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Some people say ignorance is bliss. It seems to me it doesn't work that way. It is one of the mysteries of life, and especially the mysteries of intellectual life, for people to want to know. It is a fact that knowledge is disturbing, just as Professor Jacobson described, disturbing because we know so little, as a people, about ourselves.

My concern in this Association, the National Association for Armenian Studies, has two facets. I am interested in it, I am concerned that this movement should succeed, first, because I would like our people to know about ourselves. As one who belongs to that people, I would like us to know much more about ourselves than we actually do. And know better. And as far as our knowledge about ourselves is concerned, stand on solid and firm ground, and take a more strong position with regard to ourselves.

I am concerned also, and more concerned in this endeavor, because I would like the world to know about the Armenians and what they have been, and what they have done, in the past. Not from an Armenian point of view. From the point of the other world citizens. As one who would like the gaps in the history of the Near East to be filled, I would like the gaps of the history of the Near East to be filled with further study of Armenia, its history, language, religion, race, culture, art, and other allied themes. I am a churchman, and I am interested also to see that this kind of work extends into the religious and ecclesiastical field. It is urgent that our church and religion should be studied more than it has been. I am sure that knowledge about our church history has been meager because of the language handicaps there have been few people who have been able and had the courage and the endurance to take up Armenian and learn it sufficiently. There is a great need, as Professor Jakobson mentioned, and Dr. Frye, too, of translations—many translations—of Armenian works. I think I ought to mention also that there are books in Armenian, ancient books of

which the originals do not exist. It just reminded me of a very important book which exists in Armenian and does not exist in any other language. A book which was the text book of the churches of the Syrians, and the Copts, and of the Armenians, and at that time, a very important section of the Eastern Church. At present, we, the Armenian Orthodox, and the Syrian Orthodox, and the Coptic Orthodox Churches, are small in comparison, and weaker generally than they were in the 4th and 6th and 7th centuries, when we were a strong and a very important factor in the ecclesiastical and religious world. And this book was the book that fashioned theology and the religious direction of these churches. That book, which has not yet been translated, exists only in Armenian.

And then in the 5th and 6th centuries, in spite of the fact that in those centuries we didn't have any political power of our own, it sort of looks as though the Armenians had the greatest influence on world events in the Near East. I think it is the genius of the Armenian people that they reconciled somehow better than anybody else, on the one hand, their national consciousness, and also their international. Byzantine stories have told the importance in the world, in that section of the world, of the Armenians, and surprisingly enough, that is the time when Armenian national consciousness took shape. In that particular field, the history and study of the 5th and 6th centuries, both from an ecclesiastical and national point of view, would be extremely rewarding.

A great number of European scholars, as Reverend Bedikian mentioned, have helped inform not only world scholarship, about that part of the world where our country is situated, but also the work of these scholars has helped our own writers, historians and poets, to make the results of their scholarship available to ourselves and thus strengthen and enlighten our own consciousness. Armenia is found right at the center of three great powers throughout the Christian Era, and even before that, between the Byzantine power, and the Persians, and in the South, the Syrian civilization, and the Armenians have played a very important role and have spread

themselves culturally far and wide. Consequently, the furtherance and the advancement in these studies would further help, as Professor Jakobson rightly said, the popularization of the values of which the Armenian people are the repository. And in Armenian history the values of the Armenian culture can be told and appreciated only within the international concept. That, I think, is a great need for our own writers. Unless you know the surroundings, you don't know the middle. Consequently, a wider knowledge of the history of the world in which Armenia is situated, the Near East, the Middle East, is essential for us to know ourselves and essential for world scholarship to know the history of that area. The benefit will be certainly mutual.

Now, therefore, American scholarship which is advancing very rapidly into first place in the world, and gradually catching up with Europe, must join Europe in the scholarship and advance Armenian studies to a more and wider enlightenment, first and foremost for the world knowledge about the period and the area to which we belong, and also, as far as we are concerned, and we can speak selfishly of our own life and history, because, as a people like ourselves who are still alive and have been living for a long stretch of time back in history, we still have an vision to carry out and to develop what our forefathers in their homeland had produced. Consequently, this also has an international value, because not only will it be a museum piece which will of course give satisfaction to those who roam in the museum, but also will be fertile, will become with things which our people can do in the world. In other words, this Armenian studies question is almost a poem in a kind of living way, in a kind of creative and productive way, and not just a matter of poking our nose a little further in what has happened in the past. It is not only what has happened, but also the life and the vitality which that knowledge will give us and with us, all those others who will be finding things in our history and will be inspired by what they find.