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Geographic Analysis of Armenian Immigration Patterns in the United States:
Evidence from Armenian Apostolic Churches

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Table of Content

Signature Page	ii
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	vii
I Introduction and Statement of Purpose	1
II Historical Background	3
2.1.1 Armenian Population	6
2.1.2 The Armenian Question	7
2.1.3 Armenians under the Ottoman Rule	8
2.1.4 The Armenian Massacres and Genocide	10
2.1.5 Armenians in Iran	10
2.1.6 Russian and Armenian Relations	14
2.1.7 Armenian Organizations and Institutions	16
2.1.8 Armenian Soldiers Serving in Diaspora	19
2.2.1 Hypothesis	21
III Literature Review	22
3.1.1 Diaspora Statistics	24
3.1.2 Diaspora Studies	25
3.1.3 Core Elements of Diaspora	26
3.1.4 Armenian Diaspora	27
IV Language and States	29
4.1.1 Language and Religion	30

V	Religion	32
	5.1.1 Religion and Ethnicity	32
	5.1.2 Orthodox Christians	34
VI	Armenian Diaspora Immigration Patterns	37
VII	Armenian Church Structures	38
VIII	Data and Methodology	41
	8.1.1 Armenian Apostolic Church Distribution	54
	8.1.2 Armenian Parishes	59
	8.1.3 Armenian Settlers	62
	8.1.4 The Lost Armenian Churches	66
IX	Discussion	77
	9.1.1 Eastern Diocese	77
X	Conclusion	81
	Works cited	83

List of Tables

Table 1: Immigrant group's level of education	5
Table 2: Armenian population during WWI	6
Table 3: Armenians in Iran	12
Table 4: Number of Baptism in Armenia	15
Table 5: Number of Armenians immigrated to the United States	27
Table 6: Armenian Apostolic churches in the United States	43
Table 7: Number of churches built or bought	56
Table 8: Number of churches in each state	57
Table 9: Number of churches in each decade	58
Table 10: Armenian parishes in the United States	60
Table 11: Armenian community type of employment	62
Table 12: Armenian population in Rhode Island	64
Table 13: Number of Armenian graves	65
Table 14: Armenian population estimate from various sources	66
Table 15: Number of churches destroyed	67
Table 16: The official report of destroyed properties in Adana province	75

List of Figures

Figure 1: Saint Thaddeus Monastery in West Azerbaijan, Iran	38
Figure 2: Armenian Apostolic Church distribution	54
Figure 3: Holy Trinity Armenian Church Fresno, California	55
Figure 4: Church of Our Savior, Worcester, MA	55
Figure 5: The view of the Horomos Monastery before 1965 and in 1998	71
Figure 6: Early 20 th century photo and after explosion in 1966	72
Figure 7: The view of the monument before 1912 and in 2000	72
Figure 8: Photos were taken early 1900's and in year 2000	73
Figure 9: The Cathedral of Kars	73

Abstract

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By

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Master of Arts in Geography, Standard Program

The locations of all Armenian Apostolic Churches in the United States and their dates of consecration are analyzed as a measure of Armenian immigration and mobility patterns from the late 19th century to the present time. Initially-established on the East and West Coasts of the United States, these churches provided a foundation for Armenian communities and served to preserve Armenian language and culture, acting as springboards for migration beyond coastal cities.

I Introduction and Statement of Purpose

In 2010, I had a conversation with my father regarding his birthplace -- Khoygan, a small village that is part of Fereidan Shahr County in the Isfahan province of Iran. I learned that about 50 years ago this small village, with a population fewer than 400 people, had three Armenian churches. When I asked the reason for more than one church in such a small village, I was told that the church also had a school within its structure and, since the population was expanding, commuting to one part of the village, especially in winter time, was challenging for the kids and other people. Therefore, having multiple churches was a reasonable solution at the time my father was living there. The three churches in the village of Khoygan are SurpYohana, Surp Maryam, and Surp Nercess. SurpYohana was established in the early 17th century and rebuilt in 1897. Holy Maryam was established in 1892 (Arab, 1998) about a kilometer away from SurpYohana. As my father described, around 100 years ago, each church had its own priest, but because of emigration, these were later downsized to one priest for the entire village. Still later, the community had to invite a priest from beyond the village for religious ceremonies. At the present time, there are perhaps only five Armenians left in the village, while the majority of the population migrated to urban areas such as Tehran and Isfahan for better job opportunities. This led me to the idea of using church data (date of establishment and subsequent expansion) to chart migration patterns as populations settle in an area, then grow and/or decline over time. In this thesis, I plan to use this method to study Armenian migration patterns in the United States and compare them with the patterns of the

Armenian communities in Iran based on available data for the Armenian Apostolic Church.

In the last 1700 years, the Armenian Apostolic Church and Armenians have become so interconnected that one may not exist without the other. While the main focus of the study is to map the Armenian migration pattern in the United States based on the Armenian Apostolic Church construction dates and locations, the study also brings into focus the significance of the Church and its importance in the continued existence of language, culture, and tradition for this small ethnic group. Since Armenians spent many centuries under the rule of the Muslim Ottoman Empire, one must almost inevitably talk about the Turks whenever there's a discussion about Armenians. Therefore, there will be a quick review of the Armenians during the time of the Ottoman Empire.

II Historical Background

The origins of the Armenian people and the early development of their culture remain a mystery to this day. Some argue that the Urartu Kingdom, also referred to as the Ayrarat Kingdom, after generations of war with the Assyrians, was eventually defeated and driven to collapse by the Medes around 500 BCE. As a result, only some of the tribes that had been part of the Urartu Kingdom remained. The smallest of these was the Armen group. Recent archeological discoveries have suggested that in the 8th and 7th centuries BCE, Phrygian colonists known as Armenians, overthrew Urartu. As time passed, the Armeno-Phrygian tribes imposed their Indo-European language on the Urartuans, and the combination of the two resulted in the formation of the Armenian nation (Nalbandian, 1963).

At the peak of its power between 65 and 55 BCE, Armenia extended its boundaries across Asia into the Caucasus, from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea, and contained what is now northernmost Iran (Balakian, 2003). In 301 CE, Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as its official religion. A century later, Armenia's monarch commissioned the monk Mesrop Mashtots to invent an alphabet so that people who could not read Greek would be able to read the Bible in their native language (Balakian, 2003). Historical Armenia, homeland of the Armenian immigrants in the United States, occupied a territory of approximately 259,000 kilometers (Minassian, 2010).

In the 11th century nomadic groups from central Asia journeyed south and west, sweeping through the lands of the Arabs, Armenians, and Byzantine Greeks. Saracens, Seljuks, Mongols, Tatars, and lastly the Ottoman Turks, who were predominantly Muslim, invaded these areas. Ultimately, this would result in Armenia being forced to exist under Turkic powers for centuries (Balakian, 2003). In the 11th century Seljuk Turkish forces drove Armenians southwest, also known as Cilician (Kilikian) Armenia, to what is now south-central Turkey. When Cilician Armenia was also destroyed by the Muslim Mamluks in 1375, it became a symbol of the failure of European Christianity to save its “Eastern brothers” (Balakian, 2003). Philippe de Mezieres, the 14th-century French diplomat and writer, described the fall of Armenia as “a great disgrace to all of Christianity.” Following May 1453, the Ottoman Turks essentially destroyed the Byzantine Empire, with the Armenians of Asia left to live in a complex relationship with their new Muslim rulers.

During the early years of the occupation, the Ottomans pursued a policy attempting to secure the voluntary submission and confidence of the Christians. The Ottoman Empire was thus to become a true “Frontier Empire,” a cosmopolitan state, merging all creeds and races into one, thereby uniting the Orthodox Christian Balkans, Armenians and Muslim Anatolians in a single state (Halil, 1973). In 15th century, Mehmed the Conqueror attempted to make Istanbul a universal metropolis by officially recognizing the spiritual leaders of the Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Jewish communities.

Since the Turks were poorly educated, Christians initially provided the administration of the Ottoman Empire (Shmemann, 1963). Armenians managed to maintain their level of education and, after centuries, when they relocated to the United States, they were among the most educated immigrant groups in spite of the difficulties they had with the new language. Of all the Armenians admitted into the United States between 1899 and 1917, only 23.9 percent could not read or write in Armenian. A comparison with other nationalities that immigrated to the US during this period is revealed in Table 1.

Nationality	Percent Illiterate in Their Native Language
Portuguese	68.2
Southern Italian	53.9
Syrian	53.3
Bulgarian	41.7
Russian	38.5
Polish	35.4
Romanian	35
Greek	26.4
Hebrew	26
Armenian	23.9

Table 1: Immigrant group's level of education (Minasian, 2010)

The fact that this ethnic minority group was among the most educated in the United States reflects the role the Armenian Church played in holding the community to a higher standard by using education and language as an important tools to ensure the survival of cultural identity.

2.1.1 Armenian population

In 1882, the Armenian patriarchate in Constantinople estimated the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire at 2,600,000. Of those, 1,630,000 lived in the six *vilayets* (provinces) of historic Armenia (Balakian, 2003). The Ottoman Armenians could be categorized into four groups. The first group was the wealthy, influential Armenians of Constantinople; the second group was the vital class of traders, artisans, doctors and pharmacists, and low-level bureaucrats; the third and largest group of Ottoman Armenians was the peasantry and the agrarian community that populated villages across the Ottoman Empire; and the fourth group, residing in the rugged highlands and mountains, remained a tough and independent society that was mostly untouched by the central government and its bureaucracy (Balakian, 2003).

By the beginning of the 20th century, the Armenian population in the United States was less than 50,000. The largest concentration of Armenians during World War I was found only in seven states.

State	Armenian Population by WWI
New York	17,391

Massachusetts	14,191
Rhode Island	4,923
Illinois	3,313
California	2,564
New Jersey	2,115
Pennsylvania	2,002
Total	46,500

Table 2: Armenian population during WWI (Minassian, 2010)

2.1.2 The Armenian Question

By the end of the 19th century, Armenians had been under Ottoman rule for centuries and their living conditions had progressively worsened. Armenians, as a Christian minority who were considered a unique ethnic group with a different language, were in deep trouble (Balakian, 2003). The “Armenian Question” emerged as an international issue and came to be defined by the insistence on reform for the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire who were seeking protection of life, property and civil liberties (Balakian, 2003).

One of the main problems was also created by Western missionaries. Since American Protestant missionaries could not jeopardize their lives by converting Muslim communities, they found it easier to target the Orthodox Christian communities and stay out of trouble. Although these missionaries did admire Armenians and cared for them, they created a hostile environment by expanding the cultural gap between the Turks and

the Armenians, which made it easier for the Ottoman rulers to take harsher actions against Armenians (Balakian, 2003).

Meanwhile, the efforts of Protestant missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions served as a pull factor, influencing Armenian youths in the Ottoman Empire to immigrate to the United States. The Armenian Apostolic Church repeatedly criticized the missionaries for promoting emigration. In this vein, Aris Israelian writes: “And thus the missionaries began to educate in their schools a generation, according to their own plans. The focal point of the educational process thereafter was America. Around this nucleus revolved the entire body of ‘scientific’ knowledge that the student received. The subject matter of history and geography courses was centered on America” (Minassian, 2010). As a result, the first Armenian immigrants in the United States consisted of about 3,000 Armenian students originating from the Ottoman Empire (Minassian, 2010). After more than a century, it is apparent that those who decided to immigrate to the United States are now in better circumstances than those who stayed or immigrated to neighboring Muslim countries such as Iraq and Syria.

2.1.3 Armenians under the Ottoman Rule

By the end of the 19th century, the Ottomans’ tolerance toward Armenians decreased dramatically to the point where they started creating harsh living conditions for the Armenian communities. Christians and Jews had almost no legal rights in Turkey’s Muslim society. Since only Muslims were allowed to join the army, Christians and Jews were exempted from military service. This meant that they were not allowed to own

weapons, which made them easy prey for Turks and Kurds. Christians were subjected to what was known as boy collection or “devshirme,” which meant that Ottoman officials would remove children from their Christian families, convert them to Islam, and put them to work in the Ottoman military and civil service (Balakian, 2006). Armenians also paid a “hospitality tax” to the governor that entitled “government officials, and all who pass as such,” to free lodging and food for three days a year in an Armenian home. “Kishlak,” or winter quartering obligation, also enabled nomadic Kurds and Turks to install themselves and their cattle in Armenian homes during the long winter months. The situation was extreme and in districts of Afyon Karahisar, a ruling official went so far as to announce that an Armenian could speak his native language only at the risk of having his tongue cut out. Hence, generations of Armenians in that region were forced to speak Turkish (Balakian, 2003).

The British ethnographer William Ramsay, who spent more than a decade at the end of the 19th century in Ottoman Empire doing fieldwork and was fond of the Turks, described what it meant to be an infidel: “The Armenians and the Greeks were dogs and pigs to be spat upon, if their shadow darkened a Turk, to be outraged, to be the mats on which he wiped the mud from his feet. Conceive the inevitable result of centuries of slavery, of subjection to insult and scorn, centuries in which nothing belonged to the Armenian. Neither his property, his house, his life, his person, nor his family was sacred or safe from violence, capricious, unprovoked violence to resist which by violence meant death” (Balakian, 2003).

2.1.4 The Armenian Massacres and Genocide

April 24, 2015 was the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Lots of documents gathered by various countries testify to the Armenian massacres by Sultan Abdul Hamid II during 1894-96, in which 300,000 Armenians were killed, and the Armenian Genocide in 1915, in which 1.5 million Armenians were killed by the Turks. While many nations have officially recognized the genocide, the Turkish government is still in a state of denial. Despite president Barak Obama's promise to recognize the genocide during his presidential campaign, the United States has yet to make good on that promise. Here, I will only mention how the United States covered the genocide in its newspapers while it was happening. The *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *San Francisco Examiner* were among the major newspapers that followed the plight of the Armenians by using eyewitness accounts and survivor testimonies. The word "holocaust" in the *New York Times* headline of September 10, 1895 signaled that something extraordinary was happening to the Armenians (Balakian, 2003). Since then, many US presidents, such as Jimmy Carter, George H. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barak Obama have mentioned the massacres and the genocide but have failed to recognize it officially.

2.1.5 Armenians in Iran

Many Armenians live in countries such as Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Russia, and Syria. Each of these countries may have different culture, religion, and geographical variables. Among these countries Iran, where I was

born, has a unique geographical component. One of my main research questions was whether we can study Armenian diaspora groups in other countries in order to detect a similar pattern between Armenian immigration and the Armenian Apostolic church locations. However, as explained earlier, comparing Armenian diaspora groups in two countries of the United States of America and Iran was not the main focus of this study. Iran is just an example of another host country that contains large number of Armenian population with the same characteristics of other Armenian diaspora groups in other countries.

During the 16th century, Armenia became a battlefield between the Ottomans and the Persians. Forced deportation of the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire to Persia was carried out between October 21 and November 19, 1604 (Ghougassian, 1998). As the Ottomans started a counter-offensive against the Persians who had just occupied Armenian lands, Shah Abbas II, the emperor of Iran, decided to retreat and adopt the traditional scorched earth policy. As a result, he ordered his troops to immediately deport all the inhabitants of the Ottoman province known as Chukhuri-Sad, which is now called Nakhijevan, to Iran and burn the crops and pastures, depriving the Ottomans of needed supplies. In addition to being a military strategy, Shah Abbas' decision to deport such a large number of people to Persia was also based on economic considerations. The Armenians, as traders, artisans or farmers, would contribute significantly to the development of the Persian economy (Ghougassian, 1998).

During the 17th century, most Armenians were concentrated in Persia's capital city, Isfahan, while others inhabited the surrounding farmlands and nearby villages.

However, the capital city was later relocated to Tehran. As a result, and for economic reasons, starting around the 1950's, many Armenians moved to Tehran. Today, most remaining Armenians live in Tehran but there is still a significant number living in Isfahan. After the Islamic revolution of 1979, Armenians were banned from working in the government and many other private sectors. One of the main hiring requirements in the Islamic Republic of Iran is that an applicant be a Muslim. This precludes Armenians from seeking better job opportunities. After the revolution, many Armenians left Iran and migrated to countries such as the United States, Germany, and Australia.

Below are the data of all 32 Armenian Apostolic Churches in Iran.

Place (Province/City)	Name of the church	Date
Esfahan	Vank	1606
Esfahan	Hacop	1607
Esfahan	Gevork	1611
Esfahan	Maryam	1613
Esfahan	Stepanos	1614
Esfahan	Yohana	1621
Esfahan	Katarineh	1623
Esfahan	Bidkhehm	1628
Esfahan	Nikoqayus	1630
Esfahan	Gregor	1633

Esfahan	Minas	1659
Esfahan	Sarqis	1659
Esfahan	Nerses	1666
Freidan	Surp Qukas	1912
Freidan	Surp Yohana	1897
Freidan	Holy Maryam	1892
Abadan	Surp Garabed	1954
Ahwas	Surp Mesrop	1968
Shiraz	Holy Maryam	1662
Tehran	Surp Sarqis	1970
Tehran	Surp Gevork	1795
Tehran	Holy Maryam	1945
Tehran	Surp Targmanchats	1968
Tehran	Gregor Lusavoritch	1983
Tehran	Serpots Vartanants	1981
Qazvin	Surp Heripsimeh	1936
Hamedan	Stepanos	1676
Mashhad	Surp Mesrop	1941
Orumieh	Surp Stepanos	1900
Salmas	Surp Sarqis	1671

Haftivan	Surp Gevork	1652
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Table 3: Armenians in Iran (Arab, 1998)

This table clearly shows the Armenian immigration pattern from Esfahan, which was the capital city of Iran in 1600's and the place where Armenians first settled, to Tehran, which is the current capital of Iran and where the Armenian population is now concentrated.

2.1.6 Russian and Armenian Relations

Today, only 11,175 square miles of Armenia's historical territory (100,000 square miles) constitute the Armenian Republic. It borders in the north and east on the republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan, and in the west and southeast on Turkey and Iran (Minassian, 2010). This unique geographical location leaves this small Christian nation encircled by various Muslim nations. Examining the Soviet Union occupation of Armenia following World War I, the Legal, social, and cultural status of Armenians was to change again.

In 1920, when the Republic of Armenia fell to the Red Army, all Armenian institutions, the Church included, came under the control of the Russians, who had long viewed the Armenians as an "inferior" people. During the Bolshevik revolution, all the property of the Church was nationalized. The theological seminary, the printing press, the library, and the Museum of Holy Ejmiadsin were seized in 1921. It is a paradox that while freedom of worship was guaranteed, all activities of the Church were forbidden or reduced. The parochial schools were secularized and the Church was forbidden to interfere in education (Parry, 2007). As a result, 2,025 Armenian priests were killed or

exiled to Siberia (Corely, 1996). In 1938, the great purge also brought the mysterious death of the church leader, Khoren I, undoubtedly the work of the NKVD (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) (Corley, 1996), the predecessor of the KGB. In 1946, of the 489 churches in Armenia, seven were open, six had been reopened by the CAAGC, 55 housed cultural institutions, 380 were in industrial use, and 41 were vacant (Corely, 1996). Soon, some churches reopened to train “priests” for lay missions abroad as Soviet agents to support the USSR aim of world domination (Crisis in the Armenian Church, 1958). UK’s Churchill College Archive released information in July 2014 that revealed that Aghan Baliozian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Australia and New Zealand was listed as a KGB agent, codenamed “Zorik,” in the documents of the former KGB archivist and defector, Vasili Mitrokhin. According to Mitrokhin’s notes on the Soviet State Security files, Aghan Boliozian worked as a KGB agent while studying and teaching in Jerusalem in 1974, and maintained “ongoing communications in three counties” (Dorling, 2014). Mitrohin also state that Boliozian continued his contact with the KGB after his transfer to the Armenian Church in Australia (Dorling, 2014).

As the result of church growth during the 1950’s, the number of baptisms in Soviet Armenia rose significantly thereafter.

Date	Echmiazin Cathedral	Yerevan St. Sarkis	Yerevan St. Hovhanes	Yerevan St. Zoravor
1949	203	136	125	34
1950	1796	801	244	157

1951	1693	1061	126	144
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Table 4: Number of Baptism in Armenia (Corely, 1996)

The Soviet Union’s use of Armenian priests for political advancement had a negative effect on and created tension among the Armenian churches in the United States during the Cold War era. In 1951, Catholicos of Echmiadzin cabled the United Nations Security Council condemning the United States for “imperialistic aggression” in Korea and demanded the cessation of hostilities, and said at the Moscow World Peace Conference that: “The Armenian people should be counted on to stop Anglo-American aggressive efforts” (Atamian, 1955). Consequently, a segment of American Armenians switched their church affiliation from Edjmiazin, Armenia to Antelias, Lebanon (formerly the Catholicosate of Cilicia in the Ottoman Empire). In short, the Soviet Union’s actions had a direct effect on Armenian churches in the United States. Therefore, when looking at Armenian Apostolic churches in the United States, both Prelacy and Diocese churches had to be taken into consideration.

2.1.7 Armenian Organizations and Institutions

Many Armenian political parties and institutions see the Church as their main and fundamental source of inspiration and look to Christianity as the main justification for resisting and fighting their Muslim neighbors in the Middle East and the Caucasus. As discussed, one of the main and distinct characteristics of the Apostolic Church is the idea of “One State, One Church.” Thus, wherever there’s a discussion about the Armenian

Church, there must be a conversation about Armenian institutions that support the Church and the community.

Within a very short period of time, and because they were under constant pressure from the Ottoman government, Armenians formed three political parties in late 1800's. The Armenakan Party was formed in 1885 in Van (Balakian, 2003). It was a secret society and had its first underground meetings focused on self-defense in the face of violence. The Armenakan Party believed that in case of violence, they would be saved and protected by the European Christian nations.

The Social Democrat Hunchakian (or Hnchak) Party was founded in 1887 by a group of Russian Armenians in Geneva (Balakian, 2003). It was a socialist party with a strong Marxist orientation. Its members believed that a new, independent Armenia would initiate a worldwide socialist revolution. In 1899, they published the influential weekly *TzaynHayreniats* (Voice of the Fatherland) in New York (later published in Boston) (Minassian, 2010).

By the summer of 1890, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), or Dashnaktsutun, was founded in Tiflis (Oussatcheva, 2009). The party's ideology evolved from a socialistic into a more nationalistic form that involved the idea of an armed struggle in the face of violence and oppression by the Ottoman government. For more than half a century the Dashnaks have been the most vocal advocates for Turkey's recognition of the Armenian genocide. The *Hairenik* (Fatherland) newspaper published in the Greater Boston area and served the Dashnak Party (Minassian, 2010).

Newspapers such as *Arekag* (“Sun”) in 1888, *Ararad* in 1891, *Hayk* in 1898, *Gotchnag* (“Bell”) in 1900, *Armenia* in 1906, and *Dawros* in 1918 were among other Armenian newspapers that were published in the United States (Minassian, 2010).

Contrary to the dynamics in Albanian, Serbian, and Ukrainian cases, where organizations dominating diaspora politics during Communism lost influence in the 1990s, the Armenian Dashnaks remained quite powerful (Oussatcheva, 2009). Other groups-such as Liberal and Socialist Parties that exerted some influence during the Cold War lost their hold thereafter, but the ARF remained powerful. Currently, the Armenian National Committee of America is Dashnak-based (Oussatcheva, 2009). While in exile, the ARF leadership claimed to be the only genuine representative of the Armenian nation and acted like a government in exile that occasionally resorted to acts of violence and terrorism against the Turkish government (Shain, 2003). The aim was to remind the world that “the Genocide was still an issue, that Armenian territories would be reclaimed someday, and that exiles still had one of the characteristics of government, armed forces, however puny” (Shain, 2003).

The Armenian Church also provided an institutional structure for group cohesiveness and ethnic mobilization (Oussatcheva, 2009). Tens of millions of dollars were raised to sustain Armenian day schools, churches, and other institutions in an effort to support a viable diaspora. Millions were also channeled to family members in the ASSR, especially during the period of the 1988 Armenian earthquake (Oussatcheva, 2009).

2.1.8 Armenian Soldiers Serving in Diaspora

In July 1941, Catholicos Gevork Chorekchyan called on Armenians to support the Soviet war effort. Armenian Red Army divisions were among the first to enter Berlin in 1945 (Corley, 1996). About 18,500 Armenian Americans served in the US Armed forces during the war (Thomassian, 2012). Additionally, Armenians served in the US armed forces in the Civil War. The names of Armenians who fought in the Union Army, as well as the names of the laborers who worked at the arsenal in Philadelphia (Minassian, 2012) can be found in historical records. During WWI, there were also over 100 Armenian Americans from Rhode Island who volunteered to serve in the French Legion d'Orient.

Not all Armenians fought against the Germans, however. While 430,000 Armenians fought against Germany, at least 18,000 Armenians served under the Reich (Thomassian, 2012). Nevertheless, the Germans did not really admire Armenians. Erwin Ettel, the former German Ambassador to Tehran, described Armenians the same as Jews -- indicating that they should be dealt with in the same manner as the Jews: "The Armenians are Christians by religion, but in their mentality they are very similar to the Jews. They are even recognized masters of the Jewish mentality. Where there are Armenians, there is no successful activity for the Jews. Devious and scheming, the Armenian is always unscrupulously concerned with his own personal interest. His 'salesmanship' is based on inferior character traits and has made him hated by all his neighbors" (Thomassian, 2012). In fact, Adolf Hitler appeared to have admired the 1915 Armenian genocide. In August 22, 1939, right before attacking Poland, Adolf Hitler

made a statement calling the Armenian Genocide a successful method that could be practiced against other countries such as Poland (Engin, 2014).

After the war was over, Armenians avoided repatriation to the Soviet Union. Several thousand displaced Armenian refugees from throughout Rottweil, Unterturkheim, Kongen, Heilbronn, Mannheim, Munich, Frankfurt, and Hamburg made their way towards the American zone of occupation and eventually gathered at Funkerkaserne in the Bad Cannstatt district of Stuttgart, Germany, which would serve as their home until 1951 (Thomassian, 2012).

The structure of the abandoned German barracks is similar to the refugee camp in Treiskirchen, Austria where I stayed as a refugee in the year 2000. In essence, one of the main reasons encouraging me to pursue my research in this field was my own personal experience. Fifteen years ago, I was a refugee and lived in various refugee camps for several years. I recognized the importance of the Armenian Church in diaspora when I discovered that there was an Armenian church in the city of Vienna where I could go and meet other Armenians who were in my situation. For years, the Saint Hripsime Armenian Apostolic Church in Vienna was the only place I would go to see friends, meet other refugees, and hope for a better future. The refugee camp that I was living in, Hotel Klammgruberhof in Hainfeld, was a remote area -- about 80 km away from Vienna. For a poor refugee, covering that distance would be a journey of about three days. Nevertheless, for years I would spend much time making that journey to that particular church. This was when I realized how crucial and important an Armenian church could be to an Armenian individual in diaspora.

2.2.1 *Hypothesis*

Because of the unique characteristics of the Orthodox Church, each ethnic group has its own distinct church that serves solely the people within its community. Consequently, each community tends to build its own churches as it moves to foreign host lands. Therefore, the Armenian immigration pattern within the United States can be traced by analyzing the Armenian Apostolic Church locations and the dates they were built.

III Literature Review

Usually, after a group of people immigrate to a foreign country, they begin to adapt to new conditions, learn new traditions, and blend into the society. Although the transition may not be noticeable in the first generation, time does play a significant role in changing the identity and characteristics of most immigrant groups. However, some groups do tend to hold on to their culture, language, religion and their identity does not change even after being in a host country for generations. Diaspora groups are immigrant populations that do not change their identity, language, religion, and culture by living in host countries over time.

There are various factors that push diaspora groups out of their homeland. In general, all diaspora groups have some common features. The diaspora groups are usually dispersed from an original homeland to two or more foreign regions. Alternatively or additionally, the departure from a homeland could be to search for work, to pursue a trade or to further colonial aspirations. The group usually shares a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history, suffering and achievement. Most of the time, there is an idealization of the real or imagined ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety, prosperity, and even to its creation. The group also shares a sense of empathy and co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement (Cohen, 1996).

Diaspora categories are as follows: victim, labor, imperial, trade, and deterritorialization. For instance, Jews, Africans, and Armenians are part of the victim

diaspora. Indentured Indians fall into the labor diaspora. The British could be called imperial diaspora. The Lebanese and Chinese are part of the trade diaspora, and the Caribbean people, Sindhis, and Parsis belong to the deterritorialized diaspora group (Cohen, 1996).

The word “diaspora” comes from the Greek *diaspeir*, “to distribute.” The term is a combination of “spear,” meaning “to sow” or “to scatter” like seed, and “dia,” meaning “from one end to the other” (Vertovec, 2000). After 9/11, the issue of diaspora had been added to the homeland security’s list of items for scrutiny. The main concern was whether a diasporic identity implies potential disloyalty to the state of residence and with what possible consequences.

One of the most influential statements marking the beginning of present-day diaspora studies was Safran’s article in the opening issue of the then new journal, *Diaspora*. He maintained that the concept of a diaspora can be applied when members of an “expatriate minority community” share several of the following features:

- They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from an original “center” to two or more foreign regions;
- They retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland;
- They believe they are not, and perhaps can never be, fully accepted in their host societies and so do not assimilate;

- They believe all members of the diaspora should be committed to the maintenance or restoration of the original homeland and to its safety and prosperity (Cohen, 1996).

3.1.1 Diaspora Statistics

Some numbers and statistics are presented below to quantify the peoples discussed and to elucidate the importance of this study. “First attempt to estimate the real numbers of the main historical and modern diaspora groups” indicates that among “historical diasporas,” the Chinese diaspora numbers 35 million, the Indian diaspora 9 million, the Jewish and Gypsy diasporas 8 million each, the Armenian diaspora 5.5 million, the Greek diaspora 4 million, the German diaspora 2.5 million, and the Druze 1 million (Brubaker, 2005)

Among the “modern” diasporas, the African-American diaspora numbers 25 million, the Kurdish diaspora 14 million, the Irish diaspora 10 million, the Italian diaspora 8 million, the Hungarian and Polish diasporas 4.5 million each, the Turkish and Iranian diasporas 3.5 million each, the Japanese diaspora 3 million, the Lebanese (Christian) diaspora 2.5 million and the “Black Atlantic” diaspora 1.5 million (Brubaker, 2005).

The entire diaspora population represents only about 0.01% of the world population. At this point, the question is why should we care about such a small and insignificant number of people? Why are there an increasing number of articles and research papers on these groups? And why do the media focus on some of these groups on a daily basis?

3.1.2 Diaspora Studies

Almost all scholars look at diaspora groups from a different point of view. For instance, in all three Asian cases, Chinese, Indian, and Japanese, the numbers involved in indenture were a very small fraction of the total population. The migrants had the legal right to return, and the recruitment process and work conditions, however bad, were legally regulated, which means, by some definitions, they cannot be considered a diaspora group. However, some scholars do believe that the migrants do fit in the diaspora group definition. In this context, the UCLA sociologist Rogers Brubaker warned that, “If everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctively so” (Brubaker, 2005).

Until the 1930s, the social formation known as “diaspora” consisted of a group of communities that lived in often involuntary dispersion from their homelands and resisted full assimilation or was denied the option of assimilating, or both at the same time (Tololyan, 2012). Many of the diaspora groups existed in terrible and unstable conditions and diasporicity could mean second-class citizenship. In this earlier period, scholars apply the term “diaspora” to just three groups: Jews -- the paradigmatic case; Armenians (since 11th century); and Greeks (Tololyan, 2012).

In 2005, Brubaker titled his critique of the rapid growth of diaspora studies “The ‘diaspora’ diaspora.” He pointed out that during the 1970’s, the word “diaspora” appeared as a keyword only once or twice a year in dissertation abstracts; in the late 1980s, they appeared on average 13 times a year; and by the year 2001 alone, nearly 130 times. Brubaker warned that this rapid dispersion of the term into many disciplinary discourses was stretching and weakening its meaning. He identified the journal *Diaspora*

as “a key vehicle for the proliferation of academic diaspora talk,” but added that even its editor, Tololyan, worried that diaspora “is in danger of becoming a promiscuously capacious category” (Tololyan, 2012). In the first issue of *Diaspora* that appeared at the end of May 1991, Tololyan wrote that the “semantic domain” of the term “diaspora” was being “shared” with such terms as “migrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile, overseas community and ethnic community” (Tololyan, 2012). As scholars ranging from Dominique Schnapper to Oliver Bakewell have noted, we have been observing the further crowding of diaspora’s semantic domain. As Ferdinand de Saussure pointed out in 1916, no term has its meaning independently, but rather acquires it in its relationship to, and nuanced difference from, related others.

3.1.3 Core Elements of Diaspora

Three elements that remain widely understood to be core elements of diaspora are dispersion in space, orientation to a “homeland,” and boundary-maintenance (Brubaker, 2005). Dispersion can be interpreted strictly as forced or otherwise traumatic dispersion (Brubaker, 2005). Homeland orientation is the orientation to a real or imagined ‘homeland’ as a dependable source of value, identity and loyalty (Brubaker, 2005). According to Safran, homeland orientation includes, first, maintaining a collective memory or myth about the homeland; second, “regarding the ancestral homeland as the true, ideal home and as the place to which one would (or should) eventually return”; third, being collectively “committed to the maintenance or restoration of the homeland and to its safety and prosperity”; and forth, “continuing to relate, personally or

vicariously,” to the homeland, in a way that significantly shapes one’s identity and solidarity (Brubaker, 2005).

Between 1919 and 1973, approximately 200,000 Armenians emigrated to Soviet Armenia from countries such as Syria, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Cyprus, England, and France. Although the numbers are not high, this is tangible proof of the national consciousness and patriotism of the diasporan Armenian masses drawn to the homeland (Hadjian, 2009). Between 1946 and 1948, Catholicos Gevorg VI Tchorek’tchian encouraged the repatriation of more than 80,000 Armenians, mainly from the Middle East (Parry, 2007).

3.1.4 Armenian Diaspora

Sheffer classifies the Armenian diaspora as “classic” since it existed before the era of “nation-states” formation. As described earlier, it dates back to the Mongol conquest of the Armenian heartland in the 13th century, when refugees fled to neighboring Eastern European regions and to the Middle East.

The Commissioner General of Immigration indicates that in the years preceding the great Armenian massacres of 1894-1896, during which 300,000 were killed, the number of Armenian emigrants from the Ottoman Empire to America did not exceed 7,000.

Year	Number of Armenians Immigrated to the United States
1894	298
1895	2,767

1896	4,139
1897	4,732
1898	4,275
Total	16,211

Table 5: Number of Armenians Immigrated to the United States (Minassian, 2010)

However, a sudden surge occurred in the years following the massacres and the beginning of the 1915 genocide.

Another wave of Armenian dispersion followed the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990) and the Iranian revolution (1979). Prior to the end of communism, the Armenian community in the US was largely composed of first or second generations who fled the genocide and who did not trace their origin to Eastern Armenia (present-day Armenia), but to the former Ottoman lands (Oussatcheva, 2009).

The post- Soviet wars also caused the displacement of many Armenians. As of 1995, as a result of the Nagorny-Karabakh war and because of the forced exchange of populations, a total of 247,000 Armenians had left Azerbaijan and immigrated to Armenia (Zurcher, 2007).

IV Language and States

Armenians tend to hold on to their language regardless of their geographical location or the host country which they live. This has been major factors in allowing them to live in various host countries for generations and not assimilate into the society. When an ethnic group expresses itself and makes political demands, language or religion can be viewed as the main effective tools to ensure those demands are met. The ethnic and religious boundaries may be similar or different, but they may not have the same effect for nation-building. Obviously, religion does not seem to be a factor where the surrounding population is of the same religion. For example, the Basques and Catalans are nations because of their language; the Corsicans, in order to prove themselves to be a nation, have been emphasized the importance of their language, though with limited success (Safran, 2006). However, a recent analysis on 47 European nations suggests that populations are related primarily on the basis of geography, rather than on the basis of linguistic affinity (Rosser, 2000).

Absolute monarchs once determined the religion, and, in principle, the language of their domain. But in reality, they saw no need to impose a common language on their subjects. Unlike religion, the language spoken by the masses was of little concern to the rulers of the Holy Roman, Russian, and Ottoman empires because they did not need to communicate with the masses. It is well known that Fredrick the Great of Prussia and the various czars of 19th century Russia spoke French at court (Safran, 2006).

The fact that some languages were preserved or promoted by religious figures indicates that they did understand the role of language in preserving their distinct group of people. In the words of one Jacobin, “Federalism and superstition speak low Breton; emigration and hate for the Revolution speak German; the counter-revolution speaks Italian and fanaticism speaks Basque (Safran, 2006).

4.1.1 Language and Religion

Religion and language are the two significant structures of ethno-national identity. In general, the relationship to religion is weakest in trans-ethnic languages such as English, French, and Spanish, and strongest in languages tied more closely to an ethnic community. For Greeks, both their religion and their language are important elements of their ethno-national self-image -- the Orthodox religion, because it is considered spiritually superior to the Roman Catholic variant, and the Greek language, because it reflects continuity with classical Greek civilization (Safran, 2006).

Outside the homeland territory, a common language and religion are the major markers of ethno-national identity, as in the case of diaspora Armenians, Chinese, Greeks, Indians, Jews, Sikhs, and Tibetans (Safran, 2006). Both Greek and Armenian parents generally impose some reading of religion that is part of their church services texts on their children (Fishman, 1975). The parents’ reading in the modern language is also often religiously oriented and overwhelmingly ethnic in content. The children’s reading in these languages is equally intra-community oriented, focusing on material simply not available in English (Fishman, 1975).

In the United States, the language of the immigrant ethnics was maintained for several generations through church sermons. For example, the parish schools of the Polish national church in the United States have had a dual purpose: to impart religious instruction and to teach the Polish language (Safran, 2006). The Armenian Church was and is distinguished by its use of the Armenian language. In each locality that maintained an Armenian Church and priest, Armenian classes were held in the basement of the church, with the priest usually serving as teacher. Where church facilities were not available, classes were accommodated in community centers, rented halls, back rooms of Armenian clubs, or even vacant stores (Minnasian, 2010).

Both religion and language are crucial for Armenian, Jewish, and Sikh ethno-national identity. Although fewer people practice their religion in the homeland (where territorial-political identity is often a substitute for religion), and fewer learn the language in diaspora, religion and language are of continuing symbolic importance (Safran, 2006).

V Religion

Almost all early identities developed from religious consciousness. Loyalty to the nation was based on the belief that one's nation was "God's chosen people" (Safran, 2006).

Language and religion are related; both have "deep structures" and both are widely regarded as constitutive aspects of "primordialism" in the sense that individuals are born into one, the other, or (in most instances) both (Safran, 2006). In our secular age, however, that relationship is neither manifest, nor is it consistent. Religion and language may be clearly associated and feed upon each other; language may be a substitute for religion; or religion may trump language (Safran, 2006).

5.1.1 Religion and Ethnicity

The ethno-nation has much in common with religion. Both have a shared ideology, celebrate shared festivals, hold shared symbols, acknowledge shared saints, and are loyal to a community that, in Benedict Anderson's words, is often an "imagined" one (Safran, 2006).

In sum, ethnicity, religion, and language have this in common: all three have influenced the shape and context of the state, and, on the contrary, have been the object of diverse state policies (Safran, 2006). Religion, like languages, may be: (a) instrumentalized by nations, republics, and empires (e.g., the anointment of kings in the Holy Roman Empire and the construction of the "Christian Coalition" in the United States); (b) institutionalized and officialized (e.g., via established churches and official

languages. “Institutionalization” transforms a belief into a religion and a dialect into a language); (c) domesticated and reformed (e.g., the appointment of a “Sanhedrin” and a “consistory” for Judaism in France in the 19th century and attempts to create a “western” Islam in that country today, and the “republicanization” of Catholicism in Western Europe); (d) neutralized; (e) privatized, ignored and otherwise depoliticized; and (f) banned (Safran, 2006).

Some scholars distinguish between “ethnic” religions or “primordial religions of locality and lineage,” such as Judaism, Armenian Apostolic Christianity, and Sikhism, and “founder” religions, such as Buddhism and Western Christianity (Safran, 2006). From geographic perspective, Western Christianity was intended to be above national differences, but in the east, Christian church organizations developed in harmony with the different national groupings and that is the main difference between the eastern and western Christianity. These differences between east and west created major difficulties for Orthodox Armenians in the United States. The Scots and English immigrants in the United States were predominantly Protestant. The lack of Armenian Orthodox Churches in America disarmed the Armenian immigrant of any denominational preference (Minassian, 2010).

Issues of religious and cultural reproduction increase questions regarding the maintenance, modification or discarding of religious practices among the subsequent generations born and raised in post-migration settings. Everyday religious and cultural practices, religious nurture at home and religious education at school and participation at

formal places of worship all shape the identities and activities of the so-called second and thirds generations (Vertovec, 2000).

5.1.2 Orthodox Christians

The estimates of the total number of Orthodox Christians around the globe vary from 180 million to 216 million (Krindatch, 2006). As of Church-organization, in the worldwide dimension, the Eastern Christianity consists of two ecclesiastical families of the independent-the so-called autocephalous and autonomous Orthodox Churches:

- 1) The Eastern (also known as the Byzantine) Orthodox Churches. These are the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; the Orthodox Churches of Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Albania, Czech and Slovak Republics, America, Finland, Japan, Mount Sinai and China.

- 2) The Oriental (also known as the Not-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches. These are the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Syrian, Malankara, and Eritrean Orthodox Churches. The common element among Oriental Orthodox Churches that distinguishes them from the Eastern Orthodox Churches is their rejection of the Christological definition of the 4th Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon, which asserted that Christ is one person in two natures, undivided and unconfused (Krindatch, 2006).

The concept of “one state-one Church” was historically a very characteristic of the Eastern Christianity. Therefore, when Orthodox Church is mentioned, one tends to think of its ethnic aspect. The Orthodox Christians being asked about religious association almost always add an ethnic qualifier: Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, etc. Consequently, many Orthodox Churches which have faithful in US have organized in North America their own jurisdictions with a purpose to minister to the religious world: the Greeks, Russians, Serbians, Armenians, etc (Krindatch, 2006). As a result, most Armenians will only attend Armenian churches and follow their ceremonies. Building an Armenian church is so important that during the Great Depression, which crippled America economically, Armenians carried through their church-building program and contracted heavy debts, ignoring the risks of foreclosure (Minassian, 2010).

The Church, which was traditionally a public and political institution in Armenian life, perhaps because the authorities assigned such a role to it, still remains an institution that remains an important part of community life (Oussatcheva, 2009). At some point, during 1950’s, Armenians built as many as ten churches within seven years. This large number occurred mainly because Armenian immigrants had decided to make America their permanent home (Minassian, 2010).

As indicated in an article regarding Armenian church members, “believers, atheists, agnostics, and anti-clerics alike participate regularly in the major life-cycle events held in the church, and unless one states otherwise, all who christened in the church are members for life” (Oussatcheva, 2009). However, with regard to Armenian life in a country like Russia, the church cannot serve as an umbrella institution covering

all diverse interests and providing organizational consolidation for all the different fractions of Armenians in Russia (Oussatcheva, 2009). Therefore, the church remains one of the symbols of ‘Armenianness’, but does not have the power and legitimacy to speak for the whole Diaspora in every foreign country (Oussatcheva, 2009).

VI Armenian Diaspora Immigration Pattern

Since the Armenian Apostolic Church is one of the most significant elements of the Armenian diaspora group, the world's oldest national church, and the Armenians are one of the most ancient Christian communities, no Armenian community can exist without having a church. Therefore, an Armenian Apostolic Church, in any geographic location, will lead to an Armenian community in that specific location. Although, previous scholars addressed the importance and the influence of religion and language in various diasporic groups, they did not use church locations as a tool to locate individuals, families, or communities. Basically, by locating Armenian Apostolic Churches in the United States and tracking the dates they were built, all Armenian groups' whereabouts can be located and also determine the approximate time they moved there.

VII Armenian Church Structures

The Armenian Church considers itself to be of Apostolic origin, that is, because Christianity was first introduced by the apostles Saint Thaddeus (AD 35-43) and Saint Bartholomew (AD 44-60), both of whom preached and became martyrs in Armenia.

For about twenty five years after Armenia became the first Christian state, it was known as the only Christian state. As a result, Armenian Church architecture took a distinctive character, especially in the exterior shape of the building. At the beginning all the pagan temples were destroyed and replaced by the first churches. Figure 1 shows Saint Thaddeus Monastery in West Azerbaijan, Iran. The original one was built in AD 68 and was rebuilt in 1329 after an earthquake.



Figure 1: Saint Thaddeus Monastery in West Azerbaijan, Iran (Wikipedia).

The single-nave basilicas are the oldest examples of Armenian churches. Though after careful evaluation of the weaknesses of extended basilicas, early medieval Armenian architects designed the domed hall, which had no pillars inside and was a more solid and durable structure. Some of the churches, during 4th and 7th centuries, built with an outer narthex containing a small altar on its eastern side, which was meant for those who had not been baptized or were in repentance. Armenian Church architecture also started to develop a focal style, which incorporated domes onto the structures. The central dome church became the chief model for the following centuries (Hasratian, 2001).

The cruciform design of Armenian churches is more clearly expressed by the “free-cross” form of domed structures, which are further divided into three categories; four altars, three altars, and single eastern altar (Hasratian, 2001).

Armenian Church architecture can be also observed in the Armenian diaspora. The year 2005 marked the 400th anniversary of the establishment of New Julfa, a small town on the right bank of Zayanderood River, adjacent to the Safavid Capital of Isfahan, Iran. In 1968, the Galouste Gulbengian Foundation of Lisbon, Portugal sponsored the publications of an architectural survey on the Armenian churches of New Julfa by John Carswell. During the same period, the Italian Institute for the Middle and the Far East (IsMEO) and the Italian Cultural Institute of Tehran started architectural surveys and some restoration work on churches of New Julfa (Ghougassian, 1998).

In the United States, Armenians erected their churches with great toil and sacrifice. These edifices meant more than just a beautiful and distinctive church, but

symbolized their Armenian Christian heritage and their national identity (Minassian, 2010). In the United States, there are the Eastern and Western Dioceses with their headquarters located in Ejmiatsin, Armenia and there is Eastern and Western Prelacies with their headquarters located in Antelias, Lebanon. There's also Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA), and Armenian Catholic Church. Since most Armenian churches are Apostolic, I focused my study area only on the diocese and prelacies Apostolic Churches.

VIII Data and Methodology

Armenians have been living in the United States for over a century. Unfortunately, no exact or solid data may be found on their population or migration status. The Armenian Apostolic Church may be viewed as a footprint of Armenian communities and their movements throughout the country. Since this study focuses on Armenian Apostolic Churches within the United States, visiting all churches was beyond the scope of this research. Fortunately, almost all Armenian Churches have official websites detailing ceremonies, programs, and their particular history. For this study, each Diocese and Prelacy Apostolic Church official website was reviewed to determine the location and the exact dates each church was built and consecrated. If the website didn't provide the relevant information on the history of the church, the church officials were contacted via E-mail or telephone to obtain the missing data. Many churches in the East Coast replied to my emails with detailed information regarding their church history and the Armenian population demography. A church in Glendale, CA, and another one in Las Vegas, NV were contacted by phone. Since I live in Glendale, CA, I decided to pay a visit to the Armenian churches in my neighborhood. Surprisingly, when I made an appointment with Reverend Father Khajag Shahbazyan, and went to the Western Diocese Headquarters in Burbank, CA to gather more accurate and precise information, nobody seemed to be interested in assisting me with my research. The Western Diocese Headquarters indicated that they had no such information on all Armenian Apostolic Churches in the West Coast.

After reviewing over 150 church and parish websites, assembling data, emailing more than 20 churches and parishes, and directly calling several additional churches, I believe I have located all Armenian Apostolic Church data in the United States. Since some emails remained unanswered for weeks, the data-gathering timeframe had to be extended multiple times until all data was collected. Since many church histories contained stories of relocated churches, burned churches, and other historical trends, gathering the required church data and the exact date consecration was not a straightforward task.

Below is the church data of all 97 Armenian Churches in the United States and the dates they were either built or reconsecrated as an Armenian Church. According to Armenian Church tradition, the anniversary of a church is observed on the date of consecration rather than the date of construction, and churches that were rebuilt or had new buildings added will be discussed under the period of their initial consecration (Minassian, 2010). There is a church in Seattle, WA that was built recently but not yet consecrated; therefore, it was not counted as part of the data. Also, based on the gathered data, the Armenian Church of Holy Translators in Framingham, MA was established in 2001 but consecrated in 2003. Therefore, in the data, the date 2003 is the one that is taken into consideration. The presented data in table 5 is in the construction date order, starting with the first church in Worcester, MA and ending with the one in Las Vegas, NV.

Name	Street	City	State	Zipcode	Date
Armenian Church of Our Savior	65 Laurel St.	Worcester	MA	1605	1891
Holy Trinity	2226 Ventura Blvd	Fresno	CA	93718	1900
Holy Cross	318 27th St.	Union City	NJ	7087	1907
St. Gregory the Illuminator	229 S. Third St.	Fowler	CA	93625	1910
St. Mary	14395 Ave 384	Yetter	CA	93670	1911
Sts. Sahag and Mesrob	70 Jefferson St.	Providence	RI	2908	1914
Holy Trinity	397 Shawmut Ave	Boston	MA	2118	1921
St. Gregory the Illuminator	1000 N. Hoyne Ave	Chicago	IL	60622	1922
Holy Resurrection	909 Michigan Ave	South Milwaukee	WI	53172	1924

Sts. Sahag and Mesrob	1249 F St.	Reedly	CA	93654	1924
Saint Stephen's	167 Tremont St.	New Britain	CT	6051	1927
Armenian Church of Holy Ascension	Barnum Ave	Bridgeport	CT	6608	1931
St. Gregory the Illuminator	12 Corbett Ave	Binghamton	NY	13903	1931
St. John	1335 Oakman Blvd	Detroit	MI	48238	1931
St. Leon	135_143 Bloomfield Ave	Paterson	NJ	7503	1932
Holy Cross Church of Armenia	580 W. 187th St.	New York	NY	10033	1937
St. James	465 Mt. Auburn St	Watertown	MA	2472	1937
Sts. Vartanantz	402 Broadway Ave	Providence	RI	2909	1940

Armenian Church of Holy Resurrection	11 Erwin Place	New Britain	CT	6051	1941
St. John the Baptist	7825 W. Layton Ave	Greenfield	WI	53220	1941
St. John	275 Olympia Way	San Francisco	CA	94131	1941
Holy Triniti	607 W. Susquehanna Ave	Philadelphia	PA	19122	1942
St. James	3200 W. Adams Blvd	Los Angeles	CA	90018	1942
All Saint's	2730 West Le Moyné St.	Chicago	IL	60622	1943
St. James	816 Clark St.	Evanston	IL	60201	1944
St. Vartan	314 East 35th St.	Brooklyn	NY	11203	1949
St. James	3300 Business Dr.	Sacramento	CA	95820	1951

St. George	22 White St.	Hartford	CT	6114	1953
St. Mary	4050 N.W. 100th Ave	Hollywood	FL	33024	1953
St. Sarkis	300 Ninth St.	Niagara Falls	NY	14303	1953
St. Gregory The Illuminator	1014 W. Pontoon Rd.	Granite City	IL	62025	1954
St. Vartan	650 Spruce St.	Oakland	CA	94610	1955
St. James	834 Pepper Ave	Richmond	VA	23226	1956
St. Gregory	51 Commonwealth Ave	San Francisco	CA	94118	1957
Armenian Church of The Holy Martyrs	209_15 Horace Harding Expwy	Bayside	NY	11364	1958
St. Mark	20 Dresden St.	Springfield	MA	1109	1958

St. Paul	310 N. Geddes St.	Syracuse	NY	13204	1958
St. George	1015 N. McAree Rd.	Waukegan	IL	60085	1959
St. Sarkis	214_33 40th Ave	Bayside	NY	11363	1960
Holy Trinity*	145 Brattle St.	Cambridge	MA	2138	1961
St. Sarkis	19300 Ford Rd.	Dearborn	MI	48128	1962
St. Mary	4125 Fessenden St.	N.W. Washington	DC	20016	1963
Sts. Sahag and Mesrob	630 Clothier Rd.	Wynnewood	PA	19096	1963
Holy Martyrs	5300 White Oak Ave	Encino	CA	91316	1963
Soorp Khatch	4906 Flint Dr.	Bethesda	MD	20816	1964
St. Gregory of Narek	678 Richmond Rd.	Richmond Hts	OH	44143	1964

St. Gregory the Illuminator	6700 W. Diversey Ave	Chicago	IL	60707	1964
St. Kevork	20 Bering Dr.	Houston	TX	77057	1965
St. Leon*	12_61 Saddle River Rd.	Fair Lawn	NJ	7410	1965
St. Thomas	HWY 9 W & E. Clinton Ave	Tenafly	NJ	7670	1965
Holy Trinititi*	101 Ashmead Rd	Cheltenham	PA	19012	1966
St. Peter	17231 Sherman Way	Van Nuys	CA	91406	1966
St. Gregory The Illuminator	8701 Ridge Ave	Philadelphia	PA	19128	1967
St. Vartan*	630 Second Ave.	New York	NY	10016	1968
St Gregory	158 Main St	North Andover	MA	1845	1970
Armenian Church of San Antonio	13807 Laurel Hollow	San Antonio	TX	78232	1970

St. John*	22001 Northwestern Highway	Southfield	MI	48075	1970
St. Peter	100 Troy Schenectady Rd	Watervliet	NY	12189	1971
St. James*	4950 W. Slauson Ave	Los Angeles	CA	90056	1971
St. Mary	200 W. Mt. Pleasant Ave	Livingston	NJ	7039	1973
St. Mesrob	4605 Erie St.	Racine	WI	53402	1973
St. John Garabed	4473 30th St.	San Diego	CA	92116	1977
St. John	1201 N. Vine St.	Hollywood	CA	90038	1977
Armenian Church of Holy Ascension*	1460 Huntington Turnpike	Trumbull	CT	6611	1978
Sts. Vartanantz	180 Old Westford Rd	Chelmsford	MA	1824	1978

St. Paul	3767 N. First St.	Fresno	CA	93726	1979
All Saint's*	1701 N. Greenwood	Glenview	IL	60025	1980
Armenian Church of Holy Resurrection*	1910 Stanley St	New Britain	CT	6053	1980
Holy Virgin Mary and Shoghagat	400 Huntwood Rd	Belleville	IL	62226	1980
St. Garabed	1614 N. Alexandria Ave	Los Angeles	CA	90027	1980
St. Kevork*	3211 Synott Rd	Houston	TX	77082	1982
St. Joachim and Anne	12600 S. Ridgeland Ave	Palos Heights	IL	60463	1983
Holy Cross	900 W. Lincoln Ave	Montebello	CA	90640	1984
St. Mark*	2427 Wilbraham Rd.	Springfield	MA	1129	1985

St. Stepanos	1184 Ocean Ave	Elberon	NJ	7740	1987
St. David	2300 Yamato Rd.	Boca Raton	FL	33431	1988
St. Mary	500 s. Central Ave	Glendale	CA	91204	1988
Forty Martyrs	5315 West McFadden Ave	Santa Ana	CA	92704	1988
St. Sarkis*	38_65 234th St.	Douglaston	NY	11363	1990
St. Sarkis	1805 Random Rd.	Carrollton	TX	75006	1991
St. Mary	148 E. 22nd St.	Costa Mesa	CA	92627	1992
St. Andrew	11370 S. Stelling Rd.	Cupertino	CA	95014	1992
St. Sarkis	7107 SW 113 Loop	Oscala	FL	34476	1997
St. Gregory the Enlightener	1131 N. St.	White Plains	NY	10605	1998

St. Apkar	8849 E. Cholla St.	Scottsdale	AZ	85260	2000
St. Kevork	1434 W. Kenneth Rd.	Glendale	CA	91201	2001
St. Sahag	203 N. Howell st.	St. Paul	MN	55104	2002
Armenian Church of Holy Translators	38 Franklin St.	Framingham	MA	1702	2003
St. Peter	632 W. Stocker St.	Glendale	CA	91202	2003
St. Sarkis	58 S. Sierra Madre Blvd	Pasadena	CA	91107	2005
St. Garabed	38990 Vista Dunes	Rancho Mirage	CA	92270	2005
St. Hagop	7020 90th Ave	Pinellas Park	FL	33782	2007
St. Gregory	2215 E. Colorado Blvd	Pasadena	CA	91107	2007

St. Sarkis	24626 Kansas St.	Newhall	CA	91321	2009
Soorp Haroutiun	9274 Winter Garden_Vineland Rd	Orlando	FL	32830	2010
St. Leon	3325 N. Glenoaks Blvd	Burbank	CA	91504	2010
St. Garabed	2054 E. Desert Inn Rd.	Las Vegas	NV	8919	2013

Table 6: Armenian Apostolic Churches in the United States

8.1.1 Armenian Apostolic Church distribution:

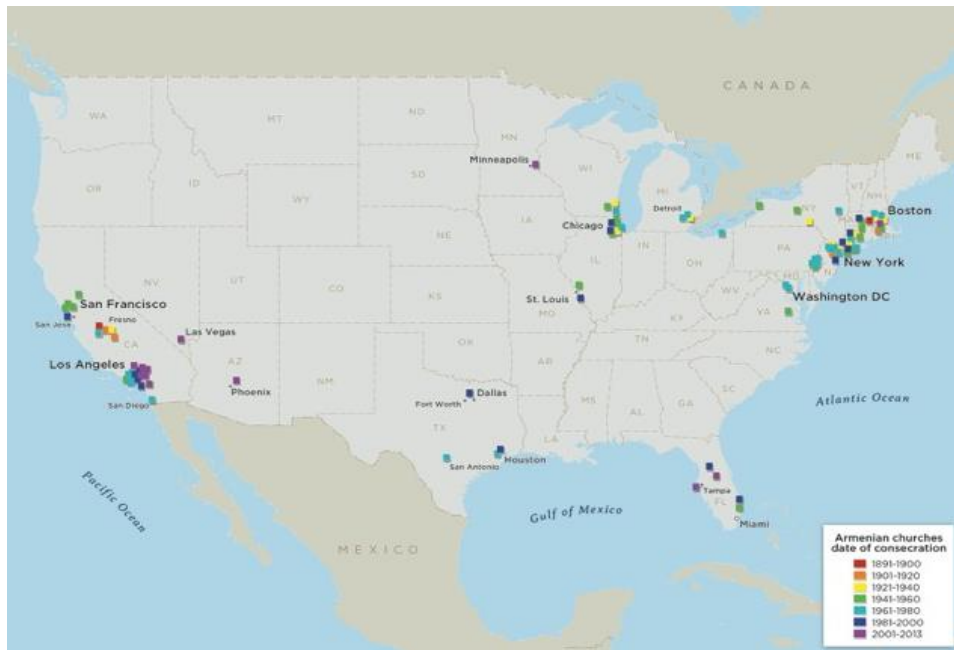


Figure 2: Armenian Apostolic Church distribution.

In order to create a map, the exact address of each church had been Geo-coded and entered into Excel. Since the exact date that each church was built is also available, the data could be organized based on those dates. In GIS, each dot represents a church and the color indicates when it was built. The brighter colors represent the older churches and the darker, the newer ones. On this map, the red dot represents the first Armenian churches built in the US. The yellow and green dots represent churches built from the 1920's to the 1960's in areas such as Fresno and Detroit, where Armenians were more involved with farming and manufacturing. Starting in the 1980's and 1990's, Armenian churches expanded toward the Midwestern US, and states, such as Texas, and Megalopolis areas, such as Los Angeles and New York.



Figure 3: Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Fresno, California.



Figure 4: Church of Our Savior, Worcester, MA, was built in 1891.

As mentioned, not all Armenian Church structures were constructed as Armenian churches and therefore, they lack the distinct Armenian structural design. For instance, when the first Armenian Church dating back to 1891 was under consideration, some

wished to build the new church edifice on a parcel of land, while another group favored renovating an existing building (Minassian, 2010). In the gathered data on all 97 Armenian churches, about 40% were built as an Armenian Church, over 30% were renovations of existing churches, and the rest were unknown and required further research. Since most churches were either built or bought, some churches did not have the distinct characteristics of a traditional Armenian church.

Armenian Church	Number of Churches		Unknown History
	Built	Bought	
Western Prelacy	7	3	0
Eastern Prelacy	1	7	1
Western Diocese	11	7	3
Eastern Diocese	19	16	22
Total	38	33	26

Table 7: Number of churches built or bought

The first Armenian Church was built in 1891 in Worcester, MA and the story of its opening was covered by the *Worcester Telegram* newspaper. Ten years later, the first Armenian Church in Fresno, CA was consecrated on October 14, 1900 (Minassian, 2010). Thus, the first two Armenian churches were built on the East and West coasts of the United States. As a matter of fact, in 1881 first Armenian settlers in Fresno were from Massachusetts, but shortly thereafter, new immigrants began migrating directly from the Ottoman Empire, their homeland (Minassian, 2010).

Only seven states -- CA, CT, FL, IL, MA, NJ, and NY -- have more than five churches. California has more churches than any other state.

State	Number of Armenian Apostolic Churches
AZ	1
CA	28
CT	7
DC	1
FL	5
IL	9
OH	1
MA	8
MD	2
MI	3
MN	1
NJ	6
NV	1
NY	11
PA	4
RI	2
TX	4

VA	1
WI	2
TOTAL	97

Table 8: Number of churches in each state

Most churches were built during the period from 1950 to the 1980's; however, the beginning of the 21st century also saw a significant number of churches being constructed.

Date	Number of Armenian Apostolic Churches
1890	1
1900	2
1910	3
1920	5
1930	6
1940	9
1950	12
1960	16
1970	12
1980	12
1990	6
2000	10

2010	3
------	---

Table 9: Number of churches in each decade

8.1.2 Armenian Parishes

The gathered data indicate that there are specific locations registered as a church, but no church building exists at the designated address. In fact, there are parishes that take the place of a church in such less populated locales and provide services to smaller Armenian communities throughout the United States. In general, many Armenian communities don't have the funds to buy or build a church and rely on Armenian parishes and their priests to raise the capital for construction. For instance, when I attempted to contact the Armenian Apostolic Church of Salt Lake City, I reached the Archpriest Father Hovsep Hagopian, who informed me that he visits the clergy of Salt Lake Parish once a month to hold services. He also mentioned that a Greek church has been rented in Denver, CO where he conducts various services as well, on an as needed basis.

More than 50 parishes were located in this study in total. There are 4 parishes in the Western Prelacy, 21 in the Western Diocese, 14 in the Eastern Prelacy, and 15 in the Eastern Diocese. Since the main focus of this study was on the church data and the dates these churches were built, the data of Armenian parishes was not taken into consideration. Nonetheless, the lack of church data in an area doesn't necessarily evidence the absence of Armenian communities in that area. In essence, the presence of a parish with no church is an indication that the community is not well-developed.

Therefore, no immigration pattern can be detected based on that information. Below are the locations of all 54 parishes.

City (Location of Armenian Parish)	State
Tucson	AZ
Norco	CA
La Crescenta	CA
North Hollywood	CA
Bakersfield	CA
Tujunga	CA
Palmdale	CA
San Luis Obispo	CA
Whittier	CA
Turlock	CA
La Verne	CA
S. Lake Tahoe	CA
Thousand Oaks	CA
Littleton	CO
Denver	CO
Kissimmee	FL
Jacksonville	FL

Lauderdale	FL
Naples	FL
Rosewell	GA
Waukegan	IL
Kansas City	KS
Baton Rouge	LA
Haverhill	MA
Orchard	MA
Mashpee	MA
Watertown	MA
Whetinsville	MA
Okemos	MI
Ridgefield	NJ
Las Vegas	NV
Fairport	NY
Jamesville	NY
Niagara Falls	NY
Tory	NY
Columbus	OH
North Royalton	OH

Clackamas	OR
Memphis	TN
Franklin	TN
Austin	TX
Seaford	VA
Redmond	WA

Table 10: Armenian Parishes in the United States.

8.1.3 Armenian Settlers

In this study, the first Armenian settlements in 19 different locations were examined as well as the churches. The correlation between the settlement establishment dates, that are often unavailable, and the church consecration dates, that are always incorporated into the church façade, evidences a pattern, which can be applied to deduce the missing date.

City	State	Establishment Date	Church Consecrated	Employment
Fowler	CA	1890	1910	Fruit Farming & Vineyard
Los Angeles	CA	1900	1923	Rug Industry
Reedley	CA	1890	1924	Farmers
Yettam	CA	1901	1911	Fruit Farming
New Britain	CT	1890	1941	Manufacturing Firms

Chicago	IL	1890	1926	N/A
Boston	MA	1880	1923	N/A
Lawrence	MA	1890	1936	Textile Manufacturing
Lowell	MA	1885	1916	Cotton Manufacturing
Watertown	MA	1902	1937	Rubber Company
Detroit	MI	1900	1931	Manufacturing Firms
Paterson	NJ	1880	1965	Textile Manufacturing
West Hoboken	NJ	1880	1907	Silk Weavers
Binghamton	NY	1912	1930	Shoe Factories
New York	NY	1844	1921	Lawyers-Engineers & Skilled Laborers
Trot	NY	1899	1928	Manufacturing Firms
Providence	RI	1870	1913	Jewelery-Textile-Tool Manufacturing
Racine	WI	1892	1925	N/A
S. Milwaukee	WI	1910	1924	N/A

Table 11: Armenian communities' type of employment (Minassian, 2010)

According to the table, it took 10 to 40 years for the early Armenian settlers to construct their own churches. This indicates that by subtracting an average number of years it takes to build a church from the church consecration date, the settlement date

specific to that location can be estimated. For instance, we can determine the settlement establishment date in the city of Yetem, CA (the Armenian word for Eden), then a rapidly growing Armenian community, by subtracting 10 from the church consecration date of 1911, arriving at the date of 1901 in line with our hypothesis. Thus, a map of the Armenian Church distribution and the dates the churches were built reflects the map of Armenian communities and the dates they were established.

Another illustration of the pattern hypothesis may be observed in the Providence example. There are two Armenian Churches in the state of Rhode Island, both located in Providence, and consecrated in 1914 and 1940 respectively. Based on this information, we can deduct that the Armenian population was concentrated in Providence. The 1934 Armenian population data supports the contention that the vast majority of Armenians did live in Providence and that the church data did actually provide an accurate image of the Armenian population concentration.

Area (In Rhode Island)	Number of Families in 1934
Providence	1395
Pawtucket & Central Falls	276
Cranston	127
East Providence	111
Woonsocket	51
North Providence	25

Table 12: Armenian population in Rhode Island (Karentz, 2004)

In addition, cemeteries can also be used to extract precise population data of a specific region. However, since Armenian graves must be located among thousands of other graves, the data-gathering process becomes very time consuming and cannot be applied on a large scale. For instance, a volunteer group of historians and genealogists has been identifying the locations of cemeteries and verifying headstone records throughout the state of Rhode Island from 1990 to 1999. As a result, 4,359 Armenian graves have been identified in thirty-three Rhode Island cemeteries and a data base containing the name of the deceased, his/her date of birth and death, and the grave location by cemetery was created for all those Armenians buried in Rhode Island (RI).

Cemetery Name (In Rhode Island)	Number of Armenian Graves (As of 1999)
North Burial, Providence	3215
Swan Point, Providence	344
Locust Grove, Providence	94
Grace Church, Providence	230
Pocasset, Cranston	18
State Institution, Cranston	22
Moshassuck, Central Falls	23
U.S. Veterans, Exeter	27
Union, North Smithfield	57
Walnut Hill, Pawtucket	229

All Saints, Warwick	11
Oak Hill, Woonsocket	7

Table 13: Number of Armenian graves (Karentz, 2004)

While other data sources, such as the number of the enlisted and draftees in the US armed forces, or telephone book listings, may be used to detect Armenian population in specific areas, finding Armenian migration patterns within the United States based on these data is not practical. Table 14 compares databases compiled using various data collection methods as a measure of data accuracy.

Rhode Island Armenian Population Estimates From Different Source Data Bases	Population
R.I. 1933-1934 Armenian Directory (Factored)	6355
R.I 1977 Armenian Telephone Book (Factored)	7061
Church Mailing Lists (2002, Factored)	7182
WWII Veterans Comparison (Ratio/Factored)	7172
2001 Armenian Deaths Comparison (Ratio/ Factored)	6804
U.S. 2000 Census...Armenian Ancestry Supplement	6677

Table 14: Armenian population estimate from various sources (Karentz, 2004)

8.1.4 The Lost Armenian Churches

As discussed earlier, wherever there is dispersion, there will be diaspora. By studying dispersion and its devastating outcomes it will be easier to understand why Armenian diaspora is so attached to its church. As many Armenians came to the United

States for a better life they saw their churches burnt down and destroyed. Armenians built their churches in the United States and used them to regain and save their cultural values. By looking at the data of lost Armenian churches it will become clear that Genocides and massacres are not just about killing a group of people but to destroy all their culture and identity. The number of churches that were destroyed as a result of the Genocide in Ottoman Empire a century ago is shown below to illustrate where the dispersion started. As a result of the Armenian Genocide and the massacres, around 4,000 clergymen, a great number of them graduates of the Monastery of Armash (Nicomedia) who had become the primates or diocesan bishops in the provinces of Western Armenia, were also massacred. There were 2,200 churches and monasteries in Western Armenia in 1912, the majority of which were burned, looted or destroyed (Parry, 2007).

However, not all churches have been destroyed. For instance, in the city of Merzifone an Armenian Church was confiscated and turned into a movie theater (Melkonian, 2005). The gathered data do not necessarily represent all lost churches. Included here is only the Armenian Apostolic Church data that does not include Destroyed Armenian Catholic, Evangelical, and Protestant churches in Turkey (House, 2011). In a word, a consequence of dispersion is crumbled churches, and the aftermath of diaspora is new churches, regardless of their geographical location.

Province	Number of churches destroyed
Adena	25
Amasya	15

Ankara	5
Antakya	7
Antep	4
Arapkir	19
Arganimadeni	10
Armash	2
Artvin	11
Balikesir	6
Bayburt	34
Beshiri	14
Bilecik	4
Bingol	11
Bitlis	99
Bolu	5
Bursa	11
Charsacak	93
Chemishgezek	20
Chungush	2
Dersim	28
Divrigi	25

Diyadin	4
Diyarbakir	11
Edirne	4
Egin	20
Elishkirt	6
Ergani	11
Erzincan	52
Erzurum	65
Giresun	1
Gumushane	4
Gurun	5
Harput	67
Hinis	19
Hoshap	14
Istanbul	44
Izmir	23
Izmit	50
Kastamonu	7
Kayseri	57
Kemah	14

Kighi	58
Konya	7
Kutahya	7
Lice	19
Mardin	3
Mush	148
Ordu	3
Palu	44
Pasinler	4
Pulumur	6
Rize	1
Samsun	44
Shebin Karahisar	32
Silvan	34
Sivas	110
Tercan	33
Tokat	32
Trabzon	89
Urfa	17
Van	322

Yozgat	51
Yusufeli	4
Zeytun	14
Total number	2,007

Table 15: Number of churches destroyed (House, 2011)

The ongoing mass destruction of all Armenian Churches following the Armenian Genocide has been recognized as Cultural Genocide. Below are four examples of the extent of the ongoing destruction.

1-Horomos Monastery built between the 10th-11th centuries.



Figure 5: The view of the Horomos Monastery before 1965 and in 1998 (Photo S. Karapetian).

2-Khtzkonk Monastery built between the 7th-13th centuries.



Figure 6: Early 20th century photo and after explosion in 1966 (Photo S. Karapetian).

3- Tekor temple, 5th century.



Figure 7: The view of the monument before 1912 and in 2000 (Photo S. Karapetian)

4- Moosh, SbArakelots (of the Holy Apostles) Monastery, 4th-15th centuries.



Figure 8: photo was taken early 1900's and in year 2000 (Photo S. Karapetian).



Figure 9: The Cathedral of Kars

The Cathedral of Kars, also known as the Holy Apostles Church, is a former Armenian Church in Kars, eastern Turkey. Built in the mid-10th century, it was converted into a mosque in 1579. In the 19th and early 20th century, it was converted into a Russian Orthodox and then into an Armenian Cathedral. In 1993, it was again converted into a mosque and is called Kumbet Mosque (Wikipedia).

The Armenian Committee of America reported that in July 2011, the House Foreign Affairs Committee adopted the Berman-Cicilline Amendment, with a vote of 43 to 1, calling on Turkey to return stolen Christian Churches and to end its repression of its Christian minority (ANCA).

“As spiritual shepherds of the Armenian faithful, proud stewards of our ancient heritage, and devoted servants in the cause of realizing our shared national aspirations, we welcome today's vote as a principled stand for religious freedom and a just demand for the rightful return of Christian churches throughout the biblical lands of present-day Turkey," said Archbishop AnoushavanTanielian, Vicar General of the Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Eastern United States.

In order to paint an image of the severity of the destruction in each province, an official report of the burnt down properties in the province of Adana, Turkey is shown in this chart. The number of people killed has been declared by the delegation of the Community Central Executive as 21,330 and by the consuls as 20,000, while the financial losses are declared by the Ottoman Bank to be 5,000,000 gold liras (Terzian, 2009).

Place of Atrocity	Church	School	Houses	Khan	Hotels	Factories	Farms	Cottages	Shops	Mills
Adana	6	5	1000	5	2	1	0	0	400	6
Tarsus	1	1	195	0	0	0	9	0	8	1
Sis	0	0	160	0	0	0	0	320	0	7
Hajin & Villages	1	3	610	0	0	0	13	660	21	9
Kars Pazar	0	0	139	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Odjaklu & Boukhar	4	7	1302	2	0	1	97	0	90	0
Youmourtalak	0	0	5	0	0	0	97	0	0	0
Eyri Boudjak	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Egbesh	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Osmanie	2	0	81	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Islahie	0	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misis	0	0	49	2	0	0	15	15	1	0
Hamidie	0	0	7	0	1	0	6	17	3	0
Davoudlar	0	0	6	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Hay-Giugh	0	0	37	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Indjirli	0	0	20	0	0	0	6	0	0	0
Palamount	0	0	76	0	0	0	4	0	0	0

Elvanlu	0	0	66	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	16	3752	14	3	2	253	1002	523	23

Table 16: The official report of destroyed properties in Adana Province (Terzian, 2009)

IX Discussion

Throughout the entire United States, both diocese and Prelacy churches have been relocated as the Armenian population relocated or expanded to various other regions. While studying and analyzing Armenian churches, I came across many churches that were subjected to the same process. Those churches that were relocated or consecrated for multiple times have been marked with a “*” in table 5. All of the data in this section was gathered from the history sections of the official Armenian Apostolic Church websites.

9.1.1 Eastern Diocese

The first structure of the Armenian Church of Holy Ascension was a former Methodist church on Bernum Avenue in Bridgeport, CT, purchased in 1931. In 1978, the church bought its next building on Huntington Avenue in Trumbull, CT, from the Berean Baptist Church.

The original edifice of the Armenian church of Holy Resurrection was at 11 Erwin Place in New Britain, CT and the subsequent one remains at 1910 Stanley St, New Britain, CT.

The Armenian Church of Holy Translators began as an official mission parish in April 1998. In recent years, as many families continued to move from the greater Boston and Worcester areas to the Metro West region, it was recognized that there was a need to develop a new spiritual community. In 2001, the Park St. Baptist Church in Framingham, MA was purchased and in October 2003, consecrated after renovations as the Armenian

Church of the Holy. This is also a great example of small communities having a small parish and then transforming it into a church as the population expands.

When a church is destroyed by fire and then undergoes reconstruction, the new structure has to be consecrated for the second time. Therefore, while the original Holy Resurrection Armenian church, purchased from St. Lucas Protestant Church, was destroyed by fire in 1960, the current one was built on the same site and consecrated in 1961. This signifies that if a church was consecrated in 1961, it may not be concluded that no Armenian church existed on that spot before that time period. Therefore, relying solely on church consecration dates is insufficient and reviewing each and every Church history is crucial to arrive at a solid conclusion.

The previous building of Holy Trinity Armenian Church was at 397 Shawmut Avenue in Boston, MA, and was purchased from the Episcopalian Church in 1921. The current site at 145 Brattle St. Cambridge, MA was bought in 1954 and consecrated in 1961.

The former building of Holy Trinity Armenian Church was at Marshall and Susquehanna Streets in Philadelphia, PA, from 1941 till 1964. After an arsonist burned down the church in 1964, a new church was rebuilt at 101 Ashmead Rd. Cheltenham, PA and consecrated in 1966.

The original building of St. Kevork Armenian Church on Bering Drive is now used by another church. This is an example of an Armenian Church building sold to another church. The Kevork parish purchased a rectory near the church in 1982. Another

example is the St. Leon Armenian Church structure, located at 135-143 Bloomfield Avenue in Paterson, NJ, which was bought in 1932 and then sold in 1965. St. Leon Church built its current facility in 1965 and remodeled in 1996.

The original church building of St. Mary Armenian Church was bought in Irvington, NJ, in 1949. In 1973, the church bought the Mt. Olive Church facility at its current site. The sanctuary was rebuilt after being destroyed by arson on March 26, 1980.

St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral was previously located at each of the following sites: 17th street (1918-1925), 30th Street (1926-1946), 20th Street (1947-1949), 314 East 35th Street (1949-1968), and 630 Second Ave, New York, NY in 1968.

Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church was located at the corner of Pike and Broad Streets from 1913 to 1917; on Pine St near Broad St from 1917 to 1923; in a large house at 6006 Walnut St. from 1925 to 1950; at 63rd and Lous St. from 1951 to 1961; and finally at its current site at 630 Clothier Rd, Wynnewood, PA.

Almost all churches in the Eastern Prelacy have undergone the same process and very few have remained at the same location untouched. Church relocation could be either a sign of gentrifications, or an indication that Armenians were constantly searching for better living conditions in better neighborhoods. Minimal activity was detected among the Western Prelacy and Diocese churches as few churches relocated. The fact that Armenian churches on the East Coast go through this many reconstructions and dislocations, while the churches on the West Coast remain static, might indicate that

Armenian communities on the West Coast of the United States are more stable than the communities on the East Coast.

X Conclusion

In this study, Armenian history was reviewed to acquire a better understanding of the Armenian diaspora and its unique characteristics in the United States and throughout the world. Since Armenians in the United States are in a very close relationship with their church and the church headquarters are outside of the United States, Armenian diaspora groups in other host lands, such as Iran, that contain the same characteristics were also analyzed.

The fact that Armenians immigrated to the United States a century ago and managed to hold on to their language may be ascribed to the influence of the Armenian Apostolic Church in preserving the ethnic group's identity. Armenian Apostolic Church ceremonies are conducted only in the Armenian language, which accentuates the role of language in this religion. In that regard, Orthodox Church characteristics were analyzed, and role of the Armenian Apostolic Church role became clearly evident.

The importance of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the existence of the community is confirmed by the analysis of 19 Armenian settlers in nine different states indicates. Using analysis Armenian Apostolic Churches in the United States and the dates they were consecrated, an Armenian immigration pattern can be detected.

The review of all 97 Armenian Apostolic Churches, their location, and the dates they were consecrated, leads to the conclusion that Armenian immigration started from both the East and West coasts of the United States in late 1800's and spread inward towards the mid-US. However, both coasts, especially the megalopolis areas, were still

significant settlements for the Armenian populations. As Armenians stopped farming and started moving to urban areas, new churches were built in more-densely populated areas such as Los Angeles, in lieu of Reedley and other less populated areas. The result of this study suggests that by locating Armenian Church structures, the Armenian population distribution can be discovered. Armenian immigration patterns can be mapped also based on the dates the churches were built or consecrated.

The review of the Armenian history and the presence of Armenians in other countries brought to light that the Armenian Apostolic Church is an important part of the Armenian community and plays a significant role in guiding and preserving the cohesion of this small group of people wherever they go. As a result, because of their similar characteristics and ideologies, analyzing one group in a host land such as the United States may lead us to understand their presence in other regions and countries as well. If this hypothesis can be tested and repeated with the same result in different countries and regions, then the analysis of the continuing Armenian diaspora can be deepened. In essence, studying and analyzing Armenian diaspora groups in other host lands may lead us to the solid conclusion that the Armenian immigration pattern is in direct correlation to the distribution of Armenian Apostolic Churches.

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