

THE ASSASSINATION OF MAYOR OF VAN KAPAMACIYAN BY THE TASHNAK COMMITTEE

Dr. Hasan OKTAY*

Van and the Armenian Separatism

It is cardinal to understand the importance of Van in order to grasp the Armenian Question. Aram Manukian, who played a leading role in the first Van revolt in 1896 and fled to Russia afterwards, returned back to the city in 1904. His primary aim was arming the local Armenians in the anticipation of another widespread revolt.

The Turks and Armenians cohabited in Van for centuries. The extremist elements within the Armenian community wanted to form an independent administration, and possibly a union with Russia. As they didn't form the majority in Van, neither in the rest of the Empire, they chose the way of 'ethnic cleansing' by organizing armed Armenian terror organizations to get rid off the local Muslim population and thereby to create an Armenian Van.

Turks and Armenians cohabited in Van for centuries.

Under the liberal political atmosphere following the declaration of the Second Ottoman Constitution in 1908, the post of mayor of Van was given to an Armenian from the Loyal People (millet-i sadıka), called Bedros Kapamacıyan in mid 1909.¹ He was a delegate of the Van board of directors. Although the city was populated overwhelmingly by Muslims, Kapamacıyan was elected thanks to the tolerance of the residents of Van without being subject to any discrimination, therefore, he received the votes of the Muslims as well. Two out of ten delegates of board of directors

* Yüzüncü Yıl University, Faculty of Education, Department of History, Van.

¹ *Teotik Salnamesi*, İstanbul 1911, p. 253; for the historical development of Turkish municipality, see; İber Ortaylı, *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Yerel Yönetim Geleneği*, (The Tradition of Local Government) İstanbul 1985, p. 9; Mehmet Ali Gökaçtı, *Dünyada ve Türkiye'de Belediyecilik*, (Municipality in the World and Turkey) (İstanbul: 1996); İlhan Tekeli, *Türkiye'de Belediyeciliğin Gelişimi*, (The Development of Municipality in Turkey) (Ankara: 1982).

Kapamacıyan attempted to serve honestly for the peace and prosperity of all communities living in Van

were elected among Armenians.² Traditionally the mayor of Van used to be elected among the Muslim delegates, as they represented the majority of the population. However, all members agreed to elect Kapamacıyan.

Consequently, he was elected unanimously. Although we do not have much information about Kapamacıyan's background,³ it is commonly known that he was an outstanding member of a respected family dealing with drapery trade.⁴

Locals were happy with him while he served his term in office. He did not facilitate the aspirations of the Armenian Revolutionary Tashnak Committee,⁵ which was headed by Manukian and was quite influential in Van. Kapamacıyan attempted to serve honestly for the peace and prosperity of all communities living in Van and to act always in favour of the Ottoman interests, not those of the Tashnak and Hınchak committees, which had revolutionary and separatist objectives. While Mayor Kapamacıyan was working hard for peace and for the future of the constituency, the Armenian Patriarch initiated some provocative plans for rebellion in Van and its surroundings with the Tashnak committee in order to convince the European states that the 'Armenian cause' was still alive.⁶

² BOA DH MUI, nr. 23-2/23-1

³ Kapamacıyan was granted a favor on 2 February 1908. BOA İrade Taltifat, 1325. Za/1.

⁴ Teotik Salnamesi, (Istanbul: 1911), p. 253; Y. Çark, *Türk Devleti Hizmetinde Ermeniler* (Armenians in the Service of Turkey), (Istanbul: 1953), p. 175; M. Sadi Koçuş, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Türk Ermeni İlişkileri* (Armenians in History and Turkish Armenian Relations), (Istanbul: 1990), p. 124.

⁵ Taşnaksutyun organization was established as the alliance of Armenian revolutionary societies in 1890 in Tiflis, taking the separatist gangs in the Balkans as an example, and started its activities by soon opening branches in Istanbul, Erzurum and Van. L. Nalbantyan, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties Through The Nineteenth Century*, Los Angeles 1963, p. 442; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia 1864-1914, a Study in Imperialism*, London 1968, p. 527; Nejat Göyünç, *Osmanlı İdaresinde Ermeniler*, (The Armenians under the Ottoman Rule) Istanbul 1983, p. 65; Mim Kemal Öke, *Ermeni Meselesi*, (Armenian Question) Istanbul 1986, p. 95; Cevdet Küçük, *Ermeni Meselesinin Ortaya Çıkışı*, (The Beginning of the Armenian Question) Istanbul 1984, p. 100; M. Sadi Koçuş, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Türk Ermeni İlişkileri*, (Armenians in History and the Turkish-Armenian Relations) Istanbul 1990, p. 153; for the political aspect of the committee, see Anahide Ter Minassian, "1876-1923 Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda sosyalist hareketin doğuşunda ve gelişmesinde Ermeni topluluğunun rolü", *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Sosyalizm ve Milliyetçilik*, (Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire) compiled by M. Tunçay, Erich Jan Zürcher, (Istanbul: 1995), pp. 163-238.

⁶ When Khrimian Hairik of Van was appointed as the Patriarch of Istanbul in 1873, he aimed to take the Armenian issue to Istanbul and from there to European embassies. As the plans and sabotages starting in this way rapidly spread to Anatolia, Van was mostly the subject of such incidents. See Yves Ternos, *Ermeni Tabusu*, (The Armenian Taboo) Istanbul 1993, p. 58 quoted from Frederic Macler, *Autour de L'Armenie*,

In line with these plans, a series of fires broke out in Van in April 1912 and the houses of some Armenians were also burnt down. The Patriarch requested the mayor to report these fires to the European embassies, and inform that the Muslims were ready to destroy the properties and to kill the Armenians and that the Muslims were responsible for fires.⁷ Contrary to what he was asked mayor Kapamacıyan prepared a report stating that this was not the case and the fires were started by the Armenian Tashnak committees. He also went to the office of Van Governor and expressed his loyalty and fidelity to the Ottoman State. The Patriarchate respectively sent out a delegation to Van immediately and tried to calm down the Mayor and conceal the incidents because Kapamacıyan was a very respected and influential man among the Armenians. His stand against the Armenian revolutionaries would have endangered those committees' activities going on.⁸

Consequently the revolutionary Armenian committees found the attitude of the mayor Kapamacıyan untolerable⁹ and a decision for his assassination was taken.¹⁰ The revolutionary terror gangs previously committed assassinations against Armenian leaders who supported the Ottoman interest as a whole and aimed to spread terror and eliminate any opposition, even among their own Armenian people.¹¹

Paris 1917, p.183; also for the activities of Patriarch Khrimian, see, Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, (Armenians in History and the Armenian Question) (Ankara: 1996); Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, (Armenian File) (Ankara: 1988); Erdal İter, *Ermeni Kilisesi ve Terör*, (Armenian Church and Terror) (Ankara: 1999).

⁷ BOA DH SYS 109/2-1.

⁸ BOA DH SYS 109/2-1.

⁹ BOA DH MÜL 55-1/54 (Minutes of 5th consultation meeting on Van revolutionary society dated 18-22 March 1909. Although Anahide Ter Minassian states that this meeting was held by the Hinchak committee (Anahide Ter Minassian, "1876-1923 Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda sosyalist hareketin doğuşunda ve gelişmesinde Ermeni topluluğun rolü", (The Role of the Armenian Community in the Beginning and the Development of the Socialist Movement) *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Sosyalizm ve Milliyetçilik*, (Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire) compiled by M. Tunçay, Erich Jan Zürcher, İstanbul 1995, p. 179), this is the revolutionary meeting of Tashnak organization, since the expression "Daşnaksutyun" is referred to in the meeting minutes.)

¹⁰ BOA DH SYS 109/2-3 (Such decisions are very frequently observed in revolutionary organizations and the process of execution was initiated by pressing a black cross on the name in the Armenian terror organizations.)

¹¹ *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Hareketi İhtilaliyesi*, (The Works and the Revolutionary Activities of the Armenian Committees) Ankara 1983, p. 250; While the Armenians were carrying out their activities in Anatolia on one hand, they were murdering coreligionist Armenians in İstanbul who did not respect them. Lawyer Haçik, Gedikpaşa church archpriest Dacad Vartabet, merchant Karagözyan, candle-maker Önnik, Apik Uncuyan, police officer Markar, Clerical Board member Mampre Vartabed and Hacı Dikran Migirdic Tütüncüyan are only some of the Armenians murdered by the Armenian brigands. Altan Deliorman, *Türkiye Karşı Ermeni Komiteleri*, (The Armenian Militants against Turks) (İstanbul: 1975), p. 31.

Ottoman Attempts to Prevent Separatism

As a result of the developments in the Ottoman territory towards the end of the 19th century, it became to be apparent that peace would be interrupted and disturbances would occur. A short time before the declaration of the Second Ottoman Constitution, Van governor Ali Rıza Pasha, who was trying to prevent the separatist activities of the revolutionary Tashnak Armenians without causing harm to the people, appointed an Armenian called Ohannes Ferit Boyacıyan¹² as the deputy governor and his brother Armarak Boyacıyan as the governor of Gevaş district,¹³ more to diminish the influence of the Armenian revolutionary committees on the local Armenian people. Gevaş is at about thirty five kilometers away from Van and Akdamar island, which is an important religious center for the Armenians. After these appointments, the Tashnak Armenian committee, which made separatist propaganda among the Armenians and frequently complained to the European states, would not have any reason to complain. Armarak Boyacıyan, while strictly preventing the Armenian brigands from using Akdamar island as a base and hindering their operations, was almost eliminating their influence on the local people. Thus, the policy of Ali Rıza Pasha started to give results.¹⁴ But the Armenian gangs by killing Armarak Boyacıyan, removed an important obstacle before them.¹⁵ Upon the murder of his brother, Ohannes Ferid, Boyacıyan stated that he could not stay in Van any more and with the authorisation of Ali Pasha, he requested to be assigned to the post of the deputy governor of Elazığ, a city far away from Van.¹⁶

Aware of the sensitivity of the situation, Ali Pasha drew attention of the Sublime Port (Ottoman Government) and requested that an Armenian called Mikail to be appointed as the deputy governor of Van, in order to increase the loyalty of the local people to the government and upset the expectations of the Armenian

¹² Y. Çark, op cit., p. 168.

¹³ Faiz Demiroğlu, *Van'da Ermeni Mezalimi*, (Armenian Atrocities in Van) (Ankara: 1995), p. 54; *Teotik Salnamesi*, İstanbul 1911, p. 250; Y. Çark, op. cit., p. 168.

¹⁴ As a result of these attempts of Ali Pasha, the social order tried to be upset in Van started to return to good old days. However, the gangs murdered Ali Pasha, who prevented their activities, in Batum after succeeding in their struggle to draw him away. Hasan Oktay, "Valiler Eskiden de Hedefli", (Governors were Targeted Before) *Tarih ve Medeniyet*, (History and Civilization) (İstanbul: 1999), volume 62, pp. 60-63.

¹⁵ BOA *İrade-i Dahiliyye*, 2685/55, 27/Şevval/1325.

¹⁶ BOA *İrade-i Dahiliyye*, 2685/55, 27/Şevval/1325.

Some favors were granted to the Armenian notables living in the Ottoman territory.

extremists.¹⁷ The Sublime Port and appointed Mikail as the deputy governor of Van. However, Mikail requested to be excused from this post as he knew that he could not serve his term in office as it should be because he was disturbed by the attitude of Tashnak Armenians in Van. Then, former district governor Leon was assigned to this post as a gesture to please the Armenians in Van.¹⁸ Besides some favors were granted to the Armenian notables living in the Ottoman territory.¹⁹ By acting in this way, it was thought by the government that the extremist Armenians would lose their ground for separatist propaganda. Despite all these attempts of goodwill, Armenian revolutionary committees strengthened their relations with Russian Armenians, carried out underground activities.

Mayor Kapamacıyan Murdered

According to Aram Manukyan, the leader of the Tashnak committee, the Mayor of Van, Bedros Kapamacıyan, should have been punished for standing against Armenian revolutionary committees. Kapamacıyan, who was frequently threatened, left his house one evening together with some family members to participate as a guest in the name giving ceremony of Marcıdciyan, one of his relatives. Then, a Tashnak group positioned around his house, started shooting them. The Mayor, who was caught without any protection, fell dead with two bullets that hit his head on 10 December 1912.²⁰

As the Mayor Kapamacıyan's house was at Bağlar district, the closest police station was at a distance of ten minutes.²¹ Therefore, the murderers managed to escape easily in the dark before the gendarmes arrived where the assassination took place. Bağlar district was a beautiful place with gardens where the

¹⁷ BOA İrade-i Dahiliyye, 1596/35, 16/Recep/1326.

¹⁸ BOA İrade-i Dahiliyye, 2118/72, 22/Şaban/1326.

¹⁹ BOA İrade Taltifat, it is seen that favors were granted to hundreds of Armenians and one of them was Kapamacıyan. BOA İrade Taltifat, 1325. Za/1

²⁰ BOA DH SYS 109/2-2.

²¹ Anahide Ter Minassian, "Ermeni Kaynaklarına Göre Yüzyıl Başında Van", *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, (The Ottoman Towns in the Process of Modernization) (Istanbul: 1999), p. 118.

Armenians formed the majority of the residents. Since the Tashnak committee was very strong in Bağlar. It was easy for the assassins to escape and hide.²² Police chief transferred more of policemen and gendarmes to Bağlar and carried out an extensive examination and collected all evidences at the place where the incident occurred.²³ Any tiny fault of the authorities could have led to a great disorder in Van, which was the scene of serious Armenian rebellion in the past.²⁴

Assassins Arrested

When the situation calmed down, the testimonies of the eye witnesses were started to be taken and information on the murderers collected. Particularly from the testimony of Mayor's son,²⁵ it was revealed that an Armenian terrorist called Karakin and a friend of him were main suspects. The identification of murderers prevented a possible disorder between the Muslim people and the Armenians.²⁶ Rapid operations were carried out, Karakin was arrested but his unidentified partner succeeded to escape.²⁷ Coachman Potur, who was sought by the police for

²² Anahide Ter Minassian, op. cit, p. 118; Bağlar was an area of 7 km length and 3 km width with yards and gardens. The houses were surrounded by thick and high walls and secret passages were easily made between houses and gardens through irrigation canals left from Urartus, connecting the houses. This region was later used as a fortress during Van rebellion and formed the point of resistance. See M. Kalman, *Batı-Ermenistan (Kürt İlişkileri) ve Jenosid*, İstanbul 1994, p. 116; *La Defense Heroique de Van (Anonyme)*, Geneva 1916; Yves Ternos, age, p. 268. For those told by Venezuela citizen Nogales Mendez assigned in the Turkish forces during the Armenian rebellion in Van, see; Kaymakam Hakkı, *Hilal Altında Dört Yıl ve Buna Ait Bir Cevap*, (Four Years under the Crescent) İstanbul 1931; Mehmet Necati Kutlu, *Türkiye'de Bir Gezgin Şövalye (A Traveller in Turkey)* Nogales Mendez, (İstanbul: 2000).

²³ BOA DH SYS 109/2-2.

²⁴ Ergünöz Akçora, *Van ve Çevresinde Ermeni İsyanları*, (The Armenian Rebellions in and around Van) 1986-1916, (İstanbul: 1994).

²⁵ The son of the mayor was also sympathizing the Tashnak committee. Therefore, it is very likely that he knew the persons sent by the committee, and furthermore, despite all the secret operation of the committee, the son informed against the committee by deciphering this assassination committed against his father. It was even told by persons who were at young ages at the time of the incident in interviews made years later with them that the mayor was killed by his son; however, this is only the result of interference of myths when the event was told throughout years by the people who were deeply affected by the terror of the event. The truth is as told above. "They did not let the Armenians who did not serve them live. For example, there was an Armenian mayor here. His name was, if I am not mistaken, Kafanacıyan, and they had him killed by his son as he did not support them." Ergünöz Akçora, "Yaşayanların Diliyle Van ve Çevresinde Ermeni Mezalimi", (Armenian atrocities in and around Van on the Eye Witness accounts) *Yakın Tarihimizde Van Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, (Van in Recent History-International Symposium) Van 1990, p. 151. "They made the mayor's son drink, sent him to his father and made him kill his father", Hüseyin Çelik, *Görenlerin Gözüyle Van'da Ermeni Mezalimi*, (The Armenian Atrocities in Van) Van 1996, p. 70.

²⁶ BOA DH SYS 109/2-2.

²⁷ BOA DH SYS 109/2-3.

smuggling arms to Van, was involved in the incident with his coach and the persons called Saddler Osep, jeweler Karakin and Shaf, were all arrested following intense pursuits.²⁸ Shaf was the one who took orders for the assassination directly from Aram Manukyan, the mastermind of the crime.

Karakin's partner, who disappeared after the incident, was later arrested and imprisoned. The police was quite quick in identifying and arresting the perpetrators of the assassination, something unusual in Van, because Kapamacıyan was an important figure and intercommunal relations were so sensitive.

It was decided that Viramyan, one of the columnists of the Armenian Azadamart newspaper published by the members of Tashak committee, Aram Manukyan,²⁹ the inspector of Armenian schools and representative of the Tashnak committee in Van and some of the leading Tashnak committee members should be arrested as instigators of the murder of Mayor Kapamacıyan.³⁰

Since the leading members of the Tashnak committee used to complain about the Governorship to Istanbul and European embassies on every occasion, they thought that this arrest warrant issued about them was related with this complains. They were holding frequent meetings for this in the Tashnak committee club and assessing the situation. They thought that they were untouchable, since they were influential in Van and the government would not have taken the risk of a communal revolt. Therefore, while becoming dominant over the people, committee members gained more self-confidence. For these reasons, the arrests of Manukian and Viramyan, who organized and directed the murder of Mayor, were postponed to a more convenient time.³¹

²⁸ BOA DH SYS 109/2-11.

²⁹ Aram Manukyan perpetrated a series of acts in Van as the head of Van Revolutionary Armenian committee. He was arrested with the offense of encouraging the murder of Van governor Ali Pasha, who was murdered in Batum by Alev Başıyan, but he was considered to be a political convict and released upon the declaration of the Second Constitution just when he would be executed. During the occupation of Van by the Russians during World War I, he murdered many Van residents while leading Armenian rebels and he was later assigned as Russia's governor in Van. *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Hareketi İhtilaliyesi*, (The Works and the Revolutionary Activities of the Armenian Committees) Ankara 1983. Aram Manukyan retreated together with the Russians after Van was regained by Turks, he was assigned in the foundation of present Armenian republic and served as the minister of the interior in this republic until his death in 1919. Yves Ternon, op. cit. , p. 274.

³⁰ BOA DH SYS 109/2-15, 16.

³¹ BOA DH SYS 109/2-15. The fact that Cabir Pasha, Commander of Van Eleventh Army Corps, sent a telegram to Istanbul stating that there was no good in arresting the said persons at that time and waited for a suitable time encouraged the members of Armenian revolutionary Tashnaks developing in Van and excited the incident.

Both Armenians and Muslims frequently asked the governorship about the investigation on the murder of Kapamacıyan.

The people could have become daunted as no measures were taken about the committee that was behind the assassination, although one or two persons who committed the murder were arrested.

Viramyán and His Defense

Both Armenians and Muslims frequently asked the governorship about the investigation on the murder of Kapamacıyan, the case file was transferred to Istanbul.³² Viramyán Papazyan, who lost the elections in 1912 and started to write in Azadamart newspaper, received an arrest warrant as the suspects gave his name to the police in relation with the assassination. Viram Papazyan sent the petition below to the Ministry of Interior:

"To the Ministry of Interior

Upon my arrival at Van after three months of absence, I have seen our province and Hizan town of Bitlis in a state of great crisis. While there is no serious attempt to correct many unjust conducts, full liberty is given to the murderers and bandits and the farmers are disturbed by the arrival of spring. Because they have no doubt that murders, injuries and plunders will follow. Van Governor İzzet Pasha disregards the arming and preparation for war of Kurdish peasants by Kurdish chiefs, who are known as bandits and murderers, and carries out a slow and continuous prosecution against the notable members of the Armenian community and the Tashnak committee. Innocent peasants and Kolost of Karkan, Sahak of Mindan, Şirin of Karagündüz and some Armenians are imprisoned. Many of these flee because of fear. Kapamacıyan was killed on 10th December; my departure from Van was 19 days before that. Despite this fact, I received a warrant from the public prosecutor as a suspect in this incident and I learned that a warrant was sent to Aram, the colleague of Rafael, itinerant director of Akdamar Katholikos school, also as a suspect in the same incident. As I knew the purposes of Mr. İzzet and his consultants and that law officers enjoyed keeping people in prison, I did not surrender to them. Although I am not unable

³² BOA DH SYS 109/2-15, 16.

against such vicious slanders, I hereby state that I do not want to be the victim of their desires. If Mr. Izzet and his men continue such acts against Armenians, it is certain that those who are honest and who fear will flee, since murderers, usurpers and thieves will become dominant.

Requesting from the state to pay attention to these problems threatening our province, where the interests of Armenian nation confirm their inseparable loyalty to the Ottoman land, and to take serious measures while there is still time, I am waiting for your reply with the hope that the fault made in Rumelia will not be repeated in Anatolia.

Former Van Deputy Viramyán.³³

This petition of Viremyán, which appears innocent at first sight, was taken into consideration by the Ministry of Interior. In the ciphered message sent to Van province by the general intelligence office of the Ministry of Interior, it was informed that Viramyán left Van before the murder and complained from the hostile conducts against Armenians living in Van, and it was requested that these incidents be clarified and finalized. Besides, it was recommended that considering the sensitivity of the situation to avoid violent acts that would cause anxiety among Armenians.³⁴

As a leading member of the Tashnak committee, one cannot totally suggest that Viramyán definitely did not take part in the assassination.³⁵ The petition he wrote appears as a completely professional petition written for the sake of history.³⁶ In fact, the Balkan incidents that he referred in this letter can be interpreted as a covert threatening. Viramyán's failure in the 1912 elections as deputy could be considered as a reason lying beneath the murder of Kapamacıyan.

Funeral

The rapid arrest of the persons who took part in the assassination of Kapamacıyan, despite not duly penalized, pleased

³³ BOA DH SYS 109/2-12-13-14.

³⁴ BOA DH SYS 109/2-10/1.

³⁵ *Belgelerle Ermeni Sorunu*, (Armenian Question in the Documents) Genelkurmay ATASE yayını, (Ankara: 1992), s. 125.

³⁶ About the presentation of information so as to direct the history as they like by a certain ideological sector, see, Tamer Akçam, *Türk Ulusal Kimliği ve Ermeni Sorunu*, (The Armenian Question and Turkish National Identity) (Istanbul: 1994), p. 220.

the local people. However, the fact that the murderers were Armenians also caused a deep sorrow among the local Armenians.³⁷ Necessary measures were taken to avoid disorder in the funeral of Kapamacıyan.³⁸ In the speeches delivered during the funeral which started early in the morning with the attendance of a considerable number of people, the kindness and integrity of Kapamacıyan were mentioned. As representing the foreign missions, English, Russian and French consuls were present.³⁹ On the other hand, it is meaningful that no member of Tashnak committee attended the funeral.⁴⁰ Tashnak committee took the opportunity to make it clear that any obstacle before them would be crushed. This was a message to the people who did not share their separatist aims.

The secret police organization working in Van was given the order to observe the behavior, dialogs and attitudes of the people attending the funeral.⁴¹ Furthermore, the secret police was in charge to prevent any provocation that could occur during the funeral. According to the records of the secret police, people told each other at the Armenian cemetery at Bağlar district that it was obvious that the Tashnaks committed the assassination and the government should have acted on this matter more swiftly and they also talked about the services of Kapamacıyan for his

It was obvious that the Tashnaks committed the assassination.

country, the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the Armenians were expressing their hatred and condemning of the Tashnaks with as low voice, as they were scared of the Tashnak violence. They also told that the committee would soon lose its influence on the Armenians and a great anger would rise among the Armenians.⁴² The funeral lasted until the evening and Kapamacıyan was buried in the family cemetery. The minimum conditions of living together, which Kapamacıyan endeavored to maintain perhaps at the price of his life, were rapidly disturbed

³⁷ Whereas there was public opinion that persons involved in such events could not be duly penalized before, it was common view that those involved in Kapamacıyan incident could not be duly penalized, either. This opinion is true for even officials assigned in Van. *BOA DH SYS 109/2-11*.

³⁸ *BOA DH SYS 109/2-4*.

³⁹ *BOA DH SYS 109/2-7-a*

⁴⁰ *BOA DH SYS 109/2-6*.

⁴¹ *BOA DH SYS 109/2-8*.

⁴² *BOA DH SYS 109/2-7b*.

The grandchildren of Kirkors, Arabacıyans, Terzibaşıyans, Avadises, Boyacıyans and hundreds of other Armenian families are telling from generation to generation the dream of living together with Muslims in the city of Van

and his aspiration for cohabitation in Van was irreversibly upset.

The revolutionary Tashnak Armenians could murder their own fellow people without hesitation in order to achieve their ambitions. The systematized attempts of the committee members, who ventured all acts for establishing a suitable conditions for revolution, gave

their yields with the help of the Russians and they temporarily occupied Van in 1915,⁴³ and when the Russians retreated in October 1917 upon the Bolshevik Revolution, Van was regained by the Turks. When the Muslim people, who left their city with much difficulties as a result of incredible atrocities and pressure of the Armenian Tashnak gang, returned there, they found the city completely ruined. Their Armenian neighbors and friends were no more living in Van. The grandchildren of Kirkors, Arabacıyans, Terzibaşıyans, Avadises, Boyacıyans and hundreds of other Armenian families that cannot be named here are telling from generation to generation the dream of living together with Muslims in the city of Van what they listened from their parents.

⁴³ For the torment, torture and cruelty applied on the Muslim people in Van by Tashnak and Hınçak armenians, see, *Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kafkaslar'da ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezalimi, I-IV*, (The Armenian Atrocities in the Caucasus and Anatolia According to Archive Documents) Ankara 1995; Faiz Demiroğlu, *Van'da Ermeni Mezalimi*, (The Armenian Atrocities in Van) (Ankara: 1995); Ergünöz Akçora, *Van ve Çevresinde Ermeni İsyanları*, (Armenian Rebellions in and around Van) 1896-1916, (Istanbul: 1994); Ergünöz Akçora, op. cit.; Hüseyin Çelik, op. cit.; Kaymakam Hakkı, op. cit.; for the narration of Van incidents through Armenian perspective, see, M. Kalman, *Batı-Ermenistan* (Kürt İlişkileri) ve Jenosid, (Istanbul: 1994), p. 116; *La Defense Heroique de Van (Anonyme)*, Geneva 1916; Yves Ternos, *Ermeni Tabusu*, (The Armenian Taboo) (Istanbul: 1993); Tamer Akçam, op. cit.