

Textured Understanding of the XIX Century US Missionary Enterprise in the East

Nigar V. Isgandarova

Department of Foreign Languages, Sumgayit State University

Block 43, Sumgayit, AZ-5008, Azerbaijan

Email: isgani@gmail.com

Abstract This paper aims to articulate the historical background of the US missionary policy in the East and its outreach through literary and publicist texts. I argue that the theories and concepts motivating the Americans for the mission in the East in the XIX century were inspired by centennial attractiveness of the region to both Europeans and Americans. Additionally, in the US political and literary imagination, the eastern land was associated with the border of “the land of promise” “gifted” them by the Heavens. Linking the idea of the Old and New Canaan, the Americans determined the Middle East as a “new frontier” of their country. My basic claim is that the missionary, as a strategic tool of the ‘soft power’ managed the US colonial policy in the East and justified it with noble tales. What encouraged the pragmatic Americans to launch “soft power” technologies there? The reason lays not so deep: in a direct interrelation between the widening of New England missionary to the Middle East and the development of financial and exploration points there.

In the paper, I propose the diversity of the American missionary narratives, most of which are intertwined into political texts. The travel diaries, essays, and particularly, the colonial-missionary novels have been structured around a plot describing the missionaries as courageous and legitimate defenders of the eastern lands and culture, and the aborigines, who were seeking their protection. This policy of the Americans have been pursued until present: without changing its essence, it has acquired new forms, and uses modern technologies to intervene in the politics of the eastern countries. In examining the roots of the US colonial policy, I explore the Joshua Strong’s concept of the Anglo-Saxons’ priority, Frederic Turner’s “Frontier thesis”, and other American myths and stereotypes.

Key words orientalism; missionary; colonialism; soft power; cultural dominance

Author **Nigar Valish Isgandarova** is Professor of American Literature and

Comparative Literature at the University of Sumgayit, Azerbaijan. Prior to her employment at this institution, she held appointments at The National Academy of Science of Azerbaijan. Major scholarly interests are the XVIII and XIX century US periodical literature and oriental issues in the US literature, Gender Studies in the US literature and Azerbaijan literature. The author has published research books on the US novel of the XVIII-XIX centuries and Oriental motifs in the US Literature.

Introduction

Missionary activities and their role in the world historical, cultural, economic, and religious politics have always been in the center of numerous disputes and discussions. Who are missionaries: ministers of good or uninvited guests? What goals do they pursue: is missionary a disseminating of the God's word or a secret territorial and cultural expansion of other nations? What forms is this activity reflected in the texts?

Initiated in England, missionary movement further was supported by other European countries and America. A large variety of religions disseminated its values in missionaries around the world, but movement of Christian preachers at the turn of the XVIII-XIX centuries was comparatively widespread. Missionaries of all Christian denominations quoted a passage from the Gospel of Matthew, where the risen Jesus says to his followers: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...."¹ Missionaries perceived this passage as the "Great Commission" and considered it as one of the last mandates that Jesus had given the disciples before ascending to Heaven.

It is challenging to reveal, what ideas pushed the Christian missionaries at the beginning of their journey, and how they correlated with the indigenous population in the stations. The expectations might be different. As N.Etherington states, only 12% of people on mission settlements were there for "spiritual" reasons. The majority sought either material advantage or psychological security (Etherington 31-40).

In 1820, first missionaries arrived in North Africa, India, Ottoman Empire, and China with the goal of "evangelizing the world", and played a significant role in the history and life of these regions. Firstly, God's messengers influenced the

1 Matthew 28: 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Holy Bible, New International Version®, 2011.

restructuring of social welfare of aboriginal people. They were actively involved in building schools and hospitals, developing local agriculture and technology. Secondly, self-righteous missionaries made efforts to impose an alien morality to the aboriginal people, and insisted on accepting the European way of life, which was largely ignored by the local people. In the study of Christian missions in Africa is noted, “Some groups such as the Basotho and the Tswana openly welcomed missionaries, others like the Pedi, the Zulu and the Pondo vehemently rejected their presence as a matter of national policy” (Etherington 34).

As any missionary, the earliest American missionaries to the Ottoman Empire in the early nineteenth century were sure that their faith carried an imperative of universal evangelization. They were intolerant to other religions, and their belief in their own was unwavering. American missionaries managed two-folded situation: they were initiators of incipient Western imperial expansion into Ottoman lands, and spending the sums given by pious American churchgoers to support the mission, enjoyed the opportunities of political and economic access (Sharkey 2).

American missionaries were key social actors and played a significant role in constructing public affairs of the New Republic. As the historian William R. Hutchison observed, the American foreign missionary movement had become, by the late XIX century, “a massive affair, involving tens of thousands of Americans abroad and millions at home. It sent abroad, through most of its history, not only the largest contingents of Americans, but also the most highly educated” (Hutchison 1). The functions of “the most highly educated” Americans involved not only spread of evangelical values, but influencing minds and souls of the local people through building schools, and hospitals, establishing printing presses, and other institutions in all the territories, including the Ottoman lands.

The situation was identical with the missionary in China. The main areas of activity of Protestant missionaries in China, both English and American, were medicine, pedagogy, and politics. Contemporary China researchers state that great importance to medicine and education attached by Protestant missionary in the occupied lands was the best way to get closer to the local population. In Beijing, all districts were united into religious communities and temples. The main goal of the Protestant religious activity was also construction of schools, hospitals and other cultural and charitable institutions. They hoped that through school teaching they would force the Chinese to enjoy Christian cultural and religious values. Through medical service, the missionaries were planning to gain the favor and sympathy of the Chinese people, thereby involving them to preaching Christianity. Therefore, each Protestant mission paid special attention to medical service of the indigenous

people (Romanenko 169). Sharkey argues that missionary encounters strongly affected all parties involved, leading to changes in ideas, practices, and outlooks (Sharkey 2). In his turn, Hutchison mentions the missionaries as “the chief interpreters of remote cultures for the people at home” (Hutchison 1).

Along with it, some scholars propose that generally missionary enterprise in the East was a failure because of a small number of converted to evangelical Christianity. As one of the main reasons of this failure, they mark the concentration of protestant missions mainly in the cities, unlike Catholics, who predominantly carried out missionary work in rural areas (Romanenko 171). We agree with the view that missionary enterprise could not completely succeed in the Asian countries because of their traditionalist cultures, and support V. Styopin explaining it with differences in cultural identity. According to Styopin, “identity in traditionalist cultures means being a part of a definite clan, caste, given from birth. If one leaves this community, he then loses his identity”, personal and cultural (Styopin 6).

In studying the texts of the US missionary enterprise, we are observing the imposition of one culture upon another. We attempt to explore this possibility of a power imbalance between Christian missionary culture and the respondent culture, which is based on racial, national, and gender differences. Over time, missionary activity had become a form of both spiritual and physical inclination. Willingly or not, religious people often appeared at the forefront of the processes, which further turned out as colonization efforts. It comes out from the missionary texts that the spread of the Christian faith has never been a way to “civilize” backward peoples outside of Europe and the United States. There were varieties of reasons for missionary presence in these lands, which we had discussed before. Therefore, revealing the peculiarities and technologies of implementation into an alien environment, learning the methods and means of justification the dominance of one culture over another in the narratives also contributes to textual understanding of the US missionary.

We believe that the parallel task of the missionaries was to learn the culture of the colonized people. In this process, the missionaries came across more difficulties in understanding the traditionalist cultures of the local people. The Europeans and Americans could not grasp the essence of a circular movement of these cultures, which saw “the best state of their society not in the future, but in the past”. Academician Styopin characterizes it as “a return to the original foundations” (Styopin 7).

Unfortunately, this knowledge has automatically transformed respondent culture into the alien “othered,” and as Raka Shome notes, “from an object

of study, it became the object of criticism” (Shome 43). Consequently, all the gained information of racial, cultural, and national character, lifestyle, strengths and weaknesses of local people turned into an instrument of domination and manipulation of the West. In the Preface to his well-known work, Edward Said quotes an epigram of Disraeli “The East is a career”¹. “When Disraeli said in his novel *Tancred* that the East was a career”, explains Said, “...he should not be interpreted as saying that the East was only a carrier for Westerners.” And he adds, “there were—and are—cultures and nations whose location is in the East, and their lives, histories, and customs have a brute reality obviously greater than anything that could be said about them in the West” (Said 5). Evidently, these remarks of Said could be related generally to the mode of thinking of the most Westerners about the East, especially of the missionaries to the East. Their gendered, “othered”, “orientalized” views concerning the indigenous people of the East had influenced their approach to the local population of the colonized territories whom they tried to learn and understand, and who were called “heathens”, “barbarians”, etc. in their narratives. Finally, they could not grasp such a simple thing that other “ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force or more precisely their configurations of power” (Said 5).

On the problem of European and American missionary to the East

By the early XIX century, Jerusalem was restored as the center of Anglican presence in the Ottoman Empire. England made efforts to be in forefront of this restoration process, and in 1809, the London Society for Propagation the Christianity among Jews was founded. Later on, in 1820 under Church was established the first Missionary Society, which started training missionaries for the Middle East. Popularizing theology and marketing Christian missions by London Society in the 40s of the XIX century has been well studied by many researchers².

In 1841, an Anglo-Lutheran bishopric was established in Jerusalem, whose duties included maintaining a theological dialogue with the Eastern churches,

1 See: Disraeli, Benjamin. *Tancred: or, The New Crusade*. The Online Books Page. <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupname?key=Disraeli%2C%201804%2D1881>

2 See: Gidney W.T. *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews, from 1809 to 1908*. L., 1908; Tibawi A.L. *British interests in Palestine, 1800–1901*. Oxf., 1961; Farah E. Caesar. *Protestantism and Politics: The 19th century Dimension in Syria // Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period; Political, Social and Economic Transformation* / Ed. by David Kushner. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1986, 320–340; *Jewish Intelligence*. L., 1835–1842; *American missionary journal: The Jewish Chronicle* / Ed. by J. Lillie. N. Y., 1846. Vol. I–II.

as well as, excluding any propaganda among them, and influencing, mainly by personal example. The missionaries of the Society also considered non-Jews as objects of preaching. In the 40s, the activities of the Anglicans in Ottoman Syria intensified markedly (Solodukhina 65-77).

Gaining independence of the New Republic in America soon was followed by brisk commerce with the Orient, which gave the country an important force. Oriental trade was actually significant for the New Republic, both as an economic value, and as a sign of national power. Soon after the Revolutionary War and signing the Acts of Trade, US ships arrived in Ottoman lands: Constantinople in 1786, Smyrna in 1797, and Alexandria in 1800 (Field 113). The main object of trade with Smyrna was opium for China. This trade was a sign of power, and the United States cornered the Smyrna market (Finnie 30-31).

There is a direct interrelation between the development of trade and widening of New England missionary to the Middle East. Obviously, a more intense penetration of Western Christianity, especially Protestantism, began after the Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860). Opium wars was a tool for each side to strengthen its power in the eastern markets. By the 1830s, the United States had negotiated a commercial treaty with Turkey, and trade with the Tripolitan states became well established. Consequently, Great Britain got an open trade and access to the Chinese domestic market, and the Chinese maintained sovereign control over their trade and independence from the Western powers (Bays 47-48). After winning the Opium Wars, foreign powers forced the Chinese government to sign a series of treaties in which foreigners, including missionaries, were granted exclusive rights (Bays 66).

The Middle East, which kept religious relics and shrines, could not be left aside by the American churchmen either. Actually, the interests of both sides – the state and the church came across on this land. Therefore, the initiative of the church to create a mission in the eastern lands immediately was supported by the American state, and Christian missionaries who were anxious that on this land “the cultures of ancient Christian churches and Islam mingled” and the distinctions between “enlightened” and “heathen” were extremely unclear (Malini 78). Following the disestablishment of Protestant churches in the early XIX century, the clergymen sought new ways to regain their former power, popularizing evangelical values and attracting new followers.

The first American missionaries arrived in the Middle East in 1820 and in the next five years carried out extensive activities to popularize Christianity and convert Muslims to this faith. By 1825, they already had two stable missions—in Malta and

Beirut. The triumph of missionary activity was opening of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut in 1866. The 100th anniversary of this College was widely celebrated in this country in 1966 (Tibawi 29, 303).

There are different approaches to US missionary in a variety of sources and scholarly researches. Nevertheless, the key point in all assessments are the words “empire” and “imperialism”. Thus, an American researcher E. Conroy-Krutz assures that “American evangelicals had dual identity: they were both evangelical Christians who saw themselves as transnational figures taking part in a global struggle for God’s kingdom, and Americans whose national pride called them to partner with Great Britain in the conversion of the world” (Conroy-Krutz 5). They believed that the Anglo-American civilization was a model of upper development, which should have to be accepted by low civilized nations. In *Missionaries and Imperialism* the role of missions in colonized territories is revealed as economic, social, and cultural exploitation, and the missionaries are called “imperialists; if different from other imperialists, it is because they were marginal, or because they were worse” (Howard 2018). Hutchison confesses, “All western missionaries were somehow enmeshed in political imperialism” and calls them “selective imperialists” (Hutchison 205). In the review to Conroy-Krutz’s book, the author R. Brenner reminds that that it were the evangelicals who “had helped lay the groundwork for American imperialism by their active disseminating of American values around the world, particularly in Ottoman state, Africa, Hawaii, Palestine, and India” (Brenner, 2016). It is obvious that the American missionaries were motivated in their activities not only by religious fervor, but also by colonial and economic interests.

Missionary movement abroad has become the subject of many literary texts published in the United States. The novels about missionaries were addressed mainly to the female readership, especially interested in this topic, and most active in the formation of foreign missions. The writers created colonial missionary novels, the main characters of which were brave Western men, who at the risk of their lives, explored new territories, or participated in archaeological excavations in a distant country. They believed that, like Champollion¹, they would be able to discover lost civilizations and forgotten languages, presenting their own culture to ignorant aborigines. Western women in these novels had a mission to spread biblical truths,

1 Jean François Champollion (1790-1832), great French philologist and historian, whose discoveries laid the basis for what is known today as Egyptology. It was Champollion who fiercely contested all the academic assumptions about Egypt, and, by deciphering the Rosetta stone unlocked the secrets of its ancient language, and established a scientific basis for studying Egyptian civilization. <https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/fid_9701/993_champollion.html>

and to support Western men in their intentions to change the faith of Muslim women¹.

The images of missionaries, their activities on the “Christianization of the world,” their relations with local people, methods and techniques of learning alien culture, and involving the “heathens” to the Christian preaches—all these issues were reflected in different forms of the nineteenth century US missionary narratives. A sketchy literary story about missionary in the Middle East branches out into many components of US racial-gender imperialism. To veil true goals, and attract more readers to these works, the authors managed a love story in a racial-gendered setting, although a love story in its various manifestations is just an ornate decoration of the plot. In essence, through the images of explorers, American authors drew a parallel between the European colonists, the first settlers of North America, and a new generation of American discoverers of eastern lands.

The methodology of this study is based on the analysis of postcolonial and gender components of the XIX century American missionary narrative by means of implementing historical and narratological tools. The study particularly concerns the missionary novel in the Middle East in its historical context, and synthesizes literary, cultural, and religious studies. American literature of that period could be hardly evaluated in terms of postcolonial studies, as unlike the empires of England and France, it did not possess colonies outside its borders at that time. In contrast, modern scholars emphasize the colonial status of early American literature (Buel 411). So, literary and publicist works concerning the East demonstrate a clear sensitivity to the imperial ambitions of New England, issues of racial and gender differences. Daniel J. Boorstin, Ahmed M. Metwalli, Helen Montgomery, A.L. Tibawi, Ann Douglas and many other researchers of early American literature² have covered these issues in their works.

1 Well-known works of this period were: Henry Brent, “The Mysterious Pyramid” (1850), Maturin Murray Ballou, *The Turkish Slave* (1850), and John De Forest, *Irene the Missionary* (1879). Even well-known woman writer Maria Susanna Cummins wrote a missionary novel *El Fureidis* in 1860. William Ware wrote *Zenobia* (1837), a history of Palmira queen, highlighting the difference between eastern and western rulers. –N.I.

2 See: Boorstin, Daniel. *The Americans: The Colonial Experience*. Vintage Books: Random House, New-York, 1958, 434; Metwalli Ahmed M. *Americans Abroad: The Popular Art Travel Writing in the 19 century*. Montgomery, Helen Barret. *Western Women in Eastern Lands*. New York: Garland, 1987; Tibawi, A.L. *American Interest in Syria, 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary and Religious Work*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1966; Ann Douglas. *The Feminization of American Culture*. New York: Knoph, 1977.

Gender Discourse in US Missionary Texts

When churches appealed to American women for missionary work in the eastern lands, the latter welcomed the initiative with great enthusiasm. Having become missionaries, American churchwomen could strengthen their social status in a post-revolutionary society, gain independence and certain power over the oppressed women. According to Ann Douglas, “it provides a way to protest a power to which one has already in part capitulated.” She recognizes that “it always borders on dishonesty but it is a dishonesty for which there is no known substitute in a capitalist country” (Douglas 12).

On this way, American women-missionaries embodied their nation as an empire, whose representatives are fundamentally different from Eastern women. In his speech on the social status of oriental women, Rev. Ross Houghton highly appreciated the efforts of “those Christian ladies of America whose sympathies and efforts are enlisted in the work of elevating Oriental women through the power of Christian education” (Rev. Houghton 5). Thus, the first feminine missionary organizations were established by 1800, 11 years before the foundation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. By 1848, there were already 13 feminine missionary societies in New England (Montgomery 19). In general, missionary women adopted the rhetoric of a portable Christianity from their brethren who had much more experience in this field. Women’s societies, claiming organizational and financial autonomy, were just constructing their own path on this way.

Appreciating the activities of missionary women in the East, Samuel Worcester wrote in 1815, that those *outside* Christianity have no “good hope.” “...Their Gods cannot save them”, he adds, “their religion does not satisfy the heart or the life, does not dissipate the darkness which heavily broods over them, thickening into the blackness of eternal night” (Singh 106).

By the mid XIX century, women in missionary societies in the United States were using similar images. The process of involving American churchwomen to support “helpless and secluded heathen women” was so intense, that by 1900 among 94 missionary boards exclusively women’s boards counted 41 with several supporting agencies. Missionary organizers of women’s missionary societies in America claimed to have raised 4 million dollars through their 2 million supporters (Singh 106). Nevertheless, as Ann Douglas notes, “nineteenth-century American women were oppressed, and damaged; inevitably, the influence they exerted in turn on their society was not altogether beneficial”. But why?—We wonder how they

could combine attributed to American women toughness, oppression, and non-beneficial influence on the society. Douglas reveals her views on the situation, “The cruelest aspect of the process of oppression is the logic by which it forces its objects to be oppressive in turn, to do the dirty work of their society in several senses” (Douglas 11).

Women missionary activities in the eastern lands were presented both in the letters, reports, social histories, and in Presbyterian women’s journal titled “Woman’s work for Woman,” which published widely produced missionary writings on the US missionary in the nineteenth century. Diversified missionary texts, served as “conduits for disseminating and perpetuating discourses about the heathen” (Singh 138). These texts represent a corpus of “knowledge” about the “Other,” based on assumptions of religious, racial, and cultural character. Therefore, reading missionary literature was crucial for understanding the missionary.

Missionaries produced a great variety of texts. They were encouraged to write both letters home, and reports, articles, memoirs, travelogues, and autobiographical and anecdotal narratives. They considered it a professional *obligation* to inform their home community about their progress in the field, to send detailed information with facts, needs, and problems. Consequently, a vast body of writings, called missionary literature, has been collected in American archives, and could be used in creating literary works.

In the array of missionary literature there were literary texts based on missionary reports and social stories. Enjoying missionary reports and stories, the authors attempted to create literary works readable for all ages, especially for women readers. In order to attract women they constructed their narratives like love stories. So, in *The Turkish slave, or, The Mahometan and his harem: a story of the East* by Maturin Murray Ballou (1850), this relationship was presented between the Greek slave Alik and Esma, the daughter of the Turkish Sultan. In the novel *Irene The Missionary* (1879) by John De Forest, the love triangle is much more complicated: the explorer Huberstein De Vries, fascinated by the local beauty Saada, was the object of love of his compatriot—missionary Irene Grant. Finally, in the novel *El- Fureidis* (1860), Maria Susanna Cummins also describes love affairs of the archaeologist Meredith, and Havillah, the daughter of an American businessman from a mixed marriage with an Indian woman.

To show the difference between American and Eastern women, the latter in these novels were portrayed as frivolous, idle, and oppressed, while women missionaries were represented as independent and intelligent. The liberation of women from harem was an important task for both women-missionaries and their

compatriots—men, although, generally, concern for the moral order was considered the prerogative of men. These novels ended in the same way as all women's novels: the missionary, who tried a little freedom and achieved some success in name of Christian faith, completed her mission, returned to her family and community, married a strong and decent man.

This template plot was generally accepted in all works about missionaries, where writers satirically depicted the ideological foundations of a country whose heroes were realizing its imperial ambitions. Awareness of racial and gender hierarchy of missionary and colonial imperialism was an important feature of these works, demonstrating the unlimited frontiers of the Eastern discourse in the mid-XIX century.

Frontier Theory in the Missionary Novels

The Americans believed that the more their country was developing, the further east in search of new lands the new borders of the United States should have extended¹. To their opinion, this way should stretch into the historical depths of civilization, where it started its evolution cycle². Accordingly, in the novel *Irene, the Missionary*, the Middle East for New England resident Uberstein De Vries, a strong, energetic, and self-confident representative of the American nation, meant a new frontier in his country's colonial policy. As a professional archaeologist, DeVries spent all his time

1 The Frontier Thesis, forwarded by Frederick Jackson Turner in 1893, had a profound influence on the formation of the ideology of US expansionism. In his theory, Turner pointed out that "the American character owes its aggressive, innovative, and democratic characteristics to the American border." He declared that the border creates freedom, "destroying the bonds of tradition, offering new experiences, creating new institutions and activities. "Turner first put forward his theory in an article entitled "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" in 1893 at the International Columbia Exhibition in Chicago. It is enlightened in: Billington, Ray Allen. *Land of Savagery / Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (1981); Jensen, Richard. "On Modernizing Frederick Jackson Turner," *Western Historical Quarterly* 11 (1980), 307-20; Etulain, Richard W. *Writing Western History: Essays on Major Western Historians* (2002).

2 The idea of a civilization passing through a full cycle in its development was popular at that time. It was argued that empires arose at the dawn of civilization in the Far East, and then expanded to Europe, and further to the New World. XVIII century English traveler Andrew Burnaby expressed this popular view after visiting America: "an idea, strange as it is visionary, [had] entered into the minds of the generality of mankind, that empire is travelling westward; and every one is looking forward ... to that destined moment when America is to give law to the rest of the world." See: Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968) 101.

among the ruins, studied the remains of the lost culture and wrote the history of this region for indigenous people: “The whole of Asia Minor ought to be excavated,” he confidently declared (Forest 35).

Unlike the American scholar, a relentless “discoverer of the Syrian culture,” the locals themselves were lesser interested in the ruins than in their economic benefits. Thus, through the image of DeVries, a young, energetic nation was described as capable of detecting and evaluating the values that the eastern aborigines themselves were not able to implement. Using this narratological tool, John de Forest emphasized, on one hand, the strength and patriarchal power of the United States, and on the other, the helplessness and dependence of the eastern inhabitants.

Accordingly, the same type of narration extends in *El-Fureidis*. In this work, the image of the main character Meredith, the explorer of the East, is more complex and contradictory in terms of racial and cultural distinctions. Meredith, a self-sufficient English aristocrat, who on his own came to *El-Fureidis*, discovered an unusual land, which looked like the narrative in Bradford’s *History of the Plymouth settlement*. Let us compare these texts:

...that far-famed Eastern land, which, when the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, He gave unto his chosen people, - that land that immortalized as the Paradise of our earthly parents, the Canaan of the favored race, ... the cherished spot whence the day spring from on high has visited us.... (Cummins 11)

Neither could they, as it were, go up to the top of Pisgah¹ to view from this wilderness a more goodly country to feed their hopes; for which way soever they turned their eyes (saved upward to the heavens) they could have little solace or content in respect of any outward objects. (Bradford 61)

Our fathers were Englishmen, who came over the great ocean and were ready to perish in the wilderness, but they cried to the Lord, and He heard their voice and looked on their adversity.... Yes, let them who have been redeemed of the Lord, show how He has delivered them from the hand of the oppressor. (Bradford 62)

William Bradford, as the first American chronicler, imitated the Pilgrim’s voyage to New England with the Israelites’ migration from Egypt to Canaan described in Deuteronomy:

1 Mountain from which the Mosses saw the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 34. 1-4).

But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, subjecting us to harsh labor. Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. (Deuteronomy 26. 6-8)

Thus, Maria Cummins colors the speech of her main hero by cognitive features of Bradford's History and the Book of Judaism. It is the key point of the American explorers in both the early experience and the colonial period. "Like "a city upon a hill"¹, El-Fureidis is described in the work as "a beacon set upon a hill", i.e. we may call it a lighthouse that indicates the path to all the humanity, and is supposed to lighten the moral values of the aborigines (Cummins 60). This "lighthouse on a hill" is fairly mentioned as "the paradigm of a new imperial border" (Malini 101).

The content of the Frontier theory as well as of the US missionary are closely linked to each other. As in implementing Frontier theory, accordingly, in the missionary politics the Americans used supporting tools, such as myths and legends. We could observe it in both preaching, and variety of talks of Father Lapierre with the heroes of "El-Fureidis". The key point of all his talks is accusing Ottoman government and Syria of despotism, bribery, injustice etc., and necessity of conversion the local people from pagan religion to Christianity.

Another main point in emphasizing the Middle East as a new US border is the use of New England rhetoric. This rhetoric strengthened with the idea that the Americans had been under the protection of God and their destiny was presupposed, laid in the minds of the New England colonists.

"Already men's eyes are turned upon us. Western Europe and enterprising America are emulating each other in their beneficent labors in this direction. ... and religion lends her aid and sanction to the work, for a faithful band of Christian missionaries are in the van of the reforming army. ... God stands at the helm, and holds the nations in the hollow of his hand" (Cummins 42-43).

In 1630, the founder of the first Massachusetts colony, John Winthrop (1588-1649), a supporter of a harmonious Christian community and author of the sermon "A Model of Christian Charity", referring to his compatriots, made a speech, which subsequently became a key moment in the history of the American history:

1 The Puritans, who arrived on the coast of Massachusetts, dreamed of constructing a holy city there similar the one that had been indicated in the biblical legend. Due to this legend, "city on the hill" was to become a beacon to the rest of the world. See: Urofsky, Melvin I. *Basic Readings in U.S. Democracy* (New York, 1995) 487.

We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so if we shall deal falsely with our god in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. (Boorstin 3)

Comparing these texts shows that they are imitating each other both in style and in content. Thus, the author of “El Fureidis” expands the borders of the United States to the Middle East, establishing both cultural, religious, and territorial closeness of these lands. In addition, the concept of Manifest Destiny, which grew into the theory of the exclusivity of the American nation, reveals in the text the bid for assimilation with the “politically backward peoples,” and colonization of peoples plunged into “darkness.”

Conclusion

In the nineteenth century, American missionaries settled in such regions as Anatolia and European part of Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Iran (until 1935-Persia). Hiding behind the slogans on the “evangelization of the world”, missionaries facilitated the penetration of American capital into the explored areas. The thirst for discovering new lands, expanding borders, and searching for new markets was veiled by “fair and noble” Christian thoughts. Peyman A. Baharvand reveals these plans as follows, “The cultural hegemony of the West, that justified the presence of colonizers in their colonies, served the capitalistic interests of colonizers to plunder natural resources and appropriate fertile lands. Colonized subjects were supposed to adopt the language and manners of colonizers in order to get rid of their barbarity” (Baharvand 139).

It is undeniable; Orientalist discourse was a tool to depict non-western people as “savage” and “primitive”, and to justify westerners’ presence in the East. As Conroy-Cruz concludes, the Christian imperialism envisioned by the missionary “had little to do with states. It relied on existing political and economic networks between supposedly Christian nations and the so-called heathen world”. The author focuses initiative of the missionaries mostly on the “spread of Anglo-American culture and Protestant religion,” emphasizing the Anglo-American governance as “a tool in this larger project” (Conroy-Cruz 10).

The fundamental and regulatory force of the US policy was the theory of Predestination. This doctrine included several components or areas of activity: economic, expansionist, religious, etc. According to this concept, the New

Englanders believed that the American continent was gifted to the settlers by Divine providence, and God ordained the future of this country. Particularly, the burden of the Americans was to seize and Christianize the land. The purpose of further colonization of the East was intruded into the minds of the young Americans even at school. An interesting fact remembered Rachel Bailey Jones from his school years:

I learned that my country was founded on ideals of freedom and equality that we were trying to spread throughout the world. My curriculum told me that the violence and wars that were supported by my country were necessary for the defense of freedom and democracy. I learned that technology and science were invented in Europe and the United States, and that we were helping the less developed people of the world to bring them up to our level. (Jones 7-8)

There were some rare cases when the Americans resisted this hegemonic discourse as a threatening state. A well-known American political leader Carl Schurz stated in his “Manifest Destiny,”

We are told that unless we take charge of a certain country it will be ill-governed and get into internal trouble. This is certainly no inducement. This republic cannot take charge of all countries that are badly governed”. He stressed the fact that “the fate of the American people is in their own wisdom and will. Therefore, it would be better if they devote their energies to the development of what they possess within their present limits. (Schurz 745-746)

Along with religious propaganda, the merit of missionaries in the cultural expansion of peoples is also great. To get closer to the indigenous people, the missionaries translated the Bible and distributed it to the aboriginal people, served in the fields of medicine, healthcare, and agriculture. They reconstructed temples, built schools and hospitals, where also served the community. Nye reveals this approach as “soft co-optive power” and believes that “soft power is just as important as hard command power”. The author is sure that “if a state can make its power seem legitimate in the eyes of others, it will encounter less resistance to its wishes. If its culture and ideology are attractive, others will more willingly follow it” (Nye 167).

We consider, missionary activities is a demonstration and intrusion of soft power, and the US for several centuries have been applying this policy all over the world. The power of the US is in the ability of manipulating public wants and reconstructing the situation the way they want. As Nye shows, “co-optive power

is the ability of a country to structure a situation so that other countries develop preferences in ways consistent with its own” (Nye 168). In “structuring a situation”, early American novel was managed “as a political and cultural forum,” and as a tool, which could express the vision of a developing nation. Missionary novels, being a product of ambivalent US policy towards the East, demonstrated hidden interest of the new Republic in the region, and fulfilled the special task of “creating literature against the overwhelming impact of their nation’s residual colonial mentality” (Davidson 11).

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