoirs of Goodell. Instead, the non-Protestant Christian churches are identified as the instigators of attacks against the missionaries' work, with the Catholics represented as the supreme enemy of the missionaries in both memoirs.

This study leaves many unanswered questions regarding the representation of the Ottoman Empire and missionary life in the memoirs of the ABCFM missionaries. First, how are women represented in these memoirs? The education of women is mentioned in this study, but much is left unexplored. The second question is the representation of those religious and ethnic groups that are not examined in this study, such as the Samaritans, Copts and Syriac Christians. How are these groups presented in the missionary memoirs, and what kinds of differences between the missionary memoirs emerge in these representations? The research questions of this study can also be partly re-used in the study of other missionaries besides Fisk and Goodell.

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