

REVIEW OF
ARMENIAN STUDIES

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Facts and Comments

Ömer E. LÜTEM

1915 Events, New Issues and Reconciliation
Within the Framework of Persistence of
Conflict and the Concept of Intractable Conflict

Ebru ÇOBAN ÖZTÜRK

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation
and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of
Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

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Stopping the Censors:
The Final Defeat of Armenian Nationalism at the
French Constitutional Council in January 2017

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Research on the Issue of Christian,
Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey

Ömer Lütfi TAŞCIOĞLU

BOOK REVIEW



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Süleyman Nazif Sok. No.12/B Daire 2 06550
Çankaya/ANKARA
Tel: 0 (312) 438 50 23-24
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CONTENTS

(İÇİNDEKİLER)

	Page
Contributors	5
(Yazarlar)	
Editorial Note	7
(Editörün Notu)	
ARTICLES	9
(MAKALELER)	
Facts and Comments	9
(Olaylar ve Yorumlar)	
Ömer Engin LÜTEM	
1915 Events, New Issues and Reconciliation Within the Framework of Persistence of Conflict and the Concept of Intractable Conflict.....	29
(Çatışma Sürekliliği ve Çözülemeyen/İnatçı Çatışma Kavramı Çerçevesinde 1915 Olayları, Yeni Sorunlar ve Uzlaşma)	
Assist. Prof. Dr. Ebru ÇOBAN ÖZTÜRK	
The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915).....	53
(Rus Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonunun Kuruluşu ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki Faaliyetleri (1890-1915))	
Olga BYKOVA HERGÜL	
Stopping the Censors: The Final Defeat of Armenian Nationalism at the French Constitutional Council in January 2017	75
(Sansürcülerin Durdurulması: Ermeni Milliyetçiliğinin Ocak 2017'de Fransız Anayasa Konseyi'ndeki Nihai Yenilgisi)	
Maxime GAUIN	
Research on the Issue of Christian, Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey.....	113
(Türkiye'deki Hristiyan Ermeniler ile Gizli ve/veya Müslümanlaşmış Ermeniler Üzerine Bir Araştırma)	
Dr. Ömer Lütfi TAŞCIOĞLU	
BOOK REVIEW	135
(KİTAP TAHLİLİ)	
"The Ararat Illusion".....	135
("Ağrı Yanılsaması")	
Assist. Prof. Dr. Christopher GUNN	

Contributors

Ömer Engin LÜTEM is a retired ambassador and the honorary president of Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM). He graduated from Galatasaray High School and the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Ankara. After several assignments in Turkish missions in France, Germany, Italy, and Libya, he became Turkish Consul General at Cologne, Germany in 1975. He served as Director General of Personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey in 1979 and Director General of Intelligence and Research of the Ministry in 1981. He was assigned as the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Bulgaria in 1983 and served for six years. He served as Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry (1989-1992), Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Vatican (1992-1995), and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey to UNESCO (1995-1997). He is the founding president of Institute for Armenian Research at Eurasian Strategic Research Center - ASAM (2001) and the Crimes Against Humanity Research Institute (2006). He served as the Director of AVİM between 2009-2012. He is currently the editor of three journals published by AVİM: *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, *Review of Armenian Studies*, and *International Crimes and History*. Apart from these, since 2006, he has been the instructor of a master's degree course titled "Emergence and Evolution of the Armenian Question" at the History Department of the Middle Eastern Technical University (METU), Ankara.



Ebru ÇOBAN ÖZTÜRK serves as an Assistant Professor at Çankaya University, Department of Political Science and International Relations. She received her undergraduate degree from Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences, Department of International Relations. Afterwards, she received both her master's and doctoral degrees from Ankara University, Faculty of Political Science, Department of International Relations. She has participated in various projects and assignments in many countries and conflict zones. She currently conducts fieldwork and theoretical studies on the subjects of violence and genocide, and has published extensively on these subjects.



Olga Bykova Hergül is a PhD candidate at Ural State University (Ural Federal University - UrFU). She graduated from Ural State University's Faculty of International Relations, Department of Oriental Studies in 2008. Upon graduation, she continued her education by applying for the doctoral degree program at the same university. For the 2009-2010 education year, she earned a research scholarship from the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey and worked as a researcher at Istanbul University's the Institute of Atatürk's Principles and History of Turkish Revolution and conducted research on the "Armenian Question". In 2011-2013, she served as an instructor at Yeditepe University. She has given lectures on Russian language and Russia's history and culture. Bykova Hergül, whose mother tongue is Russian, also speaks Turkish, English, and Spanish. She has participated as a translator in many high level events and meetings that have been organized with the attendance of political leaders, statesmen, and business world representatives between Turkey and Russia. She continues her professional life as a translator in the banking sector.



Maxime GAUIN is a Scholar in Residence at the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM). He has an MA in History from Paris-I-Sorbonne University. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Middle East Technical University, Department of History. He has published articles in several academic journals. He regularly contributes to different newspapers with his commentaries.



Ömer Lütfi TAŞCIOĞLU, PhD, is a retired staff colonel and member of the Board of Directors of the National Strategic Research Council, the Talaat Pasha Committee, and ANKA Institute's Scientific Advisory Board. Dr. Taşcıoğlu graduated from the Turkish Military Academy in 1970 and from the Turkish War College in 1983. He is also a graduate of the International Relations Department of Ankara University, and the English Language and Literature Department of Istanbul University. He retired from the Turkish Armed Forces in 2001 following a career which spanned 31 years, including positions abroad as military attaché and active combat in the 1974 Cyprus Peace Operation. After retirement from the military, Dr. Taşcıoğlu worked at the Turkish Chief of General Staff's Strategic Research Center (SAREM). Taşcıoğlu obtained his doctoral degree (with a thesis focusing on the Turkish-Armenian controversy) in 2014 at International Relations Department of Gazi University. His published works include "Turkey-European Union Relations," "The Measures Required to Bring Closure to the Armenian Issue," "Meaning Disparities in English Language Military Terminology," "The USA's Policy of Globalization and the Role of Turkey" and "Historical, Political and Legal Facts Relating to Turkish-Armenian Relations."



As always, the first article in the 36th issue of our journal is “**Facts and Comments**”. This article considers Turkish-Armenian relations and the developments regarding the 1915 events in the second half of 2017. Noteworthy developments in this period covered by the article include: the speeches delivered by President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan in the 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference and the UN General Assembly, Armenia’s initiation of a search for a new strategy for the recognition of its allegations regarding the 1915 events, Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia’s (located in Lebanon/Antelias) demand from Turkey to receive a piece of real estate that it had abandoned and its subsequent application to the European Court of Human Rights regarding this issue, and Germany’s (which pursues a state policy in support of the Armenian genocide allegations) negotiation process with the Namibian government concerning the Herero and Nama genocide allegations.

The article titled “**1915 Events, New Issues and Reconciliation within the Framework of Persistence of Conflict and the Concept of Intractable Conflict**”, prepared by Ebru Çoban Öztürk, addresses the Turkish-Armenian controversy continuing for more than a century now in the framework of the concept of “intractable conflicts,” which points to a special category of conflict. In this respect, the author emphasizes the need for the analysis of the socio-psychological repertoire of the Turkish-Armenian controversy.

In the article titled “**The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and Its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)**”, Olga Bykova Hergül, using Russian archival material as a starting point, examines how the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF - *Dashnaktsutyun*) began to develop itself after its foundation and how it came to differ from other Armenian organizations. Bykova states that a serious internal security problem emerged due to ARF’s reckless activities and that the people to suffer most damage from these activities were the Armenians, meaning ARF’s own kinsmen.

Maxime Gauin, in his article titled “**Stopping the Censors: The Final Defeat of Armenian Nationalism at the French Constitutional Council in January 2017**” explains the efforts of the Armenian diaspora in France to have the rejection of their genocide allegations outlawed, and how these efforts were affected by the decision of the Constitutional Council. According to Gauin, the decision taken by the Council on January 2017 has legally put an end to the

diaspora's efforts that been sustained for the last twenty three years. This new situation has, according to Gauin, created a new and positive environment for the discussion 1915 events.

In his article titled **“Research on the Issue of Christian, Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey”**, Ömer Lütüfi Taşcıođlu examines the general condition of the Armenian-origin Turkish citizens and their activities regarding the Turkish-Armenian controversy. The article touches upon the historical roots of the difference between Christian and hidden and/or Islamized Armenians. The article also gives space to the views of various authors about how hidden and/or Islamized Armenians should be defined and what their estimated numbers are.

In the 1970s and 1980s, a high number of Turkish diplomats, personnel, and their family members lost their lives as a result of the attacks carried out by Armenian terrorist organizations such as ASALA and the Justice Commandos, which all used the genocide allegations as a pretext for their attacks. These terrorist attacks have left deep scars in Turkish society. The extremeness of these attacks against Turkish targets have had effects beyond Turkish society, as well. For example, David Minier, the American prosecutor who took part in the trial of Gourgen Yanikian, who murdered the Turkish Consul General of Los Angeles Mehmet Baydar and Consul Bahadır Demir in 1973, wrote a novel inspired by the activities of Armenian terrorist organizations. Christopher Gunn evaluates Minier's above-mentioned book titled *The Ararat Illusion*, and indicates some inferences can be drawn from such works regarding the Cold War and the terrorist organizations that were active during this period.

Have a nice reading and best regards,

Editor

FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

Ömer Engin LÜTEM

(R) Ambassador

Honorary President of the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)

oelutem@avim.org.tr

Abstract: *This article will first evaluate Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's two recent speeches at the 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference and at the UN General Assembly. Secondly, the article will analyze Armenia's search for a new strategy towards the recognition of Armenia's 1915 allegations and developments in the Armenia-Diaspora relations. Thirdly, a recent court decision by the European Court of Human Rights will be examined, in which the court found the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia's (located in Antelias, Lebanon) appeal for the return of properties in Turkey to be inadmissible. Fourthly, the article will look at the tense condition of Turkey-Germany relations, which is reflected in Germany's support to Armenian allegations through a series of meetings, the most recent of those being WATS. Lastly, this article will evaluate Namibia's and two Namibian tribes' claims for recognition and compensation from Germany for the crimes (asserted to constitute genocide) that Germany committed at the beginning of the 20th century in Namibia's lands.*

Keywords: *Serzh Sargsyan, 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference, Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, European Court of Human Rights, WATS, Namibia, Germany*

Öz: *Bu çalışmada ilk olarak Ermenistan Devlet Başkanı Serj Sarkisyan'ın Altıncı Tüm Ermeniler Ermenistan-Diaspora Konferansı ve daha sonra BM Genel Kurulu'nda yaptığı konuşmalar değerlendirilecektir. İkinci olarak Ermenistan'ın 1915 olaylarına dair iddialarının tanınması yönünde yeni strateji arayışı ve Ermenistan-Diaspora ilişkilerinde yaşanan gelişmeler incelenecektir. Üçüncü olarak (Antelias, Lübnan'da bulunan) Kilikya Ermeni Katolikosluğu'nun Türkiye'den talepleri ve bu taleplerle ilgili olarak AİHM'in aldığı kabul olunamaz kararından söz edilecektir. Dördüncü olarak Türkiye-Almanya ilişkilerinin gergin seyrine değinilecektir, ki bu gerginliğin yansıması Almanya'nın Ermeni iddialarına verdiği destek çerçevesinde yakın zamanda düzenlenen WATS*

toplantısında görülebilmektedir. Son olarak bu çalışmada Namibya hükümeti ile iki Namibyalı kabilenin Almanya'ya yönelik ülkenin 20'inci yüzyılın başlarında Namibya'nın topraklarında işlediği suçlarla ilgili olarak (bu suçların soykırım teşkil ettiği ifade edilmektedir) tanıma ve tazminat talepleri incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Serj Sarkisyan, Tüm Ermeniler Ermenistan-Diaspora Altıncı Konferansı, Ermeni Kilikya Katolikosluğu, Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesi, WATS, Namibya, Almanya

Turkey-Armenia Relations

President Serzh Sargsyan touched upon the Turkey-Armenia relations in his long speech during the Sixth Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference on 18 September 2017.

Sargsyan stated that Turkey has refused to implement the 2009 Zurich Protocols, thus showing the world once again that its government is not concerned with regional peace. He explained that he removed the protocols off the National Assembly's agenda in 2015 and that he voiced this situation in the United Nations General Assembly.¹

The Protocols are no longer a current problem. President Sargsyan's current handling of the subject is due to him being previously highly criticized by the Diaspora because of the Protocols. While the scale of the criticism has surely dwindled, criticism nevertheless continues. In the Sixth Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference, it was seen that Sargsyan tried to take precautions in the face of the possibility that the Diaspora representatives might have discussed the Protocols.

Regarding Turkey, Sargsyan also referred to the genocide issue. He stated that Turkey's continuing "denial" of the "Armenian Genocide" is a clear disrespect to the values of modern civilization, which is why, Sargsyan stated, that the international society and the Diaspora should accept a new strategy on this issue. Additionally, Sargsyan stated that many of the world's leading countries recognize and condemn the "genocide" and that the Armenians living in these countries can announce their victories and that cooperation can be made for "a new agenda" to be established in these countries.²

In recent years, several developments have sufficiently shown that the Armenians' policy of having their genocide claims widely accepted has not been successful. These developments are as follows:

- 1) The International Court of Justice's decision that a claimed act of genocide must be proven without leaving any room for doubt (the 2007 Bosnia-Herzegovina trial), and the European Court of Human Rights' decision on the *Perinçek v. Switzerland* case that there is no consensus

1 "President attends 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference," *Official Website of the President of the Republic of Armenia*, September 18, 2017, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2017/09/18/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-took-part-in-Armenia-Diaspora-Conference/>

2 "President attends 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference."

among historians that the 1915 events were a genocide and that the Holocaust and the claims of Armenian genocide are different from each other.

- 2) The observed increase in foreign historians who do not consider the 1915 events as a genocide.
- 3) The less than expected number of state parliaments that have accepted the genocide claims on the centenary of the Armenian relocation (2015).

In short, Armenia's policy of getting Turkey to accept the genocide claims with the help of other countries has been unsuccessful. The best indication of this are the statements by President Sargsyan on the subject of determining "a new strategy" and "a new agenda".

Some of these countries' governments made statements afterwards softening their parliament's previous decisions. Furthermore, Armenians will not be satisfied with these countries simply acknowledging the genocide claims. They expect them to support Armenians in making Turkey accept these claims (as in, putting pressure on Turkey). However, no country has made such an attempt regarding this subject.

In short, Armenia's policy of getting Turkey to accept the genocide claims with the help of other countries has been unsuccessful. The best indication of this are the statements by

President Sargsyan regarding what we referred to above on the subject of determining "a new strategy" and "a new agenda".

Turkey's desired acceptance of the genocide claims has importance for the Armenians in two ways. Firstly, under the formula of attaining justice, Armenian communities around world have been exposed to a kind of brainwashing for a hundred years now by Armenian churches, political parties, associations. This brainwashing involves teaching Armenians to feel negative and destructive feelings such as racist hatred towards Turkey and Turks. A second reason is an issue that has occurred relatively recently, in which there is a necessity to form a basis to demand reparations and perhaps land from Turkey. This would be provided in the most perfect way if Turkey accepts the genocide claims. However, this is not possible, as Turkey has no intention of accepting such claims.

The aspect we want to address lastly is that it is the diaspora Armenians who are expected to determine a new strategy and agenda. What Armenia should do on this subject is not mentioned in any way. The Diaspora playing the main

role regarding the genocide issue is a formula created during Ter-Petrosian's presidency in Armenia (1991-1998). In this way, Armenia, which was already experiencing major problems during that period, did not want a new burden and did not want to harm its good relations with Turkey. Ter-Petrosian left his presidential post 20 years ago and his ideas no longer hold much currency in the Armenian world. Regarding the claims of genocide, the Diaspora continues to be more active than Armenia.

Since it is not possible for Turkey to recognize the genocide claims, the determining of a new strategy and agenda will not change the situation. Regarding the subject, by means of assigning the task to the Diaspora, Sargsyan might have aimed to keep Armenia and himself as far away as possible from probable criticism and arguments that might occur in the future.

President Sargsyan also referred to the subject of the Protocols during his speech in the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September 2017.³ He stated that Armenia does not put forward recognizing "the genocide" as a precondition for the normalization of the bilateral relations with Turkey and that, as a result of Armenia's initiative, the Zurich Protocols were signed between the two countries in 2009. He stated, however, that these documents were not confirmed and claimed that Turkey put forward illogical preconditions regarding this subject (as it can be remembered, Turkey linked the approval of the Protocols to positive developments on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue). Continuing his speech, Sargsyan stated that Turkey is mistaken if it thinks that it can hold these documents hostage and only approve them when it will be most convenient. According to Sargsyan, Armenia will declare the Protocols completely invalid because they have not brought any positive developments and that Armenia will enter Spring of 2018⁴ without these protocols on its agenda. On the other hand, Sargsyan mentioned that the forming and sustaining of normal relations between the two countries is necessary for approaching the current problems.

Actually, the 2009 Protocols not being approved and thus not being implemented is a subject that has lost its relevance. Armenia, to counterbalance the criticism from the public opinion that it is acting

3 "President partook in the session of the UN General Assembly," *Official Website of the President of the Republic of Armenia*, September 20, 2017, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2017/09/20/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-attended-UN-General-Assembly/>

4 It is understood that a reference is being made to the foundation of the Republic of Armenia on 28 May 1918.

imprudently and incompetently regarding this issue, removed the Protocols from the National Assembly's weekly agenda and then withdrew them from the Assembly in 2015, but did not state that it rejected these documents.

On the other hand, Turkey has followed the normal procedure and has sent the Protocols to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey's Foreign Affairs Commission. This process has been repeated after every general election. The Foreign Affairs Commission has not discussed these documents yet. As the Commission determines its own agenda, there is no procedure-related discrepancy.

It is understood from Sargsyan's words that he will "denounce" (discredit) the Protocols prior to the 100th year of the proclamation of the Republic of Armenia to win electoral points in his country's public opinion. Since Turkey is not resorting to such a method, Armenia will make itself look like (in the international scene) a country that does not value reconciliation.

It was not possible for President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to immediately respond to Sargsyan, since he spoke before Sargsyan in the United Nations General Assembly. In spite of this, in his speech, President Erdoğan referred to South Caucasus issues (even if it was very briefly), making important statements from our standpoint. The President stated that more effort must be made to solve the conflicts in Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia and that such crises being neglected today will cause them to turn into regional and even global conflicts tomorrow.⁵

Concerning the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, it is a known that Turkey takes Azerbaijan's side without reservations. Turkey also gives the same degree of importance for the settlement of the issues in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which is an expression of its continuing stance of not approving Russia's Abkhazia and South Ossetia policies (similar to its stance regarding Russia's Crimea and Ukraine policies) despite the positive bilateral relations between the two countries.

If we are to get back to the subject of the Protocols, it is seen that these documents are attributed almost no importance in Turkish public opinion. This situation has even caught the attention of the Dashnaks, as the foreign relations specialist Giro Manoian stated in a speech that he did not believe that there would be a positive development regarding the Protocols, that this stems from

5 "Erdogan Says More Efforts Needed to Settle Karabagh Conflict," *PanArmenian*, September 20, 2017.

Turkey having many internal and external problems, and that building its relations with Armenia is not among its agenda items.⁶

On the Armenian side, the Diaspora has always been against any form of agreement or reconciliation so long as Turkey does not accept the genocide allegations. It can be seen that Armenian public opinion, which generally does not have such a firm position, recently has been expressing stronger negative views. According to a public opinion survey made in 2015 by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), which is an American institution, about half of the people that responded said that the opening of the Turkey-Armenia border would “endanger Armenia’s national security”.⁷ Additionally, 82% of them have stated that Turkey cannot be trusted. It is possible to characterize these reactions as social paranoia. However, it is difficult for the Armenian public to think otherwise in an environment where Turks and Turkey are constantly being defamed and denigrated.

Concerning the Protocols and its effects on Turkey-Armenia relations, the latest development of 2017 occurred when the Foreign Minister of Armenia Edward Nalbandian reiterated in 13 December President Sargsyan’s earlier statements that Armenia would declare the Protocols null and void due to a lack of progress. Nalbandian accused Turkey of coming up with “groundless preconditions”⁸ regarding the ratification of the Protocols.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey immediately published a response to Nalbandian’s statement, stating that the claims made by Nalbandian “do not reflect the truth and aim at misleading the world public opinion.”⁹ The Ministry’s statement underlined that the Turkish government continues to attach value to the Protocols and normalizing relations with Armenia:

“Turkey has pursued its efforts to normalize relations with Armenia on several levels since Armenia proclaimed its independence in 1991.

6 “Giro Manoyan Says Armenian President’s Statement on Zurich Protocols Was Right,” *168.am*, September 20, 2017.

7 “Yerevan Signals Scrapping of Turkish-Armenian Accords,” *RFE/RL*, September 20, 2017.

8 “Armenia will enter the spring of 2018 without Armenian-Turkish Protocols – Nalbandian,” *Panorama.am*, December 13, 2017, <https://www.panorama.am/en/news/2017/12/13/Armenian-Turkish-Protocols-Nalbandian/1878427>

9 “No: 385, 14 December 2017, Press Release regarding the Claims of Mr. Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey*, December 14, 2017, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-385_-ermenistan-disisleri-bakani-edward-nalbantyanin-iddialari-hk_en.en.mfa

In this context, the said Protocols, aiming to normalize relations between Turkey and Armenia are the result of the negotiations facilitated by Switzerland.

However, the Constitutional Court of Armenia, with its ruling on 12 January 2010 introduced additional preconditions and restrictive clauses that are against the letter and spirit of the Protocols.

... It is a well-known fact that the Armenian diaspora was against the signing of the Protocols from the onset and has been pressuring the Armenian Government not to ratify them.

...

Despite Armenia's negative stance on the Protocols, Turkey is committed to the primary clauses of the Protocols. These Protocols are still on the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Commission and for their ratification, it is essential that a favorable political atmosphere and peace in the South Caucasus is secured."¹⁰

It did not take long for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia to issue a response of its own.¹¹ In its statement, the Ministry accused Turkey of "distorting" the letter and spirit of the Protocols. The Ministry alleged that Turkey "intentionally" brought the ratification process to a halt and that Turkey "is not ready yet to normalize the Armenian-Turkish relations."

As such, in the context of Turkey-Armenia relations, the year 2017 ended with Turkey and Armenia directing accusations against each other. It should be pointed out, however, that Armenia possesses internal dynamics that present a significant impediment to a possible normalization with Turkey. Since it is not possible for Turkey to accept the historical claims (which form the basis of the impediments) put forth by Armenia and the Diaspora, there is not much that Turkey can do to remove the impediments generated by Armenia's internal dynamics.

The Armenia-Diaspora Conference

The Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference (Armenia-Diaspora Pan-Armenian Forum) has been established for several reasons, including: 1) To

10 ""No: 385, 14 December 2017..."

11 "Turkey not ready to normalize relations with Armenia: Yerevan," *PanArmenian.net*, December 16, 2017, <http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/250027/>

ensure that Armenia and the Diaspora maintain institutional contacts, 2) To create an opportunity for the leading Diaspora Armenians to closely familiarize themselves with Armenia, 3) To draw the attention of the Diaspora Armenians to Armenia's situation and especially its economic struggles, and trying to convince them to make as much as aid as possible, and 5) To decrease, as much as possible, the criticism made by a portion of diaspora Armenians regarding common illegal acts in Armenia such human rights transgressions and corruption. The sixth instance of the conference was organized in Yerevan in 18-20 September 2017.

In his long speech Sargsyan stated,¹² briefly, that the Diaspora youth are referring to themselves as being “multi-ethnic” and highlighted the importance of developing new programs to strengthen the national identities of these youngsters. With these words, the Armenian president referred to the most important issue facing the Diaspora, which is assimilation. The Armenians who have migrated to foreign countries are rapidly dissolving, especially in predominantly Christian societies. The number of Armenians in the Diaspora who speak Armenian and who are aware of Armenian mannerisms and customs is low. This “alienation” is negatively affecting their relations with Armenia.

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The discourse which has been continuing for years, claiming that the 1915 events were a genocide, that justice must be served for the Armenians, is the main reason the diaspora Armenians are interested in Armenia, which they perceive as the “base” or “motherland”. President Sargsyan must be aware of this, since in his speech he wanted the Diaspora representatives to preserve their identity and at the same time be good citizens of the countries they live in, and for them to refuse assimilation but to integrate to those countries as much as possible.

Another subject that President Sargsyan dwelled on was the decrease in Armenia's population, which Armenia describes as very worrying. Sargsyan stated that they are aiming for the population to reach four million in 2040. It

12 “President attends 6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference.”

will be difficult to reach this aim by simply increasing the birth rate. There must be migration to the country for the following 25 years to attain such a population goal. With his statements, Sargsyan indicated that a portion of the Armenian diaspora should settle in Armenia. However, it is not realistic to expect Armenians who are residing in countries that have better economic conditions than Armenia to settle in Armenia. This kind of a migration could only be possible if the country they reside in has conditions that are worse in comparison to Armenia. But finding such a country is difficult. There are speculations that even the approximately ten thousand Armenians who have migrated from Syria to Armenia are leaving Armenia after the situation in Aleppo has turned back to normal. In this situation, it seems that Armenia's decreasing population problem will continue to remain unsolvable. Because this situation will create a weaker Armenia in the following years, it is even probable that some political consequences will occur as a result of this.

In his speech, Sargsyan invited the diaspora Armenians to invest in Armenia. The first condition for investment is a belief that a profit can be made. Due to its economic struggles and its serious problems with Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia is still far from being a country attractive for investment.

In his speech, Sargsyan repeated his country's known policy regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Moreover, as we have explained in the "Turkey-Armenia Relations" section, he stated that they will disregard the 2009 protocols signed with Turkey.

As a result of the efforts put forth in the conference, a Final Declaration was approved on 20 September 2017.¹³ We will briefly summarize this Declaration's chapter pertaining to Turkey and Karabakh.

It is mentioned that, for developing democracy in this region regarding the Karabakh issue and Karabakh's full integration to the international community, the Karabakh citizens should use their right to determine their own future. With these words, it is understood that, despite all efforts, the Karabakh administration (which has not been recognized by any country) will continue its efforts for recognition with the excuse of seeking integration with the international community.

13 "6th Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora conference concluded, final declaration adopted," *AraratNews.com*, September 21, 2017, <http://www.araratnews.am/6th-pan-armenian-armenia-diaspora-conference-concluded-final-declaration-adopted/?lang=en>

Additionally, it is stated that Armenia's, the Armenian administration in Karabakh's, and the Diaspora's problems of today and tomorrow can be solved with the joint efforts of the Armenian state, the Armenian church, and all the Armenian organizations and institutions. What is interesting about this is that a special place has been given to the Armenian church and the Armenian state. Nowadays, even if churches have power on a moral level, it is clear that this power is not a remedy for the solution of the problems Armenia is facing. On the other hand, it is a known aspect that, due to Catholicos Aram I's extreme behavior, an institution such as the Catholicosate of Cilicia only further stultifies the current problems, let alone solving them.

The Final Declaration mentions the genocide allegations, which the Armenian diaspora is most sensitive about and even equates itself with. According to this, the "Armenian Genocide" must be internationally recognized and condemned. Moreover, a unified and coordinated policy must be pursued to remedy its results. But there is no clarity on how this will be achieved. The only things mentioned are increasing awareness about the "genocide", maintaining historical memory, and placing importance on passing it onto new generations. This means that, as it has been until now, the breeding of animosity and hate speech towards Turkey and Turks and policies based on this will continue to be supported.

What does the Armenian public opinion think about this conference? According to a survey conducted by a journalist,¹⁴ 7% of the interviewees said that the conference was influential, 36% said that they did not consider the conference especially influential, 40% said that it was an unnecessary conference, 17% said that they never heard of the conference. In short, it is understood that the conference did not create a significant influence in Armenia.

In the meantime, it is necessary that we briefly touch upon the fact that the Armenian diaspora is not a monolithic entity. The Diaspora members are differentiated based on the country they reside, and there are different attitudes even in amongst the Armenians of the same country. The reason for this situation is that, no matter how much effort is made, the assimilation phenomenon is increasingly becoming stronger, and an important part of the Diaspora is slowly receding from Armenianness. The latest and striking example of this is the owner of a public relations firm in New York, Ronn Torossian, who made a contract with Turkey to handle some of the prosecution

14 Ami Chichakyan, "Survey: The majority thinks that the Armenia-Diaspora Forum was another useless gathering," *Aravot*, October 2, 2017, <http://www.aravot-en.am/2017/10/02/200735/>

procedures attempted to be made towards President Erdoğan's bodyguards during his visit to Washington. Harut Sassounian, one of the well-known columnists of the Diaspora, has accused him of not being a real Armenian.¹⁵ Torossian's response to this was that he has never felt like an Armenian.¹⁶

The Catholicosate of Cilicia's Real Estate Demand

During the period of the Ottoman Empire, an Armenian Catholicosate was located in the city of Sis (modern-day Kozan/Adana). This institution continued to function throughout World War One. Afterwards, following the end of the French invasion in 1921, despite the French military officials having expressed an opposite view, the Catholicosate left Sis. After some time, this Catholicosate was re-established in the city of Antelias close to Beirut in Lebanon.

During the Cold War years, thinking that diaspora Armenians being devoted to the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin in Armenia would entail certain risks, the US and its allies attributed importance to the Catholicosate of Cilicia. In this regard, they sought to have some of the Diaspora churches come under the administration of the Catholicosate of Cilicia. For such an endeavor, the US and its allies utilized the help of the Dashnak Party. In the end, under the influence of the Dashnaks, the Catholicosate of Cilicia became an institution that generally supports radical ideas, especially on issues concerning opposition towards Turkey. By contrast, the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, because it was under the Soviets' control via Armenia, has taken a more moderate stance towards Turkey.

Catholicos Aram I, who still heads the catholicosate in Antelias, is a person known for his staunch opposition towards Turkey. He expressed his attitude during the centenary events as well. When the tendency to demand reparations and some property from Turkey arose this year in Armenia under the formula of "abolishing the results of the genocide", Aram I quickly took action by demanding that the church and monastery buildings in Sis be given to the Catholicosate. Moreover, it is beneficial to state that Armenia has not officially demanded reparations or property from Turkey up until now.

15 Harut Sassounian, "Ronn Torossian Hired to do PR For Turkey; Is He Really an Armenian?" *California Courier Online*, November 15, 2017.

16 Harut Sassounian, "Turkish PR Agent Ronn Torossian's Father and Grandparents Are Armenians," *California Courier Online*, November 23, 2017.

With this intent, a lawsuit the Catholicosate filed in the Turkish Constitutional Court on 25 April 2015. However, the Constitutional Court did not acknowledge the Catholicosate's claim, stating that internal remedies (domestic law channels) had not been exhausted. Under normal circumstances, the Catholicosate should have first filed its claims in lower instance Turkish courts. If the verdicts delivered in such courts is not found to be satisfactory, it is possible to appeal and then finally go to the Constitutional Court.

Right after the Turkish Constitutional Court turned down the case, Aram I pressed charges at the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on 8 December 2016. It was observed from the statements made in this process that through this case, it was aimed to create negative publicity against Turkey.

In a speech he made on 19 October 2017, Aram I informed that the ECtHR had turned down the case. Actually, it can be concluded that this case was turned down at an earlier date -on March 2017, but the Catholicosate did not inform the public about this at that time.¹⁷ Like the Turkish Constitutional Court, the ECtHR turned down the case because internal remedies had not been exhausted. Moreover, this decision by the ECtHR cannot

be appealed. Aram I has harshly criticized the ECtHR regarding this issue, questioned how a 900-page request could be turned down, and requested that the Court review its decision. However, this is not possible. The ECtHR has made a decision according to its own rules, a decision that cannot be appealed.

By the way, let us indicate that this decision was not related to the return of the church and other buildings, which was the basis of the Catholicosate's original claim. It was only related to the internal remedies as stipulated in Turkish legislation. Accordingly, if Aram I or his catholicosate apply to Turkish courts and pursue the use of domestic law channels, and then finally go to the Constitutional Court and get turned down, it will then be possible to apply to the European Court of Human Rights. However, this looks like a slim possibility. This is so because the main reason why the legal claim was initiated was not to receive the church and other buildings in Kozan, which

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¹⁷ Harut Sassounian, "European Court Finds Catholicosate's Suit Inadmissible; And Could Not Be Appealed," *Asbarez*, October 26, 2017.

no longer has a significant Armenian community. The legal claim was clearly meant to exploit this subject so that the an anti-Turkey activity could be implemented. But this did not happen, as the full implementation of international law rules prevented such a perception operation from taking place.

Meanwhile, Aram I's defeat in the same European Court of Human Rights where Doğu Perinçek won a case already gives an idea about the legal acceptability of the Armenian claims reportedly planned to be made against Turkey.

The WATS Meeting in Germany

The Workshop on Armenian Turkish Scholarship (WATS) meetings, which have been organized since 2000 with the partnership of Ronald Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, Kevork Bardakjian, and Gerard Libaridian from the University of Michigan, are a series of meetings that have defined their aim as surpassing Armenian and Turkish nationalistic discourses on the 1915 events and creating a free academic discussion environment where Turkish and Armenian academics will be able to search for answers to the questions of “what and how”. The latest of these meetings was held in 14-17 September with the help of Lepsiushaus institute (among other organizers). This institute derives its name from a German individual named Johannes Lepsius, who wrote a book titled “Germany and Armenia” containing unsubstantiated material received from US Ambassador Morgenthau and the Armenian Patriarchate. It was later understood that the said book presented information and documents full of serious falsifications and distortions.

One of the striking points in the discussions about the aforementioned meeting, leaving aside its symbolic importance in the sense that it was coorganized by an institute named after someone like Lepsius, is that it took place during a period when a crisis had erupted in the Turkey-Germany relations after the German Federal Parliament's decision regarding the 1915 events. It is conspicuous that Germany, in the shadow of the conflicts between the two countries, has used a platform such as WATS (which has, in reality, contradictory aims to its officially stated ones), as a pressure tool against Turkey.

However, perhaps more importantly, while the meeting was presented as an academic platform, on the contrary, it turned into a meeting excluding academic discussions regarding the 1915 events and encouraging an anti-

Turkey political discourse. From this aspect, the WATS meetings are not really concerned with discussing the Turkish-Armenian controversy from a scientifically neutral perspective with the help of new academic findings and research. The said meetings have the characteristic of being a political platform where only one side's views are accepted and promoted beforehand against many other views regarding the Turkish-Armenian controversy.¹⁸ The attendance and paper submissions of academics who had alternative views from the one-sided views the organizing individuals and institutions were trying to impose were turned down by unacademic excuses such as there being no room left for further attendance.

Since the meeting did not have an academic conference characteristic and the organizers did not have the motivation to act academically, after some time, this subject came up in the Turkish public opinion and started receiving reactions. After receiving the said reactions, Sabancı University, which initially had its official logo and name among the list of organizers in the published program of the meeting, stated that the university did not make any contribution to the meeting. One of the striking aspects of the meeting was that, after the meeting was organized, the North America Middle East Studies Association (MESA) accused Turkish officials and YÖK (the Council of Higher Education of Turkey) of pressuring academics who had informed that they would be attending the meeting. Even though these accusations turned out to be false, the WATS organizers were unable to respond to these cases with any explanations.¹⁹ This process that invalidates the WATS meeting's claims of being academic and neutral has been a striking example of how the 1915 events are aimed to be used as a pressure tool in the Turkey-Germany relations.

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18 "WATS and the Triumph of the Political over the Scientific," *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No: 2017/64*, September 8, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/WATS-AND-THE-TRIUMPH-OF-THE-POLITICAL-OVER-THE-SCIENTIFIC>

19 "Further Questions on the Integrity of WATS Organizers," *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No: 2017/71*, September 22, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/FURTHER-QUESTIONS-ON-THE-INTEGRITY-OF-WATS-ORGANIZERS>

Namibia's Demands of Genocide Recognition and Reparations from Germany

In the beginning of the 20th century, the Herero and Nama tribes living in lands that are now a part of Namibia had rebelled against the German colonial administration that was managing the said lands at that time. The German colony administration issued a systematic annihilation policy in order to suppress this rebellion. The annihilation policy implemented against the Herero and Nama tribes has been proven in a very concrete way and this historical fact has been pursued persistently by the Namibian people. However, Germany's systematic annihilation policy against the Herero and Nama tribes has remained an unknown and undiscussed subject in Germany and other countries until recently. Germany and other European countries, which have issued decisions from their parliaments and accepted laws regarding disputes about genocide, have remained strangely silent on the subject of what Germany has done in today's Namibia during the beginning of the 20th century. Recently, this situation has begun to change, and even if the reason for this change is not completely understood, the subject of Germany paying reparations to Namibia and apologizing is being frequently brought up now. As a result, the German government has initiated a series of negotiations with the Namibian government.

The latest round of the negotiations took place in Berlin during the end of September. In the context of the negotiations, the people of Namibia demand that Germany recognizes these events as a genocide, apologizes regarding these events, and pays reparations.²⁰ However, the German government has not made a statement regarding this subject to the German public opinion or to the international community, thus it is seen that Germany is trying to quietly finalize the negotiations. Regarding the meeting in September, it is interesting that, apart from one source in the German media,²¹ almost no place was given to this news, and in the said single source, it was stated that the German government does not want to make any explanation to the public regarding this negotiation process. Despite the German government's displeasure, information about the meeting has been shared to with the public opinion by

20 Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun, "Germany and Genocide," *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Analysis No: 2017/3, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Analiz/GENOCIDE-AND-GERMANY>; Albertina Nakale, "Namibia: PM Allays Fears Over Genocide Negotiations," *AllAfrica.com*, September 25, 2017, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201709250212.html>

21 Christiane Habermatz, "Viel Druck im Kessel bei Verhandlungen mit Namibia," *Deutschlandfunk*, September 30, 2017, http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/voelkermord-an-herero-und-nama-viel-druck-im-kessel-bei.1773.de.html?dram:article_id=397153; Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun, "Germany and Genocide - II," *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Analysis No: 2017/31, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Analiz/GENOCIDE-AND-GERMANY-II>

the Namibia Committee which was aiming to expose Germany's attitude.²² According to this, it is stated that the amount of reparations claimed to be demanded from Germany is 400 billion Namibia dollars (meaning, about 25 billion euros or 30 billion US dollars). It is further stated that Germany is trying to quietly handle this subject of claims and demands mentioned in these negotiations by providing high amounts of aid²³ instead of paying reparations to Namibia. This is due to Germany's fear that the country's post-Holocaust "confrontation" policy may falter. Furthermore, it is helpful to state that until today, Germany has been the country that has provided the most development aid to Namibia with around 800 million dollars. So, Germany is trying to use these development aids as hush money to cover up recent disturbing accusations directed at it by Namibia. Again, in the framework of "fiscal and financial cooperation projects and programmes", the Namibian press has shared the information that an aid worth 133,5 million Euros will be made to Namibia by Germany.²⁴

This ethnic cleansing by Germany carried out in what is now Namibia and the questionable attitude exhibited during negotiation process regarding this subject, Germany's decision in its parliament to recognize the Armenian claims (which is a controversial subject), and its keen support to propaganda activities made against Turkey all have much importance in providing an example of how Germany politicizes the subject genocide allegations against Turkey.

If we are to explain all this in legal terminology, Germany perceives these aids as a part of "reparative justice", thus they are still trying to pursue a policy that will not be legally binding.²⁵ Hence, until now, Germany has not given any response to a negotiation position document regarding recognition, apology, and reparation that the Namibia government had sent on July 2016.²⁶ It is understood that Germany does not intend to accept these events as genocide or pay genocide reparations as Namibia is demanding from it.

22 Erdem Güneş, "Berlin'in Soykırım Pişkinliği," *Aydınlık*, October 2, 2017, <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/berlin-in-soykirim-piskinligi-dunya-ekim-2017-2> ; Tulun, "Germany and Genocide – II."

23 Ndanki Kahiurika, "Talks smooth but no agreement – Ngavirue," *The Namibian*, October 3, 2017, <https://www.namibian.com.na/59940/read/Talks-smooth-but-no-agreement-%E2%80%93Ngavirue> ; Tulun, "Germany and Genocide – II."

24 Alvine Kapitako, "Germany avails N\$2 billion to Namibia," *New Era*, September 25, 2017, <https://www.newera.com.na/2017/09/25/germany-avails-n2-billion-to-namibia/> ; Tulun, "Germany and Genocide – II."

25 Daniel Pelz, "Is Germany responding to Namibia's genocide claims?" *Deutsche Welle*, November 14, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/en/is-germany-responding-to-namibias-genocide-claims/a-41383513>

26 Tulun, "Germany and Genocide – II."

At this point, it is useful to state that the approaches of the Namibian government and the Herero and Nama tribes are different from each other.²⁷ While the Namibia government is describing the dilemma with Germany in a diplomatic language by stating that the negotiations are not progressing, the Nama and Herero tribe representatives are stating that the Namibia government is not representing them fairly and that they may start a new reparation process towards Germany if they feel it necessary.

This ethnic cleansing by Germany carried out in what is now Namibia and the questionable attitude exhibited during negotiation process regarding this subject, Germany's decision in its parliament to recognize the Armenian claims (which is a controversial subject), and its keen support to propaganda activities made against Turkey all have much importance in providing an example of how Germany politicizes the subject genocide allegations against Turkey. While the German Federal Parliament finds no risk in making political decisions regarding the controversial 1915 events and Armenian claims, it was able to turn down the draft resolution presented to the Parliament in March 2016 foreseeing the recognition of the historically documented 1904-1908 events as a "Namibian Genocide".²⁸ We will continue to follow Germany's approach on this subject in the following period as well.

27 Tulun, "Germany and Genocide – II."

28 Tulun, "Germany and Genocide."

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1915 EVENTS, NEW ISSUES AND RECONCILIATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PERSISTENCE OF CONFLICT AND THE CONCEPT OF INTRACTABLE CONFLICT*

(ÇATIŞMA SÜREKLİLİĞİ VE ÇÖZÜLEMİYEN/İNATÇI ÇATIŞMA KAVRAMI
ÇERÇEVESİNDE 1915 OLAYLARI, YENİ SORUNLAR VE UZLAŞMA)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ebru ÇOBAN ÖZTÜRK

Çankaya University,
Department of Political Science and International Relations

Translated by: Ahmet Can ÖKTEM

Translator, Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)

Abstract: *There are some concrete problems, with roots in the past, that have remained unsolved between Turkish and Armenian societies. These problems have become deeper through the years and have negatively affected the relationship between the two societies, and by now have been transformed into a chronic conflict. Nevertheless, this type of conflict does not involve physical violence today, yet it has been transformed into intractable conflict with its all defining features. This study attempts to investigate the relationship between the two societies around the concept of intractable conflict and the socio-psychological foundations of it. The socio-psychological foundation of the Turkish-Armenian conflict has generated a completely new bundle of problems. For both societies to follow a positive line of relationship, a due attention should be paid not only to the concrete problems, but also to the socio-psychological repertoire of intractable conflicts and find solutions accordingly. This article will apply Daniel Bar-Tal's method of analysis when using the concept of intractable conflict that analyzes the said socio-psychological repertoire.*

Keywords: *conflict, intractable conflict, 1915 events, reconciliation*

Öz: *Türk ve Ermeni toplumları arasında geçmişten gelen ve çözüme kavuşturulamayan somut sorunlar mevcuttur. Bu sorunlar yıllar içerisinde*

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derinleşmiş ve iki toplum arasındaki ilişkileri olumsuz etkileyerek süreklilik arz eden bir çatışmaya dönüştürmüştür. Bu çatışma türü günümüzde fiziksel şiddet içermemektedir fakat “çözümeyen/inatçı çatışmalar” (intractable conflicts) türüne dönüşmüş ve bu çatışmaların niteliklerini taşır hale gelmiştir. Çalışmada iki toplum arasındaki ilişkiler bu çatışma türünün nitelikleri çerçevesinde incelenecektir. Ayrıca bu çatışma türünde var olan sosyo-psikolojik altyapıya da yer verilecektir. Mevcut sosyo-psikolojik altyapı, var olan somut sorunlara ek yeni bir sorunlar kümesi oluşturmuştur. Bu nedenle var olan çatışma türünü diğer çatışma türlerinden ayırarak, çözümlemeyen/inatçı çatışma şeklinde incelemek, sorunu anlayabilmek ve çözümler üretebilmek için önem arz etmektedir. İki toplum arasındaki ilişkilerin olumlu seyri için sadece bilinen sorunlara değil, çözümlemeyen/inatçı çatışma türündeki çatışmaların sosyo-psikolojik altyapısına da odaklanmak ve çözümler üretmek gerektiği anlatılmaya çalışılmaktadır. Sosyo-psikolojik altyapının incelendiği çözümlemeyen/inatçı çatışmalar kavramı kullanılırken Daniel Bar-Tal’ın inceleme yöntemi uygulanacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: çatışma, çözümlemeyen/inatçı çatışma, 1915 olayları, uzlaşma

INTRODUCTION

The events that occurred in 1915 still impact the two neighboring countries of Turkey and Armenia, and continue to remain as a legacy that prevents friendly relations from developing between the two countries. In the relations between the Turkish and Armenian communities, which includes the two countries and the diaspora, hot conflict and physical violence are currently not present. However, even if there is no active fighting, the incidents and issues between the two communities have taken their place in world history as an unsolvable, irreconcilable, and continuous type of conflict. The two communities that shared a common history have become communities that have become completely separated by the 1915 events and World War One. Nowadays, as two different states, communication between them continues to be almost non-existent. The relations, especially with the Diaspora keeping the 1915 events on the agenda, continue on a negative course. Even if it is a period where there are different state boundaries with no active fighting, the negative relationship and conflict (which includes the possibility of the outbreak of active fighting) continues.

Turkish and Armenian communities have achieved neither resolution nor reconciliation of the main problems.

First, this study will explain intractable conflicts that also have similar examples. Following this, the Turkish-Armenian relations¹ transformation into an intractable conflict will be emphasized. In addition to the aspects that are considered problematic between the two communities, the presence of issues that are new and more difficult to see (and which lead to the continuation of the conflict and prevent the resolution²/reconciliation³ processes) will be explained. It will be expressed that for the relations between the two communities to come to a resolution, and then enter a reconciliation process, the points that are aimed to be emphasized in this article should be considered together with concrete issues.

1 The words “Turkish” and “Armenian” are used with emphasis on supra-identity. There is no tendency to refer to both communities having homogeneous views. An evaluation will be made in the framework of the dominant views that the parties are internally stating in a mostly like-minded manner. For this reason, despite the communities internally possessing heterogeneous traits, this paper will use the said words by paying heed to properties that can be used to analyze the communities as a whole.

2 The word “resolution” is used with an emphasis that involves concrete political and economic resolutions.

3 The word “reconciliation” is used with an emphasis on the socio-psychological precautions that involve the societal recovery processes after the political and economic resolution stages of conflicts, and which ensure that the resolutions and peace are permanent.

Turkish and Armenian communities have achieved neither resolution nor reconciliation of the main problems. When considering the partially similar examples in different geographies, the potential recommendations for solving the problems are obvious. What is aimed to be highlighted in this article is not the problems between the two communities or resolution suggestions for them. What is explained here is that resolution proposals cannot even be made, and that even if resolution processes are initiated, they will not be permanent, and that reconciliation processes cannot be initiated. It is underlined that the reason for this is that the conflict has become intractable and that the socio-psychological repertoire of this conflict type possesses a set of problems that prevent the resolution and reconciliation.

Intractable Conflicts

The word conflict, by its connotation, brings to mind physical and armed struggle and also includes the problematic relations between groups that have been in armed conflict and currently have many unsolved issues. When thinking this way, it is possible to find many examples in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Africa. It is difficult to present resolution suggestions to these kinds of conflicts. This is because concrete issues regarding land and natural resources and religious and/or ethnic strife are present in the regions where resolutions to conflicts are needed. Due to many problems being harbored together at the same time, it is quite difficult to explain the reasons for the outbreak and continuity of conflicts and solve them. But for a resolution proposal, it is necessary to make an analysis on the reasons for the conflicts as well as the conflicts' continuity.

We see that many authors are using different terms to define long-term, unresolved conflicts. For example, John Burton, who has been studying on conflict resolutions, while examining regions and countries like the Arab-Israel issue, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Cyprus, Ireland, has described the existing conflicts as "deep-rooted conflicts".⁴ When forming conflict resolutions, the general approach towards these event examinations is developed through the deep-rooted conflict term.

According to Burton, deep-rooted conflicts consist of conflict with the government, conflicts amongst governments, and conflicts between the people and groups in the society or community. These conflicts demand a change and

4 John W. Burton, *Resolving Deep-Rooted Conflict: A Handbook* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America: 1987); John W. Burton (ed.), *Conflict: Human Needs Theory* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: The Macmillan Press, 1990).

a state of conformity in the individuals' behaviors which are unacceptable and beyond a person's tolerance and skills.⁵ Concrete problems are present in these kinds of conflicts, but the said conflicts have gone way beyond the present problems and a perception of insolubility has been set. These kinds of conflicts occur over fundamental needs that cannot be reconciled. The conflicts can occur in any situation where there is inequality, and where rights over identity and participation are restrained. It is seen that the most brutal conflicts can arise in situations where cultural values are attempted to be preserved.⁶

Another term that has been developed regarding unresolved conflicts is "protracted conflicts". This term, which has been associated with Edward Azar, and even if it mostly deals with intra-state and inter-communal conflicts, can involve many kinds of conflicts. Refusal of basic human needs, attacks related to identity, and social injustice can be mentioned together with these conflicts. According to Azar, protracted conflicts are those that are long lasting, frequently involve violence, and are maintained between social groups for basic needs like security, recognition, acceptance, and access to political institutions and economic participation.⁷ In his studies up until the 1970's and the late 1980's, Edward Azar has used the examples of Lebanon, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Northern Ireland, Ethiopia, Israel, Sudan, Cyprus, Iran, Nigeria, and South Africa. It is necessary to highlight that, whether violent or not, protracted conflicts continue in these regions in our present time.

One of the subjects that Edward Azar emphasizes the most when using the term protracted conflict is identity and the role of the identity issue in conflicts. Azar has not clearly stated that he has taken the identity issue as a basic unit of analysis. However, Ronald J. Fisher states that the basic unit of analysis in Azar's studies is the identity group.⁸ The identity groups stated here are described as ethnic, racial, religious, and linguistic. This allows for the expression of socially and politically obligatory human needs.⁹ Group identity is directly connected to the provision of basic needs such as security, recognition, and justice. For example, if identity groups perceive pressure or unjust treatment in the form of the rejection of the basic needs of security,

5 John W. Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 15.

6 Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 15.

7 Edward E. Azar, "The Analysis and Management of Protracted Social Conflict," Vamik D. Volkan, Joseph V. Montville, Demetrios A. Julius (eds.), in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships: Unofficial Diplomacy at Work II* (Lexington M.A.: Lexington Publishing, 1991), 93.

8 Ronald J. Fisher, *Interactive Conflict Resolution* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 5.

9 Fisher, *Interactive Conflict Resolution*, 5.

recognition, fairness, and political participation, it becomes easier for conflicts to arise.¹⁰

According to Edward Azar, there are four main reasons for protracted conflicts:¹¹ The first is communal content. What is aimed to be explained by communal content is that there are groups in the community that have ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural differences and that these groups have become politicized.¹² The second reason is human needs. Identity groups not being able to reach their basic needs is an important reason for conflict.¹³ Azar states that concrete needs do not directly lead to conflicts.¹⁴ If some identity groups do not have access to social economic institutions that provide the allocation of basic needs, thus the society's top structures, the odds of conflicts occurring increase. The hindering of the fair distribution of resources or preventing attendance to institutions that provide the allocation of these resources can lead to conflicts.¹⁵

The third reason is the role of governments and the state. Azar emphasizes that the state and government play a critical role in the determining of the individuals' and groups' needs or in the prevention of reaching these needs.¹⁶ It is stated that in communities where there are protracted conflicts, the characteristic of the states are mostly those that do not meet the needs of the individual, and which are insufficient, limited, fragile, and run by authoritarian governments.¹⁷ In addition to this situation, a rapid population increase, limited resources, and the state's political capacity have also been listed as important factors.¹⁸ The fourth and final reason is international connections. Azar explains international connections in two separate contexts; economic connection with the international system and a military connection with great states.¹⁹ According to Azar, protracted conflicts have different meanings from conflicts in previous periods. In this conflict type, the separation between internal and external resources and internal and external actors has become blurred. Many

10 Fisher, *Interactive Conflict Resolution*, 5.

11 Edward E. Azar, *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict* (Vermont: Dartmouth Publishing Company, 1990), 7-12.

12 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 7.

13 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 7-10.

14 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 9.

15 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 9.

16 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 10-11.

17 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 10.

18 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 11.

19 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 11, 12.

reasons and conflict dynamics, and varying objectives are reflected to the actors and aims. Moreover, the starting and finishing points in these conflicts are uncertain.²⁰

The common point between the terms John Burton and Edward Azar use for conflicts is that both thinkers make a connection between conflicts and human needs. Both thinkers have emphasized that individuals and groups have the rights of identity, dignity, security, equity, and the right to participate in decision-making processes. The prevention of access to these rights or the refusal these rights make up the main reasons for conflicts.

Another thinker who dwells on the term conflict, Louis Kriesberg, prefers the term “intractable conflicts”. Kriesberg states that there are four important properties bound together in these conflict types and that they cannot be solved due to this reason.²¹ The first is that the conflict is protracted. The conflict has to be long-lasting and at least one generation must have been brought up with the reality of conflict and to have developed feelings of hostility due to living under stressful situations.²² Secondly, in the past or in the present, it was/it is expected that the conflict would have included/will include physical violence in a fluctuating manner. It needs to be clear that the physical violence has affected the whole community and is aimed towards that community.²³ Another property regarding the conflict is that the perception that this conflict type cannot be solved has taken root. Because there is no winner amongst the conflicting sides, the sides continuing the conflict or not cooperating for a resolution and even taking future precautions thinking that it will continue in the future are consequently encountered.²⁴ The last conflict trait that Kriesberg expresses is that the conflict, whether it occurs in a period containing violence or not, requires a large scale material or moral investment. What is meant by “material” is military, technological, and financial spending and investments. What is meant by “moral” is the whole community being influenced psychologically and the community dealing with feelings of hatred and stress.²⁵

According to Kriesberg, the duration of the conflict and whether people are beginning to ask whether foreign intervention is needed are significant issues

20 Azar, ... *Protracted Social Conflict*, 6.

21 Louis Kriesberg, “Intractable Conflicts,” E. Weiner (ed.), *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence* (New York: The Continuum Publishing, 1998), 332-342.

22 Kriesberg, “Intractable Conflicts.”

23 Kriesberg, “Intractable Conflicts.”

24 Kriesberg, “Intractable Conflicts.”

25 Kriesberg, “Intractable Conflicts.”

in determining the types of the conflicts.²⁶ Furthermore, when intractable conflicts are the case, none of the parties consider changing or reconciling with their own (fundamental) values.²⁷ This attitude is actually directly connected to the issue of identity. In these types of conflicts, the perception that the individual's own or collective identity is directly threatened is present.²⁸ Another trait is that the parties invest in these conflicts and this situation becomes a way of life for activists.²⁹ This is because the parties' fundamental interests are under threat.³⁰

Among the prominent academics that use the “intractable conflicts” term, Daniel Bar-Tal completely accepts the four basic conflict traits that Kriesberg lists. However, he has broadened and deepened the term by adding three more items to these traits. According to Bar-Tal, in addition to the four traits in these types of conflicts, one of the important traits is that the conflict constitutes an all-out struggle (akin to a total war) for the community. The conflict is perceived as “an inseparable part” of the fundamental aims, needs, and values that create the community and allow it to survive.³¹ Generally, it can consist of multifaceted and fundamental subjects like culture, religion, land disputes, becoming a state, and the economy. Another trait of the conflicts is that every event and development in the conflict is perceived as a “zero-sum” game. In this case, one side's absolute gain is the other side's absolute loss.³² Lastly, Bar-Tal states that these kinds of conflicts have a central place in the lives of the individuals. When the individuals of the community in conflict make decisions for themselves or the community, they are always compelled to consider the conflict.³³

As it can be seen, when a conflict is present, different terms and conflict traits can stand out. All the different terms are developed to explain the unresolved conflict types and find a resolution by explaining the conflict reasons. Explaining why any given conflict cannot in any way be resolved is the most important step to be taken on the path to a resolution. Generally, conflicts

26 Louis Kriesberg, “Conclusion: Research and Policy Implications,” Louis Kriesberg, Terrell A. Northrup, Stuart J. Thorson (eds.), *Intractable Conflicts and Their Transformation* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 214.

27 Kriesberg, “... Research and Policy Implications,” 214-215.

28 Kriesberg, “... Research and Policy Implications,” 215.

29 Kriesberg, “... Research and Policy Implications,” 215.

30 Kriesberg, “... Research and Policy Implications,” 216.

31 Daniel Bar-Tal, “Societal Beliefs in Times of Intractable Conflicts: The Israeli Case,” *International Journal of Conflict Management*, Issue 9 (1998), 22-50.

32 Bar-Tal, “Societal Beliefs...”

33 Bar-Tal, “Societal Beliefs...”

involve unsolved concrete reasons, but it is observed that there is always something more than the concrete reasons in the social perception.

One of the most important points that can be stated regarding intractable conflicts is that the conflict's socio-psychological repertoire manages the conflicts to take another shape. Many problems that are concrete and difficult to solve already exist in such conflicts. When these problems continue unsolved for a long time, the socio-psychological repertoire turns in to a new reason of the conflict and makes the resolution and reconciliation even more difficult. Daniel Bar-Tal mentions that, when intractable conflicts are the case, there is a socio-psychological repertoire apart from the existing concrete conflict reasons. According to Bar-Tal, this socio-psychological repertoire consists of three main elements: collective memory, ethos of conflict, and collective emotional orientation.³⁴ These three main elements create a new, very important situation for intractable conflicts and a new problems set. The socio-psychological repertoire formed in these kinds of conflicts becomes a reason for why resolution and reconciliation processes are not developed for the conflict. When listing the concrete reasons for conflicts, this socio-psychological repertoire should be added as an item. Moreover, this item causes the other problems to either not be discussed, or resolution proposals to not be made, or for the resolution process to not be maintained even if it was initiated.

One of the most important points that can be stated regarding intractable conflicts is that the conflict's socio-psychological repertoire manages the conflicts to take another shape. Many problems that are concrete and difficult to solve already exist in such conflicts. When these problems continue unsolved for a long time, the socio-psychological repertoire turns in to a new reason of the conflict and makes the resolution and reconciliation even more difficult.

The first trait in the socio-psychological repertoire of intractable conflicts is collective memory. Social beliefs regarding collective memory develop with time, and after a while, even what has happened in the past may no longer have any significance. This is because what has occurred in the past is being used today in a functional sense. Collective memory is formed through channels of official institutions, official history, or social institutions and establishments. The reasons for the occurrence of conflicts and violent events can be

34 Daniel Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations of Intractable Conflicts," *American Behavioral Scientist*, Issue 50 (2007), 1435.

legitimized in collective memory.³⁵ In general, there is a positive perception for one's own side, and a negative perception for the other side.³⁶ Moreover, there is a strong conviction that the other side's actions lack legitimacy and all sides are of the thought that they are the victim.³⁷

An important trait in the collective memories of groups in conflict is that the opposing groups selectively remember the information regarding the past. During this selective remembering, it is seen that the sides take what they want from the information regarding the same event and concrete situations, and exclude other information.³⁸ Selective collective memory can lead to sides remembering and passing on the same event in an utterly different fashion. At the same time, with selective collective memory, events are perceived in an easy, quick, and black and white manner, and the current continuity of the memory is given meaning.³⁹

According to Bar-Tal, the second trait of the socio-psychological repertoire regarding conflict is the ethos of conflict.⁴⁰ In one sense, the ethos of conflict is a narrative that society has created for the present.⁴¹ The perception of continuous conflicts at the present time occurs through the ethos of conflict. According to Bar-Tal, the ethos of conflict signals the social consciousness and makes connections between group members. Moreover, it can give meaning to social life by making a connection between the aims of the present and the future.⁴² Bar-Tal states that when intractable conflicts are the case, the parties develop a certain type of ethos and this is named as the ethos of conflict. The ethos of conflict provides a clear picture regarding the conflict, the aims and necessities of the conflict, and the group's own and the opposing group's image.⁴³ The ethos of conflict does not only occur during the violent periods of the conflict, but can continue to occur in a period of peace as well and is supported with the narratives in the collective memory.⁴⁴

35 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1436.

36 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1436-1438.

37 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1438.

38 Gavriel Salomon, "A Narrative-Based View of Coexistence Education," *Journal of Social Issues*, Volume 60, Issue 2 (2004), 275-276.

39 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1436.

40 The meaning of "ethos" is: "the set of beliefs, ideas, etc. about the social behaviour and relationships of a person or group." The word also points to a system of values and cultural traits. See: "Ethos," *Cambridge Dictionary*, accessed February 8, 2018, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/s/%C3%B6zl%C3%BCK/ingilizce/ethos>

41 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1438.

42 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1438.

43 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1438.

44 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1438.

Bar-Tal states that intractable conflicts lead to eight basic social views that form the ethos of conflict.⁴⁵ It is possible to list the social opinions in the following way: the opinion that the group's own aims are justified, the social opinions about security, a positive collective consciousness of individuality, the opinion that one's own group is a victim, the social opinions that decrease the opposing group's legitimacy, the social opinion regarding nationalism/patriotism, the social opinion that it is necessary to be unified against external threats, and the social opinion that the group's ultimate wish is peace.

Bar-Tal has states that the third trait of socio-psychological repertoire is collective emotional orientation. According to the author, in communities that have intractable conflicts, some collective emotional orientations form and become dominant.⁴⁶ The most important of the emotion orientations are the feelings of fear, hate, anger, guilt, and pride. Conflicts involving violence is a major factor in the formation of these feelings.

The socio-psychological repertoire is as important as the other concrete social and political problems. It leads to the continuity of the conflicts and can cause cognitive closure against all processes that can occur between communities such as meetings, resolution, and reconciliation. The socio-psychological repertoire has a functional side that supports the perpetuation of the problems caused by conflicts. There are situations when the said repertoire helps in fulfilling needs, dealing with stress, and dealing with the enemy.⁴⁷ Moreover, it can lead to a stage in which unethical behaviors (including resorting to physical violence) become legitimized.⁴⁸ It is possible to see a similar socio-psychological repertoire in the Turkish-Armenian relations. In the next section, the intractable conflict traits and the socio-psychological repertoire of conflicts will be implemented onto the Turkish-Armenian relations.

Turkish-Armenian⁴⁹ Relations and the Intractable Conflict

The term “intractable conflicts” can be applied both quantitatively and qualitatively to many conflicts around the world. Many traits of this conflict type is observed in the Turkish-Armenian relations and in throughout the

45 Daniel Bar-Tal, *Shared Beliefs in a Society: Social Psychological Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8; Bar-Tal, “Societal Beliefs...”

46 Bar-Tal, “Sociopsychological Foundations...,” 1439.

47 Bar-Tal, “Sociopsychological Foundations...,” 1440.

48 Bar-Tal, “Sociopsychological Foundations...,” 1441.

49 See footnote 2.

Armenian Question. The Armenian Question, due to it causing a freeze in the relations between the two communities for over hundred years and causing it to increasingly go on a negative course, demonstrates that it should be evaluated as an intractable conflict. The addition of intractable conflict traits to the current issues between the Turkish and Armenian communities can also mean the occurrence of a new issue in the relations between the two communities. Almost all of the traits of intractable conflicts have taken root in the Turkish-Armenian controversy. The related web of relations prevents a resolution process from taking place. Thus, this makes the resolution initiatives, the permanence of these processes, and finally, a real reconciliation impossible.

Determining the type of the problems and conflict is a crucial process for initiating communication and attempts regarding resolution. This is so because shifting the relations to a positive course cannot be done through historical findings alone. Like in all the other intractable conflict types, searching for a total resolution and accordingly developing a strategy will be needed. For this reason, determining the type of conflict also has importance. In the rest of the study, the intractable conflicts term developed by Louis Kriesberg and Daniel Bar-Tal will be applied especially onto the Armenian question.

The first trait of the intractable conflicts is that they are protracted. According to Kriesberg, for the conflict to be considered as protracted, it has to last long and at least one generation has to have been raised with the reality of conflict. Moreover, it is also expected that feelings of animosity have developed due to stressful conditions.⁵⁰ In terms of the Armenian question, the relations of the two communities having been cut off for more than a hundred years. The tense nature of the relations and the passing of a few generations since the onset of the troubles indicates a sufficiently long time. Additionally, despite the passing of a long period of time, the 1915 events (on which an agreement cannot be reached) are being kept alive as if they had occurred recently. Especially in the diaspora Armenians, the 1915 events are being transferred from generation to generation. The said events function like a common identity in all the diaspora Armenians and constitute the most important piece of their identity. By means of this common identity's potent transfer, new generations take over a historical identity laden with stress as if the events had occurred very recently.

In an important study conducted in the Armenian diaspora by Donald E. Miller and Lorna Tourian Miller, it has been revealed that depressive personality

50 Kriesberg, "Intractable Conflicts."

traits connected to the 1915 events were very commonly seen among the members of the Armenian diaspora.⁵¹ As it can be seen, the Armenian Question has the necessary conditions for it to be considered as a protracted conflict; it has been a long-lasting conflict, a few generations have been aware of the presence of this conflict, and there is the presence of stress causing conditions.

A second trait of intractable conflicts is the presence of violent events.⁵² There have been two important periods involving violence between the two communities. The first of these were the 1915 events in which there were a high number of casualties. After this date, the activities of the terrorist organizations such as ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) were witnessed between 1975 and 1985. Forty six people have lost their lives and close to three hundred people have been wounded as a result of ASALA's acts of terrorism. The influence of the attacks have been large due to the fact that those who had been attacked were Turkish officials and the fact that civilians in public places were exposed to the attacks as well. An intensive violent event has not occurred between the two communities after these dates. However, as the violence of the past leaves deep impacts, the impacts and echoes of individual attacks are considerable, as it has been the case in Hrant Dink's death. Specifically speaking, the 1915 events continue to have an insoluble and relation-freezing characteristic. There is no condition that the intractable conflict types have to have the presence of continuing violent events. What is important is the presence of a history of violence among the communities and that the impact of this history continues to be felt considerably today. This situation corresponds to the second trait of intractable conflicts.

The third trait in these conflicts is the general opinion and perception that the conflict is insoluble.⁵³ No meetings have even started among the parties and there is a settled perception that this situation will continue in the coming years. Moreover, with the perception of the conflict's continuity, instead of developing proposals for resolution, the parties ponder over the strategies for the coming years within a context of insolubility. More particularly, the Diaspora working on acts or texts of condemnation for next years is the best example of this situation.

51 Donald E. Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, "Memory and Identity across the Generations: A Case Study of Armenian Survivors and Their Progeny," *Qualitative Sociology*, Volume 14, Issue 1 (1991), 13-38.

52 Kriesberg, "Intractable Conflicts."

53 Kriesberg, "Intractable Conflicts."

The fourth trait of intractable conflicts is that they require large-scale investments for a resolution.⁵⁴ The failure experienced with starting any kind meeting in the Turkish-Armenian relations is actually a sign that it is tacitly known how minor initiatives will not be sufficient and that large-scale investments are needed. Something that is frequently stated when the subject is the Armenian issue is that the said issue should be left to the historians. However, historical studies regarding the conflict would only be one part of the resolution and reconciliation process. In these kinds of conflicts, a great number of social sciences such as international law, sociology, psychology, and political science should be utilized together. Furthermore, the possible resolution processes would require political, military, psychological, economic, and media-related support as much as they would require an academic platform. By looking at how fast the political dialogue between Turkey and Armenia⁵⁵ started and ended, it is possible to understand that political initiatives alone are insufficient in bringing resolution to intractable conflicts.

The fifth trait of intractable conflicts is the perception that the conflict is all-encompassing (akin to total war).⁵⁶ It is difficult to mention the presence of this perception for the Turkish side. For the Armenian side and especially the diaspora, however, the total war-like perception can clearly be seen. According to this perception, the conflict is an inseparable part of the community's existence and survival and its ability to sustain its existence. The said conflict is at the center of the basic social values and identity. The Armenian community keeping the 1915 events (the starting point of the conflict) alive, sustaining it as an inseparable part of its identity, and transferring it from generation to another is the evidence that the conflict is considered necessary for the community's continued existence.⁵⁷

The sixth trait of intractable conflicts is that the conflict subjects are considered to be "zero sum" in their nature.⁵⁸ Both sides winning at the same time is not considered possible and one side winning means the other side losing. In any case, reconciliation is not considered possible with this kind of a perception. This is so because, the smallest concession made by one side will be considered

54 Kriesberg, "Intractable Conflicts."

55 Regarding Turkey's opening policy during this period, see: Mitat Çelikpala, "Türkiye ve Kafkasya: Reaksiyoner Dış Politikadan Proaktif Ritmik Diplomasiye Geçiş," *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Cilt 7, Sayı 25 (Bahar 2010).

56 Bar-Tal, "Societal Beliefs..."

57 For an article written on this subject, see: Ebru Çoban-Öztürk, "Tarih, Travma ve Kimlik: Ermeni Diasporada Kimlik ve Kimliğin Yeni Nesillere Aktarımı," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Sayı 52 (2015), 141-167.

58 Bar-Tal, "Societal Beliefs..."

as a major gain for the other side, and thus neither side draws near to make mutual concessions on various subjects in the name of reconciliation.

The last trait of intractable conflicts is that the conflict commands a central position for the individuals of the community.⁵⁹ Again, it is not possible to mention this for the Turkish side. But for the Armenians and especially the Diaspora, the 1915 events, as the main axis of the conflict, constitutes a central place in the lives of all individuals. This is so because the recognition of the 1915 events as a genocide and announcing it to the whole world is an inseparable part of the identities of all Armenians. In fact, for the diaspora Armenians, who are a very heterogeneous community, the 1915 events function as a glue that binds the community together.⁶⁰ This identity holds an important place in the individuals' daily decisions such as where to live, who to form friendships with, and who to marry.

As it can be seen, the nature and the socio-psychological repertoire of the intractable conflict are met in the Turkish-Armenian relations.

As it can be seen, the nature and the socio-psychological repertoire of the intractable conflict are met in the Turkish-Armenian relations. In addition, it is necessary to highlight the presence of the nature of the intractable conflict. When Daniel Bar-Tal examines intractable conflicts, he bases his examinations on the Arab-Israel conflict and shapes his studies in the name of the resolution of the conflict.⁶¹ What is interesting is that Bar-Tal's categorization and explanations can be applied to almost all intractable conflicts around the world. Regarding the Armenian Question, the state of conflict lacking physical violence can have a place in these practices as well. In this conflict type, as stated earlier, Bar-Tal divides the socio-psychological repertoire into three main titles, which are: collective memory, ethos of conflict, and collective emotional orientation.⁶²

Firstly, we see that in the socio-psychological repertoire, collective memory plays an important role for the Armenians and especially the Diaspora. Even if collective memory has an important place for the Turkish side as well, the tendency for constantly keeping this memory up-to-date is not high as it is in

59 Bar-Tal, "Societal Beliefs..."

60 Bar-Tal, "Societal Beliefs...", 22 ; Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 242.

61 For an example of these studies, see: Eran Halperin and Daniel Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Barriers to Peace Making: An Empirical Examination within the Israeli Jewish Society," *Journal of Peace Research*, Volume 48, Issue 5 (September 2011), 637-651.

62 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations...", 1435-1440.

the Diaspora. For the Armenians, collective memory and -especially- keeping the 1915 events up-to-date have great functional meaning. Because, for the highly heterogeneous Diaspora with a history of conflicts,⁶³ this issue is seen as a turning point that forms a common identity.⁶⁴ In the Armenian diaspora, political, religious, linguistic, and regional differences have been present since the day they left their homeland. The Armenian diaspora members have carried the disputes in the places they had lived to the places they have moved to. For this reason, the 1915 events and their common demand regarding the 1915 events being recognized as a genocide serves as a unifying factor. The violent aspects of the 1915 events are of course filled with negative meanings and events in both the context of the Armenians and universal values. However, it should be accepted that the Armenians evaluating a country and its society with no remaining connection to the said events with the same perception of the past is a worrying approach. As Bar-Tal asserts, positive perceptions regarding one's own side and completely negative perceptions regarding the other side are present on both sides and it is clear that this stance has an influence in the continuity of the conflict. This is so because it is one of the important obstacles blocking communication between the two sides.

Furthermore, the parties remembering the same event in the conflict in different ways and presenting different data regarding the conflict is also a commonly seen situation in collective memory.⁶⁵ In this situation, which is referred as selective collective memory, events are presented in completely different ways for the parties and in ways that will support their own perceptions. For example, regarding the number of those who have lost their lives in the 1915 events, there are critical differences between the two parties. While the authors who look at the events from the Armenians' side present the number of people who lost their lives in varying numbers between eight hundred thousand and two million,⁶⁶ the Turkish side refers to these numbers as three hundred thousand

63 S. P. Pattie, "Armenians in Diaspora," E. Herzig, M. Kurkchian (eds.), *The Armenians Past and Present in the Making of National Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 131.

64 Panossian, *The Armenians...* ; Çoban-Öztürk, "Tarih, Travma ve Kimlik..."

65 Salomon, "A Narrative-Based View..."

66 Some of the authors who state that the number of those who have lost their lives is between 800,000 and 1,500,000: Rebecca Joyce Frey, *Genocide and International Justice* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 80 ;

Donald E. Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 44.

Some of the authors who state that the number of those who have lost their lives is one million: Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism and the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1 ; Richard L. Rubenstein, "Jihad and Genocide: The Case of the Armenians," S. L. Jacobs, (ed.), in *Confronting Genocide: Judaism, Christianity, Islam* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), 132 ; Simon Payaslian, "The United States Response to the

at the most.⁶⁷ Some academics who are working on the subject and show different numbers from both sides state that this number varies between six hundred thousand and eight hundred thousand.⁶⁸

Secondly, the ethos of conflict is present in the socio-psychological repertoire of the conflict. The narratives of past events being valid today forms the ethos of conflict. The ethos of conflict is the way a transpired conflict is perceived today. Like collective memory, in the ethos of conflict, how an event is

Armenian Genocide,” Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), in *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2006), 62 ; Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), 5 ; Robert Melson, “Provocation or Nationalism: A Critical Inquiry into the Armenian Genocide of 1915,” Richard G. Hovannisian (ed.), in *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1986), 61-84. The International Association of Genocide Scholars stated in a manifesto they published that the number of people who have lost their lives is higher than one million. Yair Auron, *The Banality of Denial: Israel and the Armenian Genocide* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003), Appendix B, 301.

Alvarez states that the number of those who have lost their lives is between 600,000 and 2,000,000. Alex Alvarez, *Governments, Citizens, and Genocide: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary Approach* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 11.

Taner Akçam, stating that he took into account Ottoman documents, claims that the total number is around 800,000. Taner Akçam, *İnsan Hakları ve Ermeni Sorunu: İttihat ve Terakki'den Kurtuluş Savaşı'na* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2002), 333 and Taner Akçam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2004), 199.

Kevorkian claims that at the end of 1915, approximately 600,000 Armenians had lost their lives, and that by 1918, this number had increased due to forced religious conversion, children being taken for payment or not into homes of Turkish and Kurdish communities, and the deaths in the immigration areas. Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 693.

The American ambassador who served in Istanbul between 1913 and 1916, H. Morgenthau, states that the number of those who had lost their lives was 600,000. However, he claimed afterwards that “maybe it [was] close to one million”. Henry Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1918), 322.

67 Some of the authors who state that the number of those who have lost their lives is 300,000 at the most (generally between 200,000-300,000): Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Sürgünden Soykırma Ermeni İddiaları*, 9. Baskı (İstanbul: Babiali Kültür Yayıncılığı, 2010), 75 ; Yavuz Ercan, *Toplu Eserler I: Ermenilerle İlgili Araştırmalar* (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 2006), 170 ; Kemal Çiçek, *Ermenilerin Zorunlu Göçü 1915-1917* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2012), 271 ; Hikmet Özdemir, Kemal Çiçek, Ömer Turan, Ramazan Çalık ve Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç*, 4. Baskı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2010), 98-99.

68 Zürcher states that the number of those who have lost their lives cannot be provided in a clear manner, but, when those who had immigrated and who lived in the Ottoman lands before the war are considered, the closest number that comes to mind is a figure between 600,000 and 800,000. Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 115.

Meanwhile, some of the authors who state that the number of those who have lost their lives is between 600,000 and 650,000 are as follows: James Bryce ve Arnold Toynbee, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermenilere Yönelik Muamele, 1915-1916, Cilt 2*, Çevirenler: Atilla Tuygan ve Jülide Değirmenciler (İstanbul: Pencere Yayınları, 2006), 496 ; Michael M. Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 17 ; Guenter Lewy, *1915 Osmanlı Ermenilerine Ne Oldu? Çarpıtılan-Değiştirilen Tarih*, Çeviren: Ceren Elitez (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2011), 372 ; Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1983), 130.

perceived today is more important than what has occurred in the past. The ethos of conflict expresses events by transcribing them to the present and gives information about the image of both groups. According to Bar-Tal, the ethos of conflict in intractable conflicts leads to social beliefs that are drawn with sharp lines.⁶⁹ It is evident that in the Turkish-Armenian relations, the ethos of conflict leads to social beliefs that seem to be unchangeable in both of communities. Both sides appear to be confident that they are right regarding the 1915 events. Moreover, it seems very difficult for the sides to come together in a common belief. Both sides are making opposite claims regarding those who have lost their lives in the events, whether the events were a genocide or not, and whether it was forced migration or relocation and resettlement. Additionally, the sides accept that their own actions were carried out due to security reasons. For example, for the Ottoman Empire, the relocation and resettlement were carried out due to the rebellions⁷⁰ and massacres⁷¹ carried out by the Armenians. Meanwhile, many Armenian authors argue that the rebellions carried out against the Ottomans were a reprisal carried out for the sake of their own security.⁷² Differing from both of the views, Guenter Lewy has states that, for example, mutual massacres were carried out in the Van uprising.⁷³ It is evident that the 1915 events, or the war in general, was full of losses and bad memories for both sides. However, as it is the case in every intractable conflict, it is seen that the sides possess a positive perception of themselves and only emphasize the negative aspects of the other group or groups. Thus, it should be stated that the sides focus on only their own sense of victimhood.

The presence of collective emotional orientation, which is the third trait of the socio-psychological repertoire, is clearly present in the Turkish-Armenian relations. According to Bar-Tal, there are dominant collective emotions in intractable conflicts.⁷⁴ Even if it is not easy to generalize about the Turkish and Armenian communities, mutual anger and, from time to time, feelings of hatred can be seen. It is naturally easier to observe hate speech in the Diaspora. This is because the Diaspora is formed of the second or third generation relatives of those who directly lived through the 1915 events. The mutual presence of these feelings has been one of the important factors that has transformed a past relation of violence to a present intractable conflict.

69 Daniel Bar-Tal, ... *Social Psychological Analysis* and Bar-Tal, "Societal Beliefs..."

70 Halaçoğlu, *Sürgünden Soykırıma...*, 20 ; Lewy, *1915 Osmanlı Ermenilerine Ne Oldu?*, 157.

71 Özdemir ve diğerleri, *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç*, 58.

72 Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Ermeni Soykırımı Tarihi: Balkanlardan Anadolu ve Kafkasya'ya Etnik Çatışma*, Çeviren: Ali Çakıroğlu (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2008), 601-608.

73 Lewy, *1915 Osmanlı Ermenilerine Ne Oldu?*, 156-164, 189-192.

74 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations..." 1439.

Intractable conflicts influence and shape social identity. As the violence of the conflict or the duration increases, the feelings of social belonging, security, and solidarity consolidate with the perception of unification in social identity. When meanings regarding the ethos of conflict and collective memory take place in social identity in a powerful way, the social identity reaches a level in which it supports the continuity of the conflict.

The socio-psychological repertoire in intractable conflicts deepens further as the social communion increases. Similar productions and works in the media or institutions and organizations causes the issue to turn into a set of unquestioned presuppositions. Both communities' official histories reflect this socio-psychological repertoire in the Turkish-Armenian relations. In the Armenian diaspora, even if an official history is not the case, the Diaspora repeatedly transfers this socio-psychological repertoire through think tanks, non-governmental organizations, schools, and churches. The family is especially very much on the foreground of identity transfer. Due to this transfer, the conflict's socio-psychological repertoire continues as if the past events of the conflict are continuing as well. The fact that the people who write and speak on the subject of conflict feel the need to apply censorship to themselves shows just how ingrained this socio-psychological repertoire is.

Turkish-Armenian relations have been eroded to a point where a resolution cannot be developed in the short term. The factual problems and the dissidence between the approaches are difficult to overcome. Together with the nature of the intractable conflict, communication and developing peaceful bilateral relations are highly difficult to achieve.

Conclusion

This study has aimed to highlight how the problems of the past can lead to conflict continuity between two communities in the present day. It has been highlighted that, even if a conflict does not contain a physical violence dimension, it can continue and become an intractable conflict. Together with problems turning into this conflict type, a new type of problem is added between the two communities, which is the socio-psychological repertoire that forms the conflict.

In intractable conflicts, the social basis that develops in time has a functional role in people dealing with the conflict. But as time passes, this socio-

psychological repertoire becomes a prism that influences the gathering of information, the forming of bilateral relations, and the making of decisions. This can result in all decisions to become differentiated and influenced as they pass through this prism, and lead to the occurrence of cognitive closure.⁷⁵ Thus, this socio-psychological repertoire that is formed during and after the conflict becomes one of the main factors that causes the conflict to gain continuity and leads to the inability to create resolutions.

Turkish-Armenian relations have been eroded to a point where a resolution cannot be developed in the short term. The factual problems and the dissidence between the approaches are difficult to overcome. Together with the nature of the intractable conflict, communication and developing peaceful bilateral relations are highly difficult to achieve. It is clear that developing a resolution or entering a reconciliation process is harder in these types of conflicts. To develop positive relations between the two communities while considering the Diaspora, and to create peaceful resolutions, people need to consider the intractable conflict traits and to focus on resolutions from this perspective.

75 Bar-Tal, "Sociopsychological Foundations..." 1446-1147.

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THE FOUNDATION OF THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION AND ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN VIEW OF RUSSIAN ARCHIVAL SOURCES (1890-1915)*

(RUS ARŞIV BELGELERİ İŞİĞİNDA ERMENİ DEVRİMÇİ
FEDERASYONUNUN KURULUŞU VE OSMANLI
İMPARATORLUĞU'NDAKİ FAALİYETLERİ (1890-1915))

Olga BYKOVA HERGÜL

PhD Candidate,
Ural State University (Ural Federal University - UrFU)

Abstract: *Established in 1890, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF - Dasnaktsutyun) is a prominent Armenian nationalist organization that sought to attain an independent Armenia. Like other Armenian nationalist organizations, the ARF engaged in propaganda and agitation to draw the world's attention towards the Armenian Question. However, ARF was set apart from other Armenian nationalist organizations by its radical mentality and scale of its aggressive acts. In this context, the organization resorted to actions that can be described as terrorism. When examined, Russian archival documents belonging to the years 1890-1915 demonstrate that ARF was heavily involved in forming armed groups for inciting rebellions in the Ottoman Empire. When the First World War began, the ARF decided to side with the Russian Empire to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, the organization's activities and the agitation of the Ottoman Armenians came to represent a serious security threat to the Ottoman Empire. This would eventually lead the Ottoman government to take the radical decision to relocate Ottoman Armenians away from sensitive areas to other parts of the Empire. This article demonstrates that, with the help of Russian archival sources, the ARF's actions had dire consequences for both Ottoman Armenians and Muslims. According to the article, it can be argued that the unbalanced and adventurist methods of ARF damaged the Armenians more than anyone else did.*

* This article utilizes the archival materials gathered by Dr. Mehmet Perinçek during his research at the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF).

Keywords: *Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Armenian Question, Terror, Ottoman Empire, Russia, First World War*

Öz: 1890'da kurulan Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu (EDF - Taşnaksütyun), bağımsız bir Ermenistan'ın kurulması amacını gütmüş önemli bir Ermeni milliyetçi örgüttür. Diğer Ermeni milliyetçi örgütler gibi EDF dünyanın dikkatini Ermeni Meselesini çekmek için propaganda yapmış ve kışkırtıcı faaliyetlerde bulunmuştur. Ancak EDF'yi diğer Ermeni milliyetçi örgütlerden ayıran, bahsi geçen örgütün radikal zihniyeti ve saldırgan faaliyetlerinin boyutları olmuştur. Bu bağlamda örgüt terörizm olarak tanımlanabilecek faaliyetlerde bulunmuştur. 1890-1915 arası Rus arşiv belgeleri incelendiğinde EDF'nin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda ayaklanma çıkartılması için yoğun bir şekilde silahlı grupların oluşturulması sürecine dahil olduğu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı başladığında; EDF, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun aleyhine olacak şekilde Rus İmparatorluğunun yanında yer almıştır. Sonuç olarak örgütün faaliyetleri ve Osmanlı Ermenilerinin kışkırtılması Osmanlı İmparatorluğu için ciddi bir güvenlik tehdidi haline gelmiştir. Bu durum, bir süre sonra Osmanlı hükümetinin radikal bir karar alarak Osmanlı Ermenilerini hassas bölgelerden İmparatorluğun başka bölgelerine sevk ve iskân etmeye karar vermesine yol açmıştır. Bu makale Rus arşiv kaynakları ışığında EDF'nin faaliyetlerinin hem Osmanlı Ermenileri hem de Müslümanları için vahim sonuçları doğurduğunu göstermektedir. Makalede, EDF'nin dengesiz ve maceraperest yöntemlerinin Ermenilere herkesten çok zarar verdiğinin söylenebileceği belirtilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu, Ermeni Meselesi, Terör, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Rusya, Birinci Dünya Savaşı*

INTRODUCTION

The precise date of the emergence of the Armenian Question is a matter of dispute among historians. However, there is consensus that the issue came to the fore in a more profound manner in the last quarter of the 19th century. We can observe that several parallel occurrences influenced the emergence of this question.

One instance we can point to is the emergence of the Armenian Question as a matter concerning the international community underpinned by the desire of the Great Powers to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire.

Parallel to this development, we can observe the beginning of the formation of Armenian nationalist organizations. With the emergence of the Armenian Question at the international arena, the Armenian bourgeoisie came to the opinion that the foundation of an independent Armenia could only become possible with the support of the Great Powers. The said powers became incensed with this development and became the primary supporters of the emerging organizations.

Among the committees and organizations founded, the most prominent was the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF - *Dasnaktsutyun*), also referred to as the Dashnak Party, which was established in 1890. The ARF became distinct from its contemporaries with its insistence on radical Armenian nationalism and use of violence. The use of terrorism was one of the primary tactics of the ARF.

The party's insistence on the use of violence, armed uprisings, and attempts to prepare the ground for foreign intervention into the Ottoman Empire came to represent an existential threat to the continued existence of the Empire.

The beginning of World War One made an already bad situation worse. The ARF collaborated with the armies fighting against the Ottoman Empire, going as far to provide militants to fight in the ranks of enemy armies. The Ottoman government was left with little option other than the relocation of Armenians within the remit of the Relocation and Resettlement Law of 1915.

The Armenian Question as an International Matter

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 is an important date for the Armenian Question becoming a matter of international concern. The signing of the Treaty

of San Stefano after the war formalized the intervention of foreign states in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Article 16 of the Treaty, accepted with the invention of Armenians, stipulates that the Ottoman government undertake reform in the “Armenian provinces”, and that Russia should continue to occupy parts of the Ottoman Empire until these reforms were satisfactorily concluded.

The influence of the Russians as arbiter on behalf of Ottoman Armenians caused consternation for the British and was the cause for the gathering of the Berlin Conference. During the Berlin Conference, Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano was superseded by Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin. This article

As Armenian statesman B. A. Borian emphasized, while the Treaty of Berlin stipulates that the Ottoman government must undertake “reform in areas where Armenians reside,” it ignored the fact that Armenians were widely dispersed throughout the Ottoman Empire, therefore the true aim of the Berlin Treaty was to exert influence over the Empire as a whole.

stipulated that the Ottoman government was bound to undertake reform in the “Armenian provinces” under the supervision of the six Great Powers that participated in the conference. Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin made the Armenian Question, which hitherto had been an internal matter for the Ottoman Empire, a matter concerning the international community.

As Armenian statesman B. A. Borian emphasized, while the Treaty of Berlin stipulates that the Ottoman government must undertake “reform in areas where

Armenians reside,” it ignored the fact that Armenians were widely dispersed throughout the Ottoman Empire, therefore the true aim of the Berlin Treaty was to exert influence over the Empire as a whole.¹ The entry titled “Armenian Question” in the 1926 edition of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia notes that the Treaty of Berlin found support among the “leading lights of the Armenian bourgeoisie in addition to Russia, the other great powers would assist in the foundation of an Armenian state.”²

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation

Armenian nationalism was set to undergo a new stage of developments after its ideological genesis in the 19th century. As Armenian historian Eduard

1 Mehmet Perinçek, *B. A. Boryan'ın Gözüyle Türk-Ermeni Çatışması* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 44.

2 Mehmet Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden 150 Belgede Ermeni Meselesi* (İstanbul: Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, 2013), 31.

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

Oganesyan posits, Armenian circles were aware that without propaganda, agitation, and active organization, the foundation of an independent Armenian state could not be realized.³

With the weakening of the Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers saw an opportunity to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Empire. Armenian intellectuals sought to draw the world's attention to the Armenian Question, but they came to the realization that to succeed in keeping this issue on the international agenda required more serious organized steps.

A great number of Armenian groups and organizations were established during this period. Some of these include the *Narodnaya Volya* (Dastanyan, Mikaelyan, Zavaryan), radical chauvinists (Hatisyan), patriots (O. Argutyun, M. Şatiryan, G. Stepanyan, N. Gagesyan, H. Yusufyan, N. Matisyan, A. Narbekyan), intellectuals gathered around the *Mshak* newspaper (Aknuni), and the self-described Marxist Hunchak Party.⁴

The view of uniting these disparate groups under a single roof came to gain currency among Armenian intellectuals, resulting in the foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation, founded in 1890, supported the theoretical aims of Armenian nationalism and sought to implement the opinions intellectuals had been arguing for. It was agreed that the party should be organized from Tbilisi, Georgia. Among the founders of the party were Hristofor Mikaelyan, Simon Zavaryan, Abram Dastakyan, Levon Sardaryan, Levon Sarkisyan, and Loris-Melikyan.⁵ The party's newspaper *Droshak* (The Flag) was founded the same year. Party organizers were dispatched to "Turkish Armenia", Trabzon, Istanbul, North Caucasus, Baku, and Ahrabadagan in "Iranian Armenia".

The Hunchak Party was initially part of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, but quickly withdrew in 1891, claiming that the ARF did not adequately adhere to the principles of socialism.

The ARF's first party program was published in the September 1894 issue of *Droshak*. The program, while not sufficiently mature and far from lucid, openly states that the policy of the ARF is the economic and political independence of "Turkish Armenia" by means of rebellion.

3 Eduard Oganesyan, *Vek Borbi*, Vol. 1 (München-Moskva: İzdatelstvo "Feniks", 1991), 41.

4 Oganesyan, *Vek Borbi*, 80.

5 Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation - Dashnaksutiun (1890/1924)* (Milan: OEMME Edizioni, 1990), 31.

The period between 1892 and 1895 saw the growth and consolidation of the party. The ARF continued to dispatch organizers to various parts of the Ottoman Empire to engage in the dissemination of propaganda and to prepare the ground for rebellion (Arabo, Markar Varjapet, Avetisyan, Grayr, Tersimi Keri and others). Munitions began to be procured and disseminated within the borders of the Empire from depots in Artptakan (Iran), Sürmeli, Kars, Gyumri, and a munitions factory was established in the Iranian city of Tabriz.

The ARF planned events that would garner attention, particularly in Istanbul. In 1892, Ovannes Yusufyan (Melik) moved from Trabzon to Istanbul and

The strategy of Armenian nationalists in the last quarter of the 19th Century was double pronged. One of the prongs rested on claims of injustice. This was centered on winning over public opinion in the Great Powers to the Armenian cause using diplomatic activity, agitation, and propaganda. The other method was based on the sword. It focused on developing bands inside Turkey and fermenting armed rebellion. These two prongs, which formed the basis of ARF activity, were also forced upon the Armenian people.

established a solid underground base for the ARF in the capital. The party also opened branches in the cities of Trabzon, Batumi, Nakhchivan, Tbilisi, Baku, Gandzan, Karabakh in addition to the Balkans, Egypt, Cyprus, Genève, Paris, Marseille and the United States (in 1896).⁶

The Organizational Activities of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation: One of the Earliest Acts of Terror

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centered on winning over public opinion in the Great Powers to the Armenian cause using diplomatic activity, agitation, and propaganda. The other method was based on the sword. It focused on developing bands inside Turkey and fermenting armed rebellion. These two prongs, which formed the basis of ARF activity, were also forced upon the Armenian people.⁷

Even while in its nascent phase, the ARF stated as early as 1891 that its purpose was to call the Armenian people to arms against their Turkish rulers. Not content with just that, official documents of the organization show that it

6 Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 35, 47.

7 Perinçek, B. A. *Boryan 'ın Gözüyle...*, 45; Oganesyan, *Vek Borbu*, 59.

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

planned armed attacks on state officials. The organization contained a “Terror Organization Committee” to prepare attacks and bring them to realization.⁸

The planned acts of terror mentioned above were set to be organized in Istanbul, were described as the “most suitable setting”⁹ by the historian Oganesyán.

The first leg of this planned terror campaign aimed to assassinate Armenians in the service of the Ottoman state. Among those murdered were Maksut Simon Bey, the head of the Ottoman intelligence organization Artashek, senior gendarmerie officer Adisi Tigran, retired bishop Mambre Benlyan, and surgeon M. Tutunciyev.¹⁰

The ARF was successful in drawing global attention to their cause with the undertaking of two large terror attacks in Istanbul. The first was an attack on the head branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank and subsequently an attack in the Istanbul neighborhood of Samatya.

Twenty-six members of the ARF armed and in possession of explosives, occupied the Imperial Ottoman Bank on 26 August 1896. The one hundred and fifty people inside were taken hostage. Hoping to benefit from Istanbul’s strategic position to garner attention, the ARF members murdered four of the hostages and wounded five others. They passed their demands to the foreign diplomatic missions in Istanbul, eventually managing to secure their own safe passage to France on board the yacht of the French ambassador Le Gironde. Arrested upon arrival in France, Armenian sources suggest that the ARF militants were freed within a short while and managed to return to the Ottoman Empire to continue with their activities.

The raid on the Imperial Ottoman Bank is one of the first instances of the use of terrorism for political ends in modern history. It resulted in clashes between Turks and Armenians on the streets of Istanbul. According to ARF sources, militants belonging to the organization used a total of 154 homemade bombs during the subsequent disturbances in the Samatya neighborhood. It has been recorded that Armenian women joined the ranks of the men during the disturbances. Robert Chalmers, an official from the United States embassy,

8 The charter of the ARF contained the article titled “Terror”, in which it was explained how the party would employ terrorism. For the full text of the charter, please see: GARF Fond 102, Opis 253, Dela 280, List 1-12. There is also a Turkish translation of the text at: Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2007), 54.

9 Oganesyán, *Vek Borbi*, 87.

10 Oganesyán, *Vek Borbi*, 87.

noted that the disturbances were organized based on political, not religious or ethnic, fault lines. The fact that non-Muslims of other denominations were not harmed during the disturbances is an important indicator in this regard.

Georgian statesman and writer Karibi, noted that the ARF reached its aims with these disturbances. Namely, encouraging a clash between Turks and Armenians then subsequently absolving themselves of responsibility. The disturbances succeeded in attracting the attention of European public opinion. According to Armenian statesman Borian, what was termed “public opinion” was that of the influential classes in Europe – crooked journalists, tabloid writers, political adventurers, and those who had thrown in their lot with the British and the Greeks. The decision of the ARF to spill blood in this way can be explained as an attempt to benefit from the desire of the Great Powers to find new markets to exploit in the East.¹¹

The methods of the ARF were in line with the desire of the Great Powers to be given a cause to intervene in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire through the spilling of innocent blood rather than listening to mere chattering from ARF representatives.¹² This strategy is best summarized by the ARF-aligned historian Oganessian; “the Europeans began to sympathize with a nation which many of them had not even previously heard of.”¹³

The next serious act of terror organized by the ARF was the 1897 bombing of the seat of the Ottoman government, the Sublime Port. This act, undertaken by the organization’s Istanbul Central Committee, did not have the desired effect and is generally considered to have been unsuccessful.¹⁴

The ARF’s second general meeting was held in Tbilisi in 1898. This meeting was dedicated to the question of strategy. It was decided that for the purpose of revolt and defense, the ARF would gather weapons and munitions in Istanbul, Cecilia, Sason, and Vaspurakan (modern day Van and its surrounding regions). The meeting also decided to launch a new party publication entitled *Volya* in 1900, which would be established with money extorted from affluent Armenians. Moreover, the ARF decided that the punishment for Armenians who refused to donate to the organization would be death.

11 Perinçek, *B. A. Boryan’ın Gözüyle...*, 48 ; E. Oganessian, *Vek Borby...*, 87 et. al. ; Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 47 ; Arman Kirakosyan, “K Voprosu O Konstantinopolskoy Rezne 1896 Goda,” *Literaturnaya Armeniya*, No. 4 (1989): 100 – referred to from Ch. A. Roberts, “A Mother of Martyrs”, *The Atlantic Monthly*, c.83 (1899): 92.

12 Perinçek, *B. A. Boryan’ın Gözüyle...*, 45 ; L. M. Bolhovitinov, *11 Aralık 1915 Tarihli Resmi Ermeni Raporu*, Hazırlayan: Mehmet Perinçek (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2011), 36.

13 Oganessian, *Vek Borby*, 89.

14 Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 48.

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

The third ARF congress was organized in Vienna in 1904. After this conference, it is observed that the ARF dramatically increased its activities. According to reports of the Tsarist police, the ARF formalized and was “now giving priority to organizational activity with newly founded and reformed bodies such as occupational, rural, paramilitary, defense units, in addition to ‘crazy terror’ organizations established to intimidate opponents. Discipline has increased, and measures have been taken to increase organizational secrecy.”¹⁵

In addition to this, the ARF was continuing its organizational activities in the Caucasus with haste. During the 1905-1907 revolution in Russia, the organization struggled both against the rule of the Tsar and against non-Armenians in the region, particularly non-Muslims. According to Armenian statesman Borian, “with the appearance of the Dashnaks [ARF] in the Caucasus, terrorism and mutual slaughter between communities became the order of the day.”¹⁶ The 1905-1906 clashes between Armenians and Tatars is one of the most important examples in this regard. The Armenian Bolshevik leader O. A. Arutyunyan noted in his memoirs that the ARF “began a campaign of terror under the slogan ‘kill as many Azeris as you can, loot their belongings, have no mercy.’” The ARF members dispersed amongst Armenian villages to deliver speeches inciting massacres, making calls upon the villagers to take up arms so that they could defend Armenians’ “honor and life.” With such speeches, they strove to have the Armenian population arm themselves against the Azeris. Furthermore, ARF brigands engaged in looting, killing the civilian folk, and burning down Azeri villages.¹⁷

The ARF undertook these efforts to change the demographic composition of the South Caucasus to secure an Armenian majority at the expense of Muslims. It was intended that Armenians arriving in the future from Iran and the Ottoman Empire would be allocated the land that Muslims were expected to have abandoned. According to Tsarist police reports, the number of Armenians who migrated to this region reached 500,000 within 5-6 years.¹⁸

The Procurement of Arms and the Arming of the People

The ARF Committees, which had been active since the 1890s in “Turkish Armenia” continued with their activities at the dawn of the 20th Century. During

15 *Dashnaki. Iz Materialov Departmenta Politsii* (Baku: Izdatelstvo “Kommunist” TSK KP Azerbaizhan, 1990), 23 ; Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar*, 23.

16 Perinçek, *B. A. Boryan 'ın Göziyle...*, 48.

17 Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden...*, 66.

18 *Dashnaki. Iz Materialov Departmenta Politsii*, 24 ; Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar*, 24.

this period, the ARF was organized in the cities of Trabzon, Karin (Erzurum), Erzincan (Erzincan), Van, Muş, Mages (Bitlis) and Hnus (Hinis). The primary goal of the groups in these areas was the procurement and dissemination of arms. This activity was undertaken under the supervision of well-known ARF figures such as Rostom, Arabo, Serob, Grayr and Gamul.¹⁹ The primary weapon smuggling routes were from Tebriz, Salmasd and Maku to Vaspurakan. The roads between Kars-Pasen and Erivan-Surmeli were also of importance. Some of the ARF's Tebriz leadership such as Toros, Garo and Sako would often go to Russia, purchase arms and munitions to be sent to Tebriz and Salmasd. These arms would be reassembled at special ARF armories.²⁰

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The prolific trafficking of arms and munitions is mentioned in hundreds of documents and court depositions held in the Russian state archives. These documents, prepared by Russian judicial authorities, are an important source when it comes to an external opinion on the issue.

The summary of court proceedings dated 23 October 1879,²¹ which were sent to the deputy head of the Russian gendarmerie in Yerevan, Staff Captain Grekov, are an indispensable source regarding weapons smuggling. In sum, the proceedings note that an Armenian by the name of Amayak Canpoladov requested that a certain

Kovalenko, a private attached to the *Derbent Piyade Alayı* (Derbent Infantry Regiment), supply him with thirty rifles from military stocks. When Kovalenko asked what the weapons were to be used for, he was told they needed for the defense Armenians who were in the process of uprising in the Ottoman Empire, and that additionally ten Armenian "specialists" would come to receive the weapons from Kovalenko. According to the court proceedings, the Armenians who requested the rifles were "members of an underground Armenian revolutionary organization," and furthermore were involved in the "purchase and sale of weapons for the purpose of revolution."²²

19 Oganessian, *Vek Borby*, 94.

20 Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 52.

21 The dates used in the documents are based on the old Julian calendar used by the Russians. This calendar is 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar in use today.

22 Olga Bykova, "19. Yüzyılın Sonlarında 20. Yüzyılın Başlarında Türkiye'deki Ermeni Hareketiyle İlgili Çarlık Mahkemelerinde Görülen Davalardan Örnekler," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları*, No. 12 (2010): 196.

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

Additional court proceedings note two individuals -either directly or assisted by others- had provided weapon parts from both the state weapons manufacturer and the Moscow arsenal in the guise of scrap metal to be reassembled then sold to Armenians. According to the depositions of the mentioned individuals, 1898 represented a milestone as the demand for illegally procured weapons showed a great increase and buyers began to take a greater interest in the quality of the supplied weapons.²³

In the early years of the 20th Century the armament of Armenians was continuing with haste in “Turkish Armenia,” with the ARF at the head of efforts. Documents from the Russian archives demonstrate the extent to which Armenian groups had undertaken preparations on the eve of World War One, particularly when it came to organizing irregular *çetes* (gangs). The role of certain individuals in these plans must be emphasized.

A report dated 3 June 1904 written on the headed paper of the Tblisi Directorate of Security, noted that “wanted individual Ovanes Tumanyants went to Gyumri on the 25th or 26th of April and from there provided arms and money for a 300-person *çete* that had been assembled to infiltrate Turkey [Ottoman Empire]. According to information obtained, he was also one of the leaders of this *çete*. Nikolay Bagratov Şaverdov, one of his close collaborators, had also gathered Armenian youths in the Ikogat village of the Konzazar region for the purpose of forming *çetes* and provided them with paramilitary instruction. After obtaining consent from Tumanyants, Şaverdov armed the youths and sent them onwards to Turkey.” According to a Tsarist police report, in a two months period over 150 persons had been sent to the Ottoman Empire in this manner.²⁴

The fourth general congress of the ARF was held in Vienna in February 1907. The organization’s/party’s new program was approved and came into force the same year. As before, the ARF program proposed a “Turkish Armenia” and a “Transcaucasian Armenia” that would be independent of each other. The program held that the irrevocable demand of a “Turkish Armenia” would be politically and economically free, have regional autonomy, and maintain a federal relationship with the rest of the Ottoman Empire.²⁵ Other issues dealt with by the party congress included matters of organization, discipline, propaganda, use of tactics, political line, and the necessity for armed rebellion.²⁶

23 Bykova, “19. Yüzyılın Sonlarında...,” 200.

24 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1904, Dela 11.1, List 141, 141ob.

25 Perinçek, B. A. *Boryan'ın Gözüyle...*, 41.

26 *Dashnaki. İz Materialov Departmenta Politsii*, 28 ; Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar*, 28.

Upon further examination, the 1907 party program reveals articles of interest. In the program's "Maximum Demands" section, the necessity of founding "war groups" comprising at least 50 persons to be sent to the Ottoman Empire is mentioned. In line with the party's program, the use of terrorism is one of the most basic strategies of the organization.

The ARF gave importance to the "fighter groups" organized as part of the ARF. Russian police reports mention few distinct types of group. Each of these groups was assigned with the task of only completing the mission assigned to it. One of those was the "Self Defense Group" which was a unit comprised of volunteer Armenian soldiers. They were assigned the task of coming to the fore during uprisings and clashes. According to reports, the other "fighter groups" were founded with the purpose of undertaking assassinations on behalf of the ARF. For example, one of these groups was the "Terror Preparation Committee" comprised of three people. This group's task was to administer and prepare the ground for terrorist activity, produce explosives and procure arms. In addition to this organization, a group was assigned the task of assassinating senior members of the ARF who had fallen out of favor with the leadership. Another group was established with the purpose of assisting the "Terror Preparation Committee" by working with sympathetic police offices to identify persons likely to be harmful to the ARF and placing them under following.

The 1907 program of the ARF stipulated that terrorism would not only be used against opponents, but also against members of the party that had fallen foul of the leadership. In this regard, it was stipulated in the program that punishment would be given to those who breached the terms of the organization by stealing weapons and funds but also for the "crimes" of treachery, betrayal and the murder of comrades.

The punishments to be meted out to party members were clear: warning, expulsion, detainment, and death. The primary task of every ARF member was to protect the secret nature of his domestic and external tasks and to pass intelligence onto his superior. The punishment for violation and non-observance of these principles was terror. Resultantly, not only were Armenians victim of this strategy, but also Russian and Turkish statesmen.²⁷

The methods of the ARF disturbed other Armenian groups and resulted in criticism being directed to the ARF. The *Zang* newspaper published in the

²⁷ Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 41 ; Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar*, 41.

Iranian city of Tabriz in its 14 April 1911 issue criticized the ARF's methods in an article addressed to the Tblisi office of the *Mshak* newspaper:

“The Dashnak Party [ARF] is behaving in an arrogant and aggressive manner. It uses appropriate and murder in pursuit of its goals without a second thought. These vile affairs are carried out with the consent of the educated party leaders. (...) The Dashnaks, who constantly complain of the oppression of the government, are pursuing a form of oppression a thousand times more oppressive than that of the government.”

The article continues by mentioning that the ARF had recently wounded a person who had criticized them.²⁸

The degree of preparedness among the large-scale “war groups” formed during the 1900s is noteworthy. The Zinvor of the ARF (the armed troops of the ARF) possessed modern weapons and a large supply of munitions. Additionally, the ARF founded a military academy in Bulgaria which produced 53 graduate officers in 1907.²⁹ All these elements demonstrate just how comprehensive the ARF's preparations were.

With the passage of time, the organization of these armed groups became more professional and this was reflected in secret police reports. In a report written in the name of a police department chief dated 13 July 1907, it was noted that a leading representative of the ARF's Kars regional leadership was expected to transcend the Ottoman border with the purpose of selecting leaders who would then go on to organize revolutionary *çetes*.

The report continued by stating that the ARF, in an effort to convince the youth to sign up to their organization, was spreading rumors that the Ottoman government intended to exile the Armenians of the provinces of Erzurum and Van.³⁰

In another secret report dated June 1907, it was noted that Kurat Taho, an associate of the ARF's infamous leader Andranik Ozanian, gave speeches at Armenian churches stating that the Armenians had 5000 weapons massed on the Russian-Ottoman border and they would invade the Ottoman Empire once the conditions had ripened.³¹

28 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opus 1910, Dela 29, List 58.

29 *Dashnaki. Iz Materialov Departmenta Politsii*, 39 ; Kolektif, *Çarlık Polis Raporlarında Taşnaklar*, 39.

30 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opus 1907, Dela 171, List 77, 77ob.

31 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opus 1907, Dela 171, List 59.

Documents in the Russian archives candidly record how the ARF gathered money from locals for the purpose of solidifying their armed revolutionary activities, how they used this money to purchase arms and munitions, how they established factories to produce munitions, how they established “war groups” under the name of “humb” and how they applied the methods of terrorism.³² A colonel attached to the Tblisi regional gendarmerie mentioned in a report dated 19 June 1909 that the ARF had managed to make the local population listen to them and apply their demands without question.³³

With the acceptance of the new Ottoman constitution and the large-scale arrests against ARF members in Russia in 1907 and 1909 that crippled ARF’s power and organizational capacity in the country, the ARF in Russia was placed on the back foot. On the other hand, however, the ARF committees of “Turkish Armenia” and Europe were growing stronger. The Western Bureau of the ARF intensified its activities in the Ottoman Empire. The collapse of Abdulhamid’s regime and the reintroduction of the Ottoman constitution was followed shortly after by the 5th ARF congress held in Varna, Bulgaria in August 1909. The changing conditions within the Ottoman Empire was a cause for an intensification in ARF activity. The party founded both eastern and western bureau in “Turkish Armenia.”³⁴

At the same time, not only was ARF involved in the revolutionary activities taking place in the Ottoman Empire, it was also collaborating with the political parties that were opposed the Ottoman sultan. Upon the initiative of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), all the opposition parties active in the Ottoman Empire assembled in Paris in 1907³⁵ and agreed to cooperate to dethrone Abdulhamid.³⁶ Between the years 1908-1914 the ARF existed in the Ottoman Empire as a legal political party with representatives in parliament. The ARF submitted to the Ottoman parliament and government a request for an autonomous Armenia.³⁷

However, when the ARF realized that it would not be able to attain what it requested with its then current methods, by the 1910s, it repudiated its cooperation with the CUP and decided to pursue its interests alone. This change in strategy can be observed from Russian intelligence reports. According to a report dated 3 September 1911, a conference was held in Istanbul that was

32 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1907, Dela 171, List 365.

33 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1909, Dela 14,8, List 19, 19ob.

34 Oganessian, *Vek Borby*, 164.

35 Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 191-197.

36 Mehmet Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden...*, 32.

37 Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation...*, 43.

attended by members of the ARF and the CUP. At this conference the ARF stated “that it had cut off all its relations with the CUP due to the reemergence of clashes between Kurds and Armenians, that it did not wish to have any links with the CUP, and that it would attain its autonomy through its own efforts.” Apart from this, it was explained that the ARF “had made the decision have all its armed units at the ready status.”³⁸

The Eve of the First World War

It can be observed in Russian intelligence reports that the Armenian organizations stepped up the pace of their organizational activities in terms of procuring arms and founding *çetes* when it became clear that the First World War was inevitable. A colonel attached to the Tbilisi gendarmerie sent a report to the police department on 2 November 1912. In the report, the colonel cited Muş, Van, and Zeytun as being centers where the ARF had organized armed units for the purpose of revolution.³⁹

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All contemporaneous sources document that Van was the center of the ARF organizational activity during the period. From 1913 onwards, the flow of arms was directed towards Van. According to an intelligence report dated 8 February 1913, on 13 January 1913, 52 Berdan rifles, 42 7.62 mm rifles, and 17,000 bullets were sent to Van by an Armenian named Kevork and an Ottoman subject named Hayko. The use of the weapons was left to the discretion of the ARF’s Van committee.⁴⁰ In the procurement of arms, both the ARF internal and international committees played a role. Further reports note that arms were being sent to “all corners of Turkish Armenia,”⁴¹ and the armed ARF members who crossed the border into the Ottoman Empire were gathering in Van.⁴²

However, the Dashnaks political position changed again during this period. Armenian political organizations sought to return to the pre-1908 policy of seeking to secure the support of Russia and Europe to bring diplomatic pressure

38 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1911, Dela 14.51B, List 15ob.

39 GARF, Fond 102 DOO, Opis 1912, Dela 14, List 21ob.

40 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1913, Dela 14.92B, List 15ob.

41 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1913, Dela 14.92B, List 18ob.

42 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1913, Dela 14.92B, List 31ob.

upon the Ottoman Empire. As the Dashnaks thought that Armenian independence could only be guaranteed with the assistance of the Russians, the Dashnaks began to display a favorable attitude towards Russia. The Russian government approved the Dashnak's advances as the First World War was becoming unavoidable, as Russian politician Pavel Milyukov⁴³ stated "The Armenians, as a nation wedged between Russia and Turkey, are gaining political importance."⁴⁴

The representatives of the ARF began talks with Mikhail N. Girs, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul and launched a campaign in Europe.⁴⁵ The ARF pledged

"It is in our national interests to work with the Russians and to bring the historic goal of Russia in the east to fruition. This desire burns in our hearts. The Russian flag will fly over the Istanbul and Dardanelles Straits. The Russians must free the subject nations that are under the Turkish yoke."

to renounce its activities against Russia and to fight on the side of Russia against the Ottoman Empire. With the impending outbreak of World War One, it was clear that the interests of the ARF were one with the interests of the Russians. The representatives of the ARF worked to bring the situation of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire to the attention of the Russian government. As of October 1913, the *Orizon* magazine published in Tbilisi began to carry articles containing overtures of peace to the Russians. In these articles, the ARF stressed that the Armenians of Russia were amongst the best people of the world and

under the influence of the world's most advanced literature. The articles stressed that on the other hand, the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire lived in the most difficult of circumstances and that it was imperative on Russia to bring an end to the plight of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. It was further stressed that the desires of the ARF were the same with the desires of Russia.⁴⁶

As it stated in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia under the heading "Dashnaksutyun," the ARF suspected that in the case of a victory for the Central Powers, they would not be granted autonomy and for this reason they aligned themselves with the Allied Powers. When the Ottoman Empire entered the war, the Armenian National Committee appealed to Nicolas II with their requests. They noted that:

43 He was the founder and head of the Russian Kadets, a constitutionalist democratic party in the Russian State Duma. Through his writings and speeches, he became known for his pan-Slavist ideas and pro-Armenian stance, which included voicing support for Armenian autonomy in the territory of the Ottoman Empire.

44 Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden...*, 33.

45 Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden...*, 41.

46 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1913, Dela 300, List 9ob.

The Foundation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and its Activities in the Ottoman Empire in View of Russian Archival Sources (1890-1915)

“It is in our national interests to work with the Russians and to bring the historic goal of Russia in the east to fruition. This desire burns in our hearts. The Russian flag will fly over the Istanbul and Dardanelles Straits. The Russians must free the subject nations that are under the Turkish yoke.”⁴⁷

The Volunteer Units of Armenians Organized Under the ARF Served as the Vanguard of the Russian Army on the Eastern Front.

The Russian government welcomed these developments. The Russian government was aware of both the spite that the ARF held for the Ottoman government and the preparation for war that the ARF was engaged in. The Tbilisi Area Gendarmerie Commander wrote to the Security Directorate on 12 September 1914 that no pressures should be placed on the Dashnaks and that they should be permitted to freely cross the border from Russia into the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁸ In a report presented to the 1923 ARF conference, Hovhannes Kajaznuni, the first Prime Minister of Armenia and a founding member of the ARF, noted that before the war had even started by the fall of 1914, Armenians had begun to organize volunteer units in the south Caucasus “with great noise and energy.”⁴⁹

As a result of intense struggle by the beginning of the war, the ARF had managed to gather a serious number of soldiers and weapons in “Turkish Armenia.” According to a 1914 Russian intelligence report, “If the Kurds begin to use force against the Armenians, the Armenians are armed well enough to repel any such attacks.”⁵⁰ This demonstrates how well the Armenians were armed.

Intelligence reports further state that the ARF was waiting for the outbreak of war with suspense, and almost all of the Armenian males were prepared to take up arms against the Ottoman Empire as volunteers.⁵¹ Correspondingly, a report dated August 1914 notes that 15,000 Armenians were on standby waiting for the founding of armed units in the Caucasus.⁵²

47 Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden...*, 42.

48 GARF, Fond 102 00, Opus 1914, Dela 343.4, List 9ob.

49 Ovanes Kaçaznuni, *Taşnak Partisi'nin Yapacağı Bir Şey Yok* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2005), 30.

50 GARF, Fond 102 00, Opus 1914, Dela 14.79B, List 6ob.

51 GARF, Fond 102 00, Opus 1914, Dela 14.79B, List 54ob.

52 GARF, Fond 102 00, Opus 1914, Dela 14.79B, List 55ob.

The Temporary Committee of the ARF took a decision that stipulated in the outbreak of war that the armed units in the Caucasus would join the Russian army en masse along with all of their military equipment, further noting that these volunteers were bound to provide the required assistance to the Russians.⁵³ Armenians from the areas of Tblisi, Yerevan, and Elisabethpol (Gence) had provided 80,000 volunteers for the Russian army.⁵⁴ In addition to their own arms, Armenian units who were provided special education were supplied with 6,000 additional rifles by the Russian state on behalf of Andranik.⁵⁵ The records for the year 1915 also demonstrate that the Armenians had succeeded in arming themselves.⁵⁶

The Armenian volunteer units had already begun attacking local Muslims and looting their property. In a report written by a Russian colonel dated 8 November 1914, it was reported that Armenian units numbering some 500 persons under the command of Drastamat “Dro” Kanayan had attacked a Kurdish village while on the way to Beyazıt from Iğdır. It was reported that the doors of the houses were forcibly destroyed and that the remaining valuables looted.⁵⁷

Armenian statesman A.B. Karinian, in his article titled “On the Nature of the Armenian Nationalist Movement,” noted that the Armenian volunteer units in the Russian army were exalted with the success of the Russians on the battlefield and in the areas they occupied they used all means to increase their influence as much as possible. To achieve this, they were required to physically destroy the non-Armenian local population. In broad terms, the Armenian units worked to eliminate the non-Christian population in eastern Anatolia.⁵⁸

A.A. Lalaian, the Soviet historian of Armenian descent similarly noted that the Armenian volunteer units lusted for blood. Under the command of ARF leaders, they murdered Turkish women, children, the elderly, and the infirm. The villages occupied by the ARF were “liberated” of their inhabitants and were transformed into unrecognizable ruins.⁵⁹

53 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1914, Dela 14.79B, List 61ob; GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1914, Dela 343.4, List 203.

54 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1914, Dela 14.21B, List 4.

55 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1914, Dela 14.79B, List 62ob.

56 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1915, Dela 14.6B, List 11.

57 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1914, Dela 343.4, List 169ob.

58 A.B. Karinyan, “K Kharakteristike Armyanskikh Natsionalisticheskikh Techenii,” *Bolshevik Zakavkazya*, No. 9–10 (1928): 87.

59 A. A. Lalayan, “Kontrevolyutsionnyi ‘Dashnaksutiun’ i Imperialisticheskaya Voina 1914-1918 Gg.,” *Revolutsionnyi Vostok*, No. 2–3 (1936): 45.

Soviet Armenian politician S.G. Pirumyan similarly described the volunteer units as “fascists”⁶⁰ who had systematically sought to eliminate the Kurdish and Turkish population of Eastern Anatolia as part of a preordained plan by the ARF.

The aforementioned preparations for war, the armed rebellions and the attacks on civilians meant that the ARF represented a threat for the both the Ottoman state and the local non-Christian population in Eastern Anatolia. In addition to this, we have demonstrated that the Armenians organized volunteer units to fight against the Ottoman Empire in World War One. In this situation, the Ottoman government sought to come to an agreement with the ARF. According to a report penned by a Russian colonel dated 10 March 1915, the ARF had been offered to pass over to the “Turkish side.” However, this proposal was rejected by the ARF on the basis that after the conclusion of the war, Russia would strive to improve the condition of the Armenians and allow them to administer their own affairs.⁶¹

The position adopted by the ARF in support of the Russian war effort against the Ottoman Empire and their refusal to reach agreement with the Ottoman state meant that the Ottoman government was left with no option but to adopt the Relocation and Resettlement Law (*Sevk ve İskân Kanunu*) in 1915.

CONCLUSION

The ARF worked to establish an independent Armenia by using various methods both inside the Ottoman Empire and abroad.

One of the ARF’s preferred methods was that which was aimed at gaining the attention of the Great Powers. In addition to this, the ARF also used methods

The ARF worked to establish an independent Armenia by using various methods both inside the Ottoman Empire and abroad. One of the ARF’s preferred methods was that which was aimed at gaining the attention of the Great Powers. In addition to this, the ARF also used methods of terrorism and propaganda based on constructed grievances. The use of terror also extended to Armenians who did not share the aims of the ARF.

60 S. G. Pirumyan, *Diasporadaki Taşnaklar* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2007), 150.

61 GARF, Fond 102 OO, Opis 1915, Dela 14.79B, List 11ob.

of terrorism and propaganda based on constructed grievances. The use of terror also extended to Armenians who did not share the aims of the ARF.

The ARF, which relied on the support of external forces to bring its goals to realization, shaped its position according to the regional balances of power. Among those the ARF sought to gain the support of at various periods, we can count Britain and Russia among the European powers, the European and Russian socialist movements, and the Ottoman opposition movements.

In the 25-year period under examination in this article, details have been given regarding the efforts over the ARF to establish *çetes* and arm the Armenian populace. As a result of the efforts to arm themselves and form *çetes* from the 1890s onwards, the ARF came to represent a threat for the Ottoman Empire. The aim of the ARF in this regard was to change the demographic composition of the “six *vilayets*” (six provinces) that the ARF argued constituted “Turkish Armenia” by the use of violence and looting. The ARF took the side of the Russians at the outbreak of World War One and rejected rapprochement with the Ottoman government.

All these developments shook the foundations of the internal security of the Ottoman Empire and meant that the Armenians of the Empire began to be viewed as a potential threat. These developments led the Ottoman government to take a radical decision to relocate Armenians from sensitive security zones in Eastern Anatolia.

In sum, the ARF exhausted every possible method in pursuit of an independent Armenia, negatively affecting the Armenians of the region as much as it affected the Muslim population. Because of the failure of the ARF strategy, the party came under severe criticism from prominent Armenian politicians and statesmen and even members of the party itself. It can be argued that the unbalanced and adventuristic methods of the party damaged the Armenians themselves more than anyone else did.

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STOPPING THE CENSORS: THE FINAL DEFEAT OF ARMENIAN NATIONALISM AT THE FRENCH CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL IN JANUARY 2017*

(SANSÜRCÜLERİN DURDURULMASI: ERMENİ MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİNİN OCAK
2017'DE FRANSIZ ANAYASA KONSEYİ'NDEKİ NİHAİ YENİLGİSİ)

Maxime GAUIN

PhD Candidate,
Department of History, Middle East Technical University
Scholar in Residence,
Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)

Abstract: *The decision pronounced on January 26, 2017, by the French Constitutional Council marked the end of the attempts to censor freedom of expression regarding the Turkish-Armenian conflict, at least the serious ones in France. It finished a 23-years cycle that had begun with the court cases against Bernard Lewis in 1994-1995: The Anglo-Saxon historian was acquitted in four of them, sentenced for one civil case, in the name of a case law canceled in 2005. Even before Prof. Lewis was sentenced, bills were introduced in the Parliament, in vain until 2011. The Boyer bill was adopted, unlike the previous ones, in 2011-2012, but was immediately censored by the Constitutional Council, which maintained its position in a preliminary ruling on the issue of constitutionality (regarding Holocaust denial) in 2016. Correspondingly, the European Court of Human Rights found the conviction of Doğu Perinçek unjustified, and 1915 to be a matter of debates. The decision of 2017 is the culmination of this national and international case law, the ultimate confirmation of the freedom for historical research.*

Keywords: *Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Constitutional Council (France), European Court of Human Rights, freedom of expression, genocide, Bernard Lewis*

Öz: *Fransa Anayasa Konseyi'nin 26 Ocak 2017'de aldığı karar, Türk-Ermeni uyuşmazlığı konusunda Fransa'daki ifade özgürlüğünün sansürlenmesi çabalarına -en azından ciddi boyutta olanlara- bir son*

* This academic article is based on Maxime Gauin's conference presentation of the same title delivered at the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM) on February 15, 2017.

vermiştir. Bu karar, Anglo-Sakson tarihçi Bernard Lewis'a açılan davalarla başlayan 23 yıllık bir döngüyü bitirmiştir. Lewis bu davaların dördünden beraat etmiştir. Kendisi bir hukuk davasında ise cezaya çarptırılmıştır, ancak bu karar içtihat hukuku gereği 2005'te iptal edilmiştir. Prof. Lewis'in cezaya çarptırılmasından bile önce başlayarak, Parlamento'da 2011'i yılına kadar bir sonuç vermeyen yasa tasarıları sunulmuştur. Diğer tasarıların aksine Boyer tasarısı 2011-2012'de kabul edilmiş, ancak derhal Anayasa Konseyi tarafından iptal edilmiştir. Bu kararlar Konsey, 2016'da (Holokost inkârıyla ilgili olarak) aldığı anayasaya uygunluk konusundaki ön kararındaki tutumunu muhafaza etmiştir. Buna bağlı olarak, Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesi Doğu Perinçek'in mahkumiyetini haksız bulmuş ve 1915'in tartışmaya tabii olduğunu belirtmiştir. 2017 kararı, bu ulusal ve uluslararası hukuk içtihadının bir sonucudur ve tarihi araştırma konusundaki özgürlüğün nihai bir şekilde onaylanmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu, Fransa Anayasa Konseyi, Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesi, ifade özgürlüğü, soykırım, Bernard Lewis*

INTRODUCTION

On January 26, 2017, the French Constitutional Council (the highest court of France) declared 48 articles of the law titled “Equality and Citizenship” to be partly or entirely unconstitutional, including the last paragraph of the second part of the article 173. This said paragraph planned to ban “denial, gross minimization or trivialization of crime of genocide, crime against humanity or war crime, if it incites to racial, ethnic, national or religious hatred or violence.”¹ I shall explain here the meaning and the background of this decision in three parts; The first part presents an assessment of the previous attempts of criminalization, the second part explains the making of and the censorship provisioned by article 173, and the third and last part explains the consequences of and opportunities brought about by the Constitutional Council’s decision.

I) Previous Attempts (1994-2016)

A) The Lewis Affair (1994-1995) As the Matrix of the Issue

In November 1993, the historian Prof. Bernard Lewis (specializing in Ottoman, Turkish and Islamic history) went to Paris, among other reasons, because of his book titled *The Arabs in History and Race and Slavery in the Middle East* had recently been translated into French by Gallimard publishers. There, he gave a series of interviews, and one of them was given to the daily *Le Monde*. At one moment of this interview, the interviewers asked a question which was not related to the discussed books: “Why does Turkey still deny the Armenian Genocide?” Prof. Lewis was a bit surprised, and answered: “Do you mean the Armenian side of this story?” He then gave a few explanations and after that, they moved to the next question.²

In reaction, the unpleasant tradition of petitions of intellectuals who know nothing on what they are speaking about enriched itself by another item a dozen of days after the interview. The item in question was a text initiated by Yves Ternon, a retired surgeon who pretends to be a specialist of the Armenian question, in spite of the fact that he cannot speak Turkish or Armenian, and who never worked in any archive, even the French ones, at least on this subject. Prof. Lewis sent a letter to the editor, published—in abbreviated form—one and a half month after the petition.

1 Conseil constitutionnel, Decision no. 2016-745 DC of 26 January 2017 - Law relating to equality and citizenship, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/2017/2016-745-dc/version-en-anglais.149221.html>

2 « Un entretien avec Bernard Lewis », *Le Monde*, 16 novembre 1993.

In reaction, the unpleasant tradition of petitions of intellectuals who know nothing on what they are speaking about enriched itself by another item a dozen of days after the interview.³ The item in question was a text initiated by Yves Ternon, a retired surgeon who pretends to be a specialist of the Armenian question, in spite of the fact that he cannot speak Turkish or Armenian,⁴ and who never worked in any archive, even the French ones, at least on this subject.⁵ Prof. Lewis sent a letter to the editor, published—in abbreviated form⁶—one and a half month after the petition.⁷

Prof. Lewis' "French friends were for the most part of the opinion that the whole interview and its subsequent development were a deliberate entrapment."⁸ Even if there is no definitive evidence for this explanation, it is certain that the controversy was exploited. The Dashnak Armenian National Committee of France (Fr. *Comité de défense de la cause arménienne*) decided to sue Prof. Lewis on the basis of the article 24bis of the law of 1881 on the liberty of the press (an article created by the law of July 13, 1990, usually called the Gayssot Act⁹), which bans the contestation of crimes against humanity perpetrated during the Second World War and judged by the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg or by a French court. The trial took place in October 1994 and the judgment was pronounced the same month. The tribunal of Paris rejected the claims of the ANC for two reasons: Firstly, to be a plaintiff on the basis of this article, you need to be an association which has previously included in its statutes the fight against racism, or to be an association of defense of the veterans of the French Résistance and the deportation to Nazi camps; and secondly, the article 24bis is specifically about the denial of the

3 « Au courrier du "Monde" — Cela s'appelle un génocide », *Le Monde*, 27 novembre 1993.

4 Engin Akgürbüz, "yves ternon," *YouTube* video, 0:43, January 27, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40ke11aHxs0>

5 His books and papers on the Armenian question (for example *Les Arméniens, histoire d'un génocide* (Paris : Le Seuil, 1977, new edition, 1996)) are not the product of any original research, as the endnotes prove. His last publication on the Turkish-Armenian conflict is a simple "speech," without any note or bibliography: Yves Ternon, *Génocide. Anatomie d'un crime* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2016), 155-192. For a detailed analysis of a wrong assertion by Yves Ternon, due to his absolute ignorance of the French and British archives: Maxime Gauin, "Strategic Threats And Hesitations: The Operations And Projects Of Landing In Cilicia And The Ottoman

Armenians (1914-1917)," in *19.-20. Yüzyıllarda Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Sempozyumu* (İstanbul: Türk Ocakları/İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2015), volume II, 982-1004 (Turkish version, pages 958-981).

6 "Lewis Replies," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, June 5, 1996, http://www.princeton.edu/~paw/archive_old/PAW95-96/16_9596/0605let.html#story3

7 « Au courrier du "Monde" — Les explications de Bernard Lewis », *Le Monde*, 1 janvier 1994.

8 Bernard Lewis, *Notes on Century. Reflections of a Middle East Historian* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2012), 289.

9 Loi n° 90-615 du 13 juillet 1990 tendant à réprimer tout acte raciste, antisémite ou xénophobe, *Legifrance.gouv.fr*, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000532990&categorieLien=id>

Nazi crimes against humanity and thus cannot be used about the 1915 events. The ANC even had to pay a part of Bernard Lewis' costs. They appealed, but it was in vain.¹⁰ Their inspiration was almost certainly the series of cases opened (and lost) by the Movement Against Racism and for the Friendship among Peoples (MRAP), between 1959 and 1971, to obtain a change in the anti-racist legislation (a change voted by the Parliament in 1972: the Pleven Act).¹¹

The ANC was imitated by the General Alliance against Racism and for the Respect of the French Identity (Agrif, fundamentalist Catholic) and the Union of Armenian Physicians of France (UMAF). Both were close to the National Front at that time, and their counsel for the two cases they opened was Jacques Trémolet de Villers who was defending, in the same year (1994), Paul Touvier, who was sentenced for crimes against humanity. The two cases were opened on the basis of the article 1382 of the civil code (every damage must be repaired). They too failed, both in the first instance and in the appeal.¹² Regardless, former ASALA spokesman and future president of the Coordination Council of France's Armenian Associations Jean-Marc "Ara" Toranian "went to thank" Bernard Anthony, the chair of the Agrif,¹³ and in spite of its failure, the Forum of France's Armenian Associations (established in 1991, as an imitation of the Armenian Assembly of America¹⁴) sued Prof. Lewis again, on the basis of the article 1382. The Forum's lawyer was Patrick Devedjian, who had defended several Armenian terrorists during the 1980s, for example Mardiros Jamgotchian (ASALA) in Geneva in 1981, Max Hraïr Kilndjian (JCAG) in Aix-en-Provence in 1982 and Katchadur Gulumian (ASALA) in 1985.¹⁵

This time, however, Prof. Lewis lost, because the angle of attack was different; the accusation was not grounded on saying "It is genocide and nothing else can be said," but about accusing Prof. Lewis for having neglected all, or most,

10 « Les actions engagées par les parties civiles arméniennes contre "Le Monde" sont déclarées irrecevables par le tribunal de Paris », *Le Monde*, 27 novembre 1994 ; Bernard Lewis, *Notes on Century. Reflections of a Middle East Historian* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2012), 288-289, 292.

11 « Le vote de la loi de 1972 », *Droit et liberté*, Juillet-Août 1981, 9.

12 « La fin du procès de Paul Touvier — L'ardent plaidoyer de Me Trémolet de Villers », *Le Monde*, 21 mars 1994 ; Daniel Bermond, « L'affaire Bernard Lewis », *L'Histoire*, n° 187 (Avril 1995) ; Lewis, *Notes on a...*, 290.

13 See the communiqué of Mr. Anthony published on his personal web site on December 11, 2011: <http://www.bernard-anthony.com/2011/12/anthony-president-communique-la-negation.html>

14 Association culturelle arménienne de Marne-la-Vallée, « Diaspora en France - Les associations », *Acam-France.org*, <http://www.acam-france.org/contacts/diaspora-france/les-assos.htm>

15 Comité de soutien à Max Kilndjian, *Les Arméniens en cour d'assises* (Roquevaire : Parenthèses, 1983) ; Richard Mels, « 30 mois avec sursis pour Charles-Antoine Sansonetti et Katchadur Gulumian », *Hay Baykar*, 25 novembre 1985, 5 ; Jean-Pierre Richardot, *Arméniens, quoi qu'il en coûte* (Paris : Fayard, 1982), 103-118.

of the elements that contradict his thesis, for having acted as a polemicist instead of a historian.¹⁶ The judgment said: “While it was in no way established that he had pursued any purpose foreign to his mission as a historian,” the “fault” was in “hiding elements contrary to his thesis [...] and had thus been lacking in his duty of objectivity and prudence, in expressing without nuance on so delicate a subject; that his remarks, likely to revive unjustly the pain of the Armenian community, are at fault and justify indemnity” (of one franc).¹⁷ Jean-Noël Jeanneney, professor of history at the Institute of Political Science of Paris (“Sciences Po”) and later (2002-2007) director of the National Library observed that the reasoning was illogical; Mr. Lewis did not neglect the arguments supporting the “genocide” allegation, he instead refuted them. Whether or not his refutation was accurate was another issue.¹⁸ Madeleine Rebérioux (1920-2005), professor emeritus of history at Paris-VIII University and president of the League of Human Rights (LDH) from 1991 to 1995, expressed a similar critique,¹⁹ and Antoine Prost, professor emeritus of history at Paris-I-Sorbonne University, raised more general concerns about freedom of expression as threatened by special ethnic interests.²⁰

More seriously, I would like to argue that the first civil chamber looking into the case was factually misled. Indeed, the judgment says a sub-committee of the United Nations had “recognized” the “genocide” claims—which is absolutely false.²¹ Yet, Bernard Lewis decided he would not appeal the decision—an error that had consequences until 2017.

B) Losing in The Parliament: 1995-2011

Regardless, it must be emphasized that the four legal actions were not coordinated; there was, rather, an emulation. The goal of the ANC was to obtain a change of the press law; they most probably knew they would lose, but they

16 « Le Forum des associations arméniennes poursuit l'historien Bernard Lewis », *Le Monde*, 19 mai 1995. Also see: Mine G. Saulnier, “Lewis’ in Zor Davasi”, *Milliyet*, 16 Mays 1995.

17 Lewis, *Notes on a...*, 290.

18 Jean-Noël Jeanneney, *Le Passé dans le prétoire. L'historien, le juge et le journaliste* (Paris : Le Seuil, 1998), 37-43.

19 Madeleine Rebérioux, « Les Arméniens, le juge et l'historien », *L'Histoire*, Octobre 1995, http://www.lph-asso.fr/index6c1c.html?option=com_content&view=article&id=32%3Amadeleine-reberieux-l-les-armeniens-le-juge-et-l-historien-r&Itemid=34&lang=fr . Also see Patrick Marnham, “Sued over a History Lesson,” *London Evening Standard*, May 23, 1995, 28; “A Franc for Your Thoughts,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 28, 1995, A12 ; and “‘Hate Speech’ Again, Abroad,” *The Washington Post*, September 9, 1995, A16.

20 Antoine Prost, *Douze leçons sur l'histoire. Édition augmentée* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2010 - 1er édition, 1996), 335-336.

21 Türkkiye Ataöv, *What really happened in Geneva: The truth about the “Whitaker report”* (Ankara, 1986).

used their failure to claim a modification in the law. This is quite clear if you take a look at the chronology of such initiatives in the French Parliament. Indeed, the first bill was introduced on February 1, 1995, a bit more than two months after the first failure of the ANC, but the trial Prof. Lewis lost took place in May of the same year, and the judgment was pronounced in June. The first of these bills filed in 1995 planned to ban “contestation of the Armenian Genocide,” another one the “denial” of any crime against humanity and genocide, and another one the “denial” of “recognized” genocides, “especially the Armenian Genocide,” but none of them was even discussed by the French National Assembly. They were sent to the Law Committee, where they were buried,²² but it is remarkable that the three methods tried during the 2000s and 2010s had actually emerged as early as 1995.

After these failures, the strategy of the main Armenian nationalist associations changed. They decided to focus first on recognition of the genocide allegations, which would make penalization easier, as a second step. Yet, in 1997, François Hollande was reelected as member of the Parliament and became the first secretary of the Socialist Party after its national victory. In Mr. Hollande’s electoral district, there is none or virtually no elector of Armenian heritage, but there are thousands of Turks. Regardless, these Turks and their children (who are French citizens) were from the lowest social and economic background,²³ and only became politically active around 2010, when it was too late to significantly change the results of the long-term work of Dashnak leader Franck “Mourad” Papazian that began as early as 1997.

The first result of this work was the vote of the “recognition” in the National Assembly, by about fifty deputies, in 1998. The conference of the presidents of French Senate blocked the bill twice, in March 1999 and February 2000, then the Senate itself rejected it in March 2000.²⁴ After a lot of threats and insults, and in procedural conditions that are quite debatable—precisely because the “recognition” had been previously rejected, the Senate accepted it at the end of the same year.²⁵ Then, the bill went back to the National Assembly,

22 Assemblée nationale, *Table des matières établie par le Service des archives de l’Assemblée nationale, du 1er janvier au 30 septembre 1996* (Paris, 1996), 184 ; Michel Troper, « La loi Gayssot et la Constitution », *Annales. Histoire, sciences sociales*, n° 6 (1999), 1240.

23 Gülsen Yildirim, « Les Turcs en milieu rural — Le cas du Limousin », *Hommes & Migrations*, n° 1280 (Juillet- Août 2009), 78-86, <https://hommesmigrations.revues.org/304>

24 « Le gouvernement refuse d’inscrire le “génocide arménien” à l’ordre du jour du Sénat », *Le Monde*, 12 mars 1999 ; « Arménie », *Le Monde*, 31 mars 1999 ; Séance du 22 février 2000, *Senat.fr*; <https://www.senat.fr/seances/s200002/s20000222/sc20000222022.html> ; Séance du 21 mars 2000, *Senat.fr*; https://www.senat.fr/seances/s200003/s20000321/s20000321_mono.html#chap39

25 « Séance du 7 novembre 2000 », *Senat.fr*, <https://www.senat.fr/seances/s200011/s20001107/sc20001107081.html> ; « Le Sénat a voté la proposition de loi reconnaissant le génocide arménien de 1915 », *Le Monde*, 9 novembre 2000.

where it was adopted—once again by a few dozens of MPs—in January 2001. That first success, after a series of failures (attempts for a “recognition” had failed in 1975, 1985-86 and 1987²⁶), made the Armenian nationalists believe that they could obtain whatever they wanted. So, after 2001, in their own words, they gave the “absolute priority”²⁷ to a bill that would suppress freedom of expression on the Turkish-Armenian controversy.

The two first of the bills were introduced in December 2002²⁸ and November 2003 by François Rochebloine, a center-right member of the Parliament (from 1988 to 2017) elected in a district with a relatively significant number of constituents of Armenian heritage, but, like the three attempts of 1995, they were not even discussed. It became a bit more serious in June 2004, when a part of the Socialist deputies defended (or at least pretended to defend) a similar text, but the rightist majority of Jacques Chirac blocked the text.²⁹ The proposals of the Communist group experienced a similar fate in 2005, like the bill introduced by some center-right MPs the same year.³⁰

Meanwhile, the ANC tried what had been tried ten years before; opening a court case on the basis of the article 1382 of the civil code, this time against the Turkish consulate in Paris. They were sure to lose, just like a decade earlier. They did indeed lose in November 2004 and even had to pay the costs of the hearing.³¹ Then, they appealed—like in 1994—, but the appeal court of Paris

26 Richard Mels, « Le génocide et la loi », *Hay Baykar*, 25 février 1986, 3 ; *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats Parlementaires, Assemblée nationale*, 10 octobre 1987, 4166, <http://archives.assemblee-nationale.fr/8/cri/1987-1988-ordinaire1/011.pdf> ; « Quand l’Assemblée nationale “étudie” la question arménienne », *Hay Baykar*, 18 novembre 1987, 9.

27 See, for instance, the retrospective regrets of Hilda Tchoboian (ARF leader during from 1970s to 2010s) in her interview to Info Arménie on 5 February 2017: <https://youtu.be/ZXcoQqkOCvY?t=135>

28 Proposition de loi tendant à modifier les articles 24 bis et 48-2 de la loi du 29 juillet 1881 sur la liberté de la presse, modifiée par la loi n° 90-615 du 13 juillet 1990, de façon à interdire la contestation de la réalité de tous génocides et crimes contre l’humanité, *Assemblée-nationale.fr*, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/12/propositions/pion0479.asp>

29 Proposition de loi sanctionnant la négation du génocide arménien, *Assemblée-nationale.fr*; <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/12/propositions/pion1643.asp>

30 Proposition de loi tendant à l’incrimination pénale de la contestation publique des crimes contre l’Humanité afin de mieux combattre toute forme de négationnisme, *Assemblée-nationale.fr*, [http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/documents/notice/12/propositions/pion2778/\(index\)/depots/\(archives\)/index-depots](http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/documents/notice/12/propositions/pion2778/(index)/depots/(archives)/index-depots) ; Proposition de loi visant à sanctionner la contestation de tous les crimes contre l’humanité, *Assemblée-nationale.fr*, [http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/documents/notice/12/propositions/pion2135/\(index\)/propositions-loi/\(archives\)/index-proposition](http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/documents/notice/12/propositions/pion2135/(index)/propositions-loi/(archives)/index-proposition)

31 CDCA c. Sezgin, Tribunal de grande instance de Paris, jugement rendu le 13 novembre 2004, *HistoryofTruth.com*, <http://www.historyoftruth.com/articles/53-turkey-and-armenia-in-1915s/14264-the-decision-of-paris-first-instance-court-on-the-lawsuit-by-the-armenian-national-committee-cdca-against-turkish-consul-general-in-paris>

rejected their demands two years later.³² In both cases, the diplomatic immunity prevailed. The openly expressed goal of the ANC was to make noise, to claim the “necessity” for a censorship bill.

The situation in the Parliament changed in 2006 for a series of reasons; the presidential and legislative elections would take place the next year and the work of the main Armenian nationalist associations increased, including their threats of electoral reprisals. The new bill, introduced by Marius Masse (deputy of Marseille),³³ failed to be adopted in May 2006—thanks to the President of the National Assembly Jean-Louis Debré and thanks to the cabinet, particularly the ministry of External trade³⁴—, but was voted five months later, by 106 voices against 19 (out of 577 deputies), and against the opinion of the Villepin cabinet.³⁵ Regardless, when this first step was taken by the proponents of censorship, it was too late. Indeed, if at the end of 1990s and beginning of 2000s the atmosphere was in favor of the Armenian nationalist claims, in the context of polemics on the Second World War and colonial history, by mid-2000s the trend had changed. In 2005, French historians began to be organized in the association Liberté pour l’histoire (Freedom for history), not specifically against Armenian nationalism, but against bullying in general. Some of them, such as René Rémond and Pierre Nora, have good networks in the medias and, as a result, strong protests were published against the Masse bill in mainstream newspapers, unlike during the Lewis affair.³⁶

32 CDCA c. Sezgin, Cour d’appel de Paris, 8 novembre 2006, *Wikisource*, https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Cour_d%27appel_de_Paris_-_05-05619

33 Marius Masse, *Rapport fait au nom de la commission des lois constitutionnelles, de la législation et de l’administration générale*, n° 3074 (2006), *Deutscharmenischegesellschaft.de*, <http://www.deutscharmenischegesellschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Franz%C3%B6sisches-Parlament-2006-rapport-3074-P%C3%A9nalisation-de-la-n%C3%A9gation-du-g%C3%A9nocide-arm%C3%A9nien-de-1915.pdf>

34 « Les divisions sur le texte et son examen dépassent le clivage gauche-droite », *Lemonde.fr*, 18 mai 2006, http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2006/05/18/les-divisions-sur-le-texte-et-son-examen-depassent-le-clivage-droite-gauche_773550_3224.html ; « Question arménienne : les risques économiques français en Turquie », *Lemonde.fr*, 22 mai 2006, http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/infographie/2006/05/22/question-armenienne-les-risques-economiques-francais-en-turquie_772979_3224.html#m8YOOqaEPeQEGrG8.99

35 « L’Assemblée nationale adopte la proposition de loi sanctionnant la négation du génocide arménien », *Lemonde.fr*, 12 octobre 2006, http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2006/10/12/l-assemblee-adopte-le-texte-sanctionnant-la-negation-du-genocide-armenien_822623_3224.html

36 Pierre Nora, « Gare à la criminalisation générale du passé ! », *Le Figaro*, 17 mai 2006, http://www.lph-asso.fr/index9d3c.html?option=com_content&view=article&id=15%3A-pierre-nora-l-gare-a-la-criminalisation-generale-du-passe-r&catid=4%3A-tribunes&Itemid=4&lang=fr ; « Des historiens ont jugé “affligeante” la proposition de loi socialiste », *Le Monde*, 12 octobre 2006 ; « Des historiens veulent saisir Jacques Chirac si le Sénat confirme cette “provocation” », *Le Monde*, 14 octobre 2006.

In 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy was elected as president, and there was, until mid-2011, a kind of deal that can be summarized as follows: “I will not be kind with you as far as your candidacy to the European Union is concerned (veto on five chapters). But for the rest—namely fight against the PKK and Armenian genocide claims—don’t worry, nothing bad will happen.” Actually, for more than two years, the Masse bill was blocked by the cabinet, which refused to introduce it in the Senate. In mid-2010, a *minority* of the Socialist group endorsed the bill for discussion, but it was not discussed until May 2011. Following the negative opinion of the Law Committee, the text was rejected by a clear majority (196 against 74), because the Turkish embassy was quite

active, and because the context, after the Blois appeal in 2008,³⁷ was even less favorable than in 2006, and because Nicolas Sarkozy was not supporting the bill. Indeed, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, largely believed to be the Socialist candidate at the presidential election of 2012, was arrested eleven days after the debate, and we may now say that Mr. Sarkozy and his collaborators were not happy, as they had planned to use another affair against Mr. Strauss-Kahn during the presidential campaign (as Mr. Strauss-Kahn was acquitted in this other case, I am not saying in any way that he was guilty, only it would have been used politically). As a result, as late as the beginning of May 2011, Mr. Sarkozy was sure he would be reelected. Moreover, in September of the same years, senatorial elections took

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Then, it was sent to the Senate, where the situation was more difficult, because it was not the period of Christmas anymore; so, Nicolas Sarkozy exerted a lot of pressure on the center-right groups.

The Boyer bill was adopted by a small majority: 120 against 86. Regardless, two applications to the Constitutional Council were filed, by members of almost all the parliamentary groups.

place, and for the first time since 1968, the right lost the majority in the Senate. To give only one example, a Socialist was elected in Lozère —something similar to a majority obtained by the CHP in the rural part of Konya. As a result, Mr. Sarkozy was in fear by September 2011, and began to look for new electors. Needless to say, the Armenian nationalist associations took profit of that. That is why the new bill, introduced by Valérie Boyer (successor of Marius Masse as deputy of Marseille) banning “denial of genocides recognized by the law” was, this time, endorsed by the cabinet.

37 Pierre Nora et Françoise Chandernagor, *Liberté pour l'histoire* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2008), partially pre-published in *Le Figaro*, October 8, 2008 and *Le Monde*, October 11, 2008.

C) *The Revenges of Law on Politics: 2012-2016*

It must be emphasized that the Boyer bill was discussed in the National Assembly at the end of December, just before Christmas, when about only thirty members of the Parliament were present —this was, of course, done on purpose. Then, it was sent to the Senate, where the situation was more difficult, because it was not the period of Christmas anymore; so, Nicolas Sarkozy exerted a lot of pressure on the center-right groups. The Boyer bill was adopted by a small majority: 120 against 86.³⁸ Regardless, two applications to the Constitutional Council were filed, by members of almost all the parliamentarian groups. In the Senate, the signatories of the application ranged from Robert Hue, former general secretary of the Communist Party, to Serge Dassault, who is at the right wing of Mr. Sarkozy's party. This, in the context of Turkey, would be akin to a coalition ranging from Doğu Perinçek to AKP deputies of Rize. Correspondingly, in the press, I would like to insist, the overwhelming majority of the columnists and intellectual who commented on the Boyer bill were fiercely hostile —not critical, but fiercely hostile. The reactions ranged from the leftists Rony Brauman (who deemed it as an “insolent” intrusion of the Parliament in a historical controversy) and Edwy Plenel (who called it “politically disastrous,” “unconstitutional”, and “an infernal machine in the field of international relations”),³⁹ to the conservatives Frédéric Pons (who deemed it “useless” and “harmful”) and Ivan Rioufol (who stated “France has no lessons to teach to Turkey”),⁴⁰ to the social-democrat Jean Daniel (who called it a “disconcerting blindness” about “a tragedy that divides historians”),⁴¹ to the centrists Alain Duhamel (who deemed it “unjustified” and “likely unconstitutional”, and that “everybody lost” because of it) and Hubert Coudurier (who deplored the “danger” that could reduce France to “a spectator” in the Middle East),⁴² as well as the business-friendly

38 Séance du 23 janvier 2012 (compte rendu intégral des débats), *Senat.fr*, https://www.senat.fr/seances/s201201/s20120123/s20120123_mono.html

39 « Le génocide ne doit pas être une arme politique », *Atlantico*, 23 décembre 2011, <http://www.atlantico.fr/decryptage/genocide-arme-politique-polemique-turquie-france-concurrence-memorielles-malsaine-crimes-algerie-armenie-rony-brauman-252927.html> ; Edwy Plenel, « La France, la Turquie et le génocide arménien : une faute politique », *Médiapart*, 24 janvier 2012, <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/international/240112/la-france-la-turquie-et-le-genocide-armenien-une-faute-politique>

40 Frédéric Pons, « L'inutile pataquès franco-turc », *Valeurs actuelles*, 5 janvier 2012, <https://www.valeursactuelles.com/divers/inutile-pataques-franco-turc-35387> ; Ivan Rioufol, « La France n'a pas de leçons à donner à la Turquie », *L'Éfigaro.fr*, 21 décembre 2011, <http://blog.lefigaro.fr/rioufol/2011/12/genocide-la-france-na-pas-de-le.html>

41 Jean Daniel, « Les nuées de 2012 », *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 4 janvier 2012, <https://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20120104.OBS8050/les-nuees-de-2012.html>

42 Hubert Coudurier, « Du danger des têtes de Turc », *Le Télégramme de Brest*, 21 décembre 2011, <http://www.letelegramme.fr/ig/generales/france-monde/commentaires/point-de-vue-du-danger-des-tetes-de-turcs-21-12-2011-1543767.php?redirect=true> ; Alain Duhamel, « Génocide arménien : la loi de trop ! », *RTL*, 24 janvier 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5wQWi6c060>

daily *Les Échos* (which slammed a “memorial cretinism,” “legally and scientifically flawed,” and “a major political fault”).⁴³ To give you an idea in terms of Turkey, just imagine: There is a bill in the Turkish Parliament, and you have Özgür Mumcu, Yılmaz Özdil, Murat Yetkin, Taha Akyol, Süheyb Ögüt, Hilâl Kaplan, and *Dünya* who all say: “this bill is completely nonsensical.”

One month after the applications of deputies and senators, the Constitutional Council ruled that the Boyer bill was unconstitutional, based on the 1789 Declaration of Human Rights, and more specifically on Article 11 that protects freedom of expression:

“5. Considering, on the other hand, that Article 11 of the Declaration of Man and the Citizen of 1789 provides: ‘The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law’; [...]

6. Considering that a legislative provision having the objective of ‘recognising’ a crime of genocide would not itself have the normative scope which is characteristic of the law; that nonetheless, Article 1 of the law referred punishes the denial or minimisation of the existence of one or more crimes of genocide” recognised as such under French law”; that in thereby punishing the denial of the existence and the legal classification of crimes which Parliament itself has recognised and classified as such, Parliament has imposed an unconstitutional limitation on the exercise of freedom of expression and communication; that accordingly, without any requirement to examine the other grounds for challenge, Article 1 of the law referred must be ruled unconstitutional; that Article 2, which is inseparably linked to it, must also be ruled unconstitutional, [...].”⁴⁴

43 « Créatinisme mémoriel », *Les Échos*, 21 décembre 2011, https://www.lesechos.fr/21/12/2011/LesEchos/21084-049-ECH_cretinisme-memoriel.htm . Also see: Pierre Nora, « Lois mémorielles : pour en finir avec ce sport législatif purement français », *Le Monde*, 27 décembre 2011 ; Robert Badinter, « Le Parlement n’est pas un tribunal », *Le Monde*, 14 janvier 2012 ; and « Génocide arménien - Axel Poniatowski : “Cette affaire est allée trop loin” », *AFP*, 28 janvier 2012, http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/genocide-armenien-axel-poniatowski-cette-affaire-est-allee-trop-loin-28-12-2011-1413027_20.php

44 Decision no. 2012-647 DC of 28 February 2012, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/english/case-law/decision/decision-no-2012-647-dc-of-28-february-2012.114637.html>. Also see: Dominique Chagnollaude de Sabouret, « Loi contre les génocides : le serpent s’est mordu la queue », *Huffington Post France*, 29 février 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/dominique-chagnollaude/genocide-armenien_b_1308760.html

Last year (Spring 2016), Jean-Louis Debré, who was the President of the Constitutional Council from February 2007 to February 2016, published the diary he had written for nine years. Two pages are devoted to the Boyer bill affair, and Mr. Debré says he received “insisting pressures” and “threats” before the decisions, and after that, “insults”.⁴⁵ So, they even tried to intimidate the Constitutional Council—but it was a complete failure; in ruling based on the Declaration of Human Rights, the Constitution Council made its decision impossible to skirt around.

After that, François Hollande was elected against Nicolas Sarkozy and found himself in a complicated situation, as far as the Armenian issue was concerned. Indeed, he was not stupid; he understood that the decision had been taken with a clear wording, that it made any alternative path very complicated, and that Turkey would be upset. I really think, and a recent (February 2017) speech by Dashnak leader Franck “Mourad” Papazian⁴⁶ even confirms that, Mr. Hollande was not excited by the idea of trying again where Mr. Sarkozy had failed, but because of his long personal relationship with Mr. Papazian, he could not do nothing. So, in 2012-2013, the cabinet said: “We will just implement the framework decision of the European Union (2008) about genocide denial (without referring to any specific crime),” namely something that was tried as early as 1995. You see, this story is an extremely repetitive one. Yet, in France, when there is a bill prepared by the cabinet, it first goes to the Council of State, which expresses its opinion. The opinion is non-binding, but if the cabinet does not respect this opinion, it knows it will be in trouble. Here, the Council of State answered, in short: “What? You don’t say what is crime against humanity and what is not, and you don’t refer to a court decision? You can be sure it will be censored by the Constitutional Council.”

As a result, in 2013, François Hollande was able to say: “At least I tried.” However, Mr. Papazian persistently asked him to try again. Yet, at the end of 2013, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) found Switzerland wrong in the Perinçek case, provoking an outcry in the Armenian diaspora, particularly because of remarks like this one:

“In any event, it is even doubtful that there can be a ‘general consensus’, particularly among academics, about events such as those in issue in the present case, given that historical research is by definition subject to controversy and dispute and does not really lend itself to definitive

45 Jean-Louis Debré, *Ce que je ne pouvais pas dire* (Paris : Robert Laffont, 2016), 100-101.

46 Conférence – Débat sur la pénalisation de la négation du Génocide des Arméniens dans le cadre de la loi Égalité-Citoyenneté au Centre national de la mémoire arménienne, 27 janvier 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/Fra.Dachnaksoutioun.centre.france/videos/610007625855014/>

conclusions or the assertion of objective and absolute truths [...]. In this connection, a clear distinction can be made between the present case and cases concerning denial of crimes relating to the Holocaust (see, for example, the case of Robert Faurisson v. France, determined by the UN Human Rights Committee on 8 November 1996, Communication no. 550/1993, doc. CCPR/C/58/D/550/1993 (1996)).”⁴⁷

The Swiss government, breaking the promise given to Ankara, applied to the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR just before the legal delay to do so was over. As a result, Mr. Hollande found here an excellent occasion to ask the ARF to be patient, as France would support Switzerland. Nobody who made it past the first term of first year in law can take seriously the two pages sent by the French government to the ECtHR. It is clear that the French government wrote something extremely weak, to be able to say to the Armenian side: “We did our part” and to the Turkish side: “Come on! Who can take seriously what we filed?” In any case, the Grand chamber confirmed in 2015; Mr. Perinçek “took part in a long-standing controversy that the court has [...] already accepted as relating to an issue of public concern [...], and described as a ‘heated debate, not only within Turkey but also in the international arena.’”⁴⁸ Regardless, the Armenian nationalists asked again for a censorship law, with a particularly aggressive wording.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, an application for priority preliminary rulings on the issue of constitutionality was filed by a Holocaust denier, Vincent Reynouard, who introduces himself as “a Nazi,” and his lawyer. Indeed, Mr. Reynouard had been previously sentenced once for having denied the genocidal politics of the Third Reich, both in first instance and then in the appeal. The main argument was the following; only the existence of the Nazi crimes against humanity cannot be challenged; it is against the principle of equality in front of law. And for the first time, the Court of Cassation found (October 2015) the application of a Holocaust denier to be sufficiently serious to be forwarded to the Constitutional Council.⁵⁰ After a hearing in December of the same year,⁵¹ the

47 Perinçek v. Switzerland, 17 December 2013, § 117, <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-139724>

48 Perinçek v. Switzerland, 15 October 2015, § 231, <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-158235>

49 « Le CCAF condamne l’arrêt Périnçek [sic] de la CEDH et exige une loi de pénalisation du négationnisme en France », *Ccaf.info*, 16 octobre 2015, <http://www.ccaf.info/item.php?r=3&id=656>

50 Cour de cassation, chambre criminelle, 6 octobre 2015, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/2016/2015-512-qpc/decision-de-renvoi-cass.146842.html>

51 Affaire n° 2015-512 QPC — Délit de contestation de l’existence de certains crimes contre l’humanité, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/videos/2015/decembre/affaire-n-2015-512-qpc.146625.html>

Council rejected the arguments of Vincent Reynouard's defense.⁵² Indeed, the Council judged that, firstly, Holocaust denial is in itself racist—so it is perfectly logical to include ban of Holocaust denial in the law on freedom of expression, and secondly, there is a difference between a crime that was judged by a French court or an international court recognized by France and a crime that was judged by a foreign, national court—an implicit, but clear reference to the 1919-1920 trials in Istanbul.⁵³ Logically, it should have been the very end, and actually, even a part of the Armenian nationalists concluded that it was time to give up.⁵⁴ Regardless, Mr. Papazian is like a gambler in the casino who has put all his plaques on one number but sees that his number is not coming. That is why he insisted again.

II) The Article 173 And Its Suppression

A) The Making of the Article and Its Vote

The first step was the statement of Mr. Hollande, in January 2016, announcing that he would ask Jean-Paul Costa, a past president of the ECtHR, for a report paving the way to a text that would be in conformity with the French Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights.⁵⁵ However, this report was never published—hardly an indication that this report was satisfactory for anybody. In fact, the only positive aspect of this report, as far as it can be understood, is that it finally convinced the Armenian nationalists that the verdicts of 1919-1920 cannot be used at all as a legal basis, because it is against the principle of national sovereignty. To convince them even more, the Presidential Palace explained; “if these verdicts are used, Azerbaijani justice will rule that Khodjaly is a genocide, and you will be legally forced to say so.”⁵⁶ As a result, the “solution” was to ban “denial” of war crimes, crimes

52 Décision n° 2015-512 QPC du 8 janvier 2016, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/2016/2015-512-qpc/decision-n-2015-512-qpc-du-8-janvier-2016.146840.html>

53 The goal of this article is not to discuss the Armenian relocations themselves, so I refer the reader to: Ferudun Ata, *İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları* (Ankara: TTK, 2005); Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 73-82; and Maxime Gauin, “‘Proving a ‘Crime against Humanity’?”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, XXV-1 (March 2015), 147-149.

54 For instance: Collectif VAN, « Plus d'espoir de loi contre la négation du génocide arménien? », *Collectifvan.org*, 11 janvier 2016, <http://www.collectifvan.org/article.php?r=0&id=92883>

55 « Hollande relance l'idée d'une loi punissant la négation du génocide arménien », *AFP*, 29 janvier 2016, http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/hollande-relance-l-idee-d-une-loi-punissant-la-negation-du-genocide-armenien-28-01-2016-2013760_20.php

56 See note 46. At the very end of 2015, Mr. Couyoumdjian was still suggesting to use the 1919-1920 verdicts: Alexandre Couyoumdjian, “Les chemins ardes de la pénalisation du négationnisme”, *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie magazine*, n° 225 (Janvier 2016), 29.

against humanity, and genocide if it incites to racial, ethnic, national, or religious hatred or violence. This is an unsophisticated and quite debatable method to be in conformity with the ECtHR's case law and it completely neglects one of Constitutional Council's rulings stressing the necessity for an international or French court decision. In this regard, if I cannot be sure about the intimate conviction of Mr. Hollande, I can at least give an incontrovertible indication; in 2015, he had appointed, as General Secretary of the Presidency, Marc Guillaume, who until then was the General Secretary of the

Constitutional Council.⁵⁷ Even if the General Secretary is not a member of the Council, he nevertheless associated to all the processes before the decisions⁵⁸ and, of course, is a respected jurist. Yet, it is hardly imaginable that Mr. Guillaume did not warn Mr. Hollande about the certainty of a censorship by the Constitutional Council.

Technically, the liberticidal measure was introduced as a cabinet's amendment to a very general and long bill ("Equality and Citizenship") introduced in mid-2016. Therefore there was no preliminary verification by the Council of State; the submitted draft did not contain this measure. Suddenly, during the discussion, literally in night time, when there were only 21 deputies present (most of them elected in districts where the Armenian vote is supposed to be important), it was introduced.

Technically, the liberticidal measure was introduced as a cabinet's amendment to a very general and long bill ("Equality and Citizenship") introduced in mid-2016. Therefore there was no preliminary verification by the Council of State; the submitted draft did not contain this measure. Suddenly, during

the discussion, literally in night time, when there were only 21 deputies present (most of them elected in districts where the Armenian vote is supposed to be important), it was introduced. Remarkably, the first orator was Patrick Devedjian —the one we already saw during the Bernard Lewis affair. The Socialist rapporteur of the National Assembly's Law committee Marie-Anne Chapdelaine objected—in vain—that this method is fundamentally wrong, as there was no discussion in his committee, and that the text itself is legally dubious, because the incitement to racial, ethnic, religious or national hatred or violence is a crime in France since 1972⁵⁹ (an argument eventually used by the Constitutional Council, as we shall see).

57 Jean-Louis Debré, *Ce que je...*, 310.

58 See, for example: Debré, *Ce que je...*, 162.

59 Assemblée nationale — XIV^e législature — Session extraordinaire de 2015-2016 — Compte rendu Intégral. Deuxième séance du vendredi 1er juillet 2016, *Assemblée-nationale.fr*, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/cri/2015-2016-extra/20161002.asp#P834905>

Then, it went to Senate, after months of discussions, article by article. The ad hoc committee rejected the Armenian nationalist-inspired article,⁶⁰ but a short majority of senators voted in favor⁶¹ and merged it with another article (it became the Article 173). Regrettably, it has to be observed that the Turkish embassy and the Franco-Turkish associations did not do what was done in 2011-2012 with senators. Correspondingly, the critiques in the mainstream medias were surprisingly less numerous.⁶² It helps to understand why, at the last minute, the reference to the liberticidal amendment disappeared from the application by senators to the Constitutional Council.

However, since 1958, the Article 61 of the Constitution allows the Constitutional Council to check the constitutionality of the whole law, and not only the article(s) which are contested in the application it has received. Moreover, an association can present a demand, if the Constitutional Council already received an application from MPs or senators, or by priority preliminary ruling on the issue of constitutionality, to also check another article—or an additional argumentation supporting the application.⁶³ That is why, on December 28, 2016, the Association for Neutrality for Turkish History in the Schoolbooks filed such a demand, written by Dominique Chagnollaude Sabouret, Professor of Constitutional Law at Paris-II-Assas University, with very strong arguments, based on the traditional case law of the Constitutional Council, as well as on the decisions of 2012 and 2016.⁶⁴

60 *Rapport n° 827 (2015-2016) de Mmes Dominique Estrosi Sassone et Françoise Gatel, fait au nom de la commission spéciale, déposé le 14 septembre 2016, Senat.fr*, <http://www.senat.fr/rap/115-827/115-8274.html#toc209>

61 Séance du 14 octobre 2016 (compte rendu intégral des débats), *Senat.fr*, <http://www.senat.fr/seances/s201610/s20161014/s20161014002.html#section327>

62 Dominique Chagnollaude Sabouret, « Quand la loi “Égalité et Citoyenneté” veut confier au juge le soin de dire l’Histoire », *Huffington Post France*, 5 janvier 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/dominique-chagnollaude/genocide-loi-egalite-citoyennete-juge-dire-histoire_a_21647538 ; Didier Mauss, « Loi Égalité et citoyenneté : cette atteinte à la liberté d’expression passée inaperçue », *Le Figaro*, 22 décembre 2016, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/societe/2016/12/22/31003-20161222ARTFIG00062-loi-egalite-et-citoyennete-cette-atteinte-a-la-liberte-d-expression-passee-inape-rcue.php>

63 Anna-Maria Lecis Cocco-Ortu, « QPC et interventions des tiers : le débat contradictoire entre garantie des droits de la défense et utilité des amici curiae », *Revue française de droit constitutionnel*, n° 104 (2015), 863-886, http://www.droitconstitutionnel.org/congresLyon/CommLA/A-lecis_T2.pdf ; Georges Vedel, « L’accès des citoyens au juge constitutionnel. La porte étroite », *La Vie judiciaire*, n° 2344 (11-17 mars 1991), 1-14.

64 « projet de loi : génocide arménien », *Ataturquie.fr*, accessed February 13, 2018, <http://www.forum.ataturquie.fr/modules.php?ModPath=phpBB2&ModStart=viewtopic&p=73117>

B) The Constitutional Council Delivers Its Verdict

The wording and the arguments of the decision pronounced on January 26, 2017⁶⁵ is particularly important. They show the Constitutional Council has been increasingly exasperated by the Armenian nationalists' claims for censorship. Indeed, in 2012, the constitutional judges had stated: "It is against the principle of freedom of expression, you cannot arbitrarily impose a label, an interpretation, to past events." In 2016, they had explicitly made a distinction between Holocaust denial and historical controversies. In 2017, they deliberately went one step further.

First of all, I would like to emphasize what the Council *did not* say. There is a case law notion in France: the legislative rider (Fr. *cavalier législatif*). Its origin is Article 45 of the Constitution, which imposes that an amendment must have a link with the object of the law, as in, you cannot include or add anything in a bill. Moreover, Article 44 gives a constitutional value to the ruling of the assemblies; yet, the Armenian nationalist-inspired amendment was introduced in more than dubious procedural conditions⁶⁶ —something that surely did not escape to the attention of Corinne Luquiens, who was the General Secretary of the National Assembly before being appointed as a member of the Constitutional Council in 2016. As a result, the Council was perfectly entitled to censor this part of the law as a legislative rider only —as it did for other articles.⁶⁷ Yet, this kind of formal argument was not used —the Council being free to censor in the name of the reasoning it wants, as long as it is relevant.

65 Conseil constitutionnel, Decision no. 2016-745 DC of 26 January 2017 - Law relating to equality and citizenship, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/les-decisions/acces-par-date/decisions-depuis-1959/2017/2016-745-dc/version-en-anglais.149221.html>

66 Xavier Aurey, Aurore Catherine, Anne-Sophie Denolle, Marie Rota, Antoine Siffert and Vincent Souty, « Chronique de jurisprudence constitutionnelle française. Janvier 2009 – décembre 2009 », *Journal for Constitutional theory and Philosophy of Law*, 12 (2010), 195-212, <http://journals.openedition.org/revus/265> ; Damien Chamussy, « La procédure parlementaire et le Conseil constitutionnel », *Nouveaux Cahiers du Conseil constitutionnel*, n° 38 (Janvier 2013), <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/nouveaux-cahiers-du-conseil/cahier-n-38/la-procedure-parlementaire-et-le-conseil-constitutionnel.135703.html> ; Raphaëlle Déchaux, « L'évolution de la jurisprudence constitutionnelle en matière de "cavaliers" entre 1996 et 2006 », *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/root/bank_mm/pdf/Conseil/cavaliers.pdf ; Services du Conseil constitutionnel, « État de la jurisprudence du Conseil constitutionnel sur le droit d'amendement », juillet 2007, http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/root/bank_mm/pdf/Conseil/droitamd.pdf

67 For instance:

"154. Article 222 states that parental authority shall exclude 'all cruel, degrading or humiliating treatment, including any use of bodily harm'.

155. Introduced on first reading, the provisions of Articles 64, 80 and 91, Paragraph XIV of Article 117, and Articles 191, 192 and 222 of the contested Law do not have a link, even an indirect one, with those in the draft law submitted in the National Assembly. Adopted according to an unconstitutional procedure, they should thus be declared unconstitutional."

Now, if we look at what the Counsellors actually wrote:

“191. Section 2° of Article 173 of the contested Law modifies Article 24 bis of the Law of 29 July 1881. Pursuant to the last Subparagraph of this Section 2°, extreme negation, minimisation or trivialisation of a crime of genocide, a crime against humanity, a crime of forcing into slavery or a crime of war is punishable by a year in prison and a fine of 45,000 euros when this negation, minimisation or trivialisation constitutes an incitement to violence or hate in reference to presumed race, colour, religion, descent or national origin.

192. Pursuant to Article 11 of the 1789 Declaration: ‘The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious rights of humanity: every citizen should speak, write, and print freely, except in regard to the abuse of this liberty in the cases determined by the law’.”

So, this first argument is clearly in continuity with the decision of 2012. Similarly, the reference (§ 196) to the necessity for a court verdict is in continuity with the 2016 one. However, there is more. Indeed, the Council continues in observing:

“193. The last Subparagraph of Section 2° of Article 173 allows for punishing the negation of certain crimes, when this negation constitutes an incitement to violence or hate in reference to the presumed race, colour, religion, descent or national origin, including if these crimes were not part of a court conviction.

194. First of all, if the actions of extreme negation, minimisation or trivialisation of a crime of genocide, a crime against humanity, a crime of forcing into slavery or a crime of war constitutes an incitement to violence or hate of a racist or religions nature, these actions, by themselves and in any case, are not of this nature. Such remarks or writings also do not constitute, themselves, a defence of the behaviours punishable by criminal law. Therefore, the actions of extreme negation, minimisation or trivialisation of these crimes cannot, in a general manner, be considered by themselves an abuse of the free exercise of expression and communication infringing on the public order and the rights of others.

195. Secondly, according to the seventh Subparagraph of Article 24 of the Law of 29 July 1881 currently in force, actions of incitement to discrimination, hate or violence in regard to a person or group of persons because of their origin or their belonging or not belonging to a particular

ethnicity, nationality, race or religion is punishable by a year in prison and a fine of 45,000 euros. Therefore, the provisions introduced by the last Subparagraph of Section 2° of Article 173, which impose the same sentences on remarks presenting the same characteristics, are not necessary for the suppression of such incitement to hate or violence.”

This is crucially important to notice that these paragraphs would have been enough to declare the amendment unconstitutional. Yet, the Council decided to add another series of arguments (the part with italics are my emphasis):

“196. Thirdly, taking into account what is written in the preceding Paragraph, the only effect of the provisions of the last Subparagraph of Section 2° of Article 173 is to allow the court, in establishing the elements that constitute an infraction, to decide on the existence of a crime where negation, minimisation or trivialisation is alleged, *when it is not asked to decide on the basis of this crime and no jurisdiction has decided on the activities alleged to be criminal*. Actions or remarks may therefore give rise to prosecution if they negate, minimise or trivialise facts without them already receiving the qualification of one of the crimes established under the provisions of the last Subparagraph of Section 2° of this Article 173. Therefore, *these provisions introduce an uncertainty of the legality of remarks or writings on facts that may be the subject of historical debate* that do not satisfy the requirement of proportionality that is imposed regarding the exercise of liberty of expression.”

Everybody knew that the last Subparagraph of Section 2° of this Article 173 was not the claim, for example, of French citizens of Chinese origin who would have been shocked by extreme Japanese nationalism; everybody knew it was about the Turkish-Armenian dispute. So, the message of the Council is clear: “1915 is ‘the subject of historical debate,’ present your arguments if you wish, but stop trying to suppress freedom of expression.” This is a considerable victory against Armenian nationalism, and even more remarkable as only Claire Bazy-Malaurie voted the three decisions of 2012, 2016 and 2017. Indeed, one third of the Council is renewed every three years (Jean-Louis Debré was replaced by former François Hollande’ Minister of Foreign Affairs Laurent Fabius one year before the 2017 decision, for example), and two members passed away, the first, Jacques Barrot, in December 2014, the other, Hubert Haenel, in August 2015,⁶⁸ and were replaced —during Mr. Hollande’s presidency. This is not a surprise, as the principle is to appoint to the

68 « Hubert Haenel, membre du Conseil constitutionnel et ancien sénateur, est mort », *Lemonde.fr*, 11 août 2015, http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2015/08/11/hubert-haenel-membre-du-conseil-constitutionnel-et-ancien-senateur-est-mort_4720912_823448.html

Constitutional Council respectable persons, who are at a point of their career when they have absolutely nothing to fear or expect anymore. So, the case law I am discussing here is the one of the institution, it is not related to personal issues.

Actually, the national case law is quite coherent with the European one, as the notion of historical “debate” is also used in the ECtHR Grand chamber’s decision regarding the *Perinçek v. Switzerland* case (§ 231). A comparison between the two case laws was made by Roseline Letteron, Professor of Law at Paris-IV University.⁶⁹

III) The Consequences of the Decision

A) The End of the Penalization Attempts

We may begin with the words of Jean-Marc “Ara” Toranian, chief of the political wing of the ASALA in France from 1976 to 1983,⁷⁰ currently co-chairman of the Coordination Council of France’s Armenian Associations, and editor of the monthly *Les Nouvelles d’Arménie* magazine. Commenting the vote at the National Assembly on July 1, 2016, Mr. Toranian concluded that there was “no credible alternative” to the angle chosen in the cabinet’s amendment.⁷¹ So, what was presented as the only “credible” remaining solution only led to the most painful and devastating defeat for Armenian nationalism in France since the trial of the Orly attack in 1985.⁷² Any new pretention from Mr. Toranian about another censorship bill would be not only against an extremely strong case law, but also against his own words —and even less credible for his own supporters as he had announced a “triumph” (sic) in

The reactions to the Constitutional Council’s decision confirm that the situation seems desperate even for the Armenian nationalist leadership. In particular, the ANC published a communiqué saying: “Don’t forget that our fight is not only the fight to obtain a law penalizing Armenian genocide’s denialism. Our fight is the Armenian cause. And this fight continues, it will take other forms!” That is how an “absolute priority cause” of about 15 years has been buried.

69 On her blog *Liberté, libertés chéries*:

<http://libertescherries.blogspot.com/2017/02/negation-du-genocide-armenien-retour.html>

70 Gaidz Minassian, *Guerre et terrorisme arméniens. 1972-1998* (Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 2002), 46, 65-66, 90. Also see: Ara Toranian, « Stratégie — Entre les Justiciers et l’ASALA, quelle politique ? », *Hay Baykar*, 29 septembre 1982, 6.

71 Ara Toranian, « Pénalisation du négationnisme : le retour », *Les Nouvelles d’Arménie* magazine, n° 232 (September 2016), 53.

72 *Terrorist attack at Orly: Statements and evidence presented at the trial, February 19-March 2, 1985* (Ankara: Ankara University, 1985).

January 2012, after the vote of the Boyer bill by the Senate,⁷³ when the application to the Constitutional Council already was in preparation.

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The only concrete initiative that has been announced does not come from the mainstream Armenian nationalist associations, but from a small group represented by Philippe Krikorian. The goal is to go to the European Court of Human Rights, in the name of the EU's framework decision of 2008 against genocide denial. It has no legal basis and is not serious —Haytoug Chamlian, one of Jean-Marc "Ara" Toranian's collaborators even called the initiative "useless" and "hurtful for the [Armenian] cause."⁷⁷ Actually, the same Philippe Krikorian has lost in front of the Constitutional Council in 2016, when he used the application of Holocaust denier Vincent Reynouard to ask for an extension of the anti-denialism article to any "genocide". He also previously lost several cases filed with the same aim.⁷⁸ To make the situation of the Armenian

73 Ara Toranian, « Pénalisation du négationnisme : le triomphe de la justice », *La Règle du jeu*, 24 janvier 2012, <https://laregledujeu.org/2012/01/24/8683/penalisation-du-negationnisme-le-triomphe-de-la-justice/>. Also see his monthly's excessively optimistic comment on the Masse bill in 2010: Paul Nazarian, « Une relance prometteuse », *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie magazine*, n° 164 (June 2010).

74 Communiqué de presse du CDCA France, *Ancnews.info*, 26 janvier 2017, <http://ancnews.info/?p=10867>

75 See note 46.

76 « Censure du Conseil constitutionnel », *Ccaf.info*, 27 janvier 2017, <http://www.ccaf.info/item.php?r=3&id=687>

77 « Dans l'état actuel des choses, toutes les démarches judiciaires se rapportant à notre Cause relèvent de l'aventurisme le plus irresponsable (et j'y inclus même les procédures intentées par le Catholiques de Cilicie). Elles sont manifestement vouées à l'échec, et en conséquence, elles sont non seulement inutiles, mais nuisibles à ladite Cause. » <http://www.armenews.com/forums/viewtopic.php?pid=146943#p146943>

78 See, among others: Krikorian c. Premier ministre, Conseil d'État, 26 novembre 2012, n° 350492, *Philippe-Krikorian-avocat.fr*, http://www.philippe-krikorian-avocat.fr/Domaine_dactivite_files/Arret_CE_26.11.2012_V_INT-1.pdf; Krikorian c. France, Cour de justice de l'Union européenne, 6 novembre 2014, *Europa.eu*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A62014CO0243> ;

nationalist associations only worse, the Court of cassation has banned in 2005 the use of the article 1382 of the Civil Code to restrict freedom of expression between individuals, and confirmed this case law in 2011 and 2013.⁷⁹

An objection could be the following: “Yes, legally, they have lost for good, but there are still members of the Parliament who need Armenian votes.” Yet, is the electoral argument still a relevant one, if you look at the last two decades? Paul Mercieca, the very first MP who introduced a criminalization bill, on February 1, 1995, was defeated during the legislative elections of June 1997. Jean-Paul Bret, who played a key role in the “recognition” in 1998-2001, lost his seat during the elections of 2002. Marius Masse, who introduced the bill adopted by the National Assembly in 2006, experienced the same fate in 2007. At a national level, Nicolas Sarkozy has lost the presidential election of 2012, and was eliminated, as early as the first ballot, from the primary election of the center-right in 2016. After this lecture was delivered, Valérie Boyer was reelected, in June 2017, but against the chair of Coordination Council of Marseille’s Armenian associations, Pascal Chamassian, and as a result, by feeling of ingratitude as well as by electoral calculation (the “Armenian vote” is not that important, after all), she stopped any support for Armenian nationalists’ claims. Correspondingly, and finally, the French citizens of Turkish heritage have started voting instead of staying at home and crying on Facebook —though a lot of effort is still needed.

Another evidence for legal impediments faced by censorship laws is the increasing popularity, during the last years, of anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, including among mainstream Armenian leaders. For example, Jean Varoujan Sirapian, past Vice-President of the Coordination Council of France’s Armenian Associations, past President of the Ramkavar in France, owner of Sigest Publishing, wrote in 2015, that if the Masse bill was rejected by the Senate and the Boyer bill by the Constitutional Council, it is because the “genocide” was orchestrated by Jews and *dönmes* (En. the apostates -meaning,

Krikorian et autres c. Premier ministre, Tribunal des conflits, 6 juillet 2015, n° C 03995, *Revuegeneraledudroit.eu*, <http://www.revuegeneraledudroit.eu/blog/decisions/tribunal-des-conflits-6-juillet-2015-k-et-autres-n-c-03995/>

79 Cour de cassation, chambre civile 1, 27 septembre 2005, n° 03-13622, *Legifrance.gouv.fr*, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichJuriJudi.do?idTexte=JURITEXT000007051612&dateTexte=>; Cour de cassation, chambre civile 1, 6 octobre 2011, n° 10-18142, *Legifrance.gouv.fr*, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichJuriJudi.do?oldAction=rechJuriJudi&idTexte=JURITEXT000024648298&fastReqId=391179403&fastPos=1>; Cour de cassation, chambre civile 1, 10 avril 2013, n° 12-10177, *Legifrance.gouv.fr*, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichJuriJudi.do?oldAction=rechJuriJudi&idTexte=JURITEXT000027303673&fastReqId=1983397061&fastPos=1>

in this case, the Ottoman Jews who converted to Islam).⁸⁰ And if you look at the social media, you will see that these conspiracy theories are increasingly popular among ordinary members of Armenian nationalist organizations. Spreading “explanations” for the repeated failures of censorship bills can only damage the reputation of the Armenian nationalist organizations and undermine their future efforts.

Yet, if Franck “Mourad” Papazian, Jean-Marc “Ara” Toranian and Alexandre Armen Couyoumdjian do not use these conspiracy theories openly, it is a legitimate question to ask why they insist so much on Robert Badinter, who is of Jewish heritage, and who was the President of the Constitutional Council from 1986 to 1995, then senator from September 1995 to September 2011. Mr. Badinter had nothing to do with the decisions of 2012, 2016, and 2017; against the Masse bill in May 2011, he was only one of the most vocal opponents, together with Jacques Blanc, Charles Gautier, Josselin de Rohan (who called the text “liberticidal, inquisitorial, and obscurantist”) and Jean-Jacques Hyst. And precisely, Mr. Hyst also signed the application of senators against the Boyer bill in 2012. He was afterwards appointed to the Constitutional Council in 2015.⁸¹ Yet, I could not find a single article, a single communiqué, from Armenian nationalist groups about his actions in 2011-2012 and his nomination in 2015. It is wrong to speak, as Mr. Couyoumdjian does, about a “Badinter doctrine” regarding the impossibility for the French Parliament to decide about history. Indeed, as Mr. Badinter himself clearly explained, his arguments are inspired by the analysis of Georges Vedel (1910-2002) in his last paper written before his death.⁸² At the very least, the Armenian nationalist leadership must be aware of what kind of reaction can be provoked among their supporters by such an extreme practice of double standard.

80 Varoujan Sirapian, « Le génocide des Arméniens et le plafond de verre », *Arrêt sur info*, 7 novembre 2015, <http://arretsurinfo.ch/le-genocide-des-armeniens-et-le-plafond-de-verre/>. For the historical background of this theory: Yitzchak Kerem, “The 1909 Adana Massacre and the Jews”, in Kemal Çiçek (ed.), *1909 Adana Olayları Makaleler / The Adana Incidents of 1909 Revisited* (Ankara: TTK, 2011), 323-335 ; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey. Third Edition* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 211-212, n. 4 ; Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (New York-London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986), 138-139.

81 “Jean-Jacques Hyst”, *Conseil-constitutionnel.fr*, <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/le-conseil-constitutionnel/les-membres-du-conseil/liste-des-membres/jean-jacques-hyst.144473.html>

82 Georges Vedel, « Les questions de constitutionnalité posées par la loi du 29 janvier 2001 », in Didier Mauss and Jeanette Bougrab (ed.), *François Luchaire, un républicain au service de la République* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2005), 37-61. Another example would be Guy Carcassonne (1951-2013), professor of law at Paris-Nanterre University who fought the “recognition” in 1999-2000 (Guy Carcassonne, « La loi dénaturée », *Le Point*, 30 mars 1999) and wrote almost entirely the application of senators against the Boyer bill in January 2012. Prof. Carcassonne never was attacked as much as Robert Badinter.

B) Divisions and New Tendencies in Armenian Nationalism

Another kind of consequence of the Article 173 and its partial censorship is that for the first time in decades, dissensions are expressed openly and publicly among Armenian nationalist leaders. Hilda Tchoboian, who was the General Director of the (Dashnak) European-Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy (EAFJD) during the 2000s, criticized the amendment to the Equality and Citizenship Law, arguing that it was poorly written. Adding self-criticism, she said that she observed an increasing hostility toward penalization by 2006, among professors of law, journalists, some members of the Parliament, etc., and concluded that no real job was done to convince them — including by herself. Her conclusion was: “We failed for good, by lack of appropriate work, so it is time to move to other subjects.”

Correspondingly, Philippe Raffy Kalfayan, a jurist by profession, who has been close to the ARF for years, but who is now skeptical about the Dashnak strategy, stated in November 2016 that the amendment is useless because one would have to prove a racist intent, which is impossible in the overwhelming majority of the cases, and if the text goes to the Constitutional Council, it will be censored.⁸³ Regardless, the funniest reaction was the one of the collectif VAN. Established in 2004 at the initiative of Jean-Marc “Ara” Toranian, it is hardly a moderate group, but they found the amendment so badly written, so unprofessionally prepared, with so “obvious weaknesses” that they preferred to see it suppressed rather than maintained. An absence of censorship of the amendment would have been “the worst” (sic).⁸⁴

Moreover, there has been divisions inside the ARF for about fifteen years -for reasons which are not clear, as I don’t have informants in this party- and they exploded around 2015, when a member of the youth branch assaulted the Turkish ambassador in Paris⁸⁵ (he has been sentenced by the Tribunal of Nanterre on November 28, 2017⁸⁶). It may be assumed that the 2017 decision of the Constitutional Council will only increase these dissensions, as the

83 Info Armenie, “Entretien extrêmement intéressant sur la loi contre le négationnisme, avec Raffi Kalfayan,” *YouTube* video, 50:59, November 24, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-WYI54DzL4>

84 « Le Conseil Constitutionnel invalide la loi pénalisant la négation du génocide arménien », *Collectif van*, 27 janvier 2017, http://www.collectifvan.org/article_print.php?id=95496

85 “ARF-France Central Committee Oppresses Its Own AYF Youth,” *Usarmenianlife.com*, 25 juillet 2015, <http://www.armenianlife.com/2015/07/25/arf-france-central-committee-oppresses-its-own-youth-af/>

86 « Verdict du procès des deux activistes extrémistes arméniens accusés d’agression sur l’ambassadeur de Turquie », *Turquie News*, 30 novembre 2017, http://turquie-news.com/spip.php?page=article&id_article=47252

amendment was the result of the work of Franck “Mourad” Papazian and as the tensions have focused on him during the last years.

The opponents to the Papazian-Toranian line argue that the Armenian nationalist activities should skip to reparations and to the Karabakh issue. I think for the Turkish side the “reparations” issue is easier, because all these

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questions are about courts, and the legal basis of the Armenian side is more than slim. The U.S. courts rejected all the demands for reparation⁸⁷ and, after this lecture was delivered, the case of the Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia failed in front of the European Court of Human Rights. For the Karabakh issue, it may be a bit more political, but no matter what we may think about François Hollande’s errors, he never endorsed the self-proclaimed independence of the “Republic of Karabakh”, and, on the contrary, the bilateral relations between Paris and Baku improved during his presidency. As a result, the ways these dissenting Armenian nationalists suggest are not likely to be successful.

C) What Could (And Should) Be Done

The three decisions of the Constitutional Council, the double decision of the ECtHR in the Perinçek v. Switzerland and the one of the same court in the Mercan and others v. Switzerland (2017)⁸⁸ have built what I would call a legal stronghold; legally, we can say that contesting the genocide label for 1915 has nothing to do with Holocaust denial. It is defamatory to compare those who contest this accusation against the Turks to the propagandists who deny the existence of gas chambers used by the Third Reich. Actually, Laurent Leylekian, a former ARF’s top official, was sentenced by the Tribunal (February 2013) then by the Appeal Court (January 2014) of Paris for having

87 David Saltzman and Esther Neuwirth, “Ten Years of Litigation by Heirs of Ottoman Armenians for Unpaid Insurance Proceeds: An End in Sight?”, *Middle East Critique*, XX-3 (Fall 2011), 341-357 ; Movsesian v. Victoria Versicherung AG, 07-56722, 23 February 2012, United States Ninth Circuit, *Findlaw.com*, <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/summary/opinion/us-9th-circuit/2009/08/20/165533.html>

88 Mercan et autres c. Suisse, requête no 18411/11, *Echr.coe.int*, <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-178955>

compared Sirma Oran-Martz to Holocaust deniers and for having accused her to be part of a plot against the European institutions (nothing less). He had to pay a total of € 9,500 to his victim.⁸⁹ Remarkably, the wording of the appeal court verdict, pronounced the month after the first ECtHR's decision in the Perinçek affair, is even stronger than the one of the tribunal: "What [Laurent Leylekian] calls the Armenian genocide." (p. 6). Such a wording could not have been imagined ten years earlier; it is likely due, at least for a part, to the decision of the Second Chamber of the ECtHR in the Perinçek case. And now, in 2017, we have even more legal decisions, particularly the one of the Constitutional Council ruling it is about "historical debates".

That is why it is time to say: "You can present your arguments, but you cannot call me a denialist." Indeed, after a first victory in Lyon (2010),⁹⁰ I have currently five libel cases filed in Paris against those who have defamed me.

Beside the strictly legal dimension, all those who oppose the "Armenian genocide" label have to publish scholarly works in French. Since 1991, only Heath Lowry's study on *Ambassador Morgenthau's story* (by the Isis Press), of Kemal Çiçek's study on 1915 (by the Turkish Historical Society, TTK) and of one book by Yücel Güçlü (in Brussels) have been translated into Molière's language. I deeply respect the Isis Press and the TTK, but you cannot expect the average French reader, or even the educated French reader to go to İstanbul or Ankara to buy books. More publications are needed. And above all, what is needed are serious efforts to present the Turkish case in the Turkish-Armenian controversy, instead of believing that because you are right, everything will go for the best.

CONCLUSION

The French Constitutional Council's decision pronounced on January 23, 2017 has ended a 23-year cycle. Now, there is an opportunity to open another one, a cycle of discussions without fear and without hate.

89 Oran c. Leylekian, Cour d'appel de Paris, 16 janvier 2014, dossier n° 13/02194.

90 Gauin c. Nissanian, Tribunal de grande instance de Lyon, 27 avril 2010, numéro de parquet 0884561, *Legipresse.com*, <http://www.legipresse.com/media/272-06.pdf>

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RESEARCH ON THE ISSUE OF CHRISTIAN, HIDDEN AND/OR ISLAMIZED ARMENIANS IN TURKEY

(TÜRKİYE'DEKİ HRİSTİYAN ERMENİLER İLE GİZLİ VE/VEYA
MÜSLÜMANLAŞMIŞ ERMENİLER ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA)

Dr. Ömer Lütfi TAŞCIOĞLU

Scientific Consultative Committee of ANKA Institute
Email: omertascioglu@gmail.com

Abstract: *In recent years, the topic of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians living in Turkey has gained great deal of importance both in Turkey and Armenia. Many authors writing on this topic express support for hidden and/or Islamized Armenians -who are currently citizens of the Republic of Turkey- returning to their “true” identities. Armenia similarly attaches particular importance to the issue of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians living in Turkey and invites some of them to Armenia to teach them Armenian culture and language. This article seeks to examine the status of the Christian, hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey as well as their activities and relations with other countries.*

Keywords: *Christian Armenians, Islamized Armenians, Apostate Armenians, Hidden Armenians*

Öz: *Son dönemde Türkiye’de yaşayan gizli ve/veya Müslümanlaşmış Ermeniler konusu hem Türkiye’de hem de Ermenistan’da büyük önem kazanmıştır. Konuyla ilgilenen birçok yazar, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin vatandaşı olan gizli ve/veya Müslümanlaşmış Ermenilerin “gerçek” kimliklerine dönmelerine destek vermektedir. Özellikle Ermenistan Türkiye’de yaşayan gizli ve/veya Müslümanlaşmış Ermenilere büyük önem vermekte ve bunlardan bir kısmını Ermeni kültürü ve dilini öğretmek üzere Ermenistan’a davet etmektedir. Bu makalede Hristiyan, gizli ve/veya Müslümanlaşmış Ermenilerin içinde buldukları şartlar, bunların faaliyetleri ve diğer ülkelerle ilişkilerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Hristiyan Ermeniler, Müslümanlaşmış Ermeniler, Din Değiştiren Ermeniler, Gizli Ermeniler*

INTRODUCTION

A brief historical background on Armenian-Turkish relations should be investigated to understand why some converted Armenians changed their religion from Christianity to Islam.

Contact between the Turks and Armenians began in the year 1026 with the arrival of Çağrı Bey into Anatolia. After the Seljuks defeated the Byzantines and gained control of Anatolia, Armenians became dependent on the Seljuks. After the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians became an integral part of the Ottoman Empire.

During the rise of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians were considered to be the loyal subjects of the state. During the downfall period, however, driven by provocations from imperialist countries, a well-organized and active section of the Ottoman Armenians started to yearn for the establishment of an independent Armenia on the territory that they could grab from the fragments of the disintegrated Ottoman Empire.

During World War I (WW-I), while the Ottoman Empire was fighting on eight different fronts, insurrections started by Ottoman Armenians weakened the government and many Armenians who had been conscripted in the Ottoman army fled with their weapons and joined the Russian army, while others set up armed groups and began to commit massacres in Turkish villages.¹

As the slaughtering of civilians and sabotaging of the Ottoman war effort by Armenian armed groups continued despite all the warnings, the Ottoman government reached a decision on May 27, 1915 to remove its Armenian subjects from militarily sensitive areas near the warzones and to transport them to the interior of the Ottoman Empire.

However, not all Armenians in Anatolia were subjected to migration. In this context, Armenians from İstanbul, Kütahya, and Aydın provinces were not forced to migrate. On the other hand, Armenians from İzmit, Bursa, Kastamonu, Ankara, Konya, Harput, Diyarbakır, and Cilicia were forced to migrate, but eventually returned.²

1 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları ve İhtilal Hareketleri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etütler Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2003): 164.

2 Azmi Süslü, *Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı* (Ankara: Yüzcüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Yayını, 1990): 149-150 ; Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler 1914-1918* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2001): 62-63.

As a result, during the application of the forced migration of Ottoman Armenians, most of the Armenians living in the areas far away from the warzone kept their religion as Christians. Meanwhile, others changed their religion to Islam in an attempt to be exempted from relocation. However, there are records showing that the Ottoman government was not interested in Armenians converting to Islam, since it sent orders to have apostate Armenians relocated as well.³

Thus, Armenians living in Turkey formed two separate groups: Christian Armenians and hidden⁴ and/or Islamized Armenians.

In this work, the different tendencies of these Armenian groups will be examined. Since the situation of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians was also mentioned in the article titled “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey”, which was published in the previous issue of *Review of Armenian Studies*, this current article will refer to the former one when it is convenient.

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Christian Armenians

Most of the Christian Armenians living in Turkey are descended from the Ottoman Armenians who were not subjected to the relocation procedure. During the Ottoman period, Armenian citizens were not discriminated against, however, the Armenian revolts did create social scepticism and distrust towards them. There are many examples of Armenians who served in the high-level posts both in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey.

3 İsmet Binark (ed.), *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915 – 1920)* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1994): 58, 69.

4 What is meant by the term ‘hidden Armenians’ is people who, for whichever reason they prefer, refrain from disclosing that they have Armenian ancestry. This explanation was provided in: Ömer Lütfi Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey,” *Review of Armenian Studies*, No.35 (2017): 181.

In the Ottoman government, there were 22 Armenian ministers, 33 members of parliament, 29 generals, 7 ambassadors, 11 consul generals, 11 academicians, and 41 senior government officers.⁵ In this context, 10 Armenians served as members of parliament in the First Assembly and 11 served in the Second one.⁶

As a specific example, Berç Keresteciyan served as deputy general manager of the Ottoman Bank and later became general manager of the Bank. He served for a period as a Deputy at the *Meclis-i Mebusan* (the Lower House) of the Ottoman Parliament.

Regarding Keresteciyan after the founding of the Republic of Turkey;

“He was awarded the Medal of Independence after the Turkish War of Independence. Following the surname reform Atatürk gave him the family name of “Türker” (means “Valiant Turk” in Turkish) for his patriotism. He became a candidate for the deputy seat of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and became the first Armenian member of the Parliament in 1935. He continued his membership of parliament for two terms more after the general elections in 1939 and 1943. During his political career in the parliament, Berç Türker Keresteciyan made significant contributions to issues of general political, economic, social and international developments.”⁷

“In connection to Berç Keresteciyan, today, despite the fact that Turkish Armenians make up less than one percent of Turkey’s current population, the 550-seat Turkish Grand National Assembly has three members of Armenian ethnicity, one (Markar Eseyan) from the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), and two (Selina Doğan and Garo Paylan) from two of the opposition parties, Republican People’s Party (CHP) and Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP).”⁸

5 Salih Yılmaz, “Statements against Turks and Supposed Armenian Genocide in a10th Grade History School Book Taught in the Armenian Republic,” *Research on the Turkish World*, No. 177 (December 2008): 112

6 *Aide –Mémorie on the rights of minorities in Turkey*, Presented to the Representatives of the Members of The League of Nations (Istanbul: National Association for The Ottoman Society of Nations, 1922): 13-14.

7 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...”, 184; Fehmi Akın, *Afyonkarahisar millevekilleri: yaşam öyküleri ve meclisteki faaliyetleri* (Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık. 2009): 107.

8 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement ...”, 185.

“As another example, Agop Martayan Dilaçar was invited to the first language congress by Atatürk and appointed as the head specialist of the Turkish Language Association in 1934. His surname Dilaçar was given by Atatürk in 1935. He worked as an instructor of Turkish language at Ankara University and served as the head advisor of the Turkish Encyclopaedia. He continued his studies as the Secretary General of Turkish Language Association until his death.”⁹

“Torkom Istepanyan, Levon Panos Dabağyan, Nerses Yeramyanyan, Elmas Garagor are the other dignitary examples of the Armenian citizens of the Republic of Turkey who were active in public life, including politics. One study of more than 50 Turkish Armenians found that they were content and prosperous in Turkey and felt patriotic towards their country”.¹⁰ Additionally, Turkish Armenian Artin Penik was so upset about the terrorist attack in the Orly Airport perpetrated by ASALA against Turkish targets that he set himself on fire in the Taksim Square as a form of protest.

“One of those who had been chosen for the important and secret posts in Turkish Republic is Professor Avedis Simon Hacınlyan whose testimony deeply affected the members of court of Orly case. In July 15, 1983, three ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) members placed a bomb in front of the Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport, Paris. The explosion killed eight and wounded about sixty people. The court found guilty and sentenced them to life time imprisonment. In the course of trials, the court called for the testimonies of some Turkish academics as experts on the Armenian issue. One of them was Associate Professor Avedis Hacınlyan”. His testimony below illuminates the situation of the Turkish Armenians in Turkey:

“I was born in Istanbul in 1944 and attended elementary school, high school and university in Turkey. Following my graduation from the university I went to the University of Chicago for graduate studies on a scholarship. After commencing my doctorate I returned to Turkey from United States of my own wish, although I could have located job opportunities abroad with my background. I was first appointed as an instructor at the Middle East Technical University. I did my military service as a reserve officer in the Research and Development Section of

9 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...” 185; “Agop Dilaçar,” *Biyografya*, accessed September 26, 2017, <http://www.biyografya.com/biyografi/15830>

10 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement ...” 185 ; Michael M.Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide* (New York: Palgrave & Macmillan. 2011).

the Ministry of Defence, a sensitive department where I had access to classified material. There were three other reserve officers there belonging to non-Muslim minorities, one Armenian and two Jewish. After my military duty, I returned to the university. During my childhood, education and my career in the university I have not been subjected to any form of discrimination because of my Armenian origin

One of the most salient demands in the statement is about hidden and/or Islamized Armenians. ARF claimed that hidden and/or Islamized Armenians refrain from revealing their true identities and afraid of practicing their religion openly. In this regard, ARF asks the Republic of Turkey to take all necessary steps for hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish ... These fervent efforts ... reveal the importance attached to hidden and/or Islamized Armenians' returning back to their "true" identities.

as openly expressed in my family name. Citizens of Armenian origin carry out their religious obligations freely and govern their foundations such as schools, hospitals and churches. The members of the Armenian community are economically in a better shape than the average citizen of Istanbul in particular or Turkey as a whole. The fact that the Armenian community is living comfortably as equal citizens of the Turkish Republic, and is not faced with discrimination."¹¹

There is no need to add even any more words to the testimony of Hacınlıyan to realize the circumstance of Turkish citizens of Armenian origin.

Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey

Most Turkish Armenians have been loyal citizens of the Republic of Turkey. However, some of those whose ancestors converted from Christianity to Islam and changed their Armenian names with Turkish ones, in an attempt to avoid relocation, during the WW-I, have never forgotten their roots. Some of them learn the truth at their parents' deathbed and hesitate whether or not to return their real identity.¹²

Recently, this topic has become more widely discussed among Armenians. The topic of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians became more popular especially

11 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement..." 186; *Terrorist Attack at Orly, Statements and Evidence Presented at the Trial, February 19-March 2, 1985* (Ankara: University of Ankara, Faculty of Political Science, 1985): 33-37.

12 Raffi Bedrosyan, "To Baptize or Not to Baptize the Hidden Armenians in Turkey," *Armenian Weekly*, August 15, 2015.

after the announcement of the Montebello statement¹³ that was declared at the Regional Convention of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) of the Western United States, in Montebello on June 22, 2014.

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On this issue, "Armenian author Rupen Melkonyan, from Yerevan State University (YSU) and the Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences, states that 'It should be noted that the issue of apostate Armenians is also a delicate question for Turkey, since it is directly linked with the question of ethnic identity.'"¹⁵

Description of Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians

Armenian authors have different points of view on the description of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians.

Concerning this issue historian Karen Khanlarian stated that a hidden Armenian is "... one who considers himself an Armenian, and is aware of his Armenian origin and routes, is Armenian, indisputably, no matter where he lives, what language he speaks, what his name is, or confession he was forced to accept."¹⁶

13 Montebello Statement, Article 14: "The Republic of Turkey shall take all steps necessary to reverse, prevent and punish any attempts to discriminate against, intimidate, or harass ethnic Armenians because of their ethnicity, within its current and future borders and to allow without any hindrance hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish and to practice religious and ethnic freedom without restriction or fear of retaliation."

14 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement ..." 181.

15 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...", 183 ; Rupen Melkonyan, "The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey," *21-st Century*, № 1 (3), Yerevan, 2008.): 97.

16 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...", 182 ; Melkonyan, "The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey," 88.

Another author, Arsen Artsruni, noted that:

“An Armenian is one who in his cumulative entity has at least a single element within his overall identity allowing him to declare and admit that he is Armenian. One of those is having and admitting the Armenian ancestors, as well as the idea of nation, regarding that everyone belongs to the nation of his ancestors. This attribute is decisive, in contrast to the one of being an Armenian speaker or a Christian... The roots as a determinant of identity are the most important factor, because many “alienated” Armenians are Armenians because they remember their predecessors to have been Armenian. They have to be always accepted on our part as Armenians, not only when they achieve international recognition. ...Therefore, being Armenian by a home-country resident who understands the roots, does not have to cause any doubt at all”.¹⁷

Another Armenian author and political scientist Armen Aivazian puts forward that “An Armenian is one, who adopts Armenia as his unique home country, has a strong psychological attachment to Armenia’s land, nation, language and culture, has a feeling of personal responsibility for Armenia’s future, and is a carrier of Armenian language and culture.”

Thus, according to Aivazian, this and other factors make the person raised as an Armenian differ from one who is simply Armenian by origin. He thinks that with regard to the Armenian identity, origin is of an inferior significance, so that the issue of the real national identity is determined in the course of life of the person in question, his personal involvement and the relevant traditions.¹⁸

Such different points of view prove that there is no consensus among Armenian authors on the description of the hidden Armenians. As for the Turkish authors; most of them consider Armenians as Islamized or hidden if they have Turkish names and surnames but in fact of Armenian roots.¹⁹

The Number of Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians

One of the most difficult questions is how many hidden and/or Islamized Armenian are currently living in Turkey. Rafi Bedrosyan emphasises that it is

17 Taşcioğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 182; Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 89.

18 Taşcioğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 183; Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 89.

19 Taşcioğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 183.

more difficult to predict what proportion of them are even aware of their Armenian roots, or how many are willing to regain their Armenian identity.²⁰

Ruben Melkonyan indicates the number of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey in range of 80,000 to 600,000.²¹ Another Armenian author Karen Khanlarian indicates that the number of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey is around two million, of which 700,000–750,000 are hidden Armenians, and 1,300 000 are the Islamized Armenians.²²

“Haykazun Alvrtsyan, Director of the Study Centre for Western Armenian Issues,²³ estimates the number of Armenians living in Turkey as 3 million²⁴ of which more than 1 million are converted Muslim Armenians who have accepted their fate and do not want to talk about it, nor others to raise the issue.”²⁵

These different estimations indicate that Armenian authors have different points of view on the number of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey. In short, there is no consensus on the number of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians.

Z.S. Andrew Demirdjian’s estimates range from 50,000 to 5 million hidden and/or Islamized Armenians living in Turkey, combined with the Hamshens along the Black Sea coast.²⁶ He considers Hamshens, who number 3-4 million, as the hidden Armenians. Armenia also attributes great importance to Hamshens and considers them to be hidden Armenians.

Nune Arevshatyan estimates that there are 5-7 million Islamized Armenians²⁷ living in Turkey. She claims that although they have accepted Islam, they have

20 Raffi Bedrosyan, “The Islamized Armenians and Us,” *The Armenian Weekly*, November 15, 2013, <https://armenianweekly.com/2013/11/15/the-islamized-armenians-and-us/>

21 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 183; Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 98.

22 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 183; Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 88.

23 Armenia and Armenian Diaspora quotes 19 provinces of Turkey as Western Armenia and regards this territory as Armenian soil.

24 Ashot Israelyan, “Haykazun Alvrtsyan; There are more than 3 million Armenians living in Turkey,” *Aravot.am*, June 12, 2015, <http://en.aravot.am/2015/06/12/170575/>

25 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 183-184; Israelyan, “Haykazun Alvrtsyan; There are more than...”

26 Z.S. Andrew Demirdjian, “Armenia Irredenta Annexation of Western Armenia,” *www.armenianlife.com*, November 16, 2015, 3.

27 Nune Arevshatyan, “According to various sources, there are 5-7 million Islamized Armenians in Turkey”. Politician,” *Aravot.am*, April 25, 2015, <http://en.aravot.am/2015/04/25/169916/>

retained their dialects and large amount of them have been returning to their roots, becoming Christian.²⁸

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Hidden and/or Islamized Armenians as Disguised as Alevi-Kurds

Hidden Armenians reportedly live in the Tunceli province of Turkey under Kurdish-Alevi identity, where the majority people are Alevi. These Alevi people are mostly of Kurdish and Zaza origin. A vast number of the local population of Dersim (Tunceli) Alevi are said to be converted Armenians who have embraced the Zaza identity and accepted the Alevi faith under various circumstances.²⁹ Closer scrutiny of their expressions (such as “Alevi Muslim”) reveals that whereas most of them are aware of their ancestral origins, they refuse to accept it openly, especially to outsiders. The “Alevi Muslim” expression could be a kind of defence strategy. Or, it could contain a hidden message; the interlocutor may deliberately use it to show his/her Armenian identity.³⁰

The chairman of Turkmen-Alevi-Bektashi Foundation has stated that one million hidden Armenians disguise themselves as Kurdish Alevi and some of them take part in terrorist activities. He also claims that some of the hidden Armenians are holding positions among high level officials in the press, bureaucracy and the state.³¹

By the virtue of their positions as politicians, academicians and journalists, some of the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians who accuse Turkey of genocide have an impact on the politicians and public of the foreign countries. Since these politicians and foreign publics do not have sufficient knowledge about the Armenian issue, hidden and/or Islamized Armenians are able to create

28 Israelyan, “Haykazun Alvrtsyan; There are more than...,”

29 Varak Ketsemanian, “Dersim: A Facet of the Silent Revolution in Turkey,” *The Armenian Weekly*, September 9, 2013 ; Masoud Jan, “How many crypto Armenians live in Turkey under the identity of Kurdish-Alevi?” *Quora.com*, October 15, 2017, <https://www.quora.com/How-many-crypto-Armenians-live-in-Turkey-under-the-identity-of-Kurdish-Alevi>

30 Ketsemanian, “Dersim: A Facet of the Silent Revolution in Turkey...”

31 “Türkiye’deki Alevilerin içine sızan 1 milyon kırpto Ermeni var!” *İnternetHaber.com*, 27 Ekim 2015, <http://www.internethaber.com/turkiyedeki-alevilerin-icine-sizan-1-milyon-kirpto-ermeni-var-807497h.htm>

the impression that Turks are admitting to the “Armenian Genocide”. This adverse effect paves the way for resolutions on the recognition of “Armenian Genocide” to be adopted in the parliaments of those countries.

Their impact on the Turkish public becomes more drastic. The Turkish public hesitates about which claim is fact-based and which is not.

Returning of hidden Armenians to their true identities

“Recently, some of the hidden Armenians have given up concealing their identity and have started to criticize their parents for giving them Turkish names. One of those people stated to the Istanbul based weekly *Agos* newspaper that he has changed his previous name from ‘Selahattin Gültekin’ to the Armenian name ‘Miran Pırığıç Gültekin’ and had been baptized 2 years ago [Miran Gültekin converted from Alevism to Christianity through an official baptism and an application to the Armenian religious authorities in Yerevan].³² ‘He added that together with 70 others who had switched to their old Armenian identity, they had established an association named ‘Faith and Social Benevolent Society of Armenians of Dersim’. He claims that the number of hidden Armenians in Turkey exceeds 500,000, but there is no need for them to hide themselves anymore.”³³

“He complained of being criticized by the hidden Armenians among his acquaintances for uncovering their real identity. His admission demonstrates that most of the ‘hidden’ Armenians do not want to return their Armenian origin. It appears that only a small minority prefer returning to their original identity.”³⁴

Some hidden Armenians, however, do not change their names after conversion. One of those who prefer to keep their names is Fethiye Çetin.³⁵

“Her grandmother Seher was an Armenian Christian who was adopted by a Turkish military officer as a child during the Armenian relocation.³⁶ She first published her memoir in Turkey, entitled *My Grandmother* in

32 Ketsemanian, “Dersim: A Facet of the Silent Revolution in Turkey...”

33 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 187.

34 Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 187; “Gizli Ermeniler Gerçek Kimliklerine Dönüyor,” *Agos Gazetesi*, February 9, 2012.

35 She is the attorney representing the family of the murdered Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink.

36 “Çetin to Speak about Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians...”

which she spoke of her grandmother's hidden identity. The book sparked a conversation among Turks about the fate of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915. This resulted in an explosion of debate on Islamized Armenians and their legacy in contemporary Muslim families."³⁷

"My Grandmother" was followed by another book edited by Ayşegül Altınay and Fethiye Çetin, titled *The Grandchildren*, about dozens of Turkish/Kurdish people describing their Armenian roots, without revealing their real identities.³⁸ Then, Surp Giragos Armenian Church was reconstructed in Diyarbakir, which became a destination for many hidden Armenians in Eastern Anatolia. On average, over a hundred people visit the church daily, most of them hidden Armenians. Some come to pray, get baptized, or get married, but most just visit to feel Armenian, without converting back to Christianity.³⁹

Fethiye Çetin and Ayşegül Altınay wrote another book titled *The Hidden Legacy of Lost Armenians in Turkey*. The Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies of Ramapo College and the Armenian National Committee (ANC) of New Jersey had co-sponsored a talk by her titled: "'Hidden' No More: Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians in Turkey" on November 12, 2015 at Ramapo College.⁴⁰

Fethiye Çetin was born and raised in Turkey to become a lawyer, writer, and human rights activist. Her grandmother's roots were discussed at this presentation and she was awarded with the ANCA (Armenian National Committee of America) Freedom Award which is said to be ANCA's highest and most prestigious award.⁴¹

"Another book written on this subject is *The Essence of Identity: Islamized & Hidden Armenians in Turkey*. The book was written by Laurence Ritter from L'Écol des hautes études and sciences sociales (EHESS), and Cafer Sarıkaya from Boğaziçi University, Istanbul. Laurence Ritter was likewise invited by AGBU (Armenian General Benevolent Union) to speak in Yerevan, Armenia on October 13, 2016."⁴²

37 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...", 181-182.

38 Raffi Bedrosyan, "The Islamized Armenians and Us", November 15, 2013.

39 Bedrosyan, "The Islamized Armenians and Us", November 15, 2013.

40 "Çetin to Speak about Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians in NJ," *The Armenian Weekly*, November 6, 2015.

41 "Çetin to Speak about Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians...", "

42 Taşcıoğlu, "An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...", 182 ; Laurence Ritter and Cafer Sarıkaya, *The Essence of Identity: Islamized & Hidden Armenians in Turkey* (Yerevan: Armenian General Benevolent Union, 2016).

Armenia's plans for Hidden Armenians and Project Rebirth

Armenia attributes great importance to hidden and Islamized Armenians living in Turkey and invites some of them to Armenia to teach them Armenian culture and language. For this purpose, in cooperation with the Armenian government, Raffi Bedrosyan initiated a project called Project Rebirth. Bedrosyan explains that the goal of the project is to help the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians find their Armenian roots, culture, and language by organizing Armenian language classes in places like Diyarbakir and Tunceli, as well as planning trips for them to Armenia.⁴³ Within this scope, 80 hidden Armenians, 50 from Diyarbakır and 30 from the other cities were hosted by Armenia in August 2014. The Armenian Ministry of Diaspora and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation organised another special trip to Armenia in 2015.⁴⁴ Invitees were selected amongst the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians living in Turkey. One of the attendees stated that; “before I went to Armenia I was a Kurd, and I returned as an Armenian.” One other stated; “For years I fought for the rights of Kurds before I found out I was an Armenian at the deathbed of my father. Now I want to go fight in Nagorno-Karabakh.”⁴⁵ The timing of the trip was made to coincide with the Pan-Armenian Games, which brought more than 6,200 Armenian athletes from all over the world to Armenia, including 450 from Van, Bitlis, Muş, Tunceli, Diyarbakır and Hatay regions of Turkey. Armenia claims that Turkish invitees represent the historic Armenian homeland.⁴⁶

This attribution proves that Armenia still considers the eastern part of Turkey as Armenian homeland.⁴⁷

On the other hand, as stated previously, Armenia considers the Hamshens of Turkey as hidden/Islamized Armenians. Saida Oganyan, an ethnographer who

43 Raffi Bedrosyan, “The Plight of Hidden or Islamised Armenians in Turkey,” *The Armenian Weekly*, November 18, 2016.

44 Raffi Bedrosyan, “Project Rebirth: Homecoming of ‘Hidden Armenians,’” *The Armenian Weekly*, August 11, 2015.

45 Bedrosyan, “The Plight of Hidden or Islamised Armenians...”

46 Bedrosyan, “Project Rebirth...”

47 As indicated in footnote 23, Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora quote 19 provinces of Turkey as “Western Armenia” and regard this territory as Armenian soil. On the official web site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia (besides the reference to “Western Armenia” in Armenia’s Declaration of Independence), there are multiple references to “Western Armenia”, which is imagined by the ARF and other nationalist Armenians to stretch from the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea to the coasts of the Black Sea and overlaps with the Eastern Anatolian territory of the Republic of Turkey. But calling some portion of Anatolia as “Western Armenia” is against the Chapter I, Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations which instructs “all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”. This explanation was provided in: Taşcıoğlu, “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement...,” 157-159.

heads the Amshenka Union of Hamshen Armenians, claims that this little-known group may become an ideological -and even more broadly- a political and security challenge in the coming months, especially if tensions between Moscow and Ankara re-emerge or if Yerevan decides it needs to focus on a foreign problem to distract attention from its domestic ones.⁴⁸ If her predictions come true, this can create new problems not only for the Hamshens, but also for Turkey, Armenia, and the Russian Federation.⁴⁹

According to Oganyan, Hamshens could be used as an instrument of temptation by Russia to interfere with Turkey and to exploit international attention toward minority peoples. She suggests that Hamshens also could be used as an instrument for the revision of the borders between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia, in favour of the latter.⁵⁰

These suggestions explain why Armenia invites the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to Armenia and seeks to teach them Armenian culture and language.

Viewpoint of Hrant Dink on hidden and/or Islamized Armenians

The issue of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians brings to mind the announcement that Hrant Dink made shortly before his assassination, at the Malatya Chamber of Commerce on April 15, 2006.

One of the important points in Dink's announcement was regarding the number of the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey. He claimed that their numbers exceed 500,000.⁵¹ Dink criticized hidden and/or Islamized Armenians for not revealing their identity and added that he might reveal their identities when convenient.⁵²

Shortly after Dink's murder, over 100,000 people gathered in Taksim Square holding the same banners "we are all Armenians" and "we are all Hrant Dink." During these demonstrations, a Turkish Armenian journalist who lives in Germany linked up to a Turkish TV channel and drew attention to the some of the demonstrators that he had recognised some of them as members of the terrorist organization PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). This highlights the

48 Paul Goble, "Islamicized Armenians in Turkey: A Bridge or a Threat?", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Volume 14, Issue 46 (April 5, 2017).

49 Paul Goble, "Islamicized Armenians in Turkey..."

50 Paul Goble, "Islamicized Armenians in Turkey..."

51 Arslan Bulut, "Devletin içindeki gizli Ermeniler!", *Yeniçağ Gazetesi*, 22 Eylül 2010.

52 "Yusuf Halaçoğlu Ateşyan'ı Doğruladı: 500.000 Kripto Ermeni var," *OdaTV.com*, 23 Eylül 2010.

importance of carrying out further research into the claims made by the chairman of Turkmen-Alevi-Bektashi Foundation and what this entails for Turkey and its society.

On the other hand, Hrant Dink's announcement was criticized by diaspora Armenian entities and people within the Republic of Armenia- who condemned him and his ideological construct regarding the "hidden Armenians" of Turkey as bringing back a taboo to life.⁵³ However, his murder caused an adverse effect and ignited the spark of self-recognition and self-assertion, and instead initiated a campaign of returning to ancestral roots among Turkish-Armenians, especially in the Eastern Anatolian provinces.⁵⁴

Hrant Dink's Warning to the Separatist Kurds

The second important point of Hrant Dink's announcement was about the United States of America's and the European Union's alleged efforts to drag Turks and Armenians into a confrontation. During his speech, he also criticized the US and the EU for their Kurdish policies.

Dink evoked that, following the US intervention in Iraq, the separatist Kurds in Turkey were encouraged to fight for autonomy followed by independence like the Kurds in Iraq. Dink forewarned the Kurds that the imperialist states always pursue such policies for their own benefit and upon reaching their goals, they abandon people like the Kurds to their own fate. He added that, just like Armenians were deceived during WW-I, Kurds were also being deceived by the US in the hope of establishment of a Kurdish state in Turkish lands. Dink advised that if Kurds do not want to be fooled like the Armenians were in the past, they should not rely on the promises of the US and remember that after the withdrawal of the US forces, Kurds would be left alone with the Turkish people.

Dink's explanations pointed out that Kurds were being maliciously manipulated by imperialist countries to serve these countries' interests. Dink also admitted the mistake of the Armenian leadership in rebelling against the Ottoman Empire during WW-I.⁵⁵ Their plan was not only to establish Kurdistan in Turkish land but also to establish Western Armenia based on the

53 Garabet K. Moundjian, "Armenian Involvement in the 1925-1946 Kurdish Rebellions in Republican Turkey: Trying to Map the Origins of "Hidden Armenians," *Academia*, November 21, 2017, <http://www.academia.edu/30409786>

54 Ketsemanian, "Dersim: A Facet of the Silent Revolution in Turkey...".

55 "Hrant, Kürtleri 11 yıl önce uyarmişti", *Aydınlık*, 26 Eylül 2017.

population of the hidden Armenians who would decipher their real identity in due time.

As it was emphasized in the article of Garabet K. Moundjian that “*ARF aims that Armenians should repatriate to their historic homeland on the basis of “hidden Armenians” existed in the Eastern Provinces of the Republic of Turkey*”.⁵⁶ The involvement of the ARF leaders in the Kurdish rebellion in Turkey could create a unique opportunity to reach this goal. For this purpose, ARF had an implicit participation in the formation of Kurdish Hoyboun organization in Lebanon. The first meeting of Kurds and Armenians took place in the summer residence of the famous ARF leader Vahan Papazian.⁵⁷

ARF also took the total control of the Dersim and Ağrı rebellious forces during the Dersim and Ağrı insurrections.⁵⁸

Recently United States’ foreign intelligence service CIA declassified the documents that showcase the cooperation between ASALA and PKK on December 22, 2016. According to these documents, Kurdish-Armenian cooperation was established to fight against the common enemy, Turkey, and has been developed from 1991 onwards.⁵⁹

All these endeavors and cooperation between separatist Kurds and Armenians and Armenia’s invitations of hidden Armenians to teach them Armenian culture and language into their minds reveal the intention of Armenia to control eastern and south-eastern part of Turkey through hidden Armenians.

Some hidden Armenians take part in the above-mentioned activities in cooperation and coordination with the separatist Kurdish movement in Turkey. A couple of years ago, some of the mayors in south-eastern part of Turkey - like in Diyarbakır and Van- had even started to change the Turkish highway signs,⁶⁰ street names and welcome signs⁶¹ as well as the city names into Armenian.⁶² At the beginning of the Kurdish insurrection, the Turkish

56 Moundjian, “Armenian Involvement ...,” 53.

57 Moundjian, “Armenian Involvement...,” 8.

58 Moundjian, “Armenian Involvement...,” 35-44.

59 Hazel Çağan Elbir, “CIA Declassified the Documents on the Cooperation Between ASALA and PKK,” Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No: 2017 / 12, February 14, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/CIA-DECLASSIFIED-THE-DOCUMENTS-ON-THE-COOPERATION-BETWEEN-ASALA-AND-PKK>

60 “BDP’li Başkana Ermeni Krallığı Nişanı Verildi,” *Sabah*, 19 Haziran 2011.

61 “Çok Dilli’ Tabela Sorguda,” *Radikal*, 4 Temmuz 2012, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/cok-dilli-tabela-sorguda-1093120/>

62 Osman Bekleyen (DHA), “İlçenin İsmi Tabelaya Ermenice Yazıldı,” *Milliyet*, 24 Temmuz 2014, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ilcenin-ismi-tabelaya-ermenice-gundem-1916601/>

government tolerated these practices. However, after the escalation of terrorist attacks in the south-eastern part of Turkey and after the emergence of the relation and support of these separatist-minded mayors with PKK, the government removed them from office and started legal prosecution against them.

Repair Future Project

An Armeno-Turkish platform called “Repair Future” accuses Turkey of having committed the “Armenian Genocide” and encourages hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their Armenian identity.⁶³

The partners of the “Repair” Project are Yerkir Europe, Region Phone Alpes, Foundation Kalust Gulbenkyan and Anadolu Kültür.

Most of the authors who write articles on Repair Future blame Turkey with the crime of genocide and support Kurdish, Assyrian, Alevi, Greek, and Armenian separatism in Turkey.

Anadolu Kültür, the Turkish partner of the Repair Future Project thanks the organizations which have supported various projects and activities of Anadolu Kültür since its establishment, in the web site.⁶⁴ The activities that the Anadolu Kültür specifies in its web site include: intercultural, inter-institutional and interdisciplinary performances reflecting the Armenian and Kurdish culture⁶⁵, and discussions supporting Kurdish movies and printing and publishing of bilingual (Armenian and Kurdish) children’s books.

Anadolu Kültür has become associated with both hidden Armenians and Kurdish separatist groups, especially in the eastern cities considered as Armenian soil by the Armenians and the other cities in which a good number of the hidden Armenians have lived. The total number of these cities exceeds 35.⁶⁶

Turks who write for The Armenian Weekly

The activities of Repair Future and Anadolu Kültür, mentioned above, are the mutual activities of Turks (or people who claim they are Turks) and Armenians.

63 Lilit Gasparian, “Armenian Genocide: Recognition and Reparations,” *Repair Future*, October 17, 2014.

64 “Revealing the City through Memory 2015,” *AnadoluKültür.org*, June 29, 2015, <http://www.anadolukultur.org/en/events>

65 “Revealing the City through Memory 2015.”

66 “Revealing the City through Memory 2015.”

But some of the artists and authors in Turkey are not content with these activities. They also send articles to Armenian weeklies, give lectures fiercely criticizing Turkey, and attend various activities supporting the Armenian theses. The Armenian Weekly gives wide coverage to these articles, conferences and similar activities and makes use of these Turks as means of criticizing and putting pressure on the Republic of Turkey.

A typical example of these articles written by Turks is a special report for the Armenian Weekly titled “The Reign of Lies in Turkey” dated May 11, 2012. In this article, the author emphasizes the effect of lies by the comments below:

“Organized denial means the reign of lies. The denialist, in order to sustain denial, has to resolutely and incessantly lie. Otherwise it can’t go on. “We in Turkey all live in this world of lies, so much so that our textbooks, news agencies, official documents, literature, and even surnames are likely telling us lies. Even our parents may have told us lies about our family history. Our whole identity may be a fabrication.”⁶⁷

Apparently, with her last sentence, the author refers to the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians disguising themselves with Turkish names. Between the years 2008-2012, this author wrote 34 articles for the Armenian Weekly criticizing Turkey, supporting Armenian allegations, and encouraging hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their identity.

Conclusion

In the centenary of the events of 1915, the Republic of Armenia, the Armenian diaspora and their supporters launched a campaign for the Republic of Turkey’s recognition of what they termed the “Armenian Genocide”. In coordination with this aim, Armenia exploits hidden, and/or Islamized Armenians living in Turkey to put pressure on Turkey and invites some of these people to Armenia to teach them Armenian culture and language.

On the other hand, ARF aims that Armenians should repatriate to their historic homeland on the basis of “hidden Armenians” that exist in the Eastern Provinces of Turkey. They consider the Kurdish rebellion in Turkey as a unique opportunity to reach this goal.

As for the hidden and/or Islamized Armenians, most of them are loyal to Turkey. But some others, who are under the influence of Armenian diaspora,

67 Ayşe Günaysu, “The Reign of Lies in Turkey,” *The Armenian Weekly*, May 11, 2012.

disguise themselves with Turkish identity, give lectures, arrange and attend forums, write books and reviews and produce movies to criticize Turks as perpetrators of genocide and support the separatist Kurdish groups in Turkey.

Recently, activities of the hidden and Islamized Armenians have become more pronounced, surpassing the pressure exerted by third-party countries, and some of the Armenian citizens of Turkey have started to explicitly cooperate with separatist Kurds and Armenia.

While some of them carry on their activities and collaboration using their Turkish identity, some others, finding it unnecessary to conceal themselves, have been baptised and have returned to their roots by assuming Armenians names.

Within this context, the Republic of Turkey should encourage hidden and Islamized Armenians to return to their roots, if they so wish. What Turkey needs most of all is to encourage academic research into the issue of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to understand how these people think and feel, what they want for their future and their country, and what they entail for Turkey.

Within this context, the Republic of Turkey should encourage hidden and Islamized Armenians to return to their roots, if they so wish. What Turkey needs most of all is to encourage academic research into the issue of hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to understand how these people think and feel, what they want for their future and their country, and what they entail for Turkey.

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BOOK REVIEW

(KİTAP TAHLİLİ)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Christopher GUNN

Department of History,
Coastal Carolina University

“THE ARARAT ILLUSION”

“AĞRI YANILSAMASI”

Author: David D. Minier

Title: Ararat Illusion

Published: Siglo Editions, 2011

ISBN: 978-0-615-53193-9

Language: English

Page: 337

On January 27, 1973, Mehmet Baydar, the Turkish Consul General of Los Angeles, and Bahadır Demir, the Vice Consul, were murdered in a hotel cottage in Santa Barbara, California by a 73-year old retired Armenian named Gourgen Yanikian. The diplomats were both shot at point-blank range in a deceptive ruse that Yanikian had planned for months. After emptying his first gun into the two men, Yanikian then shot Baydar and Demir each in the head with a second weapon, to make sure they were dead. He then called the police, reported the crime and sat down to wait for the arresting officers to arrive. In a lengthy manifesto posted to media outlets and individuals around the world days before the murders, Yanikian called on the global Armenian diaspora to take up arms against the Turkish government and kill its representatives. This historical tragedy serves as the prologue to David Minier’s novel, *The Ararat Illusion*, and the book’s main character, detective Michael Page, who was the (fictional) first responder to the double homicide.

Ararat Illusion then jumps 13 years in the future, to April 1986, and spins a tale of late Cold War murder, mystery, espionage, and potential nuclear

annihilation as (the now experienced) Detective Lieutenant Page plays a deadly cat-and-mouse game with Victor Kalik(ian), a renegade Armenian-American KGB agent with nothing less than fate of the world at stake. The book takes place primarily in and around Santa Barbara, the location of the Yanikian murders, with quick jaunts to San Luis Obispo, Palo Alto, San Francisco, Yosemite National Park, and Washington, DC. While the story is mildly entertaining, similar to a low-budget action film with limited characters, panned dialogue and requisite car chases, the mistakes (the Stanford Cardinals [sic], gorilla bands [sic], etc.), an unconvincing plot, tiring high-profile cameos (Ronald & Nancy Reagan, William Casey, Mikhail Gorbachev, etc.), and an unbelievable climax ultimately detract from the story. The moral and legal implications of Armenian terrorism referenced throughout the book are overlooked and, to Minier, are only important when American lives are at stake. What is more interesting, however, than the veneer in which this former District Attorney encases Armenian political violence, is why David Minier chose to write this story at all.

Some Armenians heard Yanikian's call. Between 1975 and 1988, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and the armed wing of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), first as the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG) and later as the Armenian Revolutionary Army (ARA) led one of the most unique terrorist movements to emerge out of the eastern Mediterranean and Europe. These terrorists killed approximately 90 individuals and wounded hundreds more through a combination of assassinations, bombing campaigns and violent assaults that spanned North America, Europe, the Middle East and the south Pacific and targeted ethnic Turks, assets of the Turkish government, and Turkish business interests. In the early 1980s, various U.S. government officials described Armenian terrorists as the most dangerous, savage, and mysterious group in existence, and in 1981 they actually accounted for the highest number of documented international terrorist attacks in the world.¹ The groups' most notorious acts were the murders of Turkish diplomats and their immediate family members, which took 29 Turkish lives by the time the assassinations stopped in 1984.

While largely neglected in public and historical discourse, the rather bizarre and brutal case of Armenian terrorism has been the subject matter for at least two other writers. The first was Kevork Ajemian who, in 1997, published *A Time for Terror*. The second was Oleg Steinhauer who wrote *Liberation*

1 "Armenian Terrorists," January 10, 1983, CIA, CIA-RDP88-01070R000100520004-4; "Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981," in Department of State Bulletin Vol. 82, No. 2065 (August 1982): 16; and Micheal M. Gunter, "Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People": *A Study of Contemporary Armenian Terrorism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 1.

Movements in 2010. While Steinhauer appears to have no personal connection to Armenian terrorism, Ajemian is (allegedly) one of the founders of ASALA. Minier too, has a direct connection to Armenian terrorism. As the District Attorney in Santa Barbara in 1973, it was Minier who successfully prosecuted Yanikian for the murders of Mehmet Baydar and Bahadır Demir. Minier therefore, is well placed to understand the significance of Armenian terrorism and certainly followed its history and trajectory in the 1970s and 1980s. It is rather curious, then, why Minier chose to pick up his story in 1986, after Armenian terrorism had largely run its course, and chose to center his tale around the spurious notion that the violence was a creation of the USSR, not an Armenian phenomenon.²

At its core, Minier's self-published *The Ararat Illusion* reads like a *mea culpa* for not having allowed Yanikian to turn his trial for the assassinations of Baydar and Demir into a condemnation of the Republic of Turkey for the alleged crimes of the Ottoman Empire in 1915.³ Yanikian's defense attorney had hoped to stage a re-enactment of another Armenian assassin's trial, Soghomon Tehlirian, in Berlin in 1921, which resulted in Tehlirian's acquittal for the murder of the former Ottoman official, Talat Pasha. In 1973, Minier blocked the testimony, arguing that the events of 1915 had no relevance to murders 58 years later. More recently, however, Minier has stated that "looking back, I regret I hadn't the courage to allow such evidence, and trust the jury to follow the law."⁴

Perhaps Minier has forgotten that most of Yanikian's testimony was, like Tehlirian's before him, largely fabricated. Perhaps he has forgotten that Yanikian was a vital link between the ARF's assassins of the early 20th century and the generation of Armenian terrorists that emerged in 1975. Whereas Tehlirian and his associates gained the adulation of the Armenian diaspora through the assassination of men who, at least in their own minds, had been responsible for the massacres of 1915, Yanikian proved that 60 years removed

2 The final terrorist attack by the ARF against a Turkish target was the takeover of the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa, Canada on March 12, 1985. The terrorists killed a Canadian security officer protecting the entrance as they fought their way inside the building, took over ten hostages, and wounded the Turkish Ambassador, Coskun Kırca. See "Terrorist Attack on Turkish Embassy Ends," OTTAWA 01836, March 12, 1985. Despite the continued efforts of the world's best counter-terrorist analysts, no direct link between the Soviet Union and either Armenian terrorist organization was ever established. See: "Armenian Terrorism: Is There a Soviet Link?" STATE 137146, May 10, 1984.

3 For a recent in-depth analysis of Gourgen Yanikian's trial and the role of David Minier see Haluk Şahin, *The Hate Trap: The Anatomy of a Forgotten Assassination* (Offenbach am Main, Germany: Manzara Verlag Bölge, 2017).

4 David Minier, "Armenian Genocide: How Valley prosecutor missed his chance to be 'immortal symbol of justice'," *The Fresno Bee*, January 26, 2018, <http://www.fresnobee.com/opinion/readers-opinion/article196785924.html>

from the events of 1915, the Diaspora would now support the assassination of any Turk; and carrying out these death sentences made one an instant hero, regardless whether the victim was a diplomat, spouse or even a child. One can only hope that Minier's change of heart, his decision to callously overlook the devastation wrought by the violence inspired by Yanikian's murder, is not simply an attempt to gain the admiration of a community that once scorned him for doing his job. We can also hope, given what appears to be an alt-right conspiracy laden second self-published novel titled *One Nation, Under Obamas...: A Descent into Tyranny*, it is not simply Islamophobia.⁵

Violence breeds violence, and if true historical reconciliation is the ultimate goal of writers and scholars involved in Turkish-Armenian relations, books like *The Ararat Illusion* should be avoided. Thankfully, it appears that his books are hard to find.⁶

5 David D. Minier, *One Nation Under Obamas...* (David Minier, 2012), https://www.amazon.com/One-Nation-Under-Obamas/dp/098598130X/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1518517425&sr=8-3

6 "The Ararat illusion: a riveting tale of revenge and political intrigue, set in Santa Barbara," *WorldCat.org*, www.worldcat.org/title/ararat-illusion-a-riveting-tale-of-revenge-and-political-intrigue-set-in-santa-barbara/oclc/816690281&referer=brief_results

ERRATUM

In the printed version of the 35th issue of the Review of Armenian Studies, the last name of Dr. Ömer Lütü Taşcıođlu, the author of the article titled “An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey”, has been misspelled. Due to a publication error, Dr. Taşcıođlu’s last name was spelled with a “Ç”, when it should have been with a “C”.

We apologize to Dr. Ömer Lütü Taşcıođlu and our readers for this publication error.

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