

7 IV 1960

Committee on Social Thought
University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Ill., USA

Dear Professor Gökbilgin,

I understand from the editors of the Encyclopedia of Islam that I am to write on the "religion and early history" of the Druzes, while you are to cover the "Ottoman period". Some time ago I wrote to the editors asking them to clarify the exact division of labor they envisaged at certain points, and they suggested that I write you directly and that we agree between ourselves. I am sorry to be so slow in writing this letter; but I hope you will find my present suggestions appropriate and feasible.

Though it is you that will cover the "Ottoman period", I am assuming that "religion", even in the Ottoman period, is in my province. On the other hand, I am hoping you will take up all the other aspects of Druze life in the Ottoman period which were covered in the original E.I. article--for instance, folkways, especially dress; and the bibliography of travellers' narratives. These are not properly religion, they do fall in the Ottoman period, and (above all) I dare say you know more about them than I do.

While I am covering "religion" under the Ottomans, I wonder if you could extend your treatment of "history" somewhat earlier? Here I am more hesitant in my suggestion, but in thinking of where "early history" ought to end, it seemed to make sense. In the article in the İslâm Ansiklopedisi, you start only with the nineteenth century; you will in any case have to start much earlier, and it occurred to me that if you covered all the material in Mr. Tekindag's "Dürzilerin tarihi" section, including the first four paragraphs, this would probably not mean much extra effort, and would probably make for a more continuous and consistent handling of the historical material. I would stop, then, at the end of the first generation--with the retirement of Bahâ'-al-dîn Muqtanâ. It is, after all, the history of this first generation only that goes well with the more religious side; again, I dare say, you would do a better job than I on the history between Muqtanâ and the Ottomans.

I hope you will agree to this interpretation of our assignments.

Sincerely,

Marshall G. S. Hodgson

Perhaps I should send a copy of this to the editor; but that can wait till I hear whether you have any objections. M.H.