

**NORTH AMERICAN NURSES' TRANSNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORTS DURING THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915 -1923**

by

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Abstract

During the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923, nurses from the United States of America and Canada traveled to Turkey, Armenia and the surrounding region to render humanitarian assistance to the victims and survivors of the Turkish atrocities. Yet, there is inadequate knowledge on the important roles these nurses played and their experiences and motivations are not fully understood. This thesis aims to add new historical knowledge to existing literature about transnational and humanitarian relief work by North American nurses, to shed light on larger social trends and human experiences and to expand our historical understanding of the Armenian Genocide through their encounters with victims, refugees and orphans.

This thesis explored the past editions of the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* from 1915 to 1923. The findings revealed that North American nurses were significantly involved in humanitarian and relief efforts in very difficult circumstances during the Armenian Genocide. They were functioning under mostly secular organizations, such as the American Red Cross, and the Near East Relief, yet often they were significantly influenced by their Protestant Christian backgrounds. Despite the tremendous hardship encountered, many nurses chose to remain in Turkey and to serve those in need of their relief efforts. US and Canadian nurses worked together and in close proximity and their humanitarianism was transnational in nature. In addition to relief work, the nurses established nursing schools and hospitals, which served both as source of help and new resources for education and employment for Armenian survivors. The thesis concludes with recommendations for future studies involving documents to expand upon the beginning of the understanding North American nurses' involvement and the meaning of transnational relationships during the Armenian Genocide.

Lay Summary

Nurses from United States of America and Canada traveled to Turkey during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 to help the Armenian victims and refugees. This thesis explores the experiences of these nurses and seeks to understand their motivations to join humanitarian organizations such as the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief. It adds new historical knowledge about humanitarian relief work and larger social and political trends shaping nurses' work.

This thesis has explored the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* for relevant documentation. The sources revealed that nurses worked in very difficult and dangerous situations in Turkey, they were devoted to their work, and they chose to not abandon their posts when they had the chance to. In addition, local Armenian girls and women looked up to the nurses who also established nursing schools and training workshops for the future generations.

Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished and independent work by the author (Hrag Yacoubian).

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Dedication

In memory of my father. You left a fingerprint of grace and taught us to contribute to justice.

Thesis Timeline

1881: American Red Cross is established.

1896: Clara Barton, first president of the American Red Cross, travels to the Ottoman Empire.

1896: Canadian Armenian Relief Fund is established.

1894-1896: Around 200,000 Armenians are massacred in Anatolia and Constantinople during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

1908-1909: Sultan Abdul Hamid II deposed, bringing the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) to power in Turkey.

1909: Around 30,000 Armenians are slaughtered during pogroms in Adana, Southern Anatolia.

1914: Germany and the Ottoman Empire sign a secret alliance treaty.

October 29, 1914: Ottoman Empire makes an unannounced attack on Russia. Three days later, Russia declares war on Turkey.

November 5, 1914: France and Britain declare war on the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire.

1915-1916: The principal phase of the Armenian Genocide, lasting until the end of the First World War. Around 1,5 million are massacred.

1915: the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief is established.

April 24, 1915: Talaat Pasha orders the arrest of more than 800 Armenian intellectuals and leaders in Constantinople; most are murdered.

April 25, 1915: First Allied landings of the ultimately unsuccessful Gallipoli Campaign.

1916-1923: Massacres against Armenians continue in various regions in Turkey.

1918: American Committee for Relief in the Near East is established.

May 21, 1918: Turkey invades Armenia to finish the extermination of Armenians, but is defeated.

May 28, 1918: First Armenian Republic is established which lasts three years.

June 10, 1919: Talaat Pasha , Enver Pasha, Djemal Pasha, and Dr. Nazim, are condemned to death in absentia (they had escaped on a German gunboat to Germany) at a Turkish trial.

August 6, 1919: the US Congress incorporates the Near East Relief.

March 21, 1921: Talaat Pasha, chief architect of the genocide, is assassinated in Berlin by Soghomon Tehlirian, a genocide survivor.

1923: The Treaty of Lausanne defines the boundaries of the modern state of Turkey and replaces the Treaty of Sevres, which recognized an independent Armenian state.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis sheds light on the relief work of nurses from the United States of America (hereafter referred to as US nurses) and Canada in Turkey, Armenia and the surrounding region during the Armenian Genocide between 1915 and 1923. The thesis explores the roles, experiences and motivations of these nurses in rendering humanitarian assistance to the victims and survivors at the time of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian Genocide, during which an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were systematically exterminated by Ottoman and Turkish authorities, was centrally organized and implemented through massacres, death marches, starvation, rape and other acts of violence. Nurses' work and their role in relief efforts during these events have not yet received much scholarly examination. Hence, this thesis contributes new knowledge to the historical understanding of humanitarian and transnational nursing.

1.1 Background

International humanitarian aid in response to veterans and victims of war obtained an organized form during the nineteenth century. The American Red Cross, established in 1881, was the first Red Cross organization to respond to the Armenian massacres, which also began in the late nineteenth century. The response was led by the organization's first president Clara Barton who in 1896 travelled to the Ottoman Empire to render assistance to Armenians who suffered Turkish massacres.¹ Before the second half of the nineteenth century, there was no neutral international humanitarian organization that provided humanitarian assistance to the

¹ "The Armenian Genocide and the International Red Cross," the Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, last modified September 23, 2009, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/23.09.2009.php>.

wounded in war zones. An international conference held in the presence of sixteen countries in Geneva in 1863 that aimed to adopt an international agreement to protect the medical staff and the injured in the battlefields led to the establishment of humanitarian law and the International Red Cross organization. Its main purpose was to be a neutral body to provide aide to the wounded soldiers and protect the life and dignity of the victims of armed conflicts.² The International Red Cross became a federation of national Red Cross societies from around the world and Clara Barton became the first president of the national organization in the US. One of the first targets of the American Red Cross was to provide help to the Armenian victims of Turkish massacres, a focal occurrence within the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire, also known as Ottoman Turkey was founded at the end of the thirteenth century in Anatolia or Asia Minor. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Empire expanded to parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Ethnic minorities such as Greeks, Jews and Armenians preserved their unique identities throughout many centuries living among Turks and Kurds and they constituted distinct millets within the Ottoman Empire. Under Ottoman law, a millet consisted of a confessional community with distinct court of law, allowed to rule itself under its own laws such as the Christian Canon Law or the Jewish Halakha. The Armenians were led by the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, and were considered second class citizens under Ottoman law. As of mid-eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire's military power began to diminish compared to its rival German and Russian Empires, and the former began to lose some of its territories to newly formed independent nations in the Balkans. Religious and racial

² Clara Barton, *The Red Cross: A History of the Remarkable International Movement in the Interest of Humanity* (New York: Classics of Medicine Library, 1992).

tensions within the Ottoman Empire also emerged leading to increasingly violent acts against particular groups such as the Armenians. In the twentieth century, Ottoman Turkey formed a coalition with Germany and entered the First World War together with Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria against the Allied Powers: Britain, France, Russia, Italy and later in 1917, the US. During this period, the Turkish authorities intensified the massacres they had already begun committing against their Armenian, Pontic Greek and Assyrian citizens.³

The role of Red Cross societies from around the world was significant in assisting Armenian victims of the massacres and the Genocide. As noted, the American Red Cross was the first organization to provide large scale humanitarian aid to the Armenian victims.⁴ At the end of 1896, Barton and her colleagues published a report on their humanitarian work in the Ottoman Empire. A new wave of Red Cross activity came during the First World War when Turkish authorities started implementing their plan of exterminating Armenians. Both financial and medical assistance was provided to Armenian refugees by Red Cross organizations from different countries.⁵

In Canada, the sufferings of Armenian people were widely covered in the major newspapers. As historian Aram Adjemian has pointed out in his recent examination of this

³ Stanford J. Shaw and Gökhan Çetinsaya, "Ottoman Empire," Oxford Islamic Studies Online, accessed August 11, 2017, <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0611>.

⁴ "The Armenian Genocide and the International Red Cross," the Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, last modified September 23, 2009, accessed January 8, 2017, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/23.09.2009.php>.

⁵ American National Red Cross, *Report. America's Relief Expedition to Asia Minor Under the Red Cross* (Connecticut: The Journal Publishing Company, 1896), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015010945072;view=1up;seq=9>.

extensive coverage, it was in particular major Protestant newspapers, such as *The Globe*, which emphasized how the Armenians, as Christian fellow citizens, were in dire need of Canadian aid. In response, the media coverage soon triggered a general fundraising campaign and Canadians asked that an Armenian relief fund be established. In January 1896, the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund was founded with representative committees in Toronto, Montreal, the Maritimes, and Western Canada. *The Globe* took on the responsibility to publish the total raised funds. The Armenian Relief Fund Association of Canada, also known as the Canadian National Armenian Relief Fund or Canadian Armenian Relief Fund, was established by prominent religious leaders, politicians and businessmen. It not only helped establish a solid Canadian role in Turkey, but, once a similar relief organization, the Near East Relief Foundation, was founded in the neighboring US during the First World War, the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund also joined forces with the US Foundation.⁶ Hence, in the twentieth century, the Canadian humanitarian initiatives in Turkey and Armenia were closely related to those in the US.

In September 1915, Ambassador of the US at Constantinople Henry Morgenthau, urged the Department of State at Washington, to construct a committee to raise funds and create means to save some of the Armenians, who he described were rapidly being annihilated in Turkey. After a series of events during which two US organizations: the Armenian Relief Committee and the Syrian and Palestinian Relief Committee merged together, on August 6, 1919, the US Congress issued a Charter signed by the US president incorporating the Near East Relief. A few months after its formation, the organization had around 50 centers in Turkey and the Near East,

⁶ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 35-49.

later expanded to around 400 centers in the region. The American Red Cross contributed financially to the Near East Relief and the latter became a large organization that organized fundraising campaigns in the US for refugees and orphans in the Near East. North American missionaries from the US and Canada contributed to humanitarian aid, and due to their efforts, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were rescued from extermination.⁷ As more is discussed later in this and the following chapters, US and Canadian citizens and missionaries collaborated extensively to deliver much needed humanitarian aid in Turkey and Armenia. This collaborative approach is highlighted as being transnational in nature throughout this thesis. Among these missionaries were many nurses, whose work has not received much historical analysis. The aim of this thesis is to explore the roles, experiences and motivations of nurses from the US and Canada in rendering humanitarian assistance to the victims and survivors at the time of the Armenian Genocide.

1.2 Problem Statement

While there is literature to some extent on US nurses during the Armenian Genocide, the work of Canadian nurses during the Armenian Genocide is understudied and sometimes unaccounted for. In section 1.6 below, I will provide a review of the existing literature, and highlight the main contributions to date. In a parallel context, there is substantial literature available on the work of Canadian nurses in the First World War in overlapping geographical areas and timeframes serving in military hospitals helping the British wounded soldiers in parts of Western Turkey, Greece and elsewhere. Yet, the important work of Canadian nurses during

⁷ “The Story of the Near East Relief,” the Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, accessed July 19, 2016, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/online_exhibition_10.php.

the Armenian Genocide which started in the midst of the First World War in 1915, reaching out to help civilians and victims of massacres has not been well documented and researched. This thesis adds new historical knowledge to existing literature about transnational and humanitarian relief work by nurses. It not only expands our understanding of nurses' work, but also sheds light on larger social trends and human experiences, such as the Armenian Genocide and transnational relief work, of which nursing was an integral part. Furthermore, the thesis informs and expands our historical understanding of the Armenian Genocide through nurses' encounters with victims, refugees and orphans, and it examines the motivation behind their humanitarian work.

1.3 A Brief Introduction to the Armenian Genocide

The Armenian Genocide, also known as the Armenian Holocaust is the systematic mass murder of over a million Armenians in Turkey as of 1915.⁸ Historically, Christian Armenians generally had a stable but subordinate existence in the majority Muslim Ottoman Empire until the mid-nineteenth century when the Great Powers, namely the British Empire, the Russian Empire and France started to increasingly take issue with the Ottoman Empire's treatment of its Christian subjects, especially after the Christian uprisings in Ottoman Bulgaria and the Balkans, forcing the Empire to extend equal rights to all its Christian minorities and its citizens. When Sultan Abdul-Hamid II came into power in 1876, the Western criticisms of Turkish treatment of its Christian citizens were wide-spread and in 1877, Russia intervened by declaring a war against the Ottomans. In 1878, following the treaty of San Stefano and through the negotiated peace

⁸ IAGS Armenian Genocide Resolution," International Association of Genocide Scholars. Accessed January 10, 2017, http://www.genocidescholars.org/sites/default/files/document%09%5Bcurrent-page%3A1%5D/documents/IAGSArmenian%20Genocide%20Resolution%20_0.pdf.

agreement, the Russian forces would establish themselves in the Eastern Armenian Provinces of the Empire, until the Ottomans successfully implemented reforms in these provinces.⁹ However, in 1878, Britain argued that the Russian gains through the San Stefano Treaty were a threat to European and British interests and thus the European Powers later signed a revised treaty in Berlin (Congress of Berlin), by which Russia would no longer keep its troops in the Armenian provinces of the Empire, ultimately further exposing the vulnerability of the minority Armenians.¹⁰

In 1891, Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Hamid II formed paramilitary forces from unregulated Kurdish chieftains, which later within the time period of 1894-1896 massacred Armenians. Kurds were an ethnic minority in overlapping geographical regions where Armenians lived and were not organized by laws and did not have a civic order.¹¹ These massacres were known as the Hamidian Massacres, named after Sultan Abdul Hamid II, during which an estimated 88,000 to 200,000 Armenians were killed in Anatolia and Constantinople. These events led to hundreds of thousands of Armenians destitute, while mass forced conversions to Islam were also carried out.¹² The American Red Cross relief efforts led by Clara Barton mentioned at the beginning of this chapter were in response to these Hamidian Massacres.

⁹ Vahakn Dadrian, *History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Rhode Island: Berghahn Books, 1995).

¹⁰ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015).

¹¹ Thomas De Waal, *Great Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹² Laure Marchard and Guillaume Perrier, *Turkey and the Armenian Ghost* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

The news of the atrocities travelled throughout the world and what began to be framed as the Armenian Question became increasingly known worldwide, including in Britain, the US and Canada. The Armenian Question is used as a term to refer to Turkey's lack of acknowledgment of the events preceding and surrounding the Armenian Genocide. Movements such as the already mentioned Protestant religious lobbies in Canada were formed within these countries to offer humanitarian aid to the survivors of the massacres, and these movements lobbied governments to intervene.¹³ The killings of 1890s were an operation driven centrally by the Ottoman government with the objective to subjugate the Armenians within the empire; the atrocities of 1915 however amounted to genocide as the central government's objective became even more aggressive after the Young Turks had come to power, shifting the previous aim of subjugation towards one of getting rid of all Armenians.¹⁴

In 1908, the Young Turks came into power by a military coup. Sultan Abdul-Hamid II was removed and initially the Armenians had hopes for improvement of their status as the Young Turk movement wanted to make reforms and modernize what was left from the declining Ottoman Empire to European standards. This change, Armenians believed, would mean equal rights to all citizens regardless of religious and ethnic backgrounds. However, soon the Young Turks perceived the Armenians as a threat, and in 1909, some thirty thousand Armenians were massacred in Southern Anatolia in what became known as the Adana pogroms.¹⁵

¹³ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Quebec: Corridor Books, 2015).

¹⁴ Thomas De Waal, *Great Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁵ Laure Marchard and Guillaume Perrier, *Turkey and the Armenian Ghost* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

In 1914, the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War against the Allies and the violence against the Armenians deepened. Later, in December of the same year, Minister of War Enver Pasha of Turkey organized a campaign against Russia to regain the territories lost to the latter. Enver's campaign was unsuccessful and his army was destroyed by the Russian army. When Enver returned to Constantinople, he publicly blamed his defeat on Armenians of the region.¹⁶ Then, in February 1915, all Ottoman Armenians in the Ottoman forces were relieved from their posts and were assigned to passive, unarmed logistic sections, many of whom later were executed. These events followed by widespread propaganda claiming all Armenians living in the Empire were a threat to the security of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government rounded up and imprisoned around 800 Armenian intellectuals and community leaders, who later were either deported or murdered. In May of the same year, the government organized and executed the deportation of Armenians by passing the Temporary Law of Deportation. This law made possible the confiscation of all Armenian property and the slaughter of Armenians and the death marches of Armenians to the Syrian desert. A network of concentration camps was established and the Turkish authorities refused to provide food and water to the victims increasing the death toll.¹⁸

¹⁶ "Chronology," the Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/chronology.php>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

In May 1915, the Allied Powers, namely France, Britain and Russia made a joint statement condemning Turkey of atrocities against humanity and civilization, and by the time of the Allies' victory which concluded the First World War, 1 million to 1.5 million Armenians were massacred.¹⁹ The Armenian Genocide intensified the humanitarian aid and responses to provide relief within the home countries of the Allied powers as well as in North America, an effort that had begun in the nineteenth century. The genocide also expanded the role of nurses which I seek to examine in this thesis.

1.4 Research Questions and Thesis Objectives

The main objective of this thesis is to explore the role of nurses from the US and Canada in humanitarian relief and missionary work in providing aid to the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide. The specific research questions of this thesis are:

1. Who were the North American nurses who travelled to areas impacted by the massacres in Turkey?
2. What were the roles, experiences and encounters of nurses from both the US and Canada during the Armenian Genocide?
3. What were the larger social influences likely shaping the motivations of these North American nurses to join organized relief work in rendering help to the Armenian sufferers during the Armenian Genocide?

¹⁹ Laure Marchard and Guillaume Perrier, *Turkey and the Armenian Ghost* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

1.5 Methodology and Social History Framework

To explore and understand the role, experience and motivation of nurses who provided humanitarian relief or engaged in missionary work during the Armenian Genocide, a social history framework has been used to answer my thesis questions within the cultural, social and political contexts of the specified period of 1915 to 1923. I have drawn upon a social history framework as it has been taken up and articulated in nursing research in particular, for example in the guide to research *Capturing Nursing History*, edited by Sandra Lewenson and Eleanor L. Herrmann.²⁰ As nurse historian Joy Buck explained, social history provides a framework to examine and reinterpret past events and social circumstances through the lens of experiences of ordinary individual nurses and explores social factors that influenced the direction of the nursing profession or nurses' work rather than simply focusing on perceived exemplary nursing leaders or "great women" and their experiences.²¹ This social history approach to the examination of individual nurses' experiences is further informed by the recently emerging transnational perspective in nursing history as a way to understand nurses' experiences in humanitarian aid and relief work.²² The term 'transnational' refers to the connections between countries and cooperation of organizations in different countries and is different from internationalism which

²⁰ Sandra Lewenson and Eleanor L. Herrmann, *Capturing Nursing History: A Guide to Historical Methods in Research* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2007).

²¹ Joy Buck, "Using Frameworks in Historical Research," in *Capturing Nursing History: A Guide to Historical Methods in Research*, ed. Sandra Lewenson and Eleanor L. Herrmann (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2007), 45-62.

²² Ellen Fleischmann et al., eds., *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* (Gimlemoen: Portal Books, 2013).

refers to more formal interactions between or among nations and states.²³ In the literature review section at the end of this chapter I will provide some further discussion of this perspective. It helps explain the North American nurses' relief work in Turkey and Armenia in its transnational context.

For this thesis, I explored what was written in two nursing journals and a newspaper, the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Canadian Nurse*, and *The Globe*, to understand the roles, experiences and motivations of North American nurses who travelled to areas where Armenians lived and provided humanitarian aid to victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide. For limiting the amount of data to be studied in the archives of these journals and newspaper, and because the Armenian Genocide had begun in 1915 and extended to 1923, the publications between 1915 and 1923 are utilized in this thesis. I explored the *American Journal of Nursing* and the *Canadian Nurse* because these were the leading publications of the nursing profession in their respective countries. Moreover, I explored the Canadian newspaper *The Globe* when a thorough search of the *Canadian Nurse* did not provide sufficient answers to my research questions.

The year 1915 forms the starting point of the analysis because it is the year in which the systematic extermination of the Armenians had become a centrally organized goal of the Turkish authorities. The analysis ends in 1923 because by that time the genocide had concluded with 1.5 million Armenians massacred and many others orphaned, wounded or displaced. The social history framework was used to understand the individual experiences of these nurses and link

²³ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915," in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al (Latvia: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

them to the broader social, cultural and political contexts. Instead of focusing on the hierarchical power figures such as politicians, presidents, ambassadors or heads of organizations, social history framework enabled me to focus my thesis on the work of ordinary nurses who engaged in transnational humanitarian relief efforts and shaped the outcome of the ordinary Armenian civilians: the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

To understand what existing literature has been written about humanitarian and missionary nurses during the First World War and in order to provide a contextual background to the events surrounding the missions of North American nurses involved in relief work during and after the Armenian Genocide, an initial literature review was conducted to explore relevant works about: 1) the humanitarian and missionary nurses from the US during and after the Armenian Genocide, 2) the Canadian response to the Armenian Genocide, and 3) relevant nursing history literature. The perspectives offered in these works also informed my analysis of the primary documents in the journals. To answer the research questions, extracted evidence from the archives of the *American Journal of Nursing*, the *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* were analyzed and compared to this already existing knowledge about the work of North American missionary nurses during the Armenian Genocide. The information drawn from the journals were then synthesized into two chapters, one focusing on the relief work of US nurses and one on Canadian nurses. It is worth mentioning that the distinction within the two national contexts in these chapters is not an entirely separated one. For example, chapter two does not exclusively discuss US nurses' humanitarian involvement, but rather uses the *American Journal of Nursing* as the primary source of information. It sometimes reported as well on Canadian nurses working side by side with their US counterparts under the umbrella of the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief. Similarly, chapter three occasionally incorporated reports on US nurses'

humanitarian involvement in addition to those of the Canadian ones. *The Globe* in particular, reported on the important work of both Canadian and US nurses in their messages. The broader context of news reporting in *The Globe* was primarily planned, as I discuss later in chapter three, for fundraising purposes. For this purpose, they used reports from nurses that fit the fundraising goals, whether from Canadian or US nurses.

In addition to the above categorical divisions of the body of this thesis into two chapters, chapter two groups the findings and discussions into subcategories which pertain to the experiences of the nurses and are not necessarily in chronological order. On the other hand, chapter three uses subcategories which are grouped according to reports by *The Globe* on major events such as the Marash disaster and the establishment and mission of the Canadian Hospital at Constantinople. All nurses presented in chapters two and three were stationed in different cities in Turkey such as in Marash, Iğdir (Tsolakert), Izmir (Smyrna), Sivas (Sepastia), Constantinople (Istanbul or Stamboul), Harpoot, and Van or in cities in Armenia such as in Echmiadzin, Erivan, and Alexandropol. As stated earlier, the timeline of the Armenian Genocide extends between 1915 to 1923. Different regions and cities within Turkey and Armenia suffered massacres at sometimes simultaneous or different times. Hence, the regional reports from genocide-struck areas by the primary archival sources, in both chapters two and three, were not independently or mutually exhaustive during that time frame.

1.6 Literature Review

In this section, I review existing secondary literature about the contexts surrounding my research. The terms humanitarian and missionary are used interchangeably because not all nurses who joined the relief effort were necessarily missionary nurses. Some joined the effort, for example by joining the Near East Relief or the American Red Cross, based on humanitarian

grounds. Other nurses were part of existing missions, such as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions who had a large number of missions throughout Turkey. First, literature about missionary nurses from the US before, during and after the Armenian Genocide will be discussed, followed by an analysis of existing literature about Canada's response to the Armenian Genocide and concluding with a presentation of relevant nursing history literature.

1.6.1 Missionary Nurses from the United States of America before, during and after the Armenian Genocide

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was founded in 1810 in Massachusetts and its aim was to send missionaries abroad for religious motives and for opening schools and hospitals. In 1820, the first missionaries arrived in Smyrna in the Ottoman Empire and until the end of the 1910s, ABCFM established around 20 missions in Anatolia (modern Asia Minor) and the Balkans to serve local Christian populations namely Armenians and Greeks. By the start of the First World War, ABCFM had founded 450 schools, 19 hospitals and dispensaries and several printing presses throughout the region. Most ABCFM institutions closed during the First World War and in 1928, after the modern Turkish Republic was established, only eight schools, three hospitals and one printing press remained operating in Turkey.²⁴

In 1915, prominent US politicians and businessmen established the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (ACASR), to provide emergency aid to Greeks, Armenians,

²⁴ "American Board Archives," Digital Library for International Research, accessed December 6, 2016, <http://dlir.org/arit-american-board-archives.html>.

Syrians and other ethnic minority groups within the Ottoman Empire. The secretary of the ABCFM James L. Barton was assigned as the chairman of ACASR. ACASR organized extensive fundraising campaigns in the US and transferred millions of dollars to ABCFM missionaries which were located throughout the Ottoman Empire and were conducting humanitarian relief work during the war. In 1918, ACASR was renamed as American Committee for Relief in the Near East (ACRNE) and started sending humanitarian workers and supplies directly to the region.²⁵

ACRNE later was incorporated by a Charter in the US Congress in 1919 to become the Near East Relief (NER). NER organized massive fundraising throughout the US and sent humanitarian workers including health care personnel such as nurses and doctors, supplies, food and clothing to the affected regions. NER also cared for large populations of orphans who had survived the massacres and provided medical treatments and vocational training to them. ABCFM missionaries were aiding the NER and were involved in its day to day activities, including as administrators and field workers. In fact, most ABCFM properties were utilized by NER to facilitate relief efforts.²⁶

Several scholars have examined ABCFM missionaries' extensive humanitarian aid to Armenians including Yervant H. Kassouny, who in his book presents a critique of the Armenian

²⁵ "Records of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Near East Relief, 1917-1928," Digital Library for International Research, accessed December 6, 2016, <http://dlir.org/aba-official-records-1917-1928.html>.

²⁶ Ibid.

Genocide through testimonies published in the *Missionary Herald* during the years 1915-1918.²⁷ The *Missionary Herald* was the official publication of ABCFM that published missionary reports from many parts of the world where ABCFM was active. Kassouny's research concentrates on American missionary movements in Turkey from a socio-political lens, presenting the circumstances under which these missionaries operated and stressing on the importance of missionaries' attestations in confirming the facts around the Armenian Genocide. Kassouny's intentions were not to present North American nurses' roles and motivation from a nursing perspective, but rather, to examine the socio-political role of the missions.

Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill in her book *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* presents a history of the Armenian nurses in general and illustrates the roles of medical missionaries and missionary hospitals, the Near East Relief, and nursing and the American women's hospitals. According to Kaprielian-Churchill, the American medical missionaries initially were recruited to the Ottoman Empire to care for American missionary families as there was a high mortality rate due to pneumonia, measles, thrush and dysentery. These medical missionaries later established modern medical facilities in both rural and urban areas that assisted the missionaries in evangelizing the local populations, Muslims and Christians alike.²⁸ Her research is fundamental in understanding the history of Armenian nurses within the context of the Armenian Red Cross while stressing on the important roles of Armenian women

²⁷ Yervant Kassouny, *Knnagan Agnark Missionary Herald-i 1915-1918 tt. Hay Joghovourti Tseghasbanoutyan yev Veradz'nounti Masin Artsanakradz Vgayoutyunneroun* (Beirut: Design Kesdenian, 2012).

²⁸ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia Press, 2012).

pioneers; however, her focus does not highlight in much detail North American nurses' daily experiences, roles and social influences shaping their motivations. In this thesis, I add more personal accounts of these nurses and build on Kaprielian- Churchill's research, deriving from documents published in the *American Journal of Nursing*.

In addition, Kaprielian-Churchill presents the extensive work of the Near East Relief in building hospitals, mobile and stationary clinics, orphanages, and schools, while supporting around 20,000 adults in camps, 55,000 children in soup kitchens, 560,000 refugees with food, and 15,000 children attending schools. The NER recruited many locals (Armenians and others) to assist in the day to day activities of the organization, including doctors, teachers, nurses, dentists and pharmacists.²⁹

According to Peter Balakian, during the rise of the US in the global arena in the late 1800s and the early 1900s, the Armenian Question and the humanitarian relief work provided to Armenians secured an important chapter in the first move towards internationalism, when many prominent figures, intellectuals, politicians, diplomats, and religious leaders such as Clara Barton, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau came together to try to save the Armenians.³⁰ Balakian's research provides an important dimension to help understand the geo-political and social circumstances in the US and around the world that helped create America's vital role in saving some of the Armenian victims of the Turkish atrocities.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris: the Armenian Genocide and America's Response* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

In her book, Merrill Peterson notes that as the *New York Times* was reporting about the Armenian massacres, the public reacted unprecedentedly through the Near East Relief which was an organization rooted in Protestant missionary endeavors aiming to save the survivors of the first genocide of the twentieth century.³¹ Peterson's study is a reflection on the extensive newspaper coverage of the Armenian massacres during the Armenian Genocide, and provides an understanding about the public reaction to the massacres and the Near East Relief Foundation.

1.6.2 Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide

In his book Aram Adjemian examines Canada's response to the Armenian Genocide in detail. Using multiple archives of sources such as newspaper articles in *The Globe*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Halifax Herald*, the *Winnipeg Herald Tribune*, the *Montreal Gazette* and the *New York Times*, Adjemian presents in a chronological sequence what was published in these sources about the Armenian Genocide and Canada's response to the massacres. He begins his account by introducing the concept of Canadian imperialism and the Social Gospel movement and nineteenth century humanitarian aid for the Armenians, then moving to Canadian media coverage and fundraising campaigns before, during and after the Genocide, followed by the Canadian Protestant religious lobby for Armenia in 1920s, and concluding with the Canadian government's reaction to Armenia's post-war predicament and post 1920 Canadian support to Armenia.³²

³¹ Merrill D. Peterson, *"Starving Armenians": America and the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1930 and After* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

³² Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Quebec: Corridor Books, 2015).

Canadian citizens and government branches as well as businessmen and religious leaders were actively engaged in fundraising campaigns and had formed the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund Association which collaborated closely with the Near East Relief and sometimes worked independently to render financial and medical assistance as well as food and shelter in the forms of refugee camps and orphanages to the Armenian victims of the Turkish atrocities. Canadian Protestant lobbyists pondered forming a Canadian mandate on Armenia which never realized. These lobbyists were at times urging the Canadian government to exert political pressure on the British government to adopt political agendas in favor of Armenia.³³ Adjemian's research provides rich understanding to the circumstances surrounding Canada's involvement in humanitarian relief work during the Armenian Genocide. Adjemian stresses on the religious, political and financial aspects of the Canadian efforts and does not necessarily bring the nursing perspective into consideration.

Kaprielian-Churchill's book *Like Our Mountains: A History of Armenians in Canada* presents the history of thousands of Armenians who have settled in Canada as of the late nineteenth century, focuses specifically on the history of the social, religious, political, and cultural life of Canadian Armenians in Canada. This book is a thorough representation of the history of Armenian immigration to Canada³⁴ and does not discuss Canadian nurses' humanitarian work in the atrocity fields of the Armenian Genocide.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Isabel Kapriellian-Churchill, *Like Our Mountains: A History of Armenians in Canada* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

Karen Ashford's master's thesis *The Globe's Representation of the Armenian Genocide and Canada's Acknowledgement* discusses how Canadian media represented the victims during the Armenian Genocide and explores Canada's recognition of the Armenian Genocide in 2004, comparing and contrasting how the quality of *The Globe's* coverage changed at different points in time because of the changing economic and political environment of the relationship between Canada and Turkey on one end and Canada and Armenia on the other.³⁵ Ashford's thesis is related to contemporary media-related problems and shortcomings in carefully and subjectively choosing news coverage topics. This thesis presents a dimension in understanding how Canadian newspapers reported on news about the Armenian massacres.

1.6.3 Relevant Nursing History Literature

In this section, I present relevant literature by nurse historians in different times or settings that create a context within which my research on the North American nurses during the Armenian Genocide has been framed as well. It is worth noting that this discussion of relevant nursing history literature is not exhaustive. Christine Hallett describes the experiences encountered by nurses while containing injury and disease in hostile zones during the First World War. Hallett talks about experiences of nurses in Alexandria, Cairo, Gallipoli, Jerusalem, Salonika, Lemnos, and India. In Hallett's work, the emphasis is on American as well as British, Canadian and Australian nurses who possessed a coherent professional identity and confidence, and though they practiced in places far from home, in unusual terrains and extreme climates,

³⁵ Karen Ashford, "The Globe's Representation of the Armenian Genocide and Canada's Acknowledgment" (Master's thesis, University of Windsor, 2012).

they loved the travel adventure and adapted with relative ease. In Hallett's research, nursing was powerful and yet dangerous work, the daily life of nurses involved dealing with death, pain and despair. Nursing was universally admired, the image of the nurse was characterized as an iconic figure of the twentieth century, who in the middle of all the chaos and dirt, maintained her symbolic white dress, professional identity and integrity.³⁶ Similar themes are emphasized in Cynthia Toman's recent analysis of Canadian military nurses' experiences during the First World War.³⁷ Yet the circumstances under which these nurses operated and the experiences they lived may not be fully transferable to the unique circumstances under which nurses delivered their services in the atrocity fields of the Armenian Genocide.

On the other hand, Inger-Marie Okkenhaug describes the experiences of a Norwegian nurse who had travelled to Eastern Turkey in 1905 and was delivering aid and nursing services to the victims of the Turkish atrocities.³⁸ Okkenhaug argues that transnationalism that linked nurses and organizations across the borders shaped early twentieth century humanitarian work. Okkenhaug's analysis provides a framework to better understand the social influences, such as the transnational links shaping the motivations and experiences of American missionary nurses

³⁶ Christine E. Hallett, *Containing trauma: Nursing Work in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

³⁷ Cynthia Toman, *Sisters of the Great War: The Nurses of the Canadian Army Medical Corps* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016).

³⁸ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915," in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al. (Gimlemeon: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

during the Armenian Genocide. Okkenhaug's discussions are part of an anthology where editors Ellen Fleischmann, Sonya Grypma, Michael Marten, and Inger-Marie Okkenhaug focus on the transnational approaches of humanitarian work by missionary nurses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in different impoverished parts of the world.³⁹

The notion of transnational connections between countries is different from internationalism. Transnationalism refers to the cooperation of organizations or individuals from different countries beyond their political and geographical borders. This notion of transnational perspective informs my examination of the transnational context in which the North American relief work and aid to Armenians took place, both in terms of work and fundraising campaigns, and of which nurses and other health care workers were an integral part, both in the work they did and how their reports figured in fundraising campaigns for financial support of relief work.

Finally, Barbra Mann Wall's research on Catholic missionary nurses' roles in Africa following the Second World War explores the religious, medical, gender related, racial and political dimensions of the transnational efforts Catholic missions engaged in, not only to convert Africans to Christianity but by actively participating in health care delivery they became part of the relief and social justice efforts in many countries in the continent and made the establishment of modern medicine including hospitals, clinics and nursing schools possible. Mann Wall's book

³⁹ Ellen Fleischmann et al., eds., *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* (Gimlemoen: Portal Books, 2013).

is about the importance of transnational approaches in relief efforts and health care delivery, and helps in understanding the concept of transnationalism in medicine.⁴⁰

1.7 Outlines of the thesis

This thesis consists of four chapters. While chapter one serves as an introduction to present a background, the problem statement, research questions and a literature review introducing the perspectives that are built upon in this thesis, chapters two and three constitute the main body of the thesis' findings. Chapters two and three have been developed as two separate manuscripts and will be submitted for publication. As a result of this organization you may find some overlap between the two chapters in terms of the discussion of methodology and general background information. Chapter four concludes the thesis by offering a summary, presenting the limitations, discussing contributions to current knowledge, and providing recommendations for further research.

Chapter two focuses mainly on US nurses involved in relief work during the Armenian Genocide, using the *American Journal of Nursing* as the main source of evidence for this thesis chapter. A detailed search of relevant publications in this journal has been conducted for the years between 1915 to 1923. This chapter discusses further the search methodology used to study these AJN archives. Subsequently, the chapter presents the synthesis of the analysis of this literature, examining the work of the humanitarian and missionary nurses from the US who witnessed the Armenian Genocide and rendered help to its victims and survivors as reported in

⁴⁰ Barbra Mann Wall, *Into Africa: A Transnational History of Catholic Medical Missions and Social Change* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2015).

the AJN. This chapter also discusses the roles of these nurses and the social influences shaping their motivations in pursuing their relief work.

Chapter three presents the roles and experiences as well as social influences shaping the motivations of Canadian humanitarian and missionary nurses during the Armenian Genocide as represented in the *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* between the years 1915 to 1923. Chapter three further discusses the reasons behind the fact that very little evidence was found in the *Canadian Nurse*. This chapter concludes by comparing the Canadian nurses' roles, experiences and social influences shaping their motivations during the Armenian Genocide to those of their US counterparts during the Armenian Genocide and in different war zones, and to those of Canadian nurses in different war zones of the First World War. The final chapter of this thesis presents the main findings, conclusions, limitations, contributions to existing knowledge, and future recommendations.

Chapter 2: Nursing Beyond Borders: The Armenian Genocide and United States of American Relief Work

2.1 Introduction

...the people were dying of starvation, dysentery, and typhus, -200 a day, requiring 20 carts to carry out the dead. Part of the town had been blown up by the Turks when they left last December. The streets swarmed with refugees, over 60,000 of them, and I never imagined such desolation and misery, -living skeletons walking or crawling on the filthy, muddy cobblestones, many of them blind with hunger...⁴¹

These are the words of Blanche Knox, who was an American Red Cross nurse from Philadelphia serving in Alexandropol, Armenia in 1919, reporting on her experiences and the continuing tragedy of Armenians during the Armenian Genocide which was systematically being carried out since 1915. The Armenian Genocide extended to 1923 and resulted in the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians and the deportation of almost the entire Armenian population of Turkey into neighboring countries and regions.

The human tragedy resulting from the Armenian Genocide was extensive and hundreds of thousands of deportees and refugees were either internally displaced in Turkey or marched through brutal conditions into neighboring countries seeking shelter and aid. International relief organizations provided extensive aid to the victims and sufferers of these atrocities, among them the American Red Cross and later the Near East Relief Foundation. American nurses were at the front line among doctors and other relief workers, both during and in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.

⁴¹ Clara D. Noyes, "The Red Cross," *the American Journal of Nursing* 19, no. 12 (1919): 947-51. doi:10.2307/3405307.

There is extensive literature on the Armenian Genocide, and much of these concentrate on the relief work by missionaries from North America and Europe. Yet, the US nurses' participation in relief work during the Armenian Genocide from a nursing perspective has not yet been fully studied. For instance, Yervant Kassouny presents extensive material published in the *Missionary Herald* between 1915-1918 that serve as testimonies of the Armenian Genocide; however, despite the fact that his critique incorporates all missionary workers including nurses, his analysis offers a more politically oriented perspective concentrating on the reality of the Armenian Genocide.⁴² Another valuable study by Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill focuses on Armenian nurses in the Ottoman Empire and the surrounding region between 1900-1930. She examines medical missionaries in the region, including the Near East Relief and the American hospitals, yet Kaprielian-Churchill studies the contributions of Armenian women pioneers in medicine within the framework of the Armenian Red Cross.⁴³

Similarly, there is substantial research about US nurses' involvement in different war fronts during the First World War, for example, Christine Hallett describes the experiences of US, Canadian, British and Australian nurses in different war zones of the First World War.⁴⁴ Yet the circumstances under which these nurses operated and the experiences they lived may not be fully transferable to the unique circumstances under which the US nurses delivered their services

⁴² Yervant Kassouny, *Knnagan Agnark Missionary Herald-i 1915-1918 tt. Hay Joghovourti Tseghasbanoutyan yev Veradznouni Masin Artsanakradz Vgayoutyunneroun* (Beirut: Design Kesdenian, 2012).

⁴³ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia: 2012).

⁴⁴ Christine E. Hallett, *Containing Trauma: Nursing Work in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

in the atrocity fields of the Armenian Genocide. The intensity of the human tragedy of the Armenian Genocide, also called the Armenian Holocaust, is of unimaginable proportion and the geopolitical circumstances under which relief nurses and organizations operated in very hostile fields and without institutional and military back up support is substantially different from nursing in the First World War war zones.

On the other hand, Inger Marie Okkenhaug describes the experiences of a Norwegian nurse who had travelled to Eastern Turkey in 1905 and was delivering aid and nursing services to the victims of the Turkish atrocities.⁴⁵ Okkenhaug's analysis complements David Wattenpaugh's arguments about the nature of humanitarianism in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries and the concept of moral citizenship further provide a framework to understand the motivations and experiences of US nurses during and in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.⁴⁶ I will elaborate on these in the discussion section at the end of this chapter.

In this chapter, US nurses' experiences provide vivid testimonies not only of the extent of human misery and overwhelming tragedy of the victims and sufferers due to the Armenian Genocide, but they also illustrate the real and powerful experiences of humanitarian relief workers in the fields of Turkish atrocities. Their attestations shed light on the scale of the atrocities and the extent of the hard work nurses and relief workers had to perform on a daily basis to keep themselves and the hundreds of thousands of Armenian orphans and survivors not

⁴⁵ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915," in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism*, ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al. (Latvia: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

⁴⁶ Keith David Wattenpaugh, "The League of Nations; Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920-1927," *The American Historical Review*, 115 no. 5 (2010): 1315-1339, doi.10.1086/ahr.115.5.1315.

only safe, but also saved from starvation, disease and many other hardships. Their experiences highlight their motivations, strength and devotion in extreme circumstances and adverse conditions. This chapter begins with a methodology section, a background on American Red Cross and Near East Relief nurses and hospitals in Ottoman Turkey and a brief introduction to the Armenian Genocide, followed by an analysis of US nurses' experiences and attestations of the events between 1915 to 1923 as presented in the *American Journal of Nursing*. The chapter also examines their endurance in the face of the devastation as described in the journal. The chapter concludes with discussions and recommendations for future research.

2.2 Methodology

This chapter uses a social history framework to describe the past experiences of ordinary nurses. By describing the past events through the experiences of individual nurses and events that helped shape the direction of the nursing profession, I tend to answer my research questions around the identities and experiences of North American humanitarian nurses that travelled to areas impacted by genocide in Ottoman Turkey, their day to day activities, roles and encounters in the fields of violence and massacres, and the motivations behind their devotion to humanitarianism and to the nursing profession. The goal of this chapter is to understand the experiences, roles and motivations of North American humanitarian nurses and link them to broader social, cultural and political events.

For this project, the past volumes of the *American Journal of Nursing* between 1915 to 1923 were studied. This time period marks the years when genocide was perpetrated by the Turkish government towards its Armenian population. I utilized the JSTOR digital library which contains digitized issues of the journal. A thorough search was conducted and a total of 58 relevant documents were extracted in the form of long and short articles and brief

announcements and news. All material related to the nurses' involvement and humanitarian work for the relief of Armenians in different geographical areas in Turkey, Armenia and the surrounding region were considered relevant and included as source material in this study. Furthermore, a limited number of related articles around the humanitarian work of nurses for the relief of Greeks and Turks were included as these were deemed essential contributions to better understand the overall circumstances surrounding the humanitarian missions and relief work of the nurses.

The *American Journal of Nursing* was established in 1900 and since then has been a regularly published, peer-reviewed journal in the US. Until the mid-twentieth century it was the leading nursing journal in the US and is still the oldest nursing journal in publication. The first editor of the journal was Sophia Palmer, followed by Mary Roberts in 1921. In the years between 1915 to 1923, the journal had sections titled "narratives from war zones", "Red Cross nursing", "foreign department", "events of the day", "public health nursing", in addition to the "nursing news and announcements", all of which contained relevant information about North American humanitarian relief workers and nurses during the Armenian Genocide.

2.3 Nurses of the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief in Ottoman Turkey and the Armenian Genocide

All of the nurses whose experiences and motivations are presented in this chapter were part of the American Red Cross or the Near East Relief. The American Red Cross established in 1881 was the first Red Cross organization to respond to the Armenian massacres and was the

first organization to provide large scale aid to the Armenian victims.⁴⁷ In 1919 the Near East Relief Foundation was incorporated by a Charter of the US Congress which was signed by the US President Woodrow Wilson. The American Red Cross contributed both financially and with manpower to the Near East Relief, which soon after its formation operated hundreds of hospitals, clinics, orphanages and refugee camps across Turkey and the region.⁴⁸

US medical missionaries were present in Turkey starting from the first half of the nineteenth century and were initially recruited to tackle the problem of high mortality rates among missionary families. These missionaries were functioning under the umbrella of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Nonetheless, medical facilities in the Ottoman Empire provided opportunities for evangelization. US doctors established medical clinics and hospitals in many areas of the Empire including urban and rural regions and were soon serving local Muslim, Jewish and Christian populations alike, including Armenians, Greeks, Syrians, Nestorians, Jews, Turks and Kurds.⁴⁹

Over the next decades, the US missionary hospitals spread and in the early twentieth century there were major medical mission centers and hospitals in many regions and cities where Armenians lived such as Aintab, Mezireh/Kharpert, Van, Marsovan, Sivas/Sepastia and Marash. Missionary hospitals served all mankind regardless of ethnicity, religion, or socio-economic

⁴⁷ “The Armenian Genocide and the International Red Cross,” Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, last modified September 23, 2009, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/23.09.2009.php>.

⁴⁸ “The Story of the Near East Relief,” Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, accessed July 19, 2016, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/online_exhibition_10.php.

⁴⁹ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill. *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia: 2012).

status. In fact, those who could afford to pay were charged fees for medical services and care, and those who were from a disadvantaged social status received their services free or at reduced rates. North American, European, as well as local doctors, nurses, pharmacists and workers were part of the missionary hospital teams operating in Turkey. These hospitals bridged traditional Christian values to modern secular and scientific health services and were modelled after the US hospitals in the US in that in 1914 they held the Eastern Turkey Medical Missionary Conference where US and local, including Armenian doctors from Van, Kharpert, Sivas, Dikranagert and other regions presented their own research about typhus, breast tumors, immunity, low back pain, native remedies, among other topics. In addition, and concurrent to the medical research, some presentations focused on the management of nursing students, home nursing, and nursing education.⁵⁰

When the First World War erupted and the Armenian Genocide began to be implemented systematically, most US Missionary Hospitals were used to care for the wounded Turkish soldiers and the missionary doctors and health care workers were forced to serve in Turkish military hospitals.⁵¹ When the Young Turks from the Committee of Union and Progress took the state by a coup, they started to officially blame and charge the Armenian population of rebellion and soon started to destroy the Armenian minority. In April 1915, the Turkish government rounded up and killed most Armenian intellectual and religious leaders, and in May 1915 the government started its plan of deporting and exterminating the entire Armenian population of

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Turkey by confiscating all Armenian properties, organizing atrocities and death marches into the Syrian desert and establishing harrowing concentration camps. At the end of the First World War, around 1.5 million Armenians were killed.⁵² This massive devastation triggered international relief efforts seeking to help the victims of the Genocide and the North American nurses' roles in this context is presented in this chapter.

In the following sections, I examine the experiences of the US nurses during the Armenian Genocide between the years 1915 to 1923, derived from the *American Journal of Nursing*. The experiences and attestations of these nurses are grouped thematically and not necessarily in chronological order.

2.4 Witnessing Death, Destitution and Despair

One of the most powerful descriptions about the Armenian massacres comes from the “Narratives from the War” section of the December 1915 issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*, where the readers can readily understand the intensity of and the motivations behind the atrocities committed against the Armenian population of Turkey. It also powerfully conveys how the journal was a medium among others to spread news of the massacre and of the death, destitution and despair US nurses working in the region were witnessing as the Armenian Genocide was unfolding. The section's editor states:

It is stated that the Armenian massacres are no mere ebullition of Turk and Kurd fanaticism but have been administratively carried out in the most elaborate way. In the massacres nineteen years ago, there were 50,000 Armenian victims. Since last May, more

⁵² “Chronology,” Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/chronology.php>.

than 800,000 have perished. The intention seems to be to exterminate the race. They are seldom armed and proverbially unwarlike...⁵³ This brief paragraph accurately describes the historical facts unfolding at the time, and the numbers of Armenian victims resonate well with existing accounts by genocide scholars.⁵⁴ The fact that these reports appeared in the journal is noteworthy, in that it conveys how the presence and participation of US nurses in relief work was part of the larger relief efforts and an essential component of the US state operation and response to the Armenian Genocide. Moreover, the report gives a clear statement of what historian Raphael Lemkin later defined as one of the characteristics of what constituted as genocide: “the intention seems to be to exterminate the race,” a legal term which was created several decades after these massacres.⁵⁵

A few months later, in a 1916 issue, the AJN reports that

The Turkish government has informed the State Department at Washington that the American Red Cross will not be permitted to send surgeons and nurses to the aid of the Armenians of the Turkish Empire. The number of this unfortunate people thus far massacred by Turkish soldiers, or sold into harems, is estimated at over 850,000.⁵⁶

The report relates the Turkish government’s decision on obstructing help to destitute Armenians which could be interpreted as a reflection of the genocidal intent of the regime, and through this specific measure, the government was imposing sanctions against a major news

⁵³ "Narratives from the War," *The American Journal of Nursing* 16, no. 3 (1915): 218-19, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3406335>.

⁵⁴ Historians such as Thomas De Waal, Laure Marchard, Guillaume Perrier, Taner Akcam and the International Association of Genocide Scholars estimate that the number of Armenians massacred during the Armenian Genocide stands around 1,5 million.

⁵⁵ William A. Schabas, “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: Paris, 9 December 1948,” Audiovisual Library of International Law, accessed June 10, 2017, <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html>.

⁵⁶ "Narratives from the War," *The American Journal of Nursing* 16, no. 4 (1916): 329-30, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3406003>.

source to cover its crimes and prevent it from spreading throughout the Western World. The US nurses who were present in Turkey as early as the nineteenth century, used to routinely report back to their central organization in the US which had close ties to US newspapers and the State Department at Washington. Likely, the AJN followed the news on the US nurses and drew from these reports to bring news about the nurses' work and the devastation they witnessed to their constituency of US nurses in the US. By the time these brief reports appeared in the journal, the Young Turks' government had imposed tight control on outgoing and incoming foreign media reports. It is not clear how much of the letters and reports sent from US missionaries and relief nurses and workers were allowed to pass the strict sanctions and reach the central organizations in the US.⁵⁷ Another powerful yet very disturbing genocidal tactic used by the Turkish government were the selling of Armenians to harems. In 1920, then US Ambassador to Turkey and Vice-Chairman of Near East Relief, Henry Morgenthau described the situation in a letter to US citizens which was published in *The Independent* as "250,000 Christian Armenian women enslaved in Turkish harems call to the people of America for liberation! 100,000 women already rescued by Near East Relief agents from harems will perish unless support from America is continued..."⁵⁸

We also find rare accounts of the actual work US nurses did in the region to counter destitution and despair. The "Nursing News and Announcement" section of the September 1919

⁵⁷ Yervant Kassouny, *Knnagan Agnark Missionary Herald-i 1915-1918 tt. Hay Joghovourti Tseghasbanoutyan yev Veradznounti Masin Artsanakradz Vgayoutyunneroun* (Beirut: Design Kesdenian, 2012), 9-11.

⁵⁸ Henry Morgenthau, "Shall Armenia Perish," Armenian National Institute, accessed March 12, 2017, <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/2-28-20-text.html>.

issue of the journal briefly reports about two nurses: “Florence Sternley, the well-known authority on infant feeding, and Amy Ames Bliss, at one time superintendent of the Niagara Falls Hospital, are stationed with the Smith College Unit of the American Red Cross, at Harpoot, Turkey, where they are caring for from 7,000 to 10,000 Armenian orphans.”⁵⁹ Miss Bliss had started working overseas with the Near East Relief in February 1919 and was appointed to Harpoot to do hospital work for above a year and returned to the US in June 1920, while Florence Sternley or Stively was a nurse at the House of the Good Shepherd in Syracuse, New York.⁶⁰

Many nurses from the US travelled overseas to Turkey with the Near East Commission, and they were appointed to various missions in different locations. A snapshot report in April 1921 in the journal reveals how Miss Noyes, the director of nursing at the American Red Cross, had reduced the number of nurses working with the Near East Commission and counted the number of American Red Cross nurses remaining with the Near East Relief at 28.⁶¹ It should be mentioned that these are the number of American Red Cross nurses remaining with the larger Near East Relief organization⁶², which included US as well as Canadian, Australian and other

⁵⁹ "Nursing News and Announcements," *The American Journal of Nursing* 20, no. 2 (1919): 157-74, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3405606>.

⁶⁰ “Near East Relief Museum online memorial,” The Near East Relief Digital Museum, accessed February 18, 2017, <http://neareastmuseum.com/memorials/>.

⁶¹ "Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 21, no. 7 (1921): 467-70, doi:10.2307/3406862.

⁶² George L. Richards, “The Medical Work of the Near East Relief; A Review of its Accomplishments in Asia Minor and the Caucasus during 1919-20,” The Internet Archive, 1923, https://archive.org/details/ldpd_11045814_000

nurses and relief workers, who were part of the Relief Commission and were working in various regions across Turkey and the Near East.⁶³

The large scale destitution is yet described in another article published in December 1919. Here, the desperate situation is noted by C.V. Vickrey, the executive secretary of the Near East Relief, in a cablegram sent to the Near East Relief headquarters:

...million Christian refugees and other Armenians have reached state of destitution that beggars all description. Most of able bodied men have already perished fighting for Allied cause. Remnant chiefly women and children are surrounded by hostile Turks, Kurds and Tartars and face almost certain extermination this winter unless help on a large scale comes from America. These people universally recognized in normal times as the most thrifty, industrious and prosperous people of Western Asia have now for four years exiled or fugitive from their ancestral homes. Their last vestige of negotiable property has been sacrificed for food and protection. Repatriation this year is utterly impossible. Turks still hold their homes. Attempted return means death. Thousands of women and children have but a single garment to cover their nakedness and to protect them from the bitterly cold winter on the high plateau around Mount Ararat. Empty flour sacks bearing names of well known American firms are improvised as clothing for children. Rags are used as shoes. All flour and food staples now come through Armenian relief but total supply in prospect will last only few weeks at most. Hundreds of tons of cast off clothing from America could be used immediately. 30,000 of foodstuffs in addition to present supply must be provided or this winter will bring the greatest harvest of death from famine that has yet been known by this martyr nation.⁶⁴

As we understand through what appears to be published as a report and possibly for fundraising, these lines describe an important piece in the history of the Near East Relief for Armenians as it pertains to the number of refugees and victims mainly composed of women and children as men had already perished, their destitution, and the large scale of donations of food and clothing needed to provide those with the necessities for survival. As mentioned in chapter

⁶³ Vicken Babkenian and Peter Stanley, *Armenia, Australia and The Great War* (Sydney: New South Publishing, 2016).

⁶⁴ "Foreign Department," *The American Journal of Nursing* 20, no. 3 (1919): 230-31, doi:10.2307/3405123.

one, the Near East Relief organized fundraising campaigns in the US to the benefit of the Armenian refugees and orphans in the Near East. This cablegram is an indirect piece of evidence of the genocidal intent through using famine as a tactic to accomplish the goal of exterminating a particular race. Tactics used during the Armenian Genocide included death marches, hunger and thirst, concentration camps, systematic rape of women, torture and mutilation, abduction of children and forced conversions to Islam.⁶⁵

In August 1921, Helen Teal, a public health registered nurse from Ohio, reflected on her experiences in Turkey and Syria in a detailed article published in the journal. Teal presents the circumstances from the moment she decided to join the Armenian and Syrian Relief Commission, to her temporary presence in Constantinople, and later her extensive public health related work in Aleppo, which not long prior had been captured from the Turks and was under British rule. Teal served in the British Army barracks and at that time the Armenian and Syrian Christians were just returning to their deserted and destroyed homes after months of hiding in caves and the desert. Teal describes the different diseases treated at the hospital in Aleppo, namely malaria, conjunctivitis, and trachoma, but also “Aleppo button disease” or cutaneous leishmaniasis, tuberculosis, pediculosis, ascariasis, favus and Vincent’s Angina. Teal also talks about her encounter with a girl child,

half clad, half starved, frightfully dirty and only apparently half alive... her age was only to be guessed at, for undernourishment made her small... probably at the age of five, [she] had seen her father killed for refusing to join the Turkish Army; her mother and aunt were drowned before her young eyes. She had escaped and hidden herself in woods and fields and caves for four years... she is no exception...there are whole orphanages of

⁶⁵ Howard Ball, *Genocide: A reference handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011).

these children out there now... I'm very glad to say that through Near East Relief, aid is still going to these, the victims of German greed, and age-old Christian indifference.⁶⁶

Teal's comment of "German greed" must be understood in the context of the First World War, during which, Turks had formed an alliance with Germany and were fighting the Allied powers mainly France, Britain and Russia. High-ranking German soldiers and officials had close ties with Turkey and were aware and indifferent of the Turkish atrocities against Armenians. This report by Teal describes Germany's indirect involvement in the Armenian Genocide, and the Armenian Genocide resolution adopted by the German Bundestag a century later in 2016, is an acknowledgment of Germany's indirect responsibility.⁶⁷ The orphanages described by Teal in this report are also reported by Kaprielian and were part of the extensive network of refugee camps and orphanages established and maintained by the Near East Relief.⁶⁸

In July 1922, Elizabeth Knowlten reported that:

The largest children's hospital that exists today...is not in New York or London...it stands in little war-torn country of Armenia. ...The American organization is supporting over a 100,000 youngsters, who without it would die of starvation... 40 buildings accommodating 6000 care for the child victims of trachoma.

This description by Knowlten about the largest children's hospital could be interpreted literally. As the numbers of hunger and disease driven orphan children were growing by the thousands as a direct consequence of the Genocide, the North American nurses were finding

⁶⁶ Helen Teal, "Public Health Nursing in the Near East," *The American Journal of Nursing* 21, no. 11 (1921): 788-93, doi:10.2307/3407401.

⁶⁷ Alison Smale and Melissa Eddy, "German Parliament Recognizes Armenian Genocide, Angering Turkey," *The New York Times*. June 2, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/03/world/europe/armenian-genocide-germany-turkey.html>.

⁶⁸ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia: 2012).

themselves in the middle of extremely difficult circumstances where in instances these nurses had to literally care for overwhelmingly large numbers of children in different Near East Relief missions. Infectious diseases were a rampant problem in the large refugee camps with thousands of children in close proximity to each other under the most minimal of circumstances. Also, the massive scale of the operation rendered enormous challenges. For example, there was an outbreak of trachoma among the hundreds of thousands of refugees living in dire conditions after being marched out of Turkey into Alexandropol which was a huge “orphan city” accommodating those refugees. Being a former Russian military base, the Alexandropol complex included 170 buildings including 40 two-story barracks that were converted to dormitories each of which held between 250 to 1000 Armenian orphans. The remaining buildings were transformed to bathhouses, bakeries, hospitals, schools and laundries.⁶⁹ Furthermore, in addition to their work in the hospital, US nurses helped run a nursing school and a women’s industrial shop which employed refugees: “The women threw themselves on their knees, clutched at my skirts, kissed my hands, and with tears rolling down their cheeks, begged for work,” Knowlten noted. Finally, missionaries also set a central bath, a bakery, and a central dining room which fed a thousand children at a time.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ “Alexandropol: Making the Orphan City,” Near East Foundation Online Museum, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://neareastmuseum.com/2015/07/10/alexandropol-making-the-orphan-city/>.

⁷⁰ "Foreign Department," *The American Journal of Nursing* 22, no. 10 (1922): 829-31, doi:10.2307/3406622.

2.5 Experiencing Personal Loss, Narrow Escapes and Devotion

While the genocidal years and their aftermath had unsurprisingly horrific impacts on Armenians, through the *American Journal of Nursing* archives it becomes evident that nurses in relief missions throughout the affected region also faced tremendous challenges and experienced personal losses and illnesses. Sometimes they were fortunate enough for narrowly escaping death, and yet they remained devoted to their humanitarian mission. The journal reports convey that some of the influences shaping their motivation to stay were driven by exercising professionalism and through adhering to their Christian values of compassion and helping those in need of their services. The “Nursing News and Announcements” section of the journal has numerous examples of brief descriptions of experiences of US doctors and nurses in the fields of genocide that convey both the challenges nurses experienced and the commitment that drove them to stay. For instance, the October 1915 issue described that the American Congregational Hospital in Van, Asiatic Turkey shut its doors, as its superintendent physician Clarence Ussher fell ill and was transferred to Tiflis and that his wife, Mrs. Ussher, contracted typhoid while helping in hospital work and died.⁷¹

The December 1915 issue characterized Mrs. Leon Sewny formerly Lillian Cole, a graduate of Montclair’s The Mountainside Hospital (1894) in New Jersey, had become a refugee in Turkey after she had lost her husband from typhus. She could escape because she was a US citizen, but her whereabouts were unknown at the time of the report. This brief paragraph on Sewny reported in the journal, describes the difficult circumstances this US nurse encountered in

⁷¹ “Nursing News and Announcements,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 16, no. 1 (1915): 57-75, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3406163>.

the face of illness of her immediate family, her husband, who had an Armenian name: Leon Sewny and had encountered typhus. The report continues saying that “she was allowed to escape because she was an American, but she would not desert her husband...” implying that she had the privilege to escape atrocities because she was a US citizen, but her Armenian husband did not share the same privilege. She lost her husband and then her location was unknown for a certain time-period.⁷²

There are numerous other examples of nurses contracting typhoid while serving in Turkey such as Elizabeth Bury, a graduate of the Memorial Hospital in Rhode Island who became seriously ill of typhus fever in Harpoot.⁷³ Typhoid was a serious illness of the First World War. In fact, many suffered the disease due to poor sanitation and contamination of food and water. Furthermore, evidence exists that typhoid was systematically introduced to the Armenian populations of different regions during the genocide by orders from the Chief Sanitation Officer of the Ottoman government to inoculate the Armenians with blood from typhoid patients without inactivating the bacteria.⁷⁴ There are reports that Turkish doctors were directly involved in the massacres, including poisoning children and adults alike and issuing false certificates of death. The centrally organized crime and the genocidal intent is also evident from the case of Dr. Tevfik Rushdu who was the Inspector General of Health Services in Turkey

⁷² "Nursing News and Announcements," *The American Journal of Nursing* 16, no. 3 (1915): 238-78, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3406342>.

⁷³ "Nursing News and Announcements," *The American Journal of Nursing* 22, no. 6 (1922): 468-95, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/3407734>.

⁷⁴ Jeremy Hugh Baron, "Genocidal Doctors," *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 92, no. 11 (1999): 590-593.

and was the brother-in-law of Nazim Bey, who was a famous Turkish politician and doctor and played a vital role in implementing the Armenian Genocide and expulsing the Greek population from Anatolia, Turkey. He later became the foreign secretary of Turkey from 1925 to 1938. Dr Rushdu was responsible for organizing the disposal of Armenian corpses with lime over a period of six months.⁷⁵

In September 1919, the director of nursing at the American Red Cross, Clara Noyes, published the letter from aforementioned American Red Cross nurse, Blanche Knox, who was serving in Armenia with the Commission to Armenia and Siberia, who I quoted in part at the opening of the chapter. Beyond the quote already stated, Knox reported that:

...All of those [not already blind with hunger], who could see went with their eyes glued to the ground hoping to find a morsel of food; so intent were they, even the little children, that they never noticed us. I saw boys of five grubbing in the grass of the cemetery for roots to eat. They were eating dog meat in many of the shelter houses. On Good Friday we went to Igdir, a forlorn village, indeed, where they have been digging up the dead to eat. I saw the opened graves and a few of the bones left in each grave, and some of the clothes which had partly covered the dead-in one a garter of twisted rags. At Erivan, just a week to-day, one of your nurses, Edith Winchester, died of typhus, and was buried in the Armenian cemetery among the flowering locusts. with majestic snow-crowned Mount Ararat looking down on the new grave of an American Red Cross nurse who gave her life for the Armenians.⁷⁶

In her description of her experiences in Armenia, Knox beautifully pays tribute to commemorate one of her colleagues who had lost her life. Nurses gave their lives in the midst of this human tragedy and amidst the hunger and disease stricken Armenians, and were buried side by side the Armenian victims clearly resembling an equal destiny of humanity while

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Clara D. Noyes, "The Red Cross," *The American Journal of Nursing* 19, no. 12 (1919): 947-51, doi:10.2307/3405307.

metaphorically associating her martyrdom to the Biblical Mount Ararat, which is considered a biblical mountain, as Christians believe this is the resting place of Noah's Ark after the great flood.

Nurses often narrowly escaped from many dangerous situations and death. For instance, in April 1920, the journal published another report related to the experiences of Blanche Knox:

Perched high on a two-wheeled cart, with six Armenian babies and small children, Blanche Knox of Philadelphia, a Red Cross nurse now in service with the Near East Commissions writes of the evacuation of Igdirdir by the Armenians: The Kurds attacked first on September 6, but were driven back by the Armenians. Six days later the inhabitants of Igdirdir, and all the surrounding villages fled. Not thinking that I too, would be joining the long procession the next morning, I watched them streaming out on the Erivan Road during the night. For three weeks we had been surrounded by Kurds on three sides, and on the fourth by none too friendly villagers. Twice I had loaded a truck with sick children to take them to safety before we had to flee, but the Armenian soldiers would not let us leave the town. "If you give news to the enemy of the weakness of our position, they will attack at once," they told us. "You must wait twenty-four hours until cannon and reinforcements come." Then they begged us to delay forty-eight hours, and the third time refused to let us take the orphans out. We finally fled to Etchmiadzen, where I have since been on duty in the hospital. The work in the Caucasus is now under U. S. military control.⁷⁷

It seems Knox had only nearly missed death as had the children she had been able to take with her. Such devotion to her beliefs highlights Knox's and other North American nurses' contributions and motivations to selflessly help the Armenian orphaned children during the Armenian Genocide, many of whom were substantially involved in saving the lives of thousands of Armenians.

⁷⁷ "The Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 20, no. 7 (1920): 558-62, doi:10.2307/3406928.

2.6 Accomplishments Rendering Professional Satisfaction

In addition to contributing to the humanitarian relief work in Turkey during and in the aftermath of the genocidal years on a very large scale, the US nurses employed in the relief work experienced many accomplishments that added to their professional satisfaction in that they had essential roles in establishing numerous hospitals to address the multiple needs of the large refugee populations. The hospitals also served as a source of training and employment for local women and, likely, for the older youth. One such instance is described in the July 1921 issue of the journal: Miss McQuaide together with Dr. Graves (a woman physician) had just established six Child Welfare stations in the poorer districts of Constantinople. They were providing locals with proper medical examination advice, distributing simple food items and clothing to mothers, and following patients to their homes. Meanwhile, they also were recruiting and training local Armenian and Greek women to act as assistants.⁷⁸

On another front, Miss Emma Woods⁷⁹ was the chief nurse at the Near East Relief and at the same time directing a large hospital in Constantinople for children suffering from tuberculosis, according to the “Department of Red Cross Nursing” in the AJN. The hospital was well supplied and maintained and had modern methods of treatment according to the journal report. It also maintained a local training school to recruit and retain local young women as

⁷⁸ “Department of Red Cross Nursing,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 21, no. 10 (1921): 717-20, doi:10.2307/3407037.

⁷⁹ Emma Woods was a Canadian nurse working for the Near East Relief. She is presented in this chapter because the *American Journal of Nursing* had reported about her work. More is presented and discussed about Emma Woods in chapter three within the context of Canadian nurses’ involvement during the Armenian Genocide as presented by *The Globe*.

assistants. Still in Constantinople, a trachoma hospital was also being developed. In addition, the report noted how Mrs. Rothrock had turned an old Turkish Harem into a modern American Hospital in which she also had established a school of nursing. This latter institution was destined to play an important role not only as a local hospital of 80 beds, but also as an educational center for local women who wished to prepare for nursing. The hospital had a strong organizing committee and means of funding. It was collaboratively maintained by the American College for Women, the Robert College for Men, the American Board of Missions, the American Navy, the American Red Cross, the Standard Oil Company and various other businesses.⁸⁰

In 1921, Miss Gardner was assigned by the American Red Cross to conduct a survey of Red Cross missions in Europe. In September the same year, she was in Constantinople reporting on the status of the American Hospital there. The hospital had an 80 bed capacity and had medical and surgical wards, as well as a small maternity section. The nursing school had seven students: five Armenian and two Greek, and because of this low number of pupils, the hospital had to also recruit Russian “so-called trained nurses.” Efforts were being made to advertise to recruit more pupils from the Balkans and from Armenia. Miss Gardner reported that although none of the patients paid any money for the services and treatments they received, the American Hospital in Constantinople was uniquely self-supporting because of the strong committee members and donated funds collaboratively maintaining it. She concluded her report by saying

⁸⁰ "Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 21, no. 10 (1921): 717-20, doi:10.2307/3407037.

there were good systems in place, an American controlled education system, a good director and a well-maintained building.⁸¹

The hospitals accommodated a very diverse ethnic population of patients as well as trainees. In August 1922, Clara Noyes, the director of the American Red Cross reported about the School of Nursing in Constantinople founded by Mrs. Anna Rothrock as having the “most heterogenous assemblages of pupil nurses ever gathered together: -Moslem and Christian,- among them Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians and Russians.” The American Red Cross nurses directed the school, including super-intendant of the hospital and director of the school Lyda M. Anderson, assistant super-intendant Mary E. Bethel, as well as theoretical and practical instructor Ruth Bridge, surgical department supervisor Edith Clendenning, floor supervisor Adah Klein Butts, dietitian Bertha Whipple, and director of the out-patient-department and public health instructor Elizabeth Marshall. Clearly, Noyes may have wanted to emphasize how the hospitals in Constantinople were up to standards similar to the ones in the nurses’ home country. She reported how staff members of the faculty of the American College for Women taught the sciences: chemistry, bacteriology, anatomy and physiology. In addition, it was noted that the school had around 20 students with different nationalities who “understand English but imperfectly,” which posed tremendous challenges on the curriculum and instructors, as the latter was designed to meet the requirements of the League of Nursing Education in America.⁸²

⁸¹ "Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 22, no. 5 (1922): 357-60, doi:10.2307/3407676.

⁸² "Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 22, no. 11 (1922): 914-17, doi:10.2307/3406768.

Conveying intertwined nationalist and professional pride and a commitment to US values, the report concludes by saying:

Perhaps no field in the Old World offer more promising opportunities for constructive educational work than does this Turkish project where the American Hospital is sowing the first seeds of community consciousness as to proper care of the sick... Eventually, as the Turkish Red Crescent cooperated more actively with the undertaking, far-reaching results of almost unimaginable significance may be expected. For the American Red Cross is the only neutral agency of its kind in the country and the Turks, inclined to suspect propaganda, proselyting and ulterior motives in the activities of many charitable organizations, have accorded to our Red Cross a measure of confidence and discipleship that is one of the most sincere tributes ever paid to any organization. Undoubtedly, in the case of the American Hospital at Constantinople, we have builded better than we knew.⁸³

However a tragedy that unfolded in a distant large Turkish city which had similar cosmopolitan population like that of Constantinople showed how the course of the way US institutions fared could change: within a year the hospitals and nursing schools would function under the Near East Relief. In September 1922, a large fire had destroyed much of the port city of Smyrna which was located some several hundred kilometers south west of Constantinople on the Aegean Sea, soon after the Greek army withdrew its forces and the Turkish Army landed on its shores. The Armenian population was targeted first even before the fire erupted, by systematic massacres and rapes. The fire destroyed the Armenian and Greek quarters of the city, while the Turkish and Jewish quarters remained intact. An estimated 100,000 Armenians and Greeks were killed in that fire and their homes and businesses were destroyed.⁸⁴

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Rudolph J. Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick: Transactions Publishers, 1994).

In May 1923, subsequently Noyes reported that the American Hospital and School in Constantinople was “fast becoming an established factor in the life of the community” until the fall of Smyrna when the Greek and Armenian students were frightened and withdrew immediately “crippling the school very considerably... The life of the school, therefore, has been very uncertain, the staff not knowing from day to day what the result would be...”⁸⁵ The strong US hold over hospital organization conveyed in the first message from Noyes, may have been more vulnerable and subject to the influences of war than she might have imagined. A year later, in 1923, the training programs were crippled as Greek and Armenian students withdrew.⁸⁶

2.7 Discussion and Conclusions

The horrifying intensity of events and the scale of massacres during the Armenian Genocide was unprecedented, with millions of Armenians massacred or displaced and victimized. North American nurses such as Florence Stively, Amy Ames Bliss, Helen Teal, Elizabeth Knowlten, Lillian Cole Sewny, Elizabeth Bury, Blanche Knox, Miss McQuaide, Emma Woods, Anna Rothrock, Miss Gardner, among others reported in the journal on the terrorizing and mesmerising details of the Armenian Genocide on the fields of the massacres and from the very front where these occurred. The eyewitness accounts of these nurses describe the dire need of humanitarian relief in the face of the intensity of the suffering endured by the Armenian population of Turkey. Yet, in the middle of all the chaos and atrocities, North American nurses who were sufferers and often survivors of narrow escapes themselves as well, somehow

⁸⁵ "Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 23, no. 8 (1923): 676-80, doi:10.2307/3406838.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

managed to establish their professional nursing identity side by side with saving thousands of orphans and survivors from disease, hunger and predetermined death. US nurses' ability to uphold to their professional nursing values of neutrality, compassion and service during the Armenian Genocide seemed similar to the way nurses maintained such identity during the devastation on the frontlines of the First World War. Hallett's description of the experiences encountered by nurses while containing injury and disease in hostile zones during the First World War also notes how their professional identity gave them confidence. Hallett talks about experiences of nurses in Alexandria, Cairo, Gallipoli, Jerusalem, Salonika, Lemnos, and India. In Hallett's work, the emphasis is on US as well as British, Canadian and Australian nurses who possessed a coherent professional identity and confidence. She also notes how these nurses, though practicing in places far from home, in unusual terrains and extreme climates, loved the travel adventure and adapted with relative ease. In Hallett's research, nursing was powerful and yet dangerous work, the daily life of nurses involved dealing with death, pain and despair. Nursing was universally admired, the image of the nurse was characterized as an iconic figure of the twentieth century, who in the middle of all the chaos and dirt, maintained her symbolic white dress, professional identity and integrity. As Hallett reports, an important part of the work of nurses was the requirement to contain their own emotions and this same response indeed is apparent in most of the documents in the *American Journal of Nursing* archives on the relief work of nurses among Armenian survivors as well.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Christine E. Hallett, *Containing trauma: Nursing Work in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

The US nurses' attestations and reports reflect a neutral and respected position within Turkey. Despite being part of the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief, two organizations which were regarded if not highly by the Turks but at least considered to be neutral, these nurses experienced tremendous hardships and encountered extreme circumstances. Although their status as US citizens helped them at several points in time, and often narrowly escape death, still some of them contracted disease and died while serving on their mission fields.

Despite the tremendous hardships encountered, many nurses chose to remain in Turkey and to serve those in need of their relief efforts. Many nurses returned to the US only to travel back to Turkey and Armenia soon after, while other nurses continued to join the ranks of the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief to travel to the region to render help to the victims and sufferers of the Turkish atrocities. These nurses were highly motivated and kept their humanitarian missions close to heart. Hargreaves and Golding's description of what spurred nurses to humanitarian work helps to understand aspects of the incitement of the US nurses to provide help during the Armenian Genocide. They explain that honing professional expertise, evangelism, adventure, and moral citizenship all played important roles in motivating nurses to engage in humanitarian work. Although the reports in the AJN provide insufficient personal detail about the nurses to allow informed judgment about personal motivation of individual nurses, the reports convey how nurses returned to the area, stated committed to their task and found inspiration to continue their work in the midst of the most devastating circumstances. Moreover, Hargreaves and Golding explain that as medical emergencies in times of war are rich grounds to gain new experiences, nurses were keen to build their experiences. Nursing work in the period of the First World War was strongly linked to religion, they argue, and humanitarian

work was often seen as part of Christian charity. A thirst for new experiences and the drive to be involved with an important cause, as much as the excitement of travel to far places is evident in the experiences of the US nurses in Turkey. Finally, the concept of moral citizenship Hargreaves and Golding highlight, seems to have been a motivation for supporting people who were mistreated.⁸⁸

To elaborate more on the concept of moral citizenship, it is beneficial to look into Okkenhaug's description of transnationalism and mission networks. Transnationalism is defined through the ties and interactions linking nurses and organizations across the borders of the nation-state. Transnationalism is different from internationalism which refers to more formal interactions between or among nations and states.⁸⁹ Watenpaugh argues that the nature of humanitarianism had changed in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, humanitarianism was linked to religion, especially Protestant Christianity, and while still having elements of its predecessor, modern humanitarianism of the early twentieth century was envisioned as permanent, transnational, institutional, and secular.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Janet Hargreaves and Berenice Golding, "Not for God Queen or Country," *The Bulletin of the UK Association for the History of Nursing*, no.3 (2014): 33-44, <http://ukahn.org/cms/bulletins/UKAHN%20Bulletin%20November%202014.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915," in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al (Latvia: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

⁹⁰ Keith David Watenpaugh, "The League of Nations; Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920-1927," *The American Historical Review*, 115 no. 5 (2010): 1315-1339, accessed February 28, 2017, doi.10.1086/ahr.115.5.1315.

The motivations and intentions of US nurses in the Near East between 1915 and 1923 resonate well with the arguments by Okkenhaug and Watenpaugh in that, those nurses, who engaged with relief work amongst the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide, saw themselves beyond the boundaries of the nations and states, travelled to far places away from home, provided nursing care by upmost professional standards, and provided their services to whoever needed them, regardless of race and religion. As Okkenhaug also describes, Norwegian Lutheran nurses had a strong desire to teach their faith to the local population, however they did not want the Armenians to leave the Gregorian (Orthodox) Armenian religion, they wanted to create “believing” Armenians who were able to read the Bible in their own language, as they believed that the Armenians were living in spiritual decay because of being occupied by Muslims.⁹¹ It would be worthwhile to further study the concepts of evangelism and secularism in shaping the missionary visions of whether of American or of other transnational humanitarian nurses in the Near East.

The Armenians looked up to these nurses and many local Armenian girls and women likely considered them as role models and joined the few nursing schools established by US nurses. Although individual nurses sometimes felt helpless and hopeless in the face of the extreme human misery of the genocide, being part of a larger organization provided them with a certain level of confidence and professional identity that shaped, if not boosted their motivation. Knowing they were part of the Near East Relief missions to Turkey, an organization widely supported by the American public in the US, most likely served as a strong source of confidence.

⁹¹ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, “Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915,” in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al. (Latvia: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

It also seemed, at other times, these nurses felt high levels of professional satisfaction and pride in the daily humanitarian work they did as evidenced by the fundraising campaigns they participated in when they returned to their homeland. Ordinary nurses from the US who happened to answer the call to join the American Red Cross and Near East Relief field missions in Turkey, found themselves making a huge impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Armenians, and on the nursing profession through establishing hospitals, clinics, engaging in public health work, and by founding nursing schools they paved the way to modern nursing in Turkey and Armenia.

Chapter 3: Canadian Nurses' Participation in Transnational Relief Efforts during the Armenian Genocide

3.1 Introduction

...they were naked and starving. How severely they had suffered was brought home to us by the many, many tiny bodies lying in the gutters, in alleyways and on doorsteps, where they had fallen when their strength gave out. Little attempt had been made to bury them. In many ways, however, they were better off than those that survived. A large fraction of the latter are deformed for life, so badly have their bodies become bloated from eating grass and uncooked herbs...⁹²

Christine MacLean from Pine Grove, Ontario and Marcella Flynn from Jenkintown, Pennsylvania were among the first party of relief workers who had arrived at Sivas in April 1919 where they encountered the tragedy of more than 12,000 starving children, most of them orphans, all of whom were victims of deportations and massacres that the Turkish authorities had organized since 1915. The Armenian Genocide which was systematically planned and carried out by the Turkish government, started in 1915 and extended to 1923. During the genocidal years, around 1.5 million Armenians perished from organized massacres, disease and hunger while thousands of others were deported through harsh terrain and climate into neighboring countries. With the above words Miss MacLean was corresponding with *The Globe* in a letter describing her eyewitness accounts at Sivas in an attempt to contribute to the fundraising campaign in Canada, appealing "to friends of Armenia to carry on relief measures" as need was still great.⁹³

⁹² *The Globe*, "Ontario Nurse Has a Message for Canadians," Jul 14, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1366155819?accountid=14656>.

⁹³ Ibid.

Similar to the Near East Relief and the American Red Cross organizations in the US, in Canada, the Armenian Relief Fund Association of Canada, also known as the Canadian National Armenian Relief Fund or Canadian Armenian Relief Fund, which was established by prominent religious leaders, politicians and businessmen, not only contributed financially to the relief efforts by the Near East Relief Foundation but also helped establish a substantial Canadian humanitarian role in Turkey.⁹⁴

As discussed in chapter two, Armenian Genocide themed literature is rich and extensive, and substantial amount of research exists on the relief work carried by international relief organizations, especially by European and US missionaries. Yet there is only limited research about the Canadian nurses' participation in relief efforts during the Armenian Genocide and scholars have not studied Canadian nurses' roles and experiences from a nursing history perspective. Yervant H. Kassouny's research of the *Missionary Herald* archives between 1915-1918 for example, concentrates on the US missionaries and nurses in Turkey from a political perspective.⁹⁵

In his important book, Aram Adjemian presents what was published in Canadian newspaper sources about the Armenian Genocide and Canada's response to the massacres. Adjemian's research is a valuable addition to the limited literature around Canada's involvement in relief efforts before, during and after the Armenian Genocide; however, his study concentrates

⁹⁴ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 35-49.

⁹⁵ Yervant Kassouny, *Knnagan Agnark Missionary Herald-i 1915-1918 tt. Hay Joghovourti Tseghasbanoutyan yev Veradznouni Masin Artsanakradz Vgayoutyunneroun* (Beirut: Design Kesdenian, 2012), 5-33.

on the religious, political and fundraising aspects of the Canadian efforts and does not necessarily bring a historical nursing perspective into discussions.⁹⁶ Moreover, there is a substantial amount of research on the North American nurses' roles and experiences in different war zones of the First World War, such as Christine Hallett's research of US, Canadian, British and Australian nurses⁹⁷, yet the unique circumstances of the atrocity fields of the Armenian Genocide do not necessarily make such literature fully transferable in time and place. As stated in the previous chapter, the human tragedy resulting from the Armenian Genocide is horrifying, and the daily circumstances under which relief workers and nurses functioned in adverse and hostile regions without any military support of their countries of origin made the experiences of these nurses profoundly different from those in war zones.

Similarly, as discussed in chapter two, Inger-Marie Okkenhaug's description of Norwegian nurses during the Turkish atrocities of Armenians in Turkey in 1905⁹⁸, in addition to Janet Hargreaves' and Berenice Golding's research⁹⁹ and David Watenpaugh's writings¹⁰⁰ on

⁹⁶ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015).

⁹⁷ Christine E. Hallett, *Containing trauma: Nursing Work in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

⁹⁸ Inger Marie Okkenhaug, "Norwegian Nurses, Relief and Welfare in the United States and Middle East, ca. 1880-1915," in *Transnational and Historical Perspectives on Global Health, Welfare and Humanitarianism* ed. Ellen Fleischmann et al. (Latvia: Portal Books, 2013), 42-69.

⁹⁹ Janet Hargreaves and Berenice Golding, "Not for God Queen or Country," *The Bulletin of the UK Association for the History of Nursing*, no.3 (November 2014): 33-44, <http://ukahn.org/cms/bulletins/UKAHN%20Bulletin%20November%202014.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ Keith David Watenpaugh, "The League of Nations; Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920-1927," *The American Historical Review*, 115 no. 5 (2010): 1315-1339, accessed February 28, 2017, doi.10.1086/ahr.115.5.1315.

transnationalism and modern humanitarianism provide a solid framework to interpret the motivations and experiences of Canadian and US nurses during the Armenian Genocide.

The Canadian nurses' experiences presented in this chapter are an extension of the vivid eyewitness accounts of their US counterparts to the Armenian Genocide presented in Chapter Two. These experiences shed light on what the Canadian relief workers and nurses went through daily and the hardships they encountered during their mission of delivering humanitarian aid to the victims and sufferers of the Turkish atrocities. This chapter intends to highlight the motivations, strength, devotion and professionalism of Canadian nurses in difficult and dangerous circumstances. The chapter also offers a more extensive discussion of the way reports of nurses were an important part of fundraising campaigns in Canada, stimulated by extensive reporting on the Armenian atrocities in the Canadian newspaper *The Globe*. This chapter begins with a methodology section, followed by a brief introduction to the Armenian Genocide, the Near East Relief and the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund and then moves to present what has been reported in the *Canadian Nurse* during the Armenian Genocide. Thereafter, *The Globe's* representation of the Armenian Genocide is discussed while concentrating on the Canadian nurses' roles, experiences and reports. This chapter concludes with a discussion and recommendations for future research.

3.2 Methodology

This examination of Canadian nurses' experiences and contributions to relief work in Turkey follows a methodological approach similar to the one presented in the previous chapter, which focused on the experiences of the US nurses. The research questions in this chapter center on an examination of the identities and experiences of Canadian humanitarian nurses in Turkey during the Armenian Genocide, their day to day activities, encounters and roles in delivering aid

to the victims of genocide, as well as their motivations to engage in relief work. In the analysis, I link their individual cases to the broader social and political events of which they were part.

To answer my research questions, I used the *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* archives between 1915 and 1923. This time-period marks the years of the Armenian Genocide, carried out by Turkey against its Armenian citizens. The *Canadian Nurse* was chosen as a source as it is the leading journal of the nursing profession in Canada. On its website, the journal is described as: “Since 1905, Canadian Nurse has presented new ideas, opinions, research and news to support and inspire registered nurses in every area of their practice. The editorial content represents the diverse nature of nursing, professionally and demographically. The *Canadian Nurse* also highlights the work and activities of the Canadian Nurses Association.”¹⁰¹ A thorough search in the *Canadian Nurse* archives from 1915 to 1923 revealed only two documents pertinent to this study. These documents related to Canadian nurses’ involvement in missionary or humanitarian work during the Armenian Genocide in different geographical areas both in the Ottoman Empire/ Turkey and Armenia were included in this chapter.

As the quantity and quality of the relevant articles published in the *Canadian Nurse* between 1915 and 1923 were not comprehensively sufficient in my attempt to answer my research questions around the identities, roles, experiences and motivations of Canadian nurses helping Armenians during the Armenian Genocide, I then considered to include *The Globe* in this pursuit. A leading newspaper in Toronto, *The Globe* was founded in 1844 and for decades was a leading voice in Canadian daily political life and social reform. In the beginning of the

¹⁰¹ “About Us,” *Canadian Nurse*, accessed January 10, 2017, <https://www.canadian-nurse.com/en/about-us>.

twentieth century, *The Globe* began organizing fundraising campaigns even before the start of the First World War and its editor James A. Macdonald had started publishing articles about the lives and experiences of Canadian missionaries in Turkey.¹⁰²

A search in ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Globe and Mail* database between January 1, 1915 to December 31, 1923 was conducted. The initial search of “Armenian” revealed 1724 results. The search was then narrowed down to a Boolean search of the words “nurs*” and “Armenia*” to focus solely on nurses working with Armenians. After reviewing the search results, 14 documents were deemed relevant to this chapter. All these documents related to Canadian nurses’ involvement and humanitarian efforts to Armenians in Turkey, Armenia and the surrounding regions, and were considered relevant to the analysis.

3.3 The Near East Relief, the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund and the Armenian Genocide

All the nurses presented in this chapter were employed under the established missions of the American Red Cross, the Near East Relief or associated with the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund. The Near East Relief was a US foundation incorporated by a US Congress Charter in 1919 which continued the relief work of US medical missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who were present in Turkey since the beginning of the nineteenth century. US missionary hospitals spread rapidly in the early twentieth century in many rural and urban regions of Turkey, and many US, Canadian and European health care

¹⁰² Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada’s Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 37-39.

workers including doctors, nurses and pharmacists functioned together under the Near East Relief.¹⁰³

Canadian involvement with relief work in Ottoman Turkey and Armenia, however, had already been established long before the official incorporation of the Near East Relief Foundation in the US. Canada became very much involved in the relief efforts of Armenians soon after the Confederation of 1867 as Protestant Canadian missionaries started offering help to the Armenians whose conditions were progressively becoming worse in the Ottoman Empire. Still, the Canadian efforts were closely connected to those in the US. The Canadian missionaries' involvement for the aid of Armenians coincides with the period when Protestant missionaries from the US also had a strong presence in Ottoman Turkey at the last quarter of the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth centuries.¹⁰⁴ This is important to note because North American (Canadian and US) missionaries worked side by side, sometimes together, and at other times independently while delivering humanitarian relief efforts during the Armenian massacres before 1915 and during the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to 1923. During the First World War, this collaboration became even more important in facilitating involvement of Canadian relief workers, because by that time Canadians, officially part of the British Empire, were considered part of the Allied Forces, whereas the US citizens were not. During the war, because Canadians were regarded as British subjects and were not considered neutral like their US counterparts,

¹⁰³ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill. *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2012), 47-87.

¹⁰⁴ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 115.

some of the former were able to deliver their services through the US organizations mentioned above. Whenever political circumstances allowed, however, Canadian nurses were able to work in Turkey, especially after the First World War ended.

Canadian missionary nurses worked within and together with the US and British missionary movements and were key in reporting back to major newspapers on the conditions of the Armenians in Turkey. Their stories sparked much interest among the ordinary Canadians who in turn contributed financially to the massive fundraising campaigns organized, for example, by the *Toronto Daily Star*. In 1916, *The Globe* also endorsed the campaigns. The funds were raised to the benefit of the Armenian Relief Fund Association of Canada.¹⁰⁵

Because of the progression of the First World War, most US hospitals in Turkey were used to care for the wounded Turkish soldiers. In 1915, when the Armenian Genocide was beginning to be officially implemented, the Turkish government started implementing its plan of deporting and exterminating the entire Armenian population of Turkey, confiscating all properties belonging to Armenians, establishing concentration camps, and organizing massacres and death marches into the Syrian desert. At the end of the First World War and the conclusion of the Genocide, an estimated 1.5 million Armenians were killed.¹⁰⁶ In the following sections, I first present what the *Canadian Nurse* reported on the Armenian massacres, followed by a presentation of *The Globe*'s representations of Canadian nurses' involvement in relief work with the Armenians between 1915 and 1923. As will become clear from the analysis, *The Globe* also

¹⁰⁵ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 38-39.

¹⁰⁶ "Chronology," Armenian Genocide Museum- Institute, accessed October 10, 2016, <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/chronology.php>.

regularly used reports from US nurses to deliver compelling messages to Canadians about the relief work among Armenian survivors of the genocide. The experiences and attestations of these nurses are grouped thematically and not necessarily in chronological order.

3.4 The Representation of the Armenian Genocide in the *Canadian Nurse*

A search in the *Canadian Nurse* archives revealed only two relevant documents about the Armenian Genocide. The first of these was published in the January 1919 issue. The journal briefly reported that Henrietta McCallum had returned to Canada from Turkey shortly after the outbreak of the First World War and had addressed Canadians possibly for fundraising purposes.¹⁰⁷ Henrietta MacCallum was the wife of the well-known missionary Frederick MacCallum from Ontario, who was a graduate of McGill University and for a long time delivered Canadian aid to Armenians in Turkey.¹⁰⁸

A year later, in 1920, the journal reported about Elizabeth A. Thom's experiences. Thom was a graduate of the Victoria Hospital, who had served with the British and Canadian forces for five years and then, possibly in 1920, had joined the Near East Relief to render help to Armenian victims of the Turkish atrocities.¹⁰⁹ Thom's humanitarian work is discussed in more details later in this chapter, as her work also was represented within *The Globe*.

¹⁰⁷ "Hospitals and Nurses," *The Canadian Nurse* 15, no. 1 (1919): 1540, https://www.canadian-nurse.com/~media/canadian-nurse/secure-page-content/issues/issues/1916-1925/cn_vol_15_no_1_january_1919.pdf.

¹⁰⁸ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015), 115.

¹⁰⁹ "Hospitals and Nurses," *The Canadian Nurse* 16, no. 10 (1920): 624, https://www.canadian-nurse.com/~media/canadian-nurse/secure-page-content/issues/issues/1916-1925/cn_vol_16_no_10_october_1920.pdf.

It may seem difficult to understand why there are only two articles published in the *Canadian Nurse* about the work of the North American missionaries during the Armenian Genocide, while the *American Journal of Nursing* regularly published detailed accounts of the day to day encounters of these nurses during the same time-frame of 1915 to 1923, when the Turkish atrocities against the Armenians were at their peak. Elaborating the reasons behind this under-reporting is certainly not the objective of this thesis. It is worth to note however, that the *Canadian Nurse* was reporting extensively about the experiences of Canadian nurses abroad who were actively engaged in war fronts helping the British wounded soldiers in the First World War battle fields. A large number of Canadian sisters, as the Canadian army nurses were called at the time, lost their lives during those years, reflecting the devastating war experiences of Canadian nurses during the First World War.¹¹⁰

The *Canadian Nurse* contains many articles related to the work of Canadian nurses in war zones under the British umbrella and while the roles and experiences of these nurses are paramount and might or might not be transferable to the atrocity fields of Turkey, yet they were excluded in this thesis as this research specifically aims to highlight the Canadian nurses and their roles, experiences and motivations during the Armenian Genocide. Similarly, the journal contains detailed accounts of Canadian missionaries' involvement in many parts of the world, namely: Canada, China, Africa, India and Europe, all during the same time-frame mentioned above. Uncovering why there is little information on the Armenian missions compared to others is similarly beyond the objectives of this thesis. Yet, as we see in the next section, *The Globe*, a

¹¹⁰ Cynthia Toman, *Sisters of the Great War: The Nurses of the Canadian Army Medical Corps* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016).

leading newspaper in Canada was publishing almost daily about these atrocities, organizing huge fundraising events, and reporting on the vital roles and heroic actions of Canadian nurses during the Armenian Genocide.

3.5 *The Globe's* Fundraising Campaign

The Globe used eyewitness reports from nurses to augment their fundraising efforts. As previously stated, *The Globe* reported extensively on the Turkish atrocities against the Armenians and sometimes on a daily basis. Time and time again, *The Globe* published letters written by US and Canadian humanitarian relief workers and nurses in Turkey and Armenia, most of which were aimed to focus the Canadian readers' attention to the urgent need of fundraising to help Armenians who would otherwise perish. Historian Adjemian talks extensively about Canada's response to the Armenian Genocide and sheds light on the media coverage during this period¹¹¹. This chapter examines *The Globe's* reporting from a nursing perspective. Specifically, the identities, roles, experiences and motivations of the North American missionary nurses who reached out to help the Armenian sufferers during the Armenian Genocide as represented by *The Globe* between 1915 and 1923 is highlighted and discussed. Somewhat counter-intuitive, this section begins with one of the US nurses' experiences, as it happened that *The Globe* used a report from US nurse Blanche Knox, also reported on in the previous chapter, to draw the Canadian readership's attention to the devastating events in Igdirdir, one of the first significant atrocities reported on in *The Globe*, using nurses' eye witness accounts, within the time period under investigation in this project. The

¹¹¹ Aram Adjemian, *The Call from Armenia: Canada's Response to the Armenian Genocide* (Lorraine: Corridor Books, 2015).

subsequent section examines *The Globe*'s reporting of Canadian and US relief work during the Marash Disaster. These reports showed how US and Canadian nurses worked side by side each other under the umbrella of the Near East Relief, in this case in the American Hospital in Marash. Then, in the next section, the experiences and accounts of Canadian nurses are presented as they engaged in relief work among the Armenians in different parts of Turkey. The final subsection presents the circumstances under which the Canadian Hospital in Constantinople was founded and its impact on the population it served.

3.5.1 A US Nurse's Report Represented in *The Globe*: The Experiences of Blanche Knox

Occasionally *The Globe* reported on the US nurses'¹¹² relief work among the Armenian people. Blanche Knox, for example, was a nurse from Philadelphia, a graduate of the training school attached to the Episcopal Hospital. During the influenza epidemic, she had worked as a community nurse in Philadelphia. She then, on February 14, 1919, travelled from New York on board the steamship *Leviathan* and joined the Near East Relief work as a Red Cross nurse. Knox was first in charge of the hospital in Iğdir, which is in Eastern Anatolia in Turkey near Mount Ararat, close to today's border between Armenia and Turkey. When the massacres peaked against the Armenian population of Iğdir, Knox witnessed "some of the terrible scenes." After

¹¹² *The Globe* reported on mostly the Canadian relief efforts in Turkey and Armenia; however, occasionally US relief efforts and US nurses' eyewitness accounts were also used to boost their fundraising campaign. These are presented in this chapter as opposed to the previous one because they are situated within the Canadian context, that is to raise the awareness about the massacres among the Canadians and raise funds to the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund.

Igdir was captured by the Turks, she moved to Echmiadzin, a region that remained under the control of Armenia, where she became in charge of an Armenian orphanage.¹¹³

Historically, Igdir had the Armenian name Tsolakert. In 1918, the First Armenian Republic was established and assumed control over Igdir in November of the same year. The newly formed Armenian Republic was a short-lived entity which was integrated in the Soviet Union in 1922. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Republic regained its independence in 1991 and became known as the Republic of Armenia. In September 1920, Turkish forces led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk invaded Igdir to eliminate the First Armenian Republic. During the period beginning from 1918, Armenians of Igdir suffered from Turkish massacres, famine and disease.¹¹⁴ Knox's descriptions of the terrible scenes in Igdir are a continuation of attestations of North American nurses about the Armenian Genocide and the resulting human tragedy. *The Globe* must have purposefully presented her account to increase awareness among Canadians about the occurrences in Igdir.

In Echmiadzin (which is part of the present-day Republic of Armenia), Miss Knox described the scarcity of food available to the Armenians and the US humanitarian workers. As the flour was scarce, rice was their only option, which was smuggled by Turks and sold in unreasonably high prices. She also reported that 40 people were dying of typhus per day in

¹¹³ *The Globe*, "Coast Kiddies Hold Out hands to Armenians," Mar 12, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351804594?accountid=14656>.

¹¹⁴ Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia, Vol. IV: Between Crescent and Sickle, Partition and Sovietization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 249–250.

Echmiadzin.¹¹⁵ Most likely, Knox's story was presented in *The Globe* to aid with the fundraising campaign to the benefit of the Armenian sufferers in Turkey. As per *The Globe*, the news of the Armenian suffering had reached to children in Vancouver, British Columbia "who do not know what real hardship is, and were aroused by the galling poverty, hunger and emaciated arms...their [the children of Vancouver] contribution will...buy food for the land of hunger."¹¹⁶ As discussed in chapter two, Knox was also represented in several issues of the *American Journal of Nursing* for her work at Alexandropol, where she witnessed the intensity of human misery at the city, including the death of her colleague Edith Winchester who had died of typhus while serving there.¹¹⁷ Knox's horrifying experiences and attestations¹¹⁸ provide a glimpse into the bigger picture of the daily experiences nurses faced and the circumstances around their humanitarian work.

¹¹⁵ *The Globe*, "Coast Kiddies Hold Out hands to Armenians," Mar 12, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351804594?accountid=14656>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Clara D. Noyes, "The Red Cross," *The American Journal of Nursing* 19, no. 12 (1919): 947-51, doi:10.2307/3405307.

¹¹⁸ "The Department of Red Cross Nursing," *The American Journal of Nursing* 20, no. 7 (1920): 558-62, doi:10.2307/3406928.

3.5.2 Canadian and US Nurses during the Marash Disaster¹¹⁹

The Marash disaster is part of the larger atrocities already discussed in the previous chapter within the context of the Armenian Genocide. Marash is a city located in Southern Turkey in the Mediterranean region. Upon the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, in 1919, the British forces and then the French troops occupied the city. In February 1920, the Turkish National Movement led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (the founder of modern Turkey) took over the city after the French forces suddenly withdrew, exposing thousands of Armenians to the Turkish massacres. The Turkish bands set on fire all Armenian schools and churches where the local population had taken refuge (six Armenian Orthodox churches, three Armenian Protestant churches and one Armenian Catholic Cathedral were burned down), and a total of 5,000 to 16,000 Armenians were massacred.¹²⁰

The Near East Relief workers remained in Marash during the turmoil and helped save thousands of starving Armenian women and children until 1922 when all remaining Armenians were deported to neighboring Syria. After the French withdrew their troops, many Turks regarded the US relief workers as collaborators with the French and Armenians, but the North American relief workers courageously stayed at their posts (which included workshops and hospitals) until the last caravan of Armenian orphans departed Marash for Beirut.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ The Marash massacres and the humanitarian work presented by mainly US and in part Canadian missionaries and nurses are discussed in this chapter as opposed to the previous chapter because they come within the fundraising efforts of The Globe targeting the Canadian public to the benefit of the Canadian Armenian National Fund.

¹²⁰ Stanley E. Kerr, *Lions of Marash: Personal Experiences with American Near East Relief, 1919-1922* (Albany: Suny press, 1973).

¹²¹ Ibid.

On April 5, 1920, *The Globe* reported on the way nurses and doctors had a very narrow escape when the American Hospital in Marash was attacked. *The Globe* anonymously gave details about the Marash massacres from the accounts of one relief worker. The American Hospital in Marash was centrally situated in the frontline when the French troops were attacking the Turkish troops in 1919, and used for the aide of the Armenian population there who were being massacred. Drawing from the relief worker's diary, *The Globe* reported how the Turks were firing from multiple houses and aiming at Armenian civilians and French troops; Armenians were fleeing while Turks were "shooting them down like jack rabbits sniping at Armenians." Relief work was becoming very difficult, and the situation was becoming more and more tragic every day: "Every compound is crowded with refugees, who hear of relatives left behind to be massacred or die of starvation, of women giving premature birth to children, or going mad with fear."¹²²

Later, on April 10, 1920, *The Globe* published another update about the Marash massacres while concluding with calls for more donations. This time, the newspaper published a letter from physician Frederick MacCallum to his wife in Ontario which entailed a note of appreciation for Canadian donors. MacCallum reported that the three churches operating in Marash were burned and only 10,000 Armenians remained in the city. MacCallum indicated that

¹²² *The Globe*, "Diary Records Anxious Times for Armenians," April 5, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1350682423?accountid=14656>.

the US relief workers were safe, but he concluded that more help was needed as Turks were threatening to repeat the horrors of the Marash tragedy everywhere.¹²³

On May 5, 1920, a next update from Marash communicated the pressing need for more humanitarian relief aid. Under the headline “Massacre Puts Thousands More in Orphanages, Marash Disaster Overcrowds the Large Institutions of Relief, Hospitals are Full,” this news report described that of the 10,000 Armenians remaining in Marash, 2000 were residing in Near East Relief hospitals and orphanages. It noted that the Armenian Relief was providing food for all the surviving Armenian population. According to this account, there were three American hospitals in Marash, each of 200 bed capacity, and they were all fully occupied. It noted that one physician, Dr. Wilson and his wife Mrs. Wilson had decided to remain in Marash to serve the victims and sufferers as all the other nurses and health care workers had fled the city with the French troops, posing immense pressure on the organization’s ability to provide medical services and relief efforts. The remaining Near East Relief personnel had become tired and very anxious to get away from the city but were sticking to their places till replacement personnel arrived, which might have been delayed by 1-2 months, according to the report, because of the difficult roads.¹²⁴ This eye witness account is supported by another personal account from Stanley Kerr’s

¹²³ *The Globe*, “Canadian Fund Came in Handy at Right Time,” April 10, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1350605926?accountid=14656>.

¹²⁴ *The Globe*, “Massacre Puts Thousand More in Orphanages,” May 5, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1356502563?accountid=14656>.

personal experiences, published in the secondary source, referenced in the opening paragraphs of this section.¹²⁵

3.5.3 Canadian Nurses amid Chaos and Devastation

In this section, *The Globe*'s reports of Canadian nurses' profound stories during the Armenian Genocide are examined. The section highlights Canadian relief work among the Armenians in different parts of Turkey. Brief and yet important accounts of nurses from the front lines consistently reported of massacres and devastation among the Armenian people.

On May 1, 1920 *The Globe* reported Christine MacLean's account. Quoted in part in the opening of this chapter. She was a nurse from Pine Grove, Ontario, stationed in Sivas, where she was in charge of an orphanage there. Sivas had a population of 60,000 people and was a former Armenian territory but was overrun by the Turks. In addition to an orphanage, the Near East Relief maintained a mission, a hospital and a school there. Under the title "Canadian Girl Survives New Turk Uprising," this report by *The Globe* describes Miss MacLean's and other relief workers' "hourly peril while the frightful tragedy was being enacted."¹²⁶

MacLean described how relief work made the conditions better for the refugees and survivors in Sivas as hospitals were opened and clothing and food supplies were brought into the city. However, when massacres intensified in the city of Sivas, MacLean among other relief workers had to escape to the Black Sea port of Samsoun. There, they remained stranded for nearly three months as it might have been very difficult to get a place on board of a ship with so

¹²⁵ See also note 118, Kerr, *Lions of Marash*.

¹²⁶ *The Globe*, "Canadian Girl Survives New Turk Uprising," May 1, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351236808?accountid=14656>.

many people seeking escape. Eventually, according to the report, they did get a place on a “dirty Russian refugee ship,” that brought them to relative safety in Constantinople. They had remained stranded and isolated in Sivas for nearly 3 months because tribesmen loyal to Turkish Leader Mustapha Kemal Atatürk were sieging the city from all angles. Still, the dire circumstances did not make MacLean wanting to leave permanently. To the contrary, she planned on returning. When in mid-1920 Miss MacLean returned she had visited her home town, and likely her family in Pine Grove, Ontario. According to *The Globe*, she had planned to briefly visit family and return to the Near East for more relief work.¹²⁷

Nurse Minnie C. Robinson from London, Ontario also had sailed to the Near East from New York in November 1919 where she was a nurse at St. Luke’s Hospital. Under the headline “Toronto Girl Just Escapes Rush of Reds...Nurse of High Courage” published on June 26, 1920, *The Globe* described Robinson’s “thrilling escape” and that “the name of Miss Robinson... would ever be held in honor for the part she has taken in Armenian relief. She had proved herself a woman of high courage, great endeavor and very sincere.”¹²⁸ It is worth noting how *The Globe* presented Robinson’s heroic actions and native Ontario girl’s narrow escape in its headline to draw the attention of the readers and possibly to solicit their aid in the ongoing fundraising campaign for the relief of Armenians.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ *The Globe*, “Toronto Girl Just Escapes Rush of Reds,” June 26, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351809587?accountid=14656>.

Robinson was stationed in Erivan, the capital of the new Armenian Republic, which hosted a Near East Relief hospital. In May 1920, the hospital personnel and relief workers received evacuation orders from the Allied High Commissioner to Armenia because of the Soviet uprisings in Baku and the reports of the proximity of the Red Army to the city which terrorized the country and the relief workers. Robinson, alongside other North American relief workers and refugees could escape North to Tiflis, Georgia and from there to port city of Batoum. When the refugees arrived to Batoum, they were very tired as they had completed a 500-mile journey and were worn out by hunger and sleeplessness. In the port of Batoum, British warships carrying Union Jack flags and US cruisers carried the refugees, and the Near East Relief workers including Robinson to Constantinople. Realizing the need of her services, she decided to stay in the Ottoman Capital as a Red Cross nurse.¹²⁹ Her commitment seemed to underscore a determination of nurses to continue their help in the face of very difficult circumstances. It also could mean that her experience as a nurse provided Robinson with a way to sustain herself by taking on work with the Red Cross organization.

In 1920, graduate nurse Elizabeth Thom of London, Ontario, travelled overseas to Alexandropol. She was a graduate from Victoria Hospital Training School for nurses and this was not the first time she left for war relief work. On an earlier mission, she had served for five years in the Canadian and Imperial military hospitals in France during the First World War. On April 24, 1922, *The Globe* reported that nurse Thom was working for the Armenian Relief Fund Association of Canada and the US Near East Relief in famine-ridden Armenia. She was stationed

¹²⁹ Ibid.

in Alexandropol with other relief workers, where they, among other tasks, were responsible to build a daily wall of bread “ten feet high and 60 yards long” to keep the famine away from 20,000 children in orphanages. The barricade of batter big as it was, was only a link in the chain of broad fortresses erected each morning and demolished before night by regiments of hungry orphans.”¹³⁰

Margaret MacLennan, a trained nurse from Kept Road in Nova Scotia, also built her transnational experience while serving in France during the First World War. In 1919 or 1920, MacLennan travelled to Erivan, the heart of the Armenian famine areas where starvation and disease were taking an appalling death toll. In the Spring of 1920, she had to be evacuated from Erivan because of the growing threats of the advancing Bolsheviks. After a series of events, she was stationed to Harpoot, Turkey. Harpoot, as described in *The Globe*, was located in the heart of Turkish Nationalist territory where relief workers were providing aid to 5000 Greek and Armenian children.¹³¹

Upon her return to home in Canada, MacLennan reported that thousands of children were gathered by Canadian and US workers in relief orphanages “who otherwise would have perished...they have been rescued from starvation, but they must be cared for until they are able to take care of themselves. Relief workers are rapidly training them for self-support. Industrial

¹³⁰ *The Globe*, “Building a Wall of ‘Daily Bread’,” April 24, 1922, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1356584257?accountid=14656>.

¹³¹ *The Globe*, “Canadian Girl Tells of Woe in Near East,” June 27, 1922, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1352073245?accountid=14656>.

schools are maintained in connection of all orphanages, and the children instructed in trades and professions. They are being taught the same ideals that children are in this country, and they cannot help but exert a powerful influence for a better Near East of tomorrow.”¹³² In the aftermath of the Genocide, the Near East Relief workers maintained many orphanages, schools and industrial workshops to provide a training ground for the tens of thousands of orphans who they rescued during the massacres and from famine and disease.¹³³ Orphans were housed and trained to be able to provide for themselves. Specific documents and accounts on this transforming mission of the Near East Relief could possibly be researched in the years that followed the Armenian Genocide, which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

3.5.4 Emma Wood and the Canadian Hospital at Constantinople

Under the title “The Call From Armenia” *The Globe* published repetitively about the fundraising campaign and simultaneously called for more funds to aid the Armenian victims of the Turkish cruelties. On January 26, 1920, *The Globe* published a message from Emma Wood, a nurse from Sarnia, who had sailed to Turkey the same day of the article’s publication. Wood talked about the privilege of saving human lives inspiring many heroic volunteers. The article stated that a party of 23 men and women had sailed from New York under the auspices of the Near East Relief. Miss Wood was to work for the Canadian National Armenian Relief Association as a nurse and assist in the distribution of relief under the direction of physician

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill. *Sisters of Mercy and Survival: Armenian Nurses, 1900-1930* (Antelias: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2012).

Frederick MacCallum of Kingston, the Canadian missionary in charge of the Armenian mission.¹³⁴ Miss Wood's message read:

On the eve of my departure for the Near East to serve as best I may the suffering people of Armenia, I wish to make this personal appeal to my friends and to Canadian citizens generally to do all in their power at home to support the cause in which I have enlisted. The appeal of the starving thousands of Armenia and other countries of Western Asia must not and cannot be ignored by the Christian people of North America. Reports reaching the National Headquarters of the Armenian Relief Association show that hundreds of thousands of adults and at least 250,000 homeless little children are in need of our aid. Without food supplies from Canada thousands of these people must perish from starvation. I deem it a privilege to have this opportunity to do my share in saving lives, administering to the welfare and upbuilding of these people. You at home also feel that your part, the most important of all, is likewise a privilege. You may not be able to go, but you can give. On your generous hearts everything else depends.¹³⁵

This account vividly described the great need for fundraising and help required in Turkish Armenia and Syria, followed by a name list of donors' contributions to the Armenian cause. The compelling and compassionate quote from Emma Wood sheds light on her motivation behind joining the relief efforts of the Near East Relief, which were humanitarian in nature. Saving human lives was an inspiration to her and she felt a strong sense of compassion driving her to act and join the relief effort. She seemed also wanting to satisfy her Christian values of compassion, a sense of obligation to help, and of doing justice by helping fellow human sufferers beyond the borders of Canada, while still calling on fellow Canadians to actively participate with whatever means possible in aiding Armenians.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ *The Globe*, "The Call from Armenia," January 26, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1356440552?accountid=14656>.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Later *The Globe* published another article on Wood's work: "New Volunteer Takes Up Work For Armenians: Miss Emma Wood of Sarnia has reached Constantinople. Hers is heroic mission. Duty at the front is both exacting and dangerous- Marash massacre." The article reads:

...That the work that Miss Wood will do in Armenia is fraught with danger is shown in the details of the massacre of the Armenians at Marash and the fighting between the French troops and the Turks. Some 17 relief workers were shut up for 23 days in a mission compound while the fighting was going on. The American Hospital at Marash was attacked by shell-fire, the doctors and nurses having a narrow escape. The Armenians fled before the Turks. An eye-witness writes that scores of women and children- 100 in one house- had been murdered with knives and hatchets. Another message says: All the 80 girls in the rescue home at Marash were killed, the Turks afterward firing the building...It was a tragic ending of a tragic exodus... 20,000 Armenians were murdered at Marash.¹³⁷

The Canadian Hospital was established to serve the great need to care for orphan children and prevent the spread of tuberculosis, and was fully funded by the Canadian fund. Emma Wood was in charge of the work at the hospital, whose buildings were given by the Greek community rent free for 2 years. The Canadian Fund which helped establish the Canadian Hospital had, according to *The Globe*, the potential to save 80,000 Armenians, adding that of the original 4 million Armenians, only 1,5 million were left.¹³⁸

The Globe also reported that the "Armenian Fund Has Passed the \$300,000 Total: Canadian Contributions Built Fine Hospital for Suffering Children. Ontario Nurse on Staff Miss

¹³⁷ *The Globe*, "New Volunteer Takes Up Work for Armenians," March 26, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1354124169?accountid=14656>.

¹³⁸ *The Globe*, "Armenian Fund Has Passed the \$300,000 Total," July 31, 1920, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351920664?accountid=14656>.

Emma Wood of Sarnia Says Institution Helps British Wounded” and published first-hand accounts of the work of the Canadian Hospital in Constantinople, where Emma Wood was stationed and was one of the nurses on staff. According to the report, Emma Wood had already been in different places and had to flee with other women relief workers at the time of the Bolshevik advance on Baku. Emma Wood related that “I have a lovely hospital just outside the old Byzantine walls overlooking Stamboul, we have a fine view of the Sea of Marmara. The hospital is entirely for children with incipient tuberculosis-two buildings- one for orthopedic work and the other for tuberculosis troubles.” Emma Wood had four Armenian and two Russian nurses to help her, in addition to other local Armenian and Turkish personnel. The hospital was inaugurated on Canada’s Dominion Day, she shared. Emma Wood continues to say “I have equipped the entire hospital myself, and it is really sweet. Most of the furniture was picked up at second-hand bazaars, then deloused and either painted or covered.”¹³⁹ In this account, we sense the optimistic nature of Wood’s description about her personal contribution and professional pride she likely took from her ability to equip an entire hospital through her own efforts, making a substantial impact on the lives of the populations the Canadian Hospital served.

According to the same article, because of the fighting around Constantinople, the Canadian Hospital also cared for the British wounded soldiers. Wood together with nurse Frances F. McQuaide of West Virginia were capable of taking care of wounded soldiers because of their experience with the Red Cross in Jerusalem, the report conveyed, where Emma Wood had been in charge of the operating room prior to her work in Constantinople.¹⁴⁰

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid

On August 26, 1921, *The Globe* reported that Emma Wood was in charge of the Canadian Hospital for Tubercular Children at Constantinople which had just completed its first year and that at the time contained “100 beds, all of which are kept constantly filled, the hospital has already reported scores of cures. Relief workers are seeking means to increase its facilities. The patients come to the hospital from the orphanages, the refugee camps and relief clinics scattered about the city and its vicinity.” The hospital was also training native Armenians and Greeks as nurses to serve in places where the Near East Relief had clinics.¹⁴¹

On October 29, 1921, *The Globe* published an article “Canada Must Stand by the Children of Armenia” on its front page with a picture of 4 children: an Armenian, Jew, Greek and Turk playing together at the Canadian Hospital, perhaps rendering a message of hope for the future generations. The report added that the Canadian Hospital at Yedi-Koul, Constantinople was not the only hospital maintained by the Canadian funds and that two others were supported by it. In her role as the director of nursing in the Near East Relief, Wood provided detailed statistical data on the first year of hospital’s work. The hospital had 310 admissions, 50% Armenians, 32% Greeks, 17% Jews, 0.5% Russian and 0.5% Turks. There had been 220 discharges of which 89% were cured, 5% discharged against medical advice, 5% got better but not cured, and 1% died. The hospital’s criteria were to admit children between 3 to 14 years old with pre-tubercular or recipient tuberculosis, all cases of tuberculosis glands, tubercular bone, joint or eye infections. The article concluded by a call to continue donating funds to the

¹⁴¹ *The Globe*, "Canada Must Stand by the Children of Armenia," October 29, 1921, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1356184002?accountid=14656>.

Canadian fund to continue supporting the Canadian Hospital, as “Citizens of no mean city, it applies to us. No mean city, this Canada of ours. And under an alien sky floats the Union Jack: On gate and door of that far away hospital, that mission of New World mercy for Old World misery, stands the name of the land we love: Canadian Hospital for Tubercular Children.”¹⁴²

There is a lack of information about the reasons and circumstances surrounding Emma Wood’s departure from Constantinople to be stationed in an orphanage in Athens. Sources other than the ones researched in this thesis may link the time gaps and give us a clearer sequence of events in the life and work of Emma Wood. *The Globe* published a final article about Emma Wood on December 26, 1922 providing the readers with a detailed description on the day King George of Greece visited a group of Near East Relief workers at the American Orphanage in Athens where Emma Wood was stationed. In this orphanage, 1000 Greek orphans had just arrived from Samsun, Turkey.¹⁴³

The Globe presented the personal accounts of Emma Wood and reported extensively about the Canadian Hospital at Constantinople. Nurse Wood had taken several responsibilities not only within the Near East Relief, which was a US foundation, but she also had been employed by the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund. From bedside nursing to nursing in war zones in Jerusalem and Marash, Wood’s nursing career had developed when she occupied the role of the director of nursing of the Near East Relief. Wood successfully paved her way to the peak of

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ *The Globe*, “George of Greece Visits Orphanage,” December 26, 1922, <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1351860980?accountid=14656>.

her professional adventure when she helped establish and directed the Canadian Hospital at Constantinople.

3.6 Discussion and Conclusions

The Armenian Genocide had horrifying and unprecedented consequences on the Armenian population of Turkey, resulting in 1.5 million deaths and thousands of others displaced and wounded. Canadian nurses who travelled to Turkey to help with the relief efforts often reported terrible and detailed eyewitness accounts of the Genocide from the front lines. The reports of ordinary front line nurses were used by Canadian news media such as *The Globe* to describe the immense need of funds to continue the humanitarian relief in benefit of the Armenian sufferers in Turkey, Armenia and the surrounding region. Canadian nurses engaged in day to day humanitarian work which resulted in saving thousands of Armenians from hunger, disease and death.

The Canadian nurses mainly functioned within the missions of the American Red Cross and the Near East Relief as this latter organizations, being American, were considered neutral and welcomed by the Turkish authorities. It is unclear if they were formally allowed to work under the US organizations' umbrella, or if they were also US citizens, or perhaps the Turkish authorities were unable to strictly implement their decisions to entirely ban Canadians from the country. Moreover, some Canadian nurses were employed after 1919, or the conclusion of the First World War, which may have helped them gain access to Turkey after the Allied victory. Despite the fact that Canadian nurses had some US support, Canadian nurses were sometimes viewed as enemy subjects because of their British ties. Canadian nurses often narrowly escaped death and encountered great danger. Despite the harsh circumstances surrounding their humanitarian work, the Canadian nurses like their US counterparts chose to remain in Turkey

even when they had the chance to leave during turmoil. These nurses were highly motivated and devoted to their call to render help to the victims and sufferers of the Armenian Genocide.

It is clear that the Canadian nurses had similar motivations to join the Near East Relief missions as their US counterparts. Moreover, Canadian nurses came from a strong religious, often Protestant background and they valued their humanitarian work within their Christian morals and ethics of compassion, social justice and service for the greater need of humanity. They seemed bound with a strong motivation to support people who were mistreated and fight injustices. These reasons resonate with Hargreaves and Golding's work around the motivations for humanitarian work in the early twentieth century.¹⁴⁴

Hargreave and Golding as well as Watenpaugh also underline the concept of moral citizenship within the parameters of transnationalism and missionary networks. The nurses described in this chapter had strong ties to Protestant Christianity and yet the services they provided were transnational. According to Watenpaugh, twentieth century modern humanitarianism still had elements of the eighteenth and nineteenth century missionary medicine and nursing in it and yet was envisioned as permanent, transnational, institutional and secular.¹⁴⁵

With their training model, the Canadian nurses had an impact on the local Armenian population, and Armenian nurses received formal nursing education and training from US and Canadian nurses in various clinics and hospitals. The Canadian nurses experienced many

¹⁴⁴ Janet Hargreaves and Berenice Golding, "Not for God Queen or Country," *The Bulletin of the UK Association for the History of Nursing*, no.3 (2014): 33-44, <http://ukahn.org/cms/bulletins/UKAHN%20Bulletin%20November%202014.pdf>.

¹⁴⁵ Keith David Watenpaugh, "The League of Nations; Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920-1927," *The American Historical Review*, 115 no. 5 (2010): 1315-1339, accessed February 28, 2017, doi.10.1086/ahr.115.5.1315.

hardships and life-threatening situations on one hand, and yet felt satisfaction and took pride in their humanitarian work as evidenced by the reports they wrote to fellow Canadians in the mainland elaborating their achievements such as saving thousands from predetermined death and establishing hospitals and clinics. The establishment of the Canadian Hospital at Constantinople is an explicit example of the enduring contributions ordinary Canadian nurses achieved and how much of an impact they had not only on the nursing profession, but also on the dark pages of Armenian history and the early pages of Canadian history.

Finally, the Canadian nurses were portrayed as heroes and were represented by *The Globe* as “women of high courage” and “sincere,” who had “thrilling escapes” and who experienced “hourly peril” and witnessed “frightful tragedy.” These descriptions resonate well with Hallett’s research on nurses during the First World War. On the one hand, the heroic role of nurses in early twentieth century war and genocide is highlighted, yet on the other these nurses also contained trauma, literally by relief work and by providing transnational organized funded support, as part of a larger organized relief effort. They were portrayed as “survivors” who yet stood by the children of Armenia and stayed devoted to their cause of helping the most vulnerable survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

This thesis has explored the names, roles, and encounters, as well as the social influences shaping the motivations and experiences of North American humanitarian and missionary nurses who joined organized relief work to render help to the Armenian sufferers during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923. The division of this thesis into two manuscripts in chapters two and three presented the opportunity to categorize and divide North American nurses' involvement: The US nurses and the Canadian nurses during the Armenian Genocide. This categorical division enabled to better organize the multifaceted aspects of each of the chapters which constitute the body of this thesis.

This thesis used a social history framework in nursing to examine past events through the experiences of ordinary nurses and to highlight social factors that influenced the direction of the nursing profession, particularly the engagement with humanitarian relief work. Its aim was not to focus on perceived exemplary nursing leaders or "great women" and their experiences although many nurses' experiences certainly reflected exemplary leadership and organizational talent. Their contributions, however, were contextualized within the larger social structures of transnational relief work allowing a more nuanced portrayal of nurses' contributions. Through this methodology, this research was able to explore and describe, drawing from relevant publications in two nursing journals and a newspaper, the experiences of North American nurses within the context of larger historical, social and political events during the Armenian Genocide.

Chapter one introduced the readers to key concepts and historical context such as the Armenian Genocide, the American Red Cross, the Near East Relief, and the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund. These provided a background and contextual understanding of the problem statement and the research questions. Relevant literature was discussed in the introductory

chapter, as well as in chapters two and three to elaborate and discuss current literature related to each chapter. Chapter one included a section on the explanation of using a social history framework and a discussion on the use of different journal and newspaper archives to answer the research questions.

Chapter two focused on US nurses during the Armenian Genocide. The *American Journal of Nursing* was used as the main source of evidence for this chapter, with a detailed search in this journal's publications between the years 1915 to 1923. The goal of this chapter was to highlight the roles and experiences of these nurses and the social influences shaping their motivations in pursuing their relief work. This chapter found that US nurses were in the front lines during the Armenian Genocide, witnessing death and destitution on a daily basis. Often, these nurses experienced personal losses, narrowly escaped death and functioned in high levels of danger, while remaining devoted to their mission and profession.

Another finding in chapter two was the North American nurses' accomplishments on both personal and professional levels through hospital work, public health nursing and teaching. US nurses helped establish modern hospitals and nursing schools at times of uncertainty during the Armenian Genocide while saving the lives of thousands of Armenian men, women, children and orphans. This chapter argues that although these nurses were situated in the midst of dangerous and difficult circumstances, their commitment after having responded to the call to serve those who were suffering and their devotion to their Christian values of compassion and justice encouraged them to adhere to their posts and to help thousands of victims and survivors. This chapter further compared the experiences of these nurses to those in different war zones in the First World War and discussed similarities and differences. Chapter two concluded with a

discussion of aspects of the transnational nursing framework in understanding the social influences shaping the motivations of US nurses in pursuing their relief work.

The foci of chapter three were the identities and roles as well as social influences shaping the experiences and motivations of Canadian nurses who were actively engaged in relief work during the Armenian Genocide. The *Canadian Nurse* and *The Globe* were used to answer the research questions of this thesis. A detailed search in these publications were conducted between the years 1915 to 1923. As in chapter two, concepts of humanitarianism and transnationalism provided a solid framework in understanding and interpreting the motivations and experiences of Canadian and North American nurses in this chapter. Chapter three found that Canadian nurses, like their US counterparts were very actively engaged in humanitarian relief work in the front lines during the Armenian Genocide. Another finding of this chapter was Canadian nurses' at times active and at other times indirect involvement in the extensive fundraising campaigns, organized by major newspapers such as *The Globe*.

Chapter three had similar findings to chapter two, such as Canadian nurses' extensive humanitarian work in the middle of atrocities and chaos, for instance caring for the wounded and diseased, feeding the hunger-stricken sufferers, as well as establishing hospitals, nursing schools and training workshops for the local women and children. Although Canadian nurses were situated in dangerous spaces, they remained devoted to their professional and Christian values of compassion, service and care for the disadvantaged. They helped save thousands of Armenians from extermination. They concurred impressive accomplishments in very unfavorable conditions. One such accomplishment was the establishment of the Canadian Hospital for Tubercular Children at Constantinople. Canadian nurses also established nursing schools and became role models to local Armenian women who they involved in the nursing work and

training workshops. Chapter three concludes by comparing the experiences, encounters and motivations of Canadian nurses to their US counterparts, as well as to nurses in different war zones of the First World War.

This thesis illustrates that the North American nurses were part of larger organizations such as the American Red Cross, the Canadian Armenian Relief Fund and the Near East Relief which were guided by transnational and humanitarian ideologies and political will. The North American nurses were deeply rooted in their religious and professional beliefs of neutrality, compassion, care for the disadvantaged, and social justice. They helped change the course of the events and shaped the outcome of the Armenian Genocide.

4.1 Limitations

This thesis has researched and discussed the identities, roles, and social influences shaping the experiences and motivations of North American nurses during the Armenian Genocide. This thesis is guided by interpreting existing literature and using a social history framework to seek to answer the research questions. Being an Armenian and a nurse has influenced the examination of the research questions. I sought to utilize reflexivity during the interpretation of historical documents through discussing my analyses, interpretations and comparisons with peers, and my thesis supervisors. These discussions helped me to develop new ideas during the interpretation of the historical documents surrounding the topic of this thesis and make links to other relevant nursing and history scholarship.

In this thesis, articles and documents published in select nursing journals and a newspaper between the years 1915 to 1923 were utilized. This enabled to limit and effectively handle a substantial number of documents for the purpose of answering the research questions. Hence, potentially a large number of relevant documents outside this time frame and those

published elsewhere were not included in this thesis, limiting the comprehensive understanding and description of events surrounding and nurses' involvement before and in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. For the purpose of this thesis, this limitation was productive as it enabled me to conduct an in-depth examination of a manageable number of documents.

4.2 Contributions to Existing Knowledge and Recommendations

This thesis is an important addition to US and Canadian nursing histories and Armenian Genocide history. The richness of the documents used for this thesis, in addition to the detailed descriptions of North American nurses about their experiences within these documents highlight important events in shared US, Canadian and Armenian histories, confirming the interconnection and intersection of history, politics and nursing.

To elaborate on this intersection of history, politics and nursing it is important to highlight the documents contained in the primary sources used in this thesis. For example, the "Foreign Department" and the "Department of Red Cross" sections of the *American Journal of Nursing* reported on the relief efforts as they happened in Turkey and the "Narratives from War Zones" and "Nursing News and Announcements" sections reported on the fundraising efforts and linked the genocide fields to the journal's nursing audience in the US. Another example is *The Globe's* "the Call from Armenia" titled articles which focused the attention of the general public in Canada on the tragic events that were happening in Turkey while using eyewitness accounts of US and Canadian nurses to boost their fundraising campaigns. These examples are important to mark because they underscore the interconnection of nursing, history and politics.

North American nurses served as rich media through which US and Canadian citizens gained valuable firsthand information on the political events and on the social circumstances of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey. These nurses wrote letters to the North American public that

were published in professional nursing journals and newspapers, in which they presented their experiences in Turkey while expressing the dire need for additional fundraising to help continue their humanitarian missions of saving the lives of thousands of survivors, refugees and orphaned children. Hence, these nurses were explicitly involved not only in fundraising, but also in political and social life as they helped shape the course of events through which the Near East Relief and the Canadian Armenian National Fund were established and maintained, and through which the Armenian Genocide became central in the foreign policies of the respective governments.

In addition to North American nurses' roles as change agents both in politics and social justice, this thesis also shed light on their enduring commitments based on which, despite the extremely dangerous circumstances, some returned to Turkey and the region after having spent some time home in their respective countries. Their commitments are understood through their high self-esteem and their professionalism by which they recognized the impact they had on the lives of the Armenian sufferers and the future generations of the inhabitants of the geographical regions they served. Finally, when they helped establish hospitals, nursing schools and training workshops for the locals, they most likely were aware that they were putting the foundations of modern nursing in place and relaying a message of hope for these ethnically mixed generations of Turks, Armenians, Greeks and Kurds.

Future studies in the field of humanitarian history and nursing history could build on the findings from this thesis. Drawing in further archival sources may shed light on a fuller description of nurses' involvement, for example in the way they helped and provided resources for the thousands of orphaned children. In addition, it would be important to extend this research beyond the specified time-frame and include further archival documents of more nursing journals

and newspapers as well as organizational records, such as from the Near East Relief or the American Red Cross, to expand upon this beginning understanding of North American nurses' involvement and the meaning of transnational relationships as a resource for the people involved during the Armenian Genocide.

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