

**THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION'S FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM IN TURKEY,  
1925-1983**

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I am pleased to be here this morning to participate in this discussion of Turkish immigration and visitation to the United States and the growth of mutual understanding between the two peoples that have resulted. In particular I want to invite Turkish scholars to make use of a unique set of records at the Rockefeller Archive Center that document cultural, scientific and intellectual exchanges between the United States and Turkey throughout much of the twentieth century.

These are the records of the Rockefeller Foundation, a private foundation that was established in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller, the founder of the Standard Oil Company whose

personal wealth at the time was more than \$900 million. Before he died in 1937 Rockefeller had given away about \$540 million, much of it to organizations he established in education, medical research and public health. The Rockefeller Foundation was the largest and most ambitious of the philanthropic organizations he established, and it was meant to act on the world stage. Indeed, its purpose was to improve the well-being of mankind throughout the world. Throughout the twentieth century it sought to carry out its mission by providing war-time relief to people in distress; by promoting the advancement of knowledge in education, public health, the sciences, and the social sciences; by promoting understanding across cultures through the arts and scholarship in the humanities; and by funding research in the basic medical sciences and agricultural sciences. It provided financial support in these areas in two ways: by making grants to institutions - usually universities - for specific projects, and by providing fellowships to specific scholars and professionals from around the world to undertake further study in their chosen fields with the major researchers, thinkers, or practitioners in that field, often at leading universities in the United States or occasionally in Europe. In this way the foundation sought to promote the advancement of knowledge and develop a new generation of leaders in these disciplines. Between 1917 and 1970 the foundation awarded nearly 9,500 fellowships to three generations of scholars and researchers from around the world.<sup>1</sup>

This morning I will talk broadly about the work of the Rockefeller Foundation in Turkey and in particular about its fellowship program. My remarks build upon a paper that I wrote a few years ago with a colleague at Ege University, Murat Erdem, and which was published in *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Special Issue on 200 Years of Turkish-American Relations.<sup>2</sup>

The fellowship directory that the Rockefeller Foundation published in 1972 includes the names of 118 Turkish fellows. A thorough review of the foundation's records indicates that between 1925 and 1983, the Rockefeller Foundation provided fellowships that allowed a total of 155 Turks to undertake a period of study outside of their own country, most often in the United States. Two people working in public health -- Kamil Adil and Asuman Turer -- each received two fellowships from the foundation, so that the total number of fellowships awarded is 157. In a slightly shorter period, between 1929 and 1967, the Rockefeller Foundation made 115 grant appropriations totaling nearly \$2.4 million to institutions and individuals in Turkey for a variety of purposes. The Rockefeller Foundation thus invested substantial money and time toward the modernization of Turkish society in the twentieth century, working quietly behind the scenes, for the most part, to develop and support institutions in key segments of Turkish society: in public health, in medical care, in education, in the humanities for the advancement of the arts, and in the social sciences to help policy-makers better understand the forces that shape the economy and social and political relations.

### **Rockefeller Philanthropy in Turkey**

American charitable and philanthropic work in Turkey dates to 1820, when the first Christian missionaries from the United States arrived in present-day Izmir. By 1914 the work they began on behalf of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had grown to include seventeen major mission stations, nine hospitals, and 426 schools serving 25,000 students. Religious work among the Christian minorities, education, and general relief of distress and sickness occupied much of the missionaries' charitable efforts in Turkey during this time.<sup>3</sup> Between 1880 and 1920, however, intellectual and organizational changes

within the United States brought about a new kind of philanthropy, as a more scientific approach to charity and philanthropy emerged. A combination of factors -- the idea that the scientific method of observation and investigation could be applied to problems among and between human beings as well as to problems in the physical world; the rapidly accumulating fortunes of the new industrialists like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, and their experience with the new forms of business organization, the corporation and the trust -- contributed to the development of the privately endowed grant-making foundation in the early years of the twentieth century.

These new institutions did not replace the older religious-based charities, which continued their work. Instead, the new foundations helped create new avenues within the political economy of the U.S. by which private funds could have an impact upon social and political decision-making in a democracy. The creators of these new foundations gave them large sums of money -- usually in the form of stocks -- in an invested endowment; each year the income earned from these investments provided the spending capital for the foundation. The foundations often were managed by a board of trustees and daily operation was entrusted to a professional staff. Rather than serve to relief distress, as did most charities at the time, these new foundations took a scientific approach to social problems and sought to find cures to social ills rather than just treating the symptoms. By the 1920s, new foundations like the Rockefeller Foundation had become powerful and influential voices in education, health care, and other matters of public policy in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> During the 1920s, these changes in charity and philanthropy in the US were felt in Turkey, where the more scientific and secular approach to philanthropy met with greater approval from the leaders of the new Turkish republic than did the older model of Christian charity.

John D. Rockefeller's philanthropy spanned both the older tradition of religious philanthropy embodied by the missionaries and the newer model of corporate, scientific philanthropy. In Turkey, Rockefeller provided some support to Baptist missionary and relief work during the Ottoman period, and both John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the Rockefeller Foundation supported relief work among Greek and Armenian refugees after World War I.<sup>5</sup>

By the time he created the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913, John D. Rockefeller was well known for his support of the Baptist religion and Christian missionary work. When the Rockefeller Foundation was only two years old, leaders of Christian missionary work in Muslim Turkey tried to persuade the foundation to fund their work.<sup>6</sup> But the Rockefeller Foundation was devoted to secularism and science, and its leaders made a conscious effort to avoid religious issues in its work. The Christian missionary leaders argued that “Islam has, in all history, been the foe of intellectual advances upon the part of the people it governed and unprogressive in all modern measures for the preservation and promotion of health.”<sup>7</sup> But the officers of the new foundation were not interested in pointing fingers of blame for present conditions. Moreover, they recognized that associating themselves too closely with those who did harbor prejudices or spoke disparagingly of Islam would make it impossible for the RF to accomplish anything of value in Turkey. “The events of the past are to us unimportant,” wrote one RF official in a report on Turkey, “provided the prospects for the future appear promising.”<sup>8</sup> The issue of religion never surfaced as an explicit issue in foundation discussions of Turkey; rather than battling Islam, the officers of the RF focused on how to eradicate the influence of the French and Germans in the Turkish education and health care systems.

By the time Mustafa Kemal Atatürk proclaimed the new Turkish republic in 1923, the

Rockefeller Foundation was assuming its role as the leading American philanthropic foundation active on an international scale. The goals of both the new Turkey and the relatively young foundation seemed ready-made for one another. Atatürk's overriding goal was to modernize Turkey and all aspects of Turkish life. He proclaimed Turkey to be a secular state so as to diminish the influence of religion, which he viewed as an impediment to progress. Moreover, the tradition of the capitulations granted to foreign nationals under Ottoman rule and the political and economic maneuvering of European powers during and after the war served to intensify both Turkish nationalism and suspicion of Europeans, thus enhancing American prestige almost by default. "Turks are suspicious of all foreigners, but Americans have probably the best position," Admiral Mark Bristol, the U. S. High Commissioner in Turkey, told Selskar Gunn of the Rockefeller Foundation during his visit to Turkey in May 1925. As if to confirm this view, Gunn received a rare treat for a foreigner a few days later: an invitation to meet with the Prime Minister, Ishmet Pasha.<sup>9</sup>

As in many countries throughout the world, the RF entered into work in Turkey through its program in public health. As early as 1915, Americans familiar with Turkey were urging the foundation to undertake efforts to improve public health in the country. "Sanitarily, Turkey is in about as deplorable a condition as it can possibly be," one report noted. "For the protection of Europe and the West it is imperative that early steps be taken to improve the intellectual, moral, and sanitary conditions in this part of the world." "The need can scarcely be overstated," wrote an American doctor who had ten years of surgical experience in Turkey. "As a disseminator of disease, the country is a distinct menace to Europe and America."<sup>10</sup>

The foundation staff did not simply accept the bleak and disparaging assessments it

received from Americans associated with Christian missionary endeavors in Turkey. True to the spirit of science and progressive reform, it sent its own experts to survey conditions. In June 1921, and again in August 1922, Dr. Victor G. Heiser spent ten days in Constantinople, visiting charitable social welfare agencies and meeting with many people, including Admiral Bristol, who expressed great eagerness for the foundation to begin work in Turkey. Another foundation officer, Richard Pearce, visited in April 1924 and began to compile a report on “Medical Education in Turkey.” Not long after Pearce's visit the Turkish government extended an official invitation for the RF to send a representative to Turkey to begin work on public health. Throughout 1924 Admiral Bristol grew increasingly impatient with the foundation's cautious approach to Turkey, as officials continued to visit and compile reports but take no action. During his visit in 1925, Selskar Gunn began to develop firm plans for the RF's work.<sup>11</sup>

By 1926, the political situation had stabilized in Turkey, which helped resolve some of the foundation's reticence about working there. The direction of the foundation's work in Turkey had become clear as well: it would provide fellowships to enable Turks to study abroad, and it would work with the Ministry of Health to develop an institute of public health. The foundation also had found a man suitable for conducting work in Turkey, Dr. Ralph K. Collins of the foundation's International Health Division. Collins arrived in the country in February 1926 and spent the next several months traveling and obtaining information, issuing his own comprehensive report on “Public Health in Turkey” in September 1926. Collins worked in Turkey until 1940, and was thus the key figure in the foundation's work in public health in Turkey during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>12</sup>

The most important RF project in Turkey during this period was the development of the Central Institute of Hygiene in Ankara. The institute was to produce serum and vaccines, provide diagnostic laboratory services, and train personnel in public health work. The Rockefeller Foundation contributed \$80,000 for scientific equipment at the Institute and provided \$200,000 toward the construction and equipment of a Service School to carry out the Institute's educational work. In 1936 this school evolved into the School of Public Health, and Collins became its first dean.<sup>13</sup> The foundation recognized that nurses were an important component of the health care system, and in 1924 several RF representatives visited Turkey to investigate nursing practices and education. A number of nurses received fellowships to study nursing in the United States.<sup>14</sup>

Public health dominated the foundation's work in Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s, especially its fellowship program: 33 of the 44 fellowships awarded by the RF in Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s were in public health. The first three Turkish fellows began their fellowships in 1925. Zeki Nassir and Tevfik Halil arrived in the U.S. on August 8, 1925; both needed additional work in English before beginning their studies. Nassir studied public health at Harvard, but difficulties with the English language made him reluctant to take written exams. His work was “only fair,” noted one RF official, but “because of [the] importance [of his] position [in] Turkey, [we are] anxious [to] afford him every possible opportunity for development,” and he transferred to School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Even though he did not take exams there, either, the foundation did not consider him a failure, since he acquired an “enormous amount of information in public health work which will be valuable in connection with his duties” back home.<sup>15</sup> Halil similarly struggled with English at Johns Hopkins, but his advisor reported that

he was “very fond” of Halil, who seemed to have “natural technical ability.”<sup>16</sup> Mustafa Hakki began his fellowship in France, where he spent four months studying dermatology and syphilography in Paris before traveling to the U.S. One RF official who monitored the progress of the three fellows believed Hakki “profited least” from the experience. “For several months [he] suffered from a serious attack of nostalgia,” the official noted.<sup>17</sup>

The experiences of these first three fellows illustrate some of the problems as well as the flexibility of the program. The “nostalgia” that Hakki encountered was most probably the shock of being immersed in a new culture, and this proved difficult for many of the fellows. The cost of living and the differences in the urban landscape were challenges for some fellows. In 1962, for example, one social science fellow who had driven his family across the continent from New York to California reported to his foundation advisor that “it is not easy to get accustomed to the new environment. The public transportation is poor,” he reported, and because he “could only afford an apartment . . . five miles from the campus, he had no other choice then [sic] to purchase a used car,” which only increased his expenses.<sup>18</sup> Sometimes the difference in university structures and expectations of status created difficulties. Also in 1962 another social science fellow at Columbia University “found it difficult to attend courses as suggested by” his academic advisor; he held the rank of associate professor in Turkey and believed that he “should not be taking courses from” professors of similar or lower rank.<sup>19</sup> At least one fellow developed an ulcer that her foundation advisor attributed to the stress of the cultural change as well as difficulty with the language.<sup>20</sup>

Mastering the English language sufficiently to undertake course work was probably the most common problem faced by fellows. It was a common experience for fellows to be

required to take English classes before enrolling in course work in their fields. For the most part, their hosts recognized the problem and appreciated efforts to overcome the obstacle. The following entry on the fellowship recorder card of Kenan Fevzi, a public health fellow (1931-1933), typifies many assessments: “Scientific ability as shown by his accomplishments at Hopkins was very good. Upon his arrival he knew no English and although he was required to spend two months studying English before he was permitted to register at School of Hygiene, throughout major portions of his studies he was necessarily laboring under a language handicap. His real ability is far in excess of that indicated by his school record. Is quite resourceful and decidedly industrious. If given opportunity would rapidly develop into a real leader in field of his chosen activities. Reliable. Has very good personality and was able to adapt himself to varying conditions and situations in this country.”<sup>21</sup>

For a few, the language problem was insurmountable. One public health fellow in 1929 found English too difficult and asked to finish his fellowship by studying infectious diseases in Paris, since he knew French better than English; his request was granted and the fellowship was later considered to be successful in preparing him for his work in Turkey. The following year a 21-year-old nurse had her fellowship terminated largely because of language problems.<sup>22</sup>

The RF's flexibility in managing the program also was evident in the experience of the earliest fellows. Although the foundation established rules and guidelines for its fellowship program, the focus of the program was to provide the fellow with a beneficial and enriching experience that would enable the fellow to return work in Turkey with greater knowledge and ability. Poor performance in coursework did not necessarily prevent a fellowship from being renewed if a fellow's RF and academic advisors believed the fellow

was profiting from the information. Accordingly, fellows were allowed to change their place of study if they felt another program offered more learning opportunities related to the fellow's position in Turkey. In short, the foundation did as much as possible to accommodate the fellows and their Turkish sponsors.

One way in which the foundation tried to accommodate its fellows was by providing travel opportunities to see as many examples of training methods and working operations as possible. After receiving his M.S. degree in sanitary engineering from the Harvard School of Engineering in June 1938, Memduh Olcer embarked on a three-month field study program that took him half-way across the U.S., from Boston to Albany, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, New Philadelphia and Columbus, Ohio, Detroit, Lansing, Chicago, Indianapolis, Louisville, Nashville, Jackson, Mississippi, and Montgomery, Alabama.<sup>23</sup>

A more typical example is the case of Dr. Cemaleddin Arifi Or. Dr. Or had earned his M.D. in 1924 from the Medical School at the University of Istanbul, and at the time of his appointment as a fellow in 1935 he was a 37-year-old district medical officer at the Model Rural Health Center in Etimesut in Ankara. Dr. Or arrived in New York on board the *SS Aquitania* on August 20, 1935, and arrangements were made for him to study English until he acquired sufficient command of the language to begin coursework at Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene in Baltimore. By late September he had entered a limited program at Johns Hopkins, and a month later was reported to have made "remarkable progress with English. When he arrived in the U.S.," one RF officer wrote to Collins, "he was totally unable to speak or understand oral English, although he did have a reading knowledge of the language. He now speaks English very well." His grades in his laboratory courses were not outstanding, but his devotion to learning and his initiative impressed his advisor, who noted

that in addition to his own courses, he “is spending three mornings a week observing teaching in the Nursing School,” since in Turkey “nursing education was just beginning to be developed . . . and . . . he felt it essential that he should acquire as much information as possible regarding nursing education and public health nursing while in this country.”<sup>24</sup>

Dr. Or received the certificate in public health from Johns Hopkins in June, 1936, and then embarked on program of fieldwork. He spent six weeks in Nashville assigned to the State of Tennessee's Health Department, doing local and county health work. He then spent time in Washington, D.C., where he visited the National Institute of Health and the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor. He spent the last week of July in New York City at the East Harlem Nursing and Health Service, which hosted several Turkish nursing fellows. Or left New York on August 2, 1936, on the *SS Bremen* with plans to visit rural health centers in Hungary and Yugoslavia on his way back to Turkey. Or returned to his job at Etimesut, where his work won praise from Kemal Ataturk during a visit in 1938.

With the outbreak of war in Europe, the foundation's work in that part of the world was disrupted as priorities changed and funding was redirected to other parts of the world, such as South America. Collins left Turkey in 1940, and two Turkish fellows studying in the U.S. -- sanitary engineering fellow Tarik Bilginer and public health administration fellow Cemal Ali Kiper, both of whom arrived in the US. in September 1939 -- were stranded there by the war, unable to return home until 1945.

Even before World War II ended, in March 1945, the new Minister of Health and Social Assistance, Dr. Sadi Konuk, wrote to the foundation to invite its personnel to return to Turkey. But the postwar phase of the foundation's work in Turkey involved much more than public health. With the advent of the Cold War, new areas of endeavor within Turkey now

received support from the Rockefeller Foundation, including the arts and humanities, the social sciences, and medical education. The expanded scope of RF support reflected Turkey's more prominent status as an important American ally and buffer against the spread of communism. The number of RF fellowships and grants awarded to Turks increased dramatically, as Table 3 illustrates. Nearly 40% of all of the Turkish fellowships awarded in the six decades the program was active were awarded in the 1950s, and more than half of all awards (57%) were awarded in the two decades of the 1950s and 1960s.

The social sciences figured more prominently in the fellowship program during the 1950s and 1960s, receiving thirty-two of the ninety fellowships awarded in those years (35.5%). Eighteen economists and eleven political scientists were among the thirty-two social science fellowship recipients in these two decades. Academics in these disciplines, and journalists like Bulent Ecevit, were seen as strategic members of society who would communicate to others the lessons they learned about Western economies, political systems, and traditions of free speech, a free press, and personal liberty. To make these lessons explicit within Turkey, the RF supported the development of American Studies programs at the University of Ankara and Istanbul University as part of its new emphasis on "area studies" within its humanities program to promote intercultural understanding.<sup>25</sup>

One measure of Turkey's increasing importance to the foundation was the new attention devoted to it by the RF's humanities program. Turkey received no grants or fellowships in the humanities prior to its increased strategic political importance in the 1950s, but during the Cold War the humanities division, in the person of the division's associate director, John Marshall, took up work in Turkey in a significant way. Marshall made annual trips to Istanbul and Ankara between 1951 and 1958. He became the RF program officer

most knowledgeable about Turkey and essentially was the RF's point man in Turkey, visiting people and institutions relevant to the social science and medical science programs as well as the humanities division. Marshall appears to have had good and sometimes close relationships with nearly all of the fifteen Turks who received fellowships in the humanities during the 1950s. These fellows included Tunc Yalman, who studied play writing and the operation of professional theatres in the U.S.; Vedat Gunyol, who studied literature and history at Harvard; Tevfik Metin And, who used his fellowship to study dance criticism in New York and also began work on several books; Leyla Goren, who completed the requirements for a doctorate at Harvard and planned to begin an American Studies program at Istanbul University upon her return to Turkey; and the actress Ayse Yildiz Kanter, who used her fellowship in 1955-56 to study methods of production in the American theater. Marshall saw her performance in the "Rainmaker" in March 1957, and with some pride he reported hearing comments that her acting "has greatly improved, and the improvement is attributed by all to her American stay."<sup>26</sup>

It was rare for a fellow from Turkey not to return to Turkey and make his or her career there, but two of the sixteen humanities fellows from Turkey apparently left Turkey to make their careers in electronic music composition - Ilhan Kemalettin Mimaroglu and Bulent Arel. Arel was director of music broadcasting at Radio Ankara when he received a year-long fellowship in 1959 to study and compose electronic music at Columbia and Princeton universities. Through the contacts he developed, he remained in the U.S. until October 1962, working in the electronic music labs first at Columbia and then at Yale. He returned to Turkey and a position at Middle Eastern Technical University, but, according to the

foundation's information, soon accepted a position at a studio for electronic music in Utrecht in the Netherlands.<sup>27</sup>

Ilhan Kemalettin Mimaroglu received a fellowship in music criticism in 1955-1956, and spent most of his time in New York at the *New York Herald Tribune* and studying music and musicology at Columbia University. He and his work impressed Marshall greatly. Mimaroglu spent the last month of his fellowship in London, Paris, Rome and Naples, and when he returned to Turkey he wrote and published “a musical travelogue” that he dedicated to Marshall. Upon its publication, Marshall wrote to Mimaroglu in praise of his work. “I might as well tell you,” Marshall wrote, “that I can recall few young people who have come here from abroad who seemed to have a mind as well prepared as yours to grasp and to understand what you saw and heard. To have someone like you report on your experience in this way for your own people is a source of deep gratification to me both as an officer of the Foundation and as an American citizen.” Marshall continued his contacts with Mimaroglu and followed his career. In October 1958 Marshall noted that Mimaroglu was having “great difficulty keeping in touch with [the] world of music outside of Turkey and cannot get necessary supplies [such as] records [and] phonograph needles.” As a result he was seeking work in Europe or the United States, a potential move that Marshall disliked but understood. By 1961 Mimaroglu was seeking the foundation's assistance to pursue studies in electronic music, and by the end of 1964 foundation officers noted that he was devoting “almost all of his time to electronic music composition, using the facilities of the Columbia-Princeton Electronec Musik Center” in New York City.<sup>28</sup>

While Arel and Mimaroglu might be rare examples of Turkish fellows ultimately

pursuing careers outside of Turkey, their cases illustrate both the degree to which the foundation maintained contact with fellows during their time in the U.S., and how closely the foundation followed the trajectory of the careers of former fellows.

Grants to two institutions in Turkey illustrate both the foundation's approach to the modernization of Turkey and the significance the foundation placed upon Turkey's role in the region during the Cold War. The largest RF grants received by Turkish institutions during the 1950s and 1960s went to two very different institutions: an American missionary school, Robert College in Istanbul, and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ankara, a faculty being developed by a physician who had studied in the U.S., Ihsan Dogramaci.<sup>29</sup>

The trustees of Robert College received two large grants during this period. The first and largest was a grant of \$350,000 in December 1956 to be used over a ten-year period to help train Turkish personnel to serve as faculty for the school and for the American College for Girls. Two years later Robert College received a five-year grant of \$115,000 to use in developing general education in the humanities at the two schools.<sup>30</sup>

Proud of its status as “the first American college to be established outside the United States,” Robert College by the late 1950s was seeking to strengthen its curriculum and its faculty and to play a more influential role in Turkish higher education. Officials were convinced that the college provided a valuable “type of instruction and a kind of college community life [based] on the American pattern” that Turkish universities could not provide, with “small classes, close student-faculty relations, an informal teaching-learning approach, [and] a humanistic emphasis.”

The college trustees thus sought support from the Rockefeller Foundation for a program that would enable it to improve its faculty by training and hiring “gifted young

Turks.” These talented men and women would be recruited from various fields and their further education through the doctorate at American or British universities would be financed by Robert College, with foundation funds. Upon the completion of their degrees they would be required to return to Robert College and teach for three years, after which they would be free to seek employment elsewhere if they desired. The grant of \$350,000 was expected to finance the training of fifteen new faculty in this manner.

The second grant to Robert College, in April 1958, involved support for the development of courses in the humanities that would focus on the interplay of Eastern and Western civilizations. Demand for such courses that avoided the biases of alien cultures was emerging throughout the Middle East, the foundation's officers argued, but “little or nothing has as yet been done in the area to provide an integrated educational experience which would help students in placing themselves first in the area’s own traditions and then in relation to the modernization that has taken place in large measure through Western influence.” The foundation hoped that this grant, as well as the work of humanities scholars from Turkey who had received foundation fellowships, would help address this problem not only at Robert College but throughout Turkey “and possibly even in the Arab states.”

While Robert College received substantial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the person in Turkey who inspired the most foundation support during the 1950s and 1960s clearly was Dr. Ihsan Dogramaci, who came to the foundation’s attention in 1955 as a newly appointed professor and head of the Department of Child Health and Pediatrics at the University of Ankara Faculty of Medicine. That year he received a small grant that enabled him to visit departments of pediatrics and institutes of maternal and child health in Mexico and the United States. Between 1956 and 1967, programs with which Dogramaci was

associated received more than one million dollars in grants from the Rockefeller Foundation.<sup>31</sup>

Dogramaci clearly impressed foundation officials as someone with the energy, drive and determination necessary to make an impact upon medical education in Turkey. His “charismatic leadership, energy, enthusiasm, and professional competence” earned their praise and inspired their confidence in him. Foundation staff discussions of Dogramaci described him as a devoted physician concerned about the extremely high infant mortality in Turkey, determined to address the problem on a long-term basis by improving the education of pediatricians and other medical personnel, overthrowing the old German medical education system in favor of a teaching program based on modern American concepts and standards of teaching and research.

His was a program that the foundation readily embraced. Foundation officers were impressed that in establishing the Research Institute of Child Health, Dogramaci had persuaded the city of Ankara to provide land for it and the national government to finance its construction. The foundation believed that his efforts could create “the environment for a reorganization of medical education not only in Turkey, but . . . for other Middle Eastern countries” as well, since about ten percent of the medical students in Ankara come from Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Afghanistan. The foundation supported Dogramaci's work enthusiastically. Between 1956 and 1964, the Dogramaci's projects received three grants totaling \$415,000, and in 1964 the foundation provided \$225,000 for the development of the Hacettepe Faculty of Medicine under Dogramaci's direction. Dogramaci's involvement also was a significant factor in the foundation's willingness to provide \$110,000 for a three-year period beginning in 1962 to support the educational programs of the new School of Nursing

and Health Sciences at the University of Ankara.<sup>32</sup> In early 1967 Dogramaci persuaded the foundation to grant the Hacettepe Science Center \$250,000 for use over a four-year period to develop family planning clinics for research, training, and demonstration in the field of population control.<sup>33</sup>

As one might expect, given the foundation's respect for his work and his judgment, Dogramaci became an important figure in recommending candidates for foundation fellowships in the medical sciences, and many candidates from programs with which he was associated received fellowships.

As these grants and fellowships suggest, the RF found institutions and individuals within Turkey who shared its goal of modernizing various aspects of Turkish life. The foundation was fairly traditional in its grant-making in Turkey during the 1950s and 1960s. Much of its funding went for medicine and public health and university-based programs in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. But as the 1960s came to a close, the foundation's program in Turkey was in decline as the foundation itself went through internal changes and agricultural development came to dominate its work. As early as 1966 foundation staff were thinking of expanding upon the successes of its Mexican Agricultural Program and the Green Revolution that its scientists had created with an agricultural research and demonstration program for the Near East and Africa. In 1969 the Rockefeller Foundation entered into a formal agreement with the Turkish government to locate its Middle Eastern Wheat Program in Turkey with assistance from the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). By July 1970 the foundation had established an agricultural sciences field office in Ankara under the direction of Bill C. Wright,<sup>34</sup> and the newest trend in the fellowship

program was toward the agricultural sciences, which received all of the Turkish fellowships in the 1970 and 1980s.

For the Rockefeller Foundation in Turkey, technical work toward the improvement of agriculture replaced work in the humanities, the social sciences, and medical education after the mid 1960s as priorities and programs within the foundation changed. But the effort to develop in Turkey an agricultural project that would be significant for the entire region is reminiscent of the hopes of RF officers that their support of both the Robert College educational programs and Dogramaci's reform efforts in medical education would achieve regional significance in the Middle East.

Finally, by way of conclusion, let me say that many of the foundation's fellowship recorder cards note that the fellow expressed his or her -- by my count only 21 of the fellows were women -- appreciation for the fellowship at the end of their experience. For example, in June 1944 while in the U.S. as a Turkish governmental delegate to a conference, Kasim Gulek visited the foundation's office "to express his deep appreciation to the RF for the fellowship aid." He had been studying in the U.S. for three years when he received a fellowship in 1931 that enabled him to study in Europe for two years. He told the RF that he attributed his "rise in public affairs" to his fellowship.<sup>35</sup>

But for the numerous expressions of gratitude and clear indications of professional progress as a result of Rockefeller Foundation fellowships, there are occasional stories of fellows who left their fields of study or who encountered other obstacles to success. One such case is that of Dr. Zeki Raghil Yalim, a fellow in public health in 1926-1928. When foundation official John M. Weir met him in May 1958, Yalim was professor and head of the Institute of Hygiene at the University of Istanbul. Weir notes that Yalim "has worked as the

Associate Professor ever since 1926 under an elderly and completely incompetent Geheimrat. He has continued to do considerable work in the field of tuberculosis during this period, but as Associate Professor has been unable to stimulate any good teaching program. . . . It was rather pitiful,” Weir continued, “to see this man who has been very well trained but who is now past his most productive age, trying to build up a department which he could have established so well thirty years ago had he been given the opportunity.” Yalim, it seems, was a victim of the inefficient educational system that the foundation hoped to change in the long run. Yet, as Weir notes, Yalim never lost his drive and energy: “A clue to this man's energy and determination is found in the fact that he has personally analyzed and hand tabulated 36,000 death certificates from Istanbul.”<sup>36</sup>

This incomplete and one-sided review of the historical record of the Rockefeller Foundation's work in Turkey leaves unanswered many questions about the legacy of this involvement, questions that I hope scholars in Turkey will help answer. Understanding how Turkish fellows and grant recipients approached the opportunities afforded them by Rockefeller assistance, and the impact of this support on their ideas, their attitudes, their work and the trajectory of their careers, is the next step in assessing the legacy of American foundation philanthropy in Turkey.

**Table 1. ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION APPROPRIATIONS FOR TURKEY**

<u>Program</u>	<u>Total \$*</u>	<u>% of Total \$</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Medical Sciences	992,615	41.7	24	20.9
Arts and Humanities	792,347	33.3	59	51.3
Public Health	333,710	14.0	9	7.8
Social Sciences	139,995	5.9	19	16.5
Nursing	111,275	4.7	2	1.7
Natural Sciences	10,400	0.4	2	1.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,380,342</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>99.9</b>

\*Note; These totals do not include expenditures for fellowships.

Source: Grant Actions in Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 805, boxes 1-14.

**Table 2. MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY OF TURKISH RF FELLOWS**

<u>Field</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Public Health	42	26.7
Social Sciences	38	24.2
Medical Research & Education	37	23.6
Agricultural Sciences	24	15.3
Humanities	16	10.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>157</b>	

Source: Fellowship Recorder cards, RFA, and *Directory of Fellowships and Scholarships, 1917-1970* (New York: Rockefeller Foundation, 1972), and annual reports.

**Table 3. TURKISH ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION FELLOWS BY DECADE**

PROGRAM	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	Total
Agricultural Sciences	0	0	0	0	5	13	6	24
Humanities	0	0	0	15	1	0	0	16
Medical Research & Education	4	2	2	22	7	0	0	37
Public Health	15	18	1	8	0	0	0	42
Social Sciences	1	4	1	17	15	0	0	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	20	24	4	62	28	13	6	157

Source: Fellowship Records cards, RFA, and *Directory of Fellowships and Scholarships, 1917-1970* (New York: Rockefeller Foundation, 1972), and annual reports.

## ENDNOTES

1. The Rockefeller Foundation, *Directory of Fellowships and Scholarships, 1917-1970* (New York: Rockefeller Foundation, 1972), pp. vii, ix.
2. Kenneth W. Rose and Murat Erdem, "American Philanthropy in Republican Turkey: The Rockefeller and Ford Foundations," in *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Special Issue on 200 Years of Turkish-American Relations, No. 31 (2000/2), pp. 131-157.
3. Roger R. Trask, *The United States Response to Turkish Nationalism and Reform, 1914-1939*, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1971, pp. 4, 9-10.
4. For a general overview of the history of philanthropy in the United States, see Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960, 1988). On the ways in which foundations alter the landscape of social and political decision-making, see David C. Hammack, 'Foundations in the American Polity, 1900-1950', in Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, ed., *Philanthropic Foundations: New Scholarship, New Possibilities*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 44.
5. Rockefeller Family Archives, Record Group 2, Office of the Messrs Rockefeller, World Affairs series, box 41, folder 356, contains a folder entitled "Near East Relief Committee" that contains material covering the years 1896-1925. The earliest material there is several letters dated March 1896 from Frederick D. Greene of the National Armenian Relief Committee to John D. Rockefeller, who gave a total of about \$3,000 toward Armenian relief throughout 1896. Another body of material in the folder documents appeals to John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (JDR Jr.) during the First World War, with related correspondence between JDR Jr.'s office and the officers of the Rockefeller Foundation, in which RF officials report on the RF's contributions and attitude toward relief work in the region. The Rockefeller Foundation gave a total of about \$610,000 to the Committee on Armenian and Syrian Relief, its officials reported to JDR Jr., and JDR Jr. appears to have given about \$22,500 during 1916-1918, but thereafter both the RF and the Rockefeller Family Office preferred to give through the Red Cross or Herbert Hoover's relief administration. On the RF and relief work, see the Rockefeller Foundation Archives, unpublished "Rockefeller Foundation History, Source Material", which contains a section on War Relief (Volume 4) that provides a narrative summary of the Foundation's early work. Part IX, "War in Europe and the First War Relief Commission (1914-1915)" includes a section entitled "Turkey, December 1914-August 1915", pp. 899-919, and Part X, "The Second War Relief Commission (1916-1917)" includes a section entitled "Renewed Efforts in Turkey", pp. 1015-1034. The documents upon which this summary is based are located in the RFA, Record Group 1.1, series 100 N, boxes 76-77, which include several folders on Turkish Relief.
6. In March of 1915 a committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions submitted to the RF a thirty-page statement of conditions in Turkey and a request for aid. Given its experience and record of accomplishment, the American Board offered to place at the disposal of the RF 'the experience and services' of its 200 missionaries and its network of colleges, schools, and hospitals in Turkey. The Board proposed that the RF

support its work with an annual grant of \$375,000 and a one-time grant of just over a million dollars to upgrade existing facilities and to establish three new hospitals and three new agricultural schools. Letter from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to Jerome D. Greene, Secretary of the Rockefeller Foundation, March 2, 1915, pp. 1, 6, 7-8, 26-28, RFA RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 3, RAC.

7. Letter from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to Jerome D. Greene, Secretary of the Rockefeller Foundation, March 2, 1915, pp. 1, 6, 7-8, 26-28, RFA RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 3, RAC.

8. Selskar Gunn wrote the "In Conclusion" chapter of Ralph Collins's 1926 report, "Public Health in Turkey". The quote is on p. 141. On Gunn's authorship of the final chapter, see Gunn to F.F. Russell, September 14, 1926. Both the report and Gunn's letter are located in RFA, RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 1.

9. During their meeting, Gunn explained the foundation's policy of "working only with the government and said that if [the foundation] should send somebody" to Turkey, that person should be "identified with the Ministry of Health". The prime minister's "eyes lit up" in approval at this statement, Gunn reported: "He said that he understood and was even sure that we were not involved in any political propaganda." Selskar M. Gunn, "Diary of a Visit to Turkey", May 5-13, 1925, RFA, RG 6.1, series 1.1, box 37, folder 458.

10. Prudential Committee of the American Board to Greene, March 2, 1915, p. 5, RFA RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 3; A.R. Hoover to Ernest C. Meyer, May 18, 1917, RFA Record Group 5, Series 1.2, box 56, folder 820. See also A.R. Hoover to George S. Vincent, July 16, 1917, and James L. Barton to Jerome D. Greene, June 25, 1915, sending Greene a copy of Alden R. Hoover's thesis at the Medical College of the University of Iowa, "The Status of Preventive Medicine in Turkey with Particular Reference to the Control of Epidemics", RFA RG 1.1, series 805, folder 1, box 3. Hoover was a medical missionary in Turkey for the American Board. In his thesis he elaborated upon the notion that the country's problems stemmed from Islam: "The people show a stolid indifference amounting in many instances to an almost hopeless sort of despair of ever attaining to anything but his present plane of existence, . . . Most potent of all, is this belief in fatalism, a predestination which man is unable to change in any way. If Allah so wills, it is vain, and contrary to Allah, to attempt to change the course of events". He argued that this fatalism has consequences in both the military and civil medical organizations, and represented "the missing link between organization and execution, a holding of office rather than a rigid performance of duty, a serving the desk rather than hustling to clean up unhygienic homes and cities, a discussing of the problems of public health rather than the actual accomplishment, until with all the paraphernalia of organization we see little actually being done". Hoover, "Status of Preventive Medicine in Turkey", pp. 16, 17, 20.

11. RFA, RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 3-4. Bristol was anxious for public health work especially because many Americans sent to the new capital of Ankara came down with malaria; he was also concerned because while the RF delayed sending representatives to

Turkey, the Turks continued to seek training in Germany, rather than from the U.S. Bristol also was personally annoyed by the inordinate delay because he felt that he had put his own prestige on the line to secure an official invitation from the Turkish government for the RF to work in Turkey. See especially Bristol to Vincent, December 19, 1924; RFA 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 3.

12. Collins's report is located in RFA, RG 1.1, series 805, box 1, folder 1. Collins joined the International Health Board of the RF in July 1924. Born in Trinidad, Colorado in 1893, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Kansas State University in 1919 and his M.D. from the Johns Hopkins University Medical School in 1922. He was an intern at the New Haven Hospital, 1922-23 and then a resident at Yale Medical School in 1923-24. In 1924-25 he served at various training stations for the International Health Board and organized county health departments in Alabama. In 1925 he moved to the Paris office of the IHB, and in 1926 he began fieldwork for the IHB in both Turkey and Bulgaria. He died in the U.S. on October 1, 1940. Collins's RF personnel file and his RF Locator File record basic biographical information and his service to the IHB.

13. On the foundation's public health work in Turkey, see RFA, RG 6.1, Paris Field Office, Series 1.1, Prewar Correspondence, boxes 36-37, folders 443-461; RG 5, International Health Division, Series 1.2, Correspondence, Series 805; and RG 1.1, Series 805, box 1, folders 8-12, and RG 1.2, Series 805, box 1, folders 5-9.

14. See RFA, RG 1.1, Series 805, box 1, folders 5-7; RG 6.1, Series 1.1, box 37, folders 457, 459, and 461; and Fellowship Recorder Cards for Turkey.

15. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Barker, Zeki Nassir," RFA.

16. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Sunac, Tevfik Halil," RFA.

17. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Hakki, Dr. Moustafa," RFA.

18. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Ulman, A. Haluk." RFA.

19. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Daver, Bulent," RFA.

20. See RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Cetin, Dr. Turkan." RFA.

21. See entry for 6/13/33 on the RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Fevzi, Dr. Kenan," RFA.

22. See RF Fellowship Recorder Cards for "Berkin Sevket, Tahsin," and "Omer, Miss Samiye," RFA.

23. RF Fellowship Recorder card for "Olcer, Memduh," RFA.

24. RF Fellowship Recorder Card for "Or, Dr. Cemaleddin, Arifi," RFA.

25. See RFA, RG 1.2, Series 805 R, box 8, folders 76-77, and boxes 10-11, folders 102-111. Recipients of RF fellowships included four Americanists in literature – Leman Yolac Fotos, Ahmet Edip Uysal, Lelya M. Goren, and Necla Bengul – and one American historian, Halil Inalcik. See the Fellowship Recorder Cards for Turkey, RFA.

26. See the respective Fellowship Recorder Cards, RFA, especially that of “Akcan, Mrs. Ayse Yildiz.” John Marshall (1903-1980) was born in Portland, Maine and educated at Harvard, where he majored in English (BA, 1925; MA, 1928) and also taught (1928-30) before becoming the first executive secretary of the Medieval Academy of America (1926-33) and editor of publications for the American Council of Learned Societies (1931-33). He joined the RF humanities division in 1933 and from 1959 to 1970 was resident director of the RF’s study and conference center at the Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio, Italy. [John Marshall Biography File, RFA, especially ‘John Marshall Tells of Life at RF’s Italian Study Center’, *RF Staff Newsletter*, February 1965.]

27. RF Fellowship Recorder Card for “Arel, Bulent,” RFA.

28. RF Fellowship Recorder Card, “Mimaroglu, Ilhan Kemalettin,” RFA.

29. Dogramaci was the only person from the Near East among the “small number of friends of the Foundation throughout the world” who were offered a visiting lectureship in the U.S. in conjunction with the RF’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. [See the exchange of letters between Dogramaci and Maier, December 1962-February 1963, RFA, RG 1.2, Series 200A, box 162, folder 1468.] Dogramaci was born in 1915 to a wealthy family in a small town in northern Iraq. Educated in Beirut, he studied medicine at the University of Istanbul School of Medicine (MD 1938). He then became a protégé of Dr. Albert Eckstein, head of the pediatrics department at Numune Hospital in Ankara (1938-40) and worked in Baghdad (1940-44) before pursuing further study in the U.S. (1944-47) at Boston Children’s Hospital and St. Louis Children’s Hospital and their affiliated universities, Harvard and Washington. He returned to Turkey in 1947 and joined the teaching staff at Ankara University, where he began to implement the wide-ranging program of reform that caught the RF’s attention. On Dogramaci’s life and career, see Sir Horace Phillips, *Ihsan Dogramaci: A Remarkable Turk* (York, England: Wilton 65, 1997).

30. See RFA, RG 1.2, Series 805, box 2, folders 12-13, “Robert College-Turkish Faculty Training”, and box 9, folders 89-91, “Robert College-Humanities”. The quotes that follow are from the grant actions.

31. See RFA, RG 1.2, Series 805, box 3, folder 21, and boxes 4-5, folder 32-44.

32. For the School of Nursing, see RFA, RG 1.2, Series 805, box 5-6, folders 49-52.

33. RFA, RG 1.2, Series 805, box 2, folders 15-16. These files show evidence of Dogramaci’s political savvy. In 1965 the Turkish parliament narrowly repealed its anti-contraception laws and passed a Family Planning Law that established a national family planning program to be conducted through the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance. The

foundation noted with pride that a key figure in changing the government's policy, Dr. Nusret Fisek, had been a foundation fellow. But vociferous opposition to family planning and population control made progress in implementing the program slow. Dogramaci believed that his medical center and its clinics were well suited to advance the family planning program, but he knew that including a line for such a program in a budget that must be approved by Parliament would spell political trouble. Thus, he turned to the Rockefeller Foundation for funds for equipment and for the salaries of doctors and nurses who would work on family planning projects at the Ankara and Erzurum medical centers and at a clinic in the Gulveren section of Ankara. For their part, foundation officials were mystified as to why Dogramaci was making such a request, since he usually had no trouble securing local funds for such items, but when he explained the delicate political situation during a meeting with a foundation official in April 1966, the situation became clear, and foundation support was forthcoming. Dogramaci's ability to maneuver within the political system to advance his projects was no small part of his success as an innovative reformer, institution-builder, and educational leader. Dogramaci went on to create two universities in Ankara – Hacettepe (1967) and Bilkent (1984) – and from 1981 until his resignation in 1992 served as president of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). See Phillips, *Ihsan Dogramaci: A Remarkable Turk* (1997).

34. For the Turkish Wheat Improvement Program, see RFA box R2002 (unprocessed material), and the Ankara field office files (also unprocessed) and RF annual reports for 1969 and 1970.

35. RF Fellowship Recorder Card, "Nebiolu, Dr. Kasim Rifat - now called Kasim Gulek," RFA.

36. RF Fellowship Recorder Card, "Raghib, Dr. Zeki" who was later to be known as Dr. Zeki Raghib Yalim.