

## MORMON MISSIONARIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Ottoman territories started to serve as grounds for missionary activities as early as the XVIth century. However, it was not until 1820 that the Protestant American missionaries joined their colleagues anticipating to christianize Ottoman subjects. Albeit their late arrival, they became the most influential missionary group in the Empire. This influence flourished relative to connections Ottomans pursued with America, a distant state believed not to hold imperialistic ambitions over the Ottoman Empire. The establishment of official Ottoman-American relations with the 1830 commercial treaty fortified this amity and confidence.

The 1839 *Gühane Hatt* and 1856 Reform Decree promising equality and bringing concessions to non-Muslims contributed to the expansion of missionary activities. However, learning through experiences that Ottoman religious toleration was valid only for the non-Muslims, that very strict measures were taken to prevent Muslims' conversions<sup>1</sup>, American missionaries, desiring favorable relations with the State, learned to suffice with working only on non-Muslims. When conversion attempts among the Jews as well as the Catholics and Orthodox, strongly supported by France and Russia remained fruitless, they turned to the Armenians. Translating the Bible into Armenian, they approached them in their vernacular language. They displayed benevolence through orphanages, Sunday schools, educational institutions, adult classes, medical centers, and performed propaganda by endless house-calls, *kahvehane* meetings and sermons. Shortly, they won over the Armenians not only with their religious guidance but also with benignant approaches and advanced Anglo-Saxon life styles they displayed.

<sup>1</sup> KARAL, Enver Ziya, *Osmanlı Tarihi Vol. VII*, Ankara, 1958 p. 6.

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American missionaries were well received by the highest Ottoman authorities, including the Sultan. Moreover, their activities were even encouraged as a bastion against the provocative designs of the imperialistic nations over the Armenians. Meanwhile, the United States, previously uninformed about the Ottoman Empire and the Turks, through missionary reflections, became aware of the *Eastern Question* and erected consulates when missionaries sought federal support due to Ottoman disorder<sup>2</sup>. Missionary activities strictly philanthropic at first started to involve the American government and reflect signs of American foreign policy as consulates multiplied around missionary stations. Missionaries became politicised and played important roles in the Armenian uprising against the Ottoman State prior to the turn of the century. Deterioration of Turco-Armenian relations hence brought a decline to favorable official relations with the American missionaries. Meanwhile, the culminating effects of missionaries' correspondences and reports, no longer pietistic, rose more curiosity and imperialistic interest in the Middle East. Learning about the declining Ottoman Empire and its non-Muslims inspired another group of U.S. missionaries to cross the Ocean to grab a slice from the cake they assumed was being split. This new group was the Mormon missionaries.

Mormon missionary activities in the Ottoman Empire started in 1880's when the Protestants' were at its climax. During their three-decade stay in the Turkish parts of the Empire, they were unable to rise interest and influence the people to the same extent as their Protestant compatriots, who enjoyed the full support of Americans back home as well as their government. This was closely connected to the nature of their belief and religious practices which made them recognized as a cloistered group even in the United States. They were Christians, but called themselves "Latter Day Saints", shortly referred to as *the Mormons*. They had a separate church, *The Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints*, and claimed to be representatives of a new, modern Christianity. They were Americans, yet feeling quite adrift from the American Protestant missionaries, referred to the latter as *the American Missionaries*<sup>3</sup>. They wanted to develop their religion within a separate state. Considering the curious fact that historians and researchers of the area scarcely refer to this interesting group, a brief reference to Mormonism becomes essential in order to relate and evaluate their brief and unproductive stay in the Ottoman Empire<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> GRABILL, George: *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East*, Minn. 1971, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> This term was encountered among the archival documents of the Mormon missionaries.

<sup>4</sup> Guiding this reference are the archives of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints in Salt Lake City and the Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. In these archives the well-kept diaries of the Mormon missionaries, their correspondences with their headquarters and reflections published in two prominent Mormon newspapers, *The Millennial Star* and *The Desert News*, are available.

Mormonism is a belief which emerged in the East Coast of the United States in the XIXth century. Its initiator was a young American named Joseph Smith, the son of a Protestant family. Joseph Smith claimed to have received initial celestial signs and orders to guide him to start Mormonism in 1823, through the revelation of Angel of God. He developed them in 1827, after being guided by the same source to a forest in Manchester, New York, where he was asked to uncover the buried tablets written in an unusual scripture, bearing the principals of Mormonism<sup>5</sup>. He claimed to have translated these tablets by the aid of two stone pieces called “*Urim and Turim*”. Hence, in 1830, the English version of Book of Mormon was published. This was followed by the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints.

The principals and practices of Mormonism were quite different from the accustomed Christian applications. For example, the human body was considered a gift of God and was to be rescued from all harmful substances such as alcohol, nicotine and caffeine, so consuming tobacco, liquor, tea and coffee was forbidden to Mormons. Polygamy was practised to rapidly increase the Mormon population and marriages were sealed by *celestial marriage*<sup>6</sup>. Yet, marrying a divorcee was considered adultery<sup>7</sup>. Such unaccustomed practices were resented by non-Mormon Americans. Soon, Mormons were expelled from New York.

Kirtland, Ohio, became the next Mormon settlement. After the establishment of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Mormon missionaries started venturing all over the world, hoping to convert masses. Meanwhile, the immigrants expecting to settle in Kirtland were invited to leave Ohio too. The quest for a home guided them next to Nouvo, Missouri, where they confronted anti-Mormon demonstrations, even violence. As a matter of fact, Joseph Smith, recognized as the Mormon prophet, was assassinated during a demonstration. Hence, guided by the new prophet, Brigham Young<sup>8</sup>, they migrated once again and reached Salt Lake City, Utah, which has up to date preserved its fame as the Mormon Center of the world.

Utah joined the Union in 1850 and Brigham Young, becoming the first governor, administered Utah and world Mormons from Salt Lake City for 33 years. However, Mormon practice of polygamy, outlawed in the U.S., caused conflicts with the Federal Government<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, the two-year missionary service the Church required guided the polygamists, unwilling to disturb their plural marriages, nor ready to face penalties, to volunteer for missionary work abroad<sup>10</sup>. Needless to say,

<sup>5</sup> *History of Mormons*, Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints publication.

<sup>6</sup> *Book of Mormon*, JACOB ch. p. 119.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* NEPHI, 12,32, p. 452.

<sup>8</sup> SHAW, George Bernard, *The future of Political Science in America, the Improvement Era*; July 1937, p. 413.

<sup>9</sup> Polygamy was outlawed in Utah in 1890, however, the practice continued.

<sup>10</sup> Such was the case of Ferdinand Hintze, the initiator of the Mormon church in Anadolu.

they preferred places where polygamy was allowed, and the Ottoman Empire, at its most feeble stage than, appeared to be an appealing mission post<sup>11</sup>. Observing the approaches of the powerful European states to the Empire with imperialistic interests encouraged the Mormons to consider colonizing there for the theocratic state they anticipated to establish in the U.S.<sup>12</sup>

Initial Mormon expeditions in the Middle East date back to 1841, when Apostol<sup>13</sup> Orson Hyde went to Jerusalem to explore the Holy Land. Returning to Utah, he advised the LDS Church to send missionaries to Jerusalem<sup>14</sup>. Consequently, an Ottoman Armenian, deeply impressed by Hyde, wrote to John Henry Smith, the President of the European Mission, requesting missionaries to Constantinople<sup>15</sup>. The arrival of Elder Joseph Spori in Istanbul in 1884 marked the beginning of active missionary work in the Ottoman Empire. The Capital must have been deliberately chosen to facilitate the initiation of relations with the State authorities. The general disapproval and ill experiences the Mormons were exposed to at home made them overcautious about naturally benefiting from the exceptional status and the privileges the 1830 treaty provided for the U.S. citizens residing in the Ottoman Empire<sup>16</sup>. They attempted to establish individual relations with state authorities. Time consuming official contacts and procedures for residence slowed Spori in starting missionary work. Once bureaucracy was overcome, Elder Spori, similar to American missionaries, took up labor among the Armenians. He held the first LDS meeting on January 18, 1885 at the Istanbul home of an Armenian, Brother Vartongian. He attempted to establish and expand relations by house-calls and visits to the ill<sup>17</sup>. He tried to impress the people by offering personal sacrifices such as fasting in their place<sup>18</sup>. To his dismay, although he was well received and listened to, he was not able to convert anyone.

Missionaries Taner and Hintze, next arrivals in Istanbul<sup>19</sup> found Spori depressed due to failure. Before long, they, like him, admitted that they always had an audience when they preached, but people were disinterested when conversion was brought up. On the other hand, Spori noted in his journal that it was almost impossible to convey any Mormonic mes-

<sup>11</sup> *Diary of Hagop Thomas (Tumas) Gagosian* Price, Carbon County, Utah, 1939, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> From the First President of the *Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints*, Msf 696 No. 3; Nov. 1898.

<sup>13</sup> A rank in Mormonic churches.

<sup>14</sup> HINDOIAN, Abraham, *A Short History of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints in the Middle East*, Latter Day Saints Church Records, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Ferdinand HINTZE, CRmh 1450, Vol. I.

<sup>16</sup> This status was granted to the United States by the Ottoman State.

<sup>17</sup> Latter Day Saints Archive Records, *Elder Spori's Journal* March 17, 1885 (Manuscript, LDS collection).

<sup>18</sup> *Millenial Star* May 18, 1885.

<sup>19</sup> CRmh 14250, Vol. I.

sages to Turks as he underlined that some among the very few English speaking, professed to prove him the absurdity of the Bible<sup>20</sup>. He also noted meeting many Armenians in Istanbul who persisted that the Bible contained final revelations on Christianity and fearing that doors might open to falsifiers, displayed over sensitivity about new prophets<sup>21</sup>. Confessing the difficulty of persuading people, he attributed this to the favorable impacts the American missionaries created in Istanbul.

A few months after his arrival, missionary Tanner called attention to the same handicap too as he stressed the necessity of learning Turkish and details of Turks' religion and lifestyle in order to reach them<sup>22</sup>. Indeed they, in return, would have to explain their own with full details, for the hospitable Turks could never understand the Mormons, especially when their offerings of tobacco, raki, coffee or tea, all very indispensable for most Ottomans, were refused. As a matter of fact, their first Mormon convert, Vartoguan, to the missionaries' astonishment, continued to smoke and drink even after he was baptised as Mormon<sup>23</sup>.

Mormon missionaries in Istanbul continuously sought ways to meet the Turks on some kind of a social platform agreeable to introduce them Mormonic principles. In conveying them to Armenians, they tried to even tempt them by talking about financial opportunities Utah offered to Mormons<sup>24</sup>. Such propaganda must have helped to convince at least some for in later years, Elder Charles Locander confessed that money bought many converts<sup>25</sup> and that Armenians were generally very indifferent about religion and that they straight forwardly asked how much they would be paid if baptised<sup>26</sup>.

Meanwhile, Elder Spori made all necessary official contacts with the Ottoman notables. He provided the mission with essential permits for publishing tracks, renting premises, etc. Hence, missionaries Tanner and Hintze had only to keep up the good relations obtained. It was obvious that the endurance of the liberty they enjoyed in Turkey depended on their tactful relations with the Turks. Moreover, Elder Hintze, following a visit to the Grand Vezir conferred with Münif Paşa, the Minister of Public Instruction, and was assured that the Government would not interfere with them as long as their conversion attempts were not diverted to Turks<sup>27</sup>. Tanner was the next to visit and pay respects to Ottoman officials including Münif Paşa. He, on July 13, 1886, presented the Paşa three major Mormon publications, "*Voice of Warning*", "*Book*

<sup>20</sup> Latter Day Saints Archive Records, *Elder Spori's Journal* April 1, 1885.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.* May 4, 1885.

<sup>22</sup> CRmh 450, Vol I.

<sup>23</sup> LDS Archive Records, *Elder Spori's Journal*, Jan. 18, 1885.

<sup>24</sup> LDS Archive Records, *Elder Taner's Diary*, Jan. 8, 1886 (manuscript, LDS Collection).

<sup>25</sup> *Desert News*, May 30, 1889.

<sup>26</sup> *Desert News*, May 22, 1889.

<sup>27</sup> Provo Archives, Msf 696, No. 1, April 6, 1888.

of Mormon” and “*Doctrine and Covenant*”. It must be noted that albeit the fact that those were Abdülhamit II’s absolutism years, the intellectuals looked upon western education as the means to stop decline. So it is most probable that Münif Paşa was more interested in the educational aspect of the missionaries’ approaches rather than the religious. Taner noted how surprised Münif was to hear of the American segregation to Mormons and wrote in his journal “He could not comprehend why the United States should persecute the Mormons as the Americans boasted of their great political and religious liberty”<sup>28</sup>.

Missionary Tanner, much impressed by the good reception he received and pleased with Münif’s interest in Mormonism, conveyed these to President Welles at Salt Lake City and remarked: “Who can be so polite and courteous as a Turk!”<sup>29</sup>.

Taner’s contacts with the Turks guided him to develop similarities with the Mormons. Defining the Turks, he wrote: “They are reticent. Ask them to talk on religious subjects, they will generously say that they believe in God and believe Mohammad was a prophet. Further, they do not care to express themselves. After all, they are the most honest and moral of the Orientals. Like the Mormons, however, they have been wonderfully misrepresented”<sup>30</sup>. Nevertheless, he did often admit the difficulty of introducing the Gospel among the Turks. However, while in Istanbul, he did not refrain from distributing tracts and at least created curiosity over Mormonism. The proposal of an Armenian newspaper to reserve a column to publish doctrines of Mormonism climbed his expectations to a climax. Excited, he suggestively wrote to Utah that press could be more impressive and less expensive than tracts in bringing Mormonic principles before the people<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand, Hintze did not share Taner’s favorable comments and complained that everything to be published had to be sent to Münif Paşa for sanction<sup>32</sup>. His remarks reflecting his impressions of the Ottoman administration as despotic government lacking freedom of press was most probably due to the unkept promises of the newspaper. Anyhow, Hintze was not alone in complaining over restrictions and sanctions. Thomas Page, in one of the articles he wrote in *The Desert News*, referred to the restrictions in the Empire and listed some forbidden words such as “conference”, “meeting”, “assassination”. “Restrictions were so severe that typewriters were not allowed as they would disguise the individuality of the handwritings. Telephones were not allowed as people who had them might possibly conspire against the government and as all the telegraph lines were owned by the government, messages were censored”<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> CRmh 14550, Vol. I, July 13, 1886.

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.* July 31, 1886.

<sup>30</sup> *Millennial Star*, June 22, 1886.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.* Feb. 13, 1887.

<sup>33</sup> *Desert News* April 25, 1909.

Albeit the missionaries' hard labor in Istanbul, the conversion of Dikron Shangobian, an Armenian from Sivas, for a long time remained as their only achievement. Consequently, Mormon missionaries laboring in Istanbul decided to extend the activities of their mission to four branches: the Turkey Mission, the Armenia Mission, the Near East Mission and the Palestine Mission. Their unsuccessful experiences in Istanbul did not stump their desire to move towards these branches. Dikron's promises for support in Sivas added to the already existing wish and guided Hintze to venture into Anatolia<sup>34</sup>.

Dikron assisted Hintze in Sivas and introduced him to a school teacher, Mike Jafergian, who became the second member of the Mormon Church in the Ottoman Empire<sup>35</sup>. The new members helped Hintze to explore Eastern Anatolia, including the provinces of Tokat, Merzifon, Maraş and Antep. The Anatolian venture proved to be more rewarding. The first Mormon church was erected in Zara in 1888. Hintze, following the opening of the church on 6th of October, wrote to Salt Lake City that he would continue his quest to find an appropriate location for colonization. He attempted to establish headquarters in Antep and in 1897 called to meeting the first Mormon conference. Conference records indicated that the number of converts had reached 101, that 5 members were elevated as elders and that 84 children were baptised. The resolution of the conference was that Antep with 60 members and a newly erected Sunday school would be the Middle East Center for Mormons<sup>36</sup>. This by all means was not an outstanding record for thirteen years of strenuous missionary work. However, although it did not match the Americans' achievements, it seemed to satisfy the Mormons. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that by the time the Mormon missionaries arrived in the Ottoman Empire the latter had already established their institutions and had become very popular through the benevolence they distributed. Albeit their evangelic work, they primarily concentrated on extending education and health benefits to the Ottomans deprived of both. In spite of their political involvements many of them preserved their liberal identities and remained respectful to differences of opinions. Most of the women missionaries were emancipated, so they concentrated more on elevating peoples' mentalities and liberating those they, according to their duty, were to proselyte.

On the other hand, the Mormon missionaries were initially concerned with increasing the Mormon population and colonizing. They wanted to impress the people in order to reach their goal, but they approached them with no more than promises of spiritual fulfilment of Mormonism. The Anatolians did not value much the superficial trends of the Mormon

<sup>34</sup> *Diary of Hagg Thomas Gagosian*, Coroba County 1939, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Jafergian in later years migrated to Utah and translated the Book of Mormon into Turkish.

<sup>36</sup> CRmh 14250, Vol. I, LDS Archives.

missionaries particularly after experiencing the positive and scientific motives of the American missionaries. They constantly demonstrated their preference by, for example, applying to a medical center for health problems rather than taking refuge in the healing power some Mormon missionaries set out to demonstrate by praying over the ill<sup>37</sup>.

Nevertheless, Mormon missionaries did not seem to be disturbed by the attitude of the Turks as much as they were by the unfavorable approaches of the Americans. Some, like Fred Stauffer, stressed this in their notes and tried to relate peoples' dislike for the latter. Stauffer noted that when he arrived in Tokat on May 17, and in Merzifon on June 6, (1890) he found the people of both places to be anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Mormon missionaries they have heard of and read much about in the papers. He claimed many, rejecting the Protestants', were looking forward to hearing their doctrine<sup>38</sup>. Stauffer seemed to be convinced that the majority of the people were satisfied with their accustomed ways of life and unwilling to change it. He admitted converting them was difficult and he attributed this to the ill-influences of the American missionaries he could not get along with at all. His dislike for them developed more through his experiences in Merzifon and Antep. He noted in his diary that they even prohibited their congregations' visits to the Mormons. He complained bitterly about his visit to a Protestant church in Merzifon where the minister preaching dropped the subject of his discourse when he noticed Stauffer and started a tirade against the Mormons<sup>39</sup>.

Dislike for the American missionaries guided some Mormons to similar unfavorable relations with the formers' adherents, the Armenians. Reciprocally, the Armenians often displayed negative approaches towards the Mormons. Stauffer noted that when he, with friendly anticipations visited the Armenian school in Antep, was met with the President's warning to his students not to listen to or become Mormons' adherents. In his report to Brigham Young, after his first year in Turkey, he complained bitterly of the other churches and wrote, "Our enemies, the sectarian churches or rather their ministers have made great efforts to destroy our work<sup>40</sup>."

Mormon missionaries reiterate in their reports that their true opponents were not the Ottomans, but the American missionaries and their adherents. Joseph Booth, a dedicated missionary who served in the Middle East from 1896 until his death in Aleppo in 1928, related how he and his

<sup>37</sup> HINDOIAN, Abraham, *op. cit.*, p. 1. An example Hindoian gives refers to an Antep pharmacist, Kevrok Vezirian. He mentions that Vezirian, who was elevated as *elder* was "helpful to the Church not only by translating tracks into Turkish, but also displayed a marvelous healing power. This power became so renowned that even many non-members came to see him in order to have him pray over the sick".

<sup>38</sup> CRmh 14250, Vol. I, June 6, 1890.

<sup>39</sup> *Desert News*, March 1, 1891.

<sup>40</sup> *Desert News*, July 19, 1890.



wife were ignored and even rejected by the Americans during their venture in South-eastern Turkey<sup>41</sup>. He related their generally hostile attitudes and gave the example of Reverend Malcom who not only refused to accept Booth's visit but sent word, saying, "I do not care to have an official representative of this society in my house. It is our simple duty to keep our houses pure"<sup>42</sup>.

Booth, disturbed like others with the extremely weak Mormon presence in the Ottoman Empire, apart from the impediment of the American missionaries, attributed this to the motives of Ottoman social life which secluded women. This, he complained, prevented house-calls so they largely had to depend on those coming see them in *their homes*<sup>43</sup>. This verdict had reason for the same motives applied to Armenians, whose women were often cloistered as the Turk's. Male company, with the exception of the immediate family and a few of the very close relatives, was not welcome into Ottoman homes. The protestant women missionaries we have already mentioned had free access to these homes while Mormon women did not appear in missionary service until 1904. Booth admitted this handicap and wrote that women in missionary work was to open doors to a new class of people who, until this date, were difficult to approach<sup>44</sup>.

However, it must be indicated that although Mormon documents included frequent references to "sisters" from 1904 on, these ladies did not display the same performance nor reached the same success in socializing with the people as the American women missionaries. This is explicable by the great difference in the personalities, life styles and purposes of each group. The Mormons also lacked the various benevolent institutions the Americans rapidly established wherever they went. These served as means to associate with the people. Failing to socialize with the people made them unpopular and more self centered. These big handicaps for missionary life even caused them to stay adrift to the political developments of the time. Interestingly, albeit their Armenian adherents, they were not much involved even with the Armenian problems of their sojourns in the Empire, nor did they display the sensitivity the American missionaries did over this issue. Although one may find very antagonistic remarks about the Turks among some documents such as in the diaries of Ouzounian, Handoian, or Gagosian, all Armenian converts, most missionaries' diaries or correspondences contain details of their personal lives. In fact, their approach to the Armenian question differed from the Americans'. For example, missionary Thomas Page, in a November 1900 interview with *the Desert News*, stated that the south-eastern Turkish towns he served in witnessed unfortunate incidences due

<sup>41</sup> CRmh 14250, Vol. II.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> BOOTH, Joseph, BYU Provo Archives, Vol. IV, Feb. 25, 1904.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, March 1904.

to Turco-Armenian conflicts and reflected surprise that these, he believed to be of religious character, should be occurring in Turkey, land of out-most religious tolerance<sup>45</sup>.

The First Presidency of the LDS Church, disillusioned by 15 years of vain work, claimed imminence of war due to Turco-Armenian conflicts in Turkey, and recalled all serving the Turkish mission in 1899<sup>46</sup>. While many Armenians, over this decision, accompanied the returning missionaries to Utah, some missionaries chose to remain in Antep, where most of the Mormons gathered under the leadership of Joseph Booth. However, the Antep Governor forbid the Mormons not yet possessing official recognition or a permit from holding meetings or preaching<sup>47</sup>. The long-awaited permit was about to be issued when 1909 Adana incidences, springing from Ottoman Armenian conflicts occurred and the headquarters repeated the call for the remaining missionaries<sup>48</sup>. Although Booth, after a 9-month stay in Athens, reactivated the mission in Antep, the Turkey mission was officially closed on January 1, 1910<sup>49</sup>. The Aleppo Branch however, was permitted to continue. Many of the converted Armenian families received financial support from the Mormon Church and migrated to the United States and some, to Aleppo<sup>50</sup>. The First World War prevented the remaining Armenian Mormons from activities but the Antep Church stayed open until the 1915 deportation. When the war ended, about 50 Armenian Mormons returned to Antep. Abraham Hindoian attempted to reactivate the Antep Church. The struggles in the area this time as a Turco-French conflict led the headquarters to disregard Hindoian's appeal. Nevertheless, Joseph Booth returned to Antep as the Mission President in 1921, only to note that the existing struggle was the Turkish independence war against all imperialistic powers. Convinced that this was bound to disabel any activity among the very few Mormons left, he decided to give an end to Mormon colonization dreams within Turkish territories. Hence, with the approval of the French government to operate a mission in Aleppo, the remaining Mormons migrated to Syria, under the name of "The Armenian Mission"<sup>51</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> *Desert News* Msd f-76 Thomas Page Interview.

<sup>46</sup> HINDOIAN, Abraham, *op. cit.*

<sup>47</sup> BOOTH, Joseph, BYU Provo Archives, Vol. VIII, Aug. 24, 1899.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Millenial Star*, Jan. 1, 1910.

<sup>50</sup> GAGUSIAN, Hagop Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> OUZUNIAN, Reuben, MSd 1723.

Seçil Karal AKGÜN, *Mormon Missionaries in the Ottoman Empire*

Missionary activities in Turkey started in the 16th century. However, it was not until 1880 that Mormon missionaries came to the Ottoman Empire. They were members of a separate church, claiming to be representing a new, modern Christianity. Wanting to develop their religion within a separate theocratic state, they observed keenly the great powers' imperialistic attempts over the declining Ottoman Empire and decided to try their luck for colonizing there. However, after an approximately three-decade stay, they admitted that they had already lost the grounds to American Protestant missionaries and departed from the Empire to venture elsewhere in the Middle East.

Seçil Karal AKGÜN, *Les missionnaires mormons dans l'Empire ottoman*

En Turquie, les activités missionnaires ont commencé dès le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Les missionnaires mormons, eux, sont arrivés vers 1880. Ils étaient membres d'une Église séparée et prétendaient représenter un nouveau christianisme. Désireux de développer leur religion dans un État théocratique, ils avaient remarqué les tentatives impérialistes des grandes puissances vis-à-vis de l'Empire ottoman finissant. Voyant là une opportunité, ils essayèrent d'y implanter une colonie. Cependant, après avoir tenu près de trois décennies, ils se rendirent compte que les missionnaires protestants américains restaient maîtres du terrain. Ils quittèrent alors l'Empire ottoman pour tenter leur chance dans d'autres pays du Moyen-Orient.