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### "Unpacking Displacement" presentation

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# UNPACKING DISPLACEMENT

# Scotch-Irish migrants, 1718

- Brought in from Ulster as “pioneers” to settle the “frontier” of central and western MA [i.e. to facilitate the displacement of indigenous people]
- Because of their Scottish heritage, were treated as second-class citizens in North Ireland (Ulster) beneath the English but above the Irish Catholics.
- Poor conditions in Ulster: exposure to disease and hunger.
- “They were industrious, frugal and peaceful, contributing to the prosperity of the province, by example of diligence and the introduction of useful arts. They brought with them, the necessary materials for the manufacture of linen: and their spinning wheels, turned by the foot, were a novelty in the country. They also introduced the culture of potatoes, which were first planted in the garden of Nathaniel Walker of Andover.”

# Formerly enslaved African-Americans, 1862-1900

- The “arrival of contraband” (according to the *Worcester Daily Spy*) – escaped enslaved Africans from NC. They were aided by union soldiers (to whom they also assisted), as well as the Worcester-based abolitionists and the local black community.
- The Freedman’s Bureau also aided in bringing formerly enslaved to Worcester and finding them employment.
- But eventually after the war the promises made to the freed black people were reneged on and after reconstruction, they encounter profound discrimination and experienced barriers to economic advancement.



Gilbert Walker and his wife Sarah were among the local residents that took in black migrants from the southern states and helped them to get established in Worcester after the Civil War. Gilbert was African American and had been born a slave, while Sarah was a member of the Hassanamisco Nipmuc tribe in Grafton, Mass. Among the ex-slaves they assisted to settle in Worcester was a woman named Laura Edwards from New Bern, NC.



Born into slavery in Craven County, N.C., in 1839, Hannah Nelson Singleton Gilliam and her husband moved to Worcester, Mass., sometime before 1880.





Raymond Schuyler and his  
children, c1904

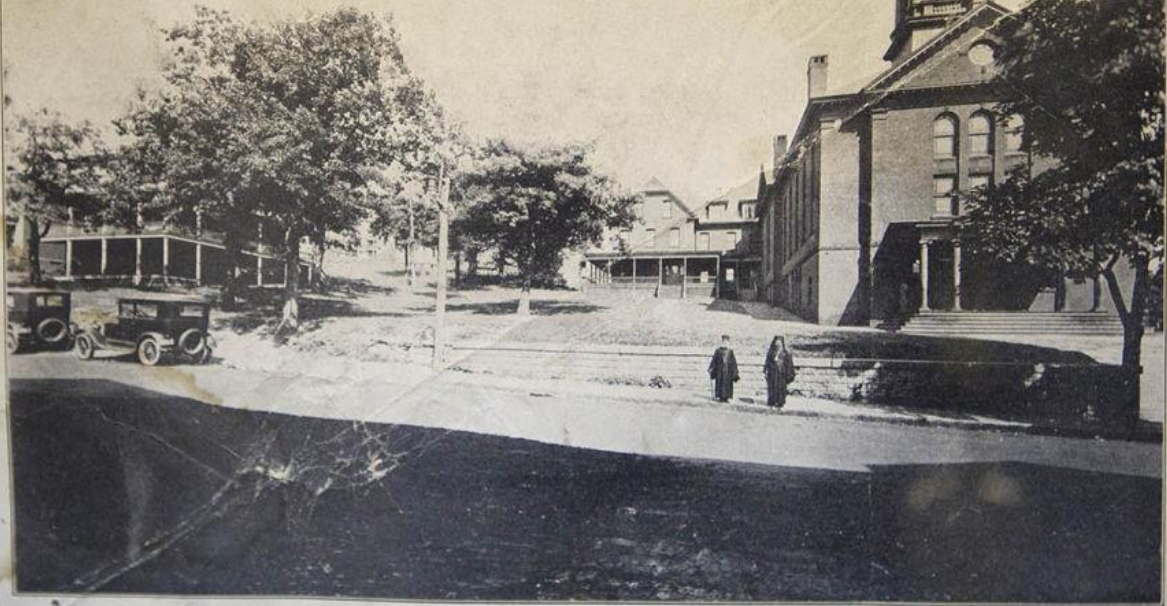
# Syrian migration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

- First arrivals: pre-WWI (1890); settled in Wall st. aka “Syrian Hill.”
- As the community grew, more arrivals were lured by jobs and community.
- Syrians who arrived to Worcester around the turn of the century were generally Christians.
- Syrians took essentially any work they could find, becoming peddlers, factory workers, day laborers, and grocers.
- The majority of the Syrian immigrants that settled in Worcester belonged to three Christian denominations: Eastern Orthodox, Melkite, and Maronite, that serve also as community hubs and support networks.
- facilitated the emergence of modern Worcester as a hub of industry in New England. Migrant such as Saleem Fatoool, for instance, had a rugs and textiles business.



The Syrian Antiochean St. George Orthodox  
Church of Worcester, August 10, 1928, A. D.

كنيسة القديس جورج في  
بورستون في ولاية ماساچوست  
في ١٠ آب سنة ١٩٢٨ ميلادية



طوبى لمحبى جمال بيتك يا رب - اخل الى بيتك يا رب واسجد في هيكل قدسك بمجدك  
تذكار المحبة والارادة الارثوذكسية وعنوان الشكر الى كل مومن الى دير العظيم في الشهداء القديس جاورجيوس  
الطائفة السورية الارثوذكسية الانطاكية  
في ١٠ آب سنة ١٩٢٨ ميلادية  
في ويست ماس

The Syrian  
Antiochean St.  
George Orthodox  
Church of Worcester,  
1928

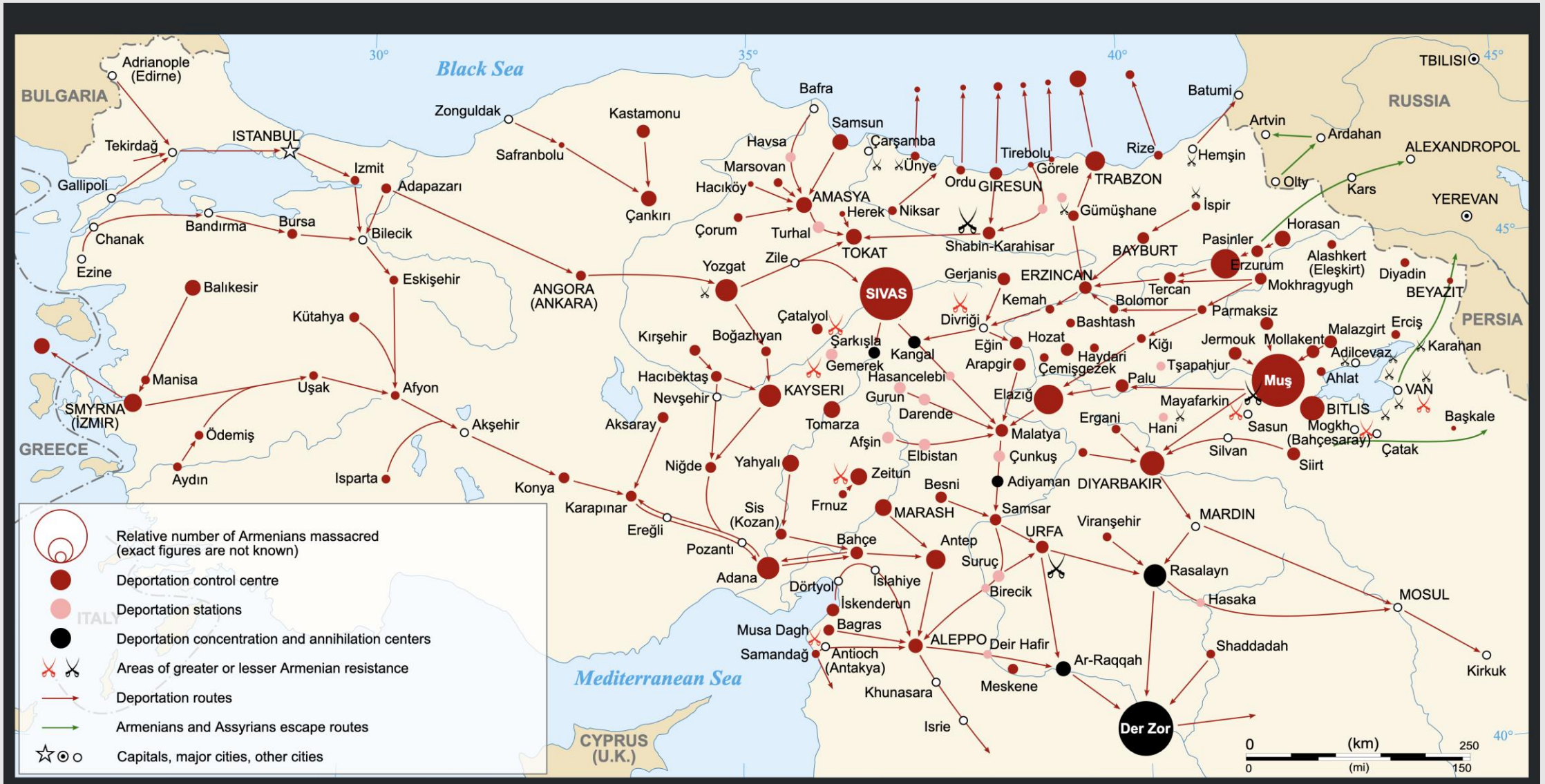




# Armenian and Assyrians

- Armenians and Assyrian arrivals post genocide (1915-6) mainly from Harput.
- Suffered severe loss of life and livelihoods as well as cultural destruction.
- The resettlement of Assyrians was aided by Protestants as well as, primarily, by pre-existing Nestorian Assyrian communities in New England.
- Armenians were often aided by the US private charity Near East Relief as well as by the Armenian community that formed in Worcester after the massacres of the 1890s.

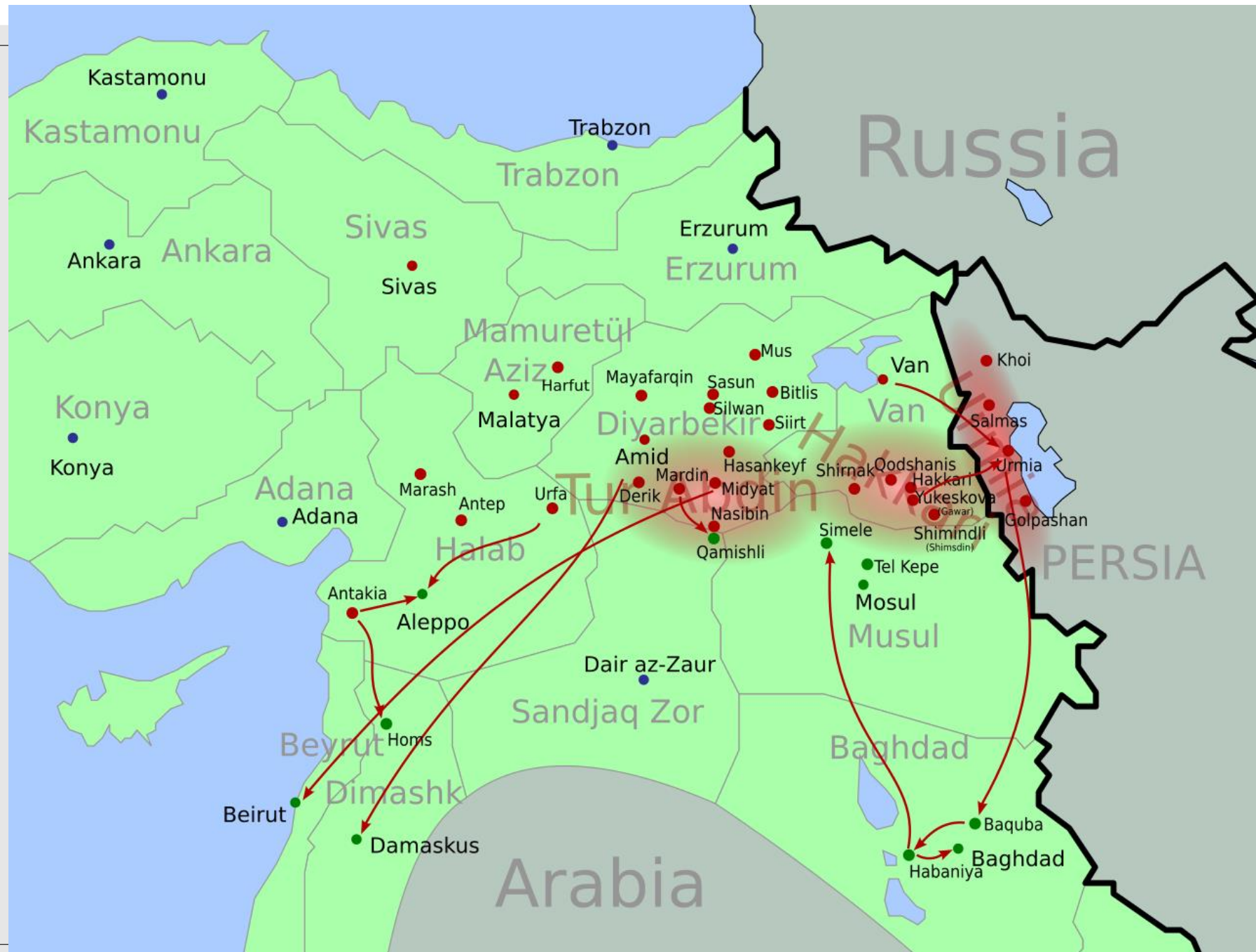
# The Genocide: Deportations and Death Marches



# The Execution of Genocide

- January 1915 (onward): Disarming Armenian Ottoman soldiers, enlisting them into labour battalions, eventually killing them.
- April 24-25, Istanbul: Arrest and murder of Armenian political, cultural and economic leadership.
- Talat Pasha's memorandum on the "necessity" to deport Armenians in border zones to "relocation centers" (concentration camps) in Syria and Mesopotamia (Iraq).
- Mass deportations of the Armenian population on the pretext of collaboration with the enemy (Russians, British, French)
- Genocidal violence:
  - Deliberate starvation
  - Death marches
  - Sexual assault
  - Medical experiments
  - Auctioning children as slaves
  - Torture

**The Assyrian  
Genocide  
(simultaneous)**





# The Aftermath

- Survivors dispersed across the region to existing Armenian communities (Jerusalem, Cairo, Alexandria, Beirut, Aleppo) and beyond (Europe and the Americas).
- Important role of the Armenian Church in reconstituting community and rehabilitation of survivors
- International aid: The Near East Relief (“The American Committee for Relief in the Near East”) – New York based; grassroots funding and awareness campaign; opened and operated hospitals, orphanages, vocational schools, food and clothing distribution centers for displaced Armenians and Assyrians.
- Attempts to establish an Armenian republic (ended up a Soviet state).
- Commemoration and public diplomacy for international recognition of the genocide.



**WHERE THE VICTIMS ARE**

Number of Square Miles — **10,395,881**  
 Non-Moslems (Christians chiefly) living in these countries in 1914 — **8,105,000**  
 Died of Massacre and Starvation — **1,000,000**

**SAVE THE SURVIVORS — 3,950,000 STARVING PEOPLE**

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR RELIEF IN THE NEAR EAST  
 1 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK CITY  
 CLEVELAND H. DODGE, TREASURER

**CAMPAIGN for \$30,000,000**

# Post-1880 Jewish migration

- Anti-Jewish violence in the Russian Empire (triggered by the assassination of Tsar Alexander II) in the 1880s pushed at least 200,000 Jews from the Pale of Settlement (parts of present day Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania) to the US.
- By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century there were over a dozen congregations in Worcester, with a number of communal organizations that merged into the United Jewish Charities (later the Jewish Social Service Agency), as well as the Jewish Community Council and the Jewish Welfare Fund (later merged to the Worcester Jewish Federation).
- Worcester as an emerging industrial hub offered incoming Jews employment opportunities, as well as a rapidly growing community around Water Street, home to kosher bakeries, butchers, a *mikvah* (ritual bath), many small businesses, Jewish communal institutions and Hebrew schools.



