

A sepia-toned photograph of a village scene. In the foreground, a man in a dark jacket and light trousers stands on the left, and a woman in a dark dress and light vest stands on the right. In the background, a church with a prominent dome and arched windows is visible, surrounded by other buildings and people. The scene is set in a hilly or mountainous area.

A VILLAGE REMEMBERED

THE ARMENIANS OF HABOUSI

MAYRENI



A VILLAGE REMEMBERED
THE ARMENIANS OF HABOUSH

A PUBLICATION OF THE COMPATRIOTIC UNION OF HABOUSHI

A VILLAGE REMEMBERED

The Armenians of Habousi

Edited by

Vatche Ghazarian, Ph.D.

Mayreni Publishing
1997

**First published in Armenian, in 1963, as:
History of the Village of Habousi**

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 96-78306

Ghazarian, Vatche (Editor)
History of the Village of Habousi

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tion address:
Mayreni Publishing, P.O. Box 1022, Waltham, MA 02154, U.S.A.

ISBN: 0-9653718-3-2

MAYRENI PUBLISHING 1997

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F oreword

In May of 1995, members of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi decided to embark on the project of translating the *History of the Village of Habousi* from Armenian into English. Both young and old members hoped to make accessible to all generations a sense of our history and a better understanding of our culture. What we did not realize at the time is that this project would become so much more.

The original *History of the Village of Habousi* was published in 1963. As the reader will learn in the 1963 preface, the contributors were aware of the historical, geographic and ethnographic significance of their undertaking. The moral obligation that compelled them to compile a history of the village, destroyed by the genocide, for posterity and to honor the people and community devastated by the massacres was not only courageous but wise. It is true that Habousi geographically no longer exists, and the land is submerged in water, as a result to the construction of the Kevan dam by the Turkish government in this region. However, through this document the reader will soon learn that the spirit of this village of Kharpert will continue to thrive from generation to generation. For equally important to the geographical and historical information is the knowledge of Habousetzies' love for education, human values, their piety, entrepreneurial spirit, self defense, and strong community spirit.

This English version is not a literal translation. The Book Committee and the editor deemed it necessary to rid the English version from repetitions, to abbreviate certain chapters while expanding others, to include maps and a historical sketch by Christopher Walker and David Marshall Lang, and where noted to anglicize some of the original names. All this was done to enable the reader to better comprehend the History of Habousi while maintaining the spirit and sense of pride from the original authors.

Finally, we hope to bridge readers not only with the past but with a new generation of Armenia. Habousetzies, once again, have the opportunity to contribute to the prosperity of an independent homeland. This new homeland's strength is encouraged by our support while we pay homage to our ancestors.

In spite of the historical significance of this document, for some readers this book will be a personal journey. For beyond the written text, the voices of your parents, grandparents or great grandparents may suddenly awaken and the stories become familiar. Once again, the Compatriotic Union of Habousi felt a moral obligation to insure that these voices were heard and not forgotten. Hence our decision to translate the original document into English.

In 1963, when the History of the Village of Habousi was published, our ancestors left a legacy to their descendants that identified the hardships and challenges of the past. In 1996, we hope that the reader not only understands those hardships but also appreciates the spirit in which the challenges were overcome. Habousetzies' respect for human dignity and perseverance transcend time and are qualities that make both Armenians and non-Armenians proud.

Compatriotic Union of Habousi

P

reface to the Armenian Version (Published in 1963)

Our birthplace Habousi was destroyed and its indigenous Armenian population devastated during the horrible genocide of 1915, like other numerous lively cities and villages of Western Armenia. The Turkish massacres and deportation claimed the lives of most of our villagers—the aged, women, children. Those who survived have kept Habousi alive in their souls. They have remembered its beautiful scenery and its brave and hardworking people whose lives, customs, and traditions remain a valuable legacy for us all.

When the Compatriotic Union of Habousi decided to prepare and publish the history of the village, they were aware that it would be a difficult task—a task that would demand dedicated work and financial sacrifices from its members. But the notion of a moral obligation to complete this project urged us forward for two major reasons.

First, there was the desire to establish a monument in honor of our destroyed village and our compatriots who were killed by the Turkish yataghan (sword) or who perished on the road to exile. We hope that present and future generations learn through this book about Habousi which today lays in ruin, its creative villagers, workers, mothers, and children forever deprived of tombs.

Second, there was the demand to write down the customs, proverbs, values, desires, and efforts of many generations of villagers, as a complementary part of the ethnographic history of the Armenian people.

Major contributors to the preparation of this book with their memoirs and documents are: Krikor M. Bennanian, Giragos Melkonian, Yeghia B. Bedrosian, Kasbar Arakelian, Dr. Arshag Der Margossian, Kasbar Minasian, Stepan Panian, Joohar Boyajian-Jerjekian, Hagop Kachadorian, Antranig Donigian, Haroutiun Boyajian, Nazaret H. Proodian, J. Kassabian, Hagop Akmakjian, Garabed Bedrosian, Boghos Yeghigian, Haroutiun Hagopian, Moushegh Hagopian, Nishan Teboyan, and Moushegh Kochakian, to whom we extend our deepest appreciation.

Central Committee
Compatriotic Union of Habousi

Acknowledgment

Since 1985, the membership of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi has been increasing and so has the desire from new members to learn more about our past. What better way to memorialize our culture than to make the voices of our ancestors accessible to current and future generations. We are grateful to the Compatriotic Union of Habousi for their decision to move forward with the translation and for their on-going support and confidence in this endeavor.

An invaluable depth of gratitude to Miriam (Mary) Kochakian, whose initial research peaked our curiosity to move forward with this project. Many a Habousetzie meeting included Miriam sharing some new information she had uncovered from the original manuscript. Miriam was also responsible for locating our editor, Dr. Vatche Ghazarian, introduced to her by Manoug Young, Chairman of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

We so appreciate our editor, Dr. Vatche Ghazarian, for his willingness to share his talent and skills with our organization. Vatche's translation of the original manuscript from Armenian into English was remarkable, particularly when it became clear that the original manuscript had truly been a collaborative effort; hence many phrases and descriptions were challenging. Equally challenging was serving as facilitator of the Book Committee meetings, a small yet enthusiastic group. Vatche was very patient in insuring that we remained focused on the task at hand. Vatche's depth of knowledge of Armenian culture is impressive, and with great admiration we appreciate the ease with which he answered our questions as we learned more about our past.

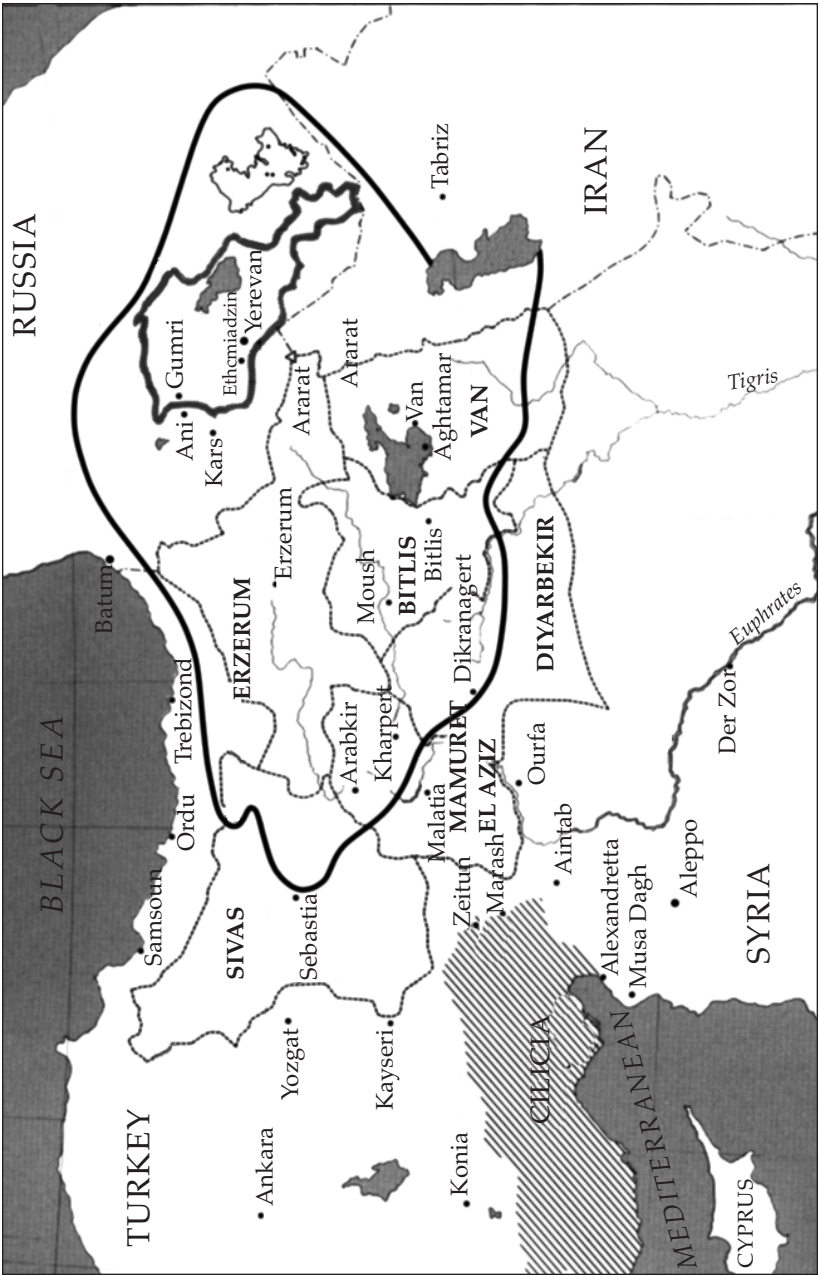
A word of gratitude must be extended to Dr. Barbara Merguerian of NAASR for her valuable editorial contribution.

We are forever grateful to Book Committee Members: Agnes Manoogian David, James Kachadorian, and Henry Manoogian. Their willingness to review manuscripts and provide critical feedback was invaluable. The English translation of this manuscript would not have come to fruition had Agnes, Jim, and Henry not been willing to invest so much time and commitment to see this project through its completion.

Thank you also to Habousetzie members: Elaine Kachadorian, Lea Kachadorian, Holly Manoogian, MaryAnn Manoogian, and Georgiana and Jerry White for their input and enthusiasm throughout this endeavor. And thank you to Marion Manoogian for insuring that the Book Committee was well-nourished during our meetings.

Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to past and present members of The Compatriotic Union of Habousi: to past members who had the foresight to document our history and culture for future generations; to current members whose pride in their culture will insure that the history and traditions of Habousi will continue to be shared with future generations.

Compatriotic Union of Habousi



Historic Armenia and Cilicia.

The Armenians

by DAVID MARSHALL LANG AND CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER

The Armenian homeland, known historically as Great Armenia, comprises a large area of mountainous country. If we take the western boundary as situated between Kharput and Malatya in Turkey, and the eastern boundary between Khoi in Persian Azerbaijan, and ... Karabagh, this makes a distance of over 450 miles 'as the crow flies'. From Armenia's northern border between Ardahan and Lake Sevan, southwards to the traditional frontier with Kurdistan, below Lake Van, measures some 250 miles. Allowing for the country's irregular shape, we arrive at an area of not less than 100,000 square miles.

The revised *Encyclopedia of Islam* ... estimates a total area for Arminiyya of about 300,000 square kilometers, or 115,000 square miles. Lesser Armenia during the Middle Ages was a district of north-western Armenia, adjoining what is now the Turkish-Kurdish city of Erzinjan. From the 11th to the 14th centuries, there existed an important Armenian kingdom in Cilicia, north of the Gulf of Alexandretta, and including St. Paul's birthplace of Tarsus and the modern city of Adana. This kingdom was ruled by the Armenian dynasty of the Rupenids, and then by the French Lusignans. It fell to the Mamluks of Egypt in 1375. Cilicia is also known as 'Little Armenia'.

... Armenia today takes in only 10% of the territory of ancient Great Armenia, comprising 29,800 square kilometers.

... Modern maps of Turkey exclude all mention of Armenia. The area once known as Turkish Armenia is now shown as being unquestionably

1- Exerpt from The Minority Rights Group, Report No. 32, revised edition of 1987, pp 3-8.

part of Turkey, and many Armenian place names have been replaced by Turkish forms. All mention of 'Turkish Armenia' is prohibited.

Parts of Armenia, notably the River Araxes valley, and the Van district, are fertile and beautiful. However, this is true of less than a quarter of Armenia's overall territory. Far from being a 'land of milk and honey', the larger part of Armenia is virtually uninhabitable. The landscape is cut up by enormous mountains, many being extinct volcanoes over 10,000 feet high. Armenia's highest peak, Mount Ararat, rises to 17,000 feet. The average height of the Armenian plateau is over 5000 feet.

A particularly hard fact of geography is Great Armenia's lack of access to the sea. Being cut off from Russia by the main Caucasus range, Armenia's nearest maritime outlets are such ports as Trebizond in Turkey, Batumi in Georgia, and Baku in Azerbaijan. From 1080 to 1375 A.D., the Cilician kingdom of Armenia had direct access to the eastern Mediterranean through several excellent ports, but this was only temporary. Otherwise Armenia is entirely landlocked and has always suffered from this fact both economically and politically.

Who are the Armenians?

Although they speak an Indo-European language, the Armenians are descended from ancient tribes who inhabited their traditional homeland in Eastern Anatolia since prehistoric times. There is a remarkable archaeological record of continuous human occupation of the region around Mount Ararat, since the Old Stone Age. To this extent, the Biblical legend of Noah's Ark reflects historical reality...

Before 1000 B. C., Armenia became dominated by a people known as the Urartians. 'Urartu' is actually the same name as Ararat, in the Assyrian language. The Urartians founded an important kingdom, based on the city of Van, where their ruined palaces and castles exist even today. Around 600 B. C., Urartu was overrun by various invaders, among whom were the Scythians, the Medes (ancestors of the present-day Kurds), and some people calling themselves 'Hayasa', who came from Central Anatolia, close to the old Hittite state. The Armenians of today call their land Hayastan, and their legendary ancestor, Haik. The ancient inhabitants of Armenia/Urartu did not die out, but became mingled with these invading elements. Though retaining much of their old ethnic identity, they adopted a new language, which is a distinctive member of the Indo-European group.

Persian and Greek sources begin to speak of 'Armina' and 'Armenians' from about 500 B. C. They were known under these names to the Great Kings Darius and Xerxes of Persia, and to the Father of

History, Herodotus. This attests to continuous occupation by the Armenian nation of the land known as 'Great Armenia' and adjoining districts, from well before 500 B. C. until the annihilation of virtually all the community living in eastern Turkey in 1915, amounting to an uninterrupted period of two and a half millennia.

Today the scattered Armenians number at least six million, spread virtually all over the world. Most of them are marked by success in business and professional life. They are renowned as university lecturers, scientists, mathematicians, doctors and dentists. They excel in the arts and in literature. Armenians are numbered among orchestral conductors and soloists, film directors, sculptors and book illustrators. They are noted for their humor... Armenians are excellent cooks and famed for their hospitality. They are faithful friends, and have produced many military leaders.

ARMENIA IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL TIMES

Armenians are understandably proud of the fact that their country was once a great power—though only for a couple of generations, in the time of Pompey and Julius Caesar. The greatest Armenian king was called Tigranes II, and he ruled from 95 to 55 B. C. His realm extended from the Caspian Sea right across the Middle East to Syria and the Mediterranean Sea. However, Tigranes was conquered by the Roman general Lucullus—inventor of the Lucullan banquet, financed by Armenian gold! Further defeats were inflicted on the Armenians by Pompey. It is worth noting that Tigranes' son, King Artavazd II, was a man of outstanding literary culture, who composed plays in Greek, and founded a Greek theater at his court in Armenia. Artavazd fell foul of Antony and Cleopatra (of Shakespearean fame), who kidnapped Artavazd and his family and put them to death.

If we except the now vanished Christian realm of King Abgar of Edessa, Armenia is the oldest Christian nation in the world. The introduction of Christianity is ascribed to St. Gregory the Illuminator. After enduring cruel tortures, Gregory converted the pagan Armenian sovereign Tiridates III, probably in the year 301 A.D. Christianity developed in Armenia independently of Rome and Constantinople. There are therefore certain doctrinal and liturgical differences. But this does not affect the Armenian church's claim to represent an authentic apostolic tradition in the Near East.

The distinctive Armenian alphabet was invented early in the fifth

century A. D., by St. Mesrop Mashtots. Previously, all literature and official documents had been written down in Greek or in Middle Iranian. This invention of a national script enabled the Bible and most of the important works of early Christian literature to be translated into Armenian.

The establishment of a national Church proved of vital importance in preserving Armenian national unity. Such were the political pressures that without their Church the Armenians would long ago have been assimilated by their neighbors. A fateful political decision was taken in 387 A. D., when the Romans and Persians carved up Armenia between them. In 428, the last king of the Armeno-Parthian dynasty of the Arsacids died, and was not replaced. Feudal barons or 'nakharars' vied for supreme power. The Persian Zoroastrian Great King Yezdegird did everything possible to suppress Christianity, invading Armenia in 451 with an enormous army, including squadrons of elephants. Persian domination was later followed by that of the Arab caliphs, who sent their generals (including one named Bogha the Turk) to ravage the land.

The Byzantine emperors also treated Armenia in a domineering manner. They deported thousands of Armenians into Thrace and Macedonia. However, several Byzantine emperors were themselves Armenians. These include remarkable Basil II (867-886) and the able but unpopular Leo the Armenian (813-820). Another Armenian emperor was John Tzimiskes (969-976), one of the most brilliant conquerors ever to sit on the throne in Constantinople. During the ninth century, the Armenian monarchy was restored under the dynasty of the Bagratids, whose capital (now in ruins) can still be seen at Ani, on the frontier between Turkey and Soviet Armenia. Another Armenian dynasty existed in the province of Vaspurakan, further south. One of its rulers, King Gagik, built the famous church of Aghtamar, on an island in Lake Van. The revival of the Armenian independent monarchy proved short-lived. In 1045 the Byzantines annexed Ani and abolished the monarchy of the Bagratids. The Seljuq Turks soon swept in from Central Asia and Iran, and overran Ani and much of Anatolia in 1064.

Armenian emigration from the homeland grew into a flood. The Armenians were successful in founding a new kingdom in Cilicia (ca.1080-1375), with its capital at Sis. There they became allies of the Crusaders, and the last king of Cilician Armenia, Levon V Lusignan, died in exile in Paris in 1393. A number of Armenians crossed the Black Sea to found trading colonies in the Crimea. Thence they spread into Russia, Romania and Poland. Armenians played an important role in building up

the Moldavian state of Prince Alexander the Good(1401-1435), while the ruler John the Brave of Moldavia (1572-1574) was himself an Armenian. In Poland, Armenians were prominent in the commercial and intellectual life of Cracow and Lvov; in the latter city, they founded an Armenian Catholic cathedral.

Within a century of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, the Ottoman frontier was established with the empire's eastern neighbor (initially Iran, later Russia), a frontier which persists to this day. Like Poland, Armenia was doomed to have her land divided among other people's empires. Within Ottoman Turkey, the Armenians were organized into their own semi-autonomous community or millet, with the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople at its head... Over the centuries, the community came to be dominated by an elite of merchants and high officials; and until a period of internal reform in the 18th century, the Patriarchate was often seen as an office to be sold to the highest bidder, with its attendant corruption. In the wealthy environment of Constantinople, Armenians and Turks developed a remarkable understanding of one another, and Armenians served the empire well as bankers, heads of government concerns and imperial architects. Until the emergence of national sentiment in the late 19th century, Ottoman Armenians were known as the 'loyal millet'.

... In the course of a quarter of a century—between 1895 and 1920—the Armenian nation lost a million and a half persons by the gun or the bayonet, by deliberate starvation, and by privation and disease. About a third of all Armenians in the world died a gruesome, painful death...

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ARMENIANS IN OTTOMAN TURKEY

Within the Ottoman Empire, Armenians formed four broad classes. The first consisted of the rich and influential men in the government and civil service. The second was the mercantile and trading class of Istanbul and the cities of Anatolia; this was the class with which Western travelers came into most contact. The third class was the peasantry—much the largest of the four and the least regarded, except by a few knowledgeable travelers such as H. F. B. Lynch. The fourth was the warrior class of the mountaineers—men living a tough, independent existence in remote mountain fastnesses like Zeitun. In addition, there was a numerous priesthood and higher clergy.

How many Armenians were there in Turkey? There were no reliable

independent population statistics. Ubicini (1854) put the figure at 2,400,000, and held that they constituted a majority in the provinces of Erzerum (which then included Kars, Bayazid and Childer) and Kurdistan (Van, Moush, Hakkiari and Diyarbakir). In 1882 the Armenian patriarchate in Constantinople produced figures estimating Armenians in the Empire at 2,660,000, of whom 1,630,000 lived in the 'six [Armenian] vilayets'—the provinces of Sivas, Mamuret el-Aziz, Erzerum, Diyarbakir, Bitlis and Van. Later statistics from the patriarchate in 1912 put the total at only 2,100,000; the decrease was due to the massacres of the 1890s, and the continual shift of the Armenian population across the frontier into the Russian Caucasus. Official Turkish figures put the Armenian population considerably lower.

The Ottoman Turkish government had exercised little direct authority over the majority of its Armenian citizens until the second half of the 19th century. Up to that date, the majority in the country areas were beholden to local Kurdish feudal lords. When central government encroached, the result was almost always bad: it meant extra taxes for the peasantry, and an increase in oppression. The Armenians in 'Turkish Armenia' (that is, eastern Turkey of today) had an additional problem to cope with. They were heavily intermixed with a large Kurdish population... These Kurds, originally from more southerly regions, had been settled there by Sultan Selim in the 16th century, on condition that they guard the frontier with Persia. The Kurds are mostly orthodox Muslims. Though not fanatical, their tendencies for pillaging, and for stealing Armenian girls, were strong. Moreover the Kurds were armed, whereas the Armenians, as a Christian subject race, were forbidden to bear arms.

Bit by bit the Armenians were squeezed out. In 1839, Consul Brant had reported that 'in the whole plain of Moush there are not any Mohammedan peasants intermingled with the Armenians', but within a few decades, they were a minority in their own land. The Armenian peasantry was sometimes heavily indebted to the Kurds, who acted as money-lenders, and charged a rate of interest of between 3% and 4% per month.

The reform movements of the 19th century in Ottoman Turkey, known as the 'Tanzimat' or reorganization, hardly benefited the Armenians at all outside Constantinople, the main reason being that the civil administration of the empire was not reorganized. And it is arguable that the 'Tanzimat' was little but a piece of window dressing, designed to pacify European diplomats pressing the 'sick man of Europe' towards some semblance of reform.

ARMENIA AND THE GREAT POWERS

Armenia did not feature as an issue in international diplomacy until 1878. Her people were not rebellious, so European diplomats tended to overlook them. But the education that Armenians were receiving, whether in France, Venice or Russia, meant that the old subservience would not last. Moreover, the capture of eastern Armenia by the Russians from the Persians in 1828, and their creation there of an 'Armenian province', gave a boost to nationalist sentiment...

With the Treaty of Paris (1856), Ottoman Turkey was first admitted as a treaty partner with the great powers; and entry into the 'club' was secured through article 9 of that treaty, which promised ameliorations for the Christian population of the empire. At the time the European powers were thinking not of the Armenians but of the Balkan Christians; however there was no distinction between Balkan and Armenian in the treaty itself. No substantial reforms were made, except for Armenians in the imperial capital; conditions in the provinces continued as they had always been.

At the same time it was a period of 'exchange of populations', exacerbating distinctions of race and religion. Tens of thousands of Armenians fled to eastern Armenia following its Russian conquest in 1828; and following the Crimean war and the Russian subjugation of Circassia, hundreds of thousands of Muslims fled to the Ottoman Empire. Russia moved on to subdue Central Asia, where the fate of rebellious or disaffected Muslims was frequently death. These things increased rather than diminished racial and religious feelings.

Nevertheless Armenians continued to hope that the administration of their people in the Ottoman provinces would improve. (It is perhaps worth pointing out that Armenians were seeking reforms in the administration, not independence; not until after World War I did any of them, except a small unrepresentative group of revolutionaries, seek independence.) Armenian hopes were highest after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78- by this time they had grown in self-awareness, and knew that their people deserved better than to be treated as serfs by the local Turks and Kurds.

But the hopes of the Armenians were frustrated, largely by the British Prime Minister, Disraeli. He viewed the introduction of reforms in the Ottoman Empire merely as an advance in Russian power, which was unacceptable. Disraeli and Lord Salisbury forced the Russians to evacuate Erzerum, although they were allowed to keep Kars and Ardahan. An

unworkable clause was introduced into the Treaty of Berlin (1878), laying the Western powers under an obscure collective obligation to check on Turkey's introduction of administrative reforms; the upshot was that 'What was everybody's business became nobody's business', as the Duke of Argyll was later to observe. Half a dozen British consuls were left with the impossible task of policing- without any real powers of coercion- an area the size of England and Wales; and they were ordered home after four years. Disraeli, however, cleverly wrested Cyprus from the Turkish sultan, as the price for a defense treaty with Britain. Britain's guilt in leaving the Armenians unprotected was later recognized by Lloyd George; he noted in 1938 that, in the Treaty of Berlin, which was 'entirely due to our minatory pressure' and which 'was acclaimed by us as a great British triumph which brought "Peace with honor" ', 'Armenia was sacrificed on the triumphal altar we had erected. The Russians were forced to withdraw; the wretched Armenians were once more placed under the heel of their old masters...' (However, despite these high sentiments, it should be pointed out that during his premiership, in 1920 Lloyd George did as little for the Armenians as any of his predecessors. He exhibited the fatal tendency of the British to wring their hands at the fate of Armenians but do nothing concrete in their behalf).

Bit by bit Britain lost its position of predominance at the court of the sultan. Reforms were never introduced into Turkish Armenia. And the Turkish court gravitated more and more towards the German capital at Berlin, where Bismarck and later Kaiser Wilhelm II were proclaiming that 'Might is Right'.

THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Though life continued to be tolerable, even enviable, for the wealthy Armenians of the great cities of the Ottoman empire, the situation in the eastern provinces went from bad to worse. Instead of the administration being reformed, oppression by local officials grew more intense. Abdul Hamid armed the Kurds, and encouraged them to attack the Armenian villagers. In 1891 he formed the Kurdish Hamidiye regiments, which terrorized the civilian population, just as Cossack troops in Russia did during the final years of Tsarism. The Armenians for their part began to form underground defense groups and armed revolutionary societies. The first of these were the Armenakans of Van(1885), followed by the Hunchaks (1887, founded in Geneva) and the Dashnaks (1890, Tiflis)... The split

which opened within the Armenian community between conservatives and gradualists on one side, and radicals and party authoritarians on the other side, was to have serious and lasting implications.

During the early 1890s, these groups carried out a few acts of armed defiance of the Turkish authorities, and put up seditious placards calling on the people to revolt. But the first really significant action was the attempt by Hunchaks in 1894 to incite the Armenians of Sasun in Turkish Armenia to defy both the Ottoman government and their local Kurdish overlords. The two leading revolutionaries, Mihran Damadian and Hampartzum Boyadjian, were respectively a teacher and a doctor.

SULTAN ABDUL HAMID AND THE 1894-96 MASSACRES

The Sasun rising was suppressed with considerable ferocity by Ottoman regulars, which led to an international outcry. Foreign pressure forced the sultan to appoint a commission, with delegates from Britain, France and Russia as observers. Abdul Hamid promised reforms, but there followed in October-December 1895 a series of massacres throughout Turkish Armenia, in almost every one of which, impartial observers, including British consuls, noted official complicity. Just before these killings took place, the Hunchaks had organized a large and violent demonstration in Istanbul, which served as an additional pretext for the authorities to slaughter the Armenian populace.

In these massacres, up to 300,000 Armenians perished. Perhaps the grimmest was the second massacre at Urfa on 28-29 December 1895. About 3000 Armenian men, women and children had taken refuge in their cathedral, but troops soon broke in. After shooting down many unarmed victims, the Turks collected straw bedding, poured kerosene on it, and set it alight. British Consul Fitzmaurice later wrote: 'The gallery beams and wooden framework soon caught fire, whereupon, blocking up the staircase leading to the gallery with similar inflammable materials, they left the mass of struggling human beings to become the prey of the flames. During several hours the sickening odor of roasting flesh pervaded the town, and even today, two months and a half after the massacre, the smell of putrescent and charred remains in the church is unbearable.'

In despair, the Armenian revolutionaries resolved to force intervention by the European powers who had signed the Berlin treaty of 1878. In August 1896, a group of armed Dashnaks seized the Ottoman Bank in

Constantinople, and threatened to blow it up unless their political demands were met. But they gave in after holding the Bank for thirteen hours— all they obtained was free passage out of the country. However, they were the lucky ones; as they left, the sultan organized another massacre of Armenians on the streets of the capital, right under the noses of the foreign ambassadors. Most of those killed were Armenians of the poorest class—migrant workers, porters, dockers and caretakers.

Pressed by Gladstone and others to intervene, Lord Salisbury commented that, unfortunately, British battleships could not operate over the Taurus mountains. The European powers discussed the possible partition of the Ottoman Empire, or even the forcible deposition of the bloodthirsty sultan. But their mutual rivalries and mistrust, and the enormous sums invested by some of them in the economy of the Ottoman Empire, prevented any effective action being taken.

A FALSE DAWN: ARMENIA AND THE YOUNG TURK REVOLUTION

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 removed the autocratic powers of Sultan Abdul Hamid and reintroduced the Constitution of 1876. Initially there was a tremendous sense of liberty and fraternity among the nationalities within the Empire; Armenian Dashnaks had collaborated closely with the Young Turks in staging the revolution, and maintained an alliance with them for a few years thereafter.

Yet even within one year, relations turned rather sour. In 1909 there was a furious massacre of Armenians in Adana, claiming about 30,000 victims. It is not clear whether the Young Turks, or partisans of the deposed Abdul Hamid, were behind this bloodthirsty episode. Soon the Young Turk revolution was degenerating into mere dictatorship, and the policy of the ruling junta became one of 'the Turks above all other nationalities'. The British Ambassador described their policy in September 1910 as 'pounding the non-Turkish elements in a Turkish mortar'—a remark which applies equally well to the Turkish government in the 1980s.

At the same time, a Turkish nationalist ideology was taking shape which was to have grave and far-reaching implications for the Armenians. This was pan-Turkism or pan-Turanianism—a doctrine which continues even today to have many powerful adepts...

The implications of pan-Turkism for the Armenians were extremely grave. They were among the least willing of the minorities within the empire to be Turkicized, clinging to their ancient Church as a symbol of

that defiance. Moreover, their fellow Armenians in the Russian Caucasus stood in the way of the 'second stage' of pan-Turkism— the expansion to Baku, the oil city on the Caspian.

This theorizing was far from being harmless intellectual speculation—any more than the Aryan myth was under the regime of Adolf Hitler. By 1914 Ottoman Turkey was ruled by a triumvirate of Young Turk militants, and pan-Turkism was the personal ideology of the most powerful of the three, Enver Pasha. The second of the trio, Talaat, was less of a theoretician, but capable of crushing the minority nationalities, and with an abundance of bureaucratic cruelty in his character. The third, Jemal, was of a more affable disposition, but with more than a streak of ruthlessness.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE 'FINAL SOLUTION' OF THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

It is often stated by Turkish historians that the mass deportation of the Armenians was forced on the Young Turk government of that time, because the entire Armenian population constituted a dangerous 'Fifth Column', sympathetic to the Western Allies and to Russia. This claim is less than the whole truth. Just two years before, Armenians had fought bravely in the Ottoman army during the Balkan War; the British ambassador had remarked that 'the several thousand of Armenian troops have fought better than any of the other non-Turkish elements'. In 1914, there were a number of professions of Armenian loyalty to the Ottoman empire (notably the enlistment of Armenians in the Ottoman army); however, the last forty years had taught the Armenians to be wary of any Turkish government, none of which had shown evidence of being their government.

Shortly before the First World War broke out in 1914, the Dashnak party held its eighth party conference in Erzerum. During the conference, Young Turk representatives approached the Dashnaks and suggested that they should foment a rebellion across the frontier, in the Russian Caucasus. In return, Turkey would set up an autonomous Armenia under her own protection. The Dashnaks turned down the plan, proposing instead that Turkey should stay neutral in the impending conflict; but in the event of Turkey joining the war, Armenians everywhere would be advised to do their duty as Ottoman citizens.

When war broke out, most Turkish Armenians behaved as loyal Ottoman citizens. An estimated 250,000 were conscripted into the

Ottoman armies. When Enver Pasha was defeated by the Russians at Sarikamish, it was Armenian soldiers who saved him from being killed or captured by the Tsarist forces. However, some Armenians fled from Turkey into Russia, and joined volunteer regiments which the Tsarist authorities were encouraging. In Cilicia, Armenian leaders instigated a revolt against the Ottoman government, but this came to nothing.

Soon events took a tragic turn. Turkish Armenians in the Ottoman army were disarmed and herded into labor battalions, where they were starved, beaten or machine-gunned. On 24 April 1915, two hundred and fifty-four Armenian intellectuals in Istanbul were arrested and deported to the provinces of Ayash and Chankiri, where nearly all of them were murdered by the authorities. Further arrests in Istanbul brought the number to 5000.

Having lost both its able-bodied male population (from the army) and now its intellectual elite, the Armenian community was now almost leaderless, and the authorities turned upon it with fury. In every town and village of Turkish Armenia and Asia Minor, the entire Armenian population was ordered out. The men were usually led away and shot down just outside their villages. A far worse fate awaited the women and children: they were forced to walk southwards in huge convoys to the burning deserts of northern Syria. Few survived the privations of these terrible death marches; for months afterwards, the roads and tracks of Anatolia were littered with corpses and skeletons picked clean by the vultures. There were variations on this pattern. In Trebizond, the local Armenians were embarked in boats, and thrown overboard when well out into the Black Sea. A number were despatched by being hurled down the Kemakh Gorge, near Erzinjan.

Those who survived the long journey south were herded into huge open-air concentration camps, the grimmest of which was that at Deir ez-Zor, in Ottoman Syria, where they were starved and killed by sadistic guards. A small number were able to escape through the secret protection of friendly Arabs in villages in northern Syria. Otherwise, the only refugee routes were to Russian Transcaucasia or the Balkans, apart from the remarkable escapes of four thousand besieged villagers from Musa Dag, near Antioch, rescued by a French warship. (The Musa Dag episode forms the subject of a novel by Franz Werfel.)

This systematic and successfully executed genocide resulted from decisions taken at the highest government level. The Interior Minister, Talaat Pasha, boasted to Morgenthau, the American ambassador, that the Armenian question was dead for fifty years. The government itself was

but an instrument of the Young Turk party, the 'Committee of Union and Progress', whose dominant ideology was pan-Turkism. The mass-murder was not just a matter of 'isolated incidents': it was carefully thought out and executed with precision. Nor did it result from religious intolerance, though the Young Turks mobilized the fanaticism of the village mullahs, and the greed of Turkish have-nots. There were in fact Muslim leaders who were shocked by the measures taken, and protested against them.

In recent years the government of the Turkish Republic has, through various official and semi-official channels, strenuously denied that the former Young Turk regime undertook a genocide against the Armenians. It is currently spending vast sums in propaganda and public relations—the firm of Gray and Company in Washington DC has been hired for the purpose—in order to try to demonstrate that no genocide took place in 1915. Pamphlets are published in Ankara aiming to show that the government orders issued in 1915 were humane; that the Armenians staged a treasonable revolt in Van- and that the events of 1915 would best be characterized as a civil war between various armed bands. All these claims are fallacious. As far as the orders are concerned, we know, from the testimony (which is in the Public Record Office, Kew) of an Ottoman Muslim officer who was a participant in the Armenian genocide that there were two sets of orders, one open and the other secret. The secret orders were the ones which had to be obeyed, and they detailed the violent measures to be undertaken against Armenians. So for the Turks to publish books and pamphlets showing that some orders were benevolent is no more than an exercise in naivete.

As regards Van in April 1915: on the evidence of independent eye witnesses, the Armenians' defiance of the Turkish governor has been shown to have been self-defense, not rebellion. On the matter of the alleged 'civil war', no reputable military historian gives any grounds for support of this view (least of all the standard work on the subject, Allen and Muratoff's *Caucasian Battlefields*). By equating Turkish and Armenian forces at this time, the proponents of this view are attempting to minimize or ignore the vast power of the Ottoman state, and its extensive deployment of the armed gendarmerie and party officials used to kill Armenian civilians at this time.

Who did the killing? In some cases it was ordinary gendarmes. The government also recruited a 'Special Organization' (*Teshkilat-i Makhsumiye*), mostly composed of common criminals released from prison in Western Anatolia, on condition that they engage in the slaughter of the Armenians.

How many Armenians died? Viscount Bryce, speaking in the House of Lords on 6 October 1915, put the figure then at 'around 800,000'. The slaughter continued well into 1916, and later still. The Turkish offensive into the Russian Caucasus in the summer of 1918 claimed many thousands of victims. The Turks then used Armenian refugees as targets for bayonet practice. When the Ottoman army captured Baku in the autumn of 1918, 15,000 Armenians were butchered. Scores of thousands of refugees died of famine after the October Revolution. As late as 1921, a British colonel in Erzerum found the Kemalists beating and starving Armenian captives to death.

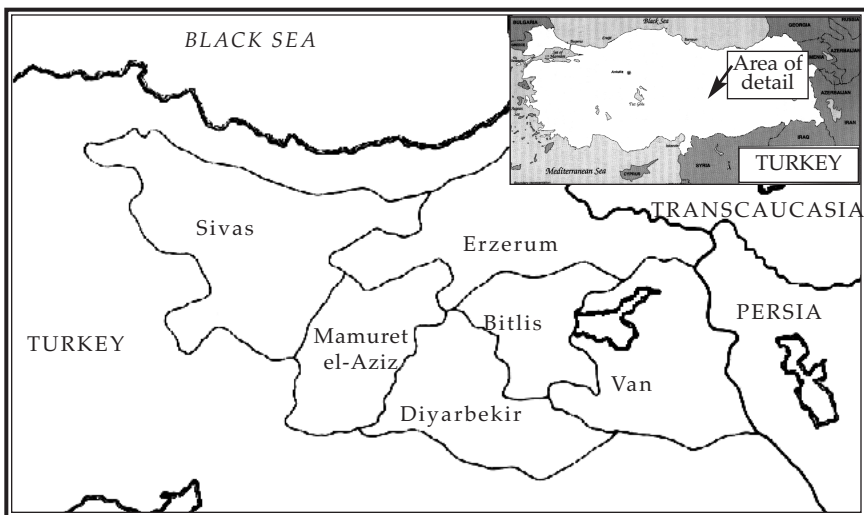
Before 1914, around two million Armenians lived in Turkey; since the First World War this figure has hardly exceeded 100,000. Thus the number of Armenian dead may safely be put at around 1,500,000. Another half-million became refugees, whose descendants, with their tragic memories, can be found in a score of countries today.

A Village Remembered

The Region and Its People

Habousi was a village of Kharpert, a province in Western Armenia renamed Mamuret-el-Aziz by Ottoman rulers. Armenia, in ancient times, was an extensive land (300,000 square kilometers or 115,000 square miles), neighbored on the west by the Byzantine Empire and on the east by the Persian Empire. After the fall of the last Armenian Cilician kingdom in 1375, six Armenian provinces—Van, Paghesh (Bitlis), Garin (Erzerum), Sepastia (Sivas), Dikranagerd (Diyarbakir), and Kharpert—and a certain portion of Cilicia fell under Ottoman Turkey, while the Persians ruled Eastern Armenia.

Kharpert was surrounded by the Taurus Mountain Ranges, com-



The administrative division of Western Armenia in late nineteenth century.

prised of three plains known as Oulou Ova (Big field), Deoz Ova (Plain field) and Keoz Ova (Sheep field). In the heart of these plains, atop a hill some 5,000 feet height the city of Kharpert (Harpur in Turkish) was built. The city was surrounded by about 365 villages, one of them being Habousi. At the foot of the hill, about three miles distant, was Mezre, the government seat of the province.

The Aradzany River (known as the Eastern Euphrates or Murat River)¹, flowing from the east, passed along the eastern boundary of Oulou Ova, turned north and cut the Taurus Ranges, thus dividing Kharpert from Dersim. Then again it changed its course and flowed southward into the Euphrates River near Malatia. Other rivers and tributaries passed through the plain also. Some came from the hills of Khacho Melik or from the Lake of Soorsoory; all were bound for the Euphrates River. Thus the plains of Kharpert formed a peninsula, abundant with water and ideal for growing crops. The lower hillsides were covered with vineyards, nut groves, fruit orchards, and mulberry trees. The fields were prolific with cotton, wheat, sesame, and all types of cereal grains and melons.

Kharpert was famous for the quality and quantity of its wine grapes. However, due to Turkish government policies, the shipping of wine grapes out of the province was kept to a minimum. The extensive acreage of mulberry trees did offer a medium for the raising of silk worms and gave impetus to a limited manufacture of silk goods for local and neighboring consumption. The manufacture of stamped cotton goods became almost an art. Various plants, leaves, nut shells, and roots were the source of fast natural dyes. Tanneries were common in many villages. Sheep and cattle raising were also important industries.

The villages which surrounded Kharpert were, for the most part, populated entirely by Armenians. In general, the Turks and Kurds inhabited villages in the mountainous regions north of Kharpert, which extended as far as the Euphrates River. Mezre was populated by both Armenians and Turks. It was on the outskirts of Mezre that silk factories were established in the mid to late nineteenth century.

1- By the source of the Aradzani the Armenian army had its headquarters in the fourth and the fifth centuries; it was near Aradzani that Tigran the Great, King of Armenia, defeated the Roman army in the first century B.C.; and it was told that King Trdades, his army, and Armenians at large were baptized in Aradzani when they adopted Christianity as the state religion in 301 AD.

The climate of Kharpert was dry and healthy. Only during a certain season of the year did humidity prevailed on the plains. The seasons were distinctly marked, each bringing with it special labors and enjoyment to the countryfolks. Kharpert was beautiful in the spring time, with its verdant fields and hillsides; beautiful in the heat of summer, with its fields of ripening grains and fruits; beautiful in the autumn, when the hills and countryside turned crimson and gold under nature's brush and young and old gathered with laughter and song to harvest the luscious grapes, fruits, grains, and nuts which filled the countrymen's larders for the coming winter days; beautiful in the winter when its cities and hamlets were covered with a mantle of snow and ice. Winter was the season for some work, but more so for rest and enjoyment.

The community life of Kharpert was closely interwoven with the change of seasons. Kharpert may well be called a patriarchal community. Families were closely knit. Grandparents, parents, and children all lived under one paternal roof. Marriages were consummated on the basis of family background and the suitability of the various families. It was jokingly said that when Kharpertsies met they invariably turned out to be relatives or at least *khenamis* (in-laws). Thus the community behaved like one large family. Each person was willing and ready to help his neighbor in the field or in the home. Dear in the memory of the Kharpetrtsie housewives were the bread-making days. On those days the whole neighborhood would get together to bake a six months' supply of bread for each family. Then came the season for crushing grapes. Crushed grapes were used to make wine, syrup, rojig, and pasdegh. Late in the fall was the time for melting butter fats and making *khavoorma* (pieces of meat cooked with bones and salted for preservation). Countless household duties were performed cheerfully, each for the other. Plowing, reaping, and shearing all turned into community projects complete with the attendant joymaking.

In spite of the ever present shadow of fear that hung over the Armenians, the inhabitants of Kharpert were happy and jovial. Birthdays, name days, feast days, engagements, and weddings were all occasions for gaiety. When the chilling blasts blew on the long winter days, the family would gather around the *koorsi* (the heating device). Grandparents told fantastic fairy tales to the little ones; maidens silently and diligently worked on intricate needlework and laces; mothers brought in trays laden with delicacies; and the menfolk spoke in low tones of their hope for the day when they would be free from oppression.

This was Kharpert before the tragic days of 1915, before the Turks brought total desolation and havoc and turned a happy and contented community to a barren wilderness.

The city of Kharpert offered great educational leadership to the wide vicinity of neighboring villages. Love of education was inherent in the young. In proportion to its size, Kharpert had many educational institutions, including kindergartens, primary schools, intermediate and high schools and three fine colleges, one French, one German, and one American, all established by their various nations for the purpose of bringing education to a worthy Christian people. The missionaries who labored zealously to bring the light of education were dear to those who studied under their untiring efforts. Non-missionary schools fell primarily under the jurisdiction and the sponsorship of the churches. Even the humblest farmer made the necessary sacrifices to insure his children receive an education. Every year, hundreds of young graduates journeyed out into the neighboring villages to teach and carry the torch of learning to others.

Turks, filled with religious fanaticism and racial hatred, looked with disfavor upon these Christian institutions. They did not take advantage of the educational opportunities of these foreign-run facilities and were content with their few mediocre schools and religious *medresses* (schools), where the teaching of the Koran and its loud recital seemed to be of highest importance. Taxes were levied on the Armenian population for the upkeep of these schools. The standard of education of the Armenians was far superior to that of the Turks, which perhaps explains why so many important positions were filled by Armenians (with the exception of military and police offices).

There was a Central High School located in Mezre. The French and German schools were also in Mezre, as well as many grade schools. The High School was co-educational. In the city of Kharpert were the St. Hagop Central School and Euphrates College, founded in 1878 and supported by an American endowment. Euphrates College was an imposing structure, comprised of two wings, with six large and small buildings, located on a hill surrounded with nut and fruit trees. The college had a well-rounded curriculum and also offered nursing and medical courses. One of its presidents, Dr. Atkinson, built the American Hospital in Mezre.

The enrollment of the schools of Mamuret-el-Aziz was about 35,000. Four-fifths of this number were Armenian, the balance was Turkish.

These numbers include the enrollment in Turkish *medresses* and the military academy. There is no doubt that the high level of education provided by these institutions raised the standard of living among the Armenians and in a measure affected the Turks positively also.

The educational advancement of the Armenian youth of Kharpert gave way to the gradual emigration from their homeland. For one reason, the opening of new vistas spurred them to establish higher goals; and the other—perhaps even stronger—motivation, was the growing sense of insecurity the people of Kharpert felt under Turkish rule. Emigration out of Kharpert and the neighboring villages started in the late nineteenth century. As the persecution and oppression increased, so did the numbers of those trying to find refuge and opportunity in other lands. Many came to the United States.

According to a census taken in 1870's by Armenian clergymen, there were nearly 118,900 inhabitants in Kharpert and the surrounding plains and hillsides. A little over fifty percent of the inhabitants were Armenians, twenty-seven percent Kurds, twenty-one percent were Turks, and one percent were Syrians. In the late 1890's, however, these numbers were not quite as favorable to the Armenians due to massacres and emigration, but Armenian birthrates were generally higher, so the population mix of the region remained stable until the genocide of 1915.

The vilayet of Mamuret-el-Aziz was divided into three provinces, Kharpert, Dersim, and Malatia. According to an unofficial census taken by Turkey, the population of the three combined was between 450,000 and 525,000. The majority were Armenian. Mezre had a population of about 16,000, half Armenians and half Turks. Business was mostly in the hands of the Armenians. Real estate was equally divided. The silk factories were Armenian owned.

Many Armenians in Kharpert were landowners. At the beginning of the last quarter of the last century, three-fourths of the land belonged to Turkish aghas, but by 1908 more and more Armenians had become property owners. No doubt the money earned by family members who had emigrated to the United States helped bring about this change.

In spite of many government restrictions and discrimination, the Armenians took advantage of opportunities. As real estate passed into the hands of the Armenians, their superiority grew also in business, industry, arts, and crafts. Of course the lack of shipping and transporta-

tion limited trade, and the supply of goods and services fell short of the demand. The standard of living among the Armenians was higher than that of the Turks in the region. No doubt a large measure of the credit for this goes to their educational institutions and training.

The mountain Kurds had little effect on the economic life of Kharpert. They lived isolated in their natural domain and enjoyed a lower standard of living than even the Turks. They had little to do with the rest of the population of Kharpert. They came down to the town and villages occasionally to trade. They were content with their nomadic life as sheep herders and dairymen. Many of them worked as the caretakers of large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle that belonged to wealthy Turkish Aghas and Armenians living on the plains. Periodically they received lambs, wool, cheese, and butter in payment for their labors.

In the early 1890's matters took a turn for the worse in Kharpert. Villages were plundered, cattle were stolen, Armenian homes were pillaged, and their lives threatened. The *Khojabashis* (tax collectors) made periodic visits to every village and hamlet to collect taxes, and woe to those who could not comply with the government's demands. The villagers were subjected to all types of physical torture. The specters of massacre and persecution hung over the heads of the Armenians.

Life in Kharpert was changing fast. Gone were the relatively peaceful days of their fathers. Now they lived as strangers in their natural homeland, torn by fear and suspicion. The pillaging and atrocities of 1895 drove them nigh to frenzy; and anyone who could get away was anxious to escape, even if it meant leaving their homes, goods, cattle, and other possessions behind and facing a strange world almost penniless.

After the massacres of 1895, when nearly 300,000 Armenians were slaughtered during the reign of Sultan Hamid¹, Armenian emigration took a pronounced upturn. However, when in 1908 the Turks declared a Constitutional Government, the Armenians became more hopeful of a peaceful existence and the association of the Turks and Armenians became temporarily more friendly. A light of hope shone on the horizon; maybe the Armenians would not have to forsake their homeland. But

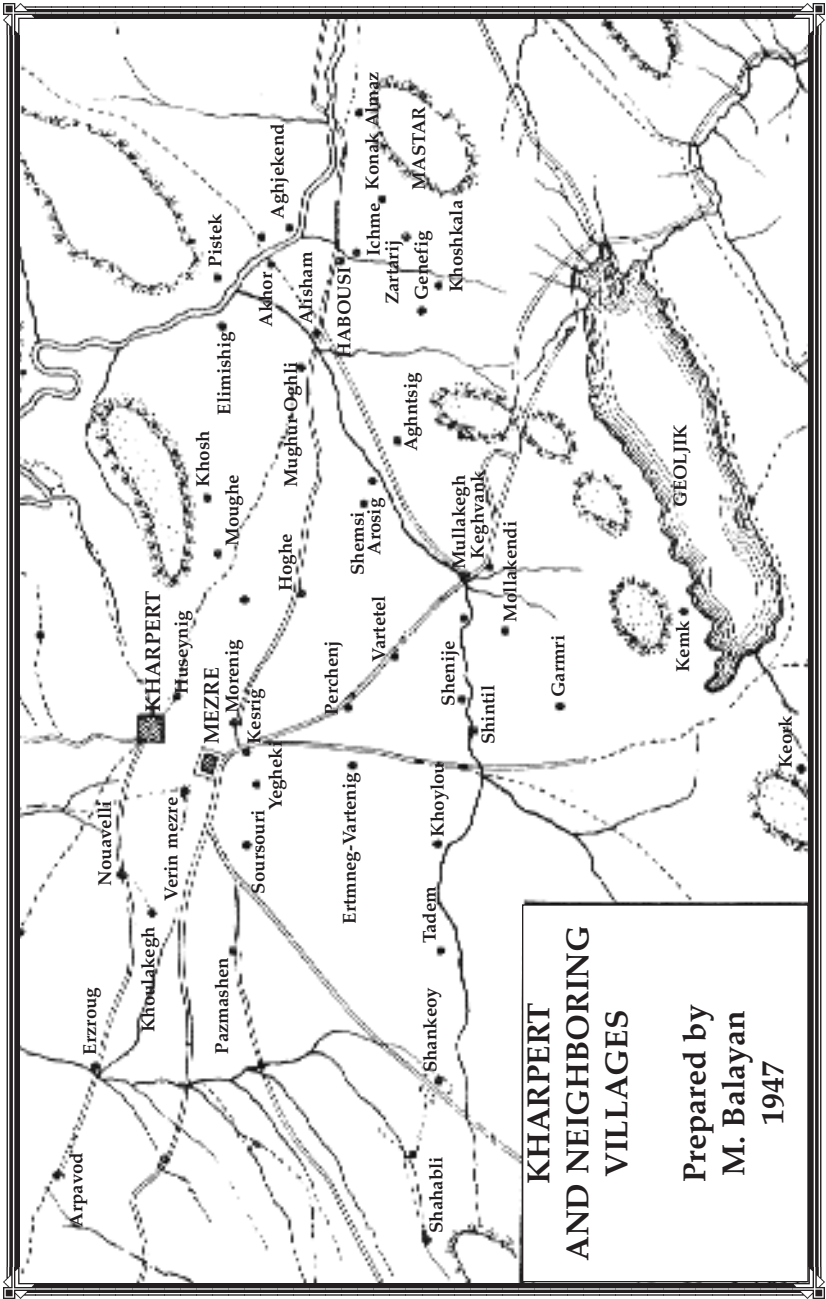
1- Sultan Abdul-Hamid II (1842-1918) became the 34th ruler of the Ottoman Empire in 1876, and under his rule the empire lost more than half of its European possessions. He organized the Kurdish Hamidieh troops and armed them against the Armenians. He was often called Abdul the Damned or Bloody Sultan.

hardly a year passed before the Young Turks¹ in 1909 killed 30,000 Armenians in Adana. This barbaric slaughter again plunged the Armenians into hopelessness. The lack of faith in the Turk became more deeply rooted. Emigration again increased until the outbreak of World War I, in 1914, when Turkey entered the war as an ally of Germany and Austria. Then all methods of escape were cut off.

The Turks were waiting for an opportune time to wipe out the Armenian nation, and their golden opportunity came in 1914, with the eruption of World War I. The Armenians who survived the 1915 death marches through the burning deserts of Der Zor, and the unimaginable tortures planned by the Turkish government, sought refuge in Aleppo (Syria), Beirut (Lebanon), Greece, Egypt, France, and any part of the world where a safe haven was offered.

About 300,000 refugees reached the boundaries of present-day Armenia. Many of the Armenians housed in refugee camps in other lands returned to this new Armenian homeland. Many villages were built and named after those from which their new inhabitants had been driven. Today, a visitor will find in Armenia a New Kharpert, New Malatia, New Arabkir, the Habousi Quarter in Nubarashen, and others.

1- During the late 1890's, small groups of officers and students banded together secretly and in 1908 led a revolt against Abdul-Hamid, forcing him to restore constitutional government. Mustafa Kemal (later known as Ataturk) was one of the young officers whose group merged with others and formed the Committee of Union and Progress, which ruled the empire beginning in 1909 and planned for the total annihilation of Armenians.



Habousi and neighboring villages.

The Foundation of Habousi

The village of Habousi—also mentioned in Armenian records as Habousé or Abousi—was located in “well irrigated fields full of wheat and in meadows full of flowers,” as cited by Ghevond Alishan, a great historian of encyclopedic knowledge. With its abundant and clear springs, with its fertile soil, and its orchards and vineyards, Habousi indeed could be named “The Queen of Villages.”

Only fifteen miles away from the city of Kharpert, Habousi counted some 350 to 400 households. Although fifty percent of the land was owned by Turkish landlords, the population of Habousi was entirely Armenian. The Armenian population totaled 3,000 people during the late 1890's according to some sources.

A highway passed the Taurus Mountains and through the plains linked the village to the cities of Palu, Keghi and Garin. Another highway led to Kharpert.

Habousi was established during the mid-sixteenth century when wealthy Armenians from Persia arrived near Palu. Some of them settled on the eastern woody shores of the Murat River, at the western side of the highway leading to Garin and Kharpert. The family name, Ajemian, still maintained in many Habousetzie families, is an indication of the families' relocation from Persian territories.

There was a large meadow. Wood was the energy source. The pretty and fertile site attracted newcomers. One of the settlers lost a family member soon after. And when winter arrived, they cut the trees, built underground houses, and found shelter in those houses with their animals, awaiting for the spring to arrive.

The climate was mild. In the spring the settlers cultivated the soil, and by doing so they became the first dwellers of the village of Habousi.

Gradually others came from Palu, Perri, Keghi, and neighboring sites to join them and develop the agriculture and trades.

There was a legend that the name, Habousi, originated from the Turkish words *ha bou sou* (this is the water), exclaimed by a Turkish governor who was astonished by the quality of the water.

It is difficult to find out the real story, for no archives are available. But in the absence of written records, stories and tales passed from generation to generation become valuable links to the past of the village.

According to one tale, in the mid-seventeenth century, the village known as Kuchuk Keoy Habousi (Small Village of Habousi) had only sixteen households—eight farmers and eight weavers working for the farmers. There were two springs. Ten minutes away, to the north, there was a big meadow for cattle to graze. Nearby ruins indicate that people had lived there in ancient times.

The early dwellers slowly grew in number, built houses, a church, and springs. When the village became prosperous, Turks began to harass the population out of jealousy.

Feudal Kurdish tribes, similarly, had difficulty tolerating the prosperity of the Habousetzies. Their chieftains began to terrorize the new settlers, demanding tribute (bribe) from the immigrants who were then becoming prosperous farmers. Thus, confrontations between Kurds and Armenians began.

It is safe to conclude that the story of the foundation of Habousi is a miniature reflection of the general history of Armenians—born out of harassment and a search for new settlements.

H

istorical Fragments

CONFRONTATIONS WITH KURDS

In the seventeenth century, immediately after Habousi was established, Turks and Kurds attacked the dwellers in an attempt to confiscate their flock and to annoy them through plunder and violence. But the Habousetzies were alert, wise, and fearless fighters. They threw their attackers back and defended their lives and properties.

The fame of the courageous villagers reached the influential Kurdish chiefs who lived in the nearby village of Perri. They decided to terrorize Habousi and take it over.

Five brave Habousetzies, fully aware of the intentions of the Kurds, took their arms and rode to the mansion of their chief, where the Begs were gathered. As they approached the mansion, Kurds surrounded them and asked them for their arms. The Habousetzies refused to give their arms away. The Kurds attacked and the fight began- twenty Kurds against five Habousetzies. After a fierce sword fight, two Habousetzies received minor wounds, and eight to ten Kurds were seriously wounded. At that point the Kurdish chiefs rushed out of the mansion pretending that they were unaware of what was happening.

When the Kurdish chiefs failed to bring the villagers into submission by force, they tried trickery. The leaders of Habousi were invited by the Kurdish chiefs to a meeting to settle their differences. The Armenians went armed. Upon arrival they were asked to put aside their arms in the hallway. Predicting a trap, the Habousetzies replied that they were accustomed to always carry their arms. Three Habousetzies sat around the table, one stood by the door of the living room, and the fifth remained as a sentinel outside the conference place.

A Beg (chief) began a story obviously intended to divert their attention, while another Beg went out. Realizing that the longer they stayed the closer the danger would be, the Habousetzies rushed out.

Once outside, they found that the number of fighters had doubled. Some fifty armed Kurds waited for the infidels¹. The brave Habousetzies fired their guns at the enemy. They wounded fifteen Kurds and taking advantage of their confusion, galloped away.

The Turkish government was tolerant in those days towards Kurd Beks. After all, they were *Dere Beyis*, meaning the nobility of the valleys and plains. They were untouchable, according to popular belief.

The villagers were fully aware that this incident was not the end of the animosity, and that the Kurds would continue to annoy them. Indeed, the Kurds attacked the village repeatedly, but failed to destroy it. Living in underground houses², the Habousetzies were well protected. The loss of many fighters caused the Kurds to retreat.

Days later, the Beks arrived at the house of Prince Sarkis carrying valuable gifts. Prince Sarkis was famous for his courage. He was known as Ajem Oghlu (meaning Son of Persian in Turkish) because he had recently settled in Habousi from Persia. The Beks established a friendship with him. They convinced him that it was important to accept the protection of a chief in order to live peacefully. The Kurdish Beks promised to protect his house and properties if he paid an annual tribute. On a piece of paper the most influential Beg wrote the tribute amount and the conditions of payment. Both sides signed the agreement and, indeed, life became peaceful. The calm gave the villagers a chance for constructive work.

1- Muslim Turks and Kurds called all Christians infidels—*giaours* in Turkish.

2- It is known that Habousetzies lived in houses built above the ground in the late nineteenth century. Apparently, after peace prevailed between Armenians and Kurds, Habousetzies felt secure and moved into above-ground houses.

SULTAN MURAD IV IN HABOUSI

The following is an interesting story linked to one of Sultan Murad IV's¹ invasions.

Habousi was governed by *Kehyas* (the head of a village). It was told that there was a very rich Armenian named Kara-Giaour (dark infidel in Turkish) who owned vast lands and had many servants.

One day, Sultan Murad IV came with a strong army to the village of Habousi on his way to Baghdad, Iraq. Kara-Giaour hosted the Sultan. The latter was amazed with the order and organization of his host's house and with his wealth. Cunningly he ordered his followers to hide the agricultural tools of the Armenian, to see how he would solve the problem and accomplish the daily work.

The following morning, when the host learned of the incident, he advised the farmers to say nothing about it and to bring out the tools needed for that day's work from the stock room.

The Sultan's astonishment grew as he realized that his host had continued his work without interruption. That night he repeated the same cunning game, and the next morning the Armenian, without interruption, brought out more tools from the stock room and finished his work.

The Sultan asked his host for an explanation. Kara-Giaour told him that he had seven sets of tools in order to keep the work ongoing without interruption due to a loss or confiscation.

The Sultan appreciated the wisdom of the Armenian and asked how he had become so rich.

"Your Majesty," answered the Armenian, "I didn't leave my eve's work to the following day; I became rich and God blessed my work."

The Sultan remembered this wise advice and engraved it in golden letters on his flagon. Then, in appreciation to his host's talent, the Sultan named him *Khanedan* (master of the house), instead of Kara-Giaour. From that day on, the head of the village used the title *Khanedan*, and today there is a family named *Kanedanian* amongst the *Habousetzies*.

1- Sultan Murad IV (1609-1640) succeeded to power in 1623. He was recognized for establishing order in the internal affairs of the state. Sultan Murad was also known for stopping the Armenian Patriarch from collecting a "fruit tax" from peasants working in orchards attached to Armenian churches.

It is said that as Sultan Murad rested on the eve of Baghdad's siege, after a long day of fighting, he read the Armenian's advice on the flagon: "Don't leave your eve's work for tomorrow," and he decided to immediately attack the city again. By doing so, he took the defenders by surprise and conquered the city.

While in Habousi, Khanedan asked Sultan Murad to grant the village permission to irrigate Habousi with water from the surrounding rivers. The Sultan granted permission by issuing a decree that approximately said:

"It is my order that the waters of Genefig, Zartarij and Ichme be set free twenty-four hours a week, each on its own, in order to irrigate the lands of Habousi. The head of a disobedient will be smashed by stone."

Sultan Murad IV

Thus Habousi received water from each of the villages of Ichme, Zartarij and Genefig for twenty-four hours a week until 1895. After 1895, villagers were forced to pay for their water, because Genefig cut the supply of free water. Zartarij allowed it to them irregularly. Only Ichme continued the water supply to Habousi as stated in Sultan Murad's decree.

The location and the Springs of Habousi

Habousi was surrounded by mountains. The village was but a circle-like meadow. The journey to the east, up to Mount Masdar or Aghjikend, was an hour and a half on foot. To the west, the city of Mezre was three hours walking distance from Habousi over high hills and mountains. To the south, an hour and a half away, were the mountains of Gadafka, and to the north, it took two hours to reach the mountains of Elmlig or Khraj.

Habousi's meadows were fertile and water was abundant. Only a few spots lacked water, like the region called Larer. Habousi's soil was dark and rich. Agriculture was the main occupation.

Mount Masdar, with its chained peaks, protected the eastern side of the village for thirty miles or so. From north to west a branch of the Euphrates River ran along the edge of Habousi.

The village of Akhor was located on the highland of the river, inhabited by nearly twenty households. The only water source of Akhor was the small river of Nazig which branched from the Euphrates. It was also known as Boug. The river had plenty of fish, especially in its deeper spots. To the northeast of Akhor lay the village of Bestik. Bestik was a village populated by Turks whose main occupation was the cultivation of grapes. It was the primary market of wine and sweets for the Habous-etzies.

From the south, out of the mountains of Masdar, flowed the Aradzani, also called the Khara River by the Turks. South of Aghntsig, Aradzani curved its way around Alisham from the north, twisting like a snake, then headed west, and drew a border between Habousi and Mughur Oghli.

High and thick aspens and willows covered Habousi's border for almost half a mile, but the trees were unable to protect the village from

Aradzani during the flood season. Therefore, the early dwellers built dams to protect their lands against flood.

It was told that Little Habousi, known to the commoners as Kuchuk Habousi, was flooded sometime between 1600 and 1650, and its population was forced to abandon their belongings and to take refuge on top of Akhor Hill, around Gamarov Spring. That location, where two springs were established as the ever-running witnesses of Little Habousi, was believed to be only two streets away from Big Habousi.

To the east of Big Habousi, the meadow and the woods bordering Aradzani were called Salug.

Villagers often found pots and pans and other objects while digging in the soil of Big Habousi—evidence of past dwellers and their lifestyle.

It was said that the Tigris River also flooded sometime during 1600 and 1650.

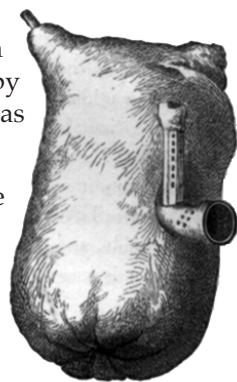
The Euphrates, like a twisted snake, flowed down from the pretty valley of Kharpert, across the village of Sheikh Haji, past the village of Akhor, and behind the mountains of Kharpert, where it continued its flow toward Malatia from the village of Pertag.

The broad banks of the Euphrates flooded every spring. The fish of the river were delicious. Fishing was a source of income for nearby villagers. Lacking technology, the water of the Euphrates was wasted. The villagers were unable to use it to irrigate the surrounding fields.

On the east side of the river lay the road to Palu. Passengers crossed the river in carts and on bagpipes. Though the Euphrates often drove nearby dwellers mad with frustration, its silver water was also the source of the valley's charm and wealth.

In the summer, the river was a resort for the youngsters of Habousi who went there with their cattle to swim. To cross from one bank to another, they set groups of oxen free in the river and hung on to the animals' tails. Fishing was a very pleasant past time.

The hill of Habousi, resembled a pear, its peak was shaped like a human head.



A bagpipe made of the skin of animals.

Habousi had a central location among the twelve neighboring villages—Alisham (Turks), Tepejik (Turks and Kurds), Aghntsig (Turks and Armenians), Khoshkala (Turks and Kurds), Genefig (Turks, Kurds and Armenians), Ichme (Armenians and Turks), Zartarij (Armenians and Turks), Sheikh Haji (Armenians and Turks), Akhor (Armenians and Turks), Mughur Oghli (mixed), Elmlig (mixed), and two others.

Habousi had six springs, each with a fame and tradition of its own. These springs divided the village into four sections like a cross.

Four of those springs were man-made and two were natural. The founding of a spring, generally done by the wealthiest men, was considered a great gift to the villagers. A gift that benefited all.

Gamarov (arch) Spring was professionally paved with a kind of stone that endured centuries of rolling carts. On top of the spring, an arm-long structure of polished pink marble was erected.



A rolling cart carrying an American missionary. Second from left is Malkhas Kassabian.

Gamarov was most probably given its name because of the arch built on top of it during ancient times.

In front of the Gamarov Spring was a pool framed with square stones. The spring ran through a large hole, and the water formed a small round lake.

Jeghig or Jrig (watery) Spring was several feet away from the Gamarov Spring. It began at the top of a hill. Jrig was not as nicely structured as Gamarov. The waters of the two springs flowed into the same small lake which was actually a basin for drinking water and a place for the cattle to bathe.

On warm summer days, the children were allowed to swim only in Jrig's water. It was forbidden to pollute Gamarov's water.

Above Gamarov were two roads, lined by vineyards, aspens, and fruit trees. These cool forests were home for birds whose warbling filled the atmosphere. A road led to the cemetery, where Habousetzies lay in peace for centuries. The cemetery formed the last boundary of the village and was hidden behind the green forests.

Gamarov's water made its way through the shadow of the trees to the road of Boug, where it met the water of the Narzhun or Najjarnrou (carpenter's) Spring. Narzhun Spring ran from east to west. Two-thirds of the villagers enjoyed the free gift of spring water with which they irrigated their fields and vineyards.

Narjun Spring divided Habousi in half. It reached from the Gamarov Spring to the road to the cemetery. The other half of the village was serviced by Galer (haloes) or Tsegod (fishy) Spring. Narjun Spring faced the roads leading to Ichme, Zartarij and Genefig.

Narjun Spring circled one-fourth of the village from the north. The spring ran behind gardens and orchards, until it reached a small bridge on Boug's road. Nearby streets also enjoyed use of the spring. The main street of Narjun or Najarian's Spring passed between the two squares until it reached the center of the hill where there was a third square. In the center of the third square was built a mortar as high as a man's shoulder called *the mortar of the center* or *the mortar to beat castor beans*.

On both sides of the street there were stations for carriages to park. At one point, the two sides of the street were attached to each other by a bridge called Keoshk that most probably was the property of the Antoian family. Main street divided each side street into two after Keoshk and before the Narjun Spring, leaving Galer Spring to its left. To the right and above the bridge, the road reached a pretty square, before it continued north.

Gatnaghpur (milk) Spring was a little further from the village, to the northeast, in the middle of two non-paved squares. It was a sanctuary for mothers with little milk. Mothers bathed in the spring water and placed two eggs by the side of the spring as a gift. There was also a special place to light candles. Villagers believed that a mother's milk would become abundant after a pilgrimage to Gatnaghpur. Women pilgrimaged to the spring after giving birth to their babies.



Narjun Spring lay in the ruins of Habousi.

Close to Gatnaghpur stood a willow tree, its branches full of clothes. Patients believed that if they tied their clothes to the branches of the willow, their illnesses would leave them and they would return home healthy. On Raffle Days, the spring was a site for the celebration of women and girls.

Galer Spring flowed into the square of two neighboring villages, Aghntsigs and Alisham. Its abundant water was perfect for the animals of nearby barns. The road to Aghntsigs was close to the barns, while the one to Alisham lay further south. The roads met at the edge of the village orchards. The meeting point was a great deal higher than the plain roads. These roads were eroded from the heavy traffic of carriages. On this elevated section were located the houses of peasants, as well as the workshops and houses of the village potters. The spring flowed through the low section of the village.

Slightly different from Gamarov Spring, the stone on top of Galer Spring was a striking yellow granite, as shiny as marble and as big as two square feet. It lay on top of the spring and it bridged the spring from north to south. A cup was attached to a white brass chain which hung from the middle of the shiny yellow stone. The cup was there for use by villagers. Gamarov and Narjun springs had no cups.

The water of Galer Spring was clear and full of fish. Both sides of the spring were paved. A lake formed at the foot of the spring. Cattle bathed in the lake and the villagers used it for drinking water.

There was a bridge within a stone's throw away. The water under the bridge ran through the orchards to the south, towards the road to Alisham where the *kors* (Turkish cemeteries) were located.

Next to the bridge was the famous Gamerchun tree (the tree of the bridge). A stork nested on top. The stork was a beloved member of the Galer Spring. In the winter the Galer Spring flowed to Little Habousi where it joined two other springs and together the three springs poured their water into the deep valley of Akhor and Elmlig.

Galer Spring was separated by a trench from a winter spring called Nor (new) Spring which lay to its north. Close to the latter was a hotel. Along one of the walls of the hotel, on a triangle-shaped spot of land, a blue flagstone four square feet in diameter was placed. Two egg-shape mortars were mounted on the flagstone. Villagers beat their castor beans there. Castor bean oil was used to light lamps.

The Galer Spring began at the blue flagstone which divided the village into two, from north to south.

To the southeast, Nor Spring, before meeting the Narjun Spring, ran around sheep pens and houses, serving their needs.

The street of Galer Spring was famous for its dwellers too. In a house to the west of one of its bridges or *keoshks*¹ was the birth place of the blind Ashek Gharib² Margos Boyajian, a singer, player, and popular poet. His

1- Habousetzies used the word bridge or Keoshg (a Turkish word that literally means balcony) to describe overpasses which were built between houses to cross over the streets.

2- This literally means a stranger who is a lover in Turkish, the equivalent of the European Troubadour somehow.

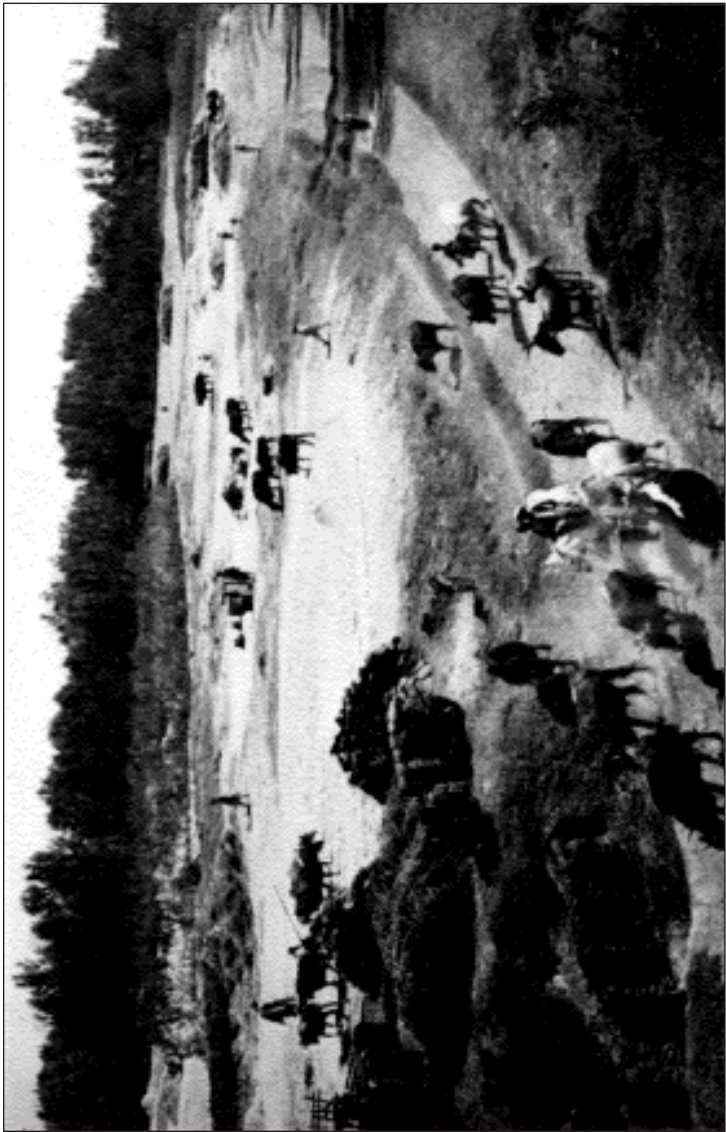
string instrument, the *saz*, was better known to Kharpert than the Turkish national anthem. His three-stringed *santour* moved Turks' and wealthy Armenians' both with laughter and tears during the years from 1825 to 1858.

From the Boyajian family home, the paved street climbed to the top of a hill, where in the middle of the road, a house gave the shape of an elbow to the street. That was Central Square and the street of Narjun Spring. The square had sidewalks for people to walk on and a dusty road for oxen and buffalo pulled carriages.

All granaries of Habousi were located in the square but none was visible, because they were built five feet under the ground, surrounded by polished stones.



A saz player in the middle.



Threshing Ground.

Agriculture and Produce

Since ancient ages Armenians have been farmers. They loved the soil, cultivated it patiently, and fed their families with the products of the land.

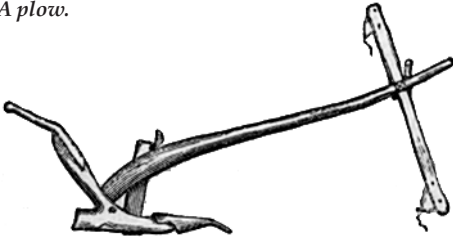
Working in nature and dealing with soil helped people not only to be bonded to each other sincerely and to share each other's happiness and sorrow, but also to assist each other overcome difficulties by sharing each other's burden. Neighbors lived close. Houses were often attached to each other. Many times holes were drilled through the walls, so neighbors could freely enter each other's houses with the unlimited mutual trust pertinent to a truly moral and honest people.

The village had shopkeepers, carpenters, painters, builders, and famous potters. Habousetzies were almost the sole preparers of linen in the villages of the Big Plain (Oulou Ova). At the turn of the twentieth century, villagers bred fine horses and sheep. But agriculture remained their main occupation.

All kinds of grains were cultivated in Habousi—wheat, barley, and sesame. Cotton was also grown. Some of the produce was marketed in Kharpert.

Villagers also cultivated legumes, such as lentils, beans, and chick-peas, as well as vegetables such as potatoes, melons, watermelons, onions, garlic, squash, turnips, and beets. The region was famous for its grapes. The fields outside the village were interspersed with orchards and vineyards.

The villagers lived off the land and its products. Most of them had their own plot of land, whether large or small. They plowed and cultivated their fields as they had seen it done by their fathers. There was no machinery. Everything was done manually. For plowing, a yoke of oxen was used. The farmer sowed the grain as he trudged behind the oxen.

A plow.

Sometimes, at the beginning of July, the wheat and barley ears were already golden. They were considered “done.” People took bundles of “done” ears home to barbecue them on the fire. Peeled grain was delicious.

Every year on July fifteenth harvesters prepared their sickles. They checked the wooden handle of the five-finger tool and the hone, and they used a piece of fat from a sheep’s tail to sharpen the sickle.

Harvest time sparked the cooperative spirit of the villagers. When the wheat and barley were ready to harvest, neighbors got together and began to reap the mature crop. Fearing that rain or cattle might ruin the crop, everyone took his sickle or scythe and helped with the harvest.

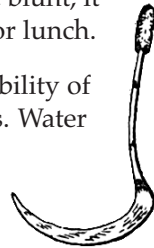
Before sunrise, a procession of men, women, and children, laughing and singing, went to the fields. The best reaper among them was the first to start. Often he made the sign of the cross and exclaimed:

*“In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
Let five hundred Turks croak this day
With only one Armenian, and that be untrue.”*

The rest would unanimously shout: “Long live!”

Then villagers would begin to work, cutting the stalks with scythes and leaving them on the ground to be picked up by specialists. A specialist would use a sickle to collect the harvest from the ground and arrange the stalks into a round pile with the heads inside. In large fields many similar piles were made. When sickles became blunt, it was time to rest and sharpen the edges. It was also time for lunch.

The feeding of the men in the fields was the responsibility of ten to twelve year old boys and girls called water-carriers. Water carriers came with their donkeys laden with food, water, and a cooling soup called *tanabour* (a mixture of barley and yogurt). The *tanabour* was placed in tightly covered pots, lowered into the cold spring, and left for hours to chill. Once chilled, the soup was served to the harvesters.

*A scythe.*



The threshing.

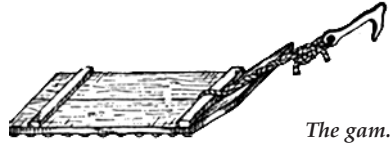
The harvested grain was picked up in carts and carried to the threshing ground, called *gal*, at the outskirt of the village. The *gal* was circular in shape, seventy to eighty feet in diameter. The harvested grain of each field was stacked around the *gal*, waiting its turn to be threshed. Villagers first had to water the ground. After it was dry, hay was thrown down and flattened by a roller-stone. The roller-stone was a yard long and half a yard thick. The round-shaped stone had holes on both sides where iron handles were placed.

Sometimes young people, in order to show their strength, loaded the big piles of grain on the carts with one lift of the pitchfork.

The carter usually made a special effort to call attention to himself as he approached the *gal*, proud of the job he performed.

Once all piles were moved to the threshing ground, a farmer would sit on a chair placed on the *gam* (thresher) and drive the oxen with a *massa* (prod). The *gam* was composed of two pieces of pine wood attached to each other by two or three belts. The pine wood was studded with fifteen to eighteen flint stones on each row underneath. From time to time villagers had to turn the heap over with pitchforks, so that the unthreshed wheat at the bottom would come to the top.

Then the winnowing would start by winnowing machines made by Habousetzie carpenters.



The gam.

While still winnowing, a villager would go after the *shahane* (inspector) to come and place his official seal on the piled wheat. The grain would remain sealed until two or four measurers would show up for distribution. The sealer, the *khasaghasi* (top agha), and the owner had to be present.

The measurers, kneeling in front of the piles, would sift a special measuring tray in the pile, and after leveling it with a wiping board, would empty it shouting: "One, my God, one!"

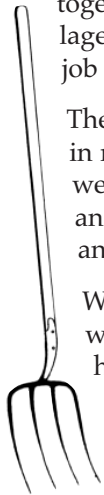
This was the time to set aside the government's share, one-tenth of the grain. During World War I the government's share increased to one-fifth. The last measure was the share for the measurer or the sifter.

Once villagers were through with the *gal*, they would harvest other produce and finally the grapes.

In autumn, farmers would seed all kinds of grain in fields that had been plowed three or four times.

Once the fields were prepared, the elders of Habousi would get together and decide upon a date for the cocoon collection. Every villager, ten years old and older, participated in cocoon collecting. This job lasted three or four days.

The people of Habousi stored their grain in pits, about twenty-five in number, which were dug in the center of the village. These pits were circular and served as silos. They were twenty-five feet deep and three feet in diameter. The grain was kept there for six months, and in the spring it was taken out to be used.



Pitchfork.

Wealthy farmers had shepherds and herdsmen servicing them, while poorer villagers would jointly use the services of special herdsmen who were located in a special place in the village. They would take the cattle in the morning to graze and bring them back in the evening.

There were also two guards paid by the villagers to look after the shepherds and the cattle.

T

rade and Trades

The village had carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, weavers, dyers, masons, potters, and masters of other occupations who catered not only to the needs of Habousi, but also to the neighboring villages for whom Habousi was a trading and shopping center.

These tradesmen usually prepared their own supplies from raw material and designed their products to fit the needs of their customers.

The making of cotton or linen clothes was commonly done in homes. Sometimes two workers joined each other in one household, and it was a good occupation during the wintertime when snow restricted the villagers to their homes. Besides these, Habousi had tailors, bag makers, and saddle makers who were called *juveleg*, meaning non-farmers.

The carpenter was the main tradesman in the village. He was responsible for building all the wooden parts of the church, the school, the houses, the tools used by the villagers, and the granaries.

Carpenters secured their timber by purchasing trees from nearby or faraway sources. They cut them down, trimmed them as logs, shaped them as beams, or sawed them as boards. Then they made coarse furniture and a few implements such as spinning wheels and threshing boards. Their chief tools were the saw and the ax-like adz.

Habousi had two or three masons. They dug the foundations and erected the walls of the houses, using stone, brick, and mortar. Men called *carriers* helped them as unskilled laborers.

The shoemaker himself tanned the hides of the buffaloes, oxen, cows, sheep, and goats that he bought from here and there. Usually he dyed the leather black. He cut and sewed shoes without heels, then he adjusted their size to fit men, women, and children of all ages. For special



Carpenters.

occasions he fixed colorful threads on the tops of the shoes. The shoemaker was also the cobbler. His tools were the awl, the needle and waxed thread, a sharp knife, and lasts. He used the trunk of a large tree as a cutting block.

Although there were three or four shoemakers in the village, villagers frequently purchased their shoes in Ichme or in Kharpert city.

When plowing the fields, the farmers wore special shoes which they generally made themselves.

Weaving was a long process. After getting the cotton out of the cocoon, it was time to separate the seeds, a very time consuming task.

The spinning wheel was called *jerjer*. Carpenters built these wheels until 1890, when a cotton factory was built in Kharpert.

Jerjer was a three-foot long trunk of a tree, with two upright flat wooden boards on each side. A very well polished smooth oak crossbar called *top* was laid horizontally on these two boards together with a round iron crossbar as thick as a finger called *ilig*. *Top* had a handle. In order to steady the trunk, a huge stone was placed on a piece of wood attached to the back of the *jerjer*.

The tradesperson usually sat on a carpet and turned the handle with his right hand while feeding the cotton with the left hand to the rolling *top* and *ilig*. This helped separate and drop the seed in front of the spinner while the cotton moved through the two crossbars. To ease the turning of the *top* and the *ilig*, soap was placed at the edges of the crossbars.

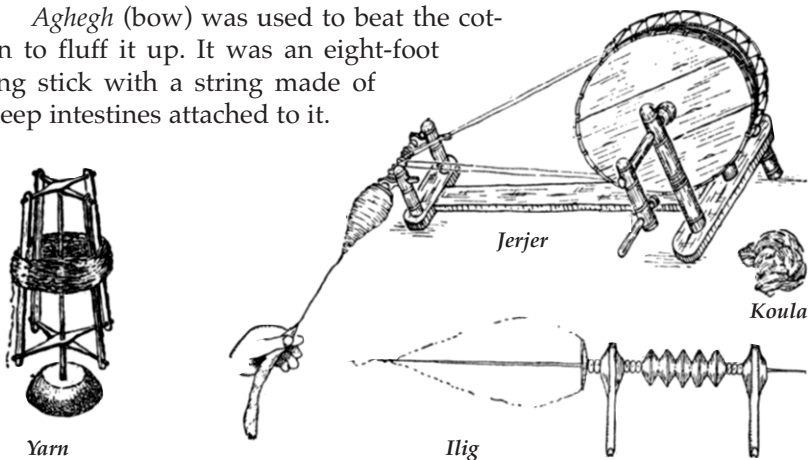
The spinner was compensated with a half oke of cotton for each one litre of cotton spun. The fastest spinner received one and a half liters of cotton in a day, working fifteen hours.

The cotton factories of the late nineteenth century put an end to the use of *jerjers*. The villagers began to take their cotton in carts to factories in Ichme and Alisham, where water was abundant and the machinery turned fast. Habousi's water source was not adequate for running cotton machinery.

The tax collectors usually arrived during cotton time and collected their one tenth—50 liters from Boghos Kehya, 30 liters from each of Toros Kehya, Tomas Kehya and Tateos Kehya. The collectors accumulated the cotton in a special place in the village and then took it away to the city.

Villagers sold part of the cotton and kept the rest for in-house use. The head of the family usually distributed the cotton to the other members of the family after carefully weighing it on a scale and separating out first a portion for the *dandigin* (his wife) and then shares for his daughters-in-law. A portion was set aside for general needs such as the making of bags and bedding.

Aghegh (bow) was used to beat the cotton to fluff it up. It was an eight-foot long stick with a string made of sheep intestines attached to it.



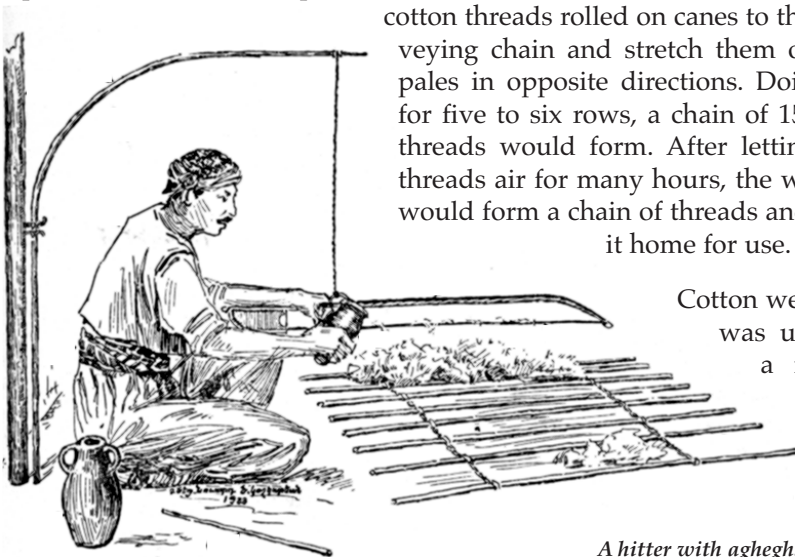
The hitter usually sat on his left foot, with the right one arched. He took the bow in his right hand and placed his arm on his right knee as a support. With a stick in his left hand he placed the string in the cotton and constantly hit it, creating a monotonous hiss. The result was the accumulation of cotton like white clouds on one side. The cotton was then given to women who sat across from the hitter. They rolled the cotton around small sticks until the cotton formed almost two feet long wicks which were placed on a wooden table called *khoncha*. Afterwards, eight or ten wicks were attached to each other to form what was called *koula*. *Koulas* were spun on spinning wheels.

Spinning was an almost everyday occupation for women during the winter. Women patiently spun the cotton and sang love songs while they sat in front of the *jakharag* (spinning wheel). Usually, there were as many spinning wheels in a house as there were women. Some houses had up to fifteen wheels.

Spinners received dresses as compensation for their work, while carpenters were compensated with fresh fruits and vegetables after they fixed a damaged or broken spinning wheel.

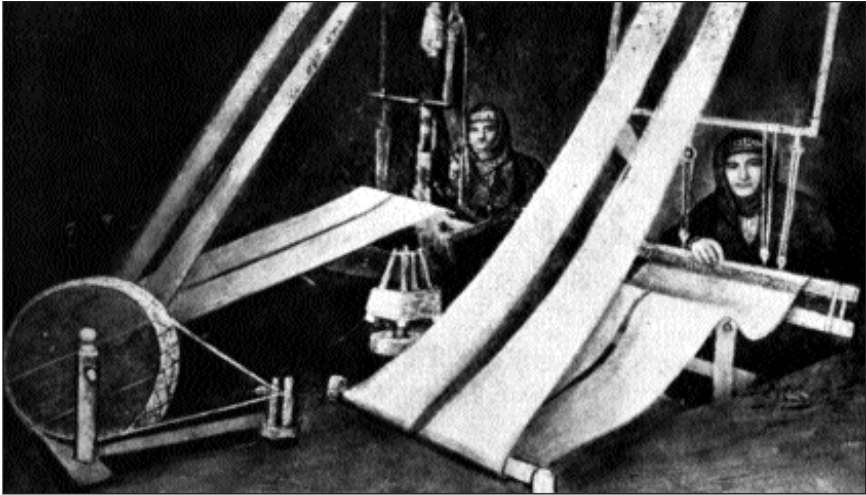
In the spring time, the weaver was ready to build a surveying chain near the village. He would stick pales in the ground three or four feet apart from each other, up to one hundred feet. Then he would take the

cotton threads rolled on canes to the surveying chain and stretch them on the pales in opposite directions. Doing so for five to six rows, a chain of 150-200 threads would form. After letting the threads air for many hours, the weaver would form a chain of threads and take it home for use.



Cotton weaving
was usually
a man's

A hitter with aghegh.



Cotton weaving.

occupation, although there were many women weavers too. The shuttle of weaving looms was heard from almost every house. The best weaver could weave twenty-five to thirty feet a day.

The potter's workshop was in his home also. The primitive wheel, *charkh*, that the potter turned with one foot was his main tool. The potter fed the clay that he had prepared previously to the wheel with one hand and gave it the desired shape with the other hand. Thus he produced water jugs, churns, and large casks for wine, as well as pots and pans for household use.

The potter, usually in March, collected dark soil from the roads and from the edges of fields, as well as white soil from the hill nearby the school. He collected enough for at least seven to eight months of work. He mixed the soil and water together, covered the mixture, and set it in the corner of the house.

Spring was the time for potters to work. They removed a part of the clay, placed it on the *charkh* and prepared the pots and pans. They worked almost every day for seven to eight months. A good potter could prepare fifteen to twenty small and large casks a day.

The prepared vessels were first placed in the shade until they were quite dry, and then in the sun to dry some more. After drying in the sun, the vessels were placed in a special oven heated by straw and baked. The

following morning, after baking, and when the vessels were totally cool, the potter would remove them from the oven.

The casks for *khavoorma* were glazed in a special way; therefore, they were taken out of the oven half-baked. First, the potter melted lead in a pan, then he added some sulfur to it to make the mixture smooth. After grinding the mixture, he used a brush to spread it inside and all over the outside of the cask, which gave the pot a dark color. Finally, he put the cask back in the oven to further bake it. After cooling, the cask turned a shiny green. Dishes were prepared similarly.

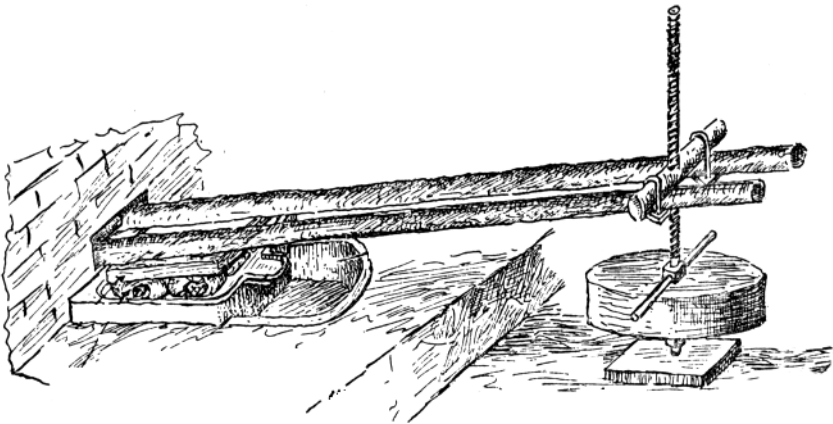
Potters had plenty of vessels for their own use. They took the excess to the city for sale. Their pretty vessels were in high demand.

Dying was a rewarding occupation. The most common colors were blue, green, red, and black. The Armenians' favorite color was blue.

Before sewing machines were introduced, the dyer sewed clothes for the villagers.

Tablecloths, bed covers, and parts of women's dresses were sometimes decorated with pictures. All dyes and related frames were prepared in-house. To protect dye casks from freezing, they were placed on a fire during the winter months.

Habousi also had oil presses, water-mills to grind wheat, and machinery to separate pearl-barley.



An oil press.

H

ousehold Economy

The women of Habousi contributed their full share to the economy of the village and to the prosperity of their homes.

In those days it was impossible for women to go to the grocer or to the butcher for their daily food. They were supposed to prepare a whole year's food in one month, in autumn, when the harvest was abundant. A portion of the harvested wheat was allocated to each individual. Most of the wheat, though, was ground into flour for the purpose of baking bread in the *tonir*. The dough was spread very thin, and sometimes thicker, adding some sesame seeds for a delicious taste. The rest of the wheat was turned into cracked wheat (bulghur) by first boiling the grain before dry-

ing and grinding it. With *bulghur* women cooked pilav, kufteh with or without meat or yogurt, *kheyma* (adding chopped onion, parsley and pepper to the meat), soup (with fine *bulghur*), and *sarma* (*bulghur* rolled in grape leaves). Barley was used in the preparation of *keshgeg* or *herisa* (when meat was added), as well as a soup with pepper, mint, and other spices. Barley was also widely used with salted fruits and vegetables such as small watermelons, squashes, pickles, tomatoes, and cabbages. These salted foods were very handy and useful in the winter time.



Baking bread in the tonir.

People bought meat in Habousi on Saturdays only. By tradition,

Habousetzies kept enough meat for a year in the home. In autumn, every family, no matter how wealthy or poor, slaughtered cows, sheep, and goats. The meat was cooked with the bones in large copper pots. Additional salt was added to preserve the meat. The result, called *khavoorma*, was kept in especially prepared casks.

Families took care of fruits and grapes also during the autumn harvest. Women prepared *basdegh*, *rojik*, and *roob* from the grape juice. *Basdegh* and *rojik* were made by mixing grape juice with wheat starch and then allowing it to dry to a paste. Nuts were added to *rojik*. *Roob* was a syrup obtained by boiling grape juice until it thickened. Habousetzies also prepared dried fruits like raisins and mulberries. During the harvest, wine and *oghi* (ouzo) were also made. The villagers stored these in casks or bottles to be used for special occasions like engagements, weddings, and feasts.

Since sesame was abundant, women extracted oil from it by placing it in special mortars (hollow stone) and beating the seeds with wooden sticks until it turned into liquid. Sesame oil was added to the *roob* to make a special delicacy. Food was cooked with sesame oil during Lent.

Oil extracted from cotton seed was used for lighting. Habousetzies knitted, worked, read, and wrote by the light of a *jerak* (lamp). Family members would gather by the light of their lamps until late night to converse, to recite tales to their children, and finally to pray before going to bed. Lamps were commonly flat clay dishes as big as a hand with a handle. A cotton wick was placed in the dish full of cotton oil.

The lamp was placed in a special place called *jerakagal* (lamp-holder) on the wall or on a pillar five or six feet high.

A

Administration

After considerable changes in 1867 in the administration of the provinces, ancient *pashaliks* were abolished, and in their stead divisions termed *vilayets* were established. Each vilayet was under the authority of a *Vali*, or Governor General, and was subdivided into three or more *sanjaks* or districts, administered by *mutesarifs*, or sub-governors, and again subdivided into *cazas* and *nahies*, or cantons and communes, the latter being aggregates of from five to ten villages under a *mudir*, a kind of Justice of the Peace.

The village was governed by a *kehya* (head of village). While in mixed populated villages *kehyas* were mostly Turks, Habousi had Armenian *kehyas* for its merely Armenian population.

The *Kehyas* of Habousi reported directly to the *mudir* headquartered in Mezre. *Kehyas* were responsible for the villagers. They kept track of their deeds and their taxes, and they settled disputes among the villagers.

Besides the *kehya*, the village retained its internal administrative structure, an ancestral, self-sufficient form of government that was called the "Assembly of Elders." The assembly allocated the taxes imposed by the government by family, according to each family's ability to pay. Taxes were collected by a *khojabashi* (overseer) and a *kzir* (clerk). But the Assembly of Elders' principal function was to oversee the life of the community, the amelioration of affairs, the betterment of the church, and the conduct of the elementary education of the time. It served also as a court of law, for settling arguments, conflicts, and other legal matters. Its decisions were generally taken as final. Habousetzies approached the government mostly in matters involving real estate.

The Assembly consisted of the village *kehya* and an even number of *rayises* (heads of families). They were elected by majority vote of the

heads of the farming families, and the important literates and craftsmen. All families belonging to the village, whether large or small, had one vote each. In addition to the heads of families, however, the foremost teachers also had a vote. Voting was secret. The literate ones of the village would write the voter's choice of candidate on pieces of paper. These ballots would be collected in a knotted cord sack. The priest and his deacon would count the votes.

The khojabashi was the general executive of the community, chosen by the Assembly of Elders, and responsible to it. It was an important and sensitive position and a profitable and desirable one. He also collected taxes, supervised the treasury, and cooperated with the Turkish officialdom to satisfy their various demands. The khojabashi received as his stipend two percent of all taxes paid by the villagers, plus fees in connection with sealing various official papers. His seal was officially authorized by the mayor's office

The kzir too was named by the Assembly of Elders. He was the general servant of the community. The kzir worked with and under the khojabashi and was a kind of "errand boy." It was the kzir who assigned visiting government officials and gendarmes in homes of the village, where they received free board. He guided the police in their investigations. He was the village "newspaper" and town crier. He announced governmental decrees, important and weighty news, and the loss of donkeys and cows. He would call out the news in a loud and hoarse voice while standing at three or four important street corners.

The taxes and levees collected in the Plain of Kharpert in general were the following:

1- "Bedel," a military tax, 1 to 5 kurush, that Armenians paid each year for each male in the household from the day of the child's birth. In return, the boy was released from military duty.

2- "Emlak," a property tax on houses, vineyards, and lands. The largest share was paid on land. With insignificant exceptions, these lands belonged to the aghas and begs, but the tax was paid generally by the Armenian tenant farmers.

3- "Temetiv," individual income tax. This was paid by the storekeeper, artisan, and even the monger who eked out a living selling a donkey-load of hay a day.

4- "Hungak" tax, one-tenth of the total production of grain crops.

5- "Baghat," a grape and fruit tax.

6- Watermelon garden tax.

7- "Sharab Akhshasi" wine tax.

8- "Khamchour" tax on sheep, cattle, and other livestock.

9- Cotton tax called the "cotton cut. "

10- Construction tax, on a new construction, or renovation.

11- Window tax.

12- Education tax. This was collected from the Armenians but none of the proceeds were allocated to Armenian schools.

13- Sanitation tax. This tax cared for sewage, protected water and food supplies, and was sent to the village physicians into the village for vaccination against smallpox.

14- All male subjects, 18 years of age and over, were required personally or through proxy to work for free on the building of new military highways or the restoration of existing ones. Each worker was responsible for his own sustenance during the four days of mandatory service. Often they were required to work eight to ten days instead of four, and few could get out of this service without paying a bribe.

15- "Mekara Take." A few times each year the police would raid the village and confiscate donkeys, other beasts of burden, and sometimes their owners, to serve the government.

Habousi gave the Turkish government one-fourth of its annual income as the village's tax payment. Those taxes included close to 2,500 pounds of wheat annually and similar portions of barley, broad bean, oats, and cotton. Despite these heavy taxes, Habousetzies enjoyed a better standard of living than Turks, who were known to constantly beg bread from the Armenians.

When cultivating fields in Habousi became insufficient for the increasing population, many villagers left to cultivate fields in the neighboring villages of Ichme and Zartarij. Others went to as far as Adana in Cilicia, and some left for the United States, with the intention of making money and returning home.

One of the consequences of this emigration was the perishing of

sixty Habousetzies during the massacres of Adana in 1909, soon after the Ottoman Constitution was declared.

The government was extremely hard on Armenians. While collecting taxes, collectors and accompanying gendarmes often beat Armenians who were short of the required tax with rods until family members found a way to fulfill their tax payment.

F amily and Holidays

Habousi was home to many large families famous for their hard work. One of those was the Kojigian clan whose head, Zadour (Dzadur) Agha, equally distributed his estates, oxen, and other animals to the laborers of his family. His family members then established their own homes.

Life in Habousi was based on a patriarchal pattern. The father was the head of the family, and when the sons married they remained with their parents. Some families numbered at times forty or fifty men, women, and children. All sat together around the table for meals. They all lived in the same household under the supreme authority of the grandfather, with mutual love and respect. The grandmother was the housekeeper. The daughters-in-law obeyed her orders. Seldom was there discord in the family. The patriarch's word was final in any argument.

When the patriarch died, the eldest son became the head of the family. When the grandchildren began to marry, some of the younger brothers would separate and form families of their own, keeping the same patriarchal pattern.

The villagers, both young and old, looked forward to the holidays. Holidays were celebrated with gaiety and merriment. The day before the holiday was the time for women to bake and cook. For New Year's Day they baked biscuits in various shapes, covering them with sesame seeds.

New Year's Eve was the time for *Gaghant Baba* to bring presents to the children. *Gaghant Baba* was the Santa Claus of the Armenians. At midnight everybody was awakened, and the merriment would begin. They ate and drank till sunrise, singing and making merry. Young women and girls took their new jugs and went to the spring to drink the fresh water they believed was mixed by St. Sarkis. Weak or sick children, totally naked, took bathes in the pool of the same spring to recover and become

strong. It was customary for everyone to drink from St. Sarkis' water and wash at least their faces before returning home to congratulate the New Year and to enjoy the delicious food. Many would climb the nearby mulberry bushes, asking: "Do you want me to drop mulberries?" Others would answer, "Be real! There are no mulberries in this cold winter."

The following day they would have buffalo fights, horse racing, games, and all sorts of fun. New Year was a day of physical enjoyment. In ancient times, before Christianity was adopted as a state religion in Armenia in 301 A.D., Armenians celebrated the New Year in August, in the month called *Navasart*, when wheat was ripe and the harvest was abundant. Afterwards, the New Year was celebrated according to the Julian Calendar, which was thirteen days ahead of the Gregorian Calendar. So New Year's day fell on the 14th day of January by the Calendar we now observe. Six days later came Christmas, on January 19. As a religious holiday, Christmas was celebrated by religious ceremonies.

The biggest religious celebration for Habousetzies and for all Armenians was Easter, which followed seven weeks of Lent. Lent was a time of strict fasting for purification. Pots and pans were cleaned with sand to prevent the use of meat and oil during Lent.

Since there was no means to keep track of time, an ingenious method was devised to count the seven weeks of Lent. An onion with seven feathers stuck in it was hung by a thread at the fireplace, and every week one feather was plucked from it. The sixth feather denoted Palm Sunday. Easter would follow a week later, when the last feather was plucked from the onion.

With Easter came colored eggs. Mothers boiled eggs in onion skins and some vegetables with dye-like qualities. Couples engaged to be married decorated their eggs and wrote their names on them with bees wax. Every man and boy went out with pockets full of colored eggs and participated in the game of egg fighting. Each man challenged a friend or a neighbor to an egg fight. One held the egg in his fist and the other man tapped on it with his. The broken egg was turned to its bottom and tapped again. The egg that cracked on both ends first lost. The winner would take the broken egg.

The egg fights in Habousi took place in the square before the church and in two other squares, one by the Narjun Spring and the other by the Galer Spring. The fights began on Good Friday and lasted until Easter Sunday evening.

Easter was also celebrated in the church with a special Mass, embellished with soul-stirring *sharagans* (prayers). The Easter holiday continued until Monday. During the holiday, relatives, friends and neighbors visited each other and offered each other the good tidings: "*Christos haryav i merelotz*" which was answered by "*Orhniat e haroutune Christosi*". (Christ is risen from the dead. Blessed is the resurrection of Christ.)

The following games provided entertainment for young Habousetzies who were frequently joined by their elders.

Anbarosh- Two equal groups were formed of four to six people. One of them was chosen to be a "pillow." The "pillow" sat on the floor with his back to the wall. Another colleague bent down slightly and held on to the "pillow." The other four colleagues bent similarly on the back of the first one and held each other. Members of the second group jumped, one after another, onto the backs of the bent people. When all had jumped, the count started from one to twenty with the condition that no one's foot would touch the floor. The game continued after each count of twenty until someone fell down or his foot touched the floor. Then the groups switched roles.

Pass over- In this game one player held his two knees with his head bent between them and the other players had to jump over him, leaving a handkerchief or a hat on his back. Whoever let the hat or handkerchief fall would replace the first player. There was no limit to the number of participants in this game.

The Monday- Two groups were formed composed equally of eight to twelve people. The first group bent their heads half to one side and half to another, while grabbing each others' clothes or a rope. Fellows from the second group jumped on each of them shouting "Monday," then "Tuesday," and so on, until "Sunday." Then the teams switched roles.

Jumping in three steps- One player bent down and the others jumped over him by taking three steps only. Then the first jumper had to increase the number of steps from three to four, to five, etc. The other players followed the first jumper. The bender had to constantly move to the spot where the first jumper reached and pointed to with his foot. The game continued until the first jumper wasn't able to go any further. At that time he became the bender and others jumped over him. Thus everyone had a chance to jump and to bend.

These are but a few of the numerous games Habousetzies played.

Women danced in large numbers and in groups; girls, brides, and old women all together. They held each other's hands and turned round and round. A woman with a sweet voice headed the group singing. Others followed her lead in both singing and dancing. The dances were numerous, some designated for special occasions.



*Soghme Boyajian
Habousetzi dress at the turn of the century.*

E ngagement and Wedding

The marriage age for men ranged from fifteen to twenty-five years old. Elder singles were subject to mockery and considered abnormal. For girls, the marriage age ranged between fourteen to twenty years of age. Girls over twenty were called *doonmena*, meaning left in the house.

It was common to engage boys and girls from the cradle with the consent of the parents of both sides. Thus families were considered *khenami* (in-laws) until the children were grown.

Another way was for the parents of a marriageable young man to choose the bride-to-be. Then, with or without a go-between, they would pay a social call on the parents of the girl. After some friendly talk they would offer to return for another visit in order to drink again of their delicious wine. A date would then be set.

During the second visit, after general conversation, the young man's parents would ask for the hand of the host family's daughter by saying, "We have come to ask you for an apple." The girl's parents at first would demur by saying that their daughter was too young yet. Then they would ask for time to think about the proposal.

The matter would be arranged on the third visit, when an engagement present, usually a gold piece on a gold chain, would be placed around the neck of the girl by the boy's mother. The bride-to-be then would kiss the hands of the visitors. The girl's mother would also give a present, saying, "Let this be also a token from us."

The day of the wedding was decided upon by both sides. It usually took place in the winter. Wedding festivities lasted two or three days.

Music by *daoul* (drum) and *zoorna* (a simple wind instrument with a shrill) played an important part in the festivities. Richer people had more

than one of each instrument play at their weddings. The guests gathered by the musicians, who first stopped in front of the *gunkahayr's* (godfather's) house. They waited for him and the *gunkamayr* (godmother) to come out and climb into an oxen-driven cart, decorated with rugs. The procession started at the *gunkahayr's* house and progressed from there around the streets, gathering the other guests. People came in carts, on horseback, or on foot.

From the groom's house wine, raisins, walnuts, *basdegh* and dried fish were given to the musicians and the crowds of guests and on-lookers accompanying them. The guests, after parading in the streets, entered the bridegroom's house where long tables laden with wine and food awaited them. If the groom was Apostolic, the priest had to bless the table, and if Protestant, "Our Lord" was sung.

The merriment continued late into the night, when the *gunkahayr* began the ceremony of praising the bridegroom, while dressing him. While lavishing all sorts of praises on the groom, he dressed him in a new shirt, jacket, and colorful socks woven by the bride. During the ceremony the guests tried to kidnap the bridegroom, and it was the *gunkahayr's* duty to defend him. The groom was supposed to remain motionless.

On the second day, the guests gathered again by the usual procession. This time the groom was with them and he carried a drawn sword. Several men danced at the head of the procession, and their friends stuck coins on their foreheads. The procession stopped in front of the bride's house. The *gunkahayr* demanded that a rooster be sent to him from the house. He took the rooster, waved it several times in the air, then held out its neck to the groom to cut with his sword. The groom was supposed to cut the rooster's neck on the first blow, but if not successful, he was allowed to try again. The *gunkahayr* threw the severed neck on the roof of the bride's house.

The bride finally came out of the house, heavily veiled. A brother or a close relative lifted her up on horseback or placed her in a cart. The groom sat next to her, sword in hand. The procession then proceeded to the church.

The procession entered the church where a priest, or a minister if the groom was Protestant, conducted the marriage ceremony. Outside the church the people made merry as the *daoul* and *zoorna* played.

Once the ceremony was over, the bride and groom left the church

Baptism

Since there were no doctors in Habousi, at childbirth the midwife acted as obstetrician. She was an illiterate woman, but well-versed in her profession. When the time of birth approached, the midwife was called and stayed with the laboring mother until the infant was born.

Habousi's midwife, Sarig Nana, was a pious woman. She always prayed before she started the delivery. "I'm only the medium," she would say, "God is the deliverer."

As soon as the infant was born, the godfather was informed. He was happy. The godfather was the guardian of the newborn for life. His happiness would be greater if the infant were a boy, and he would say, "A light is added."

At the baptism, the godfather held the infant in his arms during the long ceremony. The priest would first take his confession and give him communion. Then he would ask, "What does this child want?" The Godfather would answer, "Havadk, houys, ser yev mgrdutioun," meaning "Faith, hope, love and baptism."

Baptism was performed by immersion in a font built in the wall of the church. Then the priest carefully opened the bottle of Chrism and anointed the infant on the forehead, chest, palms, and armpits.

After the baptism the godfather went with the infant and his father to their house where the mother of the child was found sitting on a cushion on the floor, her face covered with her bridal veil. Next to her a bed was made for the infant. The godfather placed the baby on the bed, and if a boy, he said, "Let him be durable," and if a girl, "Let God give her grace."

Then everyone enjoyed the "feast of baptism" and wished happiness

for the infant. A present, prepared by the child's mother, was given to the godfather before he left. After childbirth the mother remained indoors for forty days.

The godfather was highly respected by the whole family. The mother of the child was not allowed to speak to him for the rest of her life, out of respect.

I Interesting Remedies

The climate in Habousi was healthy. The village was known for the healthiness and longevity of its dwellers, who commonly worked until eighty years old.

There were no licensed physicians in Habousi. In case of serious sickness an elderly person, who was considered a healer, especially of colds and pneumonia, was called. He put his hand on the patient's forehead or belly to see if the patient was feverish. As a cure the healer soaked a piece of cloth in vinegar and tied it on the patient's forehead. When a patient experienced so much pain he could not open his mouth to talk, the healer would strip him of all clothing and cover him with boiled cloths dipped in vinegar. These cloths were changed daily. After two weeks the patient would be able to speak.

There were also specialists of animal diseases. When an ox or a cow ate a poisonous grass, it would swell up and fall down. The specialist would then cut the back of the animal to let the blood out.

People of Kharpert had many sores. A sore called *daroug* (boil) was intolerable. Old women were usually the preparers of the medicine for that sore. Experienced old women would collect grasses, leaves, and flowers from the fields, mix them together, and crush them. They would then mix the mixture with the marrow of a sheep bone and keep it in a container. This mixture would cure sores on faces.

Another medicine was prepared by putting young mice in a container, pouring olive oil on them, covering the container, and setting it aside for months. The mice totally dissolved in the liquid, and the mixture would cure almost any cut.

One day a Turk, unable to talk, came asking for a cure for his swollen throat. An old woman found dog's dirt, crushed it into dust, filled it in a

straw, and blew it down the throat of the patient who was not at all aware of what went down his throat. Two days later the Turk came to thank the woman, for he was cured.

Villagers took patients to Gatnaghpur (milk) Spring to bathe them if they had a fever. If the fever continued, they would take a large piece of cloth, wet it in vinegar, add some chopped onions to it, and place it on the foreheads of the patients. A spoonful of cotton oil was the cure for constipation. If the constipation continued, a barber would be invited to take some blood from the arm of the afflicted person and to rub ashes of burned cloth on the cut.

Habousetzies also used leeches as a blood treatment.

The blind and crippled were reared by the village. Small pox was the main cause of blindness.

When the condition of a patient seemed hopeless, villagers called the priest. The priest read from the Bible and prayed over the dying person. The sexton washed the corpse. If the deceased was a female, women did the bathing, then shrouded the body to the shoulders. The body was then placed in a coffin that belonged to the church, and the funeral rites were performed on the day following the church services. The coffin was then carried to the cemetery where the funeral services concluded. The shrouded body was taken out of the coffin, placed in the grave, and covered with soil.

On All Souls' Day (memorial) all family members went to the cemetery where the priest performed a mass.

The priest did not receive a salary. He was compensated at Christmas and Easter, and on other occasions.

P

roverbs

Collected by K. ARAKELIAN

- Dirt can't be covered by snow. = *Bad deeds can't be hidden forever.*
- Do good and throw it away in the sea. If the fish won't know it, God will.
- Every beauty has a fault.
- The old man has finished riddling and has hung the riddle in the attic.
= *Praise for age and experience.*
- Stretch your feet according to your bed.
= *Know your limits, be realistic.*
- When people spit on the face of a disgraceful person, he said, "It's raining."
- We escaped the rain to get caught by the storm.
- God's good has an end, evil's bad is endless.
- A flattering tongue will bring a snake out of its hole.
= *Praise for a kind manner.*
- There's no rose without thorns.
- The rooster sounds best on its perch.
- From mouth to mouth, the stick turns into a beam.
= *Rumors exaggerate.*
- You're asleep but your luck is awake.
- Like a donkey's tail—it neither grows longer nor shorter.
= *Said of fixed income.*
- A beardless man's utterance is worth nothing.
- No one gives bread; everybody gives advice.
- He who is full gives only morsels to the hungry.
- Whatever you sow, that you shall reap.
- I'm a chief, you're a chief; then who'll grind the flour?
- Work gets done by working; the journey is completed by walking.
- The knife has reached the bone.
= *It's impossible to endure longer.*

-
- A hungry chicken sees feed in its dream.
 - Keep your door locked and don't accuse your neighbor of stealing.
 - The iron should be hit while warm.
= *Don't delay urgent works.*
 - Go die; come and I'll like you.
 - The thief stole from a thief; God from above was amazed.
 - You saw a cap on my head and thought I was a miller?
= *On making judgements from appearance.*
 - Scratch your own head with your own nails.
= *Be self-dependent.*
 - A strong thief accuses the owner of theft.
 - A donkey is experienced for its burden only.
 - He who rides a donkey, should endure complaints.
= *When initiating something, be ready for the consequences.*
 - What does a donkey know about what an almond is?
= *On ignorance, tastelessness.*
 - Stand in front of a donkey, but in the back of a dog.
= *Be cautious.*
 - People call the donkey uncle, until they pass the bridge.
= *On accommodation.*
 - The king's daughter too has her faults.
 - I wish even for my enemy not to be poor.
 - People decapitate a rooster that sings prematurely.
 - You'll harvest what you seed.
 - Better for a man to lose an eye than his reputation.
 - The tongue is boneless.
 - The mad don't care for advice, the dirty don't care for soap.
 - For the insane everyday is feast.
 - The tree should be straightened while young.
= *On education.*
 - A straight line can't be expected from a crooked ruler.
 - He eats the seed in our house, but lays the eggs in someone else's house.
= *Ungrateful.*
 - Get the bread from the baker.
= *Seek help from the experienced or the professional.*
 - He who becomes a friend for bread, always ends up being the grudge-holder.

- If the shepherd wants, he can get milk from a male goat.
- Man's brain isn't in age, it's in the head.
- Spring doesn't arrive with one flower.
- Don't be like a hammer, always toward yourself; be like a saw, once toward us and once toward yourself.
= *On altruism.*
- A hated person in the village is preferred over a praised person in a strange village.
- Water remains cold in a new jug.
- Much is gone, little is left.
- The dog barks where it eats.
- When the orphan wanted to steal, the moon appeared the night before.
= *On being unlucky.*
- If you're friends with the camel-man, you have to build your door high.
- He who digs a hole for others, falls in it.
- Where there's a will, there's a way.
- Instead of fixing the eyebrows, you dug the eyes!
- The bad will be punished.
- You will not be breast-fed unless you cry.
- The flood drove away the mill, you're looking for the millstone?
= *On neglecting the big loss and complaining about the small one.*
- Think ten times and speak once.
- Measure ten times and cut once.
- Have ten intelligent enemies, don't have one ignorant friend.
- From a ten penny donkey you get a five penny colt.
= *Be realistic.*

Songs, Puzzles, Games and Curses

Especially in winter, Habousetzies sat around the *tandour* and passed the time with puzzles. The following are a few of the more common puzzles with the solutions:

All around is thorn, in the middle an almond—*eye*.
 A bunch of worms on the wall—*eyebrow*.
 A dark stable, a white horseman—*mouth, teeth*.
 A white tent with no door—*egg*.
 Goes around all day long, in the evening remains with its mouth
 open—*shoes*.
 The mouth is down, the tail is up, the longer you drive the more you
 wear it out—*plow and counter*.

* * *

Mr. K. Minasian wrote the following songs told to him by Mrs. Joohar Kassabian. Habousetzies either had few folk songs, or few people who wrote them down for posterity.

Water runs and the water-mill grinds,
 Martha eats and dances,
 We gave her a penny and asked her to dance,
 Now we're offering two but she won't stop.

Eat with few people,
 Work with lots of them.
 Sit down peasant,
 My love has gone to Izmir,
 Has opened a store there,
 Has given a *shal* to his love there,
 Has caused crying to his love here.

* * *

The snow falls in abundance,
Stand up, see who's coming,
The Amir of Palu is coming;
- What does he pile on the donkey?
- Wool, cotton and silk.

The ship from far places arrived,
The concerns of my heart arrived,
Cry, my eye, cry!
The day of my departing arrived.

The neck of my white horse is black,
I'll ride it to Boukhara,
I'll either return or not return,
Let my black fortune cry.

Hoghe and Habousi
Feed a thousand people,
All with fried food.
The priest of Khoshmat by himself
Didn't get full!

The meadows are fenced,
Rich and abundant,
The trees fruitful,
Gardens and beds.
Habousi is a big village,
It's reputation is like a city,
It looks to nine roads,
Provides bread to passers by.
They've come to take away my daughter,
She's a ripe fruit, they've come to take her,
They're putting a crown on my beloved's head,
They're putting on her the pains of the world.

The pure, pure water
Runs towards the fields,
To take to the full granary
The harvest of the peasant.

During the festivities women and girls sang these songs in a large group:

I love you my new daughter-in-law,
You've just arrived from your mother's house,
You've come to the spring with your pitcher,
You've washed your feet with water,
You're as white as the snow,
I love you my new daughter-in-law. (Repetition.)

The girl went and slept in the garden,
The wind has opened her chest,
Her lover went to see her,
Covered her chest with a pretty handkerchief.

(The boy, deeply in love, sang the following)
Sun, why have you fallen on my love?
You're damaging her moon-like face,
You're changing the color of her rose-like face,
She's my pretty love, your beams annoy her,
You're sweating her forehead like a tiny dew,
She's my precious, you've to respect her,
She's my soul, you've to pardon me.

The lover of the girl has gone to Aleppo,
Asked for the price of the clothes,
Opened his purse full of gold pieces,
Returned home with lots of presents,
The pretty girl her heart has opened.

LOVE EXPRESSIONS:

I love your sun. I love your eye. I love your soul. I love your height.
May I die for you. May I get dry in front of you.

OFFENSIVE EXPRESSIONS:

Stinky, stinky (hallow eye), dirty, indiscreet (open mouth), shameless (dog face), your hair is long, but your brain is short, crazy (seedless), stupid (pumpkin head), shameless (with no face), black-faced, (your face is washed with barley water), double-faced, stupid (a pear and a half, donkey-head, long-eared), brainless (the lodge is empty).

PRAISING EXPRESSIONS:

Long live. Stay prosperous. Congratulations. May your foot bring good luck. Stay alive. I wish the same to you. May your home remain joyful. May your days be long. May God increase whatever we decrease. May God not put you to shame.

CURSES:

May fire pour on your head. May your eyes become blind. May black water fall into your eyes. May whatever you eat come out of your nose. Go underground. My soot on your head. Die in torture. Don't achieve your goal. May your feet fold beneath you. May your arms fall. May you be hit by a bullet. May you become like straw.

May I see your shroud. May I throw you down under the water. May you become small particles. May your green sun eclipse. May your family be destroyed. May what you eat not come out. May your dust go with the wind. May grass not grow on your tomb. May the dog bark on your grave. May I carry your coffin. May your house crumble. May God give you a disease. May your light turn off.

BLESSINGS:

May God be with you. May God not put you to shame. May God protect you from the worst. May God make your days good. May God bless you. May God grant you your wishes. May God keep you healthy. May God give you grace. May Abraham's abundance be in your home. May God enlighten the soul of the deceased. May God age you on one pillow.

Collected by KASBAR ARAKELIAN

Folk Idioms

Even though each district in Armenia had its own dialect, and often people of neighboring villages spoke slightly differently from each other, the following idioms were in common use in the Plain of Kharpert:

- It cuts my eye.
= *I can't do this work.*
- It fell out of my eye.
= *I was fond of something or someone, but not any more.*
- It entered to my eye.
= *I liked or loved something or someone a lot.*
- The attic is wooden.
= *The person isn't clever, not enough brain.*
- My eye remained in it.
= *I liked it a lot but couldn't take it, I wish I had.*
- The person has a back.
= *The person has strong, influential friends.*
- May your face be black.
= *Be ashamed.*
- May your face be white
= *Be proud.*
- There is something under the tongue, I don't know what it is.
= *The person has something to say but is keeping it secret.*
- The eyes remained open.
= *Was extremely amazed.*
- Take the wool out of your ears.
= *It's hopeless.*
- Throw it in the back of your ear.
= *Don't pay attention to what has been said.*
- May Satan take you away.
= *Die.*

- Dips a tale in the molasses.
= *Interferes in any matter.*
- Your tongue is very long.
= *You talk too much.*
- Who's the donkey, who's the basil.
= *The person was not worthy of something but was entrusted to it.*
- Satan falls from someone's eye.
= *The person is very capable.*
- (Someone) Doesn't let (someone's) collar.
= *Someone never lets go of someone else.*
- Someone doesn't dip a finger in the ashes.
= *Someone never works.*
- Someone searches my mouth.
= *Someone wants to know something.*
- Someone's eye is hollow.
= *Someone is stingy.*
- Someone's eye is full.
= *Someone is generous.*

* * *

(In the Armenian original of the History of the Village of Habousi there is a passage written by Kasbar Arakelian in Habousi dialect. The translator deemed it important to include the following paragraphs here because they reflect some beliefs pertinent to the Habousetzies.)

Habousetzies knew well that when Turks and Kurds die, they will go to hell, and that when even a hair of an Armenian dies, or, God forbid, an Armenian passes away, Gabriel will show up after the priest's psalm and take the soul directly to heaven.

Our grandparents were honest people. They worked hard, worshiped their God, never stole cattle, or water, or the harvest of a neighbor, and always paid their debts even without a signed document, committed to a gentleman's agreement.

Sometimes we come across ignorant peasants who know by heart the history of the Jews and their kings and their prophets because they have read the Bible for thirty to forty years, but when you ask them a question related to the history of their ancestors, they can't tell you a thing. They haven't made an effort to learn that Armenians numbered more than forty million once upon a time, that they were equal to other nations as conquerors and defeaters. Let me write the names of some

brave Armenian kings: Hayk, Trdat, Levon, Artashes, Khosrov¹. These peasants don't know even the names of Armenian saints who have at least had the same strength as non-Armenian saints. St. Sahak and St. Mesrop² are the crown of our saints, and knowing these things is an obligation for us. Learning the history of others before learning our own is not good.

Now why don't we do like our ancestors? They were merciful; are we going to be merciless? They gained honest reputations; are we going to disgrace ourselves? They left their belongings to the generations that followed; to whom are we going to leave our belongings? Do you see the difference between us and our ancestors?

If our ancestors were alive, we would tell them: "Look! I'm in a free, rich, intelligent country; I've seen and learned lots of things; I act like the Americans, dressed like them; my house is decorated with Persian rugs instead of carpets; I've learned to read the Bible better than a priest, and I can even give a sermon!"

Well, it's fine to have all these advantages, but when it comes to criticizing us, we'll tell them: "Go away! We don't want to hear a wolf's sermon. If you're truly my son, do what you've learned from me! For as long as you're alive, never, never forget your villagers, your nation. Now go, and God bless you!"

1- Hayk is the eponym for Armenia and Armenians.

Trdat or Tiridates III (250-330) adopted Christianity as a state religion in 301. Thus Armenia became the first Christian country in the world.

Levon II (?-1219) was King of Cilicia under whose rule the Cilician Armenian Kingdom reached unprecedented strength and prosperity.

Artashes I the Conquerer was the founder of the Artashesian Dynasty in 189 B.C.

Khosrov I the Brave (?-259) kept Armenia an independent state defeating both Caracalla the Roman Emperor and King Ardashir of Persia, the founder of Sassanidae Dynasty.

2- Sahak I Catholicos (348-439) played an instrumental role in the invention of the Armenian alphabet.

Mesrop Mashtots (362-440) was the inventor of the Armenian alphabet (405).

The Aghas of the Village

The famous aghas or elders of Habousi were:

- Fr. Der Stephanian, who was a kind advisor and a traditionalist priest.

- Rev. Hagop Simonian, the Protestant minister, who was a specialist of the Turkish language and whose well-versed petitions to the government in Mezre were subject of admiration.

- Ousta Garabed Guleserian, a capable person who was the councilman for the Protestant Armenians.

- Zador Kojigian, who owned a whole quarter of the village. He was a very generous patriot who mastered the Turkish language and served as Mudir (supervisor) of seven villages for seven years.

- Tovmas Yeghigian, another wealthy landlord, who was semi-literate.

- Khachadour Ajemian was said to be the grandson of the founder of Habousi. He was a healthy man who lived to the age of ninety, and who had been the head of the village once.

- Khacho Kehya Kelhagopian, another long-living, semi-literate person, wise and experienced.

- Boghos Varjabed, a teacher and a specialist of the Turkish language.

- Hagop Ousta Bennanian, the principal of the Protestant church and the chairperson of the Church Council, was a humble, kind and well educated person.

- Manoug Boolodian, a wealthy landlord and a patriot.

- Hagop Garoian, a wealthy landlord and the son of a huge clan.

- Najar Bede, a well-respected carpenter and a brave man who was a dedicated social worker.

- Hampo Kehya Hagopian, who although illiterate knew how to deal with Turk officials to minimize their harm to Habousi villagers.

T

he School and the Church

The spiritual and community life of all Armenian villages and towns centered around the church. The church was always the most prominent edifice of any locality.

In the center of Habousi, on top of the high hill, stood the main church. A hundred feet away was the school, known as Jemaran. It had two floors, each forty by sixty foot in dimension. Its brick walls were twenty-four inches thick. The first floor was twenty-six feet high and there were always hundreds of pigeons around.

The huge hall of the second floor was dedicated to the classrooms. It was clean and airy. The room next to the hall was used as the teacher's bedroom.

After the atrocities of 1895, school life was disturbed. But the villagers overcame their sorrows and recovered from their wounds. They rebuilt the burned church and reestablished the school. The constructive spirit of the Armenian people was victorious. The reconstruction was mostly accomplished due to the personal sacrifices of the villagers. A small amount of assistance was received from a few compatriots living in the United States and from American missionaries.

Before the Constitution was introduced in 1908, the students of the village studied Armenian in their homes. They took lessons from Boghos Varjabed (teacher), blind Yeghig, Ghazar Varjabed Der-Hovannessian (this fine educator was killed during the atrocities of 1895), Garabed Varjabed Kehya Hagopian (another victim of 1895 atrocities), Hovagim Varjabed, and Sempad Karamanoogian.

The Sempadian Association of Habousi, founded in 1864, played an important role in the development of the school.

After the Constitution, the school was significantly improved, most-

ly with the contributions of Habousetzies of the United States whose numbers had grown with new immigrants.

In 1850, when the American missionaries established their school in Kharpert, students from Habousi, eager for education, went there. Over time, Habousi trained its own teachers, students of theology, preachers, and doctors. Among these some were either graduates from Euphrates College, or had been students. They all volunteered to develop the village. Noted amongst them were Boghos Boyajian, Garabed Kelhagopian, and Hovagim Varjabed. Having studied in Constantinople, Boghos Boyajian was well educated. He was known to excel in mathematics, geography, Turkish, and English.

Among the first teachers was a clergyman from Havav, a village of Palu, named Yeghishe Derderian. The Protestants had a teacher named Hovhannes from the German orphanage.

The Apostolic school functioned regularly. Moushegh Kojigian, Asdour Minasian, Nazaret Proodian, Soghomon Goshgarian, Marsoub Boyajian, Yeghia Kojigian, Garabed Mousioian, Hagop Boyajian, and Goulkhas Boolodian were elected by the villagers to administer the school and the church. Garabed and Hovagim Varjabeds ran their own schools in conjunction. It was forbidden to educate female students in the Apostolic school.

The missionary school was coeducational from early on, and most of its teachers were from abroad.

By 1911, the people realized the advantages the missionary school had over the others, and a discussion began to combine the three schools. Hampo Kehya was against the concept of foreign teachers; therefore, a separate school was established for girls in a hall next to the church. They hired D. Alexanian, an old and experienced teacher, as a principal, and teachers Garabed and Hovagim as assistants. Alexanian taught Armenian history, geography, grammar, Turkish, and French to the first and second grades, while Garabed and Hovagim taught religion and reading.

The girls' school had sixty pupils. Pupils were accepted from neighboring villages too, like Mughur Oghli and Akhor.

Jemaran, the Apostolic school, offered the following courses:

From first to sixth grade: Armenian reading and writing, Armenian history, geography, grammar, mathematics, Turkish, and English.

Saturday course offerings included: spelling contests; church liturgy; composition; national songs and debates.

The United Association of Constantinople gave directions to the school and sent experienced, visiting teachers to the districts.

From 1903 to 1915, the following non-Habousetzies taught in Habousi:

- Khachadour Vartanian, from Garmir, teacher and preacher
- Hampartsoum Sarajian, from Pertag, preacher and teacher
- Bedros Bozoian, from Kurdistan, teacher and preacher
- Garabed Lulejian, from Kharpert, preacher and teacher
- Rev. Sahag Hovsepian, from Chmeshgadzak, preacher
- Avedis Garabedian, from Kurdistan, teacher and preacher.

During 1895 to 1915, Habousi benefited from the following public figures all originally from the village:

- Giragos Hagopian, teacher (son of Garabed G. Hagopian)
- Joohar Boghossian, teacher
- Vartouhi Simonian, teacher
- Sahag Medzadourian, minister
- Hagop Der Margossian, minister
- Armenag Simonian, very reverend minister
- Fr. Armenag Mateosian, priest
- Fr. Krikor Hagopian, priest.

The blind troubadour, Margos Boyajian, sang for years on his *saz* for many prominent people. He was highly respected, but unfortunately he did not write any of his songs down for future generations.

Yeghia, a blind master of Grapar (ancient Armenian), tutored students in his home.

Boghos Boyajian, a graduate of Getronagan School of Constantinople, was an expert in Turkish, Armenian, Russian, and English. He was entrusted by villagers to read Turkish official documents and to respond to them. Villagers remembered him and his beneficial work long after he passed away.

Garabed Varjabed, a student of Boghos Varjabed, was known as an expert of Turkish through self-education.

Ghazar Varjabed, another student of Boghos Varjabed, was a teacher of Armenian.

Hovagim Varjabed, still another student of Boghos Varjabed, was quite advanced in Turkish.

All those men fell victims to Turkish atrocities in 1895.

Antranig B. Boyajian, born in 1892, lost his father during the atrocities of 1895. Later he graduated from the French College of Kharpert as an expert in the French language and violin. He taught in Ourfa, where the Turks hung him in 1915 during the genocide.



Antranig Boyajian—a teacher martyred in Ourfa, in 1915.

Kevork Minasian, a graduate of Euphrates College, was another victim of the 1915 genocide.

Other Habousi graduates of Euphrates College were Setrag Hagopian, Mariam B. Boyajian (class of 1915), Vartouhi Simonian (class of 1914), and Joohar B. Boyajian. Joohar was a teacher for seven years.

A memorable event was the presentation of the Vartanants play in the church of Habousi in May 1912. The young Habousetzies of the village, together with two artists from Mezre, produced the play after overcoming initial objections from the Trustees. The result was incredible. People followed the play with great enthusiasm, and those outside the hall shouted: "We want to see the Armenian General!"

Vartan Mamikonian was the leader of the Armenian army in the fifth



Vartan Mamikonian.

century when Armenia was already divided between the Byzantine and Persian Empires. He called for and led the struggle against the Persians in order to maintain Christianity in Armenia. He and his fellows were martyred during a battle in 451. They were sainted by the Armenian church shortly after. Ever since, a special celebration, Vartanants, was dedicated to them. Vartan and his compatriots became an immense source of inspiration for a people discovering the first sparks of patriotism.

* * *

Habousetzies were model believers, loyal to their ancestral heritage and regular church-goers who kissed the door-stone of St. Mariam Asdvadzadzin Church before attending the service.

Christian beliefs and virtues deeply penetrated the Habousetzie soul. Habousetzies were known as benevolent, hospitable, and kind. Living in accordance with moral principles, Habousetzies treated each other in mutual trust and few felt the need to appeal to a court of law to disputes.

The village was home to its church since ancient times. Villagers prayed every Sunday during service, tearfully asking forgiveness for sins

they committed or not. On holidays they received communion and peace prevailed in their religious souls.

Although destroyed during the earthquake of 1879, part of the marvelous mother church was still used for services until a new church was completed in 1891.

The high dome gave a luxurious look to the church. The building was made of stone, with an arch-shaped altar in the center and two smaller altars on either side. The altars were generously decorated. The gold and silver crosses of the great altar gave the sanctuary a special brilliance. On the walls were oil paintings of angels with trumpets. Above the church hall there was a meeting room.

Capitals were visible at the edges of the six pillars. The delicate ceiling and belvedere were painted by masters. There were special rooms for the preparation of the wafer and consecrated bread, as well as for those who were in fasting. The engineer of the church was Master Vartan of Sheikh Haji. He was assisted by Hovsep.

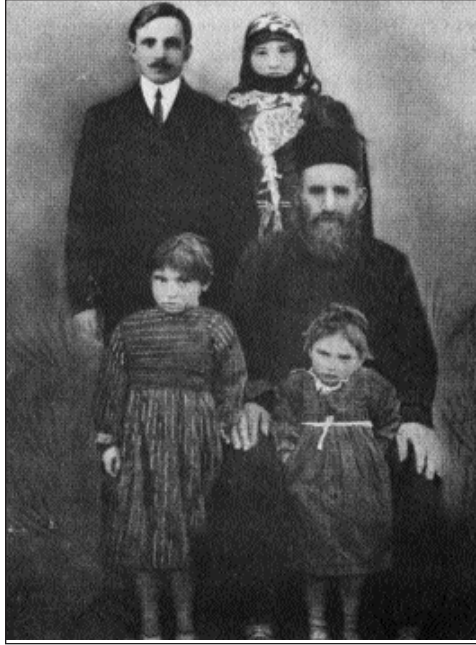
After years of dedicated work, the church was officially consecrated in 1897 in the presence of archbishops, bishops, pastors, and choristers in a ceremony that deeply impressed the faithful. The whole village celebrated that day along with many neighboring villagers. *Herisa* (a mixture of barley and shredded beef) was prepared in huge caldrons and *madagh* (consecrated lamb) was served.

* * *

The following priests, respectively, served the believers of Habousi until the massacres of 1895: Father Manuel, Father Margos Der Hovhannes, Father Giragos, Father Ghazar, and Father Kapriel.

After the massacres, survivors invited Father Mateos from the village of Khonakh Almaz to serve them, which he did until the genocide in 1915. Father Mateos, together with Father Kapriel Kelhagopian, was ordained by His Holiness Sahag Khabayan Catholicos in Sis, Cilicia.

In 1896, in compliance with the instructions of the diocese, four deacons were elected as aides to the pastors: Levon Kanedanian and Tovmas Donigian for Habousi, and Haroutiun Torigian and Garabed Der Stephanian for Zartarij. Zartarij's monastery was run by an elderly vartabed at that time.



The priest and his family.

The church of Habousi had a regular choir supervised by teachers Garabed and Hovagim. Among the choristers were: Baghdasar Donigian who was trained by Garabed Varjabed; Krikor, the son of Father Mateos who was one of the leaders of the choir; Mahdesi Hagop Goshgarian; Kevork Der Hovannessian; Yeghia Donigian who was blind; Boghos Varjabed Boyajian; Garabed Varjabed Kelhagopian; Hovagim Varjabed; Kevork Papeshian; Yeghia Akmakjian; Garabed Bederian (known as Boz Garabed); Yeghia Proodian; and Hagop Khermezian.

Thus, with its dedicated pastors and choristers, the church of Habousi enjoyed a prosperity until the genocide of 1915, when the church was destroyed and the parish scattered.

* * *

There were four monasteries in the plain of Kharpert: Khoulakiugh, Soorsoori, Tadem, and Zartarij (also called Abdel Mseh). This name was given to the monastery based on a tale. It was told that one day, the son of a gypsy wanted to become a Christian. The father opposed the idea.

The son fled the house and the father chased him and caught him. The son insisted on becoming a Christian and his father killed him, right on the spot where the monastery was later built.

Although sanctuaries, the monasteries were also pleasant recreational places during the summer time. In July, the Sunday of *Vartavar*,¹ was the best time for a pilgrimage.

1- This is the name of a major feast from the pagan era which meant "the day of adorning with roses." It was later transformed into the Christian feast of Transfiguration. As in pagan times, during the feast people adorn themselves with roses, make doves fly, and sprinkle water on one another.

T

he Missionary Movement and the School

All Armenian schools were primitive at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Habousi was no exception. It is well known that in many villages studious pupils learned their lessons on barn floors.

But the period between 1850 to 1875 turned out to be one of enlightenment, deeply affecting the lives of Armenians and changing their future course.

The main phenomenon in that period was the presence of American missionaries and the massive involvement of some European countries in educational and religious movements. Regardless of their political or religious agendas, these foreigners brought the light of civilization from West to East.

There was already a movement within the Armenians toward enlightenment. Armenian students were leaving for Germany to complete their education in German universities. The beneficial impact of French principles in civil liberties was already felt in Armenian community life.

Mkrtich Khrimian¹ established a press in the monastery of Varak, in the Vilayet of Van, and his “Ardzvi Vaspurakan” (a periodical literally meaning “The Eagle of Vaspurakan”) was read in the villages and cities of all six Armenian Vilayets. It spread a new spirit and consciousness among the Armenians.

1- Mkrtich Khrimian (1820-1907), known as Hayrik (Father), is considered one of the spiritual founders of the Armenian liberation movement. After participating in the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, he realized that there was no hope for Armenians to achieve self-governance with Europe's assistance. Therefore, he advocated armed resistance. In 1892 he was elected Catholicos of All Armenians. He was the most popular clergyman of modern times.

Before Khrimian, the Mekhitarists¹ paved the road for an Armenian renaissance by publishing many books in history, literature, and sciences. Both in Eastern and Western Armenia, benefactors and educational organizations had also begun to establish secondary schools.

But this birth had its shadow side. The missionaries brought a turbulence with them to Habousi. Parishioners of the Armenian Apostolic Church who followed the faith of their ancestors for centuries were deeply upset by the introduction of this “new religion.” Opposition reached a point where it was forbidden to bury a Protestant in the Armenian Apostolic cemetery.

Armenian Evangelists established their own school in the village. Setrag Hagopian, a brilliant graduate of Euphrates College, devoted himself to arbitration and succeeded in calming emotions.

The Protestant or missionary movement entered Habousi in 1850 (though some say it was present from 1840). Protestant missionaries first established themselves in Kharpert and then began to spread their word in the surrounding villages. The main attraction of the villagers to the Protestant movement was the availability of the Gospel in modern Armenian, a language they understood, and by understanding God’s word their religious needs were satisfied.

Missionaries disseminated the Gospel in modern Armenian to all villagers free of charge. At the beginning villagers didn’t want to even look at the foreign preacher. Calling him “Prod,” they kept a distance. But gradually they were attracted to the new movement that was fully developed by 1870.

A man named Ousta Margos built a meeting room on the top of his house with his own hands. It was across the street from the Armenian Apostolic Church. Margos gave it to the Evangelical community to be used both as a church and as a school.

The first missionary to Habousi was Dr. Wheeler (one of the founders of the movement). Later arrived Mr. Brown, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Kerry, Miss Bush and others.

1- The Mekhitarist Armenian Catholic Congregation was officially founded and recognized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1712, in Venice. It was named after its founder, Abbot Mekhitar Sebastatsi. The Mekhitarists, both in Venice and Vienna, played an instrumental role in revitalizing Armenian culture.

A brave preacher was Benne Margos (Bennanian), who was nicknamed "square wheel" for his shortness and fatness. He went from door to door preaching and he increased the number of parishioners substantially.

It was told about him that one day, because of a conflict, three tax-collecting Turkish policemen were sent to his house to beat him on the pretext that he hadn't paid his tax. The policemen didn't want to hear his arguments, and the notables of the village laughed at the scene. Aggravated, Margos lifted all three policemen and threw them in a swamp. Then he disappeared for weeks until the incident was forgotten.

Villagers fought against the Protestants. Friendly relations turned to animosity, engagements were annulled, weddings joining Protestants with Apostolic Armenians were prohibited, and constant quarrels and fights took place. The body of a Protestant secretly buried in the Armenian Apostolic cemetery was exhumed.

The first Protestants of Habousi were Reverend Hagop Boyajian, called also Der Margossian, Ghougas Der Bedrosian, Rev. Simonian, Yezegelian, Akmakjian, Bzdi Garoyenk, Matorian, Karamanoukian, Kassabian, and Antoian, and their families as well as some individuals from other families.

Impressed by the Rev. Wheeler's speeches, many refrained from drinking. Protestant families initiated the building of a thirty by seventy foot church at the south end of the village, in which they designated a space for their school and teacher. Prior to the massacres of 1895, Murat and Sahag Varjabeds taught there together with Rev. Garabed Medzadourian and Rev. Hagop Simonian.

After the massacres, when the survivors returned to the village, they found the church as well as many houses totally destroyed and burned. Luckily, the school was unharmed. Whether Apostolic or Protestant, Armenians equally used it in harmony. Within a year the Apostolic Armenians rebuilt their church, but the Protestants were denied the right to rebuild their church by the government. Therefore, they built a meeting house, a school, and a house for the preacher in a different location. In 1910, two years after the Ottoman Constitution was declared, Rev. Armenag Simonian succeeded in securing a permit to rebuild the destroyed church. A carpenter named H. Boyajian undertook leadership of the project, and together with others and the financial and physical support of the villagers the church was renovated within six months. Rev.

Armenag Simonian preached there until the end of the Armenian presence in Habousi in 1915. Before him Rev. Hampartsoum Sarajian, Rev. Khachadour Vartanian, and Rev. Bedros Boyajian (from Kurdistan) preached there.



Rev. Armenag Simonian.

Yeghia Donabedian (from Kharpert), Hovsep Bardizbanian (from Ourfa), Hovhannes Hagopian (from Malatia), Rev. Armenag Simonian, and Bedros Gharibian (from Mezre, a graduate of the German school) taught at the Protestant school. The girls' school had its own teachers.

After the massacres of 1895, the missionaries took Armenian orphans and sons and daughters of needy families to Kharpert, where they received education at Euphrates College and learned trades.

Among Euphrates College's graduates were Rev. Garabed Medzadourian, Rev. Hagop Meynoian or Simonian, Rev. Hagop Boyajian or Der Margossian, Rev. Mardiros Der Mardirosian, Rev. Armenag Simonian, Dr. Arshag Der Margossian, Setrag Karamanoukian, Yeghsa Najarian, Kevork Meynoian or Minasian, and Vartouhi Simonian.

Hayrabed Ajemian, Zadour Ajemian, Kohar Boghossian or Der

Bedrosian, Markarid Najarian, Varter Boyajian, Garabed Der Hovannessian and Boghos Meynoian didn't have the chance to complete their education at Euphrates College because of the genocide.

Habousi and neighboring villages benefited also from the graduates of other colleges, such as Antranig Boyajian, from the French College of Mezre, and the preacher Markar Nanigian, from the German seminary.

Turks, naturally, wanted to take advantage of the appearance of Protestantism in Armenian regions and use it as a means of destroying Armenian unity. Adopting a "Divide and Rule" policy, the government began to register Protestant Armenians separately, as a Protestant Millet (Protestant nation). Catholic Armenians were treated similarly, for the same reason. These new denominational communities had their own moukhtar (mayor) and ruling bodies.

The Turks went as far as to prefer Protestant Armenians over Apostolic Armenians as witnesses in court. All these were fiendish acts to deepen animosity between the denominations and to favor Protestantism, in order to increase its followers.

Although Protestantism brought educational and moral benefits to the Habousetzies, national unity suffered by Turkish encouragement. Finally, the Turks realized that foreign powers were behind the Protestant movement and they tried to limit Protestant activity after that. This was the reason behind the refusal of the Turks to allow the Protestants the right to rebuild their church after the massacres of 1895.

Here is a touching incident from the sad period of Apostolic-Protestant conflict.

Toro, an Apostolic Armenian, went to the funeral of his late Protestant relative Manoug Najar Apoian. When the mourners arrived at the Protestant cemetery, they put the coffin down. Toro noticed that the hole dug for the coffin was wet. Upset by this, he voted against burying Manoug there. "What do you want us to do?" asked the other mourners. "We have to bury him in our cemetery," replied Toro. People refused saying, "But he's Protestant." "No matter what happened, he's our Mano" insisted Toro and Mano was buried in the national cemetery. This incident was the end of discrimination between Apostolics and Protestants.

* * *

Once the Balkan War was over, Apkhar Melkonian's son Nishan, Nazareth Minasian and Alexan Proodian returned to their village of Habousi. Their presence was celebrated by gun-shots and song and music organized by teacher Giragos Proodian. The Protestant teacher was Kevork Minasian, a student at Euphrates College.

In the square of the Najarian's Spring, villagers and students sang together. There were Turks too. (To give an example of the standard of education among the Turks, it suffices to mention that every time they had to write a letter in Turkish, they came to the village seeking help from Armenians.)

On the eve of 1913, Boghos Minasian, who had recently arrived from the United States, invited all Habousetzies involved in school management for a meeting at the school. Newly agreed upon arrangements were helping bridge the gap between Apostolic and Protestant Armenians.

The school principal was Ohan Kojigian. Krikor Antoian was assistant principal and Boghos Minasian was supervisor. Kevork Minasian was the head of the teachers' group; his assistants were Hagop Kurmuzian and newly ordained Fr. Kapriel.

The Apostolic school reached the height of its advancement. It became overcrowded.

Mrs. Yughaper Barsamian was elected teacher for the girls' school. She taught writing and reading to newly wed women during after-school hours, when it was time for her to rest.

Simon Simonian and Malkhas Kassabian headed the Protestant School Committee.

By 1913, differences and discrimination between Apostolic and Protestant denominations had faded and the educational life in Habousi witnessed a boost. But only for a very short time, until the genocide unfortunately.

O n the Eve of the 1895 Massacres

There is no need to describe the horrible massacres of 1895 in order to comprehend their ferocity. Nor it is necessary to explain the reasons in order to understand the criminal intentions of the Turks.

Whatever we record here is but a fragment of the calamities of all Armenians in Turkey. We simply recall it with the purpose of bringing our share to the completion of the history of a terrible massacre and deportation.

Ever since Habousi was established, the Turkish government attempted to settle Turkish and Kurdish families there, but these families drifted away, unable to compete with the Armenians. The government also imposed heavy taxes on them. Tax-collectors were prudent oppressors. Enjoying the full support of the government, they often harassed the Armenian villagers over the slightest reasons, and received more than their lawful share by threats and beatings. Often thieves attacked the village and drove away the herds and destroyed the crops.

However, Armenians grew more keenly aware of their misery and found their lives intolerable in the mid-nineteenth century, after the cultural-educational movement and the arrival of the missionaries.

In the 1850's, Turkish soldiers entered the village. First they poured cold water on Armenian men and then whipped them until their bodies were swollen. Then they put them in a barn, and left them hungry and with no care. Other villagers protested, but the protests went unheard.

In revolt, the abbot of the monastery of Abdel-Mseh advised some courageous women—Martha, Gadar, Nazig, and Tamam—to find another twenty to thirty brave women and to drive the soldiers out with sticks. Indeed, Armenian women succeeded in accomplishing this task.

Upon hearing of this incident, the government sent new soldiers to

the village, captured the notables, investigated them, and then set them free.

This, in turn, motivated many young men to organize in order to prepare a united defense against thieves and kidnappers.

One of Habousi's elders, Zadour (Dzadur) Agha, began to preach self defense and bravery as early as 1888, upon retiring from his position as chief of the village. His successor, Hampo Kehya, tried in vain to come to terms with the Turks.

Before 1895 there was an organized revolutionary committee in the village. A betrayer almost brought disaster to the village, when his treason was discovered and he was eliminated.

Due to unbearable conditions, no matter how kind and patient they were as Christians, the Armenian villagers had to revolt and think of self-defense. It was as if the approaching calamity was felt by everybody, and everybody was eager to obtain a gun.

Shortly before the massacres of 1895, forty-four people, mostly young insubordinates, gathered in the Armenian school for a meeting.

Boghos Varjabed adjourned the meeting by saying: "Habousetzies! Today is a significant day in our lives and the future of our village. This is not a regular meeting room, but a sanctuary and our pledge is sacred." Then he put the Holy Bible on a table and invited Krikor Bennanian (the teller of this story), who was then a teenager, to read the following speech:

Armenians and brothers,

We are gathered here for a confidential undertaking. Neither the Turkish government, nor the clergymen, who advise us to turn our faces to those who slap us, knows about this. The Turk hits us, the clergy calms us down, and the elders are indifferent. We shall be discreet and unforgiving to betrayers.

If you think that we can do this, let's pledge to sacrifice ourselves; otherwise, let's go back to our homes and await our fate.

But let's not forget that the Turks will do what they know and what they already do. We also have to do what is necessary.

Immediately a committee was formed to supervise the activities: Boghos varjabed, president; Boyajian, secretary; Krikor Bennanian, treasurer. The following Habousetzies pledged and signed as members of the secret group:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Boghos Boyajian | 2. Krikor S. Bennanian |
| 3. Garabed Boghossian | 4. Moushegh Khashalian |
| 5. His brother | 6. H. M. Bennanian-Bozoyan |
| 7. Hohan Kanedanian | 8. Hagop Kanedanian |
| 9. Marsoub Boyajian | 10. Bedig Najarian |
| 11. Yeghig Najarian | 12. Hovhannes Najarian |
| 13. Vasil Ajemian | 14. Khacho Kehya Ajemian |
| 15. Hagop Ajemian | 16. Tovmas Yeghigian |
| 17. Garabed Yeghigian | 18. Hagop Yeghigian |
| 19. Karekin Kassabian | 20. Papel Kevork |
| 21. Ghazar Antoian | 22. Movses Amoun |
| 23. Sarkis Antoian | 24. Toros Berberian |
| 25. Giragos Berberian | 26. Moushegh Berberian |
| 27. Hampartsoum Boyajian | 28. Vartan Donigian |
| 29. Haroutiun Boolodian | 30. Hovagim Boolodian |
| 31. Hovhannes Proodian | 32. Apraham Proodian |
| 33. Hagop Der Stephanian | 34. Boghos Der Stephanian |
| 35. Hohan Garoian | 36. Moushegh Najarian |
| 37. Nazar Garoian | 38. Yeghig Akmakjian |
| 39. Moushegh Kojigian | 40. Sarkis Kojigian |
| 41. Arout Minasian | 42. Minas Minasian |
| 43. Hagop Garoian | 44. Atam (no family name) |

The agenda items were:

- a) Pledge on the Holy Bible
- b) Raising funds by different means
- c) Refurbishing the guns of the villagers
- d) Purchasing new guns
- e) Accumulating gunpowder and bullets
- f) Establishing ties with other groups.

Those present swore upon the Bible to dedicate themselves to the defense of the people. Moushegh Khashalian said: "My soul to Christ, my body to my nation." Many repeated the words after him.

Then Hagop Boghossian added: "Words are worthless with no work. Better not to talk if we won't work." Then, putting a gold coin on

the table for himself and for Krikor Bennanian, he invited everyone to donate something. All shouted "Long life to you!" Boghossian had never stepped on an ant in his whole life.

Moushegh Khashalian pledged ten pots of wheat for himself and his brother. Then pledges for gold, wheat, and barley followed each other, and in the end the men had raised more than one hundred gold coins and two hundred pots of wheat and barley. A special committee was formed to raise funds in other places.

It was decided to clean and refurbish personal guns. Since the organization didn't have guns, one of the goals was to arm the villagers. The committee hoped to find and purchase guns as soon as possible, and to convince the villagers to carry arms. In some instances the group lent money to villagers. Also it was decided to purchase gunpowder and bullets, disseminate them to villagers, and accept payment from those who had the means to pay.

The organization didn't have a name. There were no political party members in Habousi. People had only heard the name of Armenagans and Hunchakians. Those who signed the pledge considered themselves revolutionaries. Their aim was to protect the village.

* * *

Habousi had only begun its strategy for defense and had not collected enough guns or ammunition when the signs of the approaching calamity became clearer and clearer.

Turks and Kurds were armed at full strength. Almost every day an incident of theft occurred. The government was indifferent, and Turks and Kurds were spoiled by that indifference.

It was imperative for the villagers to find guns, by any means.

The village was divided into six posts, and twenty people assigned to each.

This arrangement was made six months before the massacres occurred. Villagers guarded the strongholds at night, communicating with each other with whistles.

The posts were located at strategic corners in the village at points on the roads leading into Habousi from outside.

The first post was located at the house of Khachadour Kelhagopian.

This house looked out over the Najar Spring and had a clear view of three major roads: the main avenue that stretched to Kharpert, Palu, and Garin; the road to Ichme (a village famous for its marvelous weather and water. Ichme's population was a mixture of Armenians and Turks. The Armenians there were famous for their trades and the market was under their control); and the road to Zartarij (a village with an Armenian, Turk, and Kurd mixed population). Close to Zartarij was another village with a mixed population, called Gdasig.

The second post was at the school, adjacent to the Armenian Protestant church. It overlooked the main avenue, the road to Aghntsig, and the roads to Alisham, a village mainly populated by Turks. Aghntsig was a small, totally Armenian populated village until the late 1800's, when some Turks built mansions there. The village was located southwest of Mount Taurus.

The third post was in the house of Boolodian, close to the second. It served similar functions.

The fourth stronghold was the house of Nanigian, located at the intersection of the roads to Alisham and to Mughur Oghli.

The fifth post was the house of the Ajemians, which overlooked the roads to Akhor and Mughur Oghli.

The Yeghigian's house was the sixth front. It functioned similarly to the Ajemian post.

Mughur Oghli was a small village populated primarily by Armenians. All were Apostolic Armenians occupied in agriculture. It was close to the Murat River, about a half an hour from Habousi. Akhor was forty-five minutes away from Habousi, to the northwest.

The six strongholds would have been able to protect the village had the Habousetzies had sufficient ammunition, but when the Turkish attack came they had only one hundred guns!

Some high quality gunpowder and some bullets were obtained from a visitor named Moushegh; a few *chakhmakhle* (flintstone) guns were obtained from the Kurds, and in addition a few guns were stolen from a Kurdish gendarme.

An impostor, named Dilo Nigol, was paid fifty gold pieces to bring the Habousetzies guns, but he cheated them. A few young Habousetzies caught him and forcibly took his arms and the ten gold pieces he was car-

rying at the time. According to Moushegh, the villagers planned to execute Dilo Nigol, but he escaped and found refuge in Iran.

The government policies towards Armenians shifted dramatically. The situation became more and more difficult. Habousi notables attempted to bribe the Begs or get help from the missionaries but to no avail. The grip of tyranny tightened.

Roads became insecure. Twenty days before the massacres many villagers were robbed.

One day three Habousetzies were going to Aghntsig when they were attacked. Najar Bede, knowing how to use his gun, survived and returned home. His companions were killed.

Another day, Habousetzies met robbers at the lower part of Ichme. They also survived after showing the thieves their guns hidden under their coats.

Turks abused and raped the Armenians. They robbed them of the fruits of their labor, made fun of their religion, and set up traps to confiscate their belongings.

At the same time, the Turkish government tried its best to collect arms from the Armenians, who often obligingly handed them over.

Finally, five notables went to ask the government for troops to protect the village from these everyday attacks. Delegations from other Armenian villages also applied for protection. All heard the same answer: "Give up your guns, pay your taxes, and the Sultan will take care of you in a fatherly manner. Go back to your homes and behave."

This is how the massacres of 1895 were initiated.

The Massacres and the Victims

It was a well-known fact that throughout their domination of Armenia, the Turks organized systematic massacres of the Armenians. This was done by inciting the Turkish and Kurdish population against their Christian neighbors and allowing them to loot and burn their properties, criminally attack their women, and to kill a number of them. Then, the government would put a stop to the killings and establish law and order.

But the massacres of 1895-96 were unprecedented in severity. They were to claim the lives of 300,000 Armenians throughout the Armenian provinces and Constantinople, and to burn and destroy whole villages, while Christian powers were more interested in concessions from the Sultan than in protecting Armenian lives.

It was fall, the beginning of October, when the atrocities began. Only those guarding the post of the Ajemian house were alert. Hagop Ajemian, the leader of the group, was a brave young man. When Kurds approached the house, Hagop fired his gun and killed a few of them. His comrades were shocked. They were not accustomed to using guns. Only Vartan of Perou was brave enough to fight. Realizing that none of their comrades would fight, Hagop and Vartan sent them home. They then dressed like Kurds and continued to protect themselves throughout the massacre, until it was over some twenty days later. During that period Turks and Kurds killed the villagers, burned and destroyed their houses, and robbed their belongings. Only the ceiling, the arch, and the walls of the Apostolic church were left standing. The Protestant church and school were burned similarly. The victims were numerous.

Vasil Ajemian, a wealthy person, was shot while jumping from roof to roof with a hundred pieces of gold under his arm.

Reyis of Yeghgants (Thomasian), a short and heavy man who con-

demned the Kurds for their evil work, was slaughtered like a lamb in front of his house.

Beadel Israelian, his wife, and their son were tied together, shot, and dumped in a well where wheat was generally stored.

Kassabian was murdered by the spring.

Among the large Antoian family, Vartan Kehya and the head of the family perished.

Hovhannes Mulkigian, his uncle Maghak, and his uncle's brother Hagop were killed while riding a donkey.

Hagop Garoian, known for his strength, was shot in the back while trying to escape in a field.

At Margos Bennanian's house, fifteen semi-burned and unrecognizable bodies were discovered. Marsoub Bennanian was also killed.

Bedros Boyajian, who had recently returned from Istanbul with some wealth, was killed. His son Antranig, a graduate of the French College, was one of the most educated people in the village. He was imprisoned in Ourfa and hung, along with the Primate of Ourfa.

At the end of the twenty days, more than a hundred Habousetzies had been killed and more than two hundred wounded.

Another Habousi stronghold was the house of Bennanian. It was reinforced by stones and bolts and was supposed to have been the site of major resistance by the young Habousetzies. But only one person, Krikor Bennanian, was there when the attack began. Relatives and friends convinced him to jump off the roof, because everybody else had abandoned their positions. He too abandoned the stronghold and together with twelve or fifteen friends decided to go to Mezre. Near Alisham, they were attacked by hundreds of Turks. Sarkis Boghigian tried to escape, and he was shot to death. The rest hid their guns. When the Turks did not find any guns, they took the young Armenians to their village instead of killing them.

Master Sarkis Bennanian was well known to the villagers of Alisham. He had found springs for them, and built their mosque and the best of their houses. Had not Sarkis been in the United States during the atrocities, he would have been killed like his brother Hagop, who was shot in Hussenig.

In those days a large number of Habousetzies went to Alisham, all victims of robbery.

One night Turks tried to decapitate Kehya Khatcho Ajemian. The wound was deep but the knife missed his throat. Friends wrapped a scarf around his neck and brought him home. He survived, but his neck remained bent.

Zadour Agha, son of Kojig, wanted to appeal to a Turkish friend. Krikor Bennanian, following Zadour's instructions, and jumping from roof to roof, went and found the man. Afterwards, bundled in sheets like a woman, he and Zadour, with the help of Ukuz Hanem, went to meet their friend, Ahmed Effendi. The scene was touching. They held each other and cried like real brothers. Ahmed Effendi was a kind old man with a pretty house in a large garden. He had a big barn and hay-house. The barn and the hay-house were full of Armenians, as was part of the garden. Ahmed Effendi was against robbery. Armenian villagers did what work they could so as to not overburden the philanthropist.

Ahmed Effendi belonged to the Sunni¹ denomination. His son, Husein Effendi, was cunning and silent. It was obvious that he was not a fan of his father's deeds. Husein's wife and daughters were philanthropists too, and they spoke some Armenian.

The extremists of Alisham did not give Zadour Agha peace of mind. Despite Ahmed's hospitality, the Turks harassed him, threw stones on his property, and demanded that Zadour surrender. Although Ahmed was willing to protect Zadour, Zadour chose to walk out. The crowd rushed to kill him. Some influential Turks interceded until government officers arrived and saved the poor man.

Except Mezre, the Kurds plundered the whole region. Those who survived were forced to begin again from scratch. Despite the Sultan's ferman (decree) to pardon Armenians, months later acts of harassment still occurred in the villages.

To pardon was an insult. It implied that the Armenians were guilty of acts that required pardoning. The Turkish government killed, robbed,

1- Most Muslims are Sunnites, the largest of all Muslim sects. Sunni Muslims are spread throughout the Arab world and are numerous in Turkey.

Sunni Muslims believe that Muslim leadership after the death of their prophet, Muhammad, passed to Caliphs elected from Muhammed's tribe.

and then pardoned! And why not, after all that it even offered compensation! The missionaries also offered money and clothes to survivors. The villagers survived until the following harvest. Fortunately, most of the seeding had been done before the atrocities.

Another fortunate thing was the mildness of the winter. It was a wonder that the people's wounds healed without a doctor, or medicine.

Armenians were accustomed to a harsh life. Some had stores of corn in their basements, others borrowed what they needed, and some had relatives and close friends in the United States who assisted them.

Naturally, Habousetzies rebuilt their houses—just like sparrows that build new nests out of destroyed ones. They began to grow again in number and wealth. They rebuilt the churches and the schools. Young people returned to their studies. Babies in cradles filled houses with screams of joy. Songs and sounds of joy began to echo like the old times during weddings. But Habousi still suffered from problems in transporting their goods on the roads, so some notables appealed to the government for fatherly protection.

Hence came ten *lolos*, Kurdish militiamen, who settled in the stronghold on top of Najar Spring. What kind of protection was that? The house was theirs now, as was the village they were supposed to protect! To complete the picture, it is worth mentioning that the villagers' labor was also theirs.

If someone stood up to them, they would take him to a barn and beat him with sticks and then levy a ten to twenty penny tax on him. The daring person would be set free only after Khacho Agha's interference. If someone walked in the neighborhood late at night, the procedure would be repeated. If two Armenians had an argument, both were equally punished and taxed.

One day a bride went to bring water from the spring. A Kurd wanted a kiss. The bride went home complaining. Four men went to voice their concern. The result? They were beaten and taxed four gold coins. Complaints were worthless.

The situation became intolerable. Hagop Ajemian and Krikor Bannanian appealed to the notables, who finally agreed to write a strong letter of protest and to collect signatures. Hagop Ajemian left for Mezre, submitted the letter of protest to the authorities, and returned home. Soon after, the Kurds were asked to leave the village.

Remaining in the village were two Turkish robbers hired to protect the fields. They were from Zartarij, as were the pastors.

One day, the Habousetzies noticed that Turks from Zartarij and Ichme had piled the Habousi flails on donkeys and were leading the donkeys out of town. The Armenians were scared to death. Who wouldn't be, after all the losses and suffering during the massacres? Instead of attacking the thieves, they shouted and pleaded for help. They soon understood that the two Turkish guards had been bribed to not intervene. Hampo Kehya shouted for help, and many answered loudly by saying, "Here we come, here we come," but no one made a move. The thieves felt sure that they could rob the Armenians without resistance.

But there was one person who, although not paid, waited for the thieves to appear on the only road they could use to enter the village. And suddenly, with a threatening voice, that person shouted, "Surrender your arms and the flails." Then slowly yet clearly the same voice said, "Surrender; otherwise bullets will come." By the third warning, one thief was downed by a bullet. The rest immediately found refuge behind the donkeys and fired their guns in the direction of the first shot. Hagop Ajemian took the Turks by surprise, disarmed them, handcuffed them, and returned the flails to the village, after placing the wounded thief on a donkey. Some villagers were happy. Some were very nervous and afraid of the repercussions of these actions. Hampo Kehya told Hagop: "Did you like what you did? These poor villagers have suffered a lot and survived death; they are scared of even a breeze. What will happen if the government hears of this incident?"

Taking the flail that belonged to him, Hagop replied, "I'm taking my flail. If you want, let the Turks take yours."

The villagers set the thieves free, including their limping friend.

Another evening, voices were heard from the west of the village asking for help. Three Turks entered the watermelon gardens. Hagop went to the roof of the Bennanians and said, "Cousin! Give me your gun and let me see who's there." Taking the gun, he ran toward the screams, asking his cousin to follow him. The thieves had taken the guard's knife and gun, and they had piled all the watermelons on donkeys. Hagop arrived with his gun. The thieves grasped the edge of the gun and both sides pushed each other for quite a while. Villagers, instead of helping Hagop, advised him to give up his gun in order to avoid complications. Suddenly

Krikor showed up and threatened the thieves with his revolver: "Give up, or else I'll fire."

When the three thieves saw that two people were now resisting, they left the stolen watermelons behind and fled the village in the opposite direction. Hagop and Krikor, too, returned to the village where they saw a group of Turks by Khacho's door. The Turks invited them to join the group. They were waiting for the dawn in order to take the wheat that belonged to the government to the city. They were the same Turks who tried to rob the watermelons. Recognizing them, Hagop stepped back and warned them not to come closer.

Hagop (known also as Ago) was well known in neighboring villages. He was not afraid of anything even when alone.

Villagers heard the loud argument between Hagop and the Turks. Some of them stepped down from their roofs. The notables tried to convince Hagop to surrender his gun to the Turks and end the incident. Hagop, with a sudden jump, appeared at the bottom of the hill by the school, and yelled: "Let the bravest amongst you come and take my gun."

The Turks were angered. They cursed and threatened. They accused the Habousetzies of protecting revolutionaries in the village and said: "We'll let the government know about this."

Hagop was experienced and he insisted: "I won't give you my gun willingly. If you're brave, come and get it."

Hagop was a descendent of the brave Ajemian family.

No matter what language the notables used with Hagop, he kept his gun and the Turks finally left.

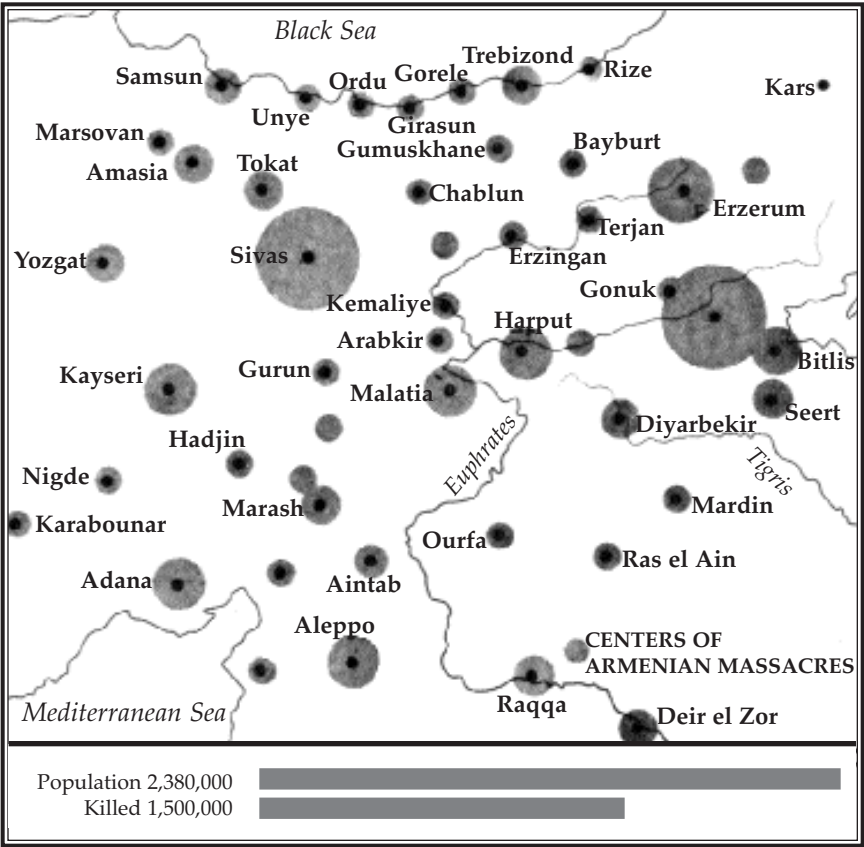
Hagop went to his uncle Vasil. Krikor was there already. Then they went to Hagop's house to have some squash wine.

The Bennanians and the Ajemians were close relatives. The latter's family name was changed during a period of official registration in the government books.

The following lists those Habousetzie families who survived the massacres of 1895:

Ajemian
Akmakjian (Manoogian)

Amboian
Antoian (Vartanian)
Arzoumanian
Avakian
Bennanian
Berberian
Boolodian
Boyajian
Bozbedoian (Bedrossian)
Derderian
Der Margossian
Donigian
Egopian (Maghakian)
Garoian
Goshgarian
Kanedanian
Kelhagopian (Hagopian and Ohanian)
Ketchegian
Kndoian
Kojigian
Menoian
Minasian
Mulkgian (Kachadorian and Melkonian)
Najarian
Torosian
Yeghigian (Thomasian)
Yezegeian



1915 Genocide and Deportation

The adoption of the Turkish Constitution in 1908 gave new hope to the Armenians that their persecution would end and they would be allowed to live as free citizens in a free country. Therefore, they greeted the new regime with sincerity, little realizing that a most fearful destiny awaited them.

The freedom provided by the Constitution granted relative security to the Habousetzies, who began to make plans for their economic and cultural advancement. But Turkish and Kurdish hatred towards Armenians did not fade. Disillusionment soon followed hope. The new regime of Young Turks demonstrated its true color by organizing a massacre of Armenians in Adana, Cilicia, in the spring of 1909. It was a warning to the Armenians that there would be no security for them under any type of Turkish regime. The people of Habousi soon realized that nothing had changed. The Turks and Kurds increased their demands, only this time they met resistance. Fights between Armenian and Turk teenagers and young people threatened to escalate the friction. Numerous incidents prove that the Armenians were not free from harassment.

Once, Krikor Berberian, a teenager, wrestled with a Turk by the latter's invitation, and in front of his friends, and won. Not accepting his defeat, the Turk took out his knife and tried to kill Krikor. Krikor's friends asked for help and Baghdasar, the brave, appeared. He began to hit the Turks who were attacking the Armenians with sticks. The beaten Turks ran away, only to return with others from Alisham, all armed with shovels and hoes. The situation worsened. Baghdasar warned the Habousetzies to flee while he threw himself in the river and began to fire at the Turks. No one dared to come close, and soon the Turks left.

The same day, another incident happened between Turks and Armenians from Habousi and Zartarij. The Armenians who went to

support Vartan and Abraham Garoian were caught in a conflict with Turks.

Another group of Armenians, under the leadership of Marsoub Donigian and Topal (limp) Yenovk, fought on their own against the Turks. Marsoub had participated in the Balkan War and he was noted for his bravery. He had once defended himself against a dozen Turks who tried to steal his horse.

Another incident occurred in September 1910. Every autumn Kurds from Erzerum brought sheep to Habousi and stayed in the village for weeks until all the sheep were sold. Malkhas Kassabian and Krikor Antoian, two butchers from Habousi, decided which sheep to purchase. When they returned to take the sheep home, they noticed that the Kurds had replaced the healthy sheep with small, sickly ones. As a result, there was a confrontation and the two men, outnumbered by Kurds, were beaten severely.

Armenians were ready for revenge. The following day, as the Kurds drove their sheep to the village of Akhor, Malkhas and Krikor attacked them. Other Armenians joined in and together they beat the Kurds. During the fight Moushegh Garoian and many Kurds were wounded. Moushegh later migrated to the United States.

Rev. Armenag Simonian submitted a letter of protest to the government, citing the aforementioned incident. The letter was signed by Reyis Simon Simonian, Hagop Kehya Yeghigian, Hampo Kehya Kelagopian, Malkhas Kehya Kassabian, Gourghis Kehya Donigian, Margos Kehya Antoian, and Krikor Kehya Boz Bedrosian.

Rev. Simonian, a capable diplomat, explained that responsibility for the incident lay with the Kurds. He defended the Armenians as loyal tax payers of the government. The Armenians won the case after a court trial.

Another day, Turks from Akhor seized a flock of sheep. The Habousetzies, under the leadership of Topal Yenovk and Krikor Boz Bedrosian, rescued the animals.

Frequently thieves broke into Armenian homes to steal whatever they found. So the villagers decided to put guards on duty at night. One night, the guards fired on thieves. The thieves complained to the Beg of Zartarij. The Beg sent for Najar Haroutiun Apoian, inviting him for a discussion. When Apoian arrived in Zartarij, the Beg complained about the shooting. Apoian replied that the firing was a cautionary measure.

In the spring of 1910, some villagers took their cattle to bathe. Kurds demanded they remove the animals. When the villagers refused to leave, the Kurds attacked and tried to steal Sarkis Arzoumanian's donkey. Four Kurds began to beat Papel. At that moment Krikor Berberian appeared, and after a short confrontation the Kurds fled. However, they soon returned with more men. Vartan Kojigian, Zadour Ajemian, and Marsoub Donigian, besieged by outnumbering Kurds, defended themselves courageously. Gun shots rang out and the Kurds fled.

In the field of Saloukh, a Kurd wanted to contaminate the water Armenians used for drinking. Malkhas, a villager, tried to prevent him and was beaten badly. Kurds plucked his hair, which caused Malkhas to bald prematurely.

A group of young Habousetzies, seeking revenge, rushed to the spot and beat the Kurds who, taken by surprise, fled. Moushegh Najarian was wounded by a stone and fell unconscious. The government investigated the matter, but no conclusion was reached.

Because of these incidents, Habousi was engulfed in a restless peace when World War I erupted in 1914. The backdrop of the war gave the Turks the opportunity to solve the Armenian question in a most fiendish manner. They planned and executed the complete elimination of Armenians from Turkey. Under the guise of national security, it was decided that the Armenians would be "removed" from their homes and sent into the Syrian desert for the duration of the war.

That was the deportation order issued in April 1915. Secret orders were sent to all governors of Armenian provinces to spare no one. First all able-bodied men between the ages of twenty-one and forty-five were called into the army so no resistance could be attempted. These men were assigned to labor corps and were ordered to build roads. Then they were shot and buried in the ditches they had dug themselves.

Whole populations of villages and towns were given twenty-four hours notice to pack up and leave. A few men were spared in order to harvest the crops, but later they received the same treatment.

When the war erupted, the seeding had been completed, and the students were in school. The sun, with every new day, increased the villagers' hopes for an abundant harvest which indeed happened in time.

The news of the war was disturbing. Immediately, the government posted an announcement calling all Habousetzies between the ages of

Then the men were ordered back to their divisions, and the village emptied again of its young people.

Then a division of fifteen hundred soldiers from Mezre came and settled in Habousi. The churches and the schools were turned into garrisons. Many soldiers settled in houses, ten to twenty in a house. Soldiers on their way from Eastern Turkey to the front spent the night in either Habousi or Palu or Gulishkir. During the day, newly arrived soldiers replaced those who had left. The villagers were obliged to feed the soldiers. This unpleasant situation continued until the eve of the genocide.

By the beginning of 1915, Habousetzies were suffering immensely. The notables traveled to Mezre to appeal to the government to ease their burden. In addition to their responsibilities toward the soldiers, the villagers were also fed up with the increasing demands of tough gendarmes. There were no listening ears. In fact the government began to demand more. Villagers were asked to secure clothing, food, and shoes for the soldiers.

A circular from the Diocese of the Armenian Church advised patience and encouraged the villagers to meet their obligations with no resistance, because the country was at war. There was a confidence in general among the population that the Armenians would overcome this difficult period, as they had done throughout the ages. At that time, the Primate of the Diocese of Kharpert was Rev. Father Bsg.

Sometimes gendarmes knocked on doors and demanded fugitives by name. Those hidden in the house rushed out to prevent mishap; otherwise, the gendarmes would have poured water on their mothers or wives and beaten them to death.

By May 1915, the village was under siege. There was a great need for arms, cannons and ammunition. The Mudir (mayor) of Ichme, accompanied by his gendarmes, captured the notable of Habousi and beat them with the help of special Turkish *Bashe Bozuk* (irregular) forces. The rustling of sticks was heard for an entire week. The notables gave the gendarmes their hunting guns and all non-functioning weapons. The harassment increased after the village was placed under the supervision of a new army commander, a beast named Huseinigli Oghli Shukri. Later he became known as Shukri Beg, when another beast from Zartarij, Zibir Hasan, joined him in his efforts to destroy Armenians.

At that time, more than six hundred Armenians in Habousi were

working on paving the roads. They were freed from military service and stripped of all weapons for a hideous plan. Guns were not entrusted to them on the pretense that they might join the Russian army.

After the decree, fugitives from military service came out of hiding and joined the *ameliye tabour* (road-paving division). The overall number of Armenians working on the roads in Habousi, Hoghe, Khoulakiugh, Pazmashen, and surrounding villages numbered close to six thousand. All were ordered to Mezre.

Nishan Onbashi (Corporal), who had gained his rank during the Balkan War, stood by the Najar Spring and addressed six hundred young people: "Compatriots! What we are doing is not military service. They are taking us to our death. It's better for us to die here than to be dismembered by the government in Mezre. Let's unite and refuse to go." But no one followed him.

The caravan left for Mezre. Two days later, the Armenians were deported in chains.

The following day, by sunrise, the *ameliye tabour* arrived in Keghouank on the Plain of Kharpert where Turk soldiers allowed them to rest. Friends of the deportees took bread to them, but their arms were tied behind their backs with thick ropes and it was impossible for anyone to approach them. They were the living dead! They were forbidden to talk to one another, and a soldier carrying a sword policed each row. Finally, they were taken to Arzni, behind Dzovk, and murdered.

A few whose ropes were cut survived. The soldiers guarded the bodies for weeks until they were swollen in the sun. The Kurds stripped the bodies of all clothing.

The Habousetzies were given a three-day deadline to surrender their guns to the Turkish authorities. Those who gave up their guns and revolvers were looked upon as less guilty. If the Turks came across a household with no gun to give, they would catch the man of the house and shoe him like a horse! If there was no man home, they were known to torture the women, even pregnant women. The weapons they gathered were piled in a carriage and taken to Mezre during the night, under heavy guard protection. The next day, a list was compiled of owners and receipts were handed out! Soon after, the government began to arrest notables and "suspects."

One of the first Habousetzies arrested was Mardiros Yezegelian.



Corporal Nishan Melkonian, 1912.

They told him: "You are a Christian, we believe in you and trust your word. Tell us the truth, for it's not appropriate for a Protestant to lie. Who has machine guns, cannons, and bombs? Tell us the truth and we'll protect you against *fedayees* (freedom-fighters)." Yezegelian answered: "Mudir Beg, we have never even heard the names of the weapons you are asking for. We are farmers and those arms, cannons, and bombs, are fit for the government. We have already given you whatever we had in our possession."

Shukri Beg replied: "You went to the United States, made money there, and have purchased vast acreage here. How could it be that you don't have a gun? Am I to believe that someone who owns land worth 300 to 400 gold pieces doesn't have a machine gun? You are a liar, infidel Armenian. Hasan, take this mean pig away and make him confess by whatever means you know."

Indeed, they shoed his feet like a horse, pulled out his nails, poured water on him, and beat him to death.

Then it was Haroutiun Berberian's turn. "Tell us. It is obvious from your eyes that you like to suck our blood. To avoid torture you must speak the truth. Where are your weapons?" "Effendi," he replied, "I have no weapons. None of the mentioned arms. You have already collected all that there was."

Immediately they laid him on the ground and put nails in his feet. Screams filled the air. He fell to the ground half dead.

Then they fetched Karekin Kassabian. "Come here, Karekin Kehya. Don't be like those fanatic infidels. Your Bible hates liars. Tell as the truth." Karekin knew them well. He said: "Effendi, we know that you want to terminate the Armenian race. The Habousetzie is a farmer by nature. His aim is to earn his bread from the soil. He does not have time to think of arms."

Pretending that they were aggravated by his lie, they shouted: "You, infidel pig, you too want to cheat us? Bring the hot iron." In the meantime, Mudir Fehmi Effendi ordered his men to pour water on Karekin and beat him. "Hit with no mercy. They wanted *beylig* (the title of beg), and this is the *beylig*!" By the time they put the hot iron under his feet, he was already speechless.

Then they brought Garabed Karamanoukian, known as the *Boursali* in the village. Shukri, the beast, began: "Come here. Are you a Protestant or an Apostolic? What kind of a Protestant are you? Against the Ottoman government or against Christ?"

Other Turks interfered to make fun of Garabed, whose only response was a prayer. Finally, the Mudir forced him to talk. "Why are you silent? We brought you here to tell us the location of the arms." Garabed answered: "I don't have any guns." The Mudir cursed. "Seems that you resemble your Christ Effendi! Take him and crucify him like Christ."

They prepared a cross and nailed his hands and feet to it. "This is the way to treat them" shouted the Mudir. "The more lenient you are with this godless people, the more they struggle against you." Then he turned to his colleague: "Zibir Hasan, you go with Shukri Beg and bring the young wives of these people, it might be easier to get information from their women."

Zibir Hasan, Shukri Beg, and a couple of soldiers went after the women. Even though most of the young brides were in hiding, Shukri was able to find a few women and virgin girls. The Mudir pretended that he was angry with Shukri for bringing him the women: "Can't you find men instead of bringing these women here?" Then cunningly he asked the women to sit next to him, and very gently caressing them he said: "There is nothing to be afraid of. It is the fault of your notables that you are here. They don't want to tell us where the guns are hidden, therefore we had to bring you." The women cried out: "We don't know the location of guns. We know that the government collected the weapons; where would we have guns from?" The Turks placed boiling eggs on the women's breasts and then raped them.

The village was totally abandoned. There was no one to protect the villagers. Thieves of honor and wealth had free access to all the houses!

The notables of the village were first seized at Haroutiun Najarian's house. The following day they were taken to Ichme and jailed. The Turks took the two priests, the Protestant preacher, the teacher, and the school board to St. Nishan Church of Ichme. The village was left with no youngsters or workers. A few men hid in the fields or in underground haylofts, but they were unable to come out of hiding. They were convinced that this disaster would pass like a ghost in a very short time, as it had in the past.

At St. Nishan, the Turks plucked the beards of Fr. Mateos and Fr. Kapriel, as well as Rev. Armenag Simonian. They accused them: "From the altars of your churches you urged the people to buy arms. Where are those arms?" Then the gendarmes whipped them, indiscriminately hitting any part of their bodies. And to crown their cruelty, they pulled out the priests' fingernails and left them half-dead on the ground.

Afterwards, the Turks hung Simon Simonian and Manoug Nenegian by their feet facing each other. They began to hit them into each other until the men were half dead from the beating. The Turks left Hagop Donigian half dead too, after hanging and beating him. All the Armenians gathered in the church were tortured, with no exception. Then the Turks searched for new victims.

On the following day, when the relatives of the prisoners arrived with food, they found them all severely beaten and hardly able to speak. Rev. Simonian told them to go back to their homes and not to expect any favors. They tried to save their dear ones by giving money to the Turks,

who took the money and offered fake promises that the prisoners would soon return home.

The next day, before dawn, gendarmes entered the church, called each of the prisoners by name, lined them up two in a row, tied their arms to each other, and ordered them to walk out of the church. The three clergymen were separated from this group.

Simon Simonian, who was the village chief (Khoja Bashi) at that time, asked: "Where are you taking us?" "You'll go to Mezre in accordance with government orders. Hurry up before the day gets warm," replied the Mudir.

Outside the church, one swordsman was assigned to each row and the group moved in an unknown direction. The three clergymen were not tied, simply because they were almost unable to walk after tortures.

Simon Simonian asked the Mudir once again: "Beg! I think this is the wrong way." The Mudir said shamelessly: "You just walk. We will find out later."

The group reached Zartarij and was ordered to walk down into a gorge. A group of people had gathered to talk at the bottom of the slope. A commander blew a whistle and ditch-diggers appeared from below the ravine. The prisoners were made to kneel down and given a last warning to hand over all their money and valuables.

The Mudir, together with his bodyguards, approached Fr. Kapriel, Fr. Mateos, and Rev. Armenag Simonian. They were asked to renounce Christ. Praying, Fr. Kapriel said: "I have sinned, I have sinned by my tongue in front of you, my Lord!" Fr. Mateos repeated the same: "I have sinned. I have sinned by my tongue and my deeds in front of you, my Lord. Have mercy on your people!"

Rev. Armenag prayed: "My Lord, if possible, take this cup away from me; otherwise, let your will prevail. Strengthen us, My Lord, and make us worthy of seeing you. Amen!"

The whistle blew again, and without a shot the gendarmes plunged their bayonets into the bodies of the prisoners. The dead bodies were hurriedly buried in a mass grave already prepared for them. When the sun rose, the executioners had already departed.

In their haste, the murderers did not make sure that all their victims were dead. The bodies were thrown into the ditches and hurriedly cov-

ered with dirt. There was no sign of life in the ditches when the Turks left the scene of their heinous crime.

The story of what happened after the departure of the murderers was told by a man who rose from one of the ditches. Marsoub Boyajian survived and finally succeeded in escaping the country.

He lived to tell this extraordinary tale.

The first man to gain consciousness in the shallow grave was Garabed Karamanoukian. When he realized that he was alive, he pushed the earth that covered his face aside and listened. Since there was complete silence he raised his head and asked in a low voice if any one else was alive. With difficulty, Marsoub Boyajian tried to answer. The two of them then struggled out of the grave only to realize that another man, Marsoub Minasian, was already out. The three men noticed the dirt move and together they dug out Kevork Minasian, a graduate of Euphrates College, whose wounds were serious.

The four survivors discussed a plan of action, but they were unable to agree. Each one decided to go his own way.

Kevork Minasian crawled on his stomach to the valley of Haramga. There he found water, cleaned his wounds, and collapsed.

Marsoub Minasian and Garabed Karamanoukian crawled to the village on their hands and knees over fields spiked with dried wheat stalks, while Marsoub Boyajian crawled to Gortin. Disoriented, Marsoub found himself in Ichme, instead of Nor (new) Spring. There, he felt something warm hanging out of his body. He push his entrails back where they belonged, tied his stomach together with his belt, and turned back. After a while he found himself back at the site of his grave. He hid himself in the wheat and waited for dawn. While waiting, he discovered that he had suffered almost forty wounds. His clothes had been shredded by the swords! After wandering around for three days, he finally arrived at Nor Spring and hid himself in the nearby bushes.

The Habousetzie women had no idea about what had happened to their men. They began a search. They took some food and money with them in order to bribe officers as needed. Upon reaching the edge of the mulberry garden that was near the border of Ichme and Habousi, they noticed a hand movement in the valley of Haramga. Scared, they didn't know what to do. Turvanda Simonian said: "Wait here. I'll go and see who he is. He might be one of ours." She went down and saw a man cov-

ered with blood and unable to speak. Finally she recognized the wounded man. He was Kevork Minasian. Two women stayed behind to care for him while the rest continued their search.

Those left behind covered Kevork with a women's sheet and carefully moved him to Habousi. But the gendarmes, suspicious of the scene, captured them. Kevork's mother managed to bribe the gendarmes and take her son home. A Turkish woman from Alisham who was a friend of the family kept Kevork in her house until he was partially recovered. However, he needed further treatment in a hospital. As Kevork left for the hospital, Turkish neighbors, aware of the presence of an Armenian man in their neighbor's house, informed the gendarmes. Kevork was caught. The gendarmes took him to Karasoun and tortured him to death.

The women who had continued their search finally reached Ichme, where they discovered that their beloved men had been driven like cattle by night in an unknown direction.

Marsoub Minasian and Garabed Karamanoukian were caught again also and killed.

The only survivor was Marsoub Boyajian, who was left in the bushes of Nor Spring.

The young boys of Habousi were feeding their cattle in the fields. Rumors of a general deportation were prevalent; therefore, everybody was taking good care of the cattle as the main means of transportation.

Hagop Akmakjian was feeding the cattle close to Nor Spring. While playing with the water with his stick, Hagop heard his name called. The voice came from the bushes of Yeghigian's field. After a brief hesitation, he heard a more familiar voice saying: "Hagop, don't be afraid, its me, come close and I'll tell you something." He went to the voice and recognized Marsoub. The latter asked him to go to the village and inform his mother, Sultan Nana, that he was alive, but wounded, and lying in Yeghigian's field. Hagop left his friends and rushed to Sultan Nene's house, where he informed her of Marsoub's fate.

Mother Sultan, without saying a word to anyone, hurried to her son. As if watering the cotton, she first turned the water toward the field. Then she went into the bushes to witness the pain of her son. After giving him some water and cleaning his wounds, she said: "My son, tonight I'll come to move you."

Indeed, in the darkness of night, Mother Sultan brought Marsoub home and hid him in the hayloft. But there was no security there. Marsoub wanted to leave the house and go to the hospital, but the hospital was far away. He decided to go despite the long dangerous journey. Hiding by day and by traveling at night, Marsoub finally reached Morenig, where he saw Armenian women forced to prepare for the harvest under the supervision of Turkish soldiers. The women fed him and hid him during the day. At night, Marsoub found some Habousetzies who had been freed to work as potters. Amongst them were Nazaret Proodian and Oghgas Boolodian. Marsoub's sister-in-law had friends in the American hospital. She went and told the doctors Marsoub's story. Marsoub was admitted to the hospital and attended to by Dr. Atkinson. After he recovered, he went to Dersim, then to Yeriza, and finally, to the Caucasus.

Nazaret Piranian, the author of "The Genocide of Kharpert," was in the same hospital during the same period of time. Piranian later wrote a chapter on the days of Genocide in Habousi based on the story of Malkhas Kassabian who, as a volunteer of World War I, met him in Yeriza, Garin, and Sarikamish.

The trials and tribulations of the people of Habousi were not over. Even though the village had been depleted of its men, except for a few fugitives who remained hidden in the fields, the inhuman persecution continued.

On June 15, 1915, the Mudir of Ichme, Fehmi Effendi, brought a dozen bloodthirsty gendarmes from neighboring Turkish villages and besieged Habousi, announcing: "Those women and girls who want to adopt the real religion are welcome to meet the Mudir."

The following day other Turks rushed into the village. The crier announced again: "Gather your belongings and place them on donkeys. By tomorrow noon every family should be ready for deportation. Those who disobey will be brutally punished."

Turkish porters served those who didn't have donkeys.

The next day all the families of Habousi gathered at Najarian's Spring, under the mulberries of Zadour Agha. Those who refused to leave their homes were beaten. Armenian mothers and sisters were left unprotected with their babies. Some chose to marry Turks in order to save their relatives from deportation. On the doors of such families was

written a sign indicating that they had adopted Islam and therefore would remain safe. Some accepted deportation, with the hope that it would not last long. And some resisted all pressures. They were taken by foot to Mount Deve Oyni and for three days and nights they were raped. Aged men and women were brutally killed.

After three days, the Mudir and Sechan Oghli, both monsters, brought the tortured women back, pretending that the government had pardoned them. Their hideous plan included using them for the harvest in order to secure food for the Ottoman army.

It was common for the government to collect, in the name of the army, all kinds of food, clothing, and objects.

The women of Habousi were subjugated to horrible tortures and they endured them heroically. They worked like men and helped their persecuted brethren.

One day the women harvesting wheat in Upper Kezel noticed Garabed Maghakian hiding in the fields. They gave him water and bread and advised him to change his hiding place. It was difficult for him to know where to go. A group of Kurds from Genefig, looking for a well prepared Armenian field from which to harvest wheat, found Garabed hiding. For an hour Garabed struggled against the five Kurds, but finally he gave up, totally exhausted.

Malkhas Kassabian and Garabed Akmakjian (also known as Manoogian) hid in the fields also, but they constantly changed locations so they were not caught.

Another person in hiding was Hagop Berberian, but he was caught by Turks in Vari village and brought to the Mudir. Hagop's mother went to the Mudir. The Mudir demanded ten pieces of gold as ransom. Mother Berberian collected the sum from here and there. The Mudir after assuring her that Hagop would be set free in an hour, left the village, but not before ordering a gendarme to take Hagop to the valley and cut his throat. The gendarme, indeed, took Hagop to the edge of Nor Spring and killed him.

The elderly of Mezre and Kharpert had already perished on the road to deportation. The rest succumbed to tortures. Armenians still alive received a government order to prepare their carriages and oxen to carry ammunition for the army in Moush, Bitlis, and Dikranagerd. Armenians of Habousi, Ichme, Akhsa, Sheikh-haji, Mughur Oghlu, Aghmerze,

Aroghig, Aghntsig, Komk, Keghouank, Sarpouli, Kaylou, Hoghe, Mouri, Vartatil, Parchanj, Khouyli, Garmre, Tadem, Morenig, Kesrig, Soorsoori, Yegheki, Khoulakiugh, Pazmashen, Chor Kegn, Nikireg, Insor, Erzouroug, and Arpavoud set forth in this service.

From Habousi, twenty-six villagers traveled with their oxen and carriages to Moush, Bitlis, and Dikranagerd, hungry, thirsty, and on bare feet. Those were: Soghomon Goshgarian, Zador Abajian, Toros Kochakian, Boghos Yeghigian, Ohan Teboian, Kevork Minasian, Vartan Antoian, Ghazar Antoian, Vartan Antoian, Hagop Der Stephanian, Hagopig Simonian, Haroutiun Berberian, Khachadour Kelhagopian, Krikor Toroian, Nishan Torigian, Ohan Kanedanian, Krikor Donigian, Kevork Goshgarian, Melkon Melkonian, Boghos Torosian, Kevork Ajemian, Boghos Yeghiazarian, Garabed Boyajian, and Mardiros Ohanian. Most of this group died on the way back to Habousi.

When the harvest was completed, the villagers received a second order for deportation. This time fifty gendarmes besieged the village and deported everybody.

Turks from Alisham came with tools and destroyed the church. Only a few Armenian women who had married Turks remained in the village.

Turkish refugees from Van, Moush, and Alashgerd took possession of the village, and instead of church bells, Mohammed's prayers were heard from the roof of the Armenian school.

Shukri Beg was in dire need of manpower. He hired Margos Antoian, Malkhas Kassabian, Bedros Meynoian, Garabed Akmakjian-Manoogian, Najar Arakel (Minasian), and Ghazar Melkonian, all teenagers, for minimal pay.

Margos Antoian and Bedros Meynoian were killed by Turkish refugees after the Russian army's advance in Garin. Malkhas Kassabian and Garabed Akmakjian went to Kharpert, spent some time with the American missionaries, and then, in the spring, returned to Habousi for the seeding. In the summer they went back to Habousi to harvest and sell the produce in the city. By then harassment of Protestants had subsided.

The only male survivors who eventually returned to the village were: Malkhas Kassabian, Garabed Akmakjian-Manoogian, Arakel Minasian, Melkig Minasian, Nazaret Proodian, Oghgas Bouloutian, Vartan Antoian, Melkig Mulkigian, Zador Boz Bedrosian, Ghazar Mulkigian, and Soghomon Goshgarian.

In 1916, once the harvest was in, most survivors left the shelters of the Protestant quarter which was located next to the American orphanage and headed towards Dersim. Life had become intolerable in Habousi, especially after the settlement of Turkish refugees there in 1916. The refugees did not work. They lived on the meager relief funds provided by the Turkish government. The fields remained uncultivated and the orchard trees were cut down for fuel. Two years after the deportation, the once prosperous village of Habousi lay in ruins. The refugees began to drift away, looking perhaps for other abandoned Armenian villages to plunder and to burn.

In 1918, after the war was over and the teenagers grown, Armenians began to rebuild Habousi, breed their animals, and plant trees.

Sundays and holidays were sacred for them. They renovated whatever was left from the church, which had been used as a stable by the Turks. Then they applied to the Diocese in Mezre. Deacon Boghos Yeghigian was ordained and elected to serve the village.

The roof of the Protestant church which was used as an inn for thousands of troops passing through Habousi was cleaned. Rev. Hampartsoumian of Aghntsig became the visiting preacher to Habousi.

This semi-freedom lasted until 1921, when the Turks once again began to annoy Armenians and urge them to leave. Indeed, most Armenians remaining in Kharpert finally left for Syria.

Close to five hundred Habousetzies were in the caravan that left for Aleppo. They were robbed four times and reached Aleppo almost naked, all their belongings stolen by the Turks.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union allocated a tent to each eight or nine families at the outskirts of Aleppo. Tent life lasted almost a year. The A.G.B.U. fed the refugees twice a day. Lack of familiarity with the region and the language, coupled with the need to secure jobs, caused the Habousetzies to scatter. Some went to Beirut, Lebanon, some to Damascus, the Syrian capital. Others left for France, South America and the United States.

This was the outcome of deportation. Sisters were separated from brothers, fathers from sons, all in pursuit of a living.

Habousetzie male survivors of the Genocide were:

Arout Minasian and his seventeen-year-old grandson Hagop,

Manoug of Takou Nene, Bedros Najarian, Najar Arakel, Melkig Minasian, Tavo Kochakian, Ohan Ourpatian, Hovhannes Khechoian, Nazaret Khechoian, Beylig Aso, Malkhas Khasboian, Garabed Erzounian (Manoogian), Garo Maghakian, Margos Antoian, Hovagim Boolodian, Bedros Meynoian, Ghazar Mulkigian, Apkar Amou, Hovhannes Pekhoian, Samuel Egopian, Bedros Bennanian, Mencho and Baghdo Boz Bedrosian and Nahabed Narjoian. The latter was hardly eighteen when four or five armed Kurds tried to kill him, but Nahabed threw one after another to the ground with his bare arms, until they finally shot him to death.

Years later, orphans found a piece of paper on a barn wall written by Nahabed to his beloved: "I don't know the days, nor the Sundays. I spend my time hungry and thirsty. I don't have parents or friends. When I put my tired head on the stone, I dream of you standing in front of me."



Volunteers in Cilicia. 1- Simon of Habousi, 2- Asadour Boghosian of Hoghé, 3- Fr. Toramas of Belejig, 4- Peta Vahan (martyred), 5- Hayrabed of Habousi (martyred).

R

esilience and Resurrection

Armenian history many, many times has recorded periods of despair and of resurrection, situations of freedom and slavery. But whatever the case, dominant has always been the Armenians' invincible will to persevere.



Dr. Arshag Der Margossian.

For Armenians, the Arab and Mongol invasions, the Turkish massacres of 1895, and finally the genocide of 1915 were attempts to annihilate the race.

The Ottoman Constitution of 1908 forced Armenians to serve in the Turkish army. The Habousetzies also were forced into military service.

During the Balkan War, the following Habousetzies served the army: Nishan Apkarian, Nazaret Minasian, Marsoub Donigian,

Baghdasar Boz Bedoian and Khayajan Boolodian. The first four returned to their village after the war was over only to become some of the first victims of the 1915 genocide, killed by Turks whose country they had once defended.

When the world was busy with World War I, the Turks found the perfect opportunity to execute their most fiendish plan—the annihilation of all Armenians.

But Armenians, especially with the participation of Russia in the war, had began to nurture hopes of liberating their homeland. Thus, volunteer forces were formed in the Caucasus to defend Armenians in Western Armenia.

Armenians in the United States heard of the deportation, and the volunteer assistance movement sprang up. Special centers were organized for men to register to go to the Caucasus to fight against Turkey.

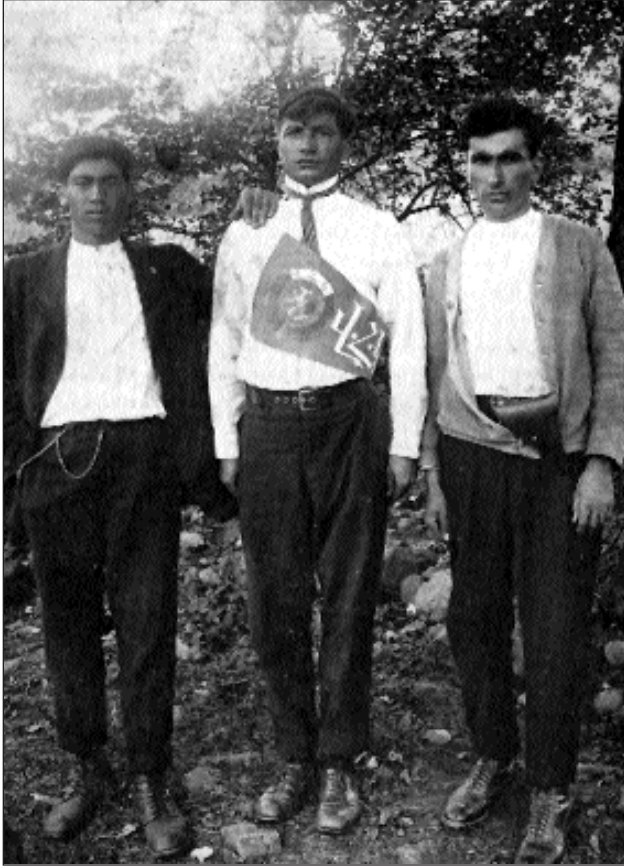
In 1915, in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a public gathering was organized to ask young Armenians to go and fight for the freedom of their homeland.

In those crucial days, news arriving from Turkey described a horrible disaster. Turks were massacring Armenians regardless of their religious affiliation or social standard. Young Armenians, influenced by this news, rushed to register as volunteers. Dr. Arshag Der Margossian, a famous patriot and a revolutionary, was the main speaker at one gathering. He addressed twenty to thirty Habousetzies. Five pledged to fight for the freedom of their homeland. Four were members of the Reformed Hunchakian Party—Zadour Ajemian, Sarkis S. Najarian, Boghos Der Movsesian, and Moushegh Kh. Hagopian (Kelhagopian). Tavit Giragossian belonged to no party.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to create a common means of cooperation between volunteers from the Caucasus and the Diaspora. All factions courageously fought against the centuries-old enemy, yet there was a harmful inner competition between Armenian groups, even though the liberation of Armenia was the common goal.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation had the largest number of volunteers. Its commanders were mostly from the Caucasus.

Volunteers belonging to the Social-Democratic Hunchak Party fought against the Turks at Olti.



*Habousetzi volunteers at the Caucasian Front, in 1915.
Boghos Der Movsesian, Moushegh Hagopian and Zadour Ajemian.*

The third group was formed by followers of the Reformed Hunchak, Ramgavar, and Armenagan parties. They appealed to the Russian government, through the Committee of Armenia's Reconstruction formed in Tiflis, Georgia, for permission to be at the front. The government granted permission and allocated arms and first-aid materials. The volunteers were charged with the protection of Van and the surroundings, then under the command of a Russian governor. After a while, Commander Chankalian—a hero of the Spanish-American War of 1896—gained permission from Governor Dermen to fight in regions that lay further East.

In July 1916, Chankalian led his legion to Shadakh, attacked seven



*Nerses Yezegelian, a volunteer
in Cilicia.*



*Garabed Manoogian, a volunteer
in Garin.*

Turkish villages, destroyed them, and killed the Turkish population. This attack had a two-fold purpose—to avenge hundreds of thousands of massacred Armenians, and to provide future security.

In August 1916, the bad news arrived. The Russian government through the viceroy of the Caucasus, Varantsov Dashkov, ordered the Russian army to retreat and put an end to the Armenian volunteer movement. This disastrous news, in those crucial times, destroyed, once again, the dreams of a nation—dreams that were just about to be realized.

Despite the despair, two Habousetzie volunteers went to Captain Chankalian and asked for permission to join the army of General Antranig—the Armenian national hero whose volunteers gained many victories over the Turks. One of them was Boghos Der Margossian. Boghos later met with other Habousetzies—Malkhas Kassabian, Garabed Manoogian, and Goulkhas Boolodian, who had also survived the genocide, and together in 1917 they moved to Garin to enlist in the Armenian army.

These Habousetzies fought with General Antranig against Turkish hoards for almost eight months, until the beginning of the Kars War, when the Russian Revolution erupted.

Overall eight Habousetzies participated in the fighting in the Caucasus, and one of them, Malkhas Kassabian, lost his life for the liberation of his homeland.



Manoug Der Stephanian in 1918.

The retreat of the Russian army was a great defeat for Armenians striving to find a solution to the Armenian cause. Many volunteers returned to the United States; others joined the Armenian army.

Volunteers fought in Cilicia too. Their goal was to liberate it from Turkish rule. Many volunteers, disappointed with the outcome at the Caucasian frontier, left for Cilicia to continue the struggle there.

Zadour Ajemian and Boghos Der Margossian were among them.

Habousetzies sacrificed Boghos Der Margossian, Nazaret Kelhagopian, and Simon Avakian for their nation's freedom.

Movses Abajian, Ajem Ajemian, Simon Meghdes Manoogian, Hagop K. Hagopian, Zadour Ajemian, Nerses Yezegelian, Khachadour Goshgarian, Krikor Najarian, Ohan (Kelhagopian) Ohanian, and M. Kh. (Kelhagopian) Hagopian returned home.

Armenians, once again, demonstrated their will to live, and to fight in order to prevent Turkey from accomplishing the total annihilation of the Armenian nation.

While we record these facts here, we praise the eternal soul of our people and reaffirm our belief that one day Turks will pay for their brutality and that Habousi will be joined to our fatherland.

The Patriotic Union of Habousi

The formation of unions might be as old as civilization itself. Unions have been formed in all centuries for a multitude of reasons.

In Armenian life also, reasons have been countless to create unions, mostly for national, educational, and benevolent purposes. Our homeland was under a barbaric rule and it was imperative to struggle for our existence and our freedom. It was imperative also to generate the financial resources needed to maintain our churches and schools.

Habousetzies have always been united, thus they were able to meet the needs of their village and fellow Armenians. As good Christians and patriots, Habousetzies undertook all kinds of sacrifices to have their churches and schools and to maintain them first in their own village and later in the Diaspora.

In 1800, the construction of the church in Habousi began. A church, a striking model of Armenian architecture, was a subject of pride for Habousi and neighboring villages. Later, in 1825, the school named Jemaran was founded next to the church. The village then formed an "Apostolic Council" to manage the school and a Board of Trustees to manage the church.

The church and the school are the two pillars of our national identity. It was natural for Habousetzies to form a union in order to maintain these institutions.

After years of dedicated work, the Apostolic Council turned into Lousavorchagan Grtasirats (Apostolic Supporters of Education). Although the latter's activities were often interrupted, because of government harassment, the Board of Trustees continued to manage the school and the church.

During the 1880's, after Protestantism was introduced to Habousi, a

competition began between the two churches which resulted in the formation of the Lousavorchagan Grtasirats Union.

In 1888, Rev. Sahag Hovsepien organized a meeting in his house for the purpose of founding a union of young Protestants. Those present bestowed upon the minister the task of preparing by-laws for the new union. After functioning for two years under the name of Yeridasartats (Youth), in January 1890, after lengthy discussions, the name of the union was changed to Poghokagan Grtasirats Mioutiun (Protestant Union of Education Lovers). This Union managed the Protestant school for the next three years.

In 1890, the emigration of young Habousetzies to Cilicia began. Most then came to the United States. The number of Habousetzies arriving in the States grew. They quickly established a chapter of their Union in their new country for the purpose of assisting the Protestant school back home.

In 1893, as the number of Apostolic Habousetzies also grew in the States, they too established Lousavorchagan Grtasirats Mioutiun (Apostolic Union of Education Lovers). It functioned only two years, because most of its members returned to Habousi within that time frame.

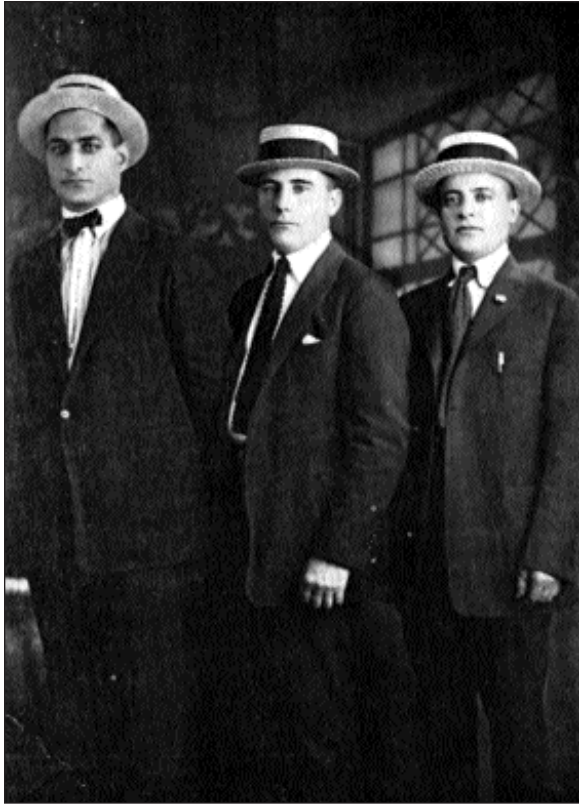
As a result of the Ottoman Constitution of 1908, Apostolic Habousetzies began to come to the United States in much larger numbers. Soon chapters of their Union were established in Michigan, Maine, Lawrence (Massachusetts), and Providence (Rhode Island).

Two sister unions competed with each other to help raise the educational standard of their fellow villagers back home. They succeeded in preparing highly educated teachers in Habousi.

The Habousi renaissance did not last long, unfortunately. The atrocities perpetrated against Armenians during World War I smashed the dreams of individuals and groups, destroyed Armenian villages and cities, and wiped out Western Armenia.

The Habousetzies living in the United States were deeply affected. There wasn't one who did not lose a sister, a brother, or a whole family. Many, caught in despair, left everything and lived in total isolation.

There were many Habousetzies in Madison, Maine, where they maintained the Union of Supporters of Education of the Village of Habousi. Active members of this Union were Hovhannes Nahigian,



Yeghia Bedrossian, Garabed Kojigian and Ajem Ajemian—activists of the Compatriotic Union of Haboussi.

Hagop Hagopian (Karamanoukian), Sarkis Donigian, M. Keolekian, Boghos Meynoian, and others.

In Lawrence, Massachusetts, active members of the same Union were Garabed Kojigian, Ajem Ajemian, Yeghia Bedrossian, M. Hagopian, Levon Garoian, Vartan Garoian, and many others whose valuable dedication helped the Union to prosper.

In 1897, the following Habousetzies founded the Educational Society of the Protestant Young People of Habousi in Lawrence, Massachusetts: Boghos Der Bedrossian, Armenag D. Boghossian, Hagop Abajian, Avedis D. Margossian, Haroutiun Guleserian, Haroutiun Giragosian, Garabed Matorian, Setrag Vartanian, Avedis Vartanian, Bedros Yezegelian, and Sarkis Karamanoukian.

For many, many years, this Protestant Society continued its dedicated work geared toward the education of new generations of Habousetzies. Many Habousetzie patriots in Lawrence supported the Society; among those were Hagop Ghougasian, Hagop Hagopian, Marsoub Kachadorian, and Hagop Kachadorian.

The founders of the Union of Supporters of Education of the Village of Habousi in Madison, Maine, and in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1890, included Khayajan Garabedian, Hovhannes Nanigian, Krikor Nanigian, Goulkhas Avakian, Manoug Hagopian, and Manoug Karamanoukian.

In Providence, RI, the Union was populated with dedicated young Habousetzies who did everything to assist their compatriots in Habousi. Among them were M. Karamanoukian, Levon Garoian, Hovhannes Abajian, Khayajan Boolodian, Krikor Der Mateosian, and others.

During World War I, in 1917, at the wedding of Bedros Berberian and Mariam Hagopian, the Habousetzies present established the Union for the Reconstruction of Habousi. They raised funds immediately, to assist needy villagers back home. Soon many Habousetzies joined this Union, and within a year the Union raised more than a thousand dollar.

In October 5, 1919, during the meeting of the Union's Providence (Rhode Island) Chapter, a suggestion was made for the Central Committee to contact all Habousetzie survivors. Thus, the Central Committee appealed to the Near East Relief, who in turn suggested they write to the N.E.R. representative Rev. H. Riggs in Kharpert. Soon a thousand dollars was wired for allocation to Habousetzie survivors.

In 1920, the Union expanded its operation to help Habousetzies who had begun to return to their paternal village. More assistance was rushed to those returning compatriots through Rev. Riggs.

The idea of unification gradually became dominant among Habousi organizations functioning independently. In 1925, finally, during a field trip where a majority of Habousetzies were present, the topic of unity was brought up one last time. Due in particular to the efforts of Dr. Arshag Der Margossian and Nazaret Piranian, a historic preliminary discussion took place and three people were assigned, one from each organization, to plan a general convention. Those three were: Garabed Matorian of the Protestant Youth Union of Habousi, Yeghia Bedrosian of the Education-Loving Union of Habousi, and Garabed Kojigian of the Reconstruction Union of Habousi.

In September 6, 1925, a meeting was held at the estate of Marsoub Kachadorian on Salem Street, New Hampshire, under the chairmanship of Garabed Matorian, who announced that the representatives of all three organizations had equal voting rights.

The agenda was the following:

1. Confirmation of delegates;
2. Election of officers;
3. Adoption of a name for the new Union;
4. Discussion and adoption of by-laws;
5. Official registration of the new Union;
6. Auditing;
7. Collection and unification of budgets;
8. Monetary security;
9. Assistance to compatriots by all means;
10. Election of an executive board.

It was clear that the majority agreed to the merger of the three organizations into one.

Following is the resolution of the meeting:

1. Each organization chose three delegates to represent them: Garabed Matorian, M. P. Hagopian, and Vartan Garoian from the Reconstruction Union; Hagop Kachadorian, Giragos Melkonian, and Marsoub Kachadorian from the Protestant Society; and Yeghia Bedrosian, Kh. Bozbedrosian, and G. Kojigian from the Education-Loving Union.

2. G. Matorian was elected Chairman and Yeghia Bedrosian, Secretary of the convention.

3. The merged union was called Compatriotic Union of Habousi, and it was given a large scope of activities.

4. The by-laws adopted were very similar to the by-laws of the three separate organizations and were to be ratified later by a special committee after the addition of an introduction.

5. It was decided to leave the application for tax-exempt status up to the executive committee. Special attention needed to focus around the fact that the Union would increase its affiliations with organizations abroad.

6. All three Unions resigned from any financial advantage that would surface from the comparison of each Union's wealth.



Convention of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi, 1953.

The following is an accounting of each Union's financial records:

a) Protestant Youth Union

A check book	\$1396.31
Another check book	\$1134.31
Total	\$2530.62

b) Union of Supporters of Education of Habousi

A check book	\$2169.92
A second check book	\$1775.56
A third check book	\$225.00
Subtotal from previous	\$4170.48
A sum	\$210.00
Total	\$4380.48

c) Reconstruction Union of Habousi

One check book	\$2159.59
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Combining all three accounts, the Compatriotic Union of Habousi had by September 6, 1925, a total of \$9,070.59.

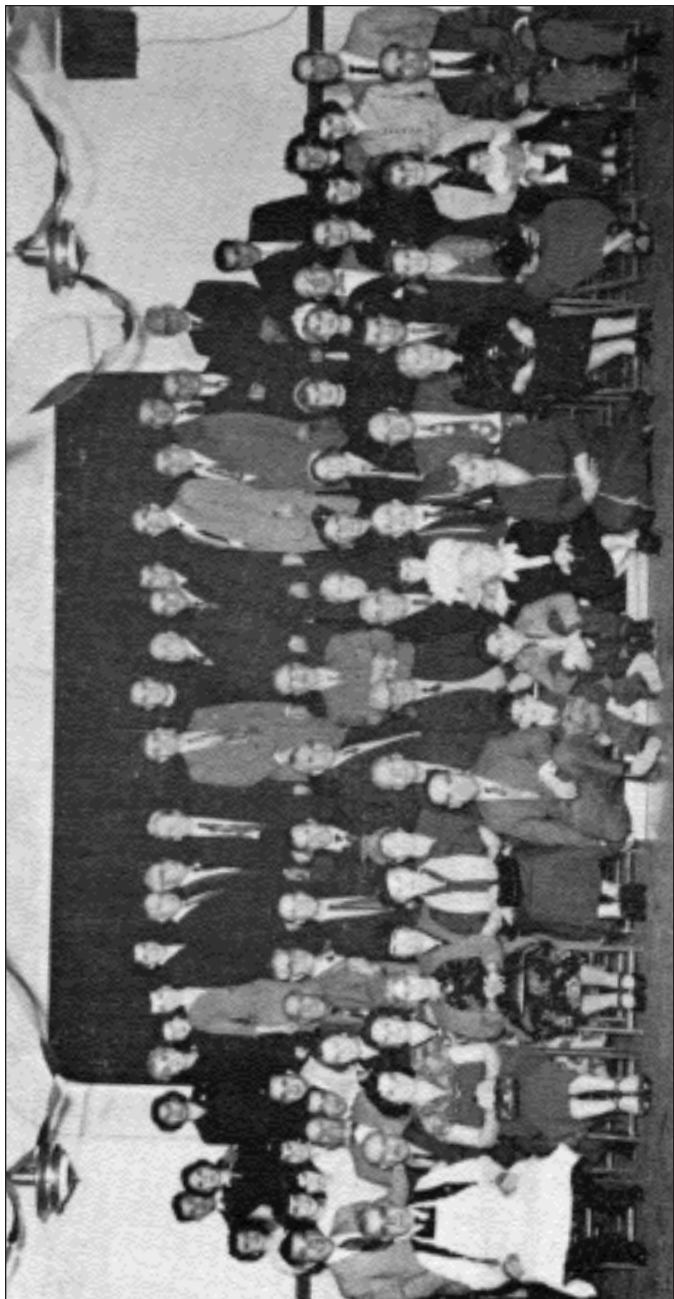
The properties of all three unions were transferred to the new Executive Committee. It was decided to open a bank account and to grant the Executive Committee sole responsibility for writing checks for the three authorized members.

7. It was decided that a Central Committee would represent the Union, and act also as the Executive Committee. It would be elected at an annual convention by delegates from all chapters. Central Committee members would serve a term of one year and were entitled to invite chapter delegates to emergency conventions.

The first Central Committee was composed of Garabed Matorian, Chairperson; M. K. Hagopian, Secretary; G. M. Kojigian, Treasurer; Vartan Garoian and Yeghia Bedrosian, Counselors.

The first convention of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi was held on March 28, 1926, in the Democratic Liberal Party's club at 313 Common Street in Lawrence.

The Central Committee had nineteen items on the agenda related to the path the Union should adopt and the ways to strengthen the Union.



Convention of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi, 1955.

The delegates, after lengthy discussions, approved all matters and reelected the same Central Committee for another term, with praise for their activity. In addition, the delegates raised \$500 to be used by the Central Committee for future needs.

At the end of the first year of its existence, the Union had \$9,386.88 in cash.

The third convention of the Compatriotic Union was held on January 1, 1927, in the home of Ghougas Akmakjian at Salem Depot, New Hampshire. This convention adopted suggestions to broaden its activities in cooperation with the Pan-Kharpert Union and the Armenian General Benevolent Union. These new alliances were adopted in order to increase the participation share in a large scale national assistance movement. Habousetzies everywhere were establishing chapters, and their strength of purpose was becoming strikingly obvious as they generated enthusiasm among their members who raised \$3,000. The annual report for the third term showed \$10,873.72 in cash.

Garabed Matorian, Zadour Ajemian, Moushegh Hagopian, Giragos Melkonian, and Hagop Kachadorian were elected by secret ballot as members of the new Central Committee.

The fourth convention of the Union was held in January 1928, in Providence, Rhode Island, in the residence of Haroutiun Boyajian. The convention, having as officers Garabed Kholigian and Haroutiun Boyajian, decided to further strengthen the Union. They organized a fundraising raffle. By this time the Union had \$11,577.50 in cash.

THE DECADE OF 1929-1939

In the decade of 1929 through 1939, the Union increased its presence. Its annual conventions adopted new suggestions towards the realization of national and patriotic goals, in accordance with the needs of the period.

First, the Union would rebuild Habousi in Soviet Armenia. After lengthy correspondence with the Central Board of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Union agreed to acquire a quarter, named Habousi, in the planned town of Nubarashen, provided that the Compatriotic Union of Habousi would undertake the construction of six buildings in that quarter, and that the A.G.B.U. would build another six buildings, while willing Habousetzies were moved there.

For this purpose, the Union transferred \$11,000 to the A.G.B.U. Six years passed before the project was implemented and the Habousi quarter was built. In those six years the Union received from the A.G.B.U. the annual interest of the mentioned sum. After construction was complete, Habousetzie orphans were moved there first, followed by other Habousetzies.

Second, the Union planned to write the history of Habousi. This project was of great interest to all Habousetzies. Since each individual had a different view about the history, preliminary actions were deemed necessary to prepare the ground. Although the matter remained unsolved at that time, many memoirs and photos were handed over to the Central Committee as a result of the initiative. Most enthusiastic about this project was K. Bennanian, who kept memoirs since the 1890's. These memoirs later became the core of the history book.

In order to maintain close ties with members, the conventions were held in different cities, such as Providence and Lawrence.

In this decade Habousetzies dedicated themselves to the goals of the Union and did whatever they could to strengthen it. Young members were included in the Union, next to the old, to refresh the organization. Every possible assistance was rendered to needy compatriots in the United States and the Diaspora.

Worthy of mentioning was the Union's purchasing a cemetery in Salem Depot, New Hampshire, in order to bury Habousetzies who passed away with no relatives around to take care of them.

THE DECADE OF 1939-1949

This decade began with serious anxiety. World War II had erupted and humanity was faced once again with massive destruction and misery.

During the 16th convention, the Habousetzies demonstrated a deep desire to continue their assistance to their needy compatriots, and yet to also serve their new country, the United States.

The delegates first increased the Central Committee's budget for immediate expenses to \$500. Then they decided to purchase a \$1,000 government bond in order to support the national defense. They further decided to support committees that were raising funds to donate tanks to the Armenian Red Army under the name of David of Sasun.

Thus, Habousetzies, with their modest means, were supportive of the national needs of Armenia, as well as the efforts geared toward the victory of justice during World War II.

The 18th convention of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi was held in November 1943, in the residence of Marsoub Kachadorian. On the agenda were:

a) To entrust \$500 to the Central Committee to assist those Habousetzies whose only hope was the Union in those dark days.

b) To participate in all efforts of the American government to gain victory in World War II. Therefore, it was decided to raise the number of bonds to \$2,500. This amount was to reach \$4,000 by the end of the war.

The Compatriotic Union was in constant touch with families who had suffered the loss of a member in the war, or who had sons and relatives serving as soldiers at the front. They encouraged them with letters or small gifts.

Finally peace in Europe prevailed on May 12, 1945. The tyrants were destroyed.

For Armenians, the hope of realizing a centuries-old dream of liberation was reborn. It was the beginning of the repatriation of Diaspora Armenians to Soviet Armenia.

The Compatriotic Union financially and morally supported the committees formed to organize the repatriation. The Central Committee issued circulars advising Habousetzies around the world to actively participate in the organization of repatriation, and to support those compatriots willing to move to Armenia. The Central Committee donated \$2,000 to the Central Committee of Repatriation to help with the travel expenses of Habousetzie repatriants.

THE DECADE OF 1949-1956

After World War II, it was time to recuperate.

The 26th annual convention was held on November 19, 1949, in the hall of the Holy Cross Church of Lawrence. Many important issues were on the table to be discussed by concerned Habousetzies, all of whom had made the prosperity of their Union one of their main goals and many of whom had passed away during their active service.

Of utmost importance were three concerns.

a) Assistance—This was one of the main reasons for the formation of the Union and was the very center of attention of all Central Committees. It was decided that assistance would continue for as long as there was a needy Habousetzie in any part of this world.

It is worthy to mention that the Union was never restricted by the by-laws in matters relating to meeting the needs of Habousetzies or regarding the Union's participation in large scale initiatives of utmost national importance.

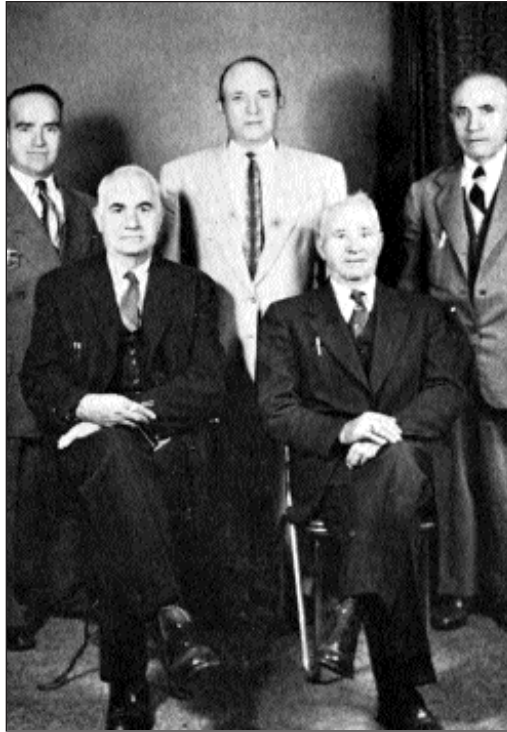
b) Education—This, too, was one of the main objectives of the Union that was once called Education-Loving. There were times when it was not possible to allocate funds for educational purposes due to other priorities. But it was important to provide support to young generations to receive an Armenian education. Middle Eastern countries were fortunate in this regard. Armenian communities there succeeded in establishing their own schools. The Compatriotic Union at its 28th annual convention in 1953 decided to support educational initiatives and needy students; therefore, the allocation of \$500 annually to the Central Committee for distribution to Habousetzies in the Middle East was agreed upon. Allocations were also made to provide scholarships for Habousetzie students in Aleppo, Syria, and Beirut, Lebanon.

c) The history of Habousi—Publishing the history of Habousi had become an inseparable item of the agenda for each annual convention over the past decades. And for twenty-five years, little by little, Habousetzies collected documents and other materials for this purpose.

Whatever approach we take in viewing this matter, we should be grateful to those alive or deceased Habousetzies who saved, from total loss, the memoirs, the history, the customs, the dialect of Habousi, and especially the memories of Habousi martyrs of the Armenian Genocide.

The 27th annual convention held in Providence, Rhode Island, finally appointed a committee of five—Dr. Arshag Der Margossian, Krikor Der Mateosian, Antranik Donigian, Yeghia Bedrosian, and Giragos Melkonian to prepare the “History of Habousi” and to publish it.

In the following years, the Compatriotic Union of Habousi continued its regular activities. Habousetzies actively supported all functions and field trips organized by the Committee of the History Book and they raised \$3-4,000 for the publication of the book.



Central Committee members in 1956.

Left to right: Giragos Melkonian, Hagop Kachadorian (Chairman), Antranig Donigian (Secretary), Samuel Vartanian (Treasurer), and Vartan Garoian.

Soon, however, the Committee concluded that it was beyond their means to accomplish this task. They took the matter to the 30th annual convention held in the hall of Ararat Armenian Congregational Church. The committee gave the convention all the materials that had been collected and classified by Stepan Panian of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and all the money it had raised for the book publication.

Delegates suggested that the Central Committee accept responsibility for the book's completion. This suggestion was adopted by a majority of votes, and in order to avoid future delays, a special clause was added to the by-laws of the Union.

The Central Committee realized that Stepan Panian had already done a thorough job of editing most documents. Therefore, a meeting was held in April 1954, in Bridgewater, with S. Panian, who assured the

Central Committee that he would continue his work and publish the book. The Central Committee expressed its wish to revise the edited work and S. Panian agreed with no objection. It was obvious that the Central Committee was concerned about the accuracy of content. Thus, the Central Committee carefully studied the book for two months and found many repetitions, misleading information, and personalized memoirs.

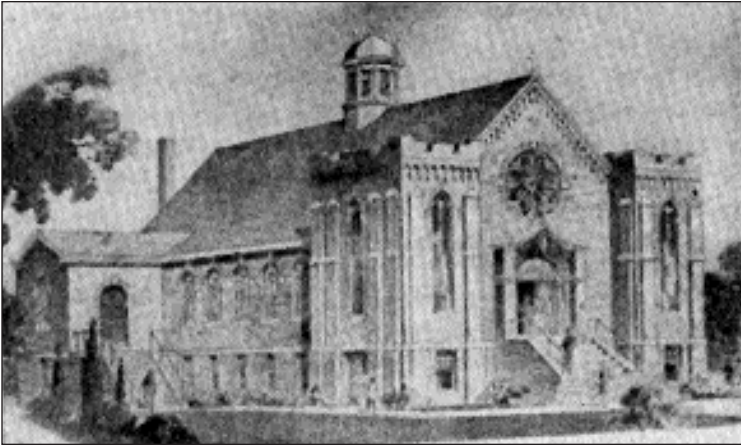
In a second meeting with S. Panian the Central Committee brought these points to his attention for revision.

Stepan Panian showed total cooperation in this matter. The Central Committee was grateful to him for a thorough job, as it was grateful to Dr. Arshag Der Margossian for introducing Mr. Panian to them.

Once the book was ready, the final stage of classifying and proofing was entrusted to Khosrov Nersesian, due to Mr. Panian's advanced age.

The Holy Cross Church of Lawrence

Habousetzies contributed greatly to the establishment and the well being of the Holy Cross Church of Lawrence, Massachusetts.



The Holy Cross Church of Lawrence.

The Lawrence Armenian community was organized in December 1, 1912. More than hundred Armenians gathered together and elected a council. Although organized, the community didn't have a church in which to conduct services. Until 1920, services were held in the chapel at Garden Street, and then in Grace Church at Jackson Street on Sunday afternoons.

The Armenians of Lowell established St. Vartanants Church in 1916. Their pastors took on the religious care of Lawrence Armenians according to arrangements made by the Diocese of the Armenian Church.

But the community needed its own church. Finally, on November 1,



Holy Cross Church Committee members, 1960
Right to left: (standing) Sarkis Gerdanian, Hratch Derderian, Minas Kazandjian, Garabed Srmayan, Boghos Boghossian,
(seated) Moushkhis Hagopian, Hagop Katchanian, Fr. Vartan Azakian, Bedros Aznoyan, and Noubar Ashjian.

1923, the council formed a sixteen-member Construction Committee entrusted to find a church or built a new one in a good location. After a lengthy search, the Committee decided to put up a new church, and purchased a piece of land on November 27, 1927.

In 1931, thanks to the devotion and generosity of community members, the church was publicly inaugurated by Fr. Ghevont Martougesian.

On August 28, 1932, Arch. Ghevont Tourian, the Primate of the Armenian Church, anointed the cornerstone.

Even though the anointment was a major step forward, the construction came to a halt due to the 1929 stock crash and the economic crisis of 1933.

As soon as conditions were improved, community members restarted the construction and finally, on June 21, 1941, the church was anointed by Arch. Karekin Hovsepian, Primate of the Armenian Church.

The Lawrence Armenian community celebrated yet another achievement on February 28, 1944—the last mortgage payment on the church which had cost \$79,000.

The Holy Cross Church had either visiting or permanent pastors until July 17, 1955. The last permanent pastor was Deacon Oshagan Minasian who retired upon an accident. Afterwards, instructed by Arch. Mampre Kalfayan, Primate of the Armenian Church, pastors from Lowell and Haverhill visited the church for sermons every other two weeks.

The church had close to one hundred dues-paying members, but 1,500 followers regularly contributed to its well being.

A Parish Council of dedicated members, together with the Church-Loving Women's Union and active young Armenians, took good care of the church.

Worthy of mention also are the church choir and the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America. Both contributed greatly.

Following is a list of the pastors:

Deacon Oshagan Minassian—1953–July 1955.

Fr. Garen Gedanian (visiting pastor)—

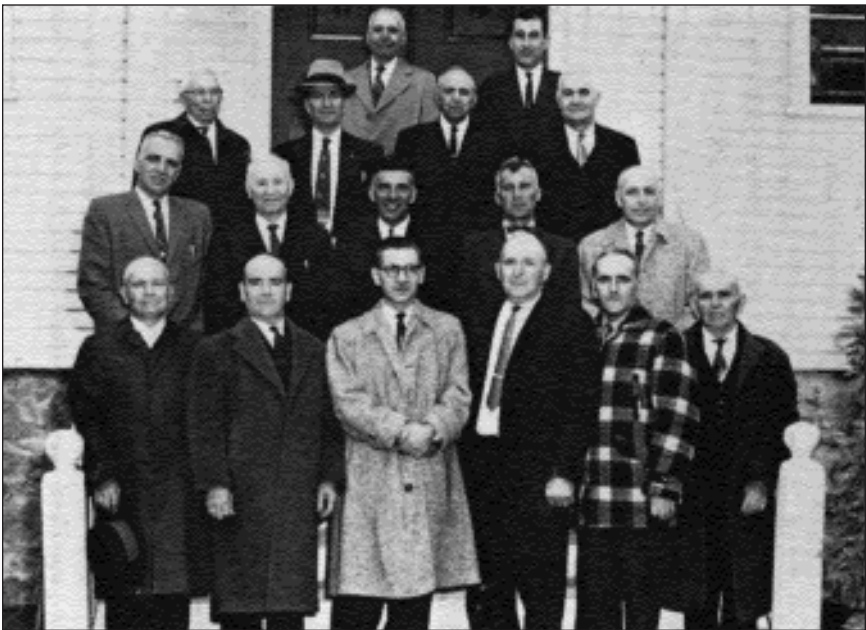
Rev. Fr. Hrant Khachadourian (visiting pastor)—

Fr. Vartan Avakian—1957–1973.

Rev. Fr. Vazken Keshishian—1974–1979.

} 1955–1957.

Fr. Papken Maksoudian (visiting pastor)—
 Rev. Fr. Yeghishe Kezirian (visiting pastor)— } 1979–1981.
 Rev. Fr. Bared Yeretsian—1981–1985.
 Fr. Zenob Nalbandian—1985 to present.



Salem Depot Armenian Congregational Church Council and supporters.
First row, right to left: Khachadour Avedisian, Antranig Donigian, Mihran Vartanian,
Samuel Vartanian, Barkev Akmakjian, Hagop Akmakjian.
Second row: Kevork Kachadorian, Hagop Kachadorian, Karnig Kachadorian, Hayig
Kachadorian, Bedros Matorian.
Third Row: Marsoub Kachadorian, Musegh Hagopian, Musegh Kochakian, Giragos
Melkonian.
Fourth row: Garabed Manoogian, Haigaz Kachadorian.

A

Ararat Armenian Congregational Church



Ararat Armenian Congregational Church, Salem Depot, New Hampshire.

Habousetzies were very active in the Armenian Protestant church too.

For many years, Armenians had wanted to have sermons in their own language in the United States. One day, they expressed their wish to the pastor of the Congregational Church of Lawrence Street, Rev. Volkat. Affected by the piety of immigrant Armenians, Rev. Volkat wanted to help them. At first, he opened the basement hall of the church for services, and then he looked for an Armenian speaking preacher who would dedicate some time to service the community. He learned of the availability of Rev. Sahag Hovsepian, pastor of the Worcester Armenian Evangelical Church. He sent for him to come and organize the Bethel Evangelical Church of Lawrence, with the assistance of the pastor of the Congregational Church of Lawrence Street. Rev. Volkat kindly undertook



Members of Ararat Armenian Congregational Church.

part of the new pastor's salary and offered his church to the Armenian community for use.

The community grew rapidly in number because of new immigrants from the Old Country. Many Armenian Protestants gathered in the town of Salem, New Hampshire.

The following were the prominent members of the Salem Armenian community: Avedis Vartanian, Garabed Matorian, Bedros Yezegelian of Habousi; Melkon Garabedian, Sarkis Garabedian, Vosgian Jamgochian, Garabed Jamgochian of Garmir; Sarkis Danielian, and Krikor Danielian of Khokh.

These first occupants of Salem attended Bethel Church for a short time, but due to commuting difficulties they finally decided to build a church of their own.

On October 25, 1912, a meeting was held in Hagop Jamgochian's house, initiated by Melkon Garabedian. Close to twenty-five people attended the meeting, together with Rev. Kapriel Bedrosian. Melkon Garabedian, Ghougas Akmakjian, Hagop Kachadorian, Avedis Vartanian, and Hagop Jamgochian were elected to pursue the establishment of a church under the leadership of Rev. Bedrosian. The church as a community chose to be called Ararat Armenian Evangelical Church.

When this matter was brought to the attention of the missionaries of New Hampshire's Congregational Churches, they supported the idea, and the church was built in 1912 and anointed on October 12, 1913, in the presence of a huge crowd, with many government officials and Armenian and American preachers among them.

The first pastor was Rev. Bedrosian who was the pastor of Bethel Church as well. He was a very dedicated preacher who helped the community and established a school for teenagers to teach them Armenian. In addition, he organized seminars to educate adults and to inform them about Armenia and Armenian community life. A choir was established under his direct supervision, and an Auxiliary Women's Union too.

When the volunteer movement for the liberation of Cilicia began, the church donated \$1,000 to that noble cause. Ever since, the church has actively participated in all major fundraising events to help Armenia and Armenians.

Following is a list of the preachers:

Rev. Kapriel Bedrosian of Van—1911-1918.

Rev. Tavit Pakhchoyan of Van—1918-1920.

Rev. Markar Der Asadourian—1920-1921.

Rev. Vahan Tamzarian of Kharpert, who was named the Father of the Community for his exceptional kindness—1921-1925.

Rev. Yeprem Jernazian of Marash, a very enthusiastic preacher under whom was built the parsonage—1925-1926.

Rev. Socrates Mackitarian of Bitlis, a graduate of Euphrates College, who was able to maintain the Armenian character of the church and under whom the church prospered—1927-1942.

Rev. Arsen Goergizian of Van under whom the church became self sufficient and was known to a larger sector of the population—1943-1953.

Rev. George Cary of Haverhill, an American preacher, who helped the church until an Armenian preacher was found—1953-1955.

Rev. Mihran M. Koeroghlian of Deortyol, Cilicia—1955-1962.

Rev. Avedis Jean Zarifian—1962-1967.

Rev. Zaven Dohanian, under whom was celebrated the “burning of the church’s mortgage”—1967-1973.

Rev. Lincoln Thomas—1973-1974.

Rev. Soghomon Nuyujukian—1974-1980.

Rev. Robert Swanson—1980-1981.

Rev. John Mokkalosian—1981-1985.

Rev. Robert Swanson—1985 to present.

Epilogue of the Armenian Version (Published in 1963)

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

by ANTRANIG DONIGIAN

As an impartial witness for the last thirty years of the work of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi, and as a participant of its work in the past decade, it is my duty to praise those Habousetzie compatriots who became the pillars of our Union and the driving force behind it through their dedication and idealism.

Those selfless compatriots helped hundreds of needy compatriots living, suffering, and struggling in far away places.

When we read the minutes of the Union, our eyes come across unforgettable names—names of those who played crucial roles in the achievements of the Union. Therefore, it is with gratitude that their names are mentioned in this book.

When we look at the lives of the living and dead veterans, we see lovely teenagers and young Habousetzies, who lived their childhood during a most bitter period. They were forced to abandon their homeland, settle in this country, and to help their relatives live a dignified life.

Despite all difficulties in a foreign land, despite the pressures of an unfortunate fate, they always persevered and kept Habousi alive in their memories. And despite all dangers—Genocide, deportation, and assimilation—they succeeded in keeping their love of Habousi and their hearts open to needy compatriots.

Many of those youths have turned into aged grandfathers and grandmothers, but reaching out to their nation and compatriots still

remains a duty and a pleasure to them. Furthermore, they have been able to transfer these warm and kind feelings to their children.

And many left this world without ever again seeing their beloved Habousi and the results of their hard work. We, living Habousetzies, have decided to publish this book as an eternal monument to our village and its offspring.



Mr. and Mrs. Sarkis and Marinos Donigian with their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Antranig Donigian, and their children in Salem, New Hampshire.

Overview of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi

by MIRIAM KOCHAKIAN

MEMBERSHIP: Comprised of Armenian immigrants and their descendants from the village of Habousi in the province of Kharpert in Eastern Turkey (in the valley of the Euphrates River).

THE VILLAGE of HABOUSHI

DESCRIPTION: A small agricultural village known for its lush gardens and orchards and especially for its six legendary springs ("Hah-bou-seh" means "Here is the water!")

POPULATION: Approximately 350~400 houses and 3,000 inhabitants -an ethnically pure Armenian Christian population.

PRESENT STATUS: Non-existent. Depopulated and razed during the 1915-1923 massacres. "Shangrila" in the minds of those who once lived there.

NOTE: "Habousetzie"—anyone who was born in the village of Habousi or is a descendant of an original resident, is known as an "Habousetzie" among Armenians (just as all Armenians are identified by the village or city or province from which they originated.)

HISTORY of the COMPATRIOTIC UNION of HABOUSHI

The first Habousetzies immigrated to the United States in the 1890's, many of them settling in the Merrimack Valley area, where they worked

in the mills or established farms. Others followed from the early 1900's through the 1930's.

These new immigrants had close social ties to one another, much like that of a large extended family. Having lost nearly everything of their past, including many family members, they were determined to keep their culture, their language, and their religion alive in what seemed at first like a hostile environment. Since they valued education highly, they organized small groups to raise money to send home to the little parochial schools (one Apostolic and one Protestant) in their beloved village. These early groups became known as The Education Societies of Habousi.

During the 1915-1923 period of Turkish massacres and deportations, when the Habousetzie immigrants learned of the destruction and pillage of Habousi, scattering refugees and orphans throughout the Middle East, they turned their focus on helping the survivors after the war ended. At that time they called themselves The Reconstruction Society of Habousi.

In 1925 all of the groups met at the Kachadorian farm in Methuen and merged into one group called The Compatriotic Union of Habousi, a benevolent society organized for the purpose of locating and helping the many displaced and needy Habousetzies around the world. The group also served as a haven for the newer immigrants to the United States, who had suffered the ravages of war. It provided educational assistance to the children of Habousetzies around the world. Every year for many years, it sponsored one of the largest and best known Armenian picnics in the Merrimack Valley, providing Armenian culture, foods, music, and dancing as well as reunion for Habousetzies and their families and friends from many locations in the United States. For many years these picnics were held at the Kachadorian farm in Salem, New Hampshire.

After the last of the post-war immigrants had arrived to recount the horrors of a lost village, the group was determined to immortalize Habousi by writing its oral history, its life and its untimely death, from the collective memories of the immigrants. Some members drew a residential map of the village from memory, to recall all the names and the locations of the families that lived in Habousi.

In 1963, after many years of laborious writing and rewriting and many discouraging attempts at publishing, The Publications Committee announced the publication of the proud history of the village of Habousi in Armenian (with an English condensation) by Baikar Press. Most

Habousetzie descendants have copies of that book and a restoration of the residential map in their homes as part of their heritage. (In 1939, Elizabeth Caraman Payne had written her autobiography of life in Habousi, published by Harper and Brothers.) The first Habousetzies in America did their work well and left a remarkable legacy. However, as the older generations passed on, the organization became inactive in the 1970's. Its work seemed to be done.

In 1985, because of a resurgence of interest in roots on the part of some descendants, The Compatriotic Union of Habousi was reactivated and nearly 200 descendants were located in the Merrimack Valley and throughout the country. For the past nine years, this new group has been meeting in Salem, New Hampshire, for benevolent, educational, social, and historical purposes. They wish "to honor the memory of Habousi's original inhabitants, our ancestors; to provide compatriotic reunion and social communication; to help descendants around the world who need financial support, especially in war-disadvantaged countries."

To date, this group has provided two scholarships annually to worthy descendants entering college. It has searched for and supported elderly Habousetzies in Middle Eastern countries and provided disaster relief for children's needs in Armenia. To satisfy the need for roots, some members of the group have restored and printed in color the original immigrants' map of the village of Habousi, where each Habousetzie can locate his ancestral home and the homes of his neighbors.

Every year in May, the Compatriotic Union of Habousi sponsors a well attended reunion of Habousetzies and their descendants, where members and their friends can share some of their cultural memories and foods and dances as well as their concerns for their fellow Habousetzies in less fortunate places.

The current project of the group is to locate and evaluate the needs of a community of Habousetzie descendants in Armenia with whom contact has been lost for many years.



Tribute to Dr. Arshag Der Margossian, Lawrence, 1935.

World Habousetzies



Seated, left to right: Mrs. Serpouhi Bedrosian, Julia Arakelian, and Yeghia Bedrosian.

Standing: Mrs. Aghavni Kochakian, Garabed Bedrosian who, while serving in the U.S. army on the German front in 1942–1945, was captured by the Germans as a prisoner of war, and Manoug Bedrosian who served in the U.S. army for three years.



Mr. and Mrs. Ohan and Satenig Ohanian-Kelagopian.



Sarkis Ohanian.



Nishan Ohanian.



Hrair Tomasian-Yeghigian.



Thomas Yeghigian.



Arthur Hagopian.



Samuel Boyajian.



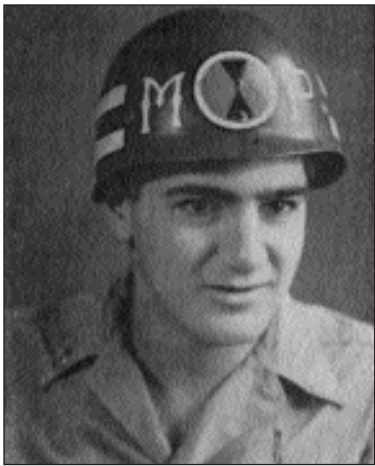
Mardiros Kochakian.



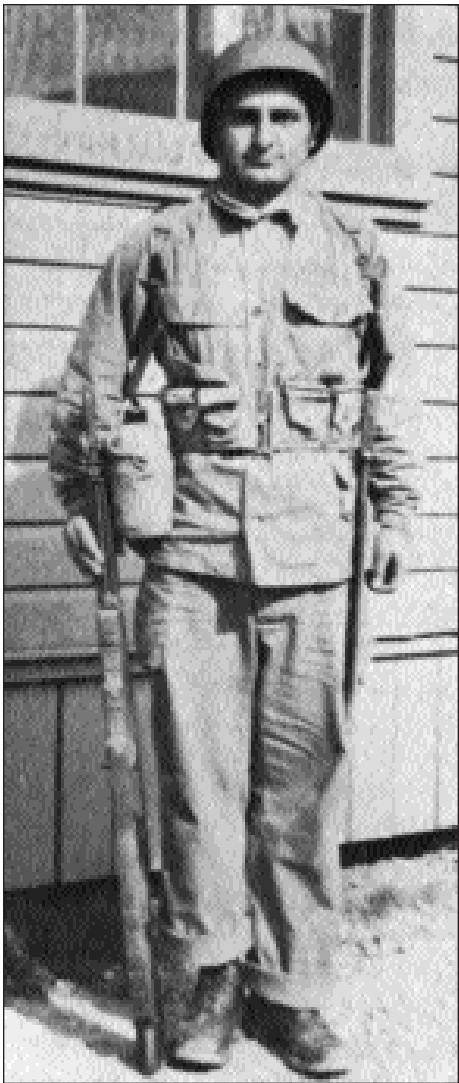
Giragos Garabedian.



Sarkis Kojigian.



Aram Yeghigian.



Henry Manoogian.



Arman Garoian.



Left to right: Hagop Garabedian, Sarkis Kojigian, and Haroutiun Maghakian, 1939.



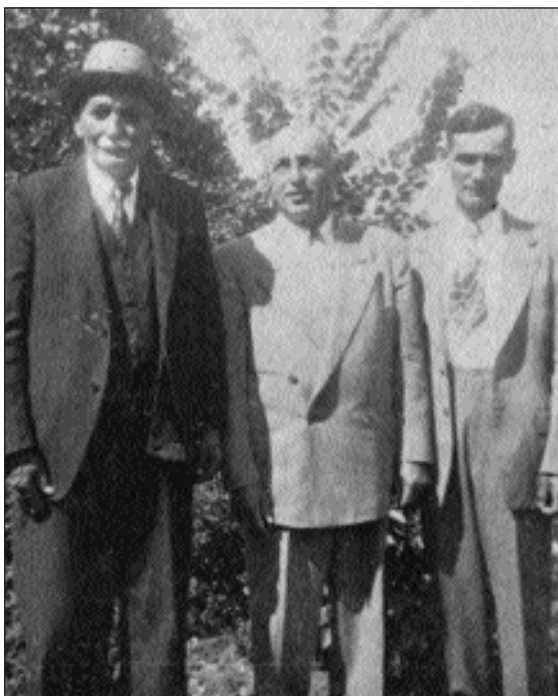
Isac Karchakian.



Aram Hagopian.



Krikor and Baghdasar Bedrosian brothers.



Garabed Matorian and his sons, Bedros and Edward.



Avedis and Margarit Der Margossian.



Avedis and Mariam Vartanian, founders of the Compatriotic Union.



Kachadorian family. Left to right, seated: Margarit, Marsoub, and Mariam; standing: Hayig, Anahid, Eugene, and Haigaz.



Mr. and Mrs. Jim Kachadorian's family.



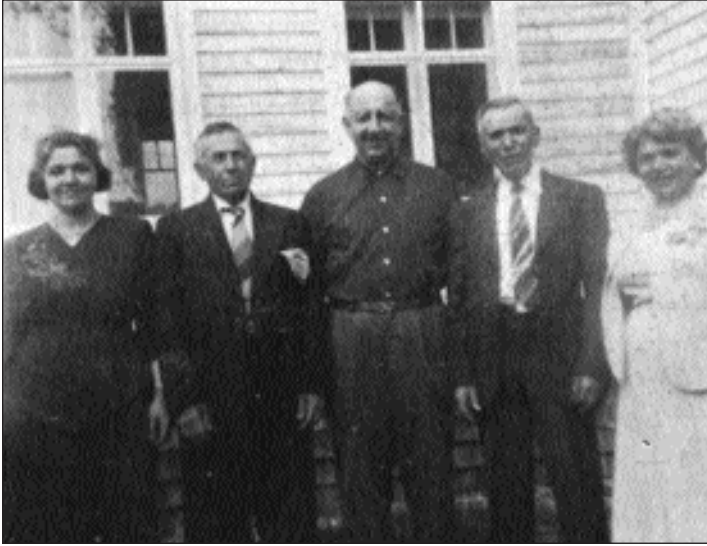
The family of Melkonian brothers.



Members of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi in Lawrence, 1961.



Habousetzies in 1962.



Habousetzies of Maine. Movses Nanigian, Giragos Kojigian and hid Wife Martha, and Vartan Kojigian and his wife Mariam.



Nanigian family, Madison, Maine.



Mr. and Mrs. Ghazar Avakian and sons, Yerevan Armenia.



Habousetzies of Nubarashen, Armenia.



Kasbar Arakelian and family, Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Members of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi in Cordoba, Argentina.



Members of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi and their children in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Habousetzies of Aleppo, Syria.
1- Hagop Akmakjian, 2- Ardashes Proodian, 3- Vazken Proodian and his wife, 4- Victoria Akmakjian, 5- Kegham Akmakjian, 6- Raffi Proodian and his wife, 7- Manoush Akmakjian.



Habousetzies of Egypt.
1- Ardashes Manoogian, 2- Nubar Valian, 3- Boghos Valian, 4- Bedros Valian, 5- Asadour Kanedanian, 6- Yesaf Akmakjian, 7- Moussegh Garoian, 8- Marie Kazanjian (Avedis Manoogian's wife), 9- Bedros Valian's wife, 10, 11 and 12- Avedis Manoogian's son and daughters.



Habousetzijs of Valance, France, 1929.



The Kochakians of France, 1929.



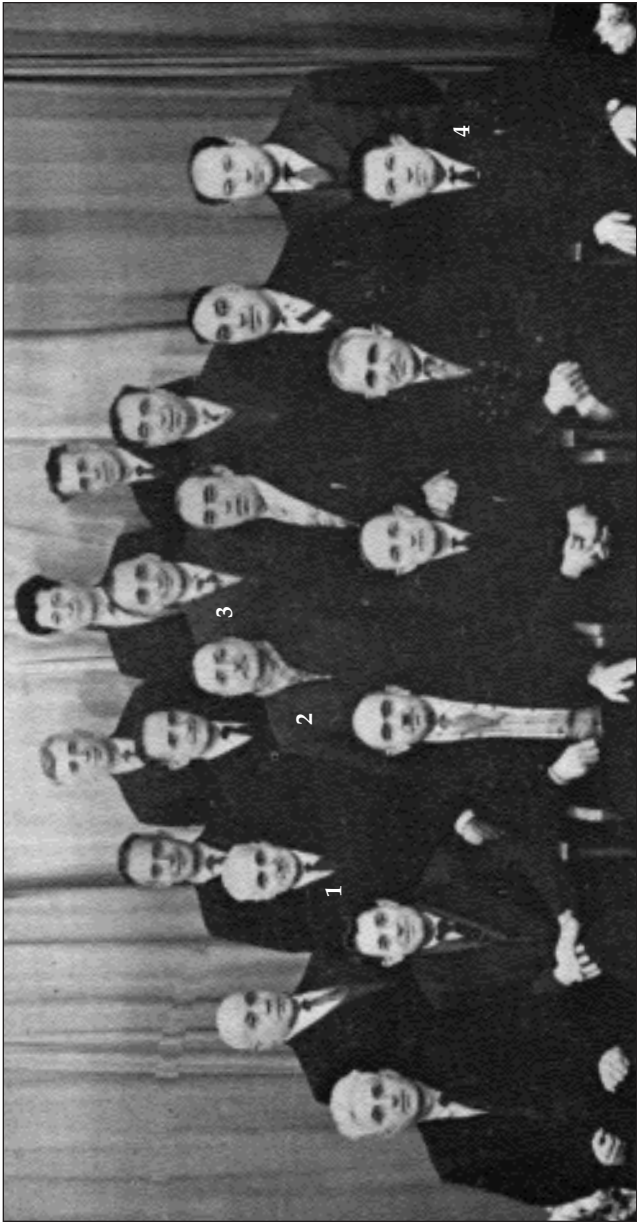
*The Women's Chapter of the Compatriotic Union of Habousi, Valance, France.
1- Vartanoush Hagopian, 2- Bertha Markarian, 3- Shoushan Garoian.*



*Ghougas and Haiganoush Melkonian family, valance, France.
1- Varash Garoian and his wife Collette (Koharig), 2- Garabed Melkonian.*



*Ghougas Kojigian, and Khoren and Ovan Kanedanian families of France.
1- Estepan Kochakian, 2- Eva Kochakian, 3- Esav Kochakian, 4- Ghoghas Kojigian, 5- Annie Kanedanian, 6- Jack Kanedanian, 7- Jacklin Kanedanian, 8- Jack Kanedanian, 9- Alice Kanedanian, 10- Ovan Kanedanian, 11- Margaret Kanedanian, 12- Beatrice Kanedanian.*



*Compatriotic Union of Habousi of Valance, France.
1- Sukias Maghakian, 2- Boghos Goshgarian, 3- Harry Maghakian, 4- Khoren Kanedanian.*