

# Review of ARMENIAN STUDIES

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY,  
POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 9 2005

## ARTICLES

*Facts and Comments*

**Ömer Engin LÜTEM**

*The Tale of European Parliament's 1987 Resolution Entitled  
"Political Solution to the Armenian Question"*

**Pulat TACAR**

*Turkish- Armenian Issue: Victimization And Large-Group Identity*

**Sevinç GÖRAL**

*The Impact of Mountainous Karabagh Conflict on Nakhichevan  
Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan*

**Salih Sılay KOÇER**

*Threatened Or Threatening?: Two British Consular Reports Regarding the Condition  
Of Non-Muslim Communities in Izmir And Aleppo*

**Mustafa Serdar PALABIYIK**

## CONFERENCES

**ASAM HIGH AWARD FOR STUDIES OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY**

## BOOK REIVIEW

*Unsilencing the Past: Track Two Diplomacy and Turkish Armenian Relations*

**Kamer KASIM**



ASAM  
Center For Eurasian Strategic Studies  
Research Institute for Crimes Against Humanity



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## REVIEW OF ARMENIAN STUDIES

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# CONTENTS

Page:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>Editorial Note</b> .....  | 4   |
| <b>ARTICLES</b>  |     |
| <i>Facts and Comments</i> .....  | 6   |
| <b>Ömer Engin LÜTEM</b>  |     |
| <i>The Tale of European Parliament's 1987 Resolution Entitled<br/>"Political Solution to the Armenian Question</i> .....   | 45  |
| <b>Pulat TACAR</b>   |     |
| <i>Turkish- Armenian Issue: Victimization And Large-Group Identity</i> .....   | 61  |
| <b>Sevinç GÖRAL</b>  |     |
| <i>The Impact of Mountainous Karabagh Conflict on Nakhichevan<br/>Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan</i> .....  | 77  |
| <b>Salih Sılay KOÇER</b>   |     |
| <i>Threatened Or Threatening?: Two British Consular Reports Regarding the Condition<br/>Of Non-Muslim Communities in Izmir and Aleppo</i> .....  | 100 |
| <b>Mustafa Serdar PALABIYIK</b>  |     |
| <b>CONFERENCES</b>   |     |
| <i>Conference on Ottoman Armenians during the Decline of the Empire: Issues of Scientific<br/>Responsibility and Democracy (23-25 September 2005, Boğaziçi/Bilgi University)</i> ..... | 115 |
| <i>International Symposium on the Development of Turkish-Armenian Relations and the<br/>Events of 1915 (23-25 November 2005, Gazi University)</i> .....                                | 122 |
| <i>Bodrum Symposium on Turks and Armenians in History and the Facts<br/>(3-4 December 2005, Bodrum)</i> .....  | 128 |
| <i>Symposium on Historical Facts Relating to Turkish-Armenian Relations<br/>(15-16 December 2005, Istanbul Technical University)</i> .....   | 130 |
| <b>ASAM HIGH AWARD FOR STUDIES OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY</b> .....  | 133 |
| <b>BOOK REIVIEW</b>  |     |
| <i>Unsilencing the Past: Track Two Diplomacy and Turkish Armenian Relations</i> .....  | 139 |
| <b>Kamer KASIM</b>   |     |

## EDITORIAL NOTE

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The ASAM Governing Board decided that the Institute for Armenian Research should not only study the Armenian question and relations between Turkey and Armenia, but also the crimes against humanity and war crimes as stipulated in the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Within this framework, the crimes of genocide, which took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against the Ottomans from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the founding of the Republic of Turkey will be examined.

Because of the enlargement of its area of research, the Institute has been renamed as the 'Research Institute for Crimes against Humanity' (IKSAREN in Turkish) as of January 1, 2006.

IKSAREN will continue to study the Armenian question and relations between Turkey and Armenia, and to publish *Review of Armenian Studies* and the "Ermeni Arařtırmaları" (Armenian Research) journals. About a year later, it is hoped to publish another journal on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In this issue of the *Review of Armenian Studies*, the first article, entitled "Facts and Comments", is on the latest developments regarding Armenian question and Turkish-Armenian relations in the second half of 2005.

In his article entitled "The Tale of the European Parliament's 1987 Resolution Entitled 'Political Solution of the Armenian Question'", Retired Ambassador Pulat Tacar, who was the Turkish Permanent Representative at the EU in 1987, writes about the conditions of emergence and acceptance of this resolution, which is still valid and could be a significant obstacle in front of Turkish accession to the EU.

Clinic Psychologist and ASAM Political Psychology Expert, Sevinç Göral, examines a neglected psychological aspect of Armenian question in his article entitled "Turkish Armenian Issue: Victimization and Large-Group Identity"

Salih Silay Koçer, analyses the impact of Nagorno-Karabagh problem on Nakhichevan with special references on its social and economic implications in his article, "The Impact of Mountainous Karabagh Conflict on Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan"

In his article entitled "Threatened Or Threatening?: Two British Consular Reports Regarding The Condition Of Non-Muslim Communities in İzmir And Aleppo" Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık examines the status of the Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century with reference to British consular reports.

The disputed conference called "Ottoman Armenians during the Fall of the Empire: Scientific Responsibility and Democracy Problems" was postponed and then held in İstanbul Bilgi University in

September 2005. This conference and some others organized as a reaction to it are reviewed in the 'Conferences' part of the journal.

Eurasian Strategic Research Center (ASAM) has established an **Award for Studies Against Humanity** and this award was first presented to American scholar Prof. Guenter Lewy.

This issue also includes a book review by Kamer Kasım, on the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Committee. This book was written by David Phillips and entitled "**Uncilencing the Past: Track Two Diplomacy and Turkish- Armenian Relations**"

With best wishes...

*The Editor*

# FACTS AND COMMENTS

## Ömer E. Lütem

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### Abstract:

*In this article the following issues are examined regarding the Armenian Problem during the June-Aralık 2005 period:*

*I- Turkey-Armenia Relations: 1. Official Statements; 2. Reopening of the Turkey-Armenia Border; 3. Kars-Akhalkalaki Railway Project; 4. Turhan Çömez's Visit to Armenia; 5. Yektan Türkyılmaz Incident*

*II- National and Regional Parliaments that Uphold the Genocide Allegations: 1. Venezuela; 2. Argentina; 3. Uruguay; 4. Lithuania; 5. Sao Paulo Parliament; 6. Crimean Parliament; 7. City of Edinburgh Council*

*III- Certain Developments Concerning the Genocide Allegations: 1. EU and Genocide Allegations; 2. Switzerland; 3. Britain; 4. Belgium; 5. Finland; 6. Assyrian and Caldean Genocide Allegations; 7. International Association of Genocide Scholars; 8. Time Magazine*

**Keywords:** *The main words in this abstract, especially Armenia, Armenian Diaspora, Relations between Turkey and Armenian, genocide allegations*

### Öz:

*Bu makalede Haziran-Aralık 2005 döneminde meydana gelen aşağıdaki hususlar incelenecektir:*

*I- Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri: 1. Resmi Açıklamalar; 2. Türkiye-Ermenistan Sınırının Yeniden Açılması; 3. Kars-Ahalkalek Demiryolu Projesi; 4. Turhan Çömez'in Ermenistan Ziyareti, 5. Yektan Türkyılmaz Olayı*

*II- Soykırım İddiaları Hakkında Karar Alan Ulusal ve Bölgesel Parlamentolar: 1. Venezuela; 2. Arjantin; 3. Uruguay; 4. Litvanya; 5. Sao Paulo Parlamentosu; 6. Kırım Parlamentosu; 7. Edinburg Şehir Konseyi*

*III- Soykırım İddiaları ile İlgili Çeşitli Gelişmeler: 1. AB ve Soykırım İddiaları; 2. İsviçre; 3. İngiltere; 4. Belçika; 5. Finlandiya; 6. Süryani ve Keldani Soykırımı İddiaları; 7. Soykırım Bilim Adamları Uluslararası Birliği; 8. Time Dergisi*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Bu özetteki başlıca sözcükler Ermenistan, Ermeni Diasporası, Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri, soykırım iddiaları*

## INTRODUCTION

**D**uring the period of June-December 2005 the Armenian problem continued to be a major issue for Turkey.

The conference postponed by the Boğaziçi University took place after being switched to the Bilgi University and it continued to be the main issue the Turkish press was preoccupied with for a long time.

Talks between Turkey and Armenia have gone into a stagnant period. Unlike in the past the foreign ministers of the two countries have not met for over a year. Armenia has kept up without a break its attempts to have the Turkish-Armenian border reopened while trying to block the realization of the Kars-Akhalkalaki Railway Project.

While Balıkesir Deputy Turhan Çömez's visit to Armenia has drawn interest in that country, the fact that Yektan Türkyılmaz, who was doing research in the Armenian archives, was arrested with a pretext such as book smuggling, has raised if it is really possible to make researches in Armenian archives

During the period we are examining, Venezuelan and Lithuanian National Parliaments, the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the Sao Paulo local parliament in Brazil and the City of Edinburgh Council passed resolutions upholding the Armenian genocide allegations while the parliaments of Argentina and Uruguay reiterated their earlier decisions to this effect.

The European Parliament maintained its stance of linking Turkish membership in the EU to Turkish acceptance of the Armenian genocide allegations.

Meanwhile, Turkey's relations with Switzerland have been adversely affected by the investigations opened in that country against the President of Turkish Historical Society Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu and Workers' Party leader Doğu



Perinçek.

The British Government has declared anew its stance vis-à-vis the genocide allegations. In Belgium, a draft resolution presented to parliament urged Turkey to recognize the “genocide”.

Erection of a monument in France to commemorate the Assyrian and Caldean “genocide” has been a surprising development. Meanwhile, the International Association of Genocide Scholars published in Herald Tribune as a paid advertisement the text of the letter the association had sent to PM Erdoğan. That move makes it obvious that the association is acting with a militant mentality rather than a scholarly one.

Finally, the way Time Magazine apologized for a DVD it had distributed in June attests to the influence exerted by the organizations of the Armenian Diaspora.

The death in June of Edward Tashji (Tasci), a friend of Turkey, has caused great sorrow both in Turkey and among the members of the Turkish community in the USA.

These issues are examined in detail below.

## **I. RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA**

### ***1. Official Statements***

We reported in the previous issue<sup>1</sup> that following the general debate on the Armenian Problem held at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) on April 13, 2005, Prime Minister Erdoğan sent a letter to President Kocharyan, suggesting a joint commission of historians and other experts from the two countries. That commission would research the developments and related events of the 1915 period in all archives and declare its findings to the international community. We reported that President Kocharyan replied to that letter on April 25, expressing the view that an inter-governmental commission could be created to discuss all of the problems left in limbo between the two countries so that a con-

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<sup>1</sup> Review of Armenian Studies, Issue No. 7-8, pp. 27-33

sensus could be reached and all these problems could be resolved.

Some time after this exchange of letters there were press reports saying that the representatives of the foreign ministries of the two countries had held a series of meetings in a third country. According to these reports, Turkish Foreign Ministry Deputy Undersecretary Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü and Turkish Ambassador in Tbilisi Ertan Tezgör were taking part in these meetings<sup>2</sup>. Although about six months have passed since then, there has been no further news report about the talks. This brings to mind the possibility that the talks may have come to a stop at least for some time.

During his visit to Azerbaijan PM Erdoğan expressed full support for Azerbaijan's stance on the Karabagh issue and criticized the efforts aimed at making Turkey accept the genocide allegations.

During his late June visit to Azerbaijan PM Erdoğan expressed full support for Azerbaijan's stance on the Karabagh issue and criticized the efforts aimed at making Turkey accept the genocide allegations. This led to Armenian press comments to the effect that Turkey has not softened its stance<sup>3</sup>. They must be hoping that the USA and the EU would put pressure on Turkey to improve its relations with Armenia.

Later, during a visit to the USA in July, PM Erdoğan said, in reply to questions from the press, that the Armenian problem was not among the Copenhagen Criteria, that it would be better not to dig out historical hostilities, that he hoped there would be a positive response to the initiative taken by Turkey (by suggesting creation of a joint commission of historians and other experts), that Armenia should end its occupation of Karabagh, and that the dynamics that were keeping Armenia away from a far-sighted, common sense viewpoint were causing the people to lose time<sup>4</sup>. That speech shows that Turkey has not altered its stance regarding the Armenian problem and the Turkey-Armenia relations.

In recent years, the foreign ministers of the two countries had habitually held bilateral talks every autumn during the UN General Assembly meeting. However, this year no such meeting took place.

2 cnnturk, July 13, 2005

3 RFE/RL, June 30, 2005

4 Milliyet, July 8, 2005

In his speech at the UN General Assembly, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul made no direct reference to the relations with Armenia. He contented himself by saying that developments towards ending the occupation of the Azerbaijani lands would create a more favorable climate in the region<sup>5</sup>.

In his speech to the UN General Assembly, Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanyan made no reference at all to his country's relations with Turkey<sup>6</sup>. However, in a speech he delivered at the UNESCO General Conference<sup>7</sup> he said that in Turkey there were thousands of cultural monuments dating from the Armenians and that these could provide an opportunity to start a cultural dialogue and to enhance of regional cooperation. He went to say that, however, these monuments that provided striking proof of the Armenian presence in those territories, had been modified or uncaringly left alone. He expressed the hope that, however, that Turkey has taken the path towards acknowledging its pluralistic past and that this would lead to a change in Turkey's stance. He went on to say that the Turkish authorities began repairing the Ahtamar Church in Lake Van and that this could be done in many other places as well. He said that the only monument left of the Ani ruins could be repaired jointly and that the medieval town, a cultural masterpiece, could be a tie linking the two peoples. On the other hand, he bitterly criticized Azerbaijan, claiming that the Armenian monuments there are not being protected.

During his visit to Brussels in October, Kocharyan said that he had "mixed feelings"<sup>8</sup> about the start of the Turkey-EU membership talks, that to meet the criteria Turkey would have to "carry out excessive reforms" and that "it is a negative moment as EU is going to start accession talks with a country that has kept its borders closed with Armenia for more than a decade and is refusing to acknowledge the dark pages of its history". Kocharyan also said, "without genuine repentance (meaning acknowledgement of the "genocide") it would be very difficult to build a modern Europe. We regret that the resolution of the European Parliament on recognizing the Armenian genocide is not mandatory for the European Commission."<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, it has been observed that Armenian officials are unwilling to con-

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5 Anatolian Times, Sept. 22, 2005

6 [www.armeniaforeignministry.com](http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com) (Statements & Speeches, Statement by E. Vartan Oskanyan at the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Sept. 18, 2005)

7 Press Release, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Oct. 7, 2005

8 Turkish Press, Oct. 26, 2005

9 Armenpress, Oct. 25, 2005

tinue talks with Turkey. President Kocharyan turned down an invitation to attend the regular annual meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. It was no secret that Erdoğan would be attending.<sup>10</sup> Thus an important opportunity was missed for a meeting between these two statesmen.

It has been observed that Armenian officials are unwilling to continue talks with Turkey.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Oskanyan carried this even further. In the course of an interview he gave to *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, he said, “I do not wish to take part in merely protocol meetings to convince the world that Armenia and Turkey are holding negotiations. As a matter of fact nothing happened (at such meetings). Ankara is not ready for serious steps. Turkey is subordinate to the interests of a third state (i.e. Azerbaijan). Turkey has no courage to do what would be better for it.”<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, Oskanyan labeled as “propaganda” Ankara’s proposal<sup>12</sup> for a joint commission to study the events of 1915. He said, “All evidence is already here. They need first open the border and establish diplomatic relations with Armenia. Only then the initiative will be useful.”

Oskanyan went on to say, “We want the EU to force Turkey to open its borders with Armenia and strengthen the freedom of speech.”<sup>13</sup> According to Oskanyan, with the start of the public debates on the Armenian “genocide” the Turkish authorities would come under pressure from the public and, as a result, they would be forced to address the “genocide” issue more seriously<sup>14</sup>.

As stated above, Armenian officials do not want to have talks with Turkey at this stage. Yet, Armenia is the party that seeks an open border and establishment of diplomatic relations with Turkey. Under the circumstances, satisfaction of these demands would depend on having negotiations with Turkey. However, probably because of the promises it may have received, Armenia is relying on support from certain countries as well as the EU. With the conviction that they would solve Armenia’s problems, Armenia apparently thinks there is no need for

10 *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, Oct. 28, 2005

11 *Pan Armenian*, Oct. 28, 2005

12 *Review of Armenian Studies*, Number 7-8, 2005; p. 23

13 *Azg*, Oct., 28, 2005

14 *Arminfo*, Nov. 4, 2005

it to have talks with Turkey. However, Armenia's taking that path has obviously not solved the problems until now. Armenia has been pushed into inertia by the stance taken by those countries that maintain that the "genocide" must be recognized and/or the border must be reopened. As a result, reconciliation between the two countries comes to be postponed continuously.

Let us come to the Turkish Government's stance in the face of the Armenian problem. In reply to a question at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly meeting in November, PM Erdoğan made comments in the following vein: "We have opened our air space to Armenia. The government has taken up reconstruction of a church in Van. We have opened our archives. Now let Armenia and the third states do the same. We are sure there never was genocide in our history." It is a gross mistake to call "genocide" the relocation of a rebellious community, he stressed.<sup>15</sup>

Deputy PM, Foreign Minister Gül said on one occasion that the European Parliament resolutions recognizing the Armenian "genocide" are "nothing more than a recommendation. They are not mandatory."<sup>16</sup> He said that the decisions taken by the parliaments of certain countries were not government deeds and that, partially excepting France; none of the EU member countries had a government that had undersigned a decision recognizing the "genocide". He stressed that the resolutions in question are not legally binding. He said, "Moves like that will impede integration of millions of Turks living in Europe as well as progress in the Turkish-Armenian relations; one should leave that issue to historians."<sup>17</sup>

It is obvious that from the standpoint of the Turkey-Armenia relations the most prominent characteristic of the period we have examined is that these relations are going through a stagnant period, with the two sides maintaining an attitude of their well-known positions.

## ***2. Reopening of the Turkey-Armenia Border***

Turkey had closed its land border with Armenia in 1993 as a reaction to the Armenian forces starting to occupy as well the territories around Karabagh. Since then Armenia has sought reopening of the border. However, it is not willing to make a concession in turn for example by ending the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories or by recognizing Turkey's territorial integrity and abandoning its

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15 Azg, Nov. 17, 2005

16 Anadolu Ajansi, Nov. 1, 2005

17 Milliyet, Nov. 21, 2005

genocide allegations. Turkey too does not alter its stance and the borders remain closed. The Armenians are expecting that Turkey would be obliged to open the border due to the pressure of the USA and the EU. Since the border has remained closed for 12 years this is hardly a realistic expectation.

Adam Schiff, known for the way he defends Armenian interests in the US Congress, presented to the House of Representatives on June 29, 2005 a bill titled "Bill for Ending the Turkish Blockade of Armenia" numbered H.R.3103. The lengthy section on the rationale includes the following arguments: The Turkish blockade of Armenia does serve security and welfare in the region and, therefore, undermines both the short-term and long-term US political goals. The blockade inflates Armenia's transportation costs by 30-35 percent and prevents US and international humanitarian aid to cross the border. The security and economic interests of the US, Turkey and the EU as well as NATO's Partnership for Peace Program depend on the immediate and unconditional lifting of the blockade. For that reason the US President and the Secretary of State should tell Turkey it should lift the blockade immediately to be able to reestablish economic, political and cultural ties with Armenia.

It is obvious that these arguments are meaningless and erroneous in many aspects.

The operative part of the bill urged the US Secretary of State to report to the Congress on the steps taken and the plans made by the US to have the blockade on Armenia lifted. The congressman who introduced that bill obviously thought that if the bill were to be passed the US Administration would be obliged to put pressure on Turkey to have the Armenian border opened.

About two weeks after the bill was introduced, the Armenian-European Policy and Legal Advice Center (AEPLAC), an institution funded by the EU, published a report estimating the potential effects on the Armenian economy of having an open border with Turkey. The report says that reopening of the border would boost Armenia's Gross National Product (GNP) by only 0.67 percent initially. Only after five years the overall effect on the GNP would be 2.7 percent. In the short run, Armenian exports would go up 5.23 percent and imports by 4.7 percent. The report also points out that, with the activation of the Kars-Gyumri railway, the reopening of the border would bring about a drop in Armenia's transportation costs<sup>18</sup>.

18 PanArmenian News, July 13, 2005, and, Eurasianet, Aug. 9, 2005

The AEPLAC report came as a great surprise because, in a report issued in 2000, the World Bank had predicted a 30 percent GNP increase in Armenia as a result of a potential reopening of the Turkey-Armenia border since then Armenians had been referring to the World Bank report at every platform available. AEPLAC officials said that their report had been prepared upon the request from the Armenian Government.

What has rendered the Parliament of Venezuela so bold is the geographical distance between the two countries and the fact that their relationship is hardly of a sizable scope.

However, Armenian Minister of Trade and Economy Karen Chshmaritian said that the government had nothing to do with the report in question.

Whose interests exactly did that report serve? That question was debated in the Armenian press. According to one argument the report supported the stance taken by Foreign Minister Oskanyan who had said that no concession would be made to Turkey to have the border reopened<sup>19</sup>. Meanwhile, Eduard Agajanov, who had served as the minister responsible for statistics during the period of 1991-1998, believed that the report was aimed at preserving Armenia's existing oligarchic economic system which supported President Kocharyan. He argued that the system in question would not be able to endure the reopening of the border and the competition to be posed by the Turkish goods.

At this stage it is not possible to tell whether the report in question reflects the truth or is geared to serve certain political interests. One may think that the Armenian Government was convinced that due to the pressure exerted by the USA and the EU, Turkey would open the border prior to the start of the Turkey-EU talks, and that, as a result, Armenia would come under pressure to pay a price in return for that. That could have caused them to arrange for a report that belittles the economic consequences of a potential reopening of the border in an effort to ward off the pressure to be put on Armenia.

Due to the contradictions between the two reports in question, one prepared by the World Bank and the other by the AEPLAC, the economic consequences of a potential reopening of the Turkish-Armenian border has become controversial. However, with a theoretical approach, one would tend to agree more with the AEPLAC report rather than the World Bank report. This is because Armenia

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<sup>19</sup> Eurasianet, Aug. 9, 2005

has a weak economy. It does not have the capacity to increase its exports or its imports to a sizable extent in a short time after a reopening of the border. That increase could be around 5 percent as the AEPLAC says in its report. However, we think that the reopening of the border would be important not because of export and import increases in the short run but from the standpoint of Armenia's economic development in the long run. This is because, for Armenia, Turkey not only would be the most reasonable economic partner but also it would provide the shortest route giving access to the countries of Europe and the Middle East.

Meanwhile, let us point out that those governing Armenia are displaying an interest in the "reopening of the border" issue with political—rather than economic—considerations, thinking that if Turkey opened its borders with Armenia, Azerbaijan would get less support from Turkey.

### **3. *Kars-Akhalkalaki Railway Project***

Establishment of railway connection between Turkey and Georgia is a subject closely related to the issue of Turkey reopening its border with Armenia.

In 1993, when it closed its border with Armenia, Turkey had closed, as a natural consequence of that decision, the railway linking the Turkish town of Kars to the Armenian town of Gyumri. Later, the idea of having a railway connection to Georgia and, via that, to Azerbaijan, was born. Suleyman Demirel, Turkey's president at that time, told Eduard Schevardnadze<sup>20</sup> about this plan during a visit to Georgia in July 1997 and the two sides reached an agreement in principle. The plan was consisting of extending the existing railway line that connected Kars to other parts of Turkey, to the Georgian town of Akhalkalaki. It was said that the new line, 68 kilometers of which would be built on Turkish soil and 30 kilometers in Georgia, would cost something in the range of \$400-500 million<sup>21</sup>. Later, it was said that the railway project could be realized for around \$250 million<sup>22</sup>.

Although the project, which required external financing as well, could not be started for some time, it was re-visited in 2004 and the heads of state of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey who met in Baku to inaugurate the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline signed the "Declaration on creation of international rail corridor Kars-Tbilisi-Baku" on May 25, 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Eurasia Daily Monitor, June 7, 2005

<sup>21</sup> Asbarez, May 25, 2005

<sup>22</sup> Hasan Kanbolat, Türkiye Kafkasya'ya Demir Ağlarla Bağlanacak Mı? [Will Turkey Be Connected to the Caucasus by Railway?], Stratejik Analiz, Issue No 56, September 2005, p. 57



This project disturbed Armenia because when the new railway became operational the Kars-Gyumri railway would become almost useless. Also, Armenia saw the new railway project as a move aimed at isolating Armenia. To prevent the construction of the new railway it applied to the EU and, at the same time, mobilized the pro-Armenian members of the US Congress.

Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanyan sent a letter to Jacques Barrot, the vice-chairman of the EU Commission who is coordinating affairs related to transportation, on May 21, that is, a week after the Baku declaration was issued. He told Barrot that a railway line linking Kars to Tbilisi via the Armenian town of Gyumri was already in existence, that in fact that line was included in the EU's TRACECA program, that the line was no longer in use because of the Turkish decision to impose a blockade on Armenia, and that construction of a new railway would require large amounts of financial resources. He said that the new railway would serve Turkey's policy of maintaining the blockade, and that the Armenia-Turkey border was the sole frontier in Europe that was put under a blockade. He maintained that if Europe wanted cooperation in South Caucasus, reopening of the Kars-Gyumri railway would make the best contribution to that. If the Kars-Gyumri line remained inactive that would constitute an obstacle to the implementation of Europe's new policy of good-neighborliness, he said<sup>23</sup>. Meanwhile, it was claimed that, with the sole aim of obstructing the Kars-Akhalkalaki project, Armenia had informed the parties concerned that if the Kars-Gyumri line were to be reopened, Armenia would agree not to use that line to transport Armenian goods for some time<sup>24</sup>. Actually, this proposal was not practical, as Armenia has, for the moment, almost no goods to be exported by this line.

Hopes for the Kars-Akhalkalaki railway project received a boost last November when EU Commission's Energy and Transportation Director General Francois Lamoureux said, during a visit to Baku, that they had examined the project and might take part in its financing<sup>25</sup>. However, latest news reports<sup>26</sup> coming from Armenian sources allege that there has been a change in the Commission's attitude. According to these reports, in response to the aforementioned Oskanyan letter dated May 21, the EU Commission's General Directorate of Energy and Transportation said that since a railway line connecting Gyumri to Tbilisi was already in existence there was no need to construct a Kars-Akhalkalaki line, and that, for

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23 AZG, Sept. 9, 2005

24 Milliyet, Sept. 1, 2005

25 AZG, Sept. 9, 2005

26 Noyan Tapan, Oct. 14, 2005

that reason, the EU would not support construction of the proposed new line.

The EU stance regarding construction of a railway between Kars and Akhalkalaki became clearer during President Kocharyan's visit to Brussels in October. Following his meeting with Kocharyan, EU High Representative for EU Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, in reply to a question, said that operation of the existing transport facilities would be more preferable than investing in construction of new railroads<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, he pointed out that "The more the Armenian-Turkish border is opened the better. In that case there will be no longer the need to have this new railroad." Both sides should strive to have the border reopened, he added<sup>28</sup>.

Meanwhile, it must be noted that the Yerevan Airport is operated by Corporacion America which is owned by Eduardo Eurnekian, a billionaire of Armenian origin.

Thus it has been clarified that the EU is not in favor of construction of the proposed railway. On that occasion, it has also been confirmed that the EU is insisting on having the border reopened. Meanwhile, it is quite significant that Solana did not refer at all to the reasons due to which the Turkish-Armenian border was closed in the first place. If the EU wanted to conduct a balanced policy between Turkey and Armenia it should have urged Armenia to eliminate the causes of the border closure (that is, the Armenian occupation of the Azerbaijani territories outside Karabagh as well) while urging Turkey to open the border.

On the other hand, UN Under-Secretary-General Anwarul K. Chowdhury told the sixth meeting of the ministers of the Developing Countries Group that the Baku – Tbilisi – Akhalkalaki - Kars railway would ensure passenger and cargo transportation from Baku to Europe.<sup>29</sup>

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Meanwhile, together with George Radanovich who has always cooperated with the Armenian Diaspora in the USA, Congressmen Joe Knollenberg and Frank Pallone, co-chairmen of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, presented to the House of Representatives on July 21, 2005 a bill titled "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" (H.R. 3361). In the section that

<sup>27</sup> Pan Armenian, Oct. 21, 2005

<sup>28</sup> RFE/RL, Oct. 20, 2005

<sup>29</sup> PanArmenian News, Sept. 23, 2005

explains the grounds for the bill, the aforementioned negative Armenian views regarding the Kars-Akhalkalaki railway are reiterated. In the operative section of the bill the Congress is asked to prohibit U.S. assistance for the promotion or development of railroads that would link Baku, Tbilisi and Kars while bypassing Armenia. If the bill is enacted, it will not be possible to use various official US funds to help finance the Kars-Akhalkalaki railway. The newly-appointed US Ambassador to Turkey Ross Wilson declared, in a statement he made before assuming his new position, that the US Administration has not taken a position on South Caucasian railway and has not provided any financial aid.

Efforts are being made to convince the EU too to take a similar stance. Under the circumstances, the financing needed for this route will have to be sought from other quarters. According to Azerbaijan's Transportation Minister Musa Panakov, certain Japanese establishments and the Asian Bank for Development are interested in this project<sup>30</sup>. On the other hand, Asraf Sihaliyev of Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry says they will seek support from the EU for the construction of the Kars-Akhalkalaki railway<sup>31</sup>.

Obviously the struggle continues regarding the project. Turkey and Azerbaijan need this route from the standpoint of economy and security. Since it has been already delayed for too long, it would be useful to have the construction work started as soon as possible.

#### *4. Turhan Çömez's visit to Armenia*

Justice and Development Party (AKP) Balıkesir Deputy Turhan Çömez paid an unofficial visit to Armenia in June 2005. He gave a lecture at the Yerevan University and met with various dignitaries including the Speaker of the Armenian Parliament Artur Bagdasaryan, Dashnak Party Director Giro Manoyan and Yerevan Mayor Yervand Zakharyan. He mixed with the crowds, held babies in his arms, and, since he is a doctor of medicine, took part in a kidney operation performed on an elderly woman at a hospital<sup>32</sup>. Although he defends the Turkish views on the "genocide" issue as well, Turhan Çömez was met with interest and people were sympathetic towards him wherever he went because of his open, sincere attitude. His visit received extensive Armenian press coverage.

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30 Les Nouvelles d'Arménie, Oct. 17, 2005

31 PanArmenian, Oct. 17, 2005

32 CNNTURK, June 10, 2005; Zaman, June 12, 2005

The press displayed great interest in his talks with Khachatur Sukiasyan, a wealthy businessman and member of parliament. While Sukiasyan focused on the possibility of Turkey reopening the border and seemed unwilling to alter the Armenian stance regarding the genocide allegations, Turhan Çömez said, “Let the two of us make a joint effort. I could make a speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly on the reopening of the border gate and, simultaneously, you could make a speech at your Parliament, saying that the 1915 incidents were not genocide, and that this is an issue for the historians to research.” He also demanded from Armenia to recognize Turkey’s territorial integrity, which would be a small step but an important start. However, Sukiasyan reiterated the usual Armenian argument that bilateral relations should begin without any preconditions. When Sukiasyan said that Turkey should apologize for the “genocide”, Çömez reminded him of the things Armenian gangs had done during World War I and the way ASALA assassinated Turkish diplomats.

Upon his return to Turkey, Turhan Çömez recounted his impressions of Armenia in a series of articles that appeared in daily *Akşam*. Underlining the need to produce effective and rational policies to break the anti-Turkey prejudices in Armenia, to destroy the taboos and to end the obstinate stance on the “genocide”, he suggested a number of steps:

- A joint working group of Turkish and Armenian members of parliament should be created.

- The journalists of the two countries should pay mutual visits more frequently, interviewing the statesmen of the two sides and relaying their views.

- Youth programs should be prepared for the students of the two sides. There should be student exchanges, with Turkish students staying at the houses of Armenian families and vice versa.

- The Armenian cultural heritage of the past that has reached our day should be repaired and gained the world tourism. (In this context, the Ani ruins can be opened up to daily tours.)

- There should be cultural exchanges, and joint artistic events should be planned.

- Joint sports contests should be staged.

- The “suitcase trade” with Armenia should be encouraged.

- In line with the demands of the two sides, meetings should be staged for specific sectors and for academics.

- All kinds of unofficial contacts should be mutually encouraged.

- The Turkish Radio-TV Corporation (TRT) should broadcast radio and TV

programs to Armenia in the Armenian language. (The TRT broadcast in 25 languages but Armenian is not one of them. The Armenian people should be able to get news of Turkey from Turkey itself rather than via France.)<sup>33</sup>

The steps suggested by Turhan Çömez could help eliminate the Armenians' prejudices against Turkey and thus make it easier for Turkey to establish normal relations with Armenia. Whether these suggestions can be translated into action depends on the extent to which Armenia would be ready to enter into cooperation with Turkey.

### *5. The Yektan Türkyılmaz Incident*

In early July the Armenian press reported that Yektan Türkyılmaz, a Turkish national whom Armenian newspapers defined as a "Kurdish" historian, was arrested for book smuggling. According to press reports, Türkyılmaz spoke Armenian and was doing research in the Armenian archives. Earlier, he had stated that he believed that the Ottoman administration had subjected the Armenians to genocide. He had also said that the Armenian archives were open to research and that he had met with no problems when working in these archives.

Türkyılmaz attempted to take out of Armenia a number of books without obtaining authorization. The point is, nobody had told him that authorization would be needed. As he had good intentions, the Armenian authorities could have told him to comply with that formality rather than throwing him into prison or they could have simply confiscated the books and permitted him to leave Armenia. That was not done. He was arrested according to an Armenian law under which he would face a prison sentence of up to eight years. Furthermore, he was arrested by the Armenian secret service and placed in a maximum-security prison belonging to that service.

Türkyılmaz's arrest triggered negative reactions in Turkey and in the USA. At the instigation of the Sabancı University and the Duke University where Türkyılmaz is a Ph.D. student, a solidarity committee was formed and a campaign was launched to obtain his release.

In this framework, some two hundred scholars from various countries sent a letter to President Kocharyan, calling for Türkyılmaz's release<sup>34</sup>. That letter said

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<sup>33</sup> Akşam, June 29, 2005

<sup>34</sup> Hyetert, Aug. 1, 2005

that Türkyılmaz was one of the few Turkish scholars that approached the 1915 events in a critical manner (that is, by accepting the genocide allegations). It went on to say that his arrest created serious doubts as to the extent to which Armenia supports independent academic studies into Armenian history. Those signing the letter included a number of Turks such as H. Berktaş, T. Akçam, M. Belge, F.M. Göçek, O. Pamuk and R. Zarakolu who have been persistently defending the Armenian genocide allegations as well as a number of American Armenians who have the same conviction including P. Balakian, V.N. Dadrian, D.R. Papazian and A. Sarafian.

Obviously the Armenians have managed to persuade a number of Lithuanian parliamentarians including Algis Kasetas, the leader of the Liberal Party group in Parliament.

Among the participants of this campaign was Senator Bob Dole who was a presidential candidate in the US elections and who has been striving to meet the demands of Armenia and the Armenians. In a letter he sent to President Kocharyan, he stressed that he and his wife, also a senator, have been old friends and supporters of Armenia, adding that Türkyılmaz's arrest created doubts as to the democratic development and rule of law in Armenia. He urged the Armenian authorities to release him immediately. Also, he called for a revision of the Armenian Penal Code which he described as a strange law<sup>35</sup>.

Thanks to all these initiatives, especially the letter sent by Dole, a highly important figure in the USA, Türkyılmaz was released from prison. The court gave him a suspended one-year prison sentence and he was released from custody. He returned to the USA in early September.

It is not clear even today why the Armenian authorities arrested a person who has been defending the Armenian views. The only possibility that comes to mind is that the Armenians do not want any research conducted in their archives by Turkish or other foreign independent scholars, and that they arrested Türkyılmaz as a deterrent measure in an effort to give the impression that if even a person arguing that the "Armenian genocide" had taken place can be arrested, those who do not support the Armenian allegations would be in for heavy-handed treatment indeed. In short, one cannot help but conclude that contrary to the age-old

35 ANN/Groong, Aug. 6, 2005

Armenian argument, the Armenian archives are “open” only in name. In reality, the archives remain closed to the independent researchers.

## II. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PARLIAMENTS THAT UPHOLD THE GENOCIDE ALLEGATIONS

### 1. *Venezuela*

The Parliament of Venezuela passed unanimously on July 14, 2005 a resolution supporting the Armenian genocide allegations<sup>36</sup>.

The introduction part of the resolution argues, in brief, that the first scientifically planned, organized and executed genocide in the history of humanity took place 90 years ago, perpetrated against the Armenian people by the “Young Turks and their ideology of Pan-Turkism”, involving the extermination of almost two million people. It says that crimes of this nature should be denounced in order to prevent them from happening again, and that the “Armenian genocide” should be repudiated by the Turkish people and all the peoples of the world. It says that due to political causes and interests, there is an ongoing attempt to change history “through the negation of this genocide”.

Translated into English, the operative section of the resolution is as follows:

“The National Assembly resolves

First: To express to the Armenian people, to their government and to the strong Armenian-Venezuelan community, support on their valid and delayed humanitarian aspirations of justice.

Second: To request the EU to postpone Turkey’s membership bid until the recognition by Turkey of the Armenian genocide.

Third: To designate a committee in charge of delivering this resolution to the Armenian Parliament and to the Armenian Religious authorities.

Fourth: To form a “Parliamentary Group of Friendship to the Armenian People.”

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<sup>36</sup> Yerkir, July 20, 2005

A number of elements (the use of the phrase, “the first scientifically planned, organized and executed genocide in the history of humanity”, the claim that almost two million people had been exterminated, and the fact that the EU was urged to postpone the Turkish bid until Turkey recognized the “genocide”) make this resolution the harshest and the most exaggerated among the resolutions adopted on this issue by the parliaments of various countries to date.

Having failed to elicit from the British Parliament a resolution supporting their genocide allegations, Armenian organizations focused on the British local parliaments.

This is due to a variety of reasons. Undoubtedly what has rendered the Parliament of Venezuela so bold is the geographical distance between the two countries and the fact that their relationship is hardly of a sizable scope. Another factor which enabled it to take such a decision with ease is the presence in the country of a wealthy, in other words, influential, Armenian community whereas few Turks live there. Furthermore, the resolutions adopted in Uruguay and Argentina certainly set a precedent for the Parliament of Venezuela. One Armenian source has written that with this resolution, President Chavez of Venezuela, who has been criticized by the US for his authoritarian rule and his populist attitude, has found a chance to urge the westerners, especially the European countries, to do their conscientious duty.<sup>37</sup>

Meanwhile, the Committee of the Catholic Churches of Venezuela adopted on Aug. 3, 2005 a resolution “aimed at preventing genocides in the future”. It said, “considering that the year 2005 marks the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first planned and organized genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”, it condemned “such criminal acts” perpetrated against the Armenian people and prayed that “such actions may never be repeated between human beings”. It expressed to the Armenian people of Venezuela support for their “just humanitarian claims as a people, which have been postponed for so long.” Also, it expressed solidarity with “the memory of faithful Armenian Christians who preferred death rather than renouncing their faith”.

The Catholic Church’s resolution is clearly similar to the resolution passed by the Venezuelan Parliament except in one significant aspect. It refers to “Armenian Christians who preferred death rather than renouncing their faith”. These words

<sup>37</sup> Armennews, July 22, 2005



obviously mean that Armenians had come under pressure to convert to another religion and that some of them chose death not to do that. Even the “major” Armenian sources had not made such a claim up to now. One cannot help but conclude that the Catholic Church of Venezuela fabricated that claim in an effort to include a religious element in the resolution.

## *2. Argentina*

We had reported earlier<sup>38</sup> that on April 20, 2005 Argentinean Senate had passed a resolution confirming a number of earlier resolutions recognizing the “Armenian genocide” adopted in the years 1993, 2003 and 2004, and that the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a statement denouncing and rejecting that resolution on May 5, 2005. On July 27, the Argentinean Senate passed yet another resolution, confirming its April 20 resolution and saying that since there is no statute of limitations for crimes against humanity; Turkey should recognize the “Armenian genocide”. This latest resolution has worsened the disagreement that exists between the two countries on this issue.

Meanwhile, on July 30, 2005, a “monument to the victims of the Armenian genocide” was unveiled in Rosario, Argentina.<sup>39</sup>

Argentina’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Rafael Bielsa had a warm welcome when he visited Armenia in late August. He was received by President Kocharyan and he visited the Genocide Museum and Monument in Yerevan. Bielsa said that the Armenian community in Argentina constituted the main element of the good relations between the two countries<sup>40</sup>. He stressed that the 100,000-strong Armenian community was an inseparable part of the Argentinean society.<sup>41</sup> During the visit Bielsa announced his country’s intention to open an embassy in Armenia.<sup>42</sup> Armenia already has an embassy in Argentina.

Meanwhile, it must be noted that the Yerevan Airport is operated by Corporation America which is owned by Eduardo Eurnekian, a billionaire of Armenian origin, and that the company in question has pledged to make a \$105 million investment to construct a new terminal building at the airport<sup>43</sup>.

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38 See, *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue no. 7-8, pp. 33-34

39 PanArmenian News Network, Aug. 2, 2005

40 Rfe/RI, Aug. 31, 2005

41 Armenpress, Aug. 31, 2005

42 Asbarez, Aug. 31, 2005

43 Armenpress, Aug. 31, 2005

### 3. Uruguay

As we had previously mentioned<sup>44</sup>, Uruguay is the first country to acknowledge the Armenian genocide allegations, with its House of Representatives passing a resolution to this effect. Since then, the House has confirmed that resolution repeatedly – on May 3, 2005 in the latest instance. On that day the House asked the Foreign Ministry of Uruguay to suggest to the UN that April 24 be declared the “Condemnation and Repudiation of All Kinds of Genocide Day”. Also in Uruguay, a member of parliament who is of Armenian origin has been waging a campaign to collect signatures with the aim of urging the EU to demand that Turkey recognize the Armenian “genocide”.

The investigation has been opened because Prof. Halaçoğlu expressed his views on an historical issue, which was quite normal for he is serving as the President of Turkish Historical Society for many years.

Turkish Ambassador to Argentina Şükrü Tufan, who is accredited to Uruguay as well, went to Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, where he had met with the members of the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee, explaining to them PM Erdoğan’s proposal for creation of a commission consisting of historians.<sup>45</sup> He told them that his government was ready to accept the findings of such a commission and he asked them to support that proposal. Armenians held a demonstration to protest against the ambassador’s initiative<sup>46</sup>. The Armenian ambassador in Uruguay met with the members of the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee and told them that the Armenian “genocide” required no proof. He urged Uruguay to support reopening of the Turkish-Armenian border and establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries<sup>47</sup>.

To date, the Uruguay Government has not applied to the UN to have April 24 declared the “Condemnation and Repudiation of All Kinds of Genocide Day” though the country’s House of Representatives had urged it to do so in the resolution it passed on May 3, 2005. However, the Armenians keep up their anti-Turkey activities in Uruguay. In fact, on Oct. 3, 2005, that is, the day on which

<sup>44</sup> See Review of Armenian Studies, Issue no. 7-8, p. 34

<sup>45</sup> See Review of Armenian Studies, Issue no. 7-8, pp. 23-25

<sup>46</sup> Armenews, Aug. 2, 2005

<sup>47</sup> PanArmenian News Network, Aug. 4, 2005

the Turkey-EU accession talks began, a large crowd demonstrated in front of the EU representation office in Montevideo, urging the EU to reject the Turkish candidacy<sup>48</sup>.

#### **4. Lithuania**

The Lithuanian Parliament adopted on Dec. 15, 2005 a resolution recognizing and denouncing the Armenian “genocide” and urging Turkey to recognize it since “there is no sense in denying the historical truth”<sup>49</sup>.

The 141-member Parliament adopted the resolution at a session where 55 members were present. Of these, 48 voted in favor of the draft while three abstained. Although resulting from a “fait-accompli” the resolution is legally valid. Obviously the Armenians have managed to persuade a number of Lithuanian parliamentarians including Algis Kasetas<sup>50</sup>, the leader of the Liberal Party group in Parliament. The resolution’s tone is quite strong. Not contenting itself with recognizing the alleged genocide the Parliament urged the Turkish Government to recognize it as well. On the other hand, the Turkish Government has been urged not to deny the “historical truth”. Considering the fact that the events of 1915 do not concern Lithuania even in the slightest manner, the tone of the Lithuanian resolution is surprising indeed. It has generally been observed that the smaller a country the harsher the resolutions it adopts.

Deputy spokesman of the Armenian Foreign Minister has said that the resolution has strengthened the position of Armenia in the international sphere<sup>51</sup>. Meanwhile, Armenian Assembly Speaker Bagdasaryan has sent a letter to his Lithuanian counterpart to express his thanks<sup>52</sup>.

In a statement issued on Dec. 16, 2005, the Turkish Foreign Ministry denounced the Lithuanian resolution, pointing out that it is not a duty for parliaments to pass judgment on controversial periods of history and that history must be assessed by historians. It stressed that the resolution can negatively affect the relations between Turkey and Lithuania and the process of normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia.

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48 Asbarez, Oct. 5, 2005

49 Pan Armenian, Dec. 16, 2005

50 REF/RL, Dec. 16, 2005

51 Noyan Tapan, Dec. 16, 2005

52 RFE/RL NEWSLINE, Dec. 19, 2005

### **5. Sao Paulo Parliament**

The parliament of Brazil's Sao Paulo region passed unanimously on Oct. 20, 2005 a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations and calling for recognition of the "genocide" at a "federal level" as well<sup>53</sup>.

Meanwhile, the Sao Paulo University is setting up a "Tolerance Museum" involving the crimes committed against humanity including the Holocaust. One understands that the museum will have a section on the Armenian "genocide"<sup>54</sup>.

### **6. Crimean Parliament**

The parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea had passed on May 19, 2005 with 59 votes against 3 a resolution that said that April 24 would be marked as the "Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide Victims" day every year. However, the speaker of the autonomous parliament, Boris Deich, refrained from undersigning the resolution on the grounds that it could have undesirable political consequences. There were press reports which said that the government of Ukraine -- to which Crimea is attached -- was seeking a number of amendments in the resolution, suggesting, for example, that the word "genocide" be dropped in favor of "tragedy". Talks were held on this issue on June 22, 2005 but the Crimean Parliament refused to make changes in the text<sup>55</sup>. Thus, Crimea too has ended up recognizing the alleged genocide.

This resolution resulted from the political conditions reigning in the Crimea region. The real owners of the territory, the Crimean Tartars, were exiled from their country and few of them have been able to return. And those who have managed to return do not have the strength to have a say in the region. The parliament they have set up, which is not legal, has taken a stance against the resolution in question but its efforts have not proved effective. Although Crimea is part of Ukraine it has a large Russian population and it was the ethnic Russian members of the parliament who had proposed the resolution in question in the first place. However, it is a fact that their ethnic Ukrainian colleagues have supported that move.

<sup>53</sup> Arka News, Oct. 22, 2005

<sup>54</sup> Milliyet, Sept. 7, 2005

<sup>55</sup> PanArmenian News, June 25, 2005

### *7. Edinburgh City Council Decision*

Having failed to elicit from the British Parliament a resolution supporting their genocide allegations, Armenian organizations focused on the British local parliaments. As a result of their efforts a draft resolution recognizing the Armenian “genocide” was submitted to the Edinburgh City Council.

For foreign dignitaries Armenian protocol calls for a visit to the genocide monument and a great majority of them do comply with that request so as to act according to local custom.

Ian White, the leader of the conservative group at the Edinburgh City Council, pointed out that was not an issue for the City Council. He stressed that the Council should focus on repairing the roads and keeping them open. The Labor Party group and its leader, Mayor Donald Anderson, defended the opposite idea. Anderson even sent a letter to the Turkish Embassy in London, saying that he had no doubt that the Armenian community had been subjected to genocide by the Ottoman regime.

The Federation of Turkish Associations in UK arranged for a meeting at the Edinburgh City Council hall on Oct. 24, 2005. ASAM Chairman Gündüz Aktan and Prof. Norman Stone of Koç University took part in the meeting to provide information about the 1915 relocation, explaining why those events could not be considered genocide. Mayor Anderson attended the meeting, listening to the speeches without raising objections. However, he found himself in a difficult position when he could not give satisfactory answers to the questions posed to him.

Following that meeting one would normally expect the Edinburgh City Council to shelve the motion. That was not to happen. The motion was debated on Nov. 16 as scheduled and passed with 29 votes cast by the Labor Party and Liberal council members in favor of the motion while 16 members voted against it.

In the end, this obviously turned into a partisan tug-of-war at the City Council rather than a debate on whether the 1915 relocation was genocide or not. Meanwhile, there seems to be no logical reason for Mayor Anderson to strive so hard to have the motion passed, displaying an attitude that runs against the stance taken

by Britain's ruling Labor Party. Anderson may have personal reasons to do so.

The motion adopted by the City Council says, in short, that a number of parliaments around the world have recognized as genocide the events in Anatolia in 1915, that atrocities and tragedies occurred on all sides in the conflicts but that the Ottoman actions against the Armenian community did constitute genocide. It expresses support for dialogue and reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples but does not support the view that genocide recognition should be made a condition for membership of the European Union.

### III. CERTAIN DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE GENOCIDE ALLEGATIONS

#### 1. *EU and the Armenian Question*

It may be remembered that the European Parliament adopted in 1987 a resolution that recognized the Armenian genocide allegations and stressed that Turkey would not be able to become a member of the EU unless it recognized the "genocide". Since then this resolution has been confirmed many times by the European Parliament on the EU progress reports on Turkey.

Although the European Parliament has thus taken a stance in favor of the Armenian allegations the European Council and the European Commission have kept silent on this issue not counting an indirect reference made in a European Commission report to the need for reconciliation<sup>56</sup>.

On Sept. 28, 2005, that is, a few days prior to the start of the Turkey-EU accession talks, the European Parliament adopted a resolution expressing the EU countries' demands on and complaints about Turkey. These demands included also the Armenian genocide claims.

The Article "J" of the "introduction" section of the resolution puts on record that Turkey has not complied with the European Parliament demands regarding the Armenian issues specified in an earlier resolution dated June 18, 1987. In Article 5 of the operative section of the resolution Turkey is invited to recognize the Armenian "genocide" as a precondition to Turkish membership in the EU.

<sup>56</sup> PanArmenian News, June 25, 2005

Some Turkish newspapers<sup>57</sup> saw that resolution as the European Parliament's way of putting forth new conditions for Turkey's EU membership. However, as we explained above, that condition has existed since 1987. Besides, it can hardly be said that this condition has proved effective. This is because European Parliament decisions are not binding. They are mainly of a recommendatory nature and they indicate the European Parliament's tendencies. The need for Turkey to recognize the genocide allegations is not one of the Copenhagen Criteria. There is no record of any such requirement in the other documents pertaining to Turkey's candidacy (including, in the latest instance, the Negotiating Framework Document) either. Accordingly, as an organization, the EU will not be demanding that Turkey recognize the genocide allegations during the Turkey-EU accession talks. However, since talks would be conducted with EU countries as well, these countries will have an opportunity to raise "individually" the issues of their choice. In fact, France, the Netherlands and Austria have already announced that they would tackle the Armenian "genocide" during the talks. However, if Turkey refused to discuss this issue or stressed that it would not recognize the "genocide" there is nothing these countries could do other than exercising their veto. And that would go against the EU tradition of member countries acting together. Under "normal" circumstances it would be hard to think that Turkey's accession process would be suspended only because of the "genocide" issue. Coming to the European Parliament, if, in the future, that is, at least a decade from now, Turkey manages to bring the accession talks to a successful conclusion and if an accession agreement can be prepared, there will be the possibility that the European Parliament would, during the ratification process of that agreement, take into consideration its 1987 decision and the subsequent European Parliament decisions on the same subject, and refuse or postpone to ratify the accession agreement until Turkey recognizes the "genocide".

Meanwhile, it must be noted that the Brussels-based *Fédération Euro-Arménienne pour la Justice et la Démocratie* founded by the Tashnaks to shape the public opinion according to the Armenian views during the process of Turkey's EU accession process, has carried out an intense propaganda campaign to have Turkey recognize the "genocide" prior to the start of the accession talks. In cooperation with the Christian Democrat group in the European Parliament, the Federation in question staged a conference on the "December 2004-October 2005: Has Turkey Changed?" theme at the European Parliament building on Sept. 22, 2005,

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57 *Hürriyet* and *Radikal*, Sept, 29, 2005

that is, about a week before the start of the Turkey-EU accession talks. The speakers argued that Turkey has not fulfilled yet the criteria to be able to join the EU<sup>58</sup>. Meanwhile, on Oct. 3, 2005 when the accession talks were due to start, Armenians held a large-scale demonstration in Luxembourg, demanding that Turkey recognize the “genocide”<sup>59</sup>. However, their efforts did not yield results -- obviously because governments are harder to influence than parliamentarians. Indeed, after intense quarrels and stiff bargaining the Negotiating Framework Document was issued and, to the great disappointment of the Tashnak circles, it did not include any reference pertaining to the Armenian demands. The Comité pour la Défense de la Cause Arménienne (CDCA), the main Armenian organization in France, issued a statement<sup>60</sup>, saying that by agreeing to start negotiations with a genocidal and “negating” country Europe had lost its values. It vowed to keep up the struggle “after this betrayal” as well until the Armenian “genocide” is recognized and retribution (compensation and territory) for Armenians takes place.

Let us come to Armenia’s views on the EU decision to start the accession talks with Turkey. Foreign Minister Oskanyan said that if Turkey wanted to join the EU Turkey should comply with the EU standards, and, for that, it would have to establish normal relations with its neighbors. He expressed the hope that the “border reopening” issue too would be taken up during the talks. He stressed that discussions on the Armenian issues would make a positive effect on the relations between the two countries. Regarding the aforementioned European Parliament resolution of September 28 that Turkish recognition of the “Armenian genocide” was a precondition for Turkish accession to the EU; Oskanyan contented himself with saying that the decision was “positive and natural”.<sup>61</sup>

Obviously the Armenian Foreign Minister is not thinking of solving the problems via negotiations with Turkey. Instead, he is thinking of benefiting from the pressure the EU is expected to put on Turkey on this issue. Meanwhile, it has been seen yet another time that, contrary to the Diaspora, the Armenian Government attaches secondary importance to the recognition of the “genocide” issue.

During his visit to Belgium and the EU in October, President Kocharyan had talks with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, European Par-

58 Milliyet and Hürriyet, Sept. 22, 2005; Armenews, Sept. 24, 2005

59 According to an Armenian source (CDCA, Oct. 3, 2005), 2,500 people took part in that demonstration. Meanwhile, some 5,000 Kurds in Europe staged on the same day an anti-Turkey demonstration.

60 CDCA, Oct. 3, 2005

61 Pan Armenian News, Sept. 29, 2005



liament President Josep Borrell, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and Belgian Senate President Anne-Marie Lizin. In all these meetings he reiterated his demands, saying that Turkey should open its border with Armenia, establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and recognize the Armenian “genocide”. Although his demand for an open border triggered a sympathetic reaction from all of his interlocutors, he received support on the “genocide” issue only from European Parliament President Borrell and Belgian Senate President Lizin. On another occasion, European Council Parliamentary Assembly President René van der Linden called on Turkey to take a sober look at the historical facts<sup>62</sup>, thus joining, albeit indirectly, those that recognizes the “genocide”.

Also, by visiting the Armenian “genocide” monument at Ixelles in the company of Kocharyan<sup>63</sup>, Lizin has shown that she favors the Armenian views. Her stance conflicts with the Belgian proposal<sup>64</sup> to mediate between Armenia and Turkey. Meanwhile, Belgium will undertake the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) presidency in 2006. Her spokesman has announced that Belgium targets to convene the parliament speakers of the 55 OSCE member countries in January 2006 and bring together the speakers of Turkey and Armenia in a special meeting.<sup>65</sup>

As to EU, Commission President Barroso gave a lecture at the Harvard University, USA, in mid-October. A newspaper report quoted him as expressing full support for Turkish accession to the EU and then to say that Turks should acknowledge the reality of Armenian “genocide”, that Europeans disliked the words “there was no genocide”, that Ankara’s best move would be the acknowledgement of the Armenian “genocide” and opening borders with Armenia. Armenians were elated by the news<sup>66</sup>. European Armenian Federation Chairwoman Hilda Chobanian said, “We welcome the statement of Mr. Barroso as a reflection of the European values and return to a principled approach on the part of European Commission.” With the declaration the three main bodies of the EU – the Parliament, Commission and Council – have taken a common stand that can no longer be ignored by Turkey, she added. She also said, “As a next step we will work towards the Commission incorporating these demands into relevant chapters of the Acquis and into the screening procedure for Turkey.”<sup>67</sup>

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62 Pan Armenian, Nov. 10, 2005

63 Zaman, Oct. 24, 2005

64 Zaman, Nov. 4, 2005

65 Anadolu Ajansi, Nov. 2, 2005

66 Hurriyet, Oct. 24, 2005

67 European Armenian Federation Press Release, Oct. 26, 2005

However, their elation was short-lived. Deputy Spokesperson of the EU said that the European Commission President did not state that Turkey should acknowledge the Armenian genocide.

The allegation that the Assyrians and the Caldeans had been subjected to genocide is not new.

Indeed, it would not be possible for Barroso to make such a statement in the absence of a European Commission decision to this effect. As a matter of fact, Barroso did not refer to the “genocide” issue in his statement to the press on his Oct. 22 meeting with President Kocharyan. He merely said, “Turkey has to establish good relations with all its neighbors.”<sup>68</sup>

The European Commission’s ‘Turkey Progress Report’, which was released soon after that incident, did not contain the word “genocide”. The report simply referred to the “tragic incidents of the year 1915”.<sup>69</sup> That came as a disappointment to the Armenians who had been striving to have their demand for “recognition of the genocide”<sup>70</sup> inserted in the report. Chobanian said, “We expect that the European Commission will finally take into account demands of European citizens and especially the European Parliament resolution instead of providing demands convenient to Ankara. The EU should put forward demands of recognition of the Armenian genocide by the Turkish state.”<sup>71</sup>

## 2. *Switzerland*

The Armenian allegations continue to poison the Turkey-Switzerland relations.

It may be remembered that Turkey had a strong reaction to the resolution the Swiss Parliament adopted on Dec. 16, 2003 to recognize the Armenian “genocide”. The Turkish Foreign Ministry vigorously condemned and rejected the resolution. Due to this resolution Swiss Foreign Minister Ms. Calmy-Rey’s planned visit to Turkey was postponed. After that, bilateral relations faltered until, due to the persistent requests of the Swiss side, Ms. Calmy-Rey visited Turkey in late March 2005 and the process of returning the bilateral relations to their normal state began.

<sup>68</sup> Pan Armenian, Oct. 22, 2005

<sup>69</sup> Arminfo, Nov. 5, 2005

<sup>70</sup> Pan Armenian, Nov. 10, 2005

<sup>71</sup> Pan Armenian, Nov. 10, 2005

However, about a month after that visit, the prosecutor of the Swiss canton of Zurich started an investigation into President of the Turkish Historical Society Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu on the grounds that he had “denied the Armenian genocide” in a speech he had made at a meeting in Zurich in May 2004. This incident was reflected by some Turkish newspapers along the lines that a warrant was issued for his arrest and that the Interpol issued the red alert for his capture.<sup>72</sup> Gnehm, the Swiss prosecutor dealing with this issue, made a statement to clarify the situation. He pointed out that an investigation was opened into Halaçoğlu due to a speech the latter had made, and that, according to the Article 261/B of the Swiss Penal Code those who denied or misrepresented a genocidal act or a crime against humanity, would face a one to three year jail sentence or a SF 5,000 fine<sup>73</sup>.

Taking into consideration the anti-Swiss sentiments starting to build up among the people in Turkey, the Swiss Embassy in Ankara issued a statement on this issue. The embassy said that Halaçoğlu was being investigated due to a complaint filed by a third party, and that in Switzerland it is a requirement of the judicial procedure to open an investigation to clear the matter upon receiving a complaint<sup>74</sup>. It turned out that the complaint had been filed by the Armenia-Switzerland Association. Meanwhile, Halaçoğlu refused to go to Switzerland, saying he would not go and make a statement at a court “that was founded on injustice”.<sup>75</sup>

The investigation has been opened because Prof. Halaçoğlu expressed his views on an historical issue, which was quite normal for he is serving as the President of Turkish Historical Society for many years. For a long time that was one of the main issues with which the Turkish press remained preoccupied. This issue triggered reactions from the general public as well. Meanwhile, a total 353 historians from 29 universities issued a communiqué to express their support for the president of the Turkish History Society<sup>76</sup>. Significantly, some of the historians that refrained from undersigning that communiqué were later among the organizers of the postponed Boğaziçi University Conference.

This incident had political effects as well. State Minister responsible for foreign trade Kürşad Tüzmen demanded cancellation of the Turkish-Swiss Business

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72 Milliyet, May 1, 2005

73 Hürriyet, May 3, 2005

74 Milliyet, May 3, 2005

75 Hürriyet, May 5, 2005

76 Yeni Şafak, May 8, 2005

Council meeting scheduled for June 22-24.<sup>77</sup> Also, Swiss Economy Minister Joseph Deiss's planned visit to Turkey in September was cancelled.<sup>78</sup>

In the face of these negative developments in Turkey-Switzerland relations, the Swiss authorities tried to find a way out. They started claiming that no warrant had been issued for Halaçoğlu's arrest and that no restrictions had been imposed on his potential visits to Europe, Switzerland included. There were even press reports to the effect that the Swiss Ambassador in Ankara had visited Justice Minister Cemil Çiçek and presented to him a document attesting to all that.<sup>79</sup>

Nothing could be more natural for scholars whose chosen topic is genocide to examine the Armenian genocide allegations and publish the conclusions they reach.

Just when the Halaçoğlu incident was being dropped from the Turkish newspapers' agenda a fresh development took place, preventing improvement of bilateral relations. Workers Party Chairman Doğu Perinçek too had made a statement to the press in Switzerland on May 7. Standing in front of the building where the Lausanne Treaty had been signed, he had said, "The Armenian genocide claims are an international lie."<sup>80</sup> Later he went to Switzerland once again to attend the ceremonies organized by the Workers Party and the Kemalist Thought Association to mark the 82nd anniversary of the signing of the Lausanne Treaty. At a press conference he held in Switzerland on July 22 he repeated the words, "The Armenian genocide claims are an international lie." He was summoned to the Winterthur prosecutor's office where he was asked to make a statement.<sup>81</sup> Since Perinçek chose to explain his views about the incident in detail the interrogation lasted for three-and-a-half hours. In the end he was released. However, in a statement he issued the next day he reiterated his views.<sup>82</sup>

The news of Perinçek's interrogation triggered a reaction from Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül as well. Gül said that the interrogation was unacceptable and entirely against the principle of freedom of expression.<sup>83</sup>

77 Radikal, June 10, 2005

78 Neue Zürcher Zeitung

79 Armenews, June 9, 2005

80 Tercüman, May 22, 2005

81 Milliyet, July 24, 2005

82 Swissinfo, July 17, 2005

83 Ibid

Perinçek went to Switzerland once again in September this time to face a magistrate. Before he made speeches in Berne and Zurich to announce yet another time that he did not believe that the Armenians had been subjected to genocide. He accused Switzerland of taking action without studying the Armenian problem adequately. Further investigations were opened against him on account of these speeches.<sup>84</sup> On Sept. 21 Perinçek was interrogated by Jacques Antenen, the magistrate to whom all the relevant files had been sent. After the interrogation the magistrate said that for the time being Perinçek would not be accused of any crime, and that he wanted to examine certain documents.<sup>85</sup> Thus the judicial procedure initiated against Perinçek in Switzerland has been suspended for the time being.

Since Perinçek said clearly and repeatedly that no “Armenian genocide” had happened, it is not clear at first glance why the magistrate felt the need to examine more documents. According to press reports, Article 261 of the Swiss Penal Code links the crime of “negation of genocide” to the presence of racial, ethnic or religious motifs, Perinçek can be indicted and tried only if it can be proved that he negated the “Armenian genocide” due to any such motif.<sup>86</sup> That, however, would be extremely difficult if not impossible to prove if the magistrate carried out the investigation in a fair manner. This is because the Turks, probably because they are the descendants of the Ottomans who had created a multinational empire, obviously are not inclined to harbor sentiments of racial, ethnic or religious enmity.

There is also the possibility that with political considerations the Swiss do not want Perinçek to be put on trial and that they are looking for an excuse to avoid further judicial proceedings. Firstly, if Perinçek were to be convicted and, especially, if he were to be imprisoned, that would deliver a massive blow to the Turkey-Switzerland relations. Secondly, if Perinçek were to be convicted he would no doubt appeal against the verdict at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). And, to be able to reach a decision, the ECHR would have to decide whether the relocation of the Armenians in 1915 had been genocide. Then it would become obvious that the “genocide” resolutions passed by the parliaments of a number of countries were not in line with the provisions of the 1948 UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Seeing that these resolutions cannot be used to “prove” the Armenian “genocide”

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84 The Anatolian Times, Sept. 20, 2005

85 Schweizerische Depeschagentur, Sept. 21, 2005; Le Temps, 20

86 Ibid

the ECHR would, most likely, overturn the Swiss court's verdict without feeling the need to examine the historical events. That would deliver a heavy blow to the Armenians' genocide allegations. For this reason it is quite possible that neither the Swiss nor the Armenians want Perinçek to be sentenced.

### **3. Britain**

Baroness Caroline Cox, a veteran member of Britain's House of Lords where she serves as deputy speaker, is famous for her protection of the interests of Armenia and the Armenians on every occasion. She spends a great part of her time in Armenia and she has visited Karabagh sixty times by now. Due to her services she was decorated with a golden medal, the "Mkhitar Gosh", by President Kocharyan on Sept. 17, 2005. The medal was awarded for her "input in the development of the Armenian-British relations as well as for fruitful and self-denying humanitarian work of many years".<sup>87</sup>

It is known that Britain does not see the 1915 incidents as genocide. Yet, the baroness posed a question on this subject to Lord Triesman, the parliamentary undersecretary of state for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, during a session of the House of Lords on July 14, 2005. She asked the lord whether the government would review its stance in favor of "recognizing the 1915 massacre as genocide". Lord Triesman's reply was along the following lines: The stance the British Government has maintained on this issue all these years is well known. The British Government concedes that this terrible period of history triggers strong emotions, and that it does consider the 1915-1916 massacre a tragedy. However, just as its predecessors the present British Government has resolved that there is no adequately clear evidence that would have caused these incidents to be put into the genocidal acts category defined by the 1948 UN Genocide Convention.

Thus, thanks to the question posed by Lady Caroline Cox, the British Government's stance regarding the Armenian genocide allegations has been reiterated.

While the British Government thus refuses to recognize the 1915 incidents as genocide, the Armenian circles in Britain have adopted the policy of trying to elicit "recognition of the genocide" resolutions from the regional parliaments. First they tried their hand in Wales. Then they made an attempt in Scotland. As

<sup>87</sup> Arminfo, Sept. 17, 2005Sept. 17, 2005

a matter of fact the City of Edinburgh Council adopted a motion on November 17, recognizing Armenian genocide allegations. This issue is separately studied in Chapter II entitled “National And Local Parliaments That Uphold The Genocide Allegations”

#### **4. *Belgium***

The Belgian Senate had accepted the Armenian genocide allegations with a resolution it passed in 1998. The resolution had urged Turkey to recognize it as well. There exists in Belgium a law (dated March 23, 1995) that makes negation of genocide a crime to be punished. In April 2005 the Senate rejected a proposal to expand the scope of that law to cover the Armenian genocide allegations as well.<sup>88</sup>

In September 2005 a new draft resolution was presented to the Senate regarding the Armenian genocide allegations. The draft urges the Turkish Government to recognize the Armenian “genocide”, to open all of its archives to researchers and historians, to refrain from intervening in the scientific work carried out by the Turkish historians (this is a reference to the then postponed Boğaziçi University conference), and to encourage public debates on this issue.<sup>89</sup> In its current form the draft does not introduce anything new. As stated above, the Senate has already recognized the alleged genocide. And it is all too clear that Turkey would not accept any such allegations. On the other hand, the conference in question did take place albeit at a different university. Furthermore, the Armenian problem is being debated by the Turkish public in a way that can be described as “heated”. Considering all these, the draft has obviously been submitted merely with the aim of keeping the Armenian “genocide” issue alive on the agenda.

#### **5. *Finland***

During a visit to Armenia in late September 2005 President Tarja Halonen of Finland laid a wreath at the genocide monument in Yerevan and planted a tree there.

According to the Finnish press, journalists asked Halonen whether she would recognize the events as acts of genocide. She avoided a direct response, making a statement along the following lines: “Finland is not in the habit of giving

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<sup>88</sup> Ermeni Arastirmalari, Issue No 16-17, pp. 64-65

<sup>89</sup> Armenews, Sept. 16, 2005

recognition to historical events. Every generation has the right to re-examine history, and every country has the right to its own history. Countries should not become prisoners of history.”<sup>90</sup>

On the other hand, the Armenian press carried a report that quoted Halonen as saying that her country was, together with Armenia, commemorating the Armenian genocide victims with sorrow.<sup>91</sup>

Alongside that letter Time Magazine published a “note from the editor” expressing regret over having disseminated the DVD and for the offense it had caused

During state visits of foreign dignitaries Armenian protocol calls for a visit to the genocide monument and a great majority of the visitors do comply with that request so as to act according to local custom. Halonen’s visit to the memorial should be assessed in this context.

## ***6. Genocide Allegations of the Assyrians and the Caldeans***

A monument built for the memory of the “victims of the genocide committed against the Assyrians-Caldeans by the Ottoman Empire in 1915” was inaugurated with a ceremony in Sarcelles, a town near Paris, on Oct. 15, 2005. The memorial is situated near the “Armenian genocide” monument in the same city. Speaking during the ceremony, Mayor Francois Pupponi said, “Turkey will never be able to be an EU member as long as it fails to recognize the Armenian and the Assyrian-Caldean genocide.”<sup>92</sup>

This triggered a statement from the Turkish Foreign Ministry in the following vein: “We have an adverse reaction to the inauguration of the monument that reflects an allegation that is put forth though no one knows which historical data it is based on. Those who groundlessly accuse a state of committing genocide, that is, the gravest crime that can be committed against humanity, are doing nothing but demeaning themselves by acting in ways that lack in seriousness.”<sup>93</sup>

The allegation that the Assyrians and the Caldeans had been subjected to genocide is not new. It is known that, during the relocation of 1915-1916, some members of the Assyrian and Caldean communities too had been relocated since they

<sup>90</sup> Helsingin Sanomat, Sept. 28, 2005

<sup>91</sup> Arminfo, Sept. 27, 2005

<sup>92</sup> Hürriyet, Oct. 17, 2005

<sup>93</sup> Hürriyet, Oct. 18, 2005



were living nearby the Armenians in mixed settlements. However, the Ottoman Government had ended that practice, making it clear that the relocation process would be limited to the Armenians. More recently, some members of these two communities immigrated to Europe and, soon after the Armenians said that they too had been subjected to acts of genocide. However, wary of any development that could overshadow their own cause; the Armenians wanted these allegations to remain in a secondary position. The monument erected in Sarcelles shows that this Armenian stance is now beginning to change. A reference Armenian Catholicos (patriarch) Karekin II made in a recent speech<sup>94</sup> constituted another sign of that change. After voicing the Armenians' genocide allegations Karekin II said that the Greeks and the Assyrians living in the Ottoman Empire too had met with a similar fate.

Why have the Armenians started to alter their stance? This is probably because the fact that a number of countries –and the European Parliament-- have recognized their genocide allegations one after another, has given the Armenians the hope that Turkey too will have to accept these allegations in a not-too-distant future. Probably they worry that in such a case the international pressure on Turkey would be eased. To prepare for such a situation, they now drive into the arena the Assyrians and the Caldeans that they have kept in reserve.

In the coming days, goaded by the Armenians, the Assyrians and the Caldeans can be expected to put forth their genocide allegations more intensely in Germany and the Scandinavian countries where they mostly live. In fact, Sweden's liberal party (Folkpartitiet) that is expected to be a coalition partner if the Socialists lose the parliamentary elections to be held next year, said in a communiqué issued at its 19-21 August, 2005 congress, that for a long time the "genocide" committed against the Armenians, the Assyrians, the Caldeans and the Pontian Greeks had been seen as Turkish-Armenian problem. It said that pressure should be put on Turkey to make it accept its responsibility in these "acts of genocide" and to disclose the facts. It said that to encourage research Turkey and the other countries should open their archives, stressing that an effective lobbying activity was needed to ensure that Turkey would respect the rights of the Kurds and the Christian population.<sup>95</sup> Also, on Sept. 24, 2005 a seminar was held in Stockholm on the "genocides" committed against the Assyrians, the Armenians and the Greeks by the Turks.<sup>96</sup>

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94 At the 19<sup>th</sup> interfaith gathering for peace organized by the Sant'Egidio Community in Lyon on 11-13 September 2005

95 AINA (Assyrian International News Agency), Oct. 4, 2005

96 AINA, Sept. 23, 2005

## 7. *Activities of the International Association of Genocide Scholars*

The “International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS)”, which is said to be bringing together the genocide experts in North America and Europe, was founded in 1994 by four academicians, who argued that the world was not attaching adequate importance to the genocide threat. It examines issues related to genocide, holding conferences every two years.<sup>97</sup> At its latest conference, held in Boca Raton, Florida on June 4-7, 2005, the text of a letter to be sent to Turkish PM Erdoğan was approved unanimously.<sup>98</sup>

The letter conveyed to PM Erdoğan on June 16, 2005 referred to the PM’s proposal for an “independent inquiry into the fate of the Armenian people by historians”<sup>99</sup> It said, in brief, that the PM might not be fully aware of the abundance of the studies made on the “genocide” issue or of the compatibility of this event with the UN Genocide Convention, that it was the generally-held view of not only the Armenians but also the scholars examining the genocide issue that an Armenian “genocide” had occurred. It said that scientific evidence indicated that more than one million Armenians had been killed. It claimed that the Armenian “genocide” was documented by the US, Austrian and Hungarian archives, the Ottoman martial court records and the testimonies of the missionaries and diplomats, also citing in this context the statements made a number of scholars and the activities of certain organizations. Without mentioning any of them by name, the letter said that “so-called scientists that give their opinions to the Turkish Government on this issue” were not impartial. Furthermore, it claimed that by preventing the conference that was to be held at the Boğaziçi University on May 25 the Turkish Government showed that it was against academic and intellectual freedom.

The letter concluded that the Turkish people would benefit from recognizing the responsibility of a former government<sup>100</sup> in the “genocide committed against the Armenian people” just as the German government and people had done regarding the Holocaust.

97 University Press, FL (Florida Atlantic University), June 30, 2005

98 International Herald Tribune, Sept. 23, 2005

99 This is a reference to the letter PM Erdoğan had sent to President Kocharyan following the April 13, 2005 session of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the letter in which he had suggested creation of a commission consisting of historians and other experts to examine the genocide allegations. See: Review of Armenian Studies, Issue No. 7-8, pp. 12-14 following the April 13, 2005 session of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the letter in which he had suggested creation of a commission consisting of historians and other experts to examine the genocide allegations. See,

100 This is a reference to the Unity and Progress Party government.

Nothing could be more natural for scholars whose chosen topic is genocide to examine the Armenian genocide allegations and publish the conclusions they reach. What is not normal is that they have written a letter to the Turkish PM with a “preaching” tone and gave a copy of the letter to the press. Furthermore, in an unprecedented move, these scholars have published the letter in question as a highly expensive paid advertisement in the International Herald Tribune on Sept. 23, 2005. It is all too clear that the International Association of Genocide Scholars has embraced the Armenian theses without any reservations at all and has been acting in a militant rather than academic mentality to spread these theses. In this context it must be noted that the current IAGS President Israel Charny is the executive director of the Jerusalem-based Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide. He has actively worked to win recognition for the Armenian “genocide” for years. And he has harshly criticized the Israeli Government for not having recognized the 1915 incidents as “Armenian genocide”.

### ***8. Time Magazine***

A four-page tourism advertisement with photographs, titled “Crossroads of Culture: Turkey”, appeared in the June 6, 2005 issue of the world-renowned Time Magazine. Attached to the advertisement was a DVD cassette in several languages. It consisted of four sections. In the first three sections Turkey was promoted from a tourism angle. The fourth section included a not-too-brief summary of the documentary, “Sarı Gelin” (Bride from the highlands), that looks into the Armenian problem. These cassettes were distributed to the 494,000 subscribers of the magazine in Europe. Furthermore, there were 116,000 more of these cassettes being sold directly with the magazine in Europe. The advertisement was placed by the Chamber of Trade of Ankara (ATO). Its Chairman Sinan Aygün said that the cost of the advertisement, no less than \$1 million, was met with donations.<sup>101</sup>

The Comité pour la Défense de la Cause Arménienne (CDCA) founded in France by the Dashnaks issued a statement denouncing Turkey’s “campaign of negation” and the “irresponsible complicity” of Time Magazine on this subject. The Committee said that it was a move aimed at creating doubts about an historical fact confirmed by the archives of the world with the exception of the Turkish archives which were closed (!) and recognized by the European Parliament, the UN (!), and some 50 states (!) and organizations including France. Committee

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101 Milliyet, June 2, 2005

Chairman Harout Mardirossian said that Time Magazine had lost its honor by selling out its journalistic credibility for the sake of profits. The statement stressed that the Fédération Euro-Arménienne pour la Justice et la Démocratie, which represents some 100 Europe-based Armenian organizations, had moved to use its “right of reply” vis-à-vis Time Magazine. It said that the CDCA would apply to the French authorities and demand measures against the accusations directed at France in the DVD. With the support of the Armenian National Committee of the USA, the CDCA would start a protest campaign against Time Magazine, reserving the right to go to court on this issue depending on the nature of the response to be obtained from the magazine, it added.<sup>102</sup>

Soon after that, Armenians began to shower Time Magazine with letters of protest. Also, legal steps were initiated to ensure that the magazine would give the Armenians the “right of reply”. About four months later, obviously impressed by all these, the magazine published in the letters to the editor section of its October 17, 2005 issue a lengthy letter sent by an organization called “Mémoire 2000” on behalf of a number of organizations waging a struggle in France against racism and anti-Semitism, and for the “memory of the Armenian genocide”. Reiterating the well-known Armenian views about the “genocide” the letter made demands for a “compensation of the damage”. It asked the magazine to disclose the standards it employs in accepting or rejecting advertising. It asked whether Time would have accepted a similar DVD denying the Holocaust. It asked the magazine to distribute free of charge a DVD prepared by the EAFJD on the history of the Armenian problem and its modern-day consequences. Also, it asked the magazine to donate the advertising revenues from the Turkish tourism promotion campaign to nonprofit organizations that reflect the “truth” about the “Armenian genocide” and “other genocides”.

Alongside that letter Time Magazine published a “note from the editor” expressing regret over having disseminated the DVD and for the offense it had caused. Referring to the “Sarı Gelin” it said that the “so-called documentary” portion of the DVD presented a one-sided view of history and did not meet the magazine’s standards for fairness and accuracy. It stressed that the DVD would not have been distributed if they had been aware of its content. It said that unfortunately the DVD had not been adequately reviewed by anyone at the magazine because it was believed to be an ordinary advertisement. It said, “We have changed our review process so as to guarantee more vigilance in the future. We

102 CDCA, June 8, 2005

apologize to the Armenian community and to our readers.”

Obviously Time Magazine is trying to end this issue by expressing regret and by extending an apology, using the excuse that the DVD had not been properly reviewed. One understands that the Time officials are wary of the possibility of facing a lawsuit in France. Considering the fact that renowned historian Bernard Lewis has been convicted in France for expressing doubts about the Armenian “genocide”, they must be thinking that Armenians could win if they opened a case in France. For a major magazine with enormous financial resources such as Time, losing prestige would be more important than losing money.

On the other hand, though the magazine has published in full the statement sent by the Armenians and extended an apology, the Armenians may not be satisfied with that. In fact, CDCA Chairman Mardirossian has said, “If Time Magazine thinks that this ‘right of reply’ will settle the score on this issue it is seriously mistaken.”

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### *Edward Tashji's Death*

Edward Tashji (Tasçı), the US-born author of the book, “The Armenian Allegations: The Truth Must Be Told”, passed away on June 22, 2005. Tashji, who had an Armenian mother and an Assyrian father, was known for the way he held Turks in such great esteem, praising and defending Turkey everywhere, on every occasion, unruffled by the threats issued by the Armenian militants. His coffin, covered with a Turkish flag, was taken to the St. Marks Syrian Cathedral in New York where a religious service was held. Turkish Consul General in New York Ömer Orhun and Chairman of the Turkish-American Associations Dr. Ata Erim made speeches during the service. Then he was laid to rest at the Christian Karachai Turks’ cemetery in New York.

The Institute for Armenian Research extends its condolences to the bereaved family and friends and to everybody who appreciated his work.

May he rest in peace.

# THE TALE OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S 1987 RESOLUTION ENTITLED "POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE ARMENIAN QUESTION"

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## **Abstract:**

*Recently the basis of 1987 Resolution of the Parliament that accepted the genocide allegations committed towards the Ottoman Armenians in 1915, Vandemeulebroucke Report, illegally came to the agenda of the General Council although rejected with the votes of Political Committee. This report was later approved there through intimidation of those parliamentarians opposing the report and the draft of resolution. The resolution is a political maneuver of those politicians who want to slander and exclude Turkey from Europe, by making it a condition for the full membership of Turkey to the European Union. Turkey should maintain that genocide is a legal concept and should stress the impossibility of declaring somebody of being a criminal before the decision of the competent court. In doing that, Turkey should bring the issue to the agenda of Turkey-European Parliament Joint Parliamentary Commission and defend her views there in order to state that there is no legal way for some suspects to be accused of committing the crime of genocide.*

**Keywords:** *European Parliament, Armenian Diaspora, Ottoman Armenians, France, Armenian Terror*

## **Öz:**

*1915 yılında Osmanlı Ermenilerine karşı soykırım uygulandığına dair, 1987 yılında Avrupa Parlamentosu (AP) tarafından alınan karara dayanak oluşturan Vandemeulebroucke raporu AP Siyasi Komitesi tarafından oylanarak reddedilmesine rağmen, usulsüz olarak AP Genel Kurul gündemine alınmış ve orada rapora ve karar taslağına karşı olan parlamenterler tehdit edilerek kabul ettirilmiştir. Alınan karar Türkiye'yi karalamak ve soykırımının kabulünü ülkemizin Avrupa Birliğine tam üyeliğinin koşulu haline getirerek Türkiye'yi Avrupa'dan dışlamak isteyen siyasetçilerin bir siyasal manevrasıdır. Türkiye soykırımının hukuksal bir terim olduğunu belirterek, bir hukuk devletinde, herhangi bir zanlının yetkili yargı organı tarafından yargılamadan suçlu ilan edilemeyeceğini vurgulayarak, kimi zanlıların soykırımı suçu*

*işlediğini tanınmasına hukuken olanak bulunmadığını belirtmek amacıyla konuyu Türkiye Avrupa Parlamentosu Karma Parlamento Komisyonunun gündemine getirmeli ve orada görüşlerini savunmalıdır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Avrupa Parlamentosu, Soykırımı Sözleşmesi, Ermeni Diasporası, Osmanlı Ermenileri, Fransa, Ermeni Terörü*

I was appointed as the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the European Union in November 1984. During my three-year service, each month, I spent one week in Strasbourg, except for the months of August when the European Parliament (EP) did not convene. I participated in the EP meetings and discussed several issues with the members of the EP. In that period, Turkey was brought to the agenda of nearly all of the EP meetings; many reports were written and many resolutions were adopted regarding Turkey and in almost all of them Turkey was criticized and condemned.

After my appointment, the first problem about the relations with the EP was the initiative of the French members of the Parliament in order to make the EP adopt a resolution recognizing the claim of the 'Armenian genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire in 1915'.

I went to the EP and met with its President, Pflimlin, in December 1984. At the beginning of our conversation, he asked me why Turkey had not accepted the so-called 'genocide'. His discourse resembled a discourse used in a conversation between an employer and employee or between the strong and the weak. During my three and a half year embassy in Indonesia, I was treated quite well by the Indonesian political elite because of their admiration towards Turkey and its founder, Atatürk. Before, I had experienced multilateral diplomacy in the International Atomic Energy Agency for nine years. Such a style, which I had never witnessed, disturbed me seriously. Later, I would perceive that the diplomacy of European integration developed a *sui generis* style regarding the communication of the European Communities' institutions with the member and candidate states. It was necessary to use this style as soon as possible. But, let me turn to my first meeting with President Pflimlin.

I thought that I had to stay calm against the disturbing style of the President towards a partner state's ambassador, which was not in accordance with the diplomatic customs, while I should not give up my firm stance. He was a lawyer, thus I should bring the issue to that field. I told him that the concept of 'geno-

cide' emerged with the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and it should not be used so carelessly. I added that without any decision by a competent court or any other judicial authority, one could not be accused of any crime; and this was a rule not only in Turkey but also in France. I also said that the European Communities had established a judicial framework and it was expected from the President of EP not to act contrary to international law. I added that Turkey had accepted the 1948 Convention and transformed it as a part of internal law, thus it was impossible to breach our internal laws. What is more, I said that many Turkish diplomats had been victims of Armenian terror and this conversation – according to me - was carried out under the shadow of these awful murders. My remarks disturbed him and said that he also condemned terrorism, he loved the Turks and he had many Turkish friends. Then he tried to bring the conversation to the political field, and said that accepting the so-called genocide would only glorify Turkey while Turkey could not be held responsible for the events occurred prior to its foundation. I told him I believed that it was unfair to voice the atrocities suffered solely by the non-Muslims residing within the multicultural Ottoman society while overlooking the Muslim Ottomans that were killed. He stated that the French society was very sensitive with respect to this issue. I replied by stating that I knew this subject quite well, and added that in the 1920's, Armenians were sent to war at Çukurova having been dressed up in French uniform, and that previously Ottoman Armenians were dressed up in Tsarist Russian uniform. I told him that the Armenian representative participating in the Sevres negotiations, Bogos Nubar, stated that they were the belligerent party and that when France was retreating from Çukurova he brought a part of the 'Anatolian Armenian soldiers' to France. I told him that there existed at cemeteries in France memorial graves for 'the Armenians that perished for the French', and that for this reason I was not surprised that he felt close to Armenians. I added that I was against a one-sided review of history, that my aim was not to remind him of certain passages of history he may not want to read or the existence of which he may not know of. I said that I just wanted to make a courtesy visit to the President of the European Parliament and added that if he wanted more detailed information on this topic, I was ready to provide for it in the future.

The discourse of the European Parliament President resembled the one used in a conversation between an employer and employee or between the strong and the weak.



During this visit, the French openly put forth how they were resolute about bringing the Armenian question before the European Parliament. Their first initiative was made in 1981, with French Parliamentarian Jacquet's draft entitled "The Condition of the Armenian People"<sup>1</sup>. Thereafter, a draft carrying the signature of French Parliamentarian Miss Duport and Belgium Parliamentarian Glinne was presented on behalf of the Socialist Group.<sup>2</sup> On behalf of the new EP's Socialist Group elected as of June 1984, French Parliamentarian Saby and his friends renewed the Armenian draft.

At the beginning of 1984, Israel, the French Parliamentarian who was appointed to write a report on the Armenian issue, resigned from this assignment. I believe that the Jewish lobby, which did not want to share the characteristic of being victims of genocide with the Armenians, influenced him. Upon Monsieur Israel's refusal, this time an agreement was made with Belgian Parliamentarian Mr. Vandemeulebroucke who, at that time, was a member of the Vlamski Block party known for being extreme-rightist, nationalist and racist. I invited Vandemeulebroucke for lunch in the days following his appointment as a reporter in January 1985. I stressed that we were prepared to submit all the information and documents he wanted on the topic he was to write a report, and stated that he could meet with all pertinent individuals and officials including the Armenian community by coming to Turkey and that he could conduct research in our archives. I told him that we expected him to be objective and include allegations as well as counter-arguments in his report. I added that we expected his prospective report would help heal the deep wound inflicted on the Turkish and world public's conscience as a result of the bloody activities carried out by terrorist groups voicing that they acted on behalf of the Armenians. I told him that this report carried the prospect of aiding in the creation of an atmosphere of mutual dialogue and understanding between the Armenians and Turks. I stated –upon his question- that we do not expect anybody to suppress his memory or disregard tragic events of the past. I added that the report also needed to include passages of history that certain historians and politicians denied, and that I desired all pages of history and the causes of events to be evaluated together. Otherwise, people would be constrained to read history for personal satisfaction or to reinforce their prejudices. Furthermore, I explained the basic elements of the Genocide Convention, and pointed out to my counterpart that he was not a competent judge, prosecutor, nor lawyer. I added that the European Parliament was not a court

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1 Doc. No. 1 782/81

2 Doc. No. 1-735/83

and stated that genocide was a legal term. I also said that this crime could be carried out by individuals; therefore, it was not in line with justice for a politician to write a report on a legal matter as if it were handing down a sentence without listening to the pleas of the defendants none of whom are alive today. Upon my counterpart stating how he heard that the massacres inflicted upon the Armenians went unpunished and that he wanted to analyze this matter, I explained how approximately 1300 Ottoman leaders were tried for wrongdoings during the relocation, a big portion of which was tried by the Courts set up during the Committee for Unity and Progress period, some of which was executed, and some of which were deported to Malta but set free due to the lack of evidence. During this first meeting, my counterpart accepted our invitation stated that he would come to Turkey, and wanted us to be sure that he would be objective.

However, The Belgian Parliamentarian never came to our country, nor explained why he did so. As time passed, it became more apparent that the reporter was acting on behalf of the diaspora. He did not accept to meet me in his room and during our discussions carried out in the Parliament's canteen there was always a "party commissar" accompanying him, who listened to our conversations without uttering a word. I told the reporter that he took upon himself an important duty, since his prospective report could serve to bring the Turks and Armenians together. I insistently requested for the report to contribute to a culture of peace, not to a culture rancor and revenge, and gave him books and documents to be put to use in his report. As time passed, information started to reach us through indirect ways regarding the points that he elaborated in his report. Among this information there existed documents, the fraudulence of which were ascertained, and factitious assertions such as the genocide claim that was accepted by The United Nations Economic and Social Council, Human Rights Sub-Committee. We analyzed all of this material and prepared counter documents approximately 200 pages in length. We distributed these documents to the Belgian reporter and also to the other parliamentarians. We observed a group of parliamentarians throw away the documents they retrieved from their post boxes without having read them in a big trash box next to the document distribution section, as the parliamentarians did not have the time to read those documents that did not fall within their own areas of priority. Everyday they received a heavy load of letters and documents. Also, during that period, a group of European parliamentarians came to Strasbourg on Mondays, signed the attendance registry, and then returned. They came again on Fridays to sign the registry again, and they took their daily payments as if they were present the whole week. This resulted in the overflow of their post-boxes.

Those elected to the European Parliament that term, with the exception of 50-60 of them, were second class politicians who could not be elected to their national parliaments. Due to these observations we made, we figured out that it would be of greater use to send the information and documents we wanted to deliver not to the parliamentarians themselves, but to their political assistants and in fact to the advisors of the political groups they were affiliated with, both of which we got in touch with as well. During that period, I discussed this issue with approximately 100 European parliamentarians face to face. During these discussions, excluding the French parliamentarians, they stated that they understood our views but that the subject matter was a problem having top priority amongst the French members of the European Parliament. They stated that the Greeks supported the French and that the reciprocal concessions granted and balances formed in Parliament left no possibility of going against this demand of the French. As a matter of fact, this subject carried no priority for the other European parliamentarians. Furthermore, they pointed out how there existed a wide spread conviction among Europe that in 1915 the Armenians were subjected to a grave massacre and that we should not pay much attention to political resolutions taken by the European Parliament that was not binding such as the one in question. The main justification of those who were opposing the matter being taken up by the EP, stemmed from how the parliament was not a place to try history, and from how they were against distorting the past for political motives. Those in opposition displayed resistance towards the matter not as a result of its essence but out of procedure. They either were unaware or did not attribute much importance to the sufferings of the Ottoman Muslims who encountered the same hardships during that period, such as the Van massacre in April 1915 inflicted by Armenian armed units. French parliamentarians adopted a highly unreliable attitude, and were voicing how this issue was a domestic political problem, and that it did not target Turkey. Their prejudices on this matter were deeply entrenched; they did not even want to hear any counter arguments.

I should point out that during that period, I meticulously analyzed social-psychology books on opinion formation and alteration techniques, and benefited greatly from this inquiry. Due to our profession also entailing the persuasion of one's counterpart, I believe it would be highly useful to teach social psychology to all young diplomats.

Let us return to our topic. To my mind, the Vandemeulebroucke report has been drafted by the Armenian diaspora. The report was full of biased and erroneous information. The report was presented to the Political Committee of the

European Parliament. At the Committee's meeting held in The Hague, the main justification that the EU was not a historical institution and was not competent to try history took over and the report was rejected by a single vote. In fact, as I personally listened to the meeting's recordings, I have no doubt that the Political Committee's Chairman (Italian) Formigoni, held the voting twice -to avoid any mistakes- and that the outcome of both was rejection.

I said that many Turkish diplomats had been victims of Armenian terror and this conversation with the President – according to me - was carried out under the shadow of these awful murders.

The recordings of the meeting were presented to us on the same day by an official present at the room where the meeting was held. According to the procedural by-law, the rejection of a report in a Committee through voting necessitated that it be dropped from the agenda and that the matter would not be dealt with again. Actually the Chairman of the Committee had drawn attention to this fact before the matter was subjected to a vote. However, when so desired, issues were not taken up in a fashion falling in line with law at the European Parliament, alleged to be a legal institution. It was a political arena and all kinds of maneuvers were deemed legitimate. Due to the Turkish parliamentarians not being members of the European Parliament our adversaries had an advantage. Pressure was exerted upon the Committee's Chairman for the report to be reassessed. However, the Chairman Formigoni resisted such pressures towards this end and stated that the report was put to a vote and that this case is closed. This time, they waited for Formigoni's tenure to come to an end. He was replaced by another Italian, Ercini. I knew Ercini as well, he was unreliable, would smile in your face but carry out deeds of a contrary nature behind your back. We overheard that the report was brought to the agenda of the Political Committee once again - as if it were a fresh issue- by the new Chairman. Fellow parliamentarians wanted to bring the issue to the By-law Committee. The By-law Committee rejected this appeal.

On the other hand, the Political Committee's new Chairman Ercini once again brought the Vandemeulebroucke report to the fore. As a result of the efforts of German Klaus Haensch -a member of the Political Committee and who thereafter was the President of the European Parliament- references made to the genocide were removed from the draft resolution pertaining to the report. The French initially opposed this. Subsequently, when the General Assembly convened, they conceded to the changes made at the Committee, presuming that they could insert whatever wordings they desired through various motions for amendment. A

group of members of the Political Committee who had voted against the report at the first meeting came to me and stated that they were being threatened, and added that they would not take part in the meeting where the votes would be cast and what was being carried out went against all the rules. The report and draft resolution were passed from the Political Committee and were brought to

The Vandemeulebroucke report has been drafted by the Armenian diaspora. It was full of biased and erroneous information.

the General Assembly. On 18 July 1987 the European parliament was encircled by Armenians, coming from various locations. One evening the groups of Armenians who went down town placed up notices at the corner of every street. The French

police took no measures. Very few parliamentarians had participated in the session. During the Parliament's session, the French parliamentarians who ascended a platform that was placed outside, explained what was going on inside to those demonstrators waiting under the rain. They applauded those who supported the Armenian thesis and heckled those who did not. The terrorists that seeped into Parliament threatened certain parliamentarians, for example when German Wedekind had the floor he disclosed that he had been threatened with a gun, that this was a scandal and stated that under these conditions this matter could not be dealt with. French parliamentarian and member of the Socialist Group Miss Pery, who was deliberately chosen to hold the presidential chair of that session, turned a deaf ear on these developments. The very same person, during a lunch break, acting in contravention of the rules of the procedural by-law, and despite all objections, passed a resolution in the General Assembly at where approximately 40 people were present, denouncing the military operation carried out by Turkey towards the PKK terrorists. To sum up, everything unraveled according to the scenario construed by the French parliamentarians who were taking directives from the Armenian diaspora. Almost all of the strict amendments proposed during the session of General Assembly regarding Vandemeulebroucke report entitled "A Political Solution to the Armenian Question" and the pertinent draft resolution were adopted and in this fashion the resolution was accepted by the European Parliament. For me and for those who are aware of the realities I explained above, this resolution is a shame for the European Parliament and is of less worth than a piece of a dirty tissue paper.

Now let me try to summarize and curtly evaluate the points incorporated in the resolution endorsed by the European Parliament. This exercise shall help us understand the expectations and stance against Turkey of those who prepared

the draft resolution and of those who made alterations to it of a stricter nature. As additions were made to the draft resolution during the General Assembly the final text is of a highly complex nature. The ensuing analysis deals with the same topic, yet I brought together various articles which do not succeed one another in the text and added sub-headings.

### ***Genocide and Consequences of Its Recognition***

The Armenian side regards these events as planned genocide within the meaning of the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

The Turkish State rejects the charge of genocide as unfounded.

*(In the first text, perceptions of two sides were given separately in these two paragraphs, thus a balance was provided. With the inclusion of the following paragraph to the resolution of the European Parliament, it was shown that the events had been believed to be genocide.)*

[European Parliament] believes that the tragic events in 1915-1917 involving the Armenians living in the territory of the Ottoman Empire constitute genocide within the meaning of the convention on the prevention and the punishment of the crime of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948; Recognizes, however, that the present Turkey cannot be held responsible for the tragedy experienced by the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and stresses that neither political nor legal or material claims against present-day Turkey can be derived from the recognition of this historical event as an act of genocide.

*(The expression of "...neither political nor legal or material claims against present-day Turkey can be derived from the recognition of this historical event as an act of genocide" implies that the consequences of recognition is not material. However, the representatives of the Armenian organizations state that the recognition of genocide would have consequences regarding compensation and the Turkish governments must be held responsible for the payment of it. In the meetings that I attended after the adoption of the resolution, there were parliaments, which tried to attract my attention that only the verb 'believe', instead of 'recognize' was used in the resolution; they claimed that they could succeed to prevent recognition by this usage.*

*In my opinion, European Parliament interpreted the 1948 Convention wrong and*

*acted contrary to it. Because, only a competent court, not a political body such as the European Parliament could decide whether there is the crime of genocide. If this wrong interpretation was to be done by one of the governments, which was a party to the Convention, other parties to the Convention would have the right to apply to the International Court of Justice with the legal ground that there was a mistake of procedure if not substance.)*

The historically proven Armenian genocide has so far neither been the object of political condemnation nor received due compensation.

*(With this paragraph, the concept of genocide, which is a legal concept, is excluded from the legal framework and put into a historical and political structure. By stating that the genocide is historically proven, the arguments of some historians recognizing the 1915-16 events as genocide was accepted as evidence, while opposite views were simply disregarded. Today the same approach continues. For example, those scholars who argue that these events can not be accepted as genocide (such as Justin McCarthy, Bernard Lewis, and Stanford Shaw) are accused of being Turkish agents; their works are denied; they are not invited to the scientific (!) conferences that the other side organize; even expression of their views are feared. Moreover the expression of 'due compensation' simply contradicts with the former paragraph articulating that "...neither political nor legal or material claims against present-day Turkey can be derived from the recognition of this historical event as an act of genocide". Those who demanded compensation are tried to be satisfied with the 'due compensation')*

The Turkish Government, by refusing to recognize the genocide of 1915, continues to deprive the Armenian people of the right to their own history.

*(With this paragraph Turkey was demanded to take some steps to cure the 'psychological crises' of the Armenians. In the former paragraphs the years '1915-1917' are stated, whereas here only '1915' is written. The claim of the Armenian Diaspora that Turkey is responsible for all the problems of Armenians is reflected here as well. Otherwise it is impossible for a state to deprive another state to read, understand and evaluate its own history.)*

The recognition of the Armenian genocide by Turkey must therefore be viewed as a profoundly humane act of moral rehabilitation towards the Armenians, which can only bring honor to the Turkish Government

[European Parliament] calls on the Council to obtain from the present Turkish

Government as acknowledgment of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians in 1915-1917 and promote the establishment of a political dialogue between Turkey and the representatives of the Armenians.

*(Here again the period of genocide is expressed as the years 1915-1917, thus the massacres committed by the Armenians much later, particularly during the War of Liberation, is excluded.*

*However, the Van Massacre of April 1915 is forgotten as well since the blame is tried to be put on the Russian army, commanded by Armenians who were former deputies of the Ottoman Parliament. The Council, on the other hand, did not act in accord-*

*ance with the EP's demand and there was no initiative on this issue towards Turkey. The expression of 'representatives of Armenians', implies not the Republic of Armenia, which had not been an independent state at that time, but the Armenian Diaspora. Some of them openly supported the Armenian terror both financially and morally.)*

The representatives of the Armenian organizations state that the recognition of genocide would have consequences regarding compensation and the Turkish governments must be held responsible for the payment of it.

### ***Armenian Terrorist Activities: Establishment of Jewish-Armenian Connection***

[European Parliament] profoundly regrets and condemns the mindless terrorism by groups of Armenians who were responsible between 1973 and 1986 of several attacks causing death or injury to innocent victims and deplored by an overwhelming majority of the Armenian people.

[European Parliament] condemns strongly any violence and any form of terrorism carried out by isolated groupings unrepresentative of the Armenian people, and calls for reconciliation between Armenians and Turks.

The obdurate stance of every Turkish Government towards the Armenian question has in no way helped to reduce the tension.

[European Parliament] calls on the Community Member States to dedicate a day to the memory of the genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated in the 20th century, specifically against the Armenians and Jews.



*(These four paragraphs reflect the balance within the European Parliament. In the first of them, Armenian terrorism is condemned, while this condemnation is somehow moderated with the expression that these events are individual acts. In the third paragraph, it is implied that these acts of terror have a reason. The attitude of European televisions, radios and press right after the Armenian terror was not much different. They perceived these events as an opportunity to reflect Armenian allegations. Those European parliamentarians, whom I met, argued that this was a text of compromise and it was aimed to satisfy the French and the Greek; and they 'laughed'!)*

### ***Package Paragraphs Condemning Turkey***

The refusal by the present Turkish Government to acknowledge the genocide against the Armenian people committed by the Young Turk government, its reluctance to apply the principles of international law to its differences of opinion with Greece, the maintenance of Turkish occupation forces in Cyprus and the denial of existence of the Kurdish question, together with the lack of true parliamentary democracy and the failure to respect individual and collective freedoms, in particular freedom of religion, in that country are insurmountable obstacles to consideration of the possibility of Turkey's accession to the Community.

*(This paragraph is a package paragraph. The European Parliament filled whatever it founded about Turkey into this package. Moreover, it reflects the negative attitude towards Turkish application for membership to the European Communities in April 1987. The interesting thing is that the European Parliament mentions 'insurmountable obstacles'.)*

Conscious of those past misfortunes, [European Parliament] supports its desire for the development of a specific identity, the securing of its minority rights and the unrestricted exercise of its people's human and civil rights as defined in the European Convention of Human Rights and its five protocols.

*(This is also a package paragraph in which 'civilizing' mission of Europe is reflected.)*

### ***The Rights of the Non-Muslim Minorities in Turkey and Their Cultural Heritage***

[European Parliament] calls on Turkey in this connection to abide faithfully by the provisions for the protection of the non-Muslim minorities as stipulated

in Articles 37 to 45 of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne which, moreover, was signed by most Member States of the Community.

*(Whenever a report, a draft or a question regarding Turkey came to the agenda of the European Parliament, anti-Turkish Greek parliamentarians perceived this as an opportunity to denigrate Turkey. This paragraph was put into the text as a result of the Greek demands.)*

[European Parliament] calls for fair treatment of the Armenian minority in Turkey as regards their identity, language, religion, culture and school system, and makes an emphatic plea for improvements in the care of monuments and for the maintenance and conservation of the Armenian religious architectural heritage in Turkey and invites the Community to examine how it could make an appropriate contribution.

[European Parliament] considers that the protection of monuments and the maintenance and conservation of the Armenian religious architectural heritage in Turkey must be regarded as part of a wider policy designed to preserve the cultural heritage of all civilizations which have developed over the centuries on present-day Turkish territory and, in particular, that of the Christian minorities that formed part of the Ottoman Empire.

[European Parliament] calls therefore on the Community to extend the Association Agreement with Turkey to the cultural field so that the remains of Christian or other civilizations such as the ancient classical, Hittite, Ottoman, etc., in that country are preserved and made generally accessible.

*(These three paragraphs are taken from different parts of the resolution. In preparing the first paragraph, the views of the Armenian community in Turkey was not addressed. This paragraph only reflects the demands of the Armenian Diaspora. In this respect, the advices of the representatives of Armenian community in Turkey were disregarded both by the reporter and the European Parliament. Greek parliamentarians who were discontent of the reference to the Armenian cultural heritage in Turkey, and other parliamentarians who supported them, tried to transform the question into a question of Christian heritage by adding a reference to the whole Christian heritage.)*

### ***Armenians in Iran and Soviet Union***

[European Parliament] condemns the violations of individual freedoms com-

mitted in the Soviet Union against the Armenian population.

[European Parliament] expresses its concern at the difficulties currently being experienced by the Armenian community in Iran with respect to the Armenian language and their own education in accordance with the rules of their own religion.

*(These paragraphs were included by the demand of the Armenian Diaspora)*

### ***Final Provisions***

[European Parliament] instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the European Council, the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation, the EEC/Turkey Association Council and the Turkish, Iranian and Soviet Governments and the UN Secretary General.

*(European Communities did not take any action in line with this paragraph. The issue was brought to the agenda of the European Parliament several times. Political authorities of the Republic of Armenia think that Turkey could not be a full member of the European Union without recognizing the Armenian genocide. It is argued that some French Parliamentarians and Patrick Deveciyan, a French Minister, assured them about that. Within this context French and German newspapers wrote that during the meeting of French Interior Minister, Nicholas Sarkozy, and the leader of German CDU party, Angela Merkel, on the prevention of Turkish full membership, Armenian question came to the agenda and German recognition of the Armenian genocide was in line with this policy.)*

### ***Conclusion***

In the resolution adopted on September 2005, European Parliament stated that recognition of 1915 events as genocide is a precondition for Turkish full membership to the European Union. Although it is argued that the resolutions of the European Parliament are not binding, in the final stage, European Parliament will approve Turkish membership and before that it will bring these resolutions to the agenda. In order to reduce tension, Turkey should seek an immediate dialogue with the European Parliament. In addition to our discourse which stipulates that the archives should be opened, the Armenian question should be left to the historians and a joint commission should be established; Turkey should explain why 1915 events can not legally be accepted as genocide.

The attitude of the Turkish governments and the majority of the Turkish people are still perceived by the Europeans as a 'denial'. However, the legal, psychological and historical reasons of this attitude can not be explained well. On the other hand, Turkish media argued that the resolution adopted by the German Parliament recognized Armenian genocide; while German Parliament especially avoided using the term 'recognition of genocide'. Although not approving this resolution, I think that this was a significant detail, because if the claim of genocide could be drawn out of the equation, it would be possible that these events would be examined more objectively by those who had developed an opinion on this matter. At least, they could accept that other interpretations are possible.

With this paragraph, the concept of genocide, which is a legal concept, is excluded from the legal framework and put into a historical and political structure.

The institution that Turkey could initiate a dialogue with the European Parliament and other parliaments is the Turkish Grand National Assembly and its EP-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Commission. Within this framework following themes should be stressed:

- The concept of genocide is a legal concept,
- It is impossible to try the suspects of these events, all of whom are not alive, without their presence and to declare that they committed the crime of genocide,
- The elements of the crime of genocide and the authority to decide on this matter is defined in the 1948 Convention
- This Convention should be examined carefully
- Those parliaments, which had acted contrary to the Convention, might be complained to the International Court of Justice.
- 1915 events were a tragedy both for Armenians and the Muslim population, and this reality is undeniable
- Necessary precautions should be taken to prevent similar events in the future and education should be given primacy
- However, regarding a subject of international and internal criminal issue, a government can not be forced to adopt a political decision. This is contrary to the basic premises of the international law such as equity.
- Even if such a decision is adopted, it can not be accepted by the Turkish nation

- Regarding ethical and moral responsibility, every individual or group can form an opinion based on historical data, and they should be free to express this opinion.
- One can not expect to erase the memory of a group of people
- However, historical data should not be gathered selectively.
- It is impossible to force others to accept the established dogmas and insistence on that matter will create new conflicts.

# TURKISH- ARMENIAN ISSUE: VICTIMIZATION AND LARGE-GROUP IDENTITY

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## **Abstract:**

*Psychology and psychoanalysis have gradually become involved in the politics, international relations and interpretations of macro events during the last two decades. Their contribution to understanding the large groups' conflicts has been recognized as useful tool to handle the long term conflicts between two nations. This article examines the psychological dynamics operating within the Turkish- Armenian issue. It was planned to accomplish this aim by two separate papers, former of which focuses on the psychological mechanisms determining the Armenian side's attitudes and political actions. Effects of victimization psychology and large group identity are emphasized as important factors for the skeleton of Armenians' group behavior. It is concluded that there are psychological processes influencing what seems to be the reality in politics, for this reason politics should include more non-traditional methods of conflict resolution.*

**Keywords:** *Psychoanalysis, political psychology, large group identity, victimization, Turkish-Armenian relations*

## **Öz:**

*Özellikle son yirmi otuz yıl içinde, uluslararası ilişkiler ve siyaset biliminde odak, insan değişkenine, etkileşimin önemine ve karşılıklılığa doğru kaymıştır. Buna paralel olarak psikoloji ve psikanaliz içinde de odak, bireyden toplumsala ve grup yaşantılarına doğru genişlemiştir. Psikoloji ve psikanalizin büyük gruplar arasındaki uzun süreli çatışmaları anlama ve onlara müdahale etmede etkili araçlar olduğu düşüncesi yaygınlık kazanmış ve çatışma çözümünü uygulamalarında daha çok yer almaya başlamışlardır. Bu çalışma, Türk- Ermeni meselesinde işleyen psikolojik dinamikleri ele almaktadır. Mağduriyet psikolojisi ve büyük grup kimliği, Ermeni grup davranışının iskeletini oluşturan mekanizmalar olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Sonuç olarak, reel politikte etkiyen pek çok meselenin içinde psikolojik dinamiklerin alttan alta işleyen süreçler olduğu ve gerçekliği yanıltma riski taşıdıkları vurgulanmaktadır.*

*Ayrıca Türk-Ermeni meselesinin çözümünde, psikoloji ve psikanalizin olanaklarından ve geleneksel olmayan yöntemlerden yararlanılabileceği dile getirilmektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Psikanaliz, siyaset psikolojisi, büyük grup kimliği, mağduriyet, Türk-Ermeni ilişkileri*

## INTRODUCTION

There are some important underlying and occult phenomena, which are affecting and operating in the events, the perceptions, the behaviors, the emotions, the relationships, the politics and even the world, but cannot be named or comprehended easily. Yet, some questions can not be answered without understanding these phenomena. For example, why the members of the some societies identify and describe themselves through their large-group identity, such as being a member of a community, a group or a nation, whereas some communities do not show this characteristic? Why some groups can easily come together and become a united whole around an ideology, a leader or a phenomenon, but others show the same reflex only in the war or other threat situations? How the social or political events, which are occurred ages and generations ago, can influence and arouse the emotions of members as vivid as the event has been happen to themselves, whereas the same individuals show insensitivity toward the pains of other human beings from the other groups and be cruel toward them? How some groups could accept and conform to the constructed and given realities and belief systems, which might be distorting the reality as well, without any questioning? Why a between-group conflict cannot be easily resolved and maintains its strength throughout years despite huge amount of political, economic, military or judicial precautions and protections? Even it has been resolved, how come it reappears lively again as if it was there all the time without any indication?

These kinds of questions have become important research areas for social sciences. International relations, politics and sociology tried to examine similar questions by means of the macro theories or models. Yet there has been no integrated theory that involves all the answers of these questions come out from these social sciences. However, the world has increasingly become a conflict laden place and these conflicts can not be worked out without considering the answers of these questions. Political psychology which is a newly emerging and developing discipline and some other parts of psychology have become increasingly more involving to these research questions. This article aimed to understand the Turk-

ish-Armenian issue, which is a crucial matter in dispute in Turkey, by means of examining the psychological dynamics. It was proposed that this point of view provides a beneficial perspective, which can contribute to the policies or the strategies for both Turkish and Armenian sides and international powers.

## CONTRIBUTION OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS

Most of the social sciences, especially politics, sociology, history and anthropology, have been worked on different aspects of conflicts, battles or wars. They have studied on inter-group conflicts and their consecutive results such as immigrations, poverty, and formation of sub-cultural structures within the society... etc.

Politics and international relations have failed in the predictions and the provisions for the future, particularly in the issues of the collapse of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), racism and resulting Holocaust phenomena, and the establishment of international, supranational political unions like European Union during the last 50-60 years<sup>1</sup>. Last years' publications of international relations suggested that realist approach, which emphasize the macro- level analysis in international relations and state is the primary and rational actor in the international relations, became to loose its power. These publications proposed a new interdisciplinary approach that in both macro and micro level analyses are integrated to each other and the macro events are seen as they are multidimensional and reciprocal rather than understood by linear deterministic processes<sup>2</sup>. While there was an evolution from linear, cause-effect type of understanding of international relations to reciprocal, mutual, multi dimensional and multidisciplinary comprehension of macro events in international relations, there emerged a similar change in psychology and psychoanalysis, which are more micro level disciplines examining the intra-psychic processes. In the last 30 years, researches on the different aspects of ethnic groups, in-group and out-group relations, group-leader relations... etc. has become accumulated in psychology. Also the build up knowledge on group relations have begun to be used in the conflict resolution practices. For example, some social psychology theories brought new premises that emphasize the mutuality principle and human factor in international rela-

1 F. Sevinç Göral, "Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkilerde Siyaset Psikolojisi", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol 5, Iss. 59, March 2005, ss.77-82.

2 Valarie M. Hudson and Christopher S. Vore, "Dış Politika Analizinin Dünü, Bugünü ve Yarını", Erol Göka and Işık Kuşçu (in ed.), *Uluslararası İlişkilerin Psikolojisi*, ASAM Yayınları, Ankara, 2002.



tions against the propositions of realists. According to these theories, international conflicts come out from the psychosocial processes of the collective needs and the fears of the groups, rather than from the rational decision making processes of the macro level actors through their objective evaluations. International conflict is a phenomenon operating via social processes rather than a result of a disagreement between two or more states. In other words, international conflict does not arise from the damage resulting from administration of the physical or political force onto other side; rather it comes from a multilayered process, which is based on repetitive reciprocal interactions between two sides. In addition, international conflicts should not be formulated as the sequence of actions in which both actors consecutively respond to each other in a cause-effect relationship. Besides this interactive nature, they have usually self-induced characteristics and provoked by in-group processes as well<sup>3</sup>.

Consequently, it could be proposed that psychology and psychoanalysis can be beneficial and be used for the understanding of the international conflicts, that international conflicts have the impression that are operating in the international level of action at first<sup>4</sup>. By considering the risk of trapping into reductionism and “psychologism”, psychological and psychoanalytical examination of political events and international conflicts could have a considerable contribution to the understanding of international and inter-group conflicts.

### EFFECT OF VICTIMIZATION IN THE TURKISH-ARMENIAN ISSUE

Some long term problems of traumatized individuals are based on and originated from their cognitions about themselves, other people and the world. These individuals usually see themselves as a weak person and a victim who is mistreated. They perceive the others and the outer world as powerful, oppressive, cruel and enemy. These perceptions, beliefs and cognitions result in a change in the construction of self identity which has weaker connection with the reality. As a result of these changes in cognitive processes, the individual mostly experiences interpersonal difficulties and problems. This phenomenon is named as ‘victimization’, in that the individuals perceive the self as helpless/victim and the others as

3 Herbert Kelman and Ronald Fisher, “Conflict Analysis and Resolution”, David Sears, Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis (in ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003, pp. 316- 320.

4 Vamık D. Volkan, “Uluslararası İlişkilerde Psikanaliz ve Psikanalizde Uluslararası İlişkiler 1: Psikanaliz ve Diplomasi Arası İşbirliğinde Engeller”, (Translation: F. Sevinç Göral), *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol 6, Iss. 62, June 2005, ss. 52-57.

offender. Most of the traumatic events related to the victimization phenomena particularly involve intentional and human made events like wars, torture, terrorism related events, physical or sexual abuse.

By means of group identity theory and group psychology perspectives, victimization phenomenon can be a beneficial conceptual metaphor used in order to understand the political

events emerged in international relations. Psychology of victimization, which is an important operating mechanism within many ethnic, religion related, cultural, economic or political conflicts, has an impact on Turkish-Armenian relations

These publications proposed a new interdisciplinary approach that in both macro and micro level analyses are integrated to each other and the macro events are seen as they are multidimensional and reciprocal rather than understood by linear deterministic processes.

as a maintaining factor for the disputes and conflicts. In international relations platform, there are some situations in which one side takes the role of victim<sup>5</sup> and the relationship between two sides is begin to be perceived by others through victim-offender duality. The common examples of these situations might be that one nation state might show defensive reflexes for the separatists or there might be conflict laden relations between the marginal or the minority group and the state. In both examples, it is quite easy to see the powerless side, which is usually the marginal group or minority group, as victim, especially if the state uses coercive power for the aim of deterrence.

Many experiences of mistreatments and excessive use of power have been witnessed throughout the history. In these experiences one group uses unfair, cruel and excessive power over other group and there is a shared judgment about victimization within both supranational and international arenas. Dropping the atomic bombs upon Japan by United States of America, biased political sanctions and unequal power uses during the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and the Caucasus, the genocide of Muslims in Kosovo, and the genocide of Jews in Europe by Nazis could be the examples of these experiences. The common reality shared by these experiences is the excessive use of power that damaged side is victimized, which is recognized in international level of judgment.

5 Nuri Bilgin, *Siyaset ve İnsan*, Bağlam Yayınları, İstanbul, 1997, pp. 92- 98.

There is also other side of the coin that victimization has the unseen side, which is the excusing phenomenon. This is operating within idealized western notions of human rights and justice as a substratum. The modern western societies generally are perceived to have a tendency of excusing the weak, damaged, suppressed part and making positive discrimination. The origin of this tendency is related to the primitive motivation for the projection of the bad parts onto other in order to be purified from the one's sins. By projecting one's bad and unwanted qualities onto the other, one can maintain the identity intact and purified. The modernization process of the West involves the projection of the aggressive parts onto "others", who is usually the "barbarian" Orient.

Assoc. Prof. Erol Göka emphasized the psychological factors in the Armenian question and mentioned about the psychological climate for genocide in the groups and nations. He states that "the Holocaust practice in Europe toward Jews by Germans forms the main frame of this psychological atmosphere. Within the frame of the Holocaust, a new ideological and psychological atmosphere and what sociologists called "human rights age" that almost giving high premium for victim and reinforcing the role of victim emerged after the Second World War"<sup>6</sup>. He suggested that this condition of increasingly accepted state of being the victim among the Western societies is being abused by Armenians. They try to take advantage by giving extra weight to their originally rightful pains. Göka emphasized the excessive excusing psychology of Western civilization, which is responsible for the two world wars, as the main underlying mechanism of this victimization psychology. He evaluated that the thesis of Armenian Diaspora, which states that "Hitler learned genocide from Turks", is actually a mechanism of purification in the Western/Christian consciousness<sup>7</sup>. It is noticeable that Judaism has a strengthening and widening structure, which is nourished and reinforced by victimization, in the world. It was also suggested that the Holocaust provided the Jews to gain positive discrimination form Western societies. The Judaism gets stronger by benefiting this situation.

The same relationship between the Holocaust and the construction of Jewish identity has been attempted to be used in the construction of Armenian identity<sup>8</sup>.

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6 Erol Göka, "Ermeni Sorunu'nun (Gözden Kaçan) Psikolojik Boyutu", *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Cilt 1, (March, 2001), p. 131

7 Erol Göka, "Ermeni Diasporasının Psikolojisi", *Ermeni Araştırmaları 1. Türkiye Kongresi Bildirileri*, Vol. 3, ASAM Yayınları, Ankara, 20-21 Nisan 2002, p. 43.

8 İbrahim Kaya, "The Holocaust and Armenian Case: Highlighting the Main Differences", *Armenian Studies, A Quarterly Journal of History, Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 4, pp. 274- 295.

After the signing of Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in United Nations in 9<sup>th</sup> October 1948, Armenians began to depict insistently that the Armenian relocation in 1915 was also genocide. At the same period, Armenian Diaspora living in the western countries, like USA, England, France, Germany, have begun to realize that the important parts of Armenian identity, such as language, life style, cultural characteristics, folklore, and community traits, begin to dissolve within the host land culture, thus they become to be assimilated. The Armenian Church, Hinchak and Tashnak parties and other Armenian aid associations, which were experiencing survival anxieties due to the dissolution of Armenian identity, used the assertion of this genocide thesis as a shelter to resist for annihilation. This thesis provided them a balanced formula for keeping the group identity alive without preventing them from joining with the host land. Armenian Diaspora members usually do not have an idea of returning to their homeland due to Republic of Armenia's economical and political difficulties and shortages in natural resources, in socio-cultural structure and in social life aspects. Thus the mental representation of genocide operates as a mental homeland, which emotionally supplies the construction of a shared Armenian identity and plays a role in the transmission of this identity to the next generations<sup>9</sup>.

Psychology of victimization, an important element of Armenian identity, has roots in the Armenian mythology. Armenians believe that they come from Noah's lineage and become to be a nation. According to their belief, the tribe, who can survive from the great Noah Flood by means of climbing to the Mountain of Ararat, was their ancestors. This is why they claim for the Ararat, as if it belongs to Armenians as a sacred land. This assertion is reinforced by Armenian Church. Based on this thesis, Armenians describe themselves as "chosen nation" due to this collective belief. Mental representations of their identity consist of this core belief that their nation has been tested by various tests throughout history and they have overcome all difficulties and could have survived. Now it could be understandable why the Armenian Church tries to make a connection between the Noah Flood and the Relocation of Armenians in 1915. There is an intention of strengthening the image of "victim nation" who has survived despite great catastrophic events<sup>10</sup>. This analogy which is consciously and intentionally emphasized

9 Haluk Özdemir, "Diaspora Ararat'ı Ararken: Ermeni Kimliği ve Soykırım İddiaları", *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Vol. 4, Iss. 14- 15, pp. 75- 97; Laçiner, "Ermeni...", pp. 13- 25; Erol Göka, "Ermeni Diasporasının ...", pp. 39- 46; Erol Göka, "Ermeni Sorununun...", pp. 128- 136; Ömer E. Lütem, *Ermeni Sorunu*, Seminar presented in CESS, 21 Temmuz 2005.

10 Sedat Laçiner, "Ermeni Sorunu'nun Temel Unsurları Olarak Ermeni Kimlik Bunalımı ve Güç Politikaları", *Ermeni Araştırmaları 1. Türkiye Kongresi Bildirileri*, Vol. 3, ASAM Yayınları, Ankara, 20-21 April 2002, p.20.

by Armenian Church lead to the perception that the Relocation has had the intention to extinct their race, like the great flood which removed all other races

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witnessed throughout the history.

from earth's surface. Thus their large group identity and mental representations related to this identity provides a psychological base for and reinforces their insistence of genocide thesis.

An important component and the axis of the group existence of Armenian identity is the shared set of beliefs that are based on being a victimized group. The great traumatic events that they are believed to have been experiencing since the formation of their community differentiates Armenians from other nations or groups. They are the nation who has been tested throughout the history and resuscitated again right on the time when they have been ceased to exist. In addition to that they had been the victimized side all the time in history. All these elements of images and belief codes are the integral part of Armenian identity. Besides, the Armenian Diaspora and the governors try to hold these images alive and perceive them to be an opportunity for benefiting in international relations. Geopolitical, demographic, economic, political and military statuses of the Republic of Armenia are also reinforcing this victimization perception. Republic of Armenia is a landlocked state which is deprived of rich natural resources. It also surrounded by neighbors with whom they have distant relations that could create security problems and threat perception. In the west, there is Turkey with larger amount of population, richer natural resources and stronger economy. In the east, there is Azerbaijan, which has a sea coast and relatively rich resources, but with whom there is increased tension due to the war about Nagorno Karabagh. In the north, there is Georgia with whom there are no good and stable relations except for their narrow economic relation and it separates Armenia from Russia, which is historically and culturally closer to Armenia and supports it in economic and political areas. In the south, there is north border of Iran, where the most of the population is consisted of Azerbaijanis. Consequently, four sides of it are surrounded by neighbors with insecure relations that create a disadvantageous position which promotes both victimization and excusing psychology. Being surrounded by these neighbors, which share the same kinship and bloodlines that Armenia have been involved in the ethnic enmity toward them in the past, intensify the perception of misery and victimization psychology in Armenian

group behavior. They also reinforce the psychology of excusing and attitudes of premium giving to the victimization in the west. Especially its relationship with Russia, which can be defined by an analogy of clinging and dependent relationship between father and son, is legitimized by this state of being wrapped up. It is seen that religious and historical bonds between two states result in Russia to give privileged position to Armenia among other states which have took their independence by separating from USSR in the Caucasus. From this base, Russia uses its power over Armenia in order to consolidate its operative effect in economic, political and military areas in the Caucasus<sup>11</sup>.

In summary, the “identity” stands out as an important factor in the problem between Armenia and Turkey. The psychology of victimization, which has been constituted the identity of the “victim” or identity of suppressed nation and created the perception of the group in need of protection, influences the international relations regarding the Turkish- Armenian issue. The group reflexes operating in Armenian identity base on the perennial enmity of Turks. Turks and Turkey constitute the essential “other” for Armenian side to project their aggressive parts and maintain the identity of wretchedness. Armenia seeks legitimization for this phenomenon in juridical and political areas of international relations.

### **ROLE OF LARGE-GROUP IDENTITY IN TURKISH- ARMENIAN ISSUE**

Large group identity is constructed by the mental codes, which are acquired through internalization mechanism within the development and socialization processes of an individual by the members of the group. They are the mental representations help to make adjustments in the relationships with the social world. Large group identity is intermixed with the individual’s personal identity. Because this large group identity is “ego syntonic”, which means that the beliefs, thoughts, emotions, behaviors and attitudes pertaining to large group identity are compatible with the person’s own mental world, the individual does not aware of its existence unless there is an evident threat to this identity. Yet, it underlies and determines the mental activities, attitudes and behaviors of an individual as much as the personal identity actually. In his tent model<sup>12</sup>, Vamik D. Volkan defined large group identity with an image of a tent canvas covering different individuals of the same group, who might not see and meet with other members any time. This canvas covers on top of the personal clothes of the individual, which represents the

11 Sedat Laçiner, *Türk Ermeni İlişkileri*, Kaknüs Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004, pp. 237- 246.

12 Vamik D. Volkan, *Kanbağı Etnik Gururdan Etnik Tëröre*, Bağlam Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p. 40.

personal identity. It brings people together by creating the we-ness in the group and draws the borders of the group by defining the in-group and out-group. This border protects group from outer dangers. Group leader functions the pole of the tent, which keeps the tent upright position and determines its direction. When the canvas or the pole of the tent is threatened, the shared we-ness within the group increases, which will eventually create the awareness of being a member of that large-group. Large group identity becomes to be even more important than the personal identity in the threatening dangerous situations.

The characteristics of the threatening event for the large group are important determinants of how the group will react to this event. The danger can be a real danger that could threaten the group existence. Or the event can be just 'perceived' to be threatening to the group, yet it may not be dangerous in reality. The important thing here is the sharing of this perception by the group members, as the amplifier of we-ness.

1915 Armenian Relocation has been an important traumatic event especially for the innocent Armenians who have not been involved in the rebellion actions. Because, besides these people faced with the risk of being killed due to war context, they fought with poverty, starvation, epidemic diseases caused by the immigration as well. Survivors have experienced traumatic events or witnessed such events throughout the way to their new place into be exiled. As a matter of fact, this was not difficult to expect that this relocation, all by itself, was a great traumatic event that will strengthen and magnify the large group identity of Armenians.

Trauma has great impact in the human mind and psychology. The perception of the event, beside its characteristics in reality, determines its degree of influence. In order for the human mind to resolve the effects of trauma, it needs processing the disturbing information like a digest process of the food that is required for the organism to absorb it. The existing mental structures are broken down into pieces by the trauma. The reconstruction of these shaken belief system and schemas of the individual is the main object to be achieved. The individual needs to live and complete his or her grief by means of accepting his or her loss and grief in order achieve a new set of beliefs and reconstructed identity. In order complete the grief process, the lost object should be retained in the past as memories, should not carried into the present issues.

Societal traumas also result in similar consequences for the large group identity, like the effects of loss and trauma to the personal identity. If the members of

the group perceive themselves as weak, helpless, damaged and victim, the group carries the past traumatic event into the present as a “chosen trauma”. This event is transmitted throughout the generations and tried to keep alive<sup>13</sup>. “Transgenerational transmission is when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child’s personality. A child then becomes a reservoir for the unwanted, troublesome parts of an older generation. Because the elders have influence on a child, the child absorbs their wishes and expectations and is driven to act on them. It becomes the child’s task to mourn, to reverse the humiliation and feelings of helplessness pertaining to the trauma of his forebears”<sup>14</sup>. The transmission of the trauma-related affective and cognitive material to the child does not have to be occurred intentionally and verbally. The mental images are delivered through non- verbal communication or while transmitting family history by stories, fairy tales, songs... etc. unconsciously. The messages such as “you mourn for my pain instead of me”, “I was humiliated, you reversed this for me”, “be assertive and protect yourself and your rights instead of me”, “idealize our victimization”, “take revenge of violence against me”, “repair our trauma”<sup>15</sup> are given to the next generations.

The same relationship between the Holocaust and the construction of Jewish identity has been attempted to be used in the construction of Armenian identity.

The group leader can exacerbate and inflame the chosen trauma during the generational transmission. The easiest way to mobilize and direct a group in a desired way is to create a perception that there is threat outside and to enhance we-ness in the group. The group identity, which has been sleeping for a while, can be mobilized and enlivened by means of making the group to remember the past trauma or loss again. The trauma or loss, for which the grief process could not have completed by the group in the past, can be very potent tool to manage the group. Even if there is a great time lag between the traumatic event and the present, the trauma can be re-experienced by the group as vivid as if it is happened to them. “Time collapse” occurs that the past collapses onto the present and affective responses given by the group nearly as powerful as the time that traumatic event

13 Vamik D. Volkan, *Politik Psikoloji*, Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, Ankara, 1993, p. 70.

14 Vamik D. Volkan, *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*, Westview Press, Colorado, 1997, p. 43.

15 Vamik D. Volkan, “Psychoanalysis and History”, *Psychoanalytic View 2:History of the Person, History of the World Symposia*, 24- 26 April 2004, İstanbul.



has been experienced<sup>16</sup>. Especially in the times of stress, the group regresses to a lower level of functioning that the emotional and other mental processes shared by the group becomes more primitive thus more easy to control by leaders or other political actors. These vigorous emotions experienced within the group are used with the intention of social mobilization.

Psychology of victimization, an important element of Armenian identity, has roots in the Armenian mythology.

From this point of view, 1915 Armenian Relocation is functioning as “chosen trauma” for the Armenians. It is an important source of we-ness and group identity especially for the Armenian Diasporas. This historical event occupies great place in the Armenian policies. Great part of Armenian Diaspora’s activities is constituted by the struggle for the recognition of this event as “Armenian genocide”. These can show that although the event has been occurred at least four generations ago, the Relocation has great impact on Armenians today and influences the group emotionally. Although third and fourth generations have not experienced the relocation, they show greater enmity toward Turkish people than the first generation Armenians. Also they are more radical about and insist more harshly on the “Armenian genocide” than the preceding generations. These observations are enough to state that there is psychological processes operating behind the reality in Turkish- Armenian issue. Armenian policies try to reinforce the transgenerational transmission and time collapse for the 1915 Relocation by means of the disinformation procedures, which can take place through media and national education devices in order to make the society homogeneous enough to control the group in a desired direction. These kinds of psychological processes and mechanisms can be used as a manipulation device in the international relations by macro actors as well. For example, Armenian side’s thesis and demands from Turkey have been stated by different authorities who are against the Turkey’s membership to the European Union. The demands for the acceptance of “Armenian genocide” have been put in front of Turkish side as an obstacle for starting

16 Vamik Volkan gave the example of time collapse that Milosevic and his followers showed around the bones of Lazar, who is a Serbian prince, has been killed in Kosovo War in 1389 by the Ottomans. Milosevic have dug and get the bones of Lazar out of the grave in the 600th anniversary of this war. The bones have been carried from village to village and city to city throughout the country. This was the beginning of the process causing the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia Herzegovina. For more detailed examination, look at Volkan, Kanbağcı..., pp. 65-100. In addition, it is known that monuments, literature, film and cinema industry can be used to maintain feelings of we-ness and group identity alive and powerful for certain purposes by using chosen traumas.

of the negotiations. This historical issue is tried to be used as a political tool in international relations.

There is a research, which has results supporting the abovementioned opinions, has been conducted by Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) in Turkey and Armenia<sup>17</sup>. Some examples of the results can be revealed that Armenians stated their information resources about Turks and Turkey are press/ media, history books, and old generations/family seniors in sequence<sup>18</sup>. The rate of giving erroneous answers for the Turkey's characteristics like religious structure or political system has been found to be increasing by increasing the education level of the Armenians<sup>19</sup>. These results indicated that government ideology and perspective may distort the information given to the Armenians about Turkey by disinformation mechanisms.

The careful examination of research results revealed that Armenians were more prejudiced in their responses than the Turks. For example, while many Turks have answered the questions measuring their level of knowledge about Armenians by the response of "I don't know" generally, Armenians generally and consistently have given negative responses for the same questions about Turks<sup>20</sup>. This shows that Turkish side was more neutral toward Armenians, whereas Armenians were more biased in their responses; hence Armenian side uses more projective mechanisms than Turkish side<sup>21</sup>. Similarly, for the questions measuring the attitudes of two sides about each other, while variety of the answers of Turkish side is broad, Armenians gave stereotypically negative answers, thus variety of their responses is small and restricted negatively. This indicated that Armenians are more homogeneous group than Turks in terms of their attitudes about them. When they were asked to report their expectations about other side's attitudes

17 Frehat Kentel ve Gevorg Poghosyan, *Ermenistan ve Türkiye Vatandaşları Karşılıklı Algılama Projesi*, Erivan, İstanbul, 2005, TESEVweb site, [http://www.tesev.org.tr/etkinlik/Turk\\_ermen\\_i\\_rapor.pdf](http://www.tesev.org.tr/etkinlik/Turk_ermen_i_rapor.pdf)

18 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* p. 18.

19 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* pp. 11-12.

20 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* pp. 16-18.

21 Projection: It is one of the defense mechanisms that human beings use during the early development. The infant projects unwanted negative mental representations, which are not integrated into a whole object yet, to outside in order to get rid of the destructiveness of his/ her aggressive impulses and to survive. He/she experiences them as they come from outside. Human projects its own destructiveness and badness to outside and creates an illusive perception that "the bad and evil is he / she / it, not me". The projection has important functions in the construction and development of being a nation as well. The group needs to project its bad parts onto other and to create an enemy outside in order to set the feelings of we-ness, to gathering around shared and idealized issues. For more detailed information, look at, Erol Göka, F. Sevinç Göral and F. Volkan Yüksel, "Birbirimize Ne Yapıyoruz? İnsan İlişkilerini Kavramanın Bir Aracı Olarak Yansıtımlı Özdeşim", *Avrasya Dosyası*, Vol 10, No. 1, Spring 2004, pp. 279-314.

about themselves, Armenians expected that Turks have more negative attitudes about themselves than in reality, thus their expectations were negatively biased. On the contrary, to lesser extent, Turks expected that Armenians have more positive attitudes about Turks than in reality, thus their expectations were positively biased<sup>22</sup>. In the questions tried to assess the mental representations of Armenians and Turks about each other, two-thirds of the answers of Armenians consisted of negative adjectives, such as “enemy, barbarian, bloodthirsty, murderer, wild...”. Whereas one-thirds of Turks’ responses involved negative adjectives, like “egoist, self-centered, prejudiced, enemy...”. Remainder two-thirds of Turks’ responses contained definitions such as “good people, endeavoring, a friendly nation, very clever, human, Christian, Armenian...”<sup>23</sup>

According to a result revealing “transgenerational transmission”, while 18-29 age of Armenians were the group which define the Turks with the most negative terms, 30-44 age group defined the Turks with average and more positive terms<sup>24</sup>. Similarly, in the question of “would you purchase the Turkish products?”, the younger the age group, the higher the rate of response of “no”<sup>25</sup>. These results show that there is higher rate of enmity and prejudice toward Turks in the third generation than the first and second generations. Consequently, unresolved trauma and mourning of the first generation of Armenians after the 1915 Relocation is transmitted to the third generation through grandfather/ grandmother and grandchild relationships. And these can be evidence that Armenian policy, which was transformed toward policies that promote the enmity against Turks and demands of the recognition of “Armenian genocide” especially after 1950’s, uses mass communication for disinformation about Turkish side and pumping the Turkish enmity among Armenians.

## CONCLUSION

The main object of this paper, which tries to understand the psychological dynamics of Turkish-Armenian issue, is to examine the psychological dynamics operating within the policies and group identity of Armenian side rather than Turkish side. In order for a broad and comprehensive evaluation of the issue, psychological factors affecting the Turkish side should also be taken into account, because transactional, reciprocal and interactive processes take place in interna-

22 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* p. 27.

23 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* pp. 28-29

24 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* p. 29.

25 Kentel ve Poghosyan, *Ermenistan...* p. 33.

tional system, like in all other systems. Thus the analysis, which does not take two sides into account, will be incomplete to understand the whole. In addition, it would be non-sense to state that all the factors affecting the Turkish side are de facto. Some characteristics related to the group identity of Turkish side have maintaining effect for the Armenian-Turkish issue as well. These characteristics and related psychological dynamics should be explored in another paper, which will complete this review.

1915 Armenian Relocation is functioning as “chosen trauma” for the Armenians. It is an important source of we-ness and group identity especially for the Armenian Diasporas.

The main argument in this paper is that the reality in international relations can be biased by many psychological mechanisms. There are some ancient psychological mechanisms and dynamics behind the demands of “Armenian genocide” recognition, not the reality.

These psychological mechanisms operating behind the conflictive structure of Turkish- Armenian relations provide important tools for archeological digging up for the etiology of the problem. Full comprehension of this problem, which is seen as affecting the international relations as well, can be possible only by means of taking human factor into account. Rather than reality, humans’, groups’, or nations’ “perceived” reality make strong influence on the policies. In international system, where macro actors’ manipulations have important effects basically, the human factor may cause unexpected effects occasionally, and sometimes these psychological backgrounds and resources can be used and controlled by the macro actors in direction with their benefits. The victimization psychology and group identity, which have become fully developed fifty years ago, operating in the Armenian group psychology, function as a manipulation tool in the political maneuvers of these international actors intentionally or unconsciously.

Turkey needs to develop the more efficient way and more skillful ability to deal with Armenian side’s projections of threat and enmity in order to get a better position in the political circumstances related to the Turkish- Armenian issue. This cannot be achieved through reactive and polarizing policies. On the other hand, it cannot be realized by excusing and accepting approaches as well. Understanding of this issue should get rid off from the duality of either accepting or rejecting the “Armenian genocide” hypothesis. The new policy style should be re-framed around the awareness that there are important psychological mechanisms

operating within the Turkish-Armenian issue and they have potential to distort the reality. The other part of this new policy should contain various methods of influencing the actors and making them to accept this point of view inside and outside of Turkey.

# THE IMPACT OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH CONFLICT ON NAKHICHEVAN AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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## **Abstract:**

*The Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, which is located outside the borders of the mainland Azerbaijan is an exclave surrounded by Turkey, Iran and Armenia. It has been subjected to a blockade of electricity, gas and transport by Armenia since the early 1990's. The economy and the people of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan have suffered from this isolation (which was) caused by this conflict with Armenia. The lack of gas, electricity and trade produced economical and social difficulties in Nakhichevan. There have been several attempts and threats to invade the exclave. Indeed, Nakhichevan did not face a large-scale invasion by the Armenians except for the village of Karki. Furthermore, there are relatively small numbers of refugees and internally displaced people (IDP) in Nakhichevan. Due to the blockade the situation of the exclave is significantly worse than the west and south western region of mainland Azerbaijan that were most greatly affected by Armenian aggression. In fact, statistics show that refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan in many cases have better living conditions than Nakhichevanis.*

**Key Words:** *Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Karabagh Question.*

## **Öz:**

*Azerbaycan sınırlarının dışında bulunan Nahçıvan Muhtar Cumhuriyeti Türkiye, İran ve Ermenistan toprakları ile çevrelenmiştir. Nahçıvan'a 1990'ların başından beri Ermenistan tarafından elektrik gaz ve ulaşım ambargosu uygulanmaktadır. Ermenistan ile yaşanan çatışmalar Nahçıvan Muhtar Cumhuriyeti'nin ekonomisini ve halkını olumsuz olarak etkilemektedir. Gaz, elektrik ve ticarete getirilen bu kısıtlamalar Nahçıvan'da ekonomik ve sosyal sıkıntıların doğmasına yol açmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra işgal veya müdahale tehdidi de sürmektedir. Karki köyü dışında Nahçıvan Ermenistan tarafından büyük çaplı bir işgale maruz kalmamıştır, ayrıca Nahçıvan'da mülteci veya iç göçmen statüsünde göreceli olarak az sayıda insan yaşamaktadır. Ancak yine de ambargo nedeniyle durum kötüye gitmektedir ve Azerbaycan'ın batı ve güney-batı sınırları Ermeni saldırılarından etkilenmektedir.*

*Hatta, istatistikler göstermektedir ki, Azerbaycan'da yaşayan mülteci ve iç göçmenlerin durumu Nahçıvan'da yaşayanlara göre daha iyidir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Nahçıvan Muhtar Cumhuriyeti, Azerbaycan, Ermenistan, Karabağ Sorunu*

## INTRODUCTION

**N**akhichevan, which is an exclave of Azerbaijan, has a total area of 5.5 thousand km<sup>2</sup>, comprising 6.3% of Azerbaijan. Nakhichevan includes the administrative districts of Babek, Julfa, Ordubad, Sadarak, Shahbuz, Sharur and Nakhichevan city. The official population of the Autonomous Republic is 364,500 which compromises 4.5% of Azerbaijan's population<sup>1</sup>.

Between 1988 and 1994, the Armenians forcibly obtained control over the district of Mountainous Karabagh and seven bordering regions, amounting to approximately 20% of Azerbaijan's territory, and they attacked the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan. But all attempts to invade this region between 1988 and 1994 failed. Almost 1 million Azerbaijanis have been driven out of their native lands as a result of this conflict.

The Armenians tried to convince the world public opinion that the war over the Mountainous Karabagh was waged between the government of Azerbaijan and the Armenians of the Mountainous Karabagh, who formed a small republic independent from Azerbaijan at the end of the war. Although Armenia provided assistance to the Karabagh Armenians and although she was actively involved in the conflict, the Armenians repeatedly tried to present the events as if Armenia was not involved in the conflict in Mountainous Karabagh. As a proof of this denial, recently the Chairman of Christian Democratic Union, Khosrov Harutyunyan, recently proclaimed the following: "we must do everything possible so that the conflict is viewed as the Azerbaijani-Karabaghi one". Despite all these efforts, attacks and cruel acts of violence against Azerbaijanis by Armenian forces and Armenian threats and attacks against Nakhichevan clearly reveal that the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is not limited to Karabagh. Armenian

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<sup>1</sup> The information in this paragraph cited in: United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), State Program on Social-Economic Development of Regions of Azerbaijan Republic for the Years 2004-2008 (Baku; 2004), p.24-25. ([http://unpan1.un.org/intrados/groups/public/documents/UNTC/UNPAN016\\_803.pdf](http://unpan1.un.org/intrados/groups/public/documents/UNTC/UNPAN016_803.pdf))

aggression is part of a grand design to create a 'Greater Armenia' out of Azerbaijani lands. Numerous attempts to invade the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic (AR) have been carried out by Armenian forces from the Republic of Armenia and not by Armenians living in Karabagh. Furthermore on numerous occasions Armenian officials claimed Nakhichevan was a part of Armenia. Furthermore, these events reveal that Armenia has more ambitions and ideas than that of merely helping the Mountainous Karabagh Armenians. The Armenian blockade of Nakhichevan also provides proof that the Armenians played a greater role in the conflict than that of merely providing assistance to the Karabagh Armenians<sup>2</sup>.

The Armenians tried to convince the world public opinion that the war over the Mountainous Karabagh was waged between the government of Azerbaijan and the Armenians of the Mountainous Karabagh.

There are a lot of papers evaluating the cost or damage of the blockade of Armenia. However there are almost no papers analyzing the damage or cost of the blockade of Nakhichevan by Armenia. The aim of this paper is to investigate the cost of Armenian aggression and the blockade for Nakhichevan. It mainly examines the effects of the Armenian blockade on the economy and the people of Nakhichevan. In conducting this study reports of international organizations, international news agencies and to a smaller extent Azerbaijani sources were used. Accordingly, the reports of the World Bank, the United Nations, UNICEF, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and The State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan (SSC) were utilized to analyze the impacts of Armenian aggression and the blockade on Nakhichevan's social and economic life. This paper reveals the impact of the conflict, especially the blockade, by comparing Nakhichevan with other districts of Azerbaijan and comparing the living conditions of Nakhichevanis with the people living in other districts of Azerbaijan especially with refugees and IDPs, namely, the main victims of conflict.

## **I. A PARTIAL VIEW OF THE COST OF ATTEMPTS TO INVADE NAKHICHEVAN**

Armenians view Nakhichevan as their historical land and the railroad connection between Iran and Armenia passes through Nakhichevan. Thus, between

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<sup>2</sup> A1+ (26.11.2004) and ANN/Groong (27.11.2004).



1988 and 1994, there have been numerous attempts to invade the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic (AR) along the territory close to the Turkish border. Most of the serious attacks happened to the Sadarak region of Nakhichevan which has vital and strategic ties with Turkey. In addition to human loss, these attacks caused a significant financial damage to the economy of the Autonomous Republic.

UNICEF's survey of Azerbaijan is important with respect to depicting the damage that the war inflicted upon of the war the Azerbaijanis. This survey reveals that the percentage of orphaned Azerbaijani children born between 1986 and 1990 were 7 times; and children born between 1991 and 1995 five times higher than the children born between 1996 and 2000. Furthermore the level of orphans in IDP/Refugee population is significantly higher than the rest of the population (5.3% to 3.1%). These results indicate that children born between 1986 and 1995 lost more family members than those children born after 1996. Although there have been several attempts, Nakhichevan has never faced a large scale military invasion by Armenians except for the village of Karki, also the number of IDPs and refugees in Nakhichevan is relatively lower than other regions of Azerbaijan. The absence of a large scale invasion decreased the number of Azerbaijanis killed during combat activities in comparison to the other regions of Azerbaijan which have a border with Armenia. A relatively lower number of deaths during combat activities and a low number of refugees resulted in the decline of the number of children who were orphaned in Nakhichevan. In Nakhichevan 97.1 % of the children live with both of their parents. This is the highest percentage in the country. The number of children have that have lost either one or both of their parents amounts to 1.2% which is at least 2 or 3 times lower than the other regions of the country<sup>3</sup>.

On January 19 1990, Armenian forces ran over the Azeri village of Karki, which is a city surrounded by Armenian territory. About 2000 refugees from Karki had to leave their homes and came to Nakhichevan<sup>4</sup>. Today they are still located in Nakhichevan. The most serious attempts to invade Nakhichevan occurred between 1992 and 1993. Interestingly when the assaults to Nakhichevan reached a peak, the assaults at Karabagh were at their highest level, which indicates the coordination between the attacks carried out by the Armenians in both Azerbaijani territories.

3 For more information about enrollment of Armenia in the conflict see Human Rights Watch / Helsinki, Seven Years of Conflict (HRW Dec 1994), p. 67-89

4 The information in this paragraph cited in: UNICEF, Azerbaijan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2000 (Dec 2000 Baku), p.34, 86.

The most serious attacks started in May 18, 1992, when well-equipped military forces attacked the strategically important part of the Azerbaijani-Turkish border in the Sadarak region. On the first day of the attack forty soldiers and civilians were seriously wounded and four people were killed, including a doctor trying to rescue a wounded soldier and a woman looking for her son. As a result of these attacks the town of Sadarak was evacuated

In addition to human loss, these attacks caused a significant financial damage to the economy of the Autonomous Republic.

<sup>5</sup>. Subsequently most of the displaced people from Sadarak returned to their homes, only the displaced people from the insecure border villages near Sadarak, which are overlooked by Armenian Army posts had difficulties to return because of fear<sup>6</sup>. When the IDPs returned the Sadarak region, they found themselves in a reconstruction process because the Sadarak district had been destroyed due to Armenian aggression.

In 2004, in the Nakhichevan Autonomous republic there were a total of 1367 refugees and IDP families. 4005 (167 families) of these people are refugees and 1073 (300 families) of them are IDP<sup>7</sup>. These people need shelter, food and jobs. Although more than a decade has passed since the ceasefire, housing for all these people is still not available. The loans and funds from international agencies have been used to build new housing for refugees and IDPs. Furthermore, the Sadarak region which has been destroyed by Armenians had to be restructured, for which international loans were predominantly used. 12 years after the major destruction occurred, on July 17, 2004, the Program of Restoration of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in Sadarak region was completed. 7 secondary schools with 1612 seats, a three-stage pumping station capable to irrigate over three thousand hectares of Sadarak territories, 24 sub-artesian wells, 75 apartment houses, a support electric power station, 20 km long overhead transmission lines and drinking pump stations, which were destroyed by Armenian aggression, were restored by the funds from the Islamic Development Bank<sup>8</sup>. On July 17, 2004, the Sadarak region returned to where it was before conflict.

5 The Economy of an Enclave: How Nakhchivan Survives (FM AMEMBASSY Baku; 03.12.1998), section 4. (<http://www.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/country/981203.az.htm>)

6 Thomas Golts, *Azerbaijan Diary* (New York and London: M. E. Sharp, 1998), p. 177.

7 HRW 2002, Azerbaijan.

8 State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan (SSC) ([www.azstat.org](http://www.azstat.org))

Although there has been a ceasefire since May 12, 1994, from time to time attacks are still being carried out against the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic. The last bloody attack took place on July 17, 2003. Subunits of the Armenian Armed Forces attacked the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan near the village of Germechatag of the Shahbuz region of the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic. One Azeri soldier was killed and another was wounded<sup>9</sup>. Although these attacks caused human loss, which might seem a little effect, their impact on the economy was greater than expected. First, IDPs, who have homes close to the Armenian border, do not want to return to their homes due to the fact that their lives might be in danger and second, international investors do not want to spend their money in a place, which is not stable. Therefore besides human loss, these small-scale attacks continuing after the ceasefire resulted in a significant amount of capital loss. Refugees/IDP and the direct damage of Armenian attacks to the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic have diverted international and governmental funds, which have been spent for the restoration of the damaged region and for supplying food and shelter to IDPs/refugees, who were driven out from their native lands as a result of Armenian aggression, rather than improving the infrastructure and economy of the region. These damages and diversion of funds definitely caused a significant delay in improving the living conditions in Nakhichevan.

## II. THE HISTORY OF BLOCKADE

There are two railroad connections between Baku and Yerevan: the Baku-Megri-Nakhijevan-Yerevan (southern route) and Ghazakh-Ijevan-Yerevan lines (northern route). The southern route, which traverses 46 kilometers of Armenia before entering the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, served to carry 85% of all goods to Armenia and Nakhichevan<sup>10</sup>. Azerbaijanis marked July 29, 1989, as the beginning of the Armenian blockade to Nakhichevan because on that day trains which were going from Azerbaijan to Armenia, were attacked in the territory of Armenia<sup>11</sup>. Despite all difficulties Azerbaijan tried to continue to send shipments. After the first attack several trains coming from Azerbaijan were attacked, robbed, and the passengers were killed in the territory of Armenia. In September 1989, Azerbaijani railroad workers went on strike due to the attacks on the trains in the territory of Armenia. It is interesting that some sources try to depict the strike of Azerbaijani railroad workers as an organized strike to block

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9 Restoration Works Finished in Sadarak, Azertag (17.07.2004).

10 Azertag (19.07.2003).

11 UNDP, Human Development Report (Armenia), 1995, box2.1;  
([www.undp.am/publications/hndr95/part\\_2.html](http://www.undp.am/publications/hndr95/part_2.html))

shipments of materials to both Armenia and Karabagh<sup>12</sup>. Not only Azerbaijani railroad workers, who were carrying goods to Armenia, but also those who were carrying goods to Nakhichevan went on a strike due to the lack of security in Armenian territory. Therefore the strikes were not for blocking shipments to Armenia. Similarly, approximately fifteen years later, at the end of July of 2004, Turkey's truckers association stopped shipping to Iraq after the death of a truck driver. Turkish truck drivers have halted transportation and refused to continue shipping due to the attacks while delivering goods to Iraq<sup>13</sup>. The reason for halting transportations in both situations was the same. There was simply no security and Azerbaijani railroad workers and Turkish truck drivers did not want to put their lives in jeopardy.

Since the beginning of the Armenian blockade the Nakhichevanis have been living in conditions akin to the Medieval Ages.

In November 1989, railroad traffic between Azerbaijan and Armenia stopped due to the attacks on Azerbaijani trains in the territory of Armenia. All attacks transpired in Armenian territory. The 10 kilometers of the southern route inside Armenia was destroyed<sup>14</sup>. The rest was destroyed in 2003<sup>15</sup>. The aim of the Armenians was to block the goods going from Azerbaijan to Nakhichevan, however, when the Armenians were trying to cut their enemy's vital transportation route, they cut their own. So, in reality, the Armenians, who were constantly trying to show themselves as the victim of the blockade, destroyed their main supply route; hence, they blockaded themselves. The northern route was cut off by the Azerbaijanis in order to protect their country when they realized that the route was used to supply goods to the Karabagh Armenians.

Since the beginning of the Armenian blockade the Nakhichevanis have been living in conditions akin to the Medieval Ages. The Armenian blockade of Nakhichevan has resulted in lack of connection to outside world, and lack of electricity and fuel for heating and cooking. The blockade crippled the economy in the exclave and as of this day Nakhichevanis are still trying (today) to survive without adequate heat, sufficient food, or medical care.

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12 For chronology see [www.Karabakh.org](http://www.Karabakh.org).

13 <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/incr/mar/data/azearmenchro.htm>

14 Suzan Fraser, Turkey won't Truck Goods to U.S. in Iraq, The Associated Press (02.08.2004)

15 Ramiz Abutalibov, The Nakhchivan Connection, Azerbaijan International, 1994 (Spring 2.4)

### III. THE COST OF THE BLOCKADE

Both the Republic of Armenia and the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic are landlocked. Under the Soviet central system, unlike Nakhichevan the AR whose economy was based on output and manufacturing farm products, Armenia developed an industrial sector which mainly supplied manufactured goods to her sister republics. After the collapse of the Soviet system at the end of 1991, Armenia had to switch her economy from a highly industrial economy to a small-scale agriculture economy. On the other hand Nakhichevan's economy was already an agricultural economy. In other words after the fall of the central Soviet system, the poor people of ex-Soviet Union did not need computers from Armenia but they still needed food. As a result, the impact of the fall of central Soviet system was lighter in Nakhichevan than in Armenia. Therefore, the primary reason that ruined Nakhichevan's economy was the Armenian blockade rather than fall of central Soviet system.

The economy of the Autonomous Republic is mainly based on the output and the farm products. There are also light food processing enterprises in Nakhichevan and only 0.5% of Nakhichevan is covered by forests.<sup>16</sup> That Nakhichevan's economy is severely suffering from the Armenian blockade is a fact. The production has been reduced by two thirds due to the blockade of Nakhichevan; the industrial production decreased by 99.99%<sup>17</sup>.

#### *1. Lack of Energy*

Until the beginning of 1992, 33,330 subscribers in 4 cities, 2 city-type settlements and 91 villages were provided with natural gas by Shusha-Lachin-Bichenek-Nakhichevan gas line. Since January of 1992, the activity of the high-pressured main gas line, which provided vital energy to Nakhichevan, was stopped by Armenia. 29,042 apartments, 3384 domestic subscribers, 19 communal enterprises, 207 organizations and 20 industrial objects were cut off from natural gas. Ten years after the ceasefire, in 2004, Nakhichevan was only place in the Caucasus

<sup>16</sup> Azernews (26.12.2003).

<sup>17</sup> UNPAN, 'State Program on...', p.25

region deprived of natural gas. Due to the supply of natural gas being cut off, 340 employees of 470 gas-housing workers were laid off or had to take leave of absence. The gas lines in Nakhichevan, which have not been used since the beginning of 1992, started falling apart. \$20 million will be spent only to restore the gas lines in Nakhichevan. Besides this, more than \$1.2 million (6 billion Manat) is needed to restore the internal gas lines inside multi-floored buildings (8,000 subscribers) in Nakhichevan. About 20 industrial and production enterprises are still waiting for gas to fully operate<sup>18</sup>.

Nakhichevan primarily depends upon Iran for energy because Iran is the only neighbor of Nakhichevan, which has rich hydrocarbon sources and can provide energy (gas, electricity and fuel) to the Autonomous Republic. This monopoly position gives the Islamic Republic of Iran the opportunity to sell slightly more expensive gas or electricity to Nakhichevan.<sup>19</sup> Since 1994 there have been discussions with Iran to supply gas by a 36-kilometer pipeline between Khoy and Culfa. Iran will supply gas to Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan will supply gas to Iran from Astara. Iran will keep 15% of volumes, as a service charge<sup>20</sup>. More than \$17 million will be spent for installation of pipeline to Iran from Astara<sup>21</sup>.

Prior to the blockade Nakhichevan was getting electricity from Armenia and since 1991 electricity lines coming thorough Armenia were cut. After the blockade Nakhichevan started getting electricity from Turkey (with no cost), Iran and some of the electricity was produced from the water dam "Araz". In 2004 roughly 52% of the electricity which was used in Nakhichevan was supplied by Iran, 36% by Turkey and 12% was generated by "Araz"<sup>22</sup>. Although there have been improvements, still in 2004 the supply of electricity is lower than demand (150-160 megawatts)<sup>23</sup>. Iran tried to use its monopoly on Nakhichevan's energy supply to exert pressure on Azerbaijan for her own international demands. The power sup-

18 Report of United Nation Environmental Program (UNEP/GRID-ARENDAL) on Azerbaijan's Environment. According to same report use of water for industrial purposes in Nakhichevan decreased due to the blockade. Decrease in industrial production calculated from decrease in use of water for industrial purposes (According to SSC in 1995, 8 million m<sup>3</sup> and in 2003, 0.05 million m<sup>3</sup> water was used for industrial purposes).

19 Information in this paragraph was discussed during the visit of Ilham Eliyev (The current President of Azerbaijan) to Nakhichevan AR at High Assembly of Nakhichevan AR Blockade of Nakhichevan is discussed. Conference at High Assembly of Nahchivan AR, 02.09.2004.

20 Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Visits Nakhichevan, RFE/RL Newline, (02.01.08)

21 Khadija Ismayilova, Neighbors Show Tactic Support, Caspian Business News (09.08.2004).

22 'Conference at High...'

23 Authors calculation from data cited in 'Electricity Supply Getting Better in Nakhchivan', Azertag (11.09.2004)

ply from Iran to Nakhichevan was cut by Iranian officials several times. In 1995, almost a month after Iran had been excluded from the Azerbaijani oil consortium (Contract of Century), Iran cut the electricity supplies to Nakhichevan, and interestingly it was just three weeks later that Iran agreed to supply Armenia with natural gas and electricity for a period of 20 years<sup>24</sup>. Most recently on 27 October 2000, Iran cut power supplies to Nakhichevan using \$45 million debt of Azerbaijan as an excuse. Iran resumed power supplies on November 4, 2000 after negotiations with Baku<sup>25</sup>. Iran and Baku agreed to the construction of the Ordubad power dam in August 2004, and agreed to increase the supply of electricity from Iran to Nakhichevan<sup>26</sup>.

Because of the blockade a lot of people lost their jobs and poverty increased. Accordingly, 13.1% of those residing in Nakhichevan are extremely poor.

Trade blockades disturbed energy politics in Nakhichevan, which made it difficult to pay increased energy tariffs for Nakhichevanis, most of whom are unemployed. The gas prices will be at least 15% higher in Nakhichevan because of the Iranian connection fee. Due to the blockade, electricity prices have increased which resulted in demonstrations from time to time<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore there have been restrictions on the usage of electrical appliances,<sup>28</sup> and street lamps,<sup>29</sup> which were turned off to reduce electricity consumption in Nakhichevan.

Transportation between the villages is vital for Nakhichevan where 79.3% of the households are in rural areas, and the main health and economic facilities are in urban areas<sup>30</sup>. The fuel used to come from Azerbaijan by trains, began to be carried through Iran by trucks after the blockade. Carrying the fuel by trucks rather than trains increased the time and length of the transportation, and therefore the cost of fuel. The situations that caused a lack of fuel also caused difficulties in public transportation. Only 33% of the villages in Nakhichevan have consistently

24 'The Economy of an Enclave...'

25 Svante E. Cornell, Iran and the Caucasus, Middle East Policy Journal (Vol. V, No.4, 1998) ([www.mepc.org/public\\_asp/journal\\_vol5/9801\\_cornell.asp](http://www.mepc.org/public_asp/journal_vol5/9801_cornell.asp))

26 RFE/RL (08.11.2000)

27 'Statement for Media', Azertag (09.09.2004)

28 REL/RF(Volume 8, No17, 28.01.2004)

29 *ibid.*

30 Thomas De Waal, Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War, (New York University Press, 2003), p. 271.

working normal bus routes which is the lowest percentage in the republic<sup>31</sup>.

The blockade of the Nakhichevan AR by Armenia has caused great damage, not only to the region's industry, but to the agriculture of Nakhichevan as well. According to UNEP report, the extreme deficiency of fuel and electric power, which is the result of the blockade, did not allow improving and taking soil-recreating measures. The whole territory of Nakhichevan is prone to erosion<sup>32</sup>.

## **2. Lack of Trade**

Since 1991, roads and railways coming to the Autonomous Republic from Armenia were decreased.<sup>33</sup> By stopping the traffic through its territory, Armenia prevented Nakhichevan from being connected to other countries including Azerbaijan's mainland. The blockade increased the transportation costs; lengthened the average distance between Nakhichevan and potential markets and raw material sources including Azerbaijan's mainland; and altered the trade partners.

With the blockade, Nakhichevan became akin to an isolated island with no connection to the outer world. On October 31, 1991, a connection between Nakhichevan and Turkey was established via the bridge over Araz which provided a vital route to Nakhichevan<sup>34</sup>. The rail link between Tabriz and Nakhichevan City, through which 3 million tons of cargo was transported, has been halted since the beginning of Karabagh conflict. The closure of this railway link caused \$2 billion worth of damage to the countries of the region<sup>35</sup>. In December 2004, in an attempt to ease the isolation of Nakhichevan, Iran and Azerbaijan (had) agreed on the construction of two bridges: one between Poldasht (Iran) and Saxtaxti (NAR), and the other between Jolfa (Iran) and Julfa (NAR). The construction costs of three million dollars for the former and four million dollars for the latter will be jointly paid by Iran and Azerbaijan<sup>36</sup>.

85% of the goods, which are consumed in Nakhichevan, used to come from Azerbaijan thorough Armenia by railroad<sup>37</sup>. After the blockade goods (almost

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31 Author's calculation from table 3 at MICS p.44

32 SSC

33 'Report of UNEP/GRID-ARENDAL...'

34 'Conference at High...'

35 Edgar O'balance, Wars in the Caucasus 1990-1995, (New York University Press 1997) p. 52.

36 Iran seeks to re-open Tabriz-Julfa-Nakhchivan-Iran Railway, Assa-Irada, (21.12.2004)

37 Iran, Azerbaijan Agree on Building two Bridges to Naxjivan, MPA News Agency, 06.12.2004. and ANN/Groong 07.12.2004.



all of it is fuel) from Azerbaijan started coming either from Iran by trucks or by planes. Carrying the goods by trucks or airplanes instead of trains increased the cost and time of transportation between Azerbaijan's mainland and Nakhichevan. The blockade of transit routes by Armenia caused the loss of access to raw materials and markets, increased the cost of trade, and naturally decreased the amount of trade.

Nakhichevan is a landlocked exclave. In 2004, the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic had the worst economical conditions in the republic<sup>38</sup> due to the lack of a sales market, raw materials, and energy (45 production and refining enterprises were shut down and the rest are operating 10-15% capacity)<sup>39</sup>. Nakhichevan has been running high trade deficits because restrictions on the direct movement of goods results in low export. The construction of Umut (or Umud) bridge across Aras provided the exclave with a vital link to the outside world. Although new markets are emerging in Turkey and Iran, the blockade severely impairs the economy. The blockade forced Nakhichevan to change its trade partners, because Nakhichevan cannot gain access to the markets in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Armenian blockade cut the easy and reasonable access of Nakhichevan with its nearest members of CIS such as Russia, Georgia and Ukraine, which have large markets and rich raw materials.

Table I<sup>41</sup>: Import and Export Figures of Nakhichevan

| Table I <sup>41</sup> | Import    |          |      | Export    |          |      |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|------|
|                       | Total     | CIS      | %    | Total     | CIS      | %    |
| Julfa                 | 8944,6    | 749,0    | 8.4  | \$10,4    | 0        | 0    |
| Sadarak               | 21816,3   | 0        | 0    | \$4157,4  | \$9,9    | 0.2  |
| Azerbaijan            | 2626427,3 | 851201,8 | 32.4 | 2591719,4 | 333633,1 | 12.9 |

Nakhichevan has two customhouses. Julfa connects it to Iran and Sadarak to Turkey. According to 2003 SSC statistics, trade from these customs with CIS is the lowest between all Azerbaijani customs which clearly indicates a lack of connection between CIS and Nakhichevan AR (Table I)<sup>40</sup>. Even the main import of Nakhichevan from mainland Azerbaijan is fuel, which is carried by trucks thorough Iran. Because of the lack of a connection with CIS countries and Azerbaijan's mainland, production of food and industrial products mainly demanded by

38 Abutalibov, 'The Nakhichevan Connection...'

39 Nakhichevan has the highest poverty incidence. State Program on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development, Annual Progress Report 2003 (Baku 2004), p.17

40 Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, 815 Meeting; 30 October 2002 (<http://karabakh-doc.gen.az/ru/istoch/is007eng.htm>) and 'The Economy of an Enclave....' sec.3.

these countries has decreased since the beginning of the Mountainous Karabagh conflict.

Between 1990 and 1995 agricultural production decreased. After the ceasefire, the government started spending more money on the economy instead of on defense. However, only the farm products such as vegetables, sugar beets and animal products, which are mainly demanded by Turkey, Iran and Nakhichevan's population, increased after the ceasefire (Table II). On the other hand, Turkey and Iran have also developed farming output, thus the development of Nakhichevan is limited without other trading partners. Production of tobacco, grapes, alcoholic beverages (cognac and vine) and related industries (such as bottle production), which are demanded and imported by Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Georgia, decreased even after the cease fire<sup>41</sup>. Therefore the decrease of production of these products is not related to a lack in demand. The decrease is direct consequence the blockade<sup>42</sup>.

Table II<sup>43</sup>: Output of crop production in Nakhichevan in thousands tons.

| Year | Grains | Tobacco | Vegetables | Potatoes | Fruits | Grapes | S u g a r<br>beet |
|------|--------|---------|------------|----------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| 1990 | 31.3   | 5.1     | 4.6        | 0.4      | 4.9    | 101.5  | -                 |
| 1991 | 26.4   | 3.3     | 4.5        | 0.3      | 2.3    | 69     | -                 |
| 1992 | 25.4   | 2.9     | 1.6        | 0.4      | 0.6    | 26.6   | -                 |
| 1993 | 19.8   | 2.3     | 1.1        | 0.3      | 0.1    | 8.8    | -                 |
| 1994 | 19.3   | 1.0     | 1.6        | 0.4      | 0.7    | 30.5   | 5.6               |
| 1995 | 21.6   | 0.9     | 1.3        | 0.8      | 0.2    | 28.3   | 7.9               |
| 1996 | 22.2   | 1.3     | 18.0       | 6        | 18.8   | 30.7   | 15.5              |
| 1997 | 43.1   | 1.2     | 19.4       | 8.9      | 20.7   | 26     | 23.3              |
| 1998 | 55.2   | 1.4     | 22.7       | 10.3     | 22.8   | 24.3   | 39.1              |
| 1999 | 43.0   | 0.0155  | 26.2       | 10.6     | 26.2   | 13.1   | 38.7              |
| 2000 | 54.4   | 0.0028  | 42.7       | 13.5     | 28.4   | 14.0   | 45.5              |
| 2001 | 63.3   | 0.00056 | 47.8       | 15.2     | 28.7   | 13.8   | 41.3              |
| 2002 | 73.7   | -       | 50.2       | 13.6     | 28.8   | 12.6   | 115.8             |

41 Source: SSC. Table I shows the total trade of Azerbaijan and trade through Julfa and Sadarak custom houses with the amount (thousand dollars) and percentage of this trade related with CIS countries. The trade through these customs with CIS countries is the lowest values among all custom houses of Azerbaijan. (Except export to CIS through Julfa is higher than export to CIS through Balaken custom house).

42 SSC and Nakhichevan: City Information ([http://www.gateway.az/cgi-bin/cl2\\_gw/browse.cgi?lang=en&topic=000e0404](http://www.gateway.az/cgi-bin/cl2_gw/browse.cgi?lang=en&topic=000e0404))

43 The decrease is not only the result of transportation; the energy blockade prevents the function of the factories. The blockade resulted in starvation in Nakhichevan. Farmers started producing their own food at the back of their houses instead of producing the tobacco and grapes. The blockade changed the content of the farm products in Nakhichevan. Also destruction of the irrigation system because of lack of maintenance (lack of import of maintenance elements such as parts of pumps) resulted in decrease in farm production. For more information see HRW/Helsinki, Seven years of ... page75-77.

In addition, because of the lack of trade and insufficient funds (the result of the diversion of funds for immediate needs such as fuel, food and housing for IDP/refugees) rich natural sources in Nakhichevan such as polymetal ores, rocksalt, marble and construction material can neither be extracted properly nor exported. All of the republic's molybdenum and dolomite reserves are closed<sup>44</sup>. Even though there is high demand for natural sources located in Nakhichevan, the employees in the mining and quarrying field dropped to 127 in 2002 from 215 people in 1999<sup>45</sup>.

In 2004, because of no direct railroad and motor road connection between Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, the goods to Nakhichevan from mainland Azerbaijan must be carried by air or by motorway through Iran<sup>46</sup>. Roads in Iran are poor and not reliable, and harsh weather conditions during the winter make transportation through Iran difficult. Due to the blockade, the transportation between mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan is more expensive, more difficult and takes an additional day<sup>47</sup>.

Because of the blockade transport costs increased and some nearby trading opportunities were eliminated. In 2003 Nakhichevan's international export was \$4.2 million on the other hand its import is roughly \$30.8 million<sup>48</sup>. To understand the magnitude of the blockade it might be valuable to estimate some of the missing exports of Nakhichevan to other countries and to Azerbaijan's mainland.

Indeed, Nakhichevan had a developed construction industry. The blockade-related financial difficulties reduced the construction rate and building houses in the region<sup>49</sup>. The transportation blockade severely prevents the trade of heavy and low valued goods (such as building stones and cement) and the products which required special transport requirements (such as meat, glass, bottled products etc)<sup>50</sup>. Thus, the blockade prevented the export of construction material, which is rich in Nakhichevan, although Azerbaijan's mainland imports construction mate-

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44 Data for 1990-1997 was cited in 'Nakhchivan: City Information' and data for 1998-2001 was provided from in SSC.

45 UNPAN, 'State Program on...', p.25

46 'The Economy of an Enclave...', section 3

47 SSC

48 Gwendolyn Burchell, Nakhchivan Blockade, Azerbaijan International (Winter 1997(5.4)). In addition there are 1 to 2 days delays on the Iranian border due to limited opening hours of Iranian border stations and difficulties with Iranian documentation. (World Bank Report, 'Trade Facilitation in the Caucasus' (Oct. 2000) p.36)

49 SSC

50 'Nakhchivan: City Information'

rial<sup>51</sup>. Although Nakhichevan has over 200 mineral water springs, which constitute 60% of the mineral water reserves in Azerbaijan<sup>52</sup>, due to the difficulties in transportation resulting from the Armenian blockade Azerbaijan had to import the mineral water from other countries instead of Nakhichevan<sup>53</sup> (Table III).

Table III<sup>54</sup>: Some of the Missing Export Items to Azerbaijan's Mainland.

| Table III     | Production in Nakhichevan in 1990 (Quantity) | Value of production | Import of Azerbaijan (Quantity) | Value of import |
|---------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Mineral water | 153 million bottle                           | \$42,000,000        | 0.8 million decalitres          | \$28,640        |
| Canned goods  | 34 million cond. Bottles.                    | unknown             | 3847,9 tons (canned meat)       | \$4,386,000     |
| Raw silk      | 82.7 tons                                    | 1,820,000           | unknown                         | \$1,107,300     |
| Bricks        | 7215 thousand pieces                         | \$500,000           | 4780,5 thousand pieces          | \$329500        |
| Tobacco       | 5100 tons                                    | \$6,043,000         | 5383,4 tons                     | \$6,378,800     |

Although there is no way to find the precise amount of the missing international exports of Nakhichevan, the following method might give an idea about it. In 2003, Azerbaijan's total export was \$2.6 billion. There is no oil production in Nakhichevan and approximately \$370 million out of \$2.6 billion Azerbaijan's export comes from products that are not related to oil. Nakhichevan's population consists of 4.5% of the republic. Under normal conditions Nakhichevan could easily do roughly 4.5% of \$370 million export, which equates to \$16.6 million. Although there is no oil production, Nakhichevan is rich in mineral water (\$40 million export estimated) which replaces oil<sup>55</sup>. The total of Nakhichevan's ex-

51 Richard Beilock, *Armenia's Economic Dead End*, University of Florida. p.6.

52 SSC

53 UNPAN, 'State Program on...', p.25

54 Evgeny Polyakov, *Changing Trade Partners after Conflict Resolution in South Caucasus*, (World Bank; 2000), p.52. ([http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/eca/eca.nsf/0/23ac8865ee0dc520852568fc005ba956/\\$FILE/ATT00ZE9/Trade+flows3.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/eca/eca.nsf/0/23ac8865ee0dc520852568fc005ba956/$FILE/ATT00ZE9/Trade+flows3.pdf))

55 This table is to give an idea to the reader about the missing exports to Azerbaijan's mainland. Some of the export items such as cement, metals, textile and most food stuff (which are rich, producing or there is existing production enterprise in Nakhichevan and imported by Azerbaijan) have not been included. The Azerbaijan's import was cited in SSC (Tobacco (2003), bricks (2002), silk (2003), canned goods (2003) and water (average import between 1995-2002)) and unit values were calculated according to SSC data (value of import/amount of import). Then unit values multiplied by production of that product in Nakhichevan in

port to countries other than Armenia and Azerbaijan's mainland could be around \$56.6 million. This would mean an additional \$52.2 million in export which is almost five times that of the exclave's budget (\$11 million)<sup>56</sup>.

### 3. *Lack of FDI*

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is beneficial for the economy. FDI helps to increase production, number of jobs, and most of the time increases export. The energy and transport blockade of Nakhichevan maintained by Armenia restricts FDI. Foreign investors naturally do not want to spend their money where there is no power, no stability and no market. In simple words, foreign investors do not want to spend money for building enterprises under the risk of not becoming operational fully because of limited energy and lack of sales market or the risk of destruction by military action. Since gaining independence, so far Exxon Mobil Company spent some money to look for hydrocarbon sources in Nakhichevan. Azerbaijani Oil Company SOCAR and Exxon Mobil formed a consortium (50%: 50%) to search for oil in Nakhichevan. However the search efforts failed in February 2002.<sup>57</sup>

## IV. IMPACT OF CONFLICT ON EVERYDAY LIFE IN NAKHICHEVAN

This is not the first time that Nakhichevan was blockaded and attacked by Armenians. Between 1918 and 1920 Nakhichevanis suffered from Armenian assaults and blockades.<sup>58</sup> Between 1918 and 1920, in the town of Sadarak, 102 people were killed during actual attacks of Armenians and 1500 people died due to the famine, exposure and maladies.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, poor living conditions stemming from aggression and the blockade caused greater damage to the people than the actual assaults. Thus the effect of the blockade on the living conditions of the Nakhichevanis should be investigated.

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1990 (from 'Nakhivan: City Information'). For calculating value of silk which is produced in Nakhichevan, the unit price of silk per ton was taken \$22000 (cited in Wu Qi, 'Upward trend for Silk' Intellex News and Analysis, (April 2004) as normal level of price 185,000 yuan per ton and \$1 is 8.3 yuan which makes price of raw silk roughly 22,000 per ton). For mineral water: 1 bottle = 0.076895dlk (Russian bottle volume), and 1dlk mineral water is \$3.58 (Polyakov 'Changing... p.52).

56 Export is cited in SSC. The export to Azerbaijan's mainland and internal consumption (estimated roughly \$2million) subtracted from mineral water production.

57 State budget cited in 'The Economy of an Enclave...', section 8.

58 Exxon Mobil to abandon Azerbaijan oil well, Caspian News Agency (26.02.2002)

59 During the first Republic of Armenia (Tashnak Armenia; 1918-1920), Armenians attacked to Nakhichevan and destroyed several villages on the railroad (BOA. HR. SYS. 2878/76). They also hold the roads and attacked the passengers (BOA. HR. SYS. 2878/93).

## **1. Unemployment**

Because of the blockade a lot of people lost their jobs and poverty increased. Accordingly, 13.1% of those residing in Nakhichevan are extremely poor<sup>60</sup>. Although the official unemployment rate is 6.6% in Nakhichevan, in reality, this percentage is much higher<sup>61</sup>. There are 198,000 people in Nakhichevan who are able to work and 41,948 people are employed which makes unemployment 78.8 %.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore it has been reported that in Sadarak only 230 people out of the 7,500 people in the workforce have jobs.<sup>63</sup>

Using the forests in a controlled way and making use of the waste of cereal crops as a fuel in private household equipment might also help to alleviate the energy problem of Nakhichevan.

## **2. Lack of Water**

Access to safe water sources is one of the major necessities for health. Unsafe water is a major invitation for diseases such as trachoma, cholera, typhoid etc. According to statistics, in Nakhichevan, 31.6% of the population uses unsafe drinking water sources such as pond, river/stream, unprotected spring etc.<sup>64</sup> This situation threatens the health of the people in the region.

Water is essential for life and for the economy of Nakhichevan where agriculture is the driving force and the climate is dry. The agricultural work is performed only in irrigated lands in Nakhichevan. Due to the blockade the irrigation system in Nakhichevan fell apart because of a lack of equipment required for maintenance (such as pumps)<sup>65</sup>.

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60 BOA. HR. SYS. 2878/76

61 'State Program Poverty Reduction ...', p.17

62 'Nakhichevan: City ...', Section: Business.

63 Able-bodied cited in UNPAN: 'State Program on Social-Economic...', p.25. Number of employed people cited in SSC (2002). According to Employment office in Nakhichevan, of the exclave's able-bodied population of 172,897, 79,500 have full-time, 7,000 have part-time jobs [unemployment 50 %] (Gulnara Mamadzade, Nakhichevan: Trouble Brewing in Aliyev's Backyard, (TWPR; CRS No. 117, February 21, 2002), paragraph 9), on the other hand according to SSC there are only 6645 people who received unemployment status in Nakhichevan (2002). It is highly possible that because of internal politics the unemployment rate could be shown lower than it is by government officials.

64 Latest Suicide Highlights Extend of Poverty, Unemployment in Nakhichevan, (RFE/RL 13.09.2002, Vol 5, No 30)

65 SSC

According to a report of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the opportunities of the local people to manage their family and invest money in agriculture and animal husbandry became limited due to the lack of irrigation water. Dry farms resulted in the loss of crops and a rise in unemployment. In addition, IOM stated that water scarcity, in many parts of Nakhichevan, forced people to migrate to other countries, and most notably to Turkey<sup>66</sup>. At least one third of Nakhichevan's population has immigrated for searching jobs<sup>67</sup>.

### 3. Child Labor and Education

Another side effect of the lack of energy and lack of water is the increase of domestic work, which covers cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, fetching water and caring for children. Due to the blockade the life conditions became worse which increased the heavy burden on the children. For example in the summer time, there is a shortage of basic drinking water especially in south Nakhichevan<sup>68</sup>. The people must walk many kilometers to bring water home, which increases domestic work especially for children. MICS results indicate that 12.4% of the children in Nakhichevan are doing more than four hours of domestic work<sup>69</sup>. This is the highest percentage in the republic and worse than the situation of children of IDP and refugees (Table IV).

Table IV<sup>70</sup> shows the child labor in Nakhichevan.

| Table IV      | Domestic Work<br>Less Than 4<br>hours/day | Domestic Work<br>4 or more hours/<br>day | Family Work | Currently<br>Working |
|---------------|---|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Baku          | 49.9                                      | 2.3                                      | 1.2         | 4.6                  |
| Nakhichevan   | 56.2                                      | 12.4                                     | 8.7         | 20.2                 |
| Center, North | 54.7                                      | 7.9                                      | 4.8         | 16.6                 |
| West, S. West | 57.2                                      | 5.1                                      | 6.3         | 15.2                 |
| South         | 47.1                                      | 1.3                                      | 2.4         | 13.1                 |
| Resident      | 53.7                                      | 5.4                                      | 4.1         | 13.4                 |
| IDP/Refugee   | 46.5                                      | 3.7                                      | 3.7         | 9.1                  |

66 HRW/Helsinki, 'Seven years of ...', page 76-77 (The observation of ADRA worker in Nakhichevan).

67 IOM in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, (Issue No. 7 April-June 2002), p.4. ([http://www.tcc.iom.int/iom/images/uploads/Issue7\\_1075282828.pdf](http://www.tcc.iom.int/iom/images/uploads/Issue7_1075282828.pdf))

68 Adalet Bargarar, Nakhichevan: Disappointment and Secrecy, (IWPR, CRS No. 234, May 19, 2004), paragraph 9.

69 Mamedzade, 'Nakhichevan: Trouble...', paragraph 6.

70 MICS p.87

Child labor is very important because children who are working are less likely to attend school and more likely to drop out. Nakhichevan has the lowest literacy rate in the republic, 90.6%<sup>71</sup>. This rate is likely to go down because of the fact that it retains the highest level of child labor (20.2%) and the highest number of drop outs in the country. 5.9 % of the children who started first grade dropped out in the first year, which is highest drop out rate in the republic<sup>72</sup>. Parents cannot afford school expenses, thus the number of children aged 36-59 months in Nakhichevan who attend some sort of an organized early education program constitute the second lowest (2.7%) attendance rate in the republic.<sup>73</sup>

#### ***4. Lack of Food and Malnutrition***

Due to the blockade Nakhichevan became an isolated place since the beginning of the 1990's. Lack of sufficient food supply caused starvation. When the news of starvation reached Turkey<sup>74</sup> and Iran<sup>75</sup>, tons of food from both countries was sent to Nakhichevan by trucks. This starvation was not a short-lived incident. In 1998 the relief agency ADRA provided supplement feeding (4 kilogram food per person per month) for 100,000 needy people in Nakhichevan<sup>76</sup>.

Household wealth correlates strongly with nutrition and children's nutritional status is a reflection of their health. High poverty and lack of sufficient food brought child malnutrition to Nakhichevan. Furthermore, an inadequate supply of food and a high disease rate (prevalence) affected the development of children. MICS results show that 23.7% of children under the age of five are stunting (shorter according to their age; chronic malnutrition) and 12.4 % are severely stunting. 19.6% of under-five children are underweight (thinner according to their age; general malnutrition) and 7.2 percent are severely underweight. 7.2% of the (under-five) children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition<sup>77</sup>. The 19.9% newly borns weigh below 2500 grams at birth and this is the highest

71 Numbers that are used for to make the table were cited in Table 38 of MICS p.87.

72 MICS p.53.

73 Calculated from table 11 of MICS p.52. Also the World Bank Poverty Assessment (1996) found that 38% of the poorest primary school children, in Nakhichevan, were not attending school for extended periods of one month or more.

74 MICS p.50.

75 Information in this paragraph cited in: 'Report of UNEP/GRE-ARENDAL...'

76 Turkish Red Crescent Society (Golts, 'Azerbaijan...', p.73) and Turkish Businessmen (Abdullah Aymaz, Sahibini Bulan Küpeler, Zaman (02.26.2002)) has sent food to Nakhichevan

77 Interview conducted by Konul Khaliyova with Brenda Shaffer, "Brothers and Brethren" reveals the dilemmas of ethnic politics in Iran; 525ci, ( Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs; 28.02.2002),



percentage in the country<sup>78</sup> These numbers reveal the true character of malnutrition in Nakhichevan. Severe undernourishment was prevented by small kitchen gardens and subsidized prices for bread<sup>79</sup>. Although Nakhichevan was never invaded by Armenia and there are relatively small numbers of IDPs and refugees in Nakhichevan, the numbers clearly indicate that in most cases Nakhichevanis suffer more than refugees/IDPs.

The blockades lower the quality of the products produced for domestic consumption<sup>80</sup>. The best example is the quality of table salt sold in Nakhichevan. Deficiency of iodine in the diet is the world's largest single great cause of preventable mental retardation and can lower the average intelligence quotient (IQ) of a population by as much as 13 points<sup>81</sup>. Furthermore iodine deficiency results in widespread goiter problems, stunted growth among children and miscarriages among pregnant woman<sup>82</sup>. As it is expected the percentage of households with adequately iodized salt is around 11% in Nakhichevan, which is the lowest in the country<sup>83</sup>.

Table V<sup>84</sup>: Cooperation of Nakhichevan with other regions of the republic and total refugee and IDP population particularly with regard to malnutrition and proper salt ionization.

| Table V<br>Description | percentage of children under five reported |                      |         |                  |        |                 | percentage of           |   |
|------------------------|--|----------------------|---------|------------------|--------|-----------------|-------------------------|---|
|                        | Underweight                                | Severely Underweight | Stunted | Severely Stunted | Wasted | Severely Wasted | Live births under 2500g | Households with adequately iodized salt |
| Baku                   | 11.4                                       | 2.7                  | 15.4    | 4.9              | 5.4    | 1.1             | 6.3                     | 34.7                                    |
| Nakhichevan            | 19.6                                       | 7.2                  | 23.7    | 12.4             | 7.2    | 1.0             | 19.9                    | 10.6                                    |
| Center & North         | 16.3                                       | 3.3                  | 19.6    | 6.5              | 8.3    | 2.1             | 8.1                     | 43.8                                    |
| West & S.west          | 22.4                                       | 8.0                  | 25.1    | 12.3             | 10.7   | 2.7             | 7.1                     | 48.5                                    |
| South                  | 16.3                                       | 2.3                  | 16.0    | 3.1              | 7.0    | 1.9             | 13.5                    | 47.8                                    |
| Resident               | 16.9                                       | 4.4                  | 19.5    | 7.4              | 7.8    | 2.0             | 9.7                     | 41.2                                    |
| IDP/Refugee            | 15.6                                       | 2.7                  | 20.4    | 6.1              | 9.5    | 1.4             | 7.3                     | 42.6                                    |

78 'The Economy of an Enclave...', section 11.

79 MICS p.57.

80 MICS p.60.

81 HRW/Helsinki, 'Seven years of ...', p.77.

82 Richard Beilock, Helping Armenia without Helping the Blockade, (Armenian International Policy Research Group; Jan. 2003), p.10.

83 MICS p.27.

84 Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Profile of Internal Displacement in Azerbaijan, (05.05.2003), p.42. ([www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/wCountries/Azerbaijan/\\$file/Azerbaijan+May+2003.pdf](http://www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/wCountries/Azerbaijan/$file/Azerbaijan+May+2003.pdf))

## V. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Despite all peace efforts, it is clear that Armenia will continue to pursue aggressive policies (her aggressive behavior) towards her neighbors. Through the completion of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline in 2005 the export of Azerbaijani oil will increase. Hopefully the projects, which alleviate the isolation of Nakhichevan, will be funded easily.

### 1. *Alternative Transportation routes for Nakhichevan*

The railway route linking Georgia with Nakhichevan via Turkey can be put into operation. The construction of the Kars-Tbilisi railway is on its way<sup>85</sup>. The project of the Kars-Nakhichevan railway communication will provide a vital rail link between Nakhichevan and members of CIS as well as Turkey. By using railway communication Nakhichevan can export more products to members of CIS cheaper and easily. With the opening of the Nakhchivan-Erzurum-Istanbul air route Nakhichevan's isolation will be eased<sup>86</sup>. Better and shorter railways and motorways through Iran will definitely establish communication between Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan's mainland.

### 2. *Production of Sufficient Energy*

The recent agreements between Iran and Azerbaijan will solve the energy problem in Nakhichevan temporarily. However, in the past, Iran used its monopoly on Nakhichevan's energy supply to pressurize Azerbaijan for her own demands. Recent tension between Iran and USA over international terrorism and Iran's nuclear program forced Iran to develop better relations with her neighbors. Iran has an Azeri minority, which threatens Tehran. Any movement in Azeris of Iran may end the recent good relations between Iran and Azerbaijan. Therefore, Nakhichevan should take steps for self-sufficient energy production.

The efficiency of the Araz power plant could easily be increased. With improvements in the economy the Nakhichevanis could buy better cars with improved fuel economy. Rehabilitation Reconstruction of the road network will also improve fuel economy. Biomass can be converted into a number of liquid

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85 MICS. p.27

86 Numbers used in this table cited in MICS Table 15 p.57, Table 17 p.59 and Table 18 p.60. According to MICS in all cases when household wealth increases negative values of the indicated aspects decreases, thus the primary reason of the continuation malnutrition in Nakhichevan is high poverty which is skyrocketed due to blockade.

fuels, including methanol, ethanol, biodiesel, and pyrolysis oil. In Nakhichevan where agriculture is the main economical branch, energy from biomass could be produced. Especially ethanol, which could be produced from sugar beet and corn, can reduce the energy import of the exclave. Forest management and agricultural soil management is in any case needed for the prevention of salinization and erosion. Using the forests in a controlled way and making use of the waste of cereal crops as a fuel in private household equipment might also help to alleviate the energy problem of Nakhichevan. Soviet-style buildings do not have good isolation<sup>87</sup>. Building more energy efficient buildings will reduce the energy consumption. According to ERBD Nakhichevan has the best solar energy resource potential in the republic (between 3.0 to 4.7kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/day)<sup>88</sup>, furthermore Nakhichevan has the potential to produce 70MW/year from wind energy<sup>89</sup>. According to same report small hydro power projects on the territory of Nakhichevan are feasible (Table VII)<sup>90</sup>.

TableVII<sup>91</sup>: Possible Energy Projects in Nakhichevan.

| Table VII            | Description                       | Capacity                        |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Renewable Energy     | Wind energy                       | 70 MW                           |
|                      | Solar energy                      | 3.0-4.7 kWh/m <sup>2</sup> /day |
| Hydro power projects | Arpchai on Arpchai River          | 12.0 MW                         |
|                      | Vaikhir on Nakhchvanchai River    | 4.7 MW                          |
|                      | HPS #1 and #2 on Gianjachai River | 12.9 MW                         |

## CONCLUSION

Between 1988 and 1994, Armenians forcibly gained control over the Mountainous Karabagh district and seven regions bordering, which constitutes (consists of) almost 20% of the Azerbaijan's territory, and attacked the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic. Since the beginning of the 1990's Nakhichevan is under the blockade of Armenia. The Armenian blockade turned the clock back to the medieval ages in Nakhichevan. The blockade affected every aspect of the lives of the Nakhichevanis. The economy is crippled. Production has decreased by 2/3.

87 Foreign Minister Meets Chairman of Turkey's Industrialist Associations, Azertag, (May 11, 2004).

88 Donald E. Miller and Lorna Touryan Miller, *Armenia: Portraits of Survival and Hope* (University of California Press, 2003) p.112

89 Renewable Energy Country Profile, (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), 27 September, 2002), Section: solar resources p.13.

90 *ibid.* Section: Wind energy p.2

91 *ibid.* Section: Renewable Energy Profile (Draft) p.3.

Unemployment increased, 44,798 people lost their jobs<sup>92</sup>. When the numbers of available jobs were going down, the prices went up. Trade stopped. Due to high poverty, prevalence of diseases increased, even the number of suicides increased. It is expected that Nakhichevan has the highest infant and under-five child mortality rate in the republic<sup>93</sup>. Although the Armenians complain about the so-called blockade, the economical situation is worse in Nakhichevan than in Armenia<sup>94</sup>. According to UNICEF's survey the living conditions of Nakhichevanis in most cases are worse than the Refugee and IDP population in the country. As a conclusion, although it is getting better, the Armenian blockade made it difficult to live in Nakhichevan over the past 15 years.

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92 Information is cited in the report *ibid*

93 Source: SSC

94 Unfortunately there are no healthy estimates of infant and under-five mortality in Azerbaijan. (see MICS p.21-22 and 'State Program on Poverty...', p. 27-28). On the other hand MICS stated that mortality rates in rural areas are almost 50% higher than in urban areas, while children born to women in poor households face three times higher mortality risk than children born to women in rich households (p21). Thus, Nakhichevan, where has the highest poverty incidence and more than 79% of the households are in rural areas, is expected to have the highest infant and under-five mortality rate in the republic.

# THREATENED OR THREATENING?: TWO BRITISH CONSULAR REPORTS REGARDING THE CONDITION OF NON-MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN İZMİR AND ALEPPO

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## **Abstract:**

*This article aims to elaborate on the condition of Non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-nineteenth century. In the literature that argues for a so-called 'Armenian genocide', it is written that the Ottoman Empire persistently suppressed Non-Muslim communities. With reference to two British consular reports from Aleppo and İzmir, this article argues that this was not the case. Rather, because of the Edict of Reform (Islahat Fermanı) of 1856 and protection of foreign diplomatic missions, the condition of Non-Muslim communities was better vis-à-vis the Muslims, both politically and economically. Accordingly, in İzmir and Aleppo, Non-Muslim communities dominated the economic life of the respective provinces and they enjoyed almost full equality with their Muslim counterparts.*

**Keywords:** *British Consuls in the Ottoman Empire, Aleppo, İzmir, the Edict of Reform, Non-Muslim Communities in the Ottoman Empire*

## **Öz:**

*Bu makale on dokuzuncu yüzyılın ortalarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'daki gayrimüslim toplulukların durumunu incelemek üzere kaleme alınmıştır. Özellikle sözde 'Ermeni Soykırımı'nın varlığını kabul eden literatürde, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun gayrimüslim topluluklar üzerine büyük bir baskı uyguladığı yazılmaktadır. Bu makalede ise Halep ve İzmir'de bulunan iki İngiliz Konsolosun raporları dikkate alınarak durumun böyle olmadığı vurgulanmıştır. Zira 1856'da kabul edilen Islahat Fermanı ve yabancı diplomatik misyonların korunması neticesinde gayrimüslim toplulukların ekonomik ve siyasi durumu Müslümanlara kıyasla çok daha iyi duruma gelmiştir. İzmir ve Halep'te gayrimüslim topluluklar içinde buldukları vilayetlerin ekonomilerine hükmetmekle kalmamışlar, aynı zamanda Müslümanlarla büyük ölçüde aynı hakları kullanmışlardır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndaki İngiliz Konsoloslukları, Halep, İzmir, Islahat Fermanı, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda yaşayan gayrimüslim topluluklar*

## INTRODUCTION

Those who argue that Armenians were victims of the crime of 'genocide' committed by the Young Turk regime, generally trace their arguments back to the conditions of the Non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. They claim that these communities had been under constant pressure from the Ottoman Empire; they were discriminated, heavily taxed and they were even under the threat of armed attacks<sup>1</sup>. In other words, nineteenth century was a century of troubles for them, in which it was quite difficult to survive. Hence, they felt themselves insecure; and this feeling of insecurity proved right when Armenians were subjected to the so-called 'first genocide of the twentieth century'.

This article, on the other hand, argues that the situation of Non-Muslim communities in the Empire was not worse than the Muslims; it was in fact better. Within this context, it examines several documents from the British archives, dating back to the 1860s. This period is deliberately chosen, because particularly after 1856, with the declaration of *Islahat Fermanı* (Imperial Edict of Reform), British diplomatic agents in Turkey, who proclaimed themselves as the protectors of Christians in their own regions, were given the duty by the British government to prepare several reports regarding the situation of these communities. These reports are of considerable significance because they reflect the conditions of the Christian communities residing within the Ottoman Empire in this period.

This article is composed of four main parts. In the first part, the political and economic condition of the Ottoman Empire will be examined with reference to the events that occurred particularly in the mid-nineteenth century. The second part will deal with the letter and questionnaire of the British ambassador, Sir Henry Bulwer, sent to the British Consuls within the Ottoman Empire. The next part will cover the basic characteristics of two Ottoman cities, İzmir and Aleppo, since it was their Consuls that replied to the questionnaire. Understanding their

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<sup>1</sup> For this line of argumentation see Ternon, Yves, *The Armenians, History of a Genocide*, trans. By Rouben Cholakian, (New York: Caravan Books, 1981); Ternon, Yves, *The Armenian Cause*, trans. By Anahid Apehlian Mangouni, (New York: Caravan Books, 1985); Dadrian, Vakahn, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict From the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997);

similarities and differences is important in the sense that they give several clues for understanding the conditions of the Christians living there. Finally, in the last part, the answers to the questionnaire by the Consuls of Aleppo and İzmir will be evaluated.

## OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

The year 1856 is a decisive turning point in the course of Ottoman history. It marked the end of the Crimean War (1853-56), in which the Ottoman Empire, sided with Great Britain, France and the newly-established Sardinia (in some sources Piedmont), and defeated Russia. This war was not only significant because it demonstrated a temporary bulwark against Russian expansionism, but also because of the Treaty of Paris (30 March 1856), ending the war among the Great Powers of the period.

In the Article 7 of this Treaty, signatories "...declare the Sublime Porte admitted to participate in the advantages of the public law and system (Concert) of Europe [and they accepted]...to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire"<sup>2</sup>. In other words, with this Treaty, the Ottoman Empire was admitted to The Concert of Europe, and its independence and territorial integrity was guaranteed by the Great Powers. This article is so significant that it is even used by many contemporary historians and political scientists as an indication of the acceptance of Turkey as a European state. Still, however, the Treaty of Paris would survive only two decades and this period of temporary relief ended with the disastrous War of 1877-78 between the Ottoman Empire and Russia.

The year 1856 is not only remarkable because of the end of the Crimean War and the Treaty of Paris. On 18 February 1856, just one week before the convention of the Congress of Paris to discuss the situation after the Crimean War, the Ottoman Sultan Abdülmecid (reigned between 1839 and 1861) declared a *Hatt-ı Humayûn* (an imperial edict), which was later called *Islahat Fermanı* (The Imperial Edict of Reform). This *ferman* granted many rights to the Non-Muslim communities living under the Ottoman rule: Muslims and Non-Muslims were accepted as equal before the law; nobody would be forced to convert from his/her religion to another one; there would be no difference among the people on the basis of ethnicity, religion or religious sect; Muslims and Non-Muslims would be

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2 For the full text of the Treaty of Paris, see [www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/wilkinson/ps123/treaty\\_paris\\_1856.htm](http://www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/wilkinson/ps123/treaty_paris_1856.htm)

admitted to public and military services equally<sup>3</sup>. Considering the British presence in India or the French presence in Algeria, it can easily be seen that this edict was beyond its time in granting such extensive rights to the Non-Muslim communities living in the Ottoman Empire. Neither the British, nor the French, at that time, had adopted such an ambitious document to grant several rights to the minorities living in their colonies.

Ironically, this Imperial Edict was a European project. It was designed as a part of the negotiations among Britain, France and Austria.

Ironically, this Imperial Edict was a European project. It was designed as a part of the negotiations among Britain, France and Austria during 1855 in Vienna, through which it was agreed that the Ottoman Empire should be forced to grant some rights to the Non-Muslim communities living in the Empire. Therefore, *Islahat Fermanı* was also cited in the Article 9 of the Treaty of Paris as follows<sup>4</sup>:

“His Imperial Majesty the Sultan having, in his constant solicitude for the welfare of his subjects, issued a *Firman*, which, while ameliorating their condition without distinction of Religion or of Race, records his generous intentions towards the Christian population of his Empire, and wishing to give a further proof of his sentiments in that respect, has resolved to communicate to the Contracting Parties the said *Firman*, emanating spontaneously from his Sovereign will.”

As it can be seen in the text of this article, it was aimed to establish full equality between Muslim and Non-Muslim communities of the Ottoman Empire. However, the result would be quite the opposite. Non-Muslim communities generally abused these extensive rights, and due to Great Power protection, the Ottoman Empire could do nothing to prevent these abuses. As a result, from 1856 onwards, (gradually), non-Christian communities gradually bettered their positions vis-à-vis and sometimes even at the expense of the Muslim communities. Economically, they eventually became the dominant groups residing within the Ottoman Empire despite the fact that their numbers were proportionally much less than the Muslims. In political terms, they became bureaucrats, diplomats, and even ministers. In other words, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled transformed dramatically.

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3 For the full text of this Imperial Edict, see Karal, Enver Ziya, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1977, Volume 5), p. 266

4 See, [www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/wilkinson/ps123/treaty\\_paris\\_1856.htm](http://www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/wilkinson/ps123/treaty_paris_1856.htm)



## THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF SIR BULWER

The letter and the attached questionnaire submitted by Sir Bulwer, the Ambassador of Britain in Istanbul, to the Consuls in the Ottoman Empire was a clear indication of British attempts

Indeed, Bulwer was aware that the Russian claims, which assertively argued that the Christians were under constant pressure from the Ottoman Empire, were exaggerated.

to gather information about the region<sup>5</sup>. By the mid nineteenth century, anxious of the Russian complaints to Queen Victoria about the condition of the Christian community in the Ottoman Empire, the British Foreign Office aimed

to present an accurate account of the Christian communities living in the Empire to Europe and especially to Russia in order to prevent its ambitious aspirations. Therefore, in his address to the Consuls, Sir Bulwer wrote that the Russians argue that there was an unbearable pressure on the Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire, which could "...no longer be borne, inasmuch as that it is characterized by the grossest intolerance and persecution."<sup>6</sup> Indeed this was a clear act of intimidation towards Britain meaning that the Russians would take it upon themselves to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire with the pretext of protecting the rights of the Christian communities present therein. The British Foreign Office could not remain oblivious to this situation and decided to take steps to counteract this, the first of which was to learn what the conditions of the Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire were.

Indeed, Bulwer was aware that the Russian claims, which assertively argued that the Christians were under constant pressure from the Ottoman Empire, were exaggerated. He argued that the complaints of Russia were observable in all countries across Europe. What is more, contrary to these claims of suppression, he wrote that the scope of religious toleration in the Ottoman Empire was broader than the practices of many European governments, since it has been a traditional characteristic of the Turkish domination<sup>7</sup>. According to him, the responsibility of Ottoman mal-administration should not only be placed on the Ottoman govern-

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5 See, "Circular addressed by Sir H. Bulwer to Her Majesty's Consuls in the Ottoman Dominions, Constantinople, June 11, 1860" Şimşir, Bilal, (ed.), *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians, Volume I (1856-1880)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), p. 10

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p. 11

ment; rather those Christian subjects who were spoiled by the foreign protectors should also shoulder some of the blame. He laconically summarized the situation of the Christian community as such: “It seems to me, indeed, that more evil arises at present from the want of power and authority somewhere, than from the actual abuse of power and authority anywhere”<sup>8</sup>.

Within this context he demanded the British Consuls in the Ottoman Empire to state the conditions of the Christian community living in the regions that they served. He formulated twenty-four questions to be answered. These questions could be grouped under three broad categories. The first category contains questions regarding the general condition of the respective provinces and its population statistics. The second category, on the other hand, deals specifically with the situation of the Christians in these provinces and their conditions vis-à-vis the Muslim population. Here, his questions also touched upon the issues such as religious tolerance or freedom of worship. Finally, in the third category, Bulwer aimed to learn the opinions of the Consuls on the problems of the Christian community and the possible solutions of these problems.

As indicated above, in this article, two answers to Bulwer’s questionnaire will be examined. The first one was written on July 28, 1860, by Mr. Blunt, the Consul of İzmir<sup>9</sup>; whereas, the second answer was written on August 4, 1860, by Mr. Skene, the Consul of Aleppo<sup>10</sup>. But before closely examining these two answers in a comparative sense, it would be useful to look at these two important cities of the Ottoman Empire in order to understand the spirit of the time as well as the general conditions of the Christian communities living in these cosmopolitan cities.

### **ALEPPO AND İZMİR: TWO COSMOPOLITAN CITIES OF THE EMPIRE**

Being two significant trading cities of the Ottoman Empire, both cities shared several common characteristics. First of all, both of them are extremely important for their commercial background. Aleppo was a significant city of commerce dating back to 2000 B.C. It has always been an intersection point of many trade

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8 Ibid.

9 See, “Consul C. Blunt to Sir H. Bulwer, Smyrna, June 28, 1860” in Şimşir, Bilal, (ed.), *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians, Volume I (1856-1880)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), pp. 15-22

10 See, “Consul Skene to Sir H. Bulwer, Aleppo, August 4, 1860” in Şimşir, Bilal, (ed.), *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians, Volume I (1856-1880)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), pp. 22-31

routes including the Roman, Byzantine and Arab-Islamic ones as well as the Silk Road. However, despite its geographical location and oldness, its commercial character was generally shadowed by Antioch (Antakya) or Damascus for centuries<sup>11</sup>. The revival of Aleppo's significance in commerce was realized under the Mamluk rule. After that, although ruled from Damascus under the Ottoman rule, Aleppo continued to be one of the most significant commercial centers in the Ottoman Levant.

İzmir was also an ancient city dating back to classical Greek and Roman civilizations. However, its importance declined during the following centuries and the city could only be revived by the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as a commercial center<sup>12</sup>. Particularly, with the increasing significance of the Mediterranean commerce, the city turned out to be a vital link between Anatolia and the European mainland. Its fertile hinterland also contributed to its rise. Particularly agricultural raw materials produced in Western Anatolia were exported from İzmir to Europe. Thus in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the city, like Aleppo, was one of the most significant trading centers of the period.

A second point of similarity was the presence of Christian communities in these cities, in other words, their cosmopolitan nature. By the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, in Aleppo, there emerged the nucleus of diplomatic communities, particularly of the Venetian, French and English merchants. Then by the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, the Armenian Culfa trading community came to the city and began to dominate the Iranian silk trade<sup>13</sup>. This was followed by the local Christian Arab population, the Jewish community as well as North African and Indian communities. Thus there emerged a very cosmopolitan city.

Similarly, in İzmir, Venetian, French, English and Dutch trading and diplomatic communities began to emerge in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and a new 'Frankish quarter' was established in the city<sup>14</sup>. Local merchant communities such as Armenians, Jews, and the Greeks also engaged in commercial relations with the European merchants. Thus, İzmir turned out to be one of the most cosmopolitan cities of the Ottoman Empire, even perhaps, as cosmopolitan as Istanbul or Thessalonica.

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11 Eldem, Edhem, [et. al.] (ed.), *Doğu ile Batı Arasında Osmanlı Kenti: Halep, İzmir ve İstanbul*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003), p. 3

12 Ibid., p. 92

13 Eldem, op. cit., p. 37

14 Ibid.,

Besides these similarities, there are significant differences as well. Geographically, İzmir, itself, had been a harbor city, which had direct access to the seaways of the Mediterranean via the Aegean Sea; whereas, Aleppo was an interior city, always in search for an outlet to the Mediterranean. For a long time, Antakya served as the harbor of Aleppo, but this dependence created a different type of commercial city compared to İzmir.

Secondly, although both cities included a significant Christian and Jewish community, the degree of their cosmopolitanism differed. The Non-Muslim population of İzmir was almost equal to that of the Muslim population, and even exceeded it by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century whereas, in Aleppo, the Muslim population always outnumbered that of the Non-Muslim communities.

Although both cities included a significant Christian and Jewish community, the degree of their cosmopolitanism differed.

Third, being an Anatolian province İzmir was directly linked to the central administration of Istanbul; whereas, in Aleppo, the Ottomans established weaker linkages ties with the capital by preserving the local political elite. Although both cities benefited from a certain degree of autonomy due to their commercial nature particularly after the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Aleppo had a longer and deeper tradition of autonomous administration compared to İzmir.

In all, commerce was the fate of both cities in general. It was this characteristic that transformed the cities into two significant commercial centers of the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as enriched their culture and social structure through the amalgamation of different communities. This coexistence was generally not very problematic until the mid-nineteenth century; however, the combination of the decline of the Ottoman Empire and foreign intervention clouded the harmonious interaction among these communities.

## THE CONSULAR REPORTS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

After this background information, in the remaining part of the article the answers of the Consuls of Aleppo and İzmir will be examined in a comparative sense. As indicated above, Bulwer's questionnaire began with the questions regarding the general condition of the respective provinces and population statistics. Consul Blunt replied to these questions with a clear statement that the general condition of the province of İzmir is constantly improving due to increasing cultivation

and increasing agricultural production. However, according to him this improvement was "...more generally to the advantage of the Christian races." This was

Starting from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the economic balance between the Muslim and Christian communities tilted towards the latter.

because of the lack of Turkish manpower to further cultivate the agricultural lands of Western Anatolia. Due to military conscription, Turks went abroad quite often and their lands remained uncultivated. Most of them could not return; if they could, they would generally find no

way to sell their lands since they were unable to recover financially. As Bulwer wrote these returnees "usually fall into the meshes of some Christian usurious banker, to whom the whole property or estate soon sacrificed... [and]...the purchasers are either Armenians or Greeks".

In other words, starting from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the economic balance between the Muslim and Christian communities tilted towards the latter. Indeed, historically it can be said that the Turks never took much interest in commerce, thus the commercial sectors were dominated by Christian and Jewish merchants.. However, in the area of agriculture, it was the Turkish farmer that cultivated the land not only for economic but also for military purposes. Thus, the decline of the Turkish agricultural sector vis-à-vis the Non-Muslim communities represented a very significant socio-economic development.

Regarding the composition of the population in İzmir, Consul Blunt stressed the remarkable change of the proportion of the Christian population to the Muslim one because of the fact that the Muslim population was subject to conscription. He gave several statistical data on this matter. According to these data, in 1830 the Turkish population of İzmir was 80,000; whereas, it declined to 41,000 in 1860. On the other hand, the Greek population of the city was only 20,000 in 1830; whereas, it almost quadrupled in 1860, reaching 75,000 due to increasing migration from the countryside to the city. Adding almost 40,000 other Christian and Jewish communities, the number of Non-Muslim community in İzmir reached to 115,000, nearly tripling the number of Muslims. Regarding the whole province, whose population almost reached 1,000,000, two-third of this number was Muslim and one-third Non-Muslim.

Consul Skene also wrote that the province of Aleppo was in a good condition as regards the amount of production. In his words "...so rich is the soil, so in-

dustrious and frugal the laborer". However, unlike İzmir, most of the fertile land laid waste because of the continuous incursions of the Bedouins. Considering the situation of the Christians he wrote that they are "a keen, money-making people, clever in trade, miserly at home, abject without support, and insolent when unduly protected". Here again, the British diplomatic agent used a blaming discourse on the Christian communities of Aleppo. He argued that most of them were unjustly enriched and this created a reaction among the Muslim population of the province.

Consul Blunt wrote that "...the Christians are much better off than the Turks; for there is no drain upon the Christian population for troops, and Christians pay the same taxes on their produce"

Consul Skene gave a less detailed account of population statistics. He merely wrote that the total population of the province of Aleppo was close to 500,000, with one-fifth constituting Non-Muslim communities, and four-fifths constituting the Muslim community. Compared to İzmir, the proportion of the Non-Muslim communities was quite low, but still they had a great say in economic and commercial matters.

Regarding the question on the professional categorization of the population, both Consuls replied in the same manner. They wrote that almost all the proprietors were the Muslims; whereas almost all the merchants were from the Non-Muslim communities. However, there is a significant discrepancy with respect to this matter. While, in Aleppo, land proprietorship was quite limited for the Christians, in İzmir, as Charles Blunt wrote, although all the land belonged to the Muslims, the Christians cultivated most of it. In other words, although in theory the land proprietorship belonged to the Muslims in accordance with Ottoman legal system, in practice the land was not used by them much; rather the Christians cultivated it. The reasons were manifold, but the most important of them was the continuous and defeating wars of the Empire since the late seventeenth century. Lack of enough Muslim manpower due to conscriptions resulted in the Christian take over and cultivation of the agricultural lands.

Following these questions on the general condition of these two provinces, specific questions were asked to the Councils in order to learn whether Christian and Muslim populations were enjoying equal rights. Indeed these questions were significant because throughout the answers given to them, the British Foreign Of-

fice tried to understand whether the Imperial Edict of Reform of 1856 had been properly applied or not.

The first three questions regarding the equality of Muslim and Christian populations were about the economic issues<sup>15</sup>:

- Can Christians hold landed property on an equal condition with the Turks; and if not, where is the difference?
- Can Christians exercise trade in towns on equal terms with the Turks; and if not, in practice where is the difference?
- Is the Christian peasantry in the Christian villages as well of generally as the Muslims; and if not where is the difference?

Consul Blunt answered that the Muslims and Christians in the province of İzmir enjoyed equal rights regarding land proprietorship and trade. In his words, “[b]oth Turk and Christian are upon a footing of perfect equality”. However, Consul Skene wrote that there were four species of tenure of land in the Ottoman Empire and only two of them were available for the use of the Christians. These were ‘Mulkh’, or freehold property, and ‘Miri’ or the crown lands. The other two types of land, namely ‘vakouf’, or the land accrued by the pious foundations, and ‘malikaneh’, the land belonging to the families of *Sipahis* could not be owned or used by the Christians. Regarding trade, similar to Consul Blunt, Consul Skene wrote that there is perfect equality.

The answers given to the third question, namely on the comparative position of the peasantry, were quite interesting. Consul Blunt wrote that “...the Christians are much better off than the Turks; for there is no drain upon the Christian population for troops, and Christians pay the same taxes on their produce”. He also mentioned that the Turkish peasantry “...is, without doubt, more frequently subject to oppression than the Christian”. He argued that whenever a disagreement occurred between the state officials and the villagers, the Christian villager had always been protected by foreign Consuls, whereas there was no such mechanism for the protection of the rights of the Muslim peasantry; therefore they suffered the most.

After indicating that there is no Christian village in the province of Aleppo except for some Armenian villages near Maraş, Consul Skene admitted that the

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15 “Circular addressed by Sir H. Bulwer...”, p. 14

“...Armenian peasants cultivate the land of the Mussulman proprietors, by whom they are protected, and their condition is consequently as good as that of the Mahometan peasantry”. This falsified the Armenian claims that the Armenians lived under miserable conditions in the Ottoman Empire.

A similar question was asked regarding the overall conditions of the Christian population and whether they had improved over the last twenty years. After emphasizing that he had been to Turkey in 1820, Consul Blunt argued that from that time onwards “Christian population...is not only better off...than they were five, ten, fifteen and twenty years ago, but they feel and know they are so.” In other words, supported by the foreign powers, the Christian population began to be aware of their power and potential. Consul Skene, replied in the same fashion and added that the progress made by the Christian population reached a degree which presented a threat even for the Christians themselves since the “...Muslims are jealous of their prosperity in trade and exasperated by their arrogance when they obtain Consular protection.”

“...Turkish authorities are ever ready to lend their assistance to keep order and prevent any indecent interruption of the ceremonies.”

The next question was about judicial matters. Sir Bulwer asked the Consuls whether Christian evidence was admitted to the Courts of Justice. Consul Blunt replied that in the interior the judges did not admit the Christian evidence in cases against Muslims but there is only one single case of such in which, at the end, Christian evidence was admitted. However, in the Courts of the cities of Aydin and İzmir, Christian evidence was properly admitted. What is more, Consul Blunt pointed out an interesting detail. He wrote that the foreign Christian evidence is not admitted against the native Christian. In other words, the Ottoman judicial system tried to protect its own Christian citizens against foreign intervention.

To the same question, Consul Skene replied that in Aleppo, in theory Christian evidence was not admitted; however, there was no such case in practice. He wrote that in the case of a judicial dispute between a Christian and a Muslim, an Arbitration Commission was appointed and in civil, commercial or correctional cases, Christian evidence might be regarded.

Questions regarding religious freedom followed. Sir Bulwer asked whether



there were inequalities pertaining to religion and whether the Christian population had difficulties in their religious affairs, such as construction of churches or

These reports were important in the sense that they attested that how Russian claims were invalid, and in fact opposite of these claims was the case:

other religious practices. Consul Blunt replied that there was neither any inequality based on religion nor any restriction for the religious matters. He even wrote that during their religious observances, "...Turkish authorities are ever ready to lend their assistance to keep order and prevent any indecent interruption of the ceremonies". Consul Skene gave the same reply and enlisted four new churches built in the Province.

religious observances, "...Turkish authorities are ever ready to lend their assistance to keep order and prevent any indecent interruption of the ceremonies". Consul Skene gave the same reply and enlisted four new churches built in the Province.

Another interesting question is about the condition of Protestants living in the Ottoman Empire. Although the complaints of Russia were generally about the Orthodox population, Protestant Britain also asked whether Protestants were being persecuted, either by the Ottomans or by other Christians. Consul Blunt replied that Protestant Ottoman subjects are under the special protection of the Turkish authorities and this protection was necessary in order to prevent the 'fanatical enmity of other Christian sects and Jews. He further added that similarly, Consul Skene wrote that pressure was exerted on the Protestant community not by the Ottomans but by the Church, which they had left. Thus Ottoman protection was a significant mechanism to deter this pressure.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

While in political and military sense the Ottoman Empire was in a constant decline throughout the nineteenth century, in the social sphere there emerged a new configuration of interaction between the 'ruler' and the 'ruled' as well as among the 'ruled'. Regarding the interaction between the 'ruler' and the 'ruled' Tanzimat and Islahat reforms restricted the authority of the former and increased the rights of the latter by articulating that every Ottoman citizen was equal. This equality was quite significant since there are not many examples of such an understanding even in Europe. However, it was generally abused by the former 'millers' of the Ottoman Empire at the expense of the Muslim population, particularly because of the foreign intervention and support towards themselves.

The consular reports prepared by the British Consuls in Aleppo and İzmir were quite conspicuous in this sense. They were written in response to the question-

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naire of the British Ambassador in İstanbul, who had been instructed to gather data for the British Foreign Office. The British Foreign Office aimed to show that the condition of the Non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire was not as negative, because there was the Russian claim that Ottomans persistently suppressed these communities. Indeed the British were aware that this was a pretext for the Russians to intervene in the Ottoman Empire. In order to prevent this intervention, they have to show the European public opinion that the news about Ottoman suppression was a mere fallacy.

These reports were important in the sense that they attested that how Russian claims were invalid, and in fact opposite of these claims was the case. Accordingly, Ottoman pressure was not exerted upon the Non-Muslim communities; rather these communities were quite well off both economically and socially. Of course, this does not mean that there had not been any discord between the Muslims and Non-Muslims. Particularly because of economic decay as well as social disturbances there occurred significant quarrels; however, there has never been a state policy regarding the suppression of Non-Muslim communities.

Armenians, being one of the most significant Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire, were not an exception. They were not a suppressed nation in the mid nineteenth century. They lived under equal conditions with the Muslim communities, sometimes, as Consul Skene writes, even better than the Muslims. In sum, Armenian claims that they were persecuted throughout the nineteenth century by the Ottoman Empire are invalid. Rather, the reasons of deterioration of the Ottoman-Armenian relations must be traced to a later period and particularly to the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the Armenians came to the fore with the demand of independence.

## CONFERENCES

Since September 2005 a number of conferences were organized regarding the Armenian Question.

The first conference, entitled as “Ottoman Armenians during the Decline of the Empire: Issues of Scientific Responsibility and Democracy”, to which some Turkish scholars who supported Armenian claims participated, was the most controversial one. Even its organization was subject to a judicial dispute.

As a reaction to it several other conferences were organized as well.

The international symposium of Gazi University, entitled “International Symposium on the Development of Turkish-Armenian Relations and the Events of 1915” was quite significant since it included alternative views regarding the Armenian question.

Another symposium was held in Bodrum, held by Istanbul Marmara Education Foundation, Bodrum Chamber of Commerce and Bodrum Municipality. It was ended with a final communiqué calling the government to prepare an ‘action program’ in order to cope with internal and external pressures on the Armenian question.

Finally, on December 15-16, another symposium on Turkish-Armenian relations, entitled ‘Turkish-Armenian Relations’, took place at the Maçka campus of Istanbul Technical University. The Conference was organized by the Union of Non-Governmental Organizations, composed of 37 NGO’s.

In this issue a review of all these conferences were provided in order to make the reader acquainted with the recent discussions on Armenian question.

# CONFERENCE 1

## CONFERENCE ON OTTOMAN ARMENIANS DURING THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE: ISSUES OF SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBILITY AND DEMOCRACY

(23-25 September 2005, Boğaziçi /Bilgi University)

As a matter of fact, the Boğaziçi University Conference was one of the most controversial conferences ever held in Turkey. Indeed, it was first organized at Boğaziçi University; however, the university administration suspended its controversial project to stage in late May a conference titled “Ottoman Armenians during the Decline of the Empire: Issues of Scientific Responsibility and Democracy”. The decision was taken after the justice minister spoke out against the plan. The would-be organizers of the conference postponed it though there was no legal requirement for doing so. That incident triggered criticism especially from the EU member countries and related organizations.

Towards the end of August<sup>1</sup> it was announced that the planned conference would take place on 23-25 September with the same program and the same list of participants and that Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül would open the conference with a speech. According to one news report PM Erdoğan had actually asked Prof. Soysal, the president of the Boğaziçi University, to revive the project to ensure that the conference would take place prior to Oct. 3, that is, the starting date of the Turkey-EU negotiations<sup>2</sup>.

The news that the conference was going to materialize triggered some reactions the strongest of which came from the Turkish Retired Officers’ Association, the Turkish War Veterans’ Association, the Turkish Noncommissioned Officers’ Association, the Turkish Association of the War Wounded, Martyrs and Their Widows and Orphans, and the Turkish Union of Nongovernmental Organizations. These organizations wanted their representatives to be allowed to follow the conference. But, one of the organizers, Prof. Halil Berktaş, told them that due to the limited capacity of the hall only the invitees would be admitted<sup>3</sup>. A bigger

1 Hürriyet, Aug. 23, 2005, Milliyet, the same date

2 Milliyet, Aug. 25, 2005

3 Zaman, Sept. 14, 2005

hall could have been found for a conference that was drawing so much interest from the public opinion. The organizers obviously had no shortage of resources. Meanwhile, some 50 academics issued a communiqué in which they said that only those scholars that subscribed to a specific viewpoint had been invited to the conference while those that held the opposite view were not permitted to attend and present papers. They stressed that they found this stance to be contrary to the “university” concept in essence. They pointed out that one-sided views were going to be presented to the public opinion and. They compared that to “Spanish Inquisition”. They said that the outcome of the conference would fall short of qualifying as a product of scientific impartiality<sup>4</sup>.

Having received a complaint from the Union of Jurists, Istanbul’s Fourth Administrative Court decided a temporary suspension of the conference, the Bilgi and Sabancı Universities, telling them to clarify in writing in 30 days a number of issues. The court decision was taken by a majority vote. The dissenting judge said that the court decision concerned a matter that could not possibly be brought before an administrative court as a case since it did not constitute an administrative procedure, adding that, in line with Article 15/1 of the Administrative Trial Procedures Law, the court should have rejected the case without even examining it<sup>5</sup>.

Objections to the decision of Istanbul’s Fourth Administrative Court came from all quarters<sup>6</sup>. PM Erdoğan said that in a democratic Turkey it was not possible for him to accept such a decision. He said that one might not like a particular idea but the expression of it could not be prevented by that kind of obstacle. He added that he did not think it was compatible with democracy and freedom<sup>7</sup>. Deputy PM, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül said that “No one could surpass us when it comes to doing harm to ourselves.”<sup>8</sup> In a written statement the Higher Education Board (YÖK) stressed that one had to comply with the decisions of the courts, then went on to say that the injunction was an attempt to stretch the limits of the powers of the judiciary, and that it constituted an intervention in the academic autonomy of the universities safeguarded by Article 130 of the Constitution<sup>9</sup>.

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4 Milliyet, Sept. 22, 2005

5 Milliyet, Sept. 23, 2005

6 Istanbul Regional Administrative Court overruled that decision of Istanbul’s Fourth Administrative Court on Sept. 26, 2005 (Milliyet, Oct. 14, 2005)

7 Bianet, Sept. 23, 2005

8 Hürriyet, Sept. 23, 2005

9 Radikal, Sept. 23, 2005

A statement issued by the EU Commission, meanwhile, expressed profound regret over “this new attempt that prevents the Turkish society from discussing its history”, saying that the decision, taken just before the start of the conference, meant another provocation, considering the timing and the conditions, and that the Commission would refer to that subject in the Turkey Report to be issued on Nov. 9<sup>10</sup>.

The Conference Preparation Committee issued a statement, saying that the court had stepped outside its jurisdiction to intervene in the academic realm in a serious manner, that the universal rules of freedom of expression had been violated as well as the constitutional provisions that arranged these rules. It said that it deemed it necessary from the standpoint of democracy, academic freedom and autonomy that the conference should be held with priority. It announced that a decision was taken to hold the conference at Bilgi University<sup>11</sup>. Justice Minister Cemil Çiçek said that would cause no problem for the Bilgi University. He pointed out that the court had taken a decision against only the two universities organizing the conference, and that the meeting could well be held somewhere else<sup>12</sup>. Although the Union of Jurists that had opened the case described that as a ruse, a way of getting around the law<sup>13</sup>, the conference did begin at Bilgi University on the morning of Sept. 24. Some 300 people gathered near the campus, protesting the conference.

Since he was attending the UN General Assembly meeting in New York, Deputy PM, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül could not attend the conference. However, he sent a message.

As we have mentioned above, those who did not have invitation cards were not admitted into the conference hall. And, of those who did have invitation cards, only two could attempt to voice the counter-argument during the conference. Fatma Sarıkaya, a member of the USA-based Turkish Forum, was in the hall as the representative of a nongovernmental organization. However, she was not permitted to take the floor. She tried to intervene from time to time, posing questions<sup>14</sup>. Also, Prof. Dr. İlhan Çuhadaroğlu, the former dean of the Faculty of Dentistry of the Marmara University, was driven out of the hall before he could

10 AFP, Sept. 23, 2005

11 Bianet, Sept. 23, 2005

12 Hurriyetim, Sept. 23, 2005

13 Hurriyetim, Sept. 24, 2005

14 CNNTURK, Sept. 24, 2005

complete his speech<sup>15</sup>.

The conference triggered an intense debate in Turkey on freedom of expression. President Ahmet Necdet Sezer said that it would be contrary to academic tradition to argue that there is only one unchanging truth on historical and social issues. He stressed that those who had opposing views had an inalienable right to express them; and denying that right would reflect a dogmatic approach rather than a scholarly one<sup>16</sup>.

In the wake of the conference, due to a number of developments debates continued in Turkey and abroad on the scope of the freedom of expression in Turkey. A case had been opened against writer Orhan Pamuk after he declared, “On this soil one million Armenians and 30,000 Kurds have been killed,” and he faced a three-year prison sentence<sup>17</sup>; meanwhile, Hrant Dink, a journalist of Armenian origin, received a –suspended—six-month prison sentence for having said, “The clean blood that would fill the place to be vacated by the poisonous blood that would spill out of the Turk, exists in the noble vein the Armenian would form with Armenia<sup>18</sup>. EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn visited Orhan Pamuk in Istanbul after winding up his official talks in Ankara<sup>19</sup>, revealing the prevailing tendency in the EU circles.

The discussions taking place in Turkey on the scope of the freedom of expression pushed into the background the Armenian problem, which was the main topic of the conference. Furthermore, with a few exceptions, it was not clear who had said what during the conference and which ideas exactly had been discussed with priority. Although some of the newspapers and TV channels covered the conference they contented themselves with reporting on the incidents triggered by the dissenters’ attempts to speak. Only a few of the participants published, either prior to or following the conference, the papers they presented to the conference. However, these appeared in relatively small newspapers. No communiqué was issued at the end of the conference and that added to the uncertainties surrounding it. The organizers said the papers would be published but they did not set any date for that. The publication of the papers presented to scholarly conferences usually takes a long time, sometimes years. The Boğaziçi/Bilgi Uni-

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15 Zaman, Sept. 25, 2005

16 Milliyet, Oct. 4, 2005

17 Zaman, Oct. 10, 2005

18 Radikal, Oct. 10, 2005

19 The Oct. 8, 2005 issues of the main newspapers

versity conference was not a “normal” or ordinary conference in that it has been widely discussed by the public and, as we mentioned above, brought the freedom of expression in Turkey issue into the foreground. Therefore, it should have been a moral duty for the organizers to inform the public opinion as soon as possible if not immediately. They could have fulfilled that duty by permitting a TV channel to broadcast the conference live or by promptly feeding the papers into an Internet site. Unfortunately, this has not been done.

The major shortcoming of the conference was that it left out those views held by a great majority of the Turkish scholars, namely, the relocation of the Armenians was not genocide. When scholars who have the opposing views applied to take part in the conference their request was turned down. Another shortcoming was that the organizers handpicked the audience as well. Those who have the opposing views were not admitted into the hall. As a result, during the conference basically only one kind of opinion was expressed with certain nuances. Yet, as the President of the Republic has said, “Universities have to be institutions where different and conflicting views are freely discussed rather than places where dogmas are defended.”<sup>20</sup>

What is the reason for this attitude witnessed mostly in totalitarian regimes, especially in the former Communist countries? The Diaspora Armenians believe that acceptance on the part of the Turkish public opinion of the Armenian genocide allegations is the prerequisite of the fulfillment of their demands which can be summed up as obtaining compensation and land from Turkey. A very large part of the Turkish public sees these allegations as the biggest insult ever made to them and to their forefathers, and, therefore, no Turkish government could possibly say an “Armenian genocide” had occurred no matter how much pressure would be put on it. In other words, there is no hope that the Armenian demands would be fulfilled. Faced with this deadlock the Diaspora Armenians thought they would be better off if they took another path. They would convince the Turkish public that the relocation of the Armenians had been genocide and, using the pressure the Turkish public would then put on the Turkish Government, they would force the Turkish Government to acknowledge the “genocide” some time in the future. The path taken for that purpose entailed, as a first step, formation of a group consisting of a number of Turkish scholars who believed that Armenians had been subjected to genocide in Turkey. That group would defend the Armenian views. For that purpose, in recent years a number of Turkish scholars

<sup>20</sup> Milliyet, Oct. 4, 2005



that came to be known as “genocidists” held various meetings in foreign countries with the participation of their foreign colleagues, some of them Armenian. In the wake of these meetings, the Turkish scholars in question began to express in their writings --with certain differences and to the extent that the Turkish laws permitted it in at that time—the idea that the 1915 relocation was genocide. The number of Turkish scholars of this kind grew in a short time. It turned out that most of them had been investigated (and, in some cases, were convicted and imprisoned) in the past for their leftwing extremist stances or actions and that they had performed a U-turn after the collapse of the Soviet Union, abandoning the ideas for which they had suffered so many hardships. They had begun to advocate liberal views, supported human rights and democracy. It was observed that they embraced the Armenian genocide allegations because they saw it as an issue that would push Turkey into a tight spot. Curiously, with a few exceptions these persons have no expertise on the subject at hand, that is, the “Armenian problem”. For example, Halil Berktaş who currently acts as the leader of the group has not even written a lengthy article on the Armenian problem let alone a full-fledged book. The speeches he has made indicate that he has only superficial knowledge on this issue.

It would be right to consider the Boğaziçi/Bilgi University meeting as an event staged in the context of a series of meetings organized by Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called genocide. Most probably, the aim is to have as many Turkish scholars as possible say that Turks had committed genocide against Armenians in an effort to initiate in Turkey a movement towards “recognition of the genocide”. Obviously the organizers assumed that by staging such a conference shortly before the start of the Turkey-EU talks they would be able to muster support from certain circles in the EU countries as well.

However, this conference could not trigger a movement in Turkey in favor of “genocide-recognition”. In fact, it backfired. The number of people in Turkey who believe that the 1915 incidents were not a genocide has grown and, for the first time in Turkish history, these people staged a demonstration. In other words, this time the opposition to the “genocidists” was not limited to the newspaper and magazine pages. It spilled into the street in what seems to be a serious process of radicalization. In short, the results turned out to be exactly the opposite of what the organizers of the conference had hoped for.

Meanwhile, certain commentaries appearing in both the foreign<sup>21</sup> and Turkish press<sup>22</sup> maintained that with this conference yet another taboo has been destroyed, and that Turkey has taken a big step, overcoming a trauma. Among these, the six-page item that appeared in the Sept. 29, 2005 issue of *L'Express*, France's most widely read magazine, especially, drew attention. Titled "Turquie: La mémoire retrouvée" (Turkey: The memory regained), the article featured photos of "genocidist" persons such as Halil Berktaş, Murat Belge and Hrant Dink as well as photos of dead bodies allegedly belonging to slain Armenians; and it reflected entirely the Armenian views. This is not surprising since the deputy editor-in-chief of *L'Express* Christian Markarian is an Armenian as his name indicates.

Another characteristic of the articles in question is that they portray the Boğaziçi/Bilgi University conference as a kind of "watershed" indicating the point in time when Turkey started discussing the Armenian "genocide". Let us point out immediately that this is not true. It was more than a decade ago that some Turkish writers began to embrace and defend the allegation that the 1915 relocation was a genocide. The first book on this issue, Taner Akçam's "Türk Ulusal Kimliği ve Ermeni Sorunu (The Turkish National Identity and the Armenian Problem)", appeared in 1992. Also, another book by Akçam claimed in as early as 2000 that the "taboo" was being destroyed<sup>23</sup>.

What is new about the Boğaziçi/Bilgi University conference is that for the first time over 40 Turkish academics came together and declared an opinion that is in line with the Armenian genocide allegations, challenging, in a way, the argument embraced by the great majority of the Turkish people, that is, the 1915 incidents were not acts of genocide. However, that challenge has not yielded results because some other issues have overshadowed the debate itself: the difficulties the organizers encountered initially in trying to stage the conference, the turmoil caused by the demonstrations protesting the conference, and the fact that the discussions that took place during the conference have not been relayed to the public. It is ironical that the organizers were able to stage the conference only with the help of the Turkish government whose view on this matter they criticize with such vigor.

21 *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Sept. 25, 2005, *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 25, 2005, *La Libre Belgique*, Sept. 24, 2005

22 *Milliyet*, Sept. 27, 2005, Derya Sazak, *Bir Tabu Daha Yıkıldı (Another Taboo Was Demolished)*, *gazetemnet*, Oct. 1, 2005, Ferhat Kentel: *Bir Konferans ve Travmalarımızı Aşmak (A Conference and to Surpass Our Traumas)*

23 Taner Akçam, *Ermeni Tabusu Aralanırken: Diyalogdan Başka Bir Çözüm Var mı? (As the Armenian taboo gets thinned out: Is there any solution other than a dialogue?)*, Istanbul, 2000

## CONFERENCE 2

### INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISH-ARMENIAN RELATIONS AND THE EVENTS OF 1915

(23-25 November 2005, Gazi University)

An international symposium was organized by Gazi University, Atatürk Research and Application Center, entitled as “International Symposium on the Development of Turkish-Armenian Relations and the Events of 1915”, between 23-25 November 2005.

During this three day symposium, dubbed by some as an alternative to the controversial September 24-25 Armenian Conference held at Bilgi University in Istanbul, over 50 presentations were made during 11 sessions by speakers from 7 countries, including Russia, Azerbaijan and the USA. However there were speakers neither from France or the United Kingdom, which were repeatedly mentioned during the conference as having a direct responsibility in the creation of the Armenian question. Likewise there were no participants from Armenia nor from among the Armenians residing in Turkey including the Armenian Patriarchate.

Following the opening speech made by Prof. Dr. Hale Şivgin, the chief organizer, who touched upon the remarks made by Orhan Pamuk, Prof Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, the President of the Turkish Historical Society, made a speech on the extensive history of Turkish-Armenian relations. He stated that the tragedy should be studied by scholars with different views by setting up a joint commission. What is more, he emphasized that all archives of the involved countries should be opened for their use. This was a tall order that will probably fall on deaf ears on the Armenian side, which are adamant about not listening to Turkish views and will not sit at the same table with Turks, whom they have now labelled as “genocide deniers” and thus keep their archives closed.

Deputy Parliament Speaker Sadık Yakut also made a presentation and said that the Armenian issue was a national problem which needs to be solved. Speaking on behalf of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Sadık Yakut stated that the mission of the Turkish Parliament was to express to the world that the issue did not only involve the Armenians.

The President of Gazi University Prof. Dr. Kadri Yamaç, welcoming well over a thousand participants including many university professors and students, stated that history could not be written by the resolutions passed in parliaments and city councils, as it is presently being done. Using a strong language, Prof. Yamaç said that those who welcomed these parliamentary resolutions were either Armenians or their agents. During an earlier press conference, Prof Yamaç stated that all the participants of the Bilgi University Armenian Conference were also invited, but that only Prof. Dr. Baskin Oran and Prof. Dr. Fikret Adanır agreed to make presentations.

The first session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Hikmet Özdemir where Prof. Dr. Norman Stone made interesting comments that Turkey's rapid growth disturbed several actors and that the Armenian issue was being kept on the agenda not only by the Armenian diaspora but also by those who wanted to weaken Turkey. On the Armenian diaspora, Prof. Stone remarked that the Armenian issue was being romanticized in order to keep it alive. A good example of this would be the play that was recently staged in NYC, "The Beast on the Moon". Following that, the presentation made by Alexander Dugin, "Eurasianist Response to the Greater Middle East project" was very interesting, carrying the issue of a hundred years to current times, with reference to the role of the United States in the region. Other speakers of the first session included Prof. Dr. Reşat Genç from Gazi University on "The Early Period of Turkish Armenian Relations and the Gregorian Kipchacks", Prof. Dr. Temuçin Faik Ertan from Ankara University on "Armenians in Ottoman State Cadres", and Assist. Prof. Haluk Selvi from Sakarya University on "Activities of Armenian Bands 1900-1918".

The second session was moderated by CHP deputy, Şükrü Elekdağ, where Prof Dr. Hikmet Özdemir spoke on the "Clashes with the Armenian Militia from the Declaration of Mobilization to the Russian Occupation" and gave a detailed summary of the rebellions and clashes across the southern and eastern regions of Anatolia, identifying the time and the location of each rebellion and uprising, including those in Zeytun, Adana, Sason. Prof. Özdemir emphasized that he was presenting his paper on behalf of the "Military History and Strategic Research Department of the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

The presentation by Assist. Prof. Kalerya Antonninovna from Moscow State University, "The interest of the Combatants at the Caucasian Front during World War I" was controversial and raised several questions which were elaborated on by participants from Azerbaijan and Prof. Özdemir. In this session Prof. Guen-

ther Lewy made a presentation on, "What We Know and What We Don't Know About the Events of 1915." During his presentation, Lewy stated that 40% of pre-war Armenians corresponding to roughly 600,000 people were either killed or perished. Another participant retired Lieutenant General Hasan Kundakçı, spoke about "The Law of Relocation: Its Causes and Execution", in which he stressed the reasons and implementation of this law.

The third session was moderated by Gündüz Aktan, the President of ASAM. The speakers included Prof. Dr. Sina Akşin from Ankara University, Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran from Ankara University, Assist. Prof. Dr. İnanç Atılğan from TOBB University, Ömer E. Lütem, Director of Armenian Research Institute of ASAM and Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu. Prof. Akşin's presentation was entitled as "The Disease of Accepting a Genocide That Did Not Happen". He stressed that due to a sense of guiltiness and inferiority some academicians, without adequate examination, preferred to state that the so-called Armenian genocide was a reality. Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran was perhaps the most controversial speaker in the conference whose speech, entitled "The Roots of the Last Taboo: Historical and Psychological Obstruction of Armenian Question", was severely criticized by the participants. He argued that the Armenian question was a taboo not only in contemporary discourse, but also in the past. Accordingly, since the establishment of the Republic, the Armenian question has always been a sacred issue which resulted in the lack of enough researches on this subject. He was followed by Prof. Halaçoğlu, who spoke on "The Claim of the Armenian Genocide: Prejudices and Approaches", and focused on the Turkish and Western historiography and stated that the events could not be labeled as an act of genocide. Ömer E. Lütem delivered a speech on "The Implications of Armenian Question on Turkish-EU Relations", in which he examined the 1987 European Parliament decision, recognizing the so-called Armenian genocide. The presentation of Assist. Prof. Dr. İnanç Atılğan, entitled as "Can a Political Controversy Be Solved by Scientific Research" was about the experiences of the speaker in several platforms of conciliation.

On the second day of the conference, the fourth session was moderated by Mr. Hale Şıvgın where Ass. Prof. Yusuf Sarınoy, Director General of State Archives, spoke about "The Armenian Relocation and Tribunals, 1915-1916". Dr. Bilal Şimşir delivered a speech on "Armenian Allegations and the Malta Deportees", followed by a presentation by Assist. Prof. Dr. Feridun Ata from Selçuk University, "Can the War Tribunals Constitute Evidence for the Armenian Allegations?" Şükrü Elekdağ spoke about "The Evaluation of Armenian Allegations from the Perspective of International Law" He said that "those who advocate the

Armenian thesis cannot prove their allegations within the context of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. According to Article 4 of the Convention legal persons and states can not be punished for committing genocide; only real persons and public officials can be guilty of or charged with this crime. Furthermore, Article 6 of the same convention states that allegations in this respect are to be determined by competent tribunals. Stating that such allegations have both political and legal implications, Mr. Elekdağ proposed that a court of arbitration should be formed to deal with this issue. Prof. Dr. Türkkaya Ataöv, complaining about not being allowed to attend the Bilgi University's Armenian conference in Istanbul, presented information on his involvement in the 1984 and 1985 Orly lawsuits in Paris and his stay there for five months in his speech, entitled "I Support Free Discussion: With My Personal Experience."

The fifth session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu where Prof. Dr. Fikret Adanır from Ruhr University-Bochum spoke about the "Armenian Genocide Arguments and Historiography." Dr. Günay Evinç made a presentation on "The Armenian Pressure on the Freedom of Expression in US and the Law Suit brought by the Turkish-Americans in Massachusetts". They were accompanied by the presentations of Gündüz Aktan, entitled as "Armenian Genocide Allegations: The Intersection Point of Legal and Psychological Approaches", Prof. Dr. Anıl Çeçen from Ankara University, entitled as "Armenian Question as a State Policy", and Gaillaume Albert Houriet, a member of Swiss Parliament, entitled as "On The Recognition of Armenian Genocide by the Swiss National Assembly and Racism". Houriet expressed his sorrow for the acceptance of the Armenian Resolution by the Swiss Parliament and apologized on behalf of the Swiss people.

The sixth session, chaired by Ömer E. Lütem, and the seventh session, moderated by Prof. Dr. Bayram Kodaman, dealt with the issue of Azerbaijan-Armenian relations where speakers spoke about the massacres committed by Armenians in Azerbaijan and the drama of the Azerbaijani refugees. The participants of these sessions and the titles of their presentations are enlisted below:

- Hakan Yavuz from Utah University – "The Concept of Genocide and Its Politization"
- Prof. Dr. Faysal Kaltum from the University of Damascus – "Minority Question in Western Politics"
- Nazım İbrahimov, State Minister of Azerbaijan Responsible for the Azeri Diaspora – "Common Concerns of Turkey and Azeri Diaspora"

- Prof. Dr. Kemal Çiçek from Turkish Historical Society – “The Conditions of Reconciliation with Turkey from the Armenian Point of View”
- Prof. Dr. Refet Yinanç from Gazi University – “Politization of Armenian Question Since 1965”
- Prof. Dr. Hasan Guliyev – “The Roots and Reasons of Armenian Nationalism”
- Sabri Rüstem Hanlı, Member of Azeri Parliament – “The Genocide Committed by the Armenians in Azeribaijan”
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vahdet Keleşyılmaz – “The Special Organization with the Context of 1914-1915 Armenian Question”
- Dr. Mihriban Elekberzade from Azerbaijan Institute of History – “Relations with Armenians: Past and Present”
- Assist. Prof. Dr. Ender Gökdemir from Gazi University – “Massacres Committed by Armenians in the Six Provinces and Azeribaijan”
- Prof. Dr. Aygün Attar from Kütahya Dumlupınar University – “The Tragedy of Azeri Refugees”

The eight session of the symposium was chaired by Dr. Bilal Şimşir where the first speaker, Prof. Dr. Stanford Shaw from Bilkent University, (who) made a presentation giving a complete overview of the tragedy. He stated that between 1911 and 1923, the Ottoman Empire was involved in five destructive wars. Referring to the “War of Independence” which took place between 1918 and 1923, Prof Shaw stated that in reality this should be called the “War of Liberation” and added that during the “The Great War of 1910-1915”, sixty percent of the Ottoman population had perished. Prof. Shaw also argued that both the US and the EU want to hold the Turkish Republic responsible for the events that took place before its founding, emphasizing that no single group should be blamed for the tragedies which cost the lives of 4 to 5 million Turks. He indicated that although the Ottoman Empire could be criticized for recruiting large number of German officers and for the establishment of the Special Organization, the Empire nonetheless could not be accused of perpetrating genocide. In order to understand the full account of events, Prof. Shaw suggested that the archives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Red Crescent, the Immigration Office and the Special Organization should also be opened. Following his speech, Aytunç Altındal talked about the “Concepts of Genocide and Holocaust” and Mehmet Yuva from the University of Damascus on “The Syrian and Lebanese Approaches to the Armenian Question”.

In the ninth session, moderated by Prof. Dr. Enver Konukcu, Assist. Prof.

Şenol Kantarcı from Süleyman Demirel University spoke about “The Second Van Insurgence: An Important Event Leading to the Decision of Relocation.” Prof. Kantarcı stated that 35-40 thousand Turks were massacred during the Van rebellion. In this session, Prof. Dr Bayram Kodaman from Süleyman Demirel University delivered a speech, entitled “Armenian Adventure”. He was accompanied by Nejla Günay from Gazi University, who talked about the “1895 Zeytun Rebellion”; Dr. Atahan Paşayev, General Director of Azerbaijan National Archives Institution, who talked about the “The Role of Armenian Nationalist Parties in the Massacres Committed against Muslim People”; and Mehmet Perinçek from Moscow State Institute on International Relations, who talked about “Tashnak-sutyun in the Soviet-Armenian Resources”.

The tenth session was chaired by Prof.Dr. Kemal Çiçek. In this session, presentations were made by the following participants: Prof. Dr. Salahi Sonyel from London Near East University who spoke on “Turkish Armenian Relations during World War I According to British Secret Documents”; Nizami Caferov, the President of Azerbaijan Atatürk Center who delivered a speech on “Armenian Question: From Etnos to Politics”; Prof. Dr. Mehmet Saray, the Head of Atatürk Research Center, who discussed “Atatürk and Armenian Question”; Prof. Dr. Süleyman Beyoğlu from Marmara University who elaborated on the “Armenian Problem in Sevres and Lausanne; and Mustafa Özbek, the Head of Turkish Metal Workers’ Syndicate, who evaluated the Armenian Genocide Allegations.

The final and eleventh session of the symposium, chaired by Prof. Dr. Reşat Genç, included the speeches of Prof. Dr. Viyaceslav Silikov on the “Armenian Millet in the First Half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Its Relations With Ottoman Authorities”, Prof. Dr. Enver Konukçu from Atatürk University on “Armenians and Erzurum, 1916-1918”, Dr. Ali Güler on the “Armenian Question Within the Context of Turkish-EU Relations”. The last speech was delivered by Doğu Perinçek, the President of the Workers Party, entitled as “Evaluation of the Swiss Attitude on the Armenian Question”.

All in all, with the various speakers that participated in and the diverse subjects that were discussed during the symposium, it was very instrumental particularly with respect to providing concrete evidence as to how alternative views and arguments incongruous with the mainstream discourse could be freely expressed.



## CONFERENCE 3

### BODRUM SYMPOSIUM ON TURKS AND ARMENIANS IN HISTORY AND THE FACTS

(3-4 December 2005, Bodrum)

A symposium was organized in Bodrum on December 3-4, 2005, by İstanbul Marmara Education Foundation, Bodrum Chamber of Commerce and Bodrum Municipality. It was entitled as “Turks and Armenians in History and the Facts”. In the opening speech, Hüseyin Aksoy, the Governor of Muğla, stated that the Armenian question was being brought to the fore in other fields, and that the aim of this move was to sentence a nation for a crime that had not been committed. He also argued that the genocide allegations did not meet the criteria set forth by the United Nations Convention, and stressed that scientific studies should be carried out in order to ascertain whether or not the genocide claims were valid.

Following the Governor, Prof. Dr. Aytekin Berkman, the President of Muğla University, delivered a speech. He said that Turkish-Armenian relations had a long past in the respective histories of Turkey and Armenia. He also argued that Armenians had lived under various foreign rules and it had been the Seljuk Turks that freed them from the oppression particularly of the Byzantine Empire. What is more, he stated that the Ottoman Empire provided Armenians with religious freedom and established a Patriarchate in İstanbul in order to provide religious as well as social services.

The symposium was attended by various participants from academic, political and civil society circles from Turkey and Azerbaijan. The participants included representatives of political parties, such as Turhan Çömez from Justice and Development Party, Nüzhet Kandemir from True Path Party and Onur Öymen from the Republican People’s Party. From the academic circles, the President of Turkish History Society, Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Prof. Dr. Enver Konukçu from Atatürk University and Prof. Dr. Aygün Attar from Dumlupınar University were among the participants. Civil society organizations were represented in the symposium as well. Sinan Aygün, the President of the Ankara Chamber of Commerce, Prof. Dr. Agah Oktay Güner, the President of Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation and Mehmet Cengiz from the National Unity Council were present as speakers in the symposium. From Azerbaijan, Sabir Rüstemhanlı, a member of Azeri Parliament and Tenzile Rüstemhanlı, the President of Azerbaijan Women’s Union, attended to the symposium.

The symposium ended with a final declaration emphasizing several points:

- Between 1914 and 1922, Turkey fought a “War of Liberation” against imperialist Great Powers and their collaborators such as the Greeks and Armenians. Thus the events of 1915-1916 should be perceived as a legitimate act of self-defense sanctioned by within the framework of international law.
- Imperialist states are responsible for tragic events that took place between the Turks and the Armenians.
- These events can not be labeled as genocide since the concept of genocide had not been coined at that time. What is more, these events can not be perceived as a deliberate attempt to exterminate a group or nation.
- The Armenian question was resolved with the War of Liberation and the subsequent Treaty of Lausanne.
- The revitalization of genocide allegations is simply an attempt to carry forth aims of the past into the present day under a different guise. Since October 2000, many parliaments of the European states adopted decisions recognizing the events of 1915-16 as genocide. This is a clear indication of their animosity. These decisions bear testimony to the existence of a racist attitude towards Turkey
- A determined and effective policy based on the righteousness of our War of Liberation must be pursued.
- Turkey should prepare a “National Resistance Program” in order to face the threats directed towards Turkish interests not only regarding the Armenian question but also the Cyprus, Kurdish and Aegean problems.

# CONFERENCE 4

## SYMPOSIUM ON HISTORICAL FACTS RELATING TO TURKISH-ARMENIAN RELATIONS

(15-16 December 2005, Istanbul Technical University)

**O**n December 15-16, a symposium on Turkish-Armenian relations was held at the Maçka campus of Istanbul Technical University. The Conference was organized by the Union of Non-Governmental Organizations, composed of 37 NGO's. The Chairman of the Union, Aysel Ekşi, invited a broad spectrum of scholars both native and foreign with contrasting views to attend the symposium in an attempt to foster intellectual exchange and collaboration.

Various aspects of Turkish-Armenian relations were discussed during the symposium, though the events of 1915 were allotted considerable attention. In reference to these events, the Chairman of the Turkish Historical Society, Prof. Dr. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, stressed how Armenian genocide allegations were devoid of scientific essence and was being abused for political purposes. On this point he drew attention to how these allegations were made despite only 10% of the pertinent Ottoman archives having been thoroughly analyzed to this date. Furthermore, as pointed out by Prof. Dr. Türkkaya Ataöv, another speaker present at the symposium, it has been established that 50 of the documents ascribed to Ottoman leaders were forged by the Armenians.

The Chairman of the Center for Eurasian Strategic Studies, Gündüz Aktan, elaborated on the necessary conditions for events to be designated as genocide. Considerable emphasis was placed on how the wording 'the intent to destroy a group as such' embedded in the United Nations Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide necessitates the existence of a purely racist motive for acts to be designated as genocide and that psychoanalysis is the discipline to ascertain the nature and intensity of racism necessary to carry out such acts. Drawing a comparison between the atrocities in Darfur (Sudan) and Srebrenica (Bosnia-Herzegovina), he mentioned how due to the element of racial hatred and genocidal intent being present in the latter it qualified as an incident of genocide whereas the former, as established by the U.N., did not. Furthermore, he added that at the time of the Armenian relocation there existed, neither among the administration nor the Turkish society intended to destroy the Armenians as such.

The Republican Peoples Party deputy chairman, Onur Öymen, argued that the reason why the events of 1915 were brought to the fore stemmed from a desire to divert attention away from other pressing issues. In this context he placed particular emphasis on the terrorist activities of ASALA and the crimes against humanity which took place at Nagorno Karabagh. With respect to the latter he mentioned that as a result of an Armenian act of aggression 18,000 Azeris were killed, 50,000 were wounded, 44,000 were held captive, and 1 million were obliged to flee from Armenian occupation. Furthermore, he pointed out how 6 Azeri provinces remain under Armenian military occupation to this day.

The Republican People's Party deputy Şükrü Elekdağ, stated how there existed two main reasons precluding Turkey from effectively countering Armenian allegations. The first, he explained, is that the true nature and scope of the threat resting behind Armenian genocide allegations has not been fully understood by Turkish luminaries, the Turkish public, and political leaders. On this point he stated how the ideology the Armenians have coined as "Hay Dat" foresees the establishment of a Greater Armenia which envisages the annexation of a significant portion of the lands of Eastern Anatolia. The second reason stems from the lack of a long term strategy and master plan regarding this issue. The nonexistence of such a strategy, he explained, greatly impairs the ability of Turkey to defend its stance over this issue. As regards this matter he stressed two points: the necessity of an umbrella organization which would coordinate the activities of institutions working towards countering Armenian allegations and the importance of admitting all military and public archives to the General Directorate of the Archives of the Prime Ministry.

Prof. Dr. Norman Stone member of the teaching staff at Koç University emphasized that the manner in which Turkey continues to defend itself with respect to the events of 1915 remains inadequate. Making an allusion to the same point, the Chairman of the Turkey in the 21st Century Institute, Ümit Özdağ, maintained that the Turkish people were not abreast with psychological warfare, nor propaganda making, and added that defending the case against the so-called Armenian genocide was incumbent upon non-governmental organizations and not states.

Stressing that genocide was a legal term, the Director of the Topkapı Palace Museum, İlber Ortaylı, maintained that Turkish lawyers and the Turkish peoples were caught off guard in respect to this issue. He continued by stating how the classification of historical documents in the archives of the Prime Ministry has

been greatly delayed and that there existed among them newly emergent documents of a striking nature. These documents unearthed new facts pertaining to Armenian acts of aggression and revealed how Armenians carried out massacres in Eastern Anatolia appealing to a mentality of how these lands belonged to their forefathers despite not constituting a majority over them. In his concluding remarks he emphasized how the assertion that the events of 1915 amount to genocide is politicization, and that this claim is devoid of historical insight and a legal basis.

Other participants of the symposium included Nazan Moroğlu, member of the Board of Directors of the Istanbul Bar Association; Dr. Abdullah Kehale, member of the teaching staff of Mimar Sinan University; Former Ambassador Bilal Şimşir; and the Istanbul Technical University rector Prof. Dr. Faruk Karadoğan.

A central message reiterated throughout the symposium was that genocide was not only a social phenomenon but that it was a legal concept and needed to be evaluated as such. Furthermore, there appeared to be a broad consensus regarding the necessity to raise the level of awareness among the Turkish public at large with respect to the events of 1915. The symposium can be viewed as an important step towards this end.

## ASAM HIGH AWARD FOR STUDIES OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Crimes against humanity' is an arduous subject, the examination of which requires utmost talent and courage. Whoever analyzes the complex factors underlying this extreme destructiveness of human nature must be careful and loyal to the truth. This process presents the historian with a solemn responsibility. Thus, those courageous scholars and their valuable studies should be supported in order to encourage further research. Within this context, The Eurasian Strategic Research Center, ASAM, presented the 'High Award for Studies of Crimes against Humanity', for the first time, to Prof. Dr. Guenter Lewy for his esteemed studies on this subject.

Prof. Lewy is a reputable historian and academician, regarded as an expert on crimes against humanity and genocide studies. His major works on this subject are "Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies", "Catholic Church and Nazi Germany" and "The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide".

In the ceremony, The President of Avrasya-Bir Foundation, Şaban Gülbahar, delivered an opening speech, emphasizing the main issues covered by Prof. Lewy. Following that, Prof. Lewy was presented with the award by İsmet Sezgin. In his speech, Prof. Lewy focused on the concepts of crimes against humanity and genocide, as well as stressing the difficulties that the academic community witnessed in examining these issues.

The President of Turkish History Association, Prof. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Former Secretary of the National Security Council, General Tuncer Kılıç, and Prof. Norman Stone from Koç University were among the participants of the ceremony.

Below, the speeches of Şaban Gülbahar and Prof. Guenter Lewy are presented.

### **SPEECH DELIVERED BY ŞABAN GÜLBAHAR**

Dear distinguished guests,

I want to begin my speech with a famous proverb of Atatürk:

*“Writing history is as important as making history. If the writer is not loyal to the maker, the unchanging truth will take a form that surprises the humanity.”*

Historiography is a significant process of writing history that requires courage and responsibility. Entering into the darkest corners of history of mankind and revealing the truth is a challenging course that only the talented and courageous writers could dare. History means power whereas it is historiography that determines how and to what extent this power could be utilized. Here, the responsibility belongs to the historian. The power is in his hands and he would decide how to use it. However, it should not be forgotten that history likens a locked box which hides a very valuable treasure; it does not reveal its secrets to everyone. The only key that could unlock this box is responsibility. Only those who show the competency to be loyal to the past could walk into the dark and dusty corridors of history and to grasp its secrets.

Prof. Guenter Lewy is one of the exceptional scholars that could act in accordance with this sense of responsibility. Therefore, he has been esteemed by the world and his works are read with high interest.

Prof. Guenter Lewy was born in Germany in 1923. While he was ten years old, Nazi regime came to power and a period of suppression and violence began to shake Germany. As a result of these pressures, Prof. Lewy migrated first to Palestine and then to the United States just before the eruption of World War II in 1939. However, some of his relatives became victims of the Holocaust, committed by the Nazi Regime.

He had started his academic career in City College of New York and took his MSc and PhD degrees from the University of Columbia. His scholarship was started in the same university in 1953 and has continued in the University of Massachusetts at Amherst since 1964.

The sorrowful experiences that Prof. Lewy witnessed during his childhood and adolescence are quite significant since they determined the landmark of his academic career. The main characteristics of his works are the deep evaluation of the issue at hand and his broad philosophical perspective.

The basic problem that Prof. Lewy examines is how human beings could establish an ideology based on hate and animosity, and whether religion or ethics has a role in this process. Because of this, the concept of genocide, which can be

accepted as the peak of human destructiveness, turns out to be an often referred topic in his works. According to Lewy, under the establishment of an ideology based on animosity lies 'estrangement'. Estrangement of some groups by a dominant group in order to define its own identity has been seen in many societies and it can even be experienced today. However, this policy was brought to the extremes by Germany under Nazi administration and the estranged group was systematically exterminated after a process of anti-Semitism which had started even one thousand years ago. While examining the reasons and consequences of this process, Prof. Lewy analyses how abstractions like religion and ethics were either insufficient to prevent the construction of these destructive ideologies or used by the dominant group to legitimize these ideologies.

With this broad as well as deep point of view, Prof Lewy writes in different subjects. Particularly his works on the crimes against humanity are very significant because they demonstrate how an extremely complicated subject is examined with mastery. Prof. Lewy diagnosed the symptoms of crimes against humanity, which could be labeled as the most lethal disease of the history of mankind, with the sensitivity of a talented doctor.

In one of his major works on the crimes against humanity, "The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies", Prof. Lewy shows the oppression of Gypsies by the Nazi regime. Although having no comparable economic or intellectual power with the Jews, Gypsies turned out to be a hated minority, and Prof. Lewy tried to examine how and why they did so. He wrote so carefully that *Publisher's Weekly Journal* wrote that although Lewy's ideas were debatable, he defended his thesis carefully. In the *Library Journal*, this work was qualified as the basic study on the persecution of the Gypsies.

In "Catholic Church and Nazi Germany", which created a significant interest both in Europe and the United States, Prof. Lewy examines the role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust. Within this context he tries to show how the main representative of Christianity, which defines itself as the religion of peace and which is at least rhetorically so, supported the process of estrangement. In the book there are conspicuous references to the speeches of the German Catholic clergy on the Jews supporting the 'Arian race' ideology of the Nazis. A reputable journalist, who witnessed the destructiveness of World War II, William L. Shirer writes that the subject of the book was analyzed with openness and great courage.



The last book of Guenter Lewy is entitled "Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide". This book represents an intellectual uprising to the politization of the concept of 'genocide'.

As I mentioned before, the issue of crimes against humanity requires courage and carefulness. Thus, the exceptional qualified works on this issue should be encouraged and supported. We are gathered here, tonight, to present Prof. Guenter Lewy the ASAM. I hope that he will accept this modest award.

Thank you.

#### **SPEECH DELIVERED BY GUENTER LEWY**

I am greatly honored by the award you have bestowed on me. Much of the time, scholars must consider themselves happy when their books are noticed and reviewed by their fellow specialists. It is gratifying to be able to reach a larger public, notably halfway across the world. Globalization, it is clear, is no longer just an economic phenomenon, but it includes the unity of humanistic studies across national and religious boundaries.

I would like to say a few words on how the books recognized by your award came to be written. I left my native Germany in 1939 as a young boy of 15, just in time to escape being a statistic in Hitler's Final Solution of the Jewish Question. Growing up Jewish during the days of Nazi tyranny probably accounts for my life-long interest in problems of persecution and genocide. I also have always been attracted to historical situations that appeared simple and unambiguous on the surface but where I suspected a more complicated reality. In several cases this has led me to unexpected conclusions.

I had done my Ph.D. dissertation on the sixteenth century Spanish Jesuit Juan de Mariana, a defender of the right of resistance to tyranny and an advocate of tyrannicide in certain extreme situations. Nazi totalitarianism appeared to me to be eminently qualified as a case of extreme repression, and I therefore decided to look into the way the Catholic Church had reacted to this regime. In a letter to the Bavarian bishops written in 1945, Pope Pius XII paid tribute to the millions of ordinary Catholics who, he said, had fought against the demonic powers that ruled Germany. Yet after studying the actual events I learned that during the days of the Nazi regime the Church not only discouraged but actively condemned resistance to Nazi tyranny. The few Catholics who actively fought against the

regime were rebels not only against the state but against their ecclesiastical authorities as well. The church shared the widely prevailing sense of nationalism and was affected by the same excessive respect for authority that did so much to hinder the resistance to Hitler. The church's carefully circumscribed opposition to the regime was rooted in concern for her institutional interests — protecting the church's schools, newspapers, and her pastoral mission — rather than in a belief in freedom and justice for all men.

Some years ago I decided to undertake a comparative study of genocide. One of the main reasons why I abandoned this project is that each historical episode I looked at turned out be inadequately analyzed and understood by the existing literature and I was forced to do my own original spade work in the archives. That takes time, and time, especially for people of my age, is a commodity in limited supply. For example, the prevailing view of the treatment of the Gypsies by the Nazi regime was that this unfortunate minority was treated like the Jews - they were murdered because they existed as a racially defined group and not for their actions and beliefs. I soon discovered that this position was wrong. Since the Gypsies hailed from India and therefore were seen as originally "Aryan," Himmler exempted so-called "pure Gypsies" from deportation and the criterion of social adjustment played an important role in the selection process. Unlike the Jews, Gypsies were not selected for destruction because they existed.

That the unfortunate fate of the Ottoman Armenians during World War I is another case of mischaracterization and misunderstanding is a finding that will not surprise this audience. Yet probably not fully known and accepted by all is my conclusion that both sides in this long-standing controversy have simplified and distorted a complex historical reality. Both sides at times have used heavy-handed tactics to advance their cause and silence a full debate of the issues. Historians in both camps have resorted to questionable tactics of persuasion that includes willful mistranslations, citing important documents out of context, or simply ignoring the historical setting altogether.

During the last few years one can detect signs of a change in this situation. Turkish historical scholarship has shows signs of a post-nationalist phase, while some scholars on the Armenian side, too, now engage in research free of propagandistic rhetoric. It is to be hoped that soon it will become possible to discuss the tragic events of 1915/16 in the same non-partisan manner that is taken for granted in regard to most other historical topics.

American intellectual life, too, has not always been free of coercive pressures to conform. We experienced the politicization of academic life during the Vietnam War, and, more recently, the demand for political correctness. The difficulties I had in finding a publisher for my book on the Armenians are a case in point. Scholarship to be true scholarship must be open-ended and free of outside pressure. What is historically true is determined by the informed consensus of historians and not by the vote of legislatures or any other state agency. But unless scholars can find a hearing for their work their dedication to the canons of free inquiry is of no avail. The spirit embodied in your award will help safeguard this vital principle. Thank you ever so much.

# BOOK REVIEW

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamer Kasım**

Abant İzzet Baysal University,  
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## UNSILENCING THE PAST: TRACK TWO DIPLOMACY AND TURKISH ARMENIAN RELATIONS

*David Phillips*

New York: Berghahn Books, 2005, 170 pages, Index, Abbreviations, ISBN: 1-84545-007-8

This book, written by David L. Phillips, the organizer of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC), mainly includes the studies of this Commission from its establishment until its end, the debates within itself and the comments of the author about its achievements. It is not an academic study, but rather a study on the experiences of the organizer of an unofficial diplomatic initiative. The book was composed of 14 chapters. Besides the main subject, the book also includes the author's comments on similar diplomatic events and the effects of other international events such as the Iraqi war.

After a prologue and introduction written by the 1986 Nobel Prize Winner, Elie Wiesel, the first chapter, entitled 'Lessons from the Eastern Mediterranean', follows which is composed of the author's other diplomatic experiences. The comments on the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission start from the second chapter of the book. The second chapter, which is entitled 'First Contact', and the third chapter are about the meetings until the formal operation of TARC, the events that affect these meetings and the information on the members of the Commission. In the second chapter, the author writes about his contact with the President of Turkish Historical Society and the lessons that he derives from the failure of the initiative. According to the author in order to be successful in unofficial diplomatic initiatives, it is necessary to control the decision-making processes from the outset, to organize meetings in neutral locations, and to establish an institutional understanding in order to overcome the differences.

BOOK REVIEW

From the fourth chapter onwards, the works of TARC and its meetings are examined. After the Vienna meeting in June 2000, the Commission became operational with another meeting in Geneva on July 9, 2001. 6 Turkish and 4 Armenian members were present in the meeting. The Turkish side included Retired Ambassador Gündüz Aktan, Former Foreign Minister İlder Türkmen, Retired Ambassador Özdem Sanberk, Former President of Boğaziçi University Prof. Dr. Üstün Ergüder, Retired General Sadi Ergüvenç and Psychiatrist Vamık Volkan; whereas, the Armenian side included the President of American-Armenian Assembly Van Krikorian, Former Foreign Minister Alexander Arzoumanian, Retired Ambassador David Hovhannasian and one of Boris Yeltsin's advisor, Andranik Migranian. In the book the author also writes his comments about these members of the Commission. He does not hesitate to sharply criticize these people; even his comments on the relations between the Turkish members were reacted and falsified by these members of the Commission. Another significant aspect of the book is that it includes the details of some meetings, which are declared by the author as secret. If these meetings were really secret, or if there were too personal details, the ethical aspects of these comments are questionable. The initiative started in July 2005, ended unofficially in 2003 and officially in 2004. The presentation of the details on secret meetings as early as 2005 may have a constraining effect on those who would like to participate similar initiatives in the future.

The author argues that this initiative was a historical step and that it provided a ground for contact with other civil society organizations of from both sides. About the Commission, which aroused more interest in Armenia, David Philips writes that some Armenians supported the initiative secretly, although they seemed to criticize it publicly. He also argues that although the Armenian government was initially supportive of the initiative, after the first meeting, it changed its position. Particularly, it is stressed that Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanyan distanced himself from the initiative after mass criticisms. As emphasized in many places in the book, Armenian claims of genocide formed an insurmountable barrier between the Turkish and Armenian sides. At this point, Van Krikorian's explanations about the 'genocide' as a part of Armenian identity building process and his acceptance of the genocide as 'a fact' rather than something that should be examined by the commission are significant. Because, if one argues that his views are true and part of his identity, then it is not meaningful to gather two sides to make an academic or legal research. The author does not put his stance clearly on the unquestioning character on Armenian allegations. Although he refers to some views used to support the Armenian claims, such as the Memoirs of American Ambassador in the Ottoman Empire, Henry M.

Morgenthau, he does not mention the Turkish counter-arguments. Although in some parts of the book the reasons of the closure of the Turkish-Armenian border or the conditions of the Turkish side for the reopening of the border are clearly mentioned, in other places, Karabagh problem is presented as the sole reason of this attitude of Turkey. While he writes about the terrorist attacks on the Turkish diplomats starting from 1973, he does not refer to the Nemesis list and those who were killed within this framework. An interesting detail is the explanations of Andranik Migranian, one of the Commission members, in order to vindicate the ASALA terror.

In the book, significant international developments in the course of TARC as well as their implications on the working of the Commission are examined. Within this framework, it is emphasized that the events of September 11 directed the attention of the US to other areas. Although not expressed openly, it is implied that two sides saw the Commission as a tool for realizing their own aims. The differences between these basic aims are also covered. For example, the author argues that Van Krikorian supported the initiative because of tactical reasons. Accordingly, Van Krikorian thought that some friendship and alliances could be established with those who could accept Armenian allegations and who are in favor of development of Turco-Armenian relations; and TARC would be a tool to realize this aim. Accordingly Krikorian said that there can be no real reconciliation with the Turks until they recognize the Armenian genocide and added that the problem was how to manage it better. The author also argues that the efforts of the Commission were evaluated positively in Turkey and the Turkish side expected that this initiative may contribute to the prevention of marginalization of the extremist Armenians. The author stresses that Turkish positive reaction to the workings of the TARC was due to Turkish collaboration with the press and the right signals given by them. David Phillips explained the expectations of the Turkish side from the Commission with a quotation from Özdem Sanberk: “*The basic purpose of our Commission is to prevent the initiatives against Turkey, which came to the agendas of US Congress and the parliaments of Western states. It is important for us to prevent further discussion of genocide allegations in the US Congress. As long as we continue the process of dialogue, this issue will not come to the agenda of the US Congress*”. In the book, it is argued that the initiative also contributes to the prevention of several resolutions of European Parliament and some European countries regarding the recognition of the so-called Armenian genocide.

While the author argues that the initiative was heavily criticized by some Armenians, such as Tashnaks, he also puts forward that Tashnaks use the issue of

‘genocide’ to obtain political and economic power. It is also stressed that if there is reconciliation between two sides, then the rationale of existence of the Tashnaks will come to an end.

The author also argues that TARC turned out to be a catalyzer of other civil society initiatives between the Turks and the Armenians. His comments on the success of the Commission are somehow exaggerated. He said that he had organized the visit of Yerevan by Mehmet Ali Birand and his meeting with President Kocarian.

Another significant issue in the book is that the TARC did not aim to question the existence of genocide or to act as an unofficial mediator in the solution of the Karabagh problem; rather it tried to find out practical cooperation mechanisms. However, it was dissolved when the discussions regarding the genocide claims resurfaced. David Philips argues that TARC had aimed to develop Turkish-Armenian relations as well as to provide the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. With reference to Üstün Ergüder, he says that the lifting of visa restrictions to Armenian citizens as well as changing attitude of Turkey towards the membership of Armenia to the World Trade Organization was a result of the efforts of TARC.

TARC decided to ask a legal opinion from a civil society organization, ICTJ (International Center For Transnational Justice) about the applicability of UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to the events that had taken place in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In its working paper, which had been declared in February 2003, ICTJ declared that the Convention could not be applied to the events prior to its ratification; thus Armenians could not demand the application of the Convention. However, ICTJ pursued a supportive attitude to the Armenian claims without having scientific study and research on that matter. In the book, Gündüz Aktan’s explanations regarding the insufficiency of ICTJ on the Armenian question, takes place. David Philips also mentions Gündüz Aktan’s criticisms towards himself about the declaration of opinions of TARC members without their consent.

Andranik Migranian, an Armenian member of TARC, informed the press about the legal opinion of TARC, and the author criticizes this attitude. He also criticizes Gündüz Aktan and Özdem Sanberk because of their contact with ICTJ without informing him.

In the book, David Philips argues that ICTJ tried to prepare an opinion, with

which neither side won. Although ICTJ report was more disturbing for the Turkish side, the impression that there were concessions for both sides decreased the reliability of the report. What is more, considering the difficulties of archival studies in different countries as well as the lengthy procedures of these works, ICTJ report was not prepared professionally. ICTJ is not a legal authority; it is a civil society organization that mediated between two sides in the overthrow of the racist government in South Africa. Indeed, according to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the Convention cannot be applied retro-actively. In the report the 'motive' aspect of the Convention as well as the acts implied upon a group of people because of this group identity were disregarded. What is more, there is no racial hatred towards the Armenians such as anti-semitizm Germany, and this fact was also disregarded.

The book of David Philips examines the adventure of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission, which can be defined as a short-lived dialogue initiative. It is not an academic study; however, it could be useful in transferring the former experiences to new similar dialogue initiatives.



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