

# REVIEW OF ARMENIAN STUDIES

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY,  
POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## REVIEW OF ARMENIAN STUDIES

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Konrad Adenauer Cad., No. 61, 06550, Çankaya, Ankara - Turkey  
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**Institute for Armenian Research**

Konrad Adenauer Cad., No. 61, 06550, Çankaya, Ankara - Turkey  
Tel: +90 312 491 60 70 • Fax: +90 312 491 60 99  
E-mail: info@eraren.org  
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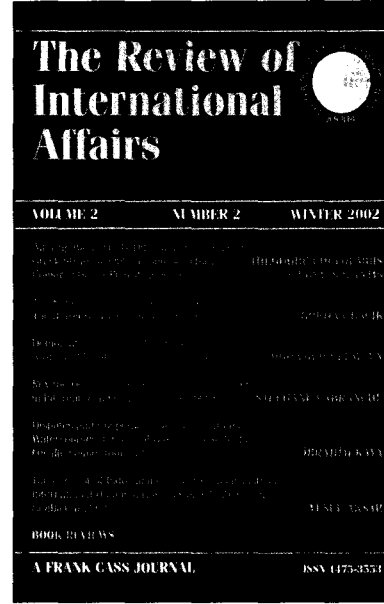
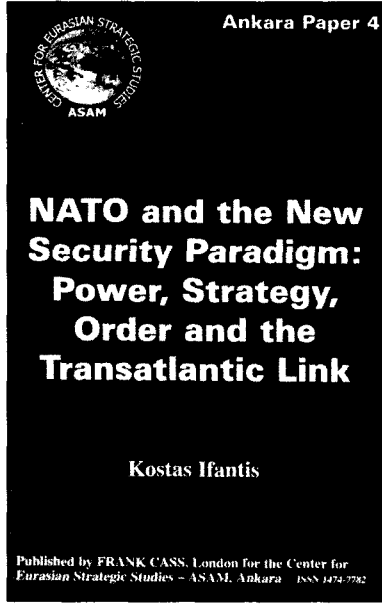
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## EDITORIAL NOTE

**T**he third issue of the Review for Armenian Studies begins with the 'Facts and Comments' by Ambassador (R) Ömer E. LÜTEM, a former director of the Institute for Armenian Research. In his article, Ambassador (Rtd.) Lütem first summarizes the developments in 2002 mainly in the context of Armenian propaganda and genocide allegations. And then, he analyses the presidential elections in Armenia and comments on the Turkish-Armenian relations.

Assist. Prof. Dr. İbrahim KAYA discusses the Nagorno-Karabakh case under international law, from the point of view of the right to self-determination. His study suggests that self rule by the population of Karabakh within Azerbaijan must be accepted for a peaceful solution of the conflict.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Süleyman SEYDİ examines the Armenian repatriation scheme in the early years of the Cold War. He pays attention to the discussions of those days on the annexation of Kars and Ardahan, and returning of Armenians to the mentioned lands.

Europe's largest Armenian Diaspora, namely the Armenians of France is the central topic in the article of Dr. Samim AKGÖNÜL. The author concentrates on the lobby and propaganda activities of the Armenians in France, and their perception of Turkey and Turkish citizens.

Research Assistant Umut KOLDAŞ writes on the integration of Armenian minority in Turkey between the years of the early 1950s and early 1970s. His article studies the integration process under the implications of successes and crises of efforts towards democratic consolidation.

The next section involves an essay on the assassination of Talat Pasha by Etruks TÜRKER. The author focuses on the response of the Armenians to the murder and analyzes the details of the event.

This issue concludes with two book reviews by Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Sıtkı BİLGİN and Hasret DİKİCİ. Finally, information is given on the recent books.

With best wishes,

The Editor

# FACTS AND COMMENTS

Ömer E. LÜTEM \*

## A SUMMARY OF 2002

The year 2002 witnessed frequent meetings between the foreign ministers of Turkey and Armenia. The foreign ministers saw the international organizations' meetings as an opportunity to hold bilateral talks in Reykjavik<sup>1</sup> in May, in Istanbul in June<sup>2</sup> and in New York in September. During these meetings, Turkey focused on finding a solution to the issue of Karabagh conflict, while the Armenian side concentrated on the question of establishing diplomatic relations with Turkey and of opening the borders. Although no progress was made in these meetings, the Armenian side, in particular, stated on numerous occasions that they favored the continuation of these talks. However, the general election in Turkey and the presidential election in Armenia halted the meetings of the foreign ministers.

Throughout the year 2002, the Armenian foreign minister stated on numerous occasions that Armenia was ready, without preconditions, to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey. There are many reasons for Turkey not to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and of her closure of the Armenian border. Some of the important ones are the Armenian occupation of Karabagh and other Azerbaijani territories; the Armenian unjust allegations of genocide directed against Turkey; and the reluctance of Armenia to officially recognize the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Turkey. If the unconditional diplomatic relations are to be established between the two countries, Armenia needs to show her good will by acting towards the solution of these problems. Because of these problems, the exchange of diplomatic relations with Armenia and opening of the border are against the interests of Turkey.

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\* Ambassador (Rtd)

1 *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, pp. 25-27.

2 *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 2, pp. 7-8.



**The Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul published a statement protesting the report.**

In 2002, unlike 2000 and 2001 and despite the efforts of the Armenian militants, no foreign parliaments passed any resolution to recognize the alleged genocide claims. In this context, the efforts made in the parliaments of Sweden<sup>3</sup> and Switzerland<sup>4</sup> were not materialized. Though initially the Canadian Senate did pass a resolution on this subject,<sup>5</sup> it was not enacted because the necessary vote was not secured in the House of Commons. Also, no draft resolution on the alleged Armenian genocide was presented to the US Congress, although, an unsuccessful attempt was made to include this matter in a resolution on the Jewish Holocaust.<sup>6</sup>

On February 28, 2002 the European Parliament, in a report on the Caucasus, restated that the alleged genocide was recognized by the Parliament and made a request from Turkey to lift the blockade on Armenia. This sparked great protests in Turkey. The political parties in the Turkish Grand National Assembly published a statement on the same day stating that the European Parliament intentionally distorted the historical facts.<sup>7</sup>

The Forum of Armenian Associations in Europe, which works in order to forward Armenian views in the organs of the European Union, commissioned by Tessa Hofmann, who is well-known for her continuous pro-Armenian stance, prepared a report on Turkey's Armenians. The report entitled as "Armenians in Turkey Today: A Critical Assessment of the Situation of the Armenians in Turkey Today". It was published in late 2002 and contained numerous errors regarding the position of the Armenians in Turkey. The Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul published a statement protesting the report.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, pp. 13-14.

<sup>4</sup> *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, pp. 17-19.

<sup>5</sup> *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 2, pp. 15-16.

<sup>6</sup> *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 2, pp. 13-14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ermeni Arařtırmaları*, Issue 4 (December 2001-January, February 2002) pp. 238-242.

<sup>8</sup> *Review of Armenian Studies*, Volume 1, Number 2, pp.17-19

The most significant vehicle for the Armenian propaganda in 2002 was the movie of "Ararat" directed by Atom Egoyan. The themes of the movie were based on many historical falsifications and distortions, and it contained many scenes of violence. Due to its confused and complicated storyline, this movie failed to attract audience even in the countries with an Armenian population. A book published by the Institute for Armenian Research displayed the propaganda aspects and historical inaccuracies of this movie.<sup>9</sup>

Although Presidents Aliyev and Kocharian privately met several times, no progress has been made on the Karabagh issue. The Minsk Group that had been formed by the OSCE to specifically address this conflict was practically not active in 2002. The French, American and Russian co-chairs of this group visited both Azerbaijan and Armenia, but they failed to produce new proposals. This fact leads one to question the value of the co-chairs' activities and of the Minsk Group they represent. It must be borne in mind that the failure to find a solution serves the interests of Armenia that has already occupied Karabagh and considers it as an Armenian land. New measures are needed to be put on the Karabagh problem which is currently at a deadlock. If the problem is to be solved within the OSCE system, a new negotiating mechanism which will sustain the balance between Azerbaijan and Armenia must be created. If the creation of such system is not possible, then the issue must be taken to the United Nations whose prior mission is to solve the conflicts. The presence of Muslim states in this body will give Azerbaijan such needed balance.

It seems that there is tacit agreement between the parties to postpone the solution of the Karabagh conflict until the end of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Armenia and presidential election in Azerbaijan. However, it must be borne in mind that as the integration of Karabagh with Armenia rapidly progresses, each day that goes by is in the interest of Armenia and against the interest of Azerbaijan.

Regarding the study of the Armenian question in Turkey, the year 2002 contained a number of important activities. The Turkish Congress of Research on Armenian Studies was held in April. Over 130 scholars and writers, who presented 115 papers on a wide

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<sup>9</sup> Şenol Kantarcı, Sedat Laçiner, *Ararat, Ermeni Sanatsal Propagandası (Ararat Artistic Armenian Propaganda)* (Ankara: ASAM, 2002).

range of topics concerning the various aspects of the Armenian question attended the Congress. The Congress was the largest one organized in Turkey. Taking into consideration the number of papers presented, the congress is likely to be the largest congress on this topic in the world. The Institute for the Armenian Research will publish the papers of the Congress in 2003.

The Institute for the Armenian Research has been publishing the bilingual quarterly "Ermeni Arařtırmaları" (Armenian Studies) since May 2001. As a result of an increase in the number of English articles in this quarterly and in order to reach to the non-Turkish readers as well, the Institute began to publish by the end of 2002 a quarterly in English titled as "Review of Armenian Studies".

Samuel A. Weems, a former District Attorney and judge from Arkansas, published in mid-2002 a highly praised book entitled as "Armenia, Secrets of a 'Christian' Terrorist State". After publishing the first volume of "The Armenian Great Deception Series", Mr. Weems unfortunately died on January 24, 2003. May he rest in peace.

#### **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ARMENIA**

The presidential election in Armenia was held on February 19, 2003. As none of the candidates was able to secure the necessary vote to be elected, the run-off was held on March 5, 2003 and Robert Kocharian was re-elected as President for a five-year term.

##### *The Election Campaign*

Although the 16 opposition parties had declared that they would agree on a single candidate,<sup>10</sup> they were unable to do so. The main reason for this is the fact that there is no single prominent politician in Armenia, which all parties can agree on. Although it was believed that the former President Ter Petrosian could have played a unifying role, the opposition did not support him either.<sup>11</sup> Shortly before the election, some parties decided to support the leader of the People's Party, Stephan Demirchian. However, finally, 9 candidates including Kocharian declared their candidacy.

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<sup>10</sup> AREA, January 28, 2002.

<sup>11</sup> RFE/RL November 16, 2002.

On the other hand, the candidature of Kocharian was widely supported by many quarters. That includes the Prime Minister (from Republican Party) and Andranik Markarian as well as by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (the Dashnak Party), the Land of Rule of Law Party and a dozen of other small parties and political organizations.<sup>12</sup>

President Kocharian gave a series of promises during his election campaign. The most significant of these was to create 30-40 thousand new jobs in the country every year. Other promises included the construction of new roads and houses for the refugees, increasing the supply of gas to the Soviet regime era's level, reinstating continuous water supply to houses and raising the water level of the drying Lake Sevan by 60 cm.<sup>13</sup> Kocharian also promised that if elected, he would stop the migration of Armenians and ensure the return of those already were abroad.<sup>14</sup>

A remarkable development during the election was the refusal of the candidature of the first Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia Raffi Hovhannisian on the grounds that he was not a citizen of Armenia. Armenian law requires that, to be eligible for the presidency, candidates must have held citizenship for at least 10 years and be resident in Armenia for the same duration.

This brings to the agenda the citizenship of Kocharian himself who was born in Karabagh. Kocharian was at the head of the Karabagh State Defense Council during 1992-1994 period. He became the president of the so called Republic of Karabagh during 1994-1997. As he was holding official positions in Karabagh during 1992-1997 term, it is physically impossible for him to have resided in Armenia. However, the claim of some candidates that Kocharian is not an Armenian citizen, was refused by the courts.<sup>15</sup>

Some acts of violence were witnessed during the election. Unknown assassins killed the President of the Armenian Public Television and Radio Council Tigran Naghdalian on December 27, 2002. It has been claimed that this killing was linked to the murder of eight people, who were attacked in the Armenian

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<sup>12</sup> *Armenia This Week*, February 14, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> *La Lettre de L'UGAB*, January 14, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> *Noyan Tapan*, January 31, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> *RFE/IRL Armenia Report*, January 9, 2003.

Parliament on October 27, 1999. Naghdalian was one of the prime witnesses of this attack.

Alex Harutiunian who was appointed as the Chairman of the Armenian Public Television and Radio Council after Naghdalian was arrested as an accomplice of the murders in Parliament's attack. He was later released due to lack of evidence. Harutiunian was the Chief of Cabinet to Kocharian, when he was arrested.<sup>16</sup>

The second act of violence during the presidential election was the stabbing of the parliamentarian Hayk Babukhanian on February 4, 2003, while he was attending a rally for the presidential candidate Aram Karpetian.<sup>17</sup>

Unfortunately the Armenian political life has a tradition of violence. From 1998 (Kocharian was elected President at that time) to the current time, we can list the following acts of violence: the slaying of Chief Prosecutor General Henrik Khachatarian in 1998; the murder of eight persons including the Speaker Demircian and Prime Minister Sarkasian in 1999 in Parliament; the killing of the Prime Ministerial Aide Gagik Poghosian in 2001; the wounding of the well known journalist Mark Grigorian; and as mentioned above, the murder of Tigran Naghdalian in 2002. Furthermore, the year 2003 started with the stabbing of Babukhanian. The reason for the unabated continuation of these attacks is the fact that none of the assassins have been caught.<sup>18</sup>

The central theme of the harsh criticism carried out by the media during the presidential election was the unlawful actions conducted by the supporters of President Kocharian. Based on the news from the Armenian media, these can be listed as follows: State television widely broadcasted in favor of President Kocharian while paying little attention to the other candidates;<sup>19</sup> misinformation was given about the other candidates;<sup>20</sup> while the posters of Kocharian were to be seen on the walls of many buildings including the official ones, the other candidates faced difficulties in showing up their own posters,<sup>21</sup> and sometimes

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<sup>16</sup> *La Lettre de l'UGAB*, January 11, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> *Yerkir Online*, February 4, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> *Le Monde*, February 19, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> *Armenia Now*, January 31, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> *Review an Outlook*, February 2, 2003, "The Noyan Tapan Highlights" N4, February, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

these were torn off;<sup>22</sup> the propaganda headquarters of President Kocharian was in a government building;<sup>23</sup> soldiers participated in the election campaign in favor of President Kocharian. Also, their other actions: school children were taken to Kocharian's election

**The Minister of Justice David Harutiuiian held conferences with teachers and parents forcing them to vote for Kocharian.**

campaigns;<sup>24</sup> the Minister of Justice David Harutiuiian held conferences with teachers and parents forcing them to vote for Kocharian;<sup>25</sup> only Kocharian's TV advertisements were shown during prime time; the electricity, gas and water bills of numerous people were paid in return to secure their votes for Kocharian.<sup>26</sup>

Defense Minister Serge Sargisian's management of President Kocharian's election campaign without resigning from his official post, led observers to think that Kocharian wanted to use governmental sources and facilities during his campaign. Some even claimed that Sargisian had ordered the security forces to ensure that Kocharian was re-elected.<sup>27</sup>

*Foreign Policy Issues in the Election Campaign*

Foreign policy issues were barely touched upon during the election campaign. It's a fact that the large number of poor people in Armenia is longing for the days of the Soviet regime, when a form of stability had been established. 13.7 percent of respondents in a poll stated that they wished to see Armenia joining the Russia-Belarus Union, while 6.3 percent expressed the desire for Armenia to become a part of the Russian Federation itself. A majority of the population, as large as 53.6 percent, believed that the close relations with the Russian Federation must be preserved.<sup>28</sup> One source claimed that it was this extraordinary

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<sup>22</sup> *Arminfo*, January 29, 2003 and *Orran*, February 1, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> *Orran*, February 1, 2003.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Eurasianet Organization* February 11, 2002.

<sup>26</sup> *Ria Orienda* January 28, 2003 and *Review and Outlook*, February 2, 2003 "The Noyan Tapan Highlights" 4 February, 2003.

<sup>27</sup> *RFE/RL Armenia Report*, January 16, 2003.

<sup>28</sup> *AZG Daily*, December 10, 2002.

standing of Russia in Armenia that led Kocharian to visit Moscow for no apparent reason on 16-18 January.<sup>29</sup> Kocharian most probably intended to prove that relations with Moscow are perfect and thus ensure the votes of those Armenians favoring Russia.

Besides the very clear pro-Russian stance, Armenia wishes good relations with also the USA and Europe as well. As Armenia is in need of support from all these nations, it has dubbed this policy as "equilibrium". Foreign Minister Oskanian stated in an interview that this is one of the most successful pillars around which their foreign policy was built.<sup>30</sup> He also added that departure from this policy would have negative repercussions. It is worth noting that Armenia does not consider either Turkey or Azerbaijan, neither even Georgia as an element in its balance policy.

On the other hand, in the same interview the Armenian Foreign Minister stated that, if he were to be elected, Kocharian would be ready to knock on the European Union's door to begin membership negotiations in 2008, which would be the final year of Kocharian's second term. However, the fraud and irregularities witnessed during the presidential election prove that European Union membership is not so close.

#### *The Karabagh Issue in the Election Campaign*

The Karabagh issue was also not taken up much during the election campaign. The main reason for this is the general approval by the public opinion of the hardline policy adopted by Kocharian towards the issue. However, even if it was nothing more than a rumor, the possibility that the Megri area may be given to Azerbaijan in the framework of a settlement was enough to attract criticism. Indirectly referring to Megri, Kocharian's election program also states that<sup>31</sup> an "exchange of territory" with Azerbaijan is unacceptable. The program also states that Karabagh must have safe borders, which have a geographical connection with Armenia. In other words, while Kocharian wishes to see Karabagh connected to Armenia via the Lachin corridor, he refuses a corridor through Megri that connects Nahchivan to Azerbaijan.

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<sup>29</sup> *Noyan Tapan*, February 10, 2003.

<sup>30</sup> H1 TV, *Orakarg Program*, February 8, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> *La Lettre de L'UGAB*.

During the visit to Moscow mentioned above, Kocharian stated in a conference on January 16, 2003 that the Karabagh events of 1991-1992 proved that it was not possible for the Armenians to live in Azerbaijan, and added 'We are talking about some sort of ethnic incompatibility'. This statement attracted strong protests.<sup>32</sup> The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Walter Schwimmer, made a comment that this expression of hate was amounted to war mongering and ran counter to the principles of ethnic tolerance and diversity. He also made the following statement: "Europe to which Armenia and Azerbaijan belong, begins with the acceptance of European diversity-be it ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic."<sup>33</sup>

#### *Relations with Turkey in the Election Campaign*

Since the public opinion generally accepts Kocharian's hardline policy towards Turkey, this issue has not been dwelled upon much during the election campaign.

The leader of the pro-Russian National Unity Party Gegemian criticized the Kocharian Government because Turkey would be participating in NATO military exercises, which will be held in Armenia next summer and made a demagogic as well as historically inaccurate statement by saying 'After 1915, a Turkish soldier will set foot on Armenian soil for the first time in 2003.'<sup>34</sup>

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation said that they had decided to support Kocharian because he was "raising national issues in the international arena with dignity." This refers surely to Armenian diplomacy starting to make accusations of alleged genocide against Turkey in some international organizations after Kocharian assumed power.<sup>35</sup> Viken A. Hovsepian, a member of the Dashnak Party, said in a statement that it must be remembered that Kocharian for the first time in Armenian history requested from the United Nations to recognize the genocide and that this constituted a major break with the previous regime of Ter Petrosian, who had made continuous efforts to avoid talking about the so-called 'genocide' issue.<sup>36</sup> In conformity with Dashnak

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<sup>32</sup> RFE/RL Armenia Report, January 31, 2003.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Noyan Tapan*, January 28, 2003.

<sup>35</sup> *La Lettre de L'UGAB*, novembre 30, 2002.

<sup>36</sup> *AWOL*, February 8-14, 2003.



demand, Kocharian in his election program<sup>37</sup> unwisely reiterated that he would work for the international recognition of the "genocide".

*Results of the First Round*

After the first round of the election, Robert Kocharian obtained 49.48 percent of the votes, while Stepan Demirchian received only 28.22 percent.

Participation in the election remained as low as 62 percent. However, this percentage should be considered to be normal for Armenia, since it was 60 percent in the previous presidential election.

*Developments between the Two Rounds*

When the voting started on February 19, 2003 some voters were unable to find their names on the voters' registration lists and they went to the courts asking for their right of voting to be restored. The number of these persons exceeded ten thousand.<sup>38</sup>

Opposition parties complained about ballot box stuffing in favor of President Kocharian. In addition to this, a significant number of the election observers from the opposition were arrested. Nevertheless, the Central Election Commission reported to have received very few written complaints.<sup>39</sup>

The presidential election was monitored by some 470 foreign observers some of which were members of international organizations. Yuri Yarov, who headed the observer mission of the Commonwealth of Independent States stated that there was no proof of the violations that the opposition was claiming.<sup>40</sup> Yarov also said that the presidential election was being conducted in a free, fair, open, democratic and legitimate fashion.<sup>41</sup>

In the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions<sup>42</sup> issued by the International Election Mission, which was jointly established by the OSCE and Council of Europe it was stated that "the 19 February 2003 presidential election in the Republic of

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<sup>37</sup> *La Lettre de L'UGAB*, Novembre 25, 2002.

<sup>38</sup> *Arminfo and Armen Press*, February 19, 2003.

<sup>39</sup> *Armen Press*, February 19, 2003.

<sup>40</sup> *Arminfo*, February 19, 2003.

<sup>41</sup> *Arminfo*, February 20, 2003.

<sup>42</sup> Press Release, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, Yerevan, February 20, 2003.

Armenia was generally calm and well administered, but the counting process was flawed and the long-term election process fell short of international standards in several key aspects". It was also said that the election had been marred by intimidation and a serious instance of violence, that there was evidence of manipulations, that public resources were heavily used in support of the incumbent President and that public TV failed to provide balanced and unbiased broadcast on candidates.

Supporters of the opposition parties staged large rallies to protest the outcome of the first round of the election. In response to this, President Kocharian said in an official statement that the authorities would vigorously respond to any action aimed at disrupting public order.<sup>43</sup> The Ministry of Defense issued a statement in which it was stressed that the opposition's actions broke the internal stability of Armenia and jeopardized the country's constitutional order. The same statement reminded that Armenia was still living in conditions of temporary armistice.<sup>44</sup>

In the meantime, some participants of the unauthorized rallies were arrested. According to the Speaker of the Ministry of Justice, Ara Saghatalian, 150 persons had been arrested by February 27, 2003.

There were concerns that the Armenian presidential election was being conducted in an atmosphere of violence. Peter Schieder, the Chairman of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe stated on February 26th that he was seriously concerned about the shortcomings and irregularities of the election adding that if Armenia wants to live in accordance with the democratic obligations as a member country of the Council of Europe, such irregularities should not be reproduced during the second round. Schieder also demanded the public order to be maintained without resorting to disproportionate means and all persons arrested to be released immediately.<sup>45</sup>

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, and the OSCE Chairman in Office, raised his concerns about the election and requested the arrested persons to

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<sup>43</sup> *Noyan Tapan*, February 22, 2003.

<sup>44</sup> *Arminfo*, February 22, 2003.

<sup>45</sup> *Council of Europe Press Release*, 26 February 2003.

be released. He called upon the Armenian authorities to respect the OSCE Copenhagen Document of 1990 on election. This document demands that election campaigns be conducted in a free and fair atmosphere and that neither administrative action, and violence nor intimidation prevents parties and the candidates from freely presenting their views.<sup>46</sup>

An important development between the two rounds of the election was the participation of Kocharian and Demirchian in a TV debate on March 3, 2003. In the debate during which a number of issues were taken up, Kocharian followed a tactic in which he showed his own knowledge of state affairs and sought to portray his rival as an inexperienced politician lacking in-depth knowledge in the same field. Demirchian, on the other hand talked about Kocharian's involvement in corruptions, frauds and scandals and stated that 'What I lack is an experience of involvement in illegalities and intrigues'.

During the debate, a journalist asked Kocharian and Demirchian the probability of improving the relations with Turkey and the possible cost of doing so. In his answer Demirchian said that the improvement of ties would not be at the expense of national values and he believed that ties with regional countries and neighbors in the future must be improved. On the issue of the alleged genocide, Demirchian stated that this is a national issue. Kocharian on the other hand stressed that none of the candidates including Demirchian had any word related to the genocide issue in their election programs.<sup>47</sup>

The importance of this televised debate for the Turkish-Armenian relations is that none of the candidates, with the exception of Kocharian, made use of the alleged genocide claims during their election programs. This development, in principle, may show that in the era after Kocharian, Turkish-Armenian relations may be constructed upon more realistic foundations.

Before the second round of voting, Walter Schwimmer, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Lord Russell Johnston, the Head of the Consultative Assembly Observer Mission and Peter Eicher, the Head of the OSCE Observer Mission demanded fair and free election in Armenia.

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<sup>46</sup> OSCE, The Hague, February 28, 2003.

<sup>47</sup> *Ann Groong*, March 5, 2003, Armenian Presidential Candidates TV Debates, Public Television of Armenia, Yerevan, March 3, 2003.

### *Results of the Presidential Election*

There were no serious acts of violence during the second round of voting on March 5, 2003. According to the results declared by the Central Election Commission the following day, Kocharian received 67.5 % and Demirchian 32.5% of the total votes.

The Armenian press and news agencies published numerous reports claiming that many irregularities had occurred during the second round of voting as well. The most important allegations were in relation to ballot-box stuffing in favor of President Kocharian. According to one of the reports 600.000 fake ballots bearing the name of Kocharian had been printed.<sup>48</sup> The second allegation was that significant number of observers belonging to the opposition had been arrested, thus preventing them from objecting to the vote count. Besides these allegations, the pro-Kocharian broadcasts of the state TV must also be mentioned.

The Council of Europe issued a statement<sup>49</sup> immediately after the second round of voting stressing that the second round marked by serious irregularities, adding that the overall election process had fallen short of international standards.

Yuri Yarov who headed the observer mission of the Commonwealth of Independent States said that there had been no irregularities after the second tour and that the election had been well organized.<sup>50</sup> The contradictions between Yarov's statement and the views of the other observers can be explained with the Russian desire to contribute to the election of Kocharian. In this context, it is safe to assume that Vladimir Putin's congratulation of Kocharian as the first foreign statesman is a result of Russian attempt to give legitimacy to the election.

However, the reaction to the election by the USA, which usually supports Armenia in every field, has been quite harsh. Richard Boucher, the Speaker of the State Department, agreed with the international observers' conclusion that presidential run-off fell short of international standards. He stated that the leadership of Armenia missed an important opportunity to advance democratization by holding a credible election and added that "we

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<sup>48</sup> *Arminfo*, March 5, 2003.

<sup>49</sup> *Council of Europe Press Release*, March 6, 2003.

<sup>50</sup> *Arminfo*, March 5, 2003.

**The Council of Europe  
(and OSCE) has no power  
to apply sanctions to any  
country in the case of  
undemocratic elections.**

confidence."<sup>51</sup>

One may ask the possible impacts of the above-mentioned statements of fraud in the election? As Lord Russell Johnston has said personally, the Council of Europe (and OSCE) has no power to apply sanctions to any country in the case of undemocratic elections.<sup>52</sup> Also it must be remembered that according to international law no country or organization has such power. A report regarding this election will be prepared and submitted to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe. The Armenians will most probably refuse any criticism that will be directed at them during the deliberations and will try to defend themselves by sheltering behind the report of the Observer Mission of the Commonwealth of Independent States which claims that no irregularities occurred during the election. In this context, it should be remembered that fraud took place also in 1998 during the Armenian presidential election and that reports were prepared on that occasion too and all of these were later forgotten.

Although his election is questionable, it is clear that Robert Kocharian will be leading Armenia during the next 5 years. It is hoped that in this long period of time Kocharian will implement the much needed domestic reforms. In the sphere of foreign policy, he must heed Armenian interests and resolve the Karabagh problem with Azerbaijan. It is also hoped that to normalize the relations with Turkey adopting a realistic policy and abandon allegations of genocide, and recognize the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Turkey. This will open the gate to an era of peace and cooperation in the southern Caucasus.

<sup>51</sup> *RFE/RL*, March 7, 2003.

<sup>52</sup> *Arminfo*, March 6, 2003.

## **TURKISH-ARMENIAN RELATIONS**

There were Armenian press reports in the second half of December 2002 stating that the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Yaşar Yakış had said that in spite of Azerbaijan's dissatisfaction, Ankara might improve relations with Armenia.<sup>53</sup> When asked questions on this statement, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Oskanian welcomed the intention of Turkey to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia. He added that Armenia was ready for cooperation without any preconditions<sup>54</sup> and that establishing diplomatic relations with Armenia and lifting the embargo would make the perspective of Turkish membership to the European Union (EU) more real.<sup>55</sup> Another source claims that Oskanian said, "I hardly believe that the EU will admit Turkey having no diplomatic relations with Armenia."<sup>56</sup>

According to an Armenian news agency<sup>57</sup> in the same days the Deputy Secretary of State of the USA Marc Grossman stated: "I call on the Turkish government to continue efforts on Armenian-Turkish reconciliation as well as to individual steps being taken to that end so that Turkey and Armenia can advance on the way of accord and joint economic development". This led to the opinion that soon there would be developments in Turkish-Armenian relations.

This situation created serious concerns in Azerbaijan. The speaker of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Metin Mirza declared that these were a part of the lies of the Armenian press and stressed that Ankara had stated on numerous occasions that it would not cooperate with Armenia in any field until the Azerbaijani territories under occupation were liberated and the Karabagh conflict settled.<sup>58</sup>

The leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) Tayyip Erdoğan visited Azerbaijan on January 7, 2003 and he and those with him made statements that clarified the policies of the new Turkish government regarding Armenia and the Karabagh conflict, thus allaying certain fears in Azerbaijan.

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<sup>53</sup> *Pan Armenian Net and ArmTV* dated December 17, 2002.

<sup>54</sup> *ITAR-TASS News Agency*, December 17, 2002.

<sup>55</sup> *Arm TV*, December 17, 2002.

<sup>56</sup> *ARKA*, December 18, 2002.

<sup>57</sup> *Pan Armenian*, December 18, 2002.

<sup>58</sup> *ANS TV*, December 18, 2002.

Erdoğan stated in Azerbaijan that in the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict, the new Turkish Government will continue to support the rightful policy of Azerbaijan.<sup>59</sup> Turkey will not develop relations with Armenia before a resolution is reached on the Karabagh conflict.<sup>60</sup> Turkey supports the idea of direct talks between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia with the aim of finding a solution.<sup>61</sup> Turkey also supports the efforts of the Minsk Group<sup>62</sup> despite she considers this Group ineffective.<sup>63</sup> A trilateral dialogue between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey may have a positive impact on the solution of the Karabagh conflict.<sup>64</sup>

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yaşar Yakış, who accompanied Erdoğan on his visit to Azerbaijan said that Armenia must evacuate the territories of Azerbaijan, and that Armenia was the only country that did not recognize the borders of the former USSR, and the borders of Turkey, which had been established in 1921. He also drew attention to the fact that Eastern Anatolia was called West Armenia by Yerevan, adding that the article of the Armenian constitution regarding the alleged genocide must be removed.<sup>65</sup> He also said that Turkey would open her border with Armenia if Azerbaijan gives its consent.<sup>66</sup>

The above statements indicate that the new Turkish government will follow the same basic policies as the previous Turkish governments did. In other words, it is understood that no diplomatic relations will be established with Armenia the border will not be opened as long as she does not resolve her problems with Azerbaijan, such as Karabagh. Relations also will not be established as long as Armenia fails to recognize the territorial integrity of Turkey and continues its false allegations of genocide.

The clarification of Turkish policy led to disillusionment in Armenia. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Oskanian organized a press conference, where he stated that the AKP government had initially sounded ready to reconsider the Armenian policy followed

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<sup>59</sup> *Azerbaijan TV Channel One*, January 7, 2003.

<sup>60</sup> *Arm TV*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>61</sup> *Armen Press*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>62</sup> *Pan Armenian News*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>63</sup> *Arm TV*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>64</sup> *Trend News Agency*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>65</sup> *ANS Radio*, January 8, 2003.

<sup>66</sup> *Pan Armenian News*, January 8, 2003.

by previous Turkish cabinets and that signals testifying to this had been received but that Erdoğan's statements in Baku had cast a shadow over those hopes, adding however that they wished direct contacts which had been initiated in the Ecevit era to be resumed with no pre-conditions attached.<sup>67</sup>

About a week later, on January 16, 2003 while visiting Russia, President Kocharian touched upon this matter during a speech at the Moscow Academy of Foreign Affairs. After saying that Turkey continued to blockade Armenia and that there were no diplomatic relations between the two states, he said that bilateral relations should not be tied with the resolution of the Karabagh conflict, and that Turkey had nothing to do with the conflict and that relations should not be burdened with Azerbaijani-Armenian problems. He also said that Turkish-Armenian cooperation would be beneficial for both countries and the region as a whole and that they had expressed their preparedness for a dialogue with Turkey without any preconditions on a number of occasions and that Armenia continued to stand by this position.<sup>68</sup>

Kocharian's insistence on the idea that the Karabagh conflict is of no interest to Turkey is an answer to Erdoğan's aforementioned statements in Baku about his concerns on the ineffectiveness of the Minsk Group and the idea of establishing trilateral dialogue between Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey; which will have positive effect on the solution of the Karabagh conflict. The Armenians believe that it will not be in their interest to take up the Karabagh conflict to a trilateral meeting, where the Turks will support the views of Azerbaijan.

As a result, some Armenian officials interpreted the statements of the Turkish politicians in line with their own expectations. When Tayyip Erdoğan, the Turkish Premier, clarified the matters during his Baku visit, Armenians are disappointed. Considering the importance of the issues that divide two countries, Foreign Ministers of Turkey and Armenia should resume their meeting as soon as possible. It's likely that after the parliamentary elections in Armenia on May 25, 2003 such a meeting will take place.

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<sup>67</sup> RFE/RL Armenia Report, January 11, 2003.

<sup>68</sup> <http://news.president.am/eng/>



# THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION: THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT RECONSIDERED

Assist. Prof. Dr. İbrahim KAYA\*

## **Abstract:**

*This study examines the validity of the claim for the right to self-determination of the Armenian administration of Nagorno-Karabakh. The Nagorno-Karabakh case under international law from the point of view of the right to self-determination is discussed here. It is argued that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh is not entitled to form their own state or to unite with Armenia, since either will mean secession from Azerbaijan, unless Azerbaijan gives its consent. However, this study suggests that self rule by the population of Karabakh within Azerbaijan must be accepted for the peaceful solution of the conflict.*

## **Keywords:**

*Self-determination, Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, the Caucasus, Minorities, International law.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**T**he failure to resolve the conflict over the mountainous territory of Nagorno-Karabakh remains the most serious problem in the south Caucasus, blighting the peaceful development of the whole region. Almost nine years after Armenians and Azerbaijanis signed the ceasefire agreement that halted the war in 1994, and ten years after the first United Nations resolution on the conflict on April 30 1993 the dispute is no nearer resolution.

One reason it remains unsettled is that one party to the conflict managed to defeat the other party militarily. As a result, the Armenian side as a victorious one that expelled the Azerbaijanis of Nagorno-Karabakh and the land between Nagorno-Karabakh insists on the proposition that either the Armenian administration of Nagorno-Karabakh must be recognized as an independent state by Azerbaijan or the former *oblast* must be united with Armenia. The

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\* Institute for Armenian Research and Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University. ikaya@eraren.org

other side, Azerbaijan, claims that Nagorno-Karabakh is a part of Azerbaijani territory and demands that the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories, both in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding areas, must end. Both sides seek the help of international law in their respective claims; while the former resorts to the right to self-determination, the latter argues in terms of the principle of the respect for territorial integrity and *uti possidetis*.

This study attempts to assess the validity of the claim for the right to self-determination of the Armenian administration of Nagorno-Karabakh. Firstly, the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the right to self-determination will be examined. Then, the Nagorno-Karabakh case under international law from the point of view of the right to self-determination will be discussed.

### **THE CONFLICT IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH<sup>1</sup>**

Three Transcaucasian countries of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia became independent on 26, 27 and 30 May 1918 respectively. Nagorno-Karabakh was under the Azerbaijani control. The independence of the Transcaucasian republics did not live long. Baku was occupied on 27 April 1920 by the Soviet forces and next day Azerbaijan became the first Soviet Socialist Republic of Transcaucasia. The Red Army occupied Yerevan and Armenia also became a Soviet Socialist Republic on 1 December 1920. As a result of the sovietization of Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was transformed from an international (inter-state) issue to an internal matter of the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> For the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party delivered the following decision on 5 July 1921:

Proceeding from the necessity for national peace among Muslims and Armenians and of the economic ties between upper (Nagorno) and lower Karabakh, of its permanent ties with Azerbaijan, mountainous

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent assessment of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh see, Svante Cornell, 'Undeclared War: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Reconsidered', *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (1997).

<sup>2</sup> Michael P. Croissant, *The Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict, Causes and Implications* (Westport, London: Praeger, 1998) p. 18. Historically both Azerbaijanis and Armenians have claimed sovereignty over Karabakh.

(Nagorno) Karabakh is to remain within the borders of the Azerbaijan SSR, receiving wide regional autonomy with the administrative center at Shusha, becoming an autonomous region.<sup>3</sup>

The autonomy mentioned above was materialized by the creation of the Autonomous Oblast of Nagorno-Karabakh in 1923 with the authority to administer its own internal affairs in the realm of culture and education; and communist party and state organs were also created.<sup>4</sup> The same year, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh was moved from Shusha to Khankend which was later named Stepanakert. The name of the *oblast* was changed in 1937 to the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast.

During the Soviet era, except the period of Gorbachev's last years, the scale of the conflict on Nagorno-Karabakh was quite low, if any. The issue was taken up in 1964 by a petition with the signatures of 2,500 Karabakh Armenians to Moscow. The petition plead for Nagorno-Karabakh's incorporation into Armenian SSR.<sup>5</sup> This was followed by a second petition signed by 13 prominent Karabakh Armenians in 1965.<sup>6</sup> But, both petitions proved to no avail. The late 1980s witnessed more petitions and street demonstrations for the unification of Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia. This could be seen as a result of Gorbachev's democratization policy.<sup>7</sup> On 20 February 1988, the Soviet of Peoples Deputies of Nagorno-Karabakh passed a resolution requesting the *oblast's* transfer to the Armenian SSR. Three days later, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union rejected the union between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR responded on 15 June 1988 by passing a resolution calling for the USSR Supreme Soviet to approve the annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenia as demanded by 20 February 1988 resolution. On 12 July 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast's Deputies voted for unilateral secession from Azerbaijan which immediately

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<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Audrey L. Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity Under Russian Rule*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1992), p. 118 and also in Croissant, *The Armenia-Azerbaijan...*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Audrey L. Altstadt, 'Nagorno-Karabakh: 'Apple of Discord'', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (1988), p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Gerard J. Libaridian (ed), *The Karabakh File: Documents and Facts on the Question of Mountainous Karabakh, 1918-1988*, (Cambridge, MA: The Zoryan Institute, 1988), pp. 42-46.

<sup>6</sup> Croissant, *The Armenia-Azerbaijan...*, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Kamer Kasim, 'The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict From Its Inception to the Peace Process', *Armenian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2001, p. 171.

**The Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was restored, reinstating Azerbaijani rule over the region.**

rejected the vote as illegal. However, again the attachment of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast to Azerbaijan was reaffirmed by the Soviet Presidium six days later. The USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, by a decree dated 12 January 1989, put the *oblast* under the direct control of Moscow. However, on 28 November 1989, the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was restored, reinstating Azerbaijani rule over the region. Violence against and the deportation of the Azeri population of Karabakh increased towards the end of 1989.<sup>8</sup> In January 1990, Moscow sent troops and declared state of emergency in Azerbaijan, after a popular demonstration against inability of Azerbaijan and the USSR to stop the Armenian aggression. The Soviet's military involvement claimed the lives of more than a hundred Azeris.<sup>9</sup> This came to be known as 'Black January'. In September 1991, Armenia and Azerbaijan became independent. Nagorno-Karabakh also declared independence. On 27 November 1991, the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet annulled the autonomous legal status of the Nagorno-Karabakh Oblast. The end of the Soviet Union marked that the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh was transformed to an international (inter-state) conflict again after all those years.

Clashes between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis continued in 1992 and 1993. Armenians captured the entire Nagorno-Karabakh and some of the surrounding Azerbaijani territory. Places like Shusha, Lachin, Kelbajar and Khojaly fell to the hands of the Armenians. The falling of Khojaly captured the attention of the world, as more than 1,000 were massacred at the hands of the Armenians.<sup>10</sup> Although the Armenian officials denied the charges of massacre, it was well documented by the international media. Newsweek and the New York Times, for instance, presented the story of the burned and scalpted bodies of the Azerbaijanis under

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<sup>8</sup> Kasim, 'The Nagorno-Karabakh...', p. 172.

<sup>9</sup> Bill Keller, 'Soviets Claim Control in Baku; Scores of Azerbaijanis Killed; Coup Averted, Gorbachev Says', *The New York Times*, 21 January 1990.

<sup>10</sup> *Interfax*, 6 March 1992.

the headlines of 'Face of A Massacre' and 'Massacre by Armenians' respectively.<sup>11</sup>

A cease-fire was agreed on 24 May 1994. The Armenians were pleased with the situation: They managed to take control of Nagorno-Karabakh, land corridors were opened between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory fell to the Armenian control, including the area between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, and finally Azerbaijani population of the Armenian occupied region was driven out by Armenians, resulting in more than one million Azerbaijani refugees. As a result of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh 25,000 lost their lives. The only problem remained for the Armenians was the recognition of the legal status of *de facto* Armenian control over Nagorno-Karabakh.

### **THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION**

#### *Historical Background to the Right to Self-Determination*

Following the World War I Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the right to self-determination in respect of the peoples of the Austro-Hungarian, German, Russian and Ottoman empires. However, this right to self-determination was not fully given effect. Middle Eastern countries were denied their independence whereas the right to self-determination of those people in Eastern Europe and the Balkans has been recognized by the international community. Even the main constituent people of the Ottoman Empire, namely the Turks, was nearly deprived of enjoying their right to self-determination fully by the invading armies of the Allied Powers. Turks were only given a small plot of land in central Anatolia to establish their own national state with extremely limited sovereignty by the Sevres Treaty. Even the territories overwhelmingly populated by the Turks were promised to other nations, like eastern part of Anatolia to the Armenians.<sup>12</sup> However, the Turks rejected the arrangements made by the invading armies and waged a war of independence to free the whole Turkish nation from outsider domination. The Turkish Parliament proclaimed the union of all Turkish nation, giving real effect to the right of self-

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<sup>11</sup> *Newsweek*, (16 March 1992) and *The New York Times*, 3 March 1992. For similar reports on the Khojaly massacre see 'Armenian Soldiers Massacre Hundreds of Fleeing Families' by Thomas Goltz in *the Sunday Times*, (1 March 1992), 'Massacre in Khojaly' *Time*, 16 March 1992 and 'Armenian Raid Leaves Azeris Dead or Fleeing' *The Washington Times*, 2 March 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Article 89 of the Sevres Treaty.

determination. The Turkish struggle for independence and the right of self-determination was set an example to other people under the colonial domination. The Caucasian peoples of Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Georgians also gained their independence after the Bolshevik Revolution. However, their independence lived short, after a few years of independence they joined the new Soviet Union.

Following the World War II, the disintegration of the overseas empires of the colonial powers has given impetus to those demanding self-determination for all peoples of colonial territories. Almost all colonial and alike territories have gained their independence. After the collapse of communism, on the one hand former Marxist regimes adopted the principles of market economy and liberal democracy. This coincided with new political arrangements made to reflect the will of their peoples. Socialist federal states of the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia dismantled on the basis of the constituent republics. With the exception of the latter, the emergence of full sovereign states after the post-Cold War was quite peaceful.

East Timor is the latest former colonial territory that became independent in 2002. Although the United Nations General Assembly accepted that the Palestinians are a people with right to self-determination, the Palestinian question has not been solved yet.<sup>13</sup> While the Palestinian Authority has been its own way to independence and sovereignty, the 2002 Israeli occupation hampered the process.

#### *Self-Determination as a Legal Right*

Today self-determination is recognized as being a legal right in the colonial context. The right to self-determination finds expression in Articles 1(2) and 55 of the United Nations Charter, the common Article 1 of the two 1966 Covenants of Human Rights and a host of the General Assembly resolutions, including General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law.<sup>14</sup> Chief amongst the latter is the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Territories and Peoples which declares:

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<sup>13</sup> For example see UNGA Res. ES-7/2, GAOR, 7th Emergency Session, Supp. 1, p. 3 (1980).

<sup>14</sup> UNGA Res. 2625 (XXV) of 1970.

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation.

2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

3. ...

4. All armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples shall cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence, and the integrity of their national territory shall be respected;

5. ...

6. *Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations,*

7. All states shall ...respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity.<sup>15</sup> (Italics added)

Resolution 1514 proposes self-determination within existing borders (para. 6). In other words the principle of self-determination is subject to the principle of *uti possidetis*. This was made clear by the International Court of Justice when delimiting the boundary between Burkino Faso and Mali by stating:

At first sight this principle (*uti possidetis*) conflicts outright with another one, the right of peoples to self-determination. In fact, however, the course, to preserve what has been achieved by peoples who have struggled for their independence, and to avoid a disruption which would deprive the stability in order to survive, to develop and gradually to consolidate their

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<sup>15</sup> UNGA Res. 1540 of 1960.

independence in all fields, has induced African states judiciously to consent to the respecting of colonial frontiers, and to take account of it in the interpretation of the principle of self-determination of peoples.<sup>16</sup>

Although the above judgment delivered with regard to decolonization in Africa, where colonial boundaries were drawn without taking into account the population of local peoples in most cases, if the principle of *uti possidetis* prevails in Africa, there is no reason to dissent the application of this to other parts of the world, especially to those parts that have had clearly defined territories with a stable population. After recognizing the principle of self-determination of peoples the Declaration on Principles of International Law declares that it is subject to the principle of territorial integrity by stating that

Nothing in the (Principles of International Law) shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the *territorial integrity* or *political unity* of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples...

Every state shall refrain from any action aimed at the partial or total disruption of the *national unity* and *territorial integrity* of any other State or country.<sup>17</sup>  
(Italics added)

Similarly the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe declared in 1975 that

The participating States will respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to *territorial integrity* of States. (Italics added)

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<sup>16</sup> 'The Frontier Land Case', *ICJ Reports*, 1986, p. 554.

<sup>17</sup> UNGA Res. 2625 (XXV) of 1970.



The Final Act further states

The participating States will respect the *territorial integrity* of each of the participating States. Accordingly, they will refrain from any action inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations against the *territorial integrity*, political independence or the unity of any participating State, and in particular from any such action constituting a threat or use of force. The participating States will likewise refrain from making each other's territory the object of military occupation or other direct or indirect measures of force in contravention of international law, or the object of acquisition by means of such measures or the threat of them. No such occupation or acquisition will be recognized as legal. (Italics added)

The Conference became the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) later where both Armenia and Azerbaijan participate.

The narrow scope of the right to self-determination is that it is a right of people under colonial rule as stated by the above legal documents. However, there is also a trend that the right of peoples to self-determination could be invoked against racist regimes as made clear by the General Assembly resolutions recognizing the inhabitants of South Africa as a 'people' with a right to self-determination.<sup>18</sup> After the constitutional changes made by South Africa and racism was abandoned, no racist state exist in the world. Article 1 (4) of the two 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 supports the proposition that peoples under colonial rule or occupation and racist regimes are entitled to the right to self-determination by mentioning 'armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination' within the category of international armed conflicts where the laws of war are applicable.

The wider scope of the right to self-determination would include all peoples. However, the meaning of the term 'people' is far from clear. Peoples are defined according to the objective factor of

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<sup>18</sup> For example see UNGA Res. 33/24, GAOR, 33rd Session, Supp. 45, p. 137 (1978).

inhabiting a territorial unit. Eide mentions that 'people' refers to the population of a territory as a whole (demos) and not the separate ethnic groups based on language, religion and culture (ethnoses), which taken together to constitute the demos.<sup>19</sup> Although there are attempts to define the people in ethnical terms, this is the most widespread and seems correct from the perspective of international law as confirmed by the territorial integrity clauses following almost all pronouncements on self-determination.<sup>20</sup> What is clear is that the terms 'people' and 'minority' denote different things. It is not accepted that there is a duty under international law to treat minorities as separate peoples.

The question of third party assistance to peoples struggling to attain self-determination is highly controversial and far from clear.<sup>21</sup> There is no room to discuss it in detail here, nor it is relevant in the current context of Karabakh. What is clear is that third party military involvement in armed struggles which are not against colonial rule or racist regimes is clearly a breach of international law.<sup>22</sup>

#### *Minorities in International Law*<sup>23</sup>

Under international law, national minorities are given rights. Despite not defining the term 'national minority', the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities which came to force in 1998 provides for the rights of national minorities. Both Azerbaijan and Armenia are parties to the Convention. Persons belonging to national minorities are equal before the law and equally protected by the law according to the Convention.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.<sup>25</sup> The convention also guarantees the

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<sup>19</sup> Asbjorn Eide, 'The National Society, Peoples and Ethno-Nations: Semantic Confusions and Legal Consequences', *Nordic Journal of International Law*, Vol. 64, 1995, pp. 360-4.

<sup>20</sup> Gunter Lauwers and Stefaan Smis, 'New Dimensions of the Right to Self-Determination: A Study of the International Response to the Kosovo Crisis', *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2000, p. 57.

<sup>21</sup> Malcolm N. Shaw, *International Law*, (Cambridge: Groutius Publications Ltd., 1991) Third Edition, pp. 700-701.

<sup>22</sup> See the Nicaragua case.

<sup>23</sup> See for an excellent work on minority rights Patrick Thornberry, *International Law and the Rights of Minorities*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

<sup>24</sup> Article 4.

<sup>25</sup> Article 4.

freedom of religion of national minorities.<sup>26</sup> The use of the native language by the persons belonging to national minorities is also guaranteed by the Convention.<sup>27</sup> However, all the rights guaranteed by the Convention are subject to 'the fundamental principles of international law and in particular of the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States.'<sup>28</sup> The Convention also requires that the members of the national minorities 'shall respect the national legislation and the rights of others, in particular those of persons belonging to the majority or to other national minorities.'<sup>29</sup>

The principle of self-determination may not be successfully invoked by any and every dissident group seeking to assert their own brand of nationalism. On the question of political self-determination for minorities, such as the Scots in Britain, Basques in Spain, Romans in Hungary and Slovakia, in existing states there is no evidence in the United Nations and other state practice to suggest that the right to self-determination is applicable outside of the colonial or similar context as a matter of customary international law.<sup>30</sup> The same proposition also applies to majorities in non-democratic states, that is to say the right of self-determination does not include the majority within a state attempting to throw off a non-elected government nor it implies an equatiton with the concept of democracy. Nevertheless, with the increasing awareness of democracy and human rights all around world rights of minorities became an issue of international law.

### **THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CASE UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW**

The international law does not recognize that every ethnic group within a state must be granted its own state or that self-determination requires independent statehood. It has already mentioned in this paper that Nagorno-Karabakh received wide regional autonomy and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was created. The resolution of the Soviet of Peoples Deputies of

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<sup>26</sup> Articles 5,7,8.

<sup>27</sup> Articles 10 and 14.

<sup>28</sup> Article 21.

<sup>29</sup> Article 20.

<sup>30</sup> David J. Harris, *Cases and Materials on International Law*, (London: Sweet and Maxwell, 1991), Fourth Edition, pp. 124-125.

Nagorno-Karabakh requesting the oblast's transfer to the Armenian SSR in 1988 and the proclamation of independence by Nagorno-Karabakh in 1991 needs to be examined from the legal point of view within the framework of the right to self-determination.

It is said that the Article 70 of the Soviet Union's constitution affirms the right of peoples to self-determination. However, Article 78 of the Soviet Constitution provided that:

The territory of a union republic may not be altered without its consent. The boundaries between union republics may be altered by mutual agreement of the union republics concerned, subject to confirmation by the USSR.

What the Soviets understood from the 'right of peoples to self-determination' is clearly out of the boundaries of this study. Even it is assumed that self-determination meant the right to independence and secession, in the broadest sense, the Armenian SSR's decision to annex Nagorno-Karabakh as well as the decisions of the Nagorno-Karabakh Oblast on uniting with Armenia or being independent are contrary to the Soviet Constitution and, therefore, null. This is for two reasons: First Article 78 makes it clear that the boundaries of the republics cannot be changed without their consent and Azerbaijan, for obvious reasons, did not agree to this. Second even the republics gave their consent to any territorial change, this had to be approved by the USSR and as explained above in detail the Soviets always rejected the Armenian claims. It is true that, according to the Soviet Constitution of 1977, union republics had, in theory, right to secede from the Union. However, neither autonomous republics, which had constitutions, nor autonomous regions (oblasts), which had no constitutions, had the right to secede. It is clear that in addition to the Karabakh Armenians' decision to unite with Armenia or to become independent, the 1989 decision by the Armenia to annex Nagorno-Karabakh is unfounded under the USSR constitution and violates the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Although Armenia made it clear that it does not recognize the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, there is no indication that Armenia annulled its 1989 decision. Representatives from Nagorno-Karabakh are members of the Armenian Parliament. Even more absurd is that a Karabakh Armenian Robert Kocharian, who is also still an Azerbaijani citizen, serves its second term as the President of the Republic of Armenia. The incorporation of

Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenia is also evident in the fact that Armenians built new roads, on the Azerbaijani territory outside Nagorno-Karabakh, between Stapanakerd and Armenia and the currency of Armenia is being used as a legal tender in Nagorno-Karabakh. One reason for rejecting the application of the 'Nagorno-Karabakh Republic' by the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS) could be that the declaration of independence by Nagorno-Karabakh is not in accordance with the Constitution of the USSR. The CIS was formed by eleven former Soviet republics and declared that they will respect territorial integrity of states as requested by international law.

It is clear that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh could be defined as a minority, even a national minority. Azerbaijan is party to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan provides that 'The human and civil rights and freedoms enumerated in this Constitution shall be exercised in accordance with international Agreements to which the Azerbaijan Republic party.'<sup>31</sup> It is obvious that Azerbaijan is bound by the Framework Convention and rights prescribed by the Convention is applicable in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani Constitution further recognizes the equality of all citizens and declares that:

The state guarantees equality of rights and liberties of everyone, irrespective of race, nationality, religion, language, sex, origin, financial position, occupation, political convictions, membership in political parties, trade unions and other public organizations. Rights and liberties of a person, citizen cannot be restricted due to race, nationality, religion, language, sex, origin, conviction, political and social belonging.<sup>32</sup>

Under this provision discrimination on ethnicity is clearly prohibited. Similarly the Constitution also guarantees the freedom of religion.<sup>33</sup> Use of minority language is also permitted by the

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<sup>31</sup> Article 12. Two English texts of the Constitution are referred by this paper, namely the one provided by the Presidency and the other one provided by the Constitutional Court of Azerbaijan. Both can be found at <http://www.president.az/azerbaijan/const.htm#44> and <http://www.constitutional-court-az.org/const-contents.htm>, respectively.

<sup>32</sup> Article 25.

<sup>33</sup> Article 18.

Constitution.<sup>34</sup> The Constitution further states that 'Everyone shall have the right to be raised and get an education, be engaged in creative activities in Native Language. No one can be deprived of the right to use Native Language'.<sup>35</sup> For the protection of minorities the Constitution speaks of 'National and Ethnic Identity' and provides that 'Every Person shall have the right to preserve national/ethnic identity. No one can be deprived of the right to change national/ethnic identity.'<sup>36</sup> However, the Constitution requires, as other States' constitutions do and even the Framework Convention itself, territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be respected.<sup>37</sup>

One of the purposes of the United Nations is 'to maintain international peace and security' and this was given to the responsibility of the Security Council whose decisions are binding upon all member states.<sup>38</sup> Initiatives taken by the Security Council are highly regarded since they inevitably reflect a consensus of opinions of the members of the whole world community. On 30 April 1993 the Security Council passed its Resolution 822, upon the invasion of Azerbaijani Kelbadjar district by Armenians, where it affirmed 'the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region' and also 'the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory'. Azerbaijan supported Resolution 822 for its provision rejecting the forceful alteration of existing borders.<sup>39</sup>

Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan was also reaffirmed by the resolutions 853, 874 and 884. Similarly, at the Lisbon summit of the OSCE in December 1996, every state, including Russia, but Armenia accepted a resolution confirming the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

In July 1993 the Armenians besieged and captured Agdam, a city of 150,000 outside the borders of Karabakh. On 29 July 1993 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 853 which:

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<sup>34</sup> Articles 21 and 45.

<sup>35</sup> Article 45.

<sup>36</sup> Article 44.

<sup>37</sup> Article 11.

<sup>38</sup> Articles 1, 23, 24,25 and 28 of the UN Charter.

<sup>39</sup> Croissant, *The Armenia-Azerbaijan...*, p. 89.

1. Condemns the seizure of the district of Agdam and of all other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijani Republic;
2. Further condemns all hostile actions in the region, in particular attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas;
3. Demands the immediate cessation of all hostilities and the immediate complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces involved from the district of Agdam and all other recently occupied areas of the Azerbaijan Republic.<sup>40</sup>

In October the UN Security Council passed another resolution calling upon the parties to make effective and permanent cease-fire and to refrain from all violations of international humanitarian law.<sup>41</sup> But the Armenians refused the call for ceasefire and launched attacks on Zangelan and Goradiz. These attacks and 'attacks on civilians and bombardments of the territory of the Azerbaijani Republic' were also condemned by the Security Council.<sup>42</sup> A cease-fire which is in effect today was finally signed on 12 May 1994.

It could be drawn from the UN resolutions that territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should be maintained, refusing any right of secession of Karabakh Armenians, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict should be settled on the principle of the inviolability of international borders. This means that the members of the UN are not of the opinion that the right of self-determination of Karabakh Armenians gives them right to secession. This view was also supported by the world community, none of its member states has recognized the self-proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

It is clear that the use of force for the acquisition of territory cannot, and should not, be accepted and the current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is an example of this as well as the violation of the principle of territorial sovereignty and integrity of Azerbaijan. It seems that the Armenian administration realized that it would not be possible to secure neither the recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh as a separate state nor its unification with Armenia.

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<sup>40</sup> Res. 853.

<sup>41</sup> Res. 874 of 14 October 1993.

<sup>42</sup> Res. 884 of 12 November 1993.

In September 1997, Ter-Petrosian in a press conference dismissed the option of maintaining status quo, Armenian occupation of parts of Azerbaijan and hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani refugees. He stated that 'It happened in Bosnia. The Serbs lost everything. I don't think that the maintenance of the status quo is a real option'.<sup>43</sup> He reportedly told the Armenians that they had to recognize that Karabakh would be formally part of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijanis had to recognize the rights of Armenians of Karabakh. However, Ter-Petrosian has had no opportunity to take an initiative to settle the dispute since then. As a result of the pressure, he had to resign from the office of presidency where Robert Kocharian, a hardliner, was elected in 1998.

Azerbaijan made it clear that it is ready to the resolution of the conflict by peaceful means on the basis of the principles of international law, among which are:

1. Territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan;
2. Legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh defined in an agreement based on self-determination which confers on Nagorno-Karabakh the highest degree of self-rule within Azerbaijan.<sup>44</sup>

Since the Armenians of Karabakh have neither been under colonial rule nor Azerbaijan is a racist state, it is not possible to speak of Nagorno-Karabakh's right to self-determination, as being understood as a right to a separate state. However, as explained above self-determination does not necessarily mean independence. In this context, minority rights could be regarded as a part of self-rule. Azerbaijan appears to be ready to recognize Karabakh Armenians self-determination in this context. It could be said that the Karabakh conflict is not self-determination *v.* territorial integrity, it may be termed as secession *v.* territorial integrity.

The question of 'Karabakhis' should be faced by Armenians, since Nagorno-Karabakh has not been populated only by Armenians but also Azerbaijanis. According to 1989 census, it had a population of 188,000, of whom only 145,000 were Armenians,

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<sup>43</sup> Quoted in David D. Laitin and Ronald G. Suny, 'Armenia and Azerbaijan: Thinking a Way out of Karabakh', *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1999), p. 166.

<sup>44</sup> Foreign Policy Priorities of Azerbaijan at <http://www.usacc.org/azerbaijan/govt-foreign.htm>.



**Armenians are expected to make their views clear on whether they are ready to recognize the rights of the non-Armenian population of Karabakh,**

40,000 Azerbaijanis and 3,000 Russians.<sup>45</sup> In another word Armenians formed less than 73% of the total population. Azerbaijanis, either migrated or, more commonly, were expelled from Armenian populated lands, including from in and around Karabakh, to their 'home' republic. As pointed out

by Laitin and Suny, this happened most notably in the late 1980s and in the first three years after the breakup of the Soviet Union.<sup>46</sup> It is also known that Armenian migration to other countries continues. The current population is estimated less than it was in 1989, despite Armenian efforts to populate the region by Armenians. According to a United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR) report 'a lasting cease-fire or peace agreement is a prerequisite for displaced persons to return home'.<sup>47</sup> Armenians are expected to make their views clear on whether they are ready to recognize the rights of the non-Armenian population of Karabakh, which was more than a quarter of the total population in 1989.

### CONCLUSION

This study assessed whether the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh is entitled to form their own state or to unite with Armenia. Either will mean secession from Azerbaijan. One could safely propose that on the question of political self-determination for minorities in existing states there is no evidence in the United Nations and other state practice to suggest that the right to self-determination is applicable outside of the colonial or similar context as a matter of customary international law. This is true when self-determination is taken to mean necessarily right to independence. However, today self-determination could occur in the form of self rule in democratic societies. Azerbaijan made it

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<sup>45</sup> This figure was also confirmed by the Global IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council at [www.db.idpproject.org](http://www.db.idpproject.org).

<sup>46</sup> Laitin and Suny, 'Armenia and Azerbaijan...', p. 148.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR), Background Paper on Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Armenia (1995) at [www.unchr.org](http://www.unchr.org).

clear that self rule by the population of Karabakh within Azerbaijan must be accepted for the peaceful solution of the conflict. This is in line with international law, as long as the rights of Karabakh Armenians and Azerbaijanis are recognized and a supportive environment for their practice is prepared.

Although it is claimed by Armenians that Karabakh has a population of 140,000 people all of whom are Armenians to buttress their claims for self-determination, estimates by international aid workers in Karabakh put the figure much lower, at perhaps half that.<sup>48</sup> It is not surprising when this is compared to the dramatic decrease in the population of Armenia since its independence. Although it is inhabited by a relatively tiny number of peoples, Nagorno-Karabakh is a place of inspiration for Armenian nationalism. Therefore, since an Armenian hardliner Robert Kocharian is elected for second term as the President of Armenia, there is no evidence to suggest that Armenian side drops its claim for independence or union with Armenia.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Thomas de Waal, 'Myths and Realities of Karabakh War' Institute for War and Peace Reporting, *Caucasus Reporting Service*, No. 177, 1 May 2003.

<sup>49</sup> President Bush sent to Kocharian a letter where the election was criticized and found "falling short of OSCE standards" but the Armenian authorities portrayed US President George W. Bush's message as a letter of congratulation on Kocharian's reelection. *ANN/Groong -- RFE/RL Armenia Report*, 25 April 2003.

# THE ARMENIAN QUESTION IN THE EARLY COLD WAR: REPATRIATION SCHEME

Assist. Prof. Dr. Süleyman SEYDİ\*

## **Abstract:**

*This article focuses on Armenian repatriation scheme supported by the Soviet government at the end of the Second World War. This issue was first raised by the Soviets in the summer of 1945 in the following sense that Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan, formerly inhabited by Armenians, should be annexed to Soviet Armenia. Thereafter, the Armenian diaspora organisations in America, in the Balkans and in the Middle East simultaneously presented memorandums on several occasions to the world leaders, Churchill, Attlee, Truman and Stalin and to world organisations, urging the cession of the Turkish territories to Soviet Armenia, and facilities for the repatriation of those one and a half million Armenians living outside the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, who might wish to return there. After a short propaganda campaign, the Soviet Union put the Armenian repatriation scheme into effect in March 1946. To do so, a Committee was set up by the Soviet Armenian Government to administer the migration. The Armenians living in Romania, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq were targeted by this scheme. Soviet diplomats in these countries took a great part in it.*

## **Keywords:**

*Armenian repatriation, Second World War, Soviet Armenia, Armenian diaspora, Soviet Union*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**B**etween the two World War period, the Great Powers seemed not interested in Armenian affairs. During this period, there was no conflict between the Great Britain and the Soviet Union over the region. The USSR also was very much concerned with her domestic affairs and left the foreign policy as secondary matter. However, during this period, Armenian diaspora organisations maintained their campaign against Turkey. The largest and best organised of the Armenian-American

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\* Isparta Süleyman Demirel University, Department of History

organisations was the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, with headquarters in Boston. This was the American branch of the strongly nationalist Tashnag Party, which long strove for the establishment of an independent Armenia and followed a bitter anti-Soviet policy. The Federation had a daily newspaper, Hairenik, which advocated a complete Armenian Republic. Realising the futility of this program, the organisation officially renounced its anti-Sovietism in July 1944. Pro-Communist Armenian Americans were formed the Armenian Progressive League of America in New York City, which had been consistently enthusiastic about the role of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic as a member of the Soviet Union. The Armenian Democratic Liberal Union of Boston, an American branch of the Ramgavar Party, had liberal views, anti-Communist and constantly in dispute with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, on the other hand increasingly friendly towards the Soviet Union. This Union had a daily newspaper called Baikar. Occasionally Baikar condemned 'Soviet Tyranny' but in general, it was friendly to the USSR, because the Soviets was considered as their protector against Turkey.<sup>1</sup> The differences between these factions were united by a common dislike of Turkey.

Since the Hitler's defeat had removed the chief *raison d'être* of the Grand Alliance, the capability of co-operation in the war turn into conflict, when the post-war settlement was brought into the agenda. Faced with the Soviets' constant pressure regarding the East European countries the Western powers became more careful about the Soviet policies, on Turkey. When Turkey had broken off her diplomatic relations with Germany and Japan, and declared war on these countries on a demand by Roosevelt and Churchill, the Soviet press launched a daily campaign of criticism against Turkey early in March 1945. The main lines of such criticism were the following: Turkish courts tried to appear as 'champions of democracy' by penalising the Communists, while 'the Partisans of Fascism, the Pan-Turanians' were leniently treated. In fact, there was evidence that the Turkish government was penalising Communists, but that they also penalised Pan-Turanians. Ridiculing the Turkish declaration of war at this late stage, although there had been a hint by the Soviet delegations to the

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<sup>1</sup> Public Record Office (PRO), HS 3/227 Memorandum by Office of Strategic Services Foreign National Branch on Armenian Press in the United States, 16 December 1942; PRO FO 371/48795, R 1689/11137/44, Wright (Washington) to Southern Department, no. 1388/16/45, 26 September 1945.

Turks at the Yalta Conference that they should enter the war by 1 March.<sup>2</sup>

### **SOVIET UNION'S DEMANDS FOR THE ARMENIANS**

Moscow put pressure on Turkey in order to dictate its objectives by using the Armenian card in the following sense, that Turkish territory formerly inhabited by the Armenians should be annexed to Soviet Armenia, thus enabling the Armenians abroad, who had variously estimated at one or one and a half million in number to return to the motherland. Though Molotov claimed the territories of Kars and Ardahan from Sarper in June 1945 and also Stalin in December 1945 told Bevin in Moscow that the Soviet Government was claiming the pre-1921 frontier in Caucasus, these claims had not been publicly put forward by the Soviet government and population pressure in Armenia was only being gradually built up the early June 1946 with the return of Armenians from overseas.<sup>3</sup> The Armenian expectations in this campaign were to obtain some compromise at the expense of Turkey and envisage an Armenian State that was planned at the abortive Sèvres Treaty of 1920. The political conjecture was also suitable for such demands since the victorious powers of the Second World War had gathered for the post-world settlement. They believed that they had a great advantage as the Armenians openly supported the Allied Powers in the war. Whereas Turkey stayed in a neutral position until very last moment of the war. Besides, regarding to the put the Sèvres Treaty into effect Armenians believed that the Western Powers had a word from the previous world war.

Whether the claim to Turkish territory was in the first instance raised by the Armenians spontaneously or at Soviet instigation did not perhaps matter much. There was little doubt that the Armenians in Romania, the Middle East and particularly in the US, who put the claim forward in the summer of 1945 at the time of the Potsdam Conference and later, did so with Soviet approval. As a matter of fact, by playing the Armenian card, the soviets was after pushing Turkey for making some concessions in favour of Soviet Union regarding the Montreux Convention of 1939, such guaranteeing a military base and a joint administration in the

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<sup>2</sup> PRO FO 371/48773, R 4972/4476/44, PRO FO 371/48773, R 4972/4476/44, Foreign Office to Moscow, no. 1383, 20 March 1945.

<sup>3</sup> FO 371/59227, R 12306, Roberts (Moscow) to FO, no. 2714, 20 August 1946.

Straits. Thus, Moscow would be in a position to dominate the Mediterranean affairs. The Soviet territorial claims from Turkey on behalf of the Armenians well understood one if one looks from this perspective.

Indeed, one could not deny the role of Moscow in this campaign, as was seen in the election of a Supreme Catholicos. The Armenian Church Council in February of 1945 was accorded permission by the Soviet Government to elect a Supreme Catholicos, an office which had been vacant since 1938. During this interim the affairs of the Armenian Church had been conducted by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, an arrangement which did not appear to have given the Soviet Government any particular concern. As the result of the election Archbishop Corekciyan was elected as Catholicos, then named KevorkV (1945-54). Afterwards Moscow gave special privileges to the Catholicos of Echmiadzin in the line of other churches. Making the Church accepted single religious authority Soviet Union would be in a position to use the Armenian question for their own cause.

It was shortly after the announcement of this pending church election that the Soviet government denounced the Russian-Turkish Treaty and subsequently informed the Turkish government of the condition that it considered indispensable to a renewal of friendship. A few days after the election of the new Catholicos at Echmiadzin, Kevork V. had a contact with Washington and London so that Kars and Ardahan should return to Soviet Armenia. Simultaneously, Armenian National Council presented its memorandum to the San Francisco Conference, including charges of mistreatment of Armenians by the present Turkish Government.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, inspired from Moscow, the Armenian diaspora organisations in America, in the Balkans and the Middle East presented memorandums on several occasions to the world leaders, Churchill, Attlee, Truman and Stalin and to world organisations, urging the cession of Kars and Ardahan to their sole legal representative, the Soviet Armenia, and facilities for the repatriation of those one and a half million Armenians, living outside the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic who might wish to

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<sup>4</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 1689/11137/44, Wright (Washington) to Southern Department, no. 1388/16/45, 26 September 1945.

return there.<sup>5</sup> The Armenian National Council in Syria and Lebanon organised meetings at Beirut, Aleppo, Damascus and Zahlel in September 1945. At the end of these meetings the conclusion was reached that 'the time was ripe to incorporate Armenian lands occupied by Turkey in Soviet Armenia.' To do so, an appeal was made to Stalin, Truman and Attlee to win them over to this cause.<sup>6</sup>

A resolution with similar basis was passed at the National Meeting of Armenian Refugees in Romania at the end of July 1945. It was drawn up by Dangoulov, the Head of the Press and Propaganda Department at the Soviet Legation, who was of Armenian origin and consequently much interested in the activities of the Armenian community in Romania.

In Greece, the president of the Committee for the Vindication of Armenian Rights took part in this campaign against Turkey by addressing a letter to Clement Attlee with a confirmatory signature by Mazlumian, the Archbishop of the Armenian Community of Greece. In this letter it was claimed that the Armenians had been left alone to deal with the Turks although they had fought heroically on the side of the Allied armies during the First World War, as a result of which three million unarmed Armenian inhabitants of the Armenian provinces in Turkey, were 'so mercilessly and brutally slaughtered or faced leaving their homes to take refuge in foreign countries.'<sup>7</sup>

The American Committee for Ensuring Just Treatment of Armenia and the Armenian National Council in Egypt and Lebanon also took part in this campaign by sending telegrams at the beginning of 1946 to the General Assembly on the question of the transfer of Armenian territory occupied by the Turks to Soviet

<sup>5</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R12420/11137/44, Roberts (Moscow), no. 3268, 23 July 1945. The Armenian National Committee once again presented a similar memorandum to President Truman and Byrnes on 22 September 1945, which, in addition to above the two demands, claimed reparations from Turkey for property confiscated during the First World War. PRO FO 371/48795, R 1689/11137/44, Wright (Washington) to Southern Department, no. 1388/16/45, 26 September 1945.

<sup>6</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 1638/11137/44, Roberts (Moscow), no. 4385, 29 September 1945.

<sup>7</sup> The Armenian stand in the Second World War, once again standing against tyranny and with the organised regular armies of the Soviet Armenia, strengthening the British and American Armies, was also underlined in this letter. As they had paid their share of blood for the cause of liberty the Greek Armenians requested Attlee to use all possible means to set right 'the injustices of 1914-18, so that all the historical Armenian provinces of Turkey could be united with Soviet Armenia, thus enabling a million and a half wandering Armenians to settle within the boundaries of their historical land'. PRO FO 371/48795, President of the Committee for the Vindication of Armenian Rights in Greece to Attlee, 10 September 1945.

Armenia. These stressed Armenia's legal rights recognised by international treaties and the great sacrifices made in the joint struggle of the UN against tyranny; the second demanded the return to Soviet Armenia of Armenian lands under Turkey from which Armenians had been forcibly ejected and their property seized.<sup>8</sup> The latter claimed that European and Asiatic countries used Armenians as pawns in their disputes, while only the Soviet Union had given Armenian territory security and cultural advantages. A later problem was the presence of over a million hungry and oppressed Armenians in the Near East.<sup>9</sup> The newly established American Committee for Attainment of a Just Attitude to Armenia and the Armenian National Council in America had sent a telegram at the end of December 1945 to the foreign ministers in Moscow, dwelling on the Turkish persecution of Armenians and calling for arrangements for their repatriation. The telegram of the new committee dealt at length with President Wilson's recommendations for the revision of Armenian's frontiers and called on the foreign ministers in Moscow to reach agreement on Armenia's frontiers and the creation of an Armenian home. Telegram from the Armenian council demanded the liberation of Armenia's historic home within the frontiers defined by Wilson.<sup>10</sup> The Radio and the press in the USSR took up these themes; Tass gave the widest publicity to these activities. The main theme was that European and Asiatic countries used Armenians as pawns in their disputes while only the Soviet Union had given Armenian territory security and cultural advantages. A later problem was the presence of over a million hungry and oppressed Armenians in the Near East.<sup>11</sup>

### **REPATRIATION SCHEME**

While Washington was in the process of taking a firm stand against the Soviet policy in the region, the Soviet Union, after a short break in her war of nerves the Soviet Union devoted increasing attention to the Middle East area generally, and to Turkey in particular by putting the Armenian repatriation scheme into effect in March 1946. To do so, a Committee had been set up

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<sup>8</sup> PRO FO 371/59246, R 1150/145/44, Roberts, no 297, 22 January 1946.

<sup>9</sup> PRO FO 371/59246, R 1995/145/44, Roberts, no. 523, 7 February 1946.

<sup>10</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 21571/11137/44, Clark Kerr, no 5486, 28 December 1945.

<sup>11</sup> PRO FO 371/59246, R 1995/145/44, Roberts, no. 523, 7 February 1946.



by the Soviet Armenian government to administer the migration. Papken Asvatadourian was the president of this committee and Sahag Karabetian, Haigaz Marzarian, Mardiros Sarian, Ardashes Melik Adamian were the members of it. Its aim was to send of its members on a visit to the Balkans and the countries of the Middle East in order to facilitate migration of Armenians. For instance, when the departures were to commence during the months of July 1946 in Greece, in order to accelerate this emigration scheme, two representatives from Soviet Armenia, Kourken Koverkian and Serko Manousian, arrived in Athens, where they were accompanied by Vahan Takasian, uncrowned chief of Armenian Communist newspaper, *Vie Nouvelle*. This movement was sponsored by 'People's Organisation of Armenians in Greece', the political complexion of which was decidedly left. The head of this organisation was Mazlounian, the Armenian Arc-Bishop in Athens, who had already organised means by which Armenian students might travel from Greece to the USSR or Soviet Armenia for study at Soviet or Armenian universities. The first batch of Armenians for repatriation, which was estimated about 2,000 persons some of whom registered unwillingly as a result of pressure, left Greece towards the end of this July.<sup>12</sup> The cost of this repatriation was 50 dollars per person, and was being borne by Greek Armenian Community and by the Armenian Benevolent Society in US.<sup>13</sup> Looking from another aspect, the repatriation movement served, to some extent, for the Greek government's cause in a view that this might prevent any perceptible number of Armenian Communists from joining the armed bands of Atika and Thessaly since the majority of Armenians in Greece were known to be of left-wing sympathy. Therefore, Athens welcomed to seeing more Armenians involved in the repatriation scheme. For instance in April 1946 Soviet Embassy in Athens notified the Greek Aliens Department of Ministry of Interior that all Armenians without Greek or foreign passports should be allowed to emigrate to the USSR. The Aliens Department agreed to this suggestion at first. However, when the Soviet Embassy proposed that any Armenian wishing to travel to the Russia should be issued with a Russian passport. It was opposed on the ground that an Armenian, once in possession of a Soviet passport, they might possibly continue to reside in

<sup>12</sup> It was officially announced that the number of Armenian, who had registered under the scheme, was between 30,000 to 35,000. A reliable source stated. However, that this figure was grossly exaggerated, and that the actual figure did not exceed 5,000 to 6,000.

<sup>13</sup> FO 195/2597, BCIS (Greece) HQ LF (G), Special Report no:195, 26/53/46, 19 July 1946 Armenian Affairs

Greece. It was finally agreed, between the Aliens Department and the Soviet Embassy that all Armenians, leaving Greece would be issued with Greek papers. Once they had crossed the Greek frontier the Soviets could then supply them with whatever papers they desired.<sup>14</sup>

The Armenians living in Romania, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq were affected by this scheme. Soviet diplomats in these countries took a great part in it. As the result, fifty thousand Armenians from Aleppo registered for repatriation, and all of them were encouraged to think that they would leave very shortly; whereas in fact only ten thousand were likely to be repatriated from their region within the year. This state of uncertainty dislocated the economy of the community, which anti-Communists circles at Aleppo suspected to have been the aim of the USSR in sponsoring repatriation. In the end, approximately three thousand Armenians returned to Soviet Armenia in two caravans from Syria and the same number from Greece in the summer of 1946.<sup>15</sup> However, as regards the Armenian in Iraq they were advised by the Soviet officials that although the Soviet government approved the admission of Armenians living abroad into Soviet Armenia and into other territories which would be annexed in the future, 'the time was not yet ripe for registration of Armenians in Iraq.'<sup>16</sup>

There was naturally a good deal of discussion among the Armenians in Istanbul, and particularly those who had relatives in Syria. The passage of the Soviet ship named Garcia, carrying Armenian repatriates through the Straits' did not give rise to any agitation in Istanbul. There were no meetings or organised activity among the Armenian colony in Istanbul, nor was any move made by the Soviet Consulate. The general trend of opinion, however, was to take no precipitous action but wait to see how things would turn out. The reasons for this cautious approach were that the Armenians in Istanbul were not subject to any solid doses of Soviet propaganda and were fairly sceptical about the conditions of life in USSR. They were waiting to find out how the repatriates from other areas fared in their new home. Another factor weighing against any sudden move was that the Armenians hoped that steps

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> PRO FO 195/2597, BCIS (Greece) HQ LF (G), Special Report no:195, 26/53/46, 19 July 1946 Armenian Affairs.

<sup>16</sup> State Department Archives, 761.67/1-2546, Schoenrich to Byrnes, no. A-22, 25 January 1946.

would be taken to improve their conditions of life in Turkey. So on this account also, they were waiting to find what the future held in store. During the process of the Soviet recruitment of Armenians throughout the world, 1,200-1,400 Armenians in Istanbul also registered for immigration. After the Turkish government's announcement, however, that they would facilitate their departure, there were a number of withdrawals. Armenian language newspapers in Istanbul published articles declaring the complete loyalty of the Armenian community to the Turkish government. "Jamanak", one of these newspapers, added that 'every single Armenian will do his duty with the other nineteen million Turkish citizens.'<sup>17</sup>

It is not true to say that all the scattered Armenian people, were willing to migrate to the presumed homeland, a great many of them did not dare take the risk. However, pressure was being brought to bear on those who, though not communists, had registered for repatriation, and they were told that their chances of being included in the list for embarkation depended on their conversion to communism.<sup>18</sup> Some of them suspected that all these schemes were being supported by the Soviet government with the intention of exploiting them for their own cause. For instance, the Armenian community in Romania were disturbed by the Soviet propaganda against Turkey, and they refrained from any nationalist propaganda. Following the return campaign several Armenian holders of Nansen passports<sup>19</sup> applied to the Romanian authorities for Romanian identity papers fear that they might eventually be deported to the USSR.<sup>20</sup>

Some political and religious leaders in the Levant were also annoyed by the repatriation scheme and by Soviet activities of every kind in Lebanon. The Tashnak Party leaders criticised the local Repatriation Committee for having rushed into the scheme without proper preparation or recognition of the financial difficulties involved. They accused the Committee of having upset the community by encouraging an appetite for mass repatriation,

<sup>17</sup> PRO FO 195/2597, no. 26/43/46 26 August 1946; PRO FO 371/59240; R 4436/52/44, Helm to Hayter, 11 March 1946.

<sup>18</sup> PRO FO 195/2597, no. 121/404-26/46/46, 2 July North Syria: Repatriation of Armenians, 9 July 1946.

<sup>19</sup> This was an identification card for displaced persons mostly given to White Russians, to the Armenians from Turkey, and, later, to the Jews from Nazi Germany.

<sup>20</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 13912/11137/44, Le Roujefel (Bucharest) to Ernest Bevin, no. 263, 9 August 1945.

without possessing the means to satisfy it; and they urged that, as it was obvious that the great majority of local Armenians would have to remain where they were, there was great danger that their patriotic urge return to their motherland might be exploited as a political weapon by the USSR to further an aggressive policy in the Middle East.

Leon Pasha, the principal leader of the Tashnak Party in Iraq, believed that Soviets' intention was to make use of the Armenians for their own cause; he pointed out that the departure of Armenians from Syria for Soviet Armenia to the effect that they were not going to Armenia but to the USSR and she would use them against Turkey. He also was of the opinion that the USSR would attack Turkey when preparations were further forward and that she would put the Armenians in the front line of the battle. Moscow was only endeavouring to secure her boundaries. Therefore, Leon Pasha decided not to encourage any of his followers to return to Soviet Armenia.<sup>21</sup>

Some of the more extreme Tashnaks considered that emigration to Erivan was the last thing that an Armenian, who wished to preserve a characteristic Armenian individuality, should favour; Soviet Armenia and the Levant Community would do better to work for the establishment of an independent Armenia under the patronage of some Western power, and within the framework of the Treaty of Sevres.<sup>22</sup>

Karekin Hovsepian, Catholicos of Antilyas, was deeply concerned that this repatriation scheme might prejudice the political status of the Levant Armenians. He therefore refused to be drawn into arguments about the merits of the scheme. He was sure that the emigrants would regret their decision to move and were being made the victims of high politics. He also asked the political leaders to take a far stronger line against the local Communist Party.<sup>23</sup>

There was little doubt that the Armenians in Romania, the Middle East and particularly in the US, who put the territorial

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<sup>21</sup> PRO FO 195/2597, no. 5467, 120/1/484, The report of the British Embassy in Ankara on Tashnak Opinion, 20 August 1946.

<sup>22</sup> PRO FO 195/2597, no. 121/399-26/46/46, 2 July 1946, Levant States-Political: Armenian Repatriation, 2 July 1946.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

demand from Turkey forward in the summer of 1945 at the time of the Potsdam Conference and later, did so with Soviet approval. In a conversation at a reception in Ankara, in reply to Vinogradov's suggestion to make a little effort to improve two countries' relations, Sümer told him that his government would do its best if Moscow withdrew its request regarding the eastern provinces and the Straits. Vinogradov replied that the Soviet government was obligated by its constitution to defend the interests of various Soviet Republics, that a request for the eastern provinces had been made on behalf of the Armenian representative and the Soviet government, and therefore, that the request could not be withdrawn. In a private conversation, Vinogradov remarked 'We waited long time regarding arrangement we wanted with Poland and finally got it, we can wait regarding Turkey.'<sup>24</sup> No doubt such statements from Soviet quarters made the situation worse as Turkey felt the Soviet threat at her back. In addition to all these activities, Soviet military dispositions on the Caucasian border raised the question in Turkish circles as well as among the Western powers as to whether Moscow had decided to use force to achieve its assumed objectives. Ankara was not exaggerating the need to be anxious as the Soviets expended considerable efforts in endeavouring to win over the Kurds on the Soviet-Turkish and Iranian-Turkish frontiers. With little progress on Armenia, a new offensive opened on another front Turkish Kurds at the summer of 1946 at a time which coincided with opening of Foreign Minister Conference.<sup>25</sup> As a matter of fact, with propaganda campaign for autonomous Kurdistan, the Kremlin could scarcely expect to make

<sup>24</sup> State Department Archives, RG 59, 761.67/2-1346, Wilson to Byrnes, no. 4949, 13 February 1946.

<sup>25</sup> State Department Archives, RG 59, 761.67/6-1746, Decimal File 1945-49, Smith (Moscow) to Byrnes, no. 5799, 17 June 1946. As a matter of fact, the Soviet propaganda regarding the Kurdish case was given a start in the initial phase of the war. According to SOE sources, the Soviets brought about a thousand Kurdish youths into the USSR without the knowledge of the Turkish authorities taught them Russian and succeeded in winning them over to the communist cause. In addition to the youths, the Soviets had been smuggling aged and unemployed Kurds into the Caucasus on the understanding that they would give them work and food. As a result of this, many Kurds near the Soviet frontier regarded the Soviets as their friends. Further Russian activities had been noticed around Erivan where they had managed to organise large numbers of Armenians under the Armenian committee. In the final stages of the war, Soviet propaganda was naturally being disseminated in Turkish Kurdistan, the main theme being that the Turkish Kurds must give every assistance to the Red Army, which would be fighting on their behalf for the establishment of a 'Greater Kurdistan'. As Turkey was to be finished off with a lightning blow, irrespective of whether the Red Army went into action at the same time or not, the Kurds must carry out their various tasks without any hesitation as soon as the signal was given. Kurds from the Red Army were being demobilised and infiltrated into Kurdistan with the object of acting as partisans when the time arrived. See PRO HS 3/221, Chastelain to Directorate of SOE, no. 1734/13/18, 8 February 1943; PRO FO 195/2595, Soviet propaganda in eastern Turkey, no. 18/8256, 24 January 1946.

more progress towards inducing the creation of an autonomous Kurdistan than it had in bringing about the return of the Turkish Armenians to their Soviet motherland. It seemed that the Kurdistan campaign was not designed to achieve its pretended aims. Its objectives should have been the renewing of the war of nerves against Turkey on a new front; and raising a smoke screen over the issues at the Foreign Minister's Conference which embarrassed the USSR

British Foreign Office circles reached the conclusion that their attitude to the successful outcome of the campaign of 'investing Mount Ararat with the nostalgic glow of an Armenian Zion remains sceptical, but what was certain was the Soviet Government's shrewd appreciation of the value of this minor religious development to its designs upon the warm waters not only of the Mediterranean but also - for there are Armenians in Iraq and Iran - of the Persian Gulf.'<sup>26</sup> Ultimately, London was worried that some scattered Armenian societies who had stood for an independent Armenia by supporting the Soviet policy might honestly believe that an Armenia expanded into Turkish territory would be a viable State. However' from the view points of the British Foreign Office experts, it seemed both wrong and inexpedient to allow a historic Armenian claim to be exploited for what might be no more than the strategic advantage of the Soviet Union.<sup>27</sup> Their view was strengthened by consistent Tass reports which overemphasised the importance of these various Armenian organisations in the US. Therefore, the Foreign Office instructed their diplomats in Washington and the other capitals not to give any encouragement to these Armenian Societies who had followed the general line of pro-Soviet Armenian groups.<sup>28</sup> As part of this policy the British controlled Iraq CDI was ordered to make things difficult for any

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<sup>26</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 1689/11137/44, Wright (Washington) to Southern Department, no. 1388/16/45, 26 September 1945. Wilson also reported to the State department that the USSR would use indirect methods of aggression against Turkey, such as employing Armenian and Kurdish fronts in the Eastern Provinces, rather than take the risks involved in open war. Thus, the Soviets stood to gain by postponing action against Turkey and letting time work in their favour. The Soviets were consolidating the position in Iran, which meant the eastern prong of the pincers closed on Turkey. After the Greek elections, British Government could hardly withstand the pressure to withdraw troops from Greece, which would open the door to civil war, and intervention by Tito and Company, and creation of a friendly government in Greece, thus closing the western prong of pincers and isolating Turkey from British help through the Mediterranean. 761.67/3-1846 Wilson to Byrnes, 18 March 1946.

<sup>27</sup> PRO FO 371/48795, R 17431/11137/44, Armenian Claim to Turkish Territory 5 October 1945.

<sup>28</sup> PRO FO 371/59247, R 6228/145/44, Mr. Maclean, no. 827/3/46, 16 April 1946.

Armenian resident of Baghdad who indicated a desire to go to Soviet Armenia.<sup>29</sup>

Similar line also had taken by the US authorities. In a letter to the Secretary of State, James Byrnes, Admiral Leahy, the Joint Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief, postulated a common cause between the US, Britain and Turkey to the effect that the Soviet demands for the provinces of Turkey was a manifestation of the Soviet desire to dominate the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean. In other words, the objective of Soviet policy was to acquire a 'new springboard for further Soviet expansion' in order to 'access the extensive oil resources in the Middle East; full utilisation in both peace and war of Black Sea ports to include ingress and egress therefrom and the prospect of alienating the Muslim World from British and US influence'.<sup>30</sup> Thus the defeat or disintegration of the British Empire, Leahy believed, would eliminate 'from Eurasia the last bulwark of resistance between the US and Soviet expansion'. Militarily, America's present position as a world power was of necessity closely interwoven with that of Britain. He concluded his letter with the conviction that under these conditions, American acquiescence in whole or in part to these Soviet demands would definitely impair American national security by weakening Britain's position as a world power and reducing the effectiveness of the UN.<sup>31</sup>

In the end, not only the Soviets used the Armenian for their own cause but also Armenian communities around the world threw their support to the Soviet cause. Under the Cold War diplomacy the Washington authorities come to believe that any Soviet domination over Turkey would jeopardise the American interests in the Middle East as well as the western interests. Therefore, the support was given Turkey by Washington under the Truman Doctrine and this probably prevented the enlargement of Soviet Armenia at the expense of Turkey.

During the Cold War Turkey was a member of NATO, that alliance guaranteed the existing border. Therefore any Soviet attempt to encroach on it had to be more subtle. In early 1970's Armenian terrorist campaign against Turkey began by ASALA who

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<sup>29</sup> State Department Archives, RG 59, 761.67/1-2546, Schoenrich to Byrnes, no. A-22, 25 January 1946.

<sup>30</sup> RG 59, Decimal File 1945-49, 867.80/3-1346, William D. Leahy to Byrnes, 13 March 1946.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

**The objective of Soviet policy was to acquire a 'new springboard for further Soviet expansion' in order to 'access the extensive oil resources in the Middle East.**

repeated the same territorial demands with those made by the Soviets in the years of 1945 and 1946. Since then it was felt that the Armenian assassination of Turkish diplomats and their attack to the Turkish institution and foundation were carried out with Soviet support. Because each Armenian assassination of a Turkish diplomat generated strain in Turkish relations with the country where it had occurred. This was what the Armenians and the Soviets wanted. As Fred Ikle, the American Undersecretary of Defence for Policy, stated that 'if ASALA were to be successful in its aim it would lead directly to the expansion of the Soviet Union'. Paul Henze, a member of the National Security Council during the Carter administration, also saw the Soviets as playing a major role, arguing that the Soviet Union invested more in destabilizing Turkey through terrorism and subversion than it had spent on any single country since Vietnam.<sup>32</sup> Dismantling the Southern flank of NATO was not only a benefit the Soviet Union would receive if ASALA's territorial aim were satisfied, but also a truncated Turkey would eliminate it as an attractive model for the Turkic and Islamic populations of the Soviet Union. From this point of view, it is possible to urge that the activities of ASALA were a Soviet sponsored one. However, a tangible proof is difficult to achieve. What is most likely is that the Soviets had simply played their usual game of trying to destabilise their potential foes.

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<sup>32</sup> Michael M. Gunter, The Armenian Terrorist Campaign Against Turkey, *Orbis*, Summer 1983, Vol. 27, no:2, s.473-74.





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# THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY OF FRANCE AND TURKEY: PROPAGANDA AND LOBBYISM

Samim AKGÖNÜL \*

## **Abstract:**

*Armenian Community in France and its activities will be analysed in this article. After brief description of the community, its role as diaspora and its lobby activities will be dealt with. The number of Armenian originated French citizens has been estimated to be 350000-400000, which means that Armenian diaspora in France is the most powerful one among Armenian diaspora in Europe. This article will try to measure the feelings of the Armenian community in France against Turkey and Turkish citizens in the lights of the regular publications of the Armenians of France.*

## **Keywords:**

*Armenians, Diaspora, France, Hunchak, Dashnak, Turkey.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**W**hile writing this article, I have had some difficulties in naming the community that I have dealt with.<sup>1</sup> The alternatives are as follows:

- French Armenians
- Armenian French
- French Armenian Society
- French Armenian Community

The last one will be the term used most frequently. Without doubt this can be criticized, because it is known that constitutionally there has been no societies or communities in France. However, as the aim of this article is to study the mechanism of the process of this community (existence of these

\* Doctor, Researcher (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Strasbourg - France), University of Strasbourg lecturer

<sup>1</sup> Another terminological difficulty appears in qualifying the events of 1915. The following article is not written to support or to defend either of two theses. For this reason, it is preferred to use the word "genocide" in inverted commas and to try being neutral as much as possible.

**Does Turkey have a  
problem, which can be  
named as the  
"Armenian problem"?**

communities cannot be denied if not de jure but de facto) the preference is made. Besides, using the other terms, may give the impression of making differentiation between the concerning individuals to be either French or Armenian. Thus, the fact is not so in this aspect. The most famous of the French Armenians, Charles Aznavour could say 'I feel myself 100 % French and at the same time 100 % Armenian.'<sup>2</sup> Leaving the discussion of the probability of such a thing to psychologists, we disregarded the emotional part of this phrase in our writings. While reading the following article, these two difficulties should be remembered.

Does Turkey have a problem, which can be named as the 'Armenian problem'? The answer to this question shows differences depending on the point of view, the periods in history or the meaning loaded to the concept of Armenian problem. On the other hand, the presence of a chain of problems related to Turkey for the Armenians living away from Armenia and have become the citizens of other countries (who are called Diaspora) is out of discussion. Of course the above mentioned matters are related to the communities. Among individuals there are many taking this matters calmly, more peacefully and even, more irrelevantly. But yet, in the last analysis, it can be seen that the Armenian Diaspora (when the communities are taken as a base) adopted a hostile attitude against the existence of the Turkish State, its principals, sovereignty of its territory and rarely the citizens of the country, the Turks. It is possible to say that this attitude is a national policy. At first sight it might be seen easy to define this policy: the key point for whole Diaspora is to force Turkey to officially recognise the so-called 'genocide'. All institutions within the Diaspora are spending their energy on this subject. It is inevitable that this great effort will end up with multiple results. This situation has become more complicated since Armenia appeared as an independent state in the international area. The gradual effects of this lobbyism can be listed as follows:

<sup>2</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, October 2000, p. 35.

The effects on Turkey can be divided into two; the effects on Turkey's state policy; and the effects on Turkish public opinion against Armenians.

The effects on Armenia: Armenia's attitude, especially against Turkey, and its policy are affected by the attitude of the Diaspora. But, with a closer look, we can see that a group in Diaspora, which can be named as 'falcons', find Armenia's Turkish policy very lax.

The effects on western states (Europe and the USA) and western public opinion: The most important results of lobbyism can be seen in this field. The only visible part of this effect is the recognition of the 'genocide' by some western states, but more important than that is the atmosphere created against Turkey and the Turks for many years.

And finally, effects on Diaspora: It is quite difficult to measure the reactions of the Armenians living outside of Armenia to these harsh lobbying activities. But we can easily say that there are two kinds of feelings: the first is by all means 'hatred' (no need to be afraid of the words). Hatred is openly declared against Turkey and everything related to Turkey. But of course it will be unfair to say that this is the only feeling they have. In daily life, you may meet a number of individuals, who are in good relations with the Turks, and declare their own reactions against this anti-propaganda against Turkey. And they even have a peaceful point of view on the subject. Nevertheless, we have to admit that the very same persons may speak differently under different circumstances and with different collocutors, which is extremely natural. For this reason, to approach this subject with a Manichean look will be wrong.

In this article, I plan to scrutinize the viewpoint of the French Armenian community, which is the one of the most important and the most effective of whole Armenian groups against Turkey. After introducing this community, I am going to analyse the lobbyism activities of the notables of this community and will try to measure the feelings against Turkey and the Turkish citizens in the lights of the regular publications of the Armenians of France.

#### **THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY OF FRANCE**

The total population of Armenian origin people living in the World is estimated to be 6.5 millions. As it can be seen, this is a

very small number as the population of a nation, but on the contrary the proportion of the approval of this little nation is very wide, at least in the western World. This shows how successful the propaganda is. Approximately 5 millions of Armenians have been living in the former Soviet Union Republics and about 3.5 millions of them have been Armenian citizens since 1991. The remaining 1.5 millions are forming the Armenian Diaspora. Although the USA is the most important country in which Armenians settled widely (800000 persons), the most important community in Europe live in France.<sup>3</sup> Today the number of Armenian originated French citizens has been estimated to be 350,000-400,000. In addition, the emigration from Armenia has been going on since 1991, and France has become one of the most important immigration countries besides the USA. We can also add Cyprus and Lebanon to this picture. Lebanon Armenians, although very small in number, have made their voice heard by means of ASALA.

The majority of French Armenians live in Paris and surroundings. Since 1930's they have mostly been living in Alfortville, Maison-Alfort and Issy-Les-Moulineaux. Some other groups are living in the surroundings of big cities like Marseilles and Lyon. France has got a very special place in the contemporary Armenian national mythology for sure. Before 1914 there were only 4.000 Armenians sheltered in this country.<sup>4</sup> The emigration movement to France has begun in 1915. For Armenians, France was a shelter country. Between the years 1925 and 1938, 63.000 Armenians migrated to France from Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, and Soviet Armenia. The choice of France is because of the active presence of an Armenian trade colony in this country since 19<sup>th</sup> century and that of presence of the french nationals in Syria and Lebanon where Armenians lived.

In the history of the French Armenians, there were interesting and painful events. After 1945, Stalin gave permission to the Armenian Diaspora for going back to Armenia. The aim was to increase the population of Armenia and to prepare an excuse for demanding land from Turkey. From all over the World, 100.000 Armenians willingly immigrated to Armenia to make their utopian dreams come true (this coming back is called NERKATH). Among

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<sup>3</sup> 'Sur la Route avec les Émigrés Clandestins' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 2001, pp. 12-21.

<sup>4</sup> Hovanessian Martine, *Les Arméniens et leurs territoires*, Paris : Autrement, 1995, p. 32.

them there are also 1000 French Armenians. This experience ended up with a great disappointment, and most of them went back to France; that is France became a shelter country for the second time. Walking out of Armenia caused a diversian among the Armenians. The Diaspora and the Armenians living in Armenia became fall apart and political differences became more visible. When the ones in Armenia were closer to the parties Hintchak and Ramgavar (pro-Soviet), in Diaspora, especially in France, the sympathizers of Dashnak party were in majority (anti-Soviet). This diversity, made their relations tense, and a long lasting rivalry took place between them. The importance of this rivalry was very big referring to their points of view and their policy against Turkey. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Diaspora showed a more 'falcon' attitude against Turkey. It was definite that, Soviet Armenians were not being free in their policy and they got a share in this.

The ethnic appearance of the French Armenians has begun to change with this experience. From the beginning of 1950's, the Palestinian and East European Armenians, after 1975 Armenians from Lebanon and after Islamic revolution Armenians from Iran and after the military coup-d'état in 1980 Armenians in Turkey went to France. Armenians, who came to this country with the policy of gathering the French immigrant families together, have become almost a 'fresh blood' for the Armenian community of France. In 1980's, the community, which was given existence by the 1915 immigration has become to change, to widen, and to have a variety of aspects.

With the earthquake in 1988 and the collapse of the Soviet Armenia, the emigration to the west especially to France has gain speed again. As it can be seen, French Armenians do not show one specific culture, one geographic origin and even one religious belief:

*'There are lots of differences separating Armenian origin French's from each other...; The Armenian bourgeoisie, assimilated in the French middle class who are Lebanon, Iran, and Istanbul originated, speaking Armenian but at the same time cosmopolitans; Turkish and Kurdish speaking Anatolian Armenians from labour class who are conservative Christians and are not related to their past anymore, and get stuck in the social dwellings of the suburbs like Arnouville, Alfortville, Issy-les-Moulineaux; 'old' Armenians coming from important Armenian cities like Beirut,*

*Damascus and Algeria have devoted their lives to their identity and their language and they are militants of Armenian claim*"<sup>5</sup>

It is necessary to have a careful glance at an important result of this diversion of view toward Turkey. On the contrary of what is seen from outside, we mean from Turkey, French Armenians think that their members are assimilated in the French society more than necessary, lost their identities and are not engaged to the Armenian claim enough. They claim only 5 or 20 thousand of 350 000 Armenians of France are always attached to their identity and by means of the regular publications made by French Armenians, those 5-10 thousand Armenians are able to follow news about Armenia and the Diaspora, and very few of them speak Armenian in their daily life. The number of children attending Armenian schools is not more than 2.000.<sup>6</sup>

The biggest fear of the notables of Armenian community is that the young French Armenians might break off the claim, forget the 'genocide' and their relations with Armenia. The nightmare of all minorities, 'assimilation' naturally exists in this community too. The most important precautions taken against this danger are to establish associations and institutions. It is a fact that French Armenians have got a very good net of association and publication.

From 1920's on, like all immigrant groups, Armenians also carried all their institutions like social clubs, political groups and churches to France. Besides the churches, the most important regularity can be seen in political parties. The first coming ones of these parties are:

Hunchak: Marxist and populist. Takes its place beside the Soviet Armenian Republic and thus it is not very effective in France.

Dashnak: (Armenian Revolutionist Federation) is the most notable party for the Armenian activities before 1914. Between the years of 1918 and 1920 the leaders of Armenian Republic were from this party. After Armenia because the part of the Soviet, they were exiled and they continued their activities in Diaspora. Today the most common political movement is considered to be Dashnak Party.

5 Ter Minassian Anahide, 'Les Arméniens de Paris depuis 1945', in *Les Paris des étrangers*, (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1994), pp. 205-239.

6 *La lettre de l'UGAB*, July 15th, 1995, p. 2.

Ramgavar: represents the liberal bourgeoisie part of the Armenians. It mostly addresses the elite and the rich class of the society. The institution named 'The general aid Unity of Armenians' is related to this party.

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France.**

From 1930's on, all the Armenian organizations in the Ottoman Empire, have been taken to France. The participations of these organizations in preserving the Armenian identity can't be denied.<sup>7</sup> The most successful among all is accepted to be Dashnak party. The centre of this party in Paris is the centre of many other organizations at the same time. The most important of them are 'Nor Seround'<sup>8</sup> and 'the Blue Cross of the Armenians of France.'<sup>9</sup> In this same centre there are some other organizations like 'the Armenian House of Culture', 'The Movement of Young Dashnaks' or 'Armenian scouts'.<sup>10</sup>

The rivalry in the political arena can also be seen in the associations. There are lots of institutions around Hunchak party too. The establishments of this pro-Soviet party have been getting closer to other institutions since Armenia was founded. Some of these institutions are: 'The Red Cross',<sup>11</sup> 'Movement of Young French Armenians' (Mouvement de la jeunesse Arménienne - JAF) and 'Organization of Scouts pro-JAF'. JAF was founded after the Second World War. In that period, as French Communist Party was so powerful, we can understand the importance of Hunchak party. From 1948 on, it spread through the cities like Décines, Valence, Paris, Alfortville and Sevran. But, as most of its interest was the Soviet Armenia, it hasn't been effective in Diaspora.

<sup>7</sup> Hovanessian Martine, *le Lien Communautaire, Trois Générations d'Arméniens*, (Paris : Armand Colin, 1992), p. 122.

<sup>8</sup> The youth branch of the party. A lot of panels and discussions are organized by this branch. The subjects of these weekly discussions, to which a lot of notables are invited, is "reunited" Armenia. The lobbyism activities are quite developed.

<sup>9</sup> An organ of Dashnak Party and has got about 1 000 members 99% of which are women. It has 18 departments all over France. It organizes lessons of language, dance, theatre and chorus besides a lot of conferences.

<sup>10</sup> This organization attracts the young people by organizing sportive competitions. There are 57 departments settled both in Europe and America. It has got strong relations. All departments are directed by a centre named 'Homenetmen'.

<sup>11</sup> The rival of the 'Blue Cross'.



Finally the most important association within the Ramgavar party is the 'General Union of Armenian Aid' established in Cairo in 1906 and active in Marseilles since 1910's. It has got 22 000 members all over the Europe and has got a powerful financial structure. It is said that its capital has reached to 700 million Francs in 1990's. With this great amount of money, it can run lots of schools and cultural centres. Besides it has got two vacation camps, one is in Syria and the other is in the USA. Its relations with Armenia are very strong.

There are some other establishments to be added to this list. The associations, which were established between 1975 and 1985, the period in which Armenian terrorists went on committing murders against Turkey, intending to support these terrorist activities, to form public opinion for them, should also be considered seriously. 'Armenian National Movement', 'Solidarity of Franco-Armenians' and 'Land and Culture Association' are some of them. The very last one has got a vast net. The association, which was established by the Armenian militants to support terrorism, has got 250 members in France. Besides this it also has got some departments in Switzerland, England, Argentina, Armenia and the USA. Since 1991 these organizations have been united in a federation named 'Union internationale des organisation Terre et Culture (UIOTC)'.

The earthquake in Armenia on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1989 caused the birth of new non-politic initiatives. Whole Diaspora and especially the Armenians of France have made new organizations to help 530000 homeless Armenians. This event is believed to be the 'new awakening' of the Armenians in Diaspora. In France a dozen of associations have started movements to help. Among these, there are some old associations like the 'Blue Cross' as well as the new ones like 'Aznavour for Armenia', 'SOS Armenia', etc. Especially 'Aznavour for Armenia' which was founded in the leadership of Charles Aznavour, has worked very actively since 1989 and has played an important role in Armenia's gaining sympathy in the French public opinion.

In the last 15 years, there have been important developments in the life of the Armenians of France related to Armenia. The 1988 earthquake, the announcement of independent Armenia on September 23, 1991, and the Karabakh problem caused a new friction among the Armenians of France. Some think that Armenia should come closer to its neighbour Turkey for it's survival and

defending a 'real-politic' manner. But the others, never approving any kind of relations with Turkey, with any means, and only accept the approach with the prerequisite of the recognition of the 'genocide'.

To prevent the friction, which is related to Armenia's political future, they have formed a new institution named 'the Forum of Armenian Associations' in Paris in 1991.<sup>12</sup> The aim is to renew the Armenians of France to whom the churches, the political parties and the old associations can't respond anymore. Today, nearly 60 Armenian associations are the members of this forum. The principal aims of this forum are to create an establishment to represent officially the Armenian community of France. It is a fact that, as the political system of France –just like the Turkish political system- is structured, not taking the communities as bases, but only the individuals, there has been no such establishments representing them officially up to day. Nevertheless, from 1990's on, various immigrants groups, in France like the groups coming from Algeria, Tunisia and Turkey, have got the opportunity of coming together in communities. Following the same example, the Armenians of France are also seen in the effort of becoming a congregation within this Forum. And without doubt these efforts strengthen the lobbyism activities. The most important proof of this strengthening is the recognition of the 'Armenian "Genocide" Law' in the French Parliament. It is certain that this Forum will become as powerful as the National Assembly of Armenians in the USA in a short period of time.<sup>13</sup> In this point of view it can be said that the Forum has strengthened the Armenian 'claim' in the recognition of the 'genocide' and the relations between the Armenians and the Frenchmen.

The second aim of the Forum is to be able to protect Armenian identity.<sup>14</sup> As a matter of fact, on the contrary of what it is seen from Turkey, the greatest fear of Armenians is the assimilation. All the interviews published in a magazine named *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie* are on this subject and ones who hesitate to declare their Armenian identity openly are not looked good. For instance

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<sup>12</sup> 'Les Associations Arméniennes ont Décidé d'Évoluer vers une Structure à l'image du Conseil représentatif des institutions juives de France (Crif)', *Libération*, 22.02.2001.

<sup>13</sup> 'Etats-Unis : un Modèle à Méditer. Lobbying Mode d'Emploi ' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, pp. 8-9.

<sup>14</sup> *La Lettre de l'UGAB*, July 15th 1995, p. 2.

the famous film director Henry Verneuil who doesn't use his real name, is known to shut the film Mayrig telling about the immigration of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire, under the pressure of the community. In this point of view, the duties of the Armenians of France are two: first not to be assimilated, second, to make their claim understood throughout France.

Finally, among the goals of this Forum is to build a bridge between the Armenians of France and Armenia. More important than any others, the main goal is to keep the Armenian community united. But for this, the Forum should prove its credibility. Because of this, the Forum has performed many activities, which take an effective place in the media like in the cases of Bernard Lewis<sup>15</sup> or Gills Veinstein. The important thing is that the considerable newspapers like *Le Monde* or *Libération* have given place to these mentioned cases widely and as a result, they have got the attention of the readers. In this aspect the Forum gained the confidence of the Armenian community and has become the strongest candidate to represent the Armenians officially.<sup>16</sup>

As a matter of fact, the propaganda, which has been imposed by the Forum, has played an important role in the recognition of the 'Armenian genocide' by the French Parliament. Too see this propaganda monolithic, ossified, and completely rational will be wrong. Now we are going to examine this.

#### *Lobbyism and Propaganda*

First of all we should define these two concepts. The lobbyism, which is accepted to be a positive idea in Anglo-Saxon political culture, is defined just in the opposite way, negatively in Latin political culture (We can put Turkey in this category). In every period of time and society there have been pressure groups or power groups. Professional, religious, ethnic, political or geographical groups are the best examples. Even going further, we can say that, in the Western societies, after the industrialisation, some people coming together for pleasure and for spending their free time have become pressure groups, too. The best example to this is the very powerful hunters lobby in France. But, when we refer to lobbyism, economic and ethnic groups come to mind. The new parameter on this subject is the European Union where the

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<sup>15</sup> 'Procès Lewis' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 1994, p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> 'Les trois ans du Forum' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 1996, pp. 30-31.

Civil Society has become a real political actor. Under these conditions, it is inevitable that lobbyism is becoming more powerful in all countries in the EU.<sup>17</sup>

Even in countries like France, which has always given the individuals an upper position depending on its political culture, regional or ethnic communities are beginning to be acceptable. Corsica, Alsace and Bretagne for the regions, Moslems and Jewish's for the religious communities are the best examples. Under these circumstances it isn't hard to foresee that the Armenian lobby will eventually get stronger in France just like in the USA. More important than this is that the activities are becoming more acceptable in the French public opinion and are being considered to be normal.<sup>18</sup> The propaganda against Turkey and to make Turkey to recognize 'genocide' allegations is becoming to be known widely.

At this point, we should make clear what we understand from 'propaganda'. We can briefly define it as forming a public opinion. Among various definitions, the more detailed one in the political point of view is:

'The activities which are effective on masses, classes and persons who have a role in winning any claim related to the internal or the external policy of a country are called propaganda.'<sup>19</sup> This definition is fitted to the propaganda type we are talking about. According to Osman Özsoy's definition, the aim of propaganda is as follows:

'It is to direct the individuals, to accept an idea with their own will even though they are not obliged to do so, and to take part in a movement willingly without being forced.'<sup>20</sup> I think this definition is incomplete. In the last analysis, if we assume that the individuals do not have to accept any idea principally, with this definition, every idea explained would have to be described as propaganda; and it will be exaggeration. And yet, the aim of Armenian propaganda, is not affecting the individuals but the society by means of which affecting the political power. In this specific propaganda, affecting individuals cannot be taken as the goal but as the means.

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<sup>17</sup> Quermonne Jean-Louis, *le Système de l'Union Européenne*, (Paris : Montchrestien, 1994), p. 93.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Lamarque Gilles, *Le Lobbying*, (Paris : Presses Universitaire de France, 1994).

<sup>19</sup> Ferhat Başdoğan, *Propaganda*, (Ankara : Kara Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı Yayınları, 1960), p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Osman Özsoy, *Propaganda ve Kamuoyu Oluşturma*, (İstanbul : Alfa, 1998), p. 7.

These thoughts took us to the propaganda of the Armenian communist specifically. We can say that there are two goals of this propaganda: The first one is to ensure France's putting pressure on Turkish State for the recognition of the 1915 Armenian 'genocide' in every way possible. This goal requires of a plan to be carried out within few steps. The first step is to convince the French public opinion that the 'genocide' is a real and historical event. The second step is to make the same people put pressure on the French State organs on the very same object. The third step is to make the mentioned organs to recognize the 'genocide' and this was to transform the subject into being a legal historical reality, from being a thesis. As it is known, these three steps have almost completely become true in France. Following steps will be directed to Turkey. The aim is to make France to put political, economic and psychological pressure on Turkey and as a result to get Turkey's approval. For most of the Armenians this will be the final point. But, it is a reality that the people dominating the propaganda have been planning further steps. Simply, after the recognition, they are willing to demand compensations from Turkey and finally to take eastern region of Turkey called Western Armenia in Armenian literature.<sup>21</sup>

The second aim seems to be more abstract. The propaganda works on creating public opinion against Turkey, have been speared out widely. The Armenians are trying to show that Turkey is unfair in every subject. It is not important whether the subject is related to Armenians, or not. The aim is draw a picture of a primitive, antidemocratic, savage Turkish State and worse of all a Turkish nation. In the *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*<sup>22</sup> we see lots of articles about:

Naturally two-way relations in the region, in which Armenia has also been involved, have got an important place in the magazine. But, it is very interesting that Turkey wants to be shown alone and isolated in the region and to be in a bad and hostile manner against all neighbours. It is intended to emphasize that Turkey is

<sup>21</sup> 'Séparer les Bourreaux et les Victimes' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 1995, pp. 40-41.

<sup>22</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie* has been being published since 1994 and it is said to have severe line. It is a magazine which sent only to subscribers, printed thoroughly in French and contains a lot of advertisements. It addresses the Armenians of France not the French people. The continuous readers of this magazine are generally young generation Armenians. Briefly, the bad Turkey image affects the Armenians of France, not the Frenchmen, and it prevents the young generation Armenians to change their view against Turkey and the Turks.

an irreconcilable, irredentist and an aggressive country.<sup>23</sup> As for Turkey's relations with Greece,<sup>24</sup> Cyprus,<sup>25</sup> Bulgaria, Georgia, even with Iraq Iran, Syria and a fortiori Armenia, the only side which is right is always the side against Turkey. Among all, the relations, between Turkey and Azerbaijan are the most important one. These two countries are shown to be one<sup>26</sup> and they are accused of creating economic and political problems for Armenia.

Turkey-EU relations: On this subject, we have met numerous articles, interviews and researches. In general, the idea aimed to emphasize that, Turkey doesn't deserve to be a member of the EU. The thesis repeatedly claim that Turkey is not democratic enough, it has a poor economy, and there have been infringements of human rights in Turkey.<sup>27</sup> But, of course the most important prerequisite for Turkish- EU proximity is shown to be the recognition of the 'genocide'. The impression these articles give is that if the recognition comes true, all the other negative claims will be wiped off immediately. According to the magazine, the basis of all the problems in Turkey is the not-recognition of the 'genocide'. Under these circumstances, all the problems between Turkey and EU are applauded<sup>28</sup> and all the proximities are criticized severely.<sup>29</sup>

Another subject treated frequently in this magazine is the Kurdish problem. The idea, these tens of articles want to give, is that both Armenians and the Kurds are in some kind of a unity of fate, as being 'nations crushed by Turks.'<sup>30</sup> Besides the support given to the Kurds, it is very striking to see the place they give to PKK and to Abdullah Öcalan.<sup>31</sup> The most important conclusion on

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<sup>23</sup> 'Turquie et ses voisins ; le torchon brûle' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> 'le retour des tensions gréco-turques' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 1994, pp. 34-35, 'Tensions en Mer Egée' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, March 1996, p. 22.

<sup>25</sup> 'Une République bananière au cœur de la Méditerranée' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 2000, p. 20, 'Chypre : Ankara cloué au pilori' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 2001, p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, November 1994, pp. 16-19.

<sup>27</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February 1995, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> 'Le camouflet des Quinze : l'Europe ferme ses portes à la Turquie' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February, 1998, pp. 24-25.

<sup>29</sup> 'Turquie : quelle place en Europe? Contradictions entre la Commission européenne et le Parlement de Strasbourg sur les conditions de l'intégration d'Ankara' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 2000, pp. 32-35.

<sup>30</sup> 'Arménie-Kurdistan : une alliance naturelle' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 1996, pp. 22-23, 'Tous avec le PKK' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1999, pp. 8-9.

<sup>31</sup> 'Abdullah Öcalan va mal' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, July-August 2000, p. 11.

**The most important conclusion on this matter is for the solution of the Kurdish problem, Turkey first of all should recognize the 'genocide'. According to the magazine, the Southeastern policy of Ankara is an extension of 1915.**

this matter is for the solution of the Kurdish problem, Turkey first of all should recognize the 'genocide'. According to the magazine, the Southeastern policy of Ankara is an extension of 1915. The impression we get after reading all the articles and interviews is that Turks' treating the Kurds badly is 'normal'. This Manichean approach can also be seen in the subject of other minorities.<sup>32</sup> The interesting point is that the magazine keeps very quiet about the Armenians of Turkey. This may be because they find the Armenian minority of Turkey not concerned of the matter enough, not making any effort for the recognition of the 'genocide', and besides being in an attitude close to Ankara. Very few articles written about them are mostly an religion.<sup>33</sup> Although it is known that this minority has got various problems, like belongings of the foundations, there have nearly been no articles on these subjects. According to the Armenians of France, the most passive part of the Diaspora is the Armenians of Turkey.

We can also see articles on Turkey's economic problems very often. The conclusion we have reached in the last analysis, depending on the articles, is that Turkey is a mafia country, it has got the position of a 'banana republic' and the economic problems are 'normal'. But as a contradiction, the very same magazine refers to Turkey as being a great and conspirator regional power. With an ethnocentric view, every attempt made by Turkey in that region, is shown as an attempt against Armenia.<sup>34</sup>

To the list of news and commentaries about Turkey we should also add the ones about Turkey's internal politics. These articles on Turkey's internal policy are less than ones on Armenia's internal policy but as a paradox they are much more than the ones about French internal policy. There are so many of these articles

<sup>32</sup> 'Anatolie où sont tes enfants grecs' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 2000, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> 'décès de Sa Béatitudo Karékine II : la communauté d'Istanbul en deuil' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1998, pp. 34-35.

<sup>34</sup> 'Gaz turkmène et allumettes turques' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, November 2000, p. 7.

that it can be said the writers are spending their political lives around Turkey and Armenia. The news and commentaries on French internal policy take place only if they are about the 'genocide'. Interviews are made with every politician except for the extreme rightists but the only questions asked are about the 'genocide'.

Two new parameters are added to the propaganda, which Armenians of France have been imposing against Turkey for the last 10 years. The first is the appearance of the EU as a very important political actor. Even though it has been painful and even chaotic, it can't be denied that the relations between Turkey and the EU have become more frequent in the last 10 years. In other words, the integration to EU has become Turkey's state policy. Meanwhile the Armenians of France think that they have gained a new triumph against Turkey. The EU is seen as a new and more powerful way of pressure now.

The second parameter is much complicated. It is the independent Armenia. First of all it should be clear that the Armenians of France are proud of having an independent "motherland". Especially the ones having a cold look towards Soviet Armenia, with the joy of finding the motherland myth again, seem to embrace Armenia. With no doubt there is political rivalry in France as well as in Armenia. The political formations mentioned before, cause a separation in France too, but in the last analysis it seems that there has been nearly no one to feel uncomfortable about the presence of Armenia. The most important point on this is that the Diaspora and the Armenians of France, who consider themselves to be the real and pure Armenians, want to play an important role on the politics of Armenia.<sup>35</sup> The limping democracy in Armenia is criticized openly, it is asked the governments to be in close relations with the Diaspora and the mafia type formations are preoccupied. Two points of which the Armenians of France feel sorry are: Armenia's becoming more emptied day by day<sup>36</sup> and the government's not defending the 'genocide' enough. On the first point, everyone has got the same opinion on the necessity that this bleeding, getting heavier gradually because of the emigration, should be stopped with any solution possible. The Armenian press is introducing the persons who leave France to go to Armenia and settle there, as

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<sup>35</sup> 'Arménie-Diaspora' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, September 2001, p. 74.

<sup>36</sup> 'Hémorragie' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 2001, pp. 22-25.



heroes and is encouraging this returning to motherland. But, as it can be seen easily these type reversal emigration are extremely marginal.<sup>37</sup> Another thing being encouraging are the aid campaigns to Armenia. There is nearly no month passing without a supporting concert, aid nights, auction or aid demands. But, of course, so many campaigns give the image that Armenia is a very poor country and it is difficult to live there; and this discourage the ones wishing to go back 'home'. We should make this clear that for the Diaspora, which has reached the fourth generation, it is quite difficult to settle down in the motherland again. According to the Armenians of France, the main reason of the emigration is economic; and Turkey together with Azerbaijan who put embargo on Armenia is responsible of this situation. Naturally, the Armenians of France have a look at Armenia with the eyes of Frenchmen, and thus they are neglecting other more structural problems.

Another subject disturbing the Armenian community is that, Armenia seems to be unwilling and more passive on putting pressure on Turkey for the recognition of the 'genocide' when compared with the Diaspora. Diaspora accuses the Armenian State of loosening the 'genocide' politics for their own political and economic profits with the wish of putting the claim in front of anything else. Diaspora tolerates no relations with Turkey unless the recognition becomes true. For instance, 'Turkey-Armenia Peace Council' which has been trying to work properly for the last two years, is never looked at good.<sup>38</sup> It is believed that the Turkish members of this council are deceiving Armenia with economic promises and are taking them away from the main topic, 'genocide'. We must accept that the Armenian community of France is in a difficult position in this aspect. Because, as the life of this community has been built up on the 'genocide' and its remembrance for tens of years, the birth of Armenia, neighbour of Turkey, makes everything more difficult than ever.

After scrutinizing the aims of lobbyism and the propaganda briefly, it is necessary to give some information on the means. There are three destinations of the propaganda:

<sup>37</sup> 'Portrait de trois femmes qui ont choisi de travailler en Arménie: il faut y aller' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February 1996, pp. 14-15.

<sup>38</sup> 'Le dialogue Arméno-Turc' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January, 2000, pp. 32-35, 'Dialogue de demi-sourds' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, July-August 2000, pp. 34-35.

The Armenians of France (to prevent assimilation, to preserve Armenianship, to raise new generations against Turkey)

Frenchmen (to form a public opinion against Turkey, to Make Turkey seem unpleasant, to convince them on the presence of the 'genocide')

State of France (Not being in good relations with Turkey, to impose the others to be in an attitude against Turkey in the relations with the EU, to try building up good relations with Armenia, to recognize the 'genocide' and to pressure on Turkey for the same recognition).

We can see that there are three different ways of addressing to these three destinations. The direct addressing to the Armenians of France is made by means of the regular publications. Today there are three monthly magazines (Les Nouvelles d'Arménie, France-Arménie, Azad Magazine), two weekly magazines (Achkar, La Lettre de l'UGAB) and two daily newspapers (Gamk and Haratch) in France, which are read by the Armenians. The magazines are published in French and in Armenian whereas the newspapers are published only in Armenian. All these publications, although they have some ideological differences, claim that they help to preserve the French-Armenianship and are in service of the claim. But, we can say that the oral and family educations are more useful than these publications in preserving the characteristics of the new generation Armenians and raising new soldiers for their struggles.<sup>39</sup> In the magazine Les Nouvelles d'Arménie, a well-known Armenian origin French is interviewed every month. After mentioning about the activities of this person, several questions like what he/she does for the 'genocide', how much he/she is engaged, are asked. The ones who declare that they are away from being Armenians, and that they are French first of all, are criticized and given lessons of Armenianship. By introducing the successful Armenians, they want to give a message to the society that a person can be a French, an Armenian, famous and successful at the same time, and it is a shame not serving the claim.

In general, the messages are given to the French public opinion by means of the national publications. In the newspapers like le Monde, Libération, le Figaro and even Le Canard Enchaîné, which

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. Hovanessian Martine, *Le lien communautaire, trois générations d'Arméniens*, (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992).

are very effective on the public opinion, on national and regional televisions, and on the radios, there have been publications and programmes on the Armenian 'genocide' very often. In addition, tens of Internet sites in France can be followed all over the world. They are either personal or established sites, and the largest place is given to the 'genocide' claim.<sup>40</sup> As a result of using all these media groups the 'genocide' allegations and the Armenian claim are well known by the French public opinion as shows the results of the inquiry made and published by *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*. The results of this inquiry, very important for Turkey, are as follows:

**Question 1:**

Are you aware of the 'genocide', which took place in Turkey in 1915, against the Armenian population? Or have you ever heard it?

69% Yes, 31 % No

**Question 2:**

Do you know that Turkey has never recognized this "genocide"

49 % Yes, 51 % No

**Question 3:**

In your opinion, should French authorities recognize the "genocide" officially?

75 % Yes, 14 % No, 11 % No idea

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<sup>40</sup> According to the Armenians there are more than 650 Internet sites who introduce the "genocide", *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 2000, pp. 11-15. Some of them are:  
[www.armenews.com](http://www.armenews.com) (*Les nouvelles d'Arménie*)  
[www.acam-france.org](http://www.acam-france.org) (Association Culturelle Arménienne de Marne-la-Vallée)  
[www.agbu.org](http://www.agbu.org) (Armenian General Benevolent Union)  
<http://giiia.armenweb.org> (Groupement International Interprofessionnel Arménien)  
[www.internews.am](http://www.internews.am) (Internews Armenia)  
[www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am) (Armenian News Agency)  
<http://com24.armenweb.org> (Conseil de coordination des organisations arméniennes de France)  
[www.cdca.asso.fr](http://www.cdca.asso.fr) (Comité de défense de la cause arménienne)  
[www.guiank.com](http://www.guiank.com) (Amicale des Arméniens de Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées)  
[www.ifrance.com/japel](http://www.ifrance.com/japel) (association artistique arménienne)  
<http://azadakroutiou.free.fr> (Association d'Aide et de Coopération à l'Arménie)  
[www.netarmenie.com](http://www.netarmenie.com)  
<http://mattlnp.free.fr/index.htm> (Educational Link and Entertainment For Armenian New Talents)  
<http://perso.club-internet.fr/sarafian> (France-Arménie)

Question 4:

As you know, it is a crime to refuse the Jewish genocide according to French law. Should it be the same for 1915 Armenian genocide in your opinion?

79 % Yes, 13 % No, 11 % No idea

As it can be seen clearly from the answers to these questions, French public opinion is convinced about the reality of the 'genocide' allegations.<sup>41</sup> In fact, the France's recognition of the 'genocide' with a law is an indirect proof; this recognition cannot be explained with the concern of the elections or the vote accounts. But the element should always be kept in mind, is that the public opinion concept is never ossified. Public opinion is in a continuous movement, and the tests of public opinion can only take the pictures of a specific moment. In this circumstances, thinking that French people will always be in an attitude against Turkey, is not realistic and is dangerous at the same time.

I'd like to take the attention to the last question in this inquiry. It is reality that, after the 'genocide' was recognized in the French Parliament and the Senate, the propaganda activities of the Armenians of France have become dense on putting pressure on the ones who refuse the 'genocide' and getting them to be punished by the law. As it is known in France, refusing the Jewish genocide openly and even writing articles and books and making scientific studies, which question the genocide, are being punished by the Gayssot law. The purpose of the Armenian Lobby is to widen the extension of this law and to make is possible to be carried out for the Armenian 'genocide' too. If this becomes a rule, the thesis of Turkey claiming that 'history should be left to the hands of historians' will become non valid and consequently the idea of the 'genocide' being transferred from the historical field to the political one, will be able to take its place in the law platform, which is more rigid. What I mean is that Armenian lobbyism hasn't come to an end with the recognition of the 'genocide' by France.

Lastly, the address of the propaganda is the French administration and the state mechanism. Interviews with the

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<sup>41</sup> A very popular news speaker Patrick Poivre d'Arvor, whom millions of French people have been watching every evening, says "I think French people accepted the Armenian "genocide" as a reality now" in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 2001, pp. 40-41.

politicians taking place in *les Nouvelles d'Arménie* show that the Armenian community is taking the opinions of the people with political power whichever party they belong to, and whatever position they have in the French international policy, and further more, is putting a kind of pressure on them to be engaged to their matter. The Mayors, Deputies, Ministers, candidates to the elections, presidents of the associations, etc. are all asked questions on the 'genocide', on Armenia, and on France-Turkey relations and even if they have never given thought on these, they feel obliged to take a position against Turkey during the interview. If they try to resist the pressure, the questions of the reporter are getting harsher and more than being questions, they become a lesson on ethics and the politician being interviewed finds himself in a defending position. The quantity and the quality of the writings took place in this magazine from 1994 to 2001 shows how importantly considered the French politicians are:

Ségolène Royale,<sup>42</sup> Lionel Jospin,<sup>43</sup> Edouard Balladur,<sup>44</sup> Michel Barnier,<sup>45</sup> François Mitterrand,<sup>46</sup> François Rochebloine,<sup>47</sup> Patrick Devedjian,<sup>48</sup> Laurant Fabius,<sup>49</sup> Robert Hue,<sup>50</sup> Gilles de Robien,<sup>51</sup> Philippes De Villers,<sup>52</sup> François Rochebloine,<sup>53</sup> André Santini,<sup>54</sup> Paul Mercieca,<sup>55</sup> Patrick Devedjian,<sup>56</sup> Jean-Pierre Foucher,<sup>57</sup> Jean-Paul Bret,<sup>58</sup> Jacques Oudin,<sup>59</sup> Jacques-Richard

<sup>42</sup> 'Elle porte plainte contre la Turquie' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 1995, pp. 22-23.

<sup>43</sup> 'Le candidat de la gauche s'adresse aux Arméniens' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1995, pp. 32-33.

<sup>44</sup> 'Edouard Balladur s'adresse à la communauté' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1995, pp. 34-35.

<sup>45</sup> 'De retour d'Arménie, le Ministre des Affaires européennes nous livre ses impressions', *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 1995, p. 30-31.

<sup>46</sup> 'Mitterrand et les Arméniens' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February 1996, pp. 4-5

<sup>47</sup> 'Le Président du groupe d'amitié France Arménie au Parlement' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, March 1996, pp. 26-27.

<sup>48</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1996, p. 10

<sup>49</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1996, p. 11.

<sup>50</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1996, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1996, p. 13.

<sup>52</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 1996, p. 6.

<sup>56</sup> « Plaidoyer pour une vraie justice » in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 1996, p. 28-29.

<sup>57</sup> 'L'UDF doit reconnaître le génocide' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 1998, pp. 24-25.

<sup>58</sup> 'Le nouveau Président du groupe d'amitié France-Arménie' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February 1998, pp. 30-31

<sup>59</sup> 'Les pressions turques ne peuvent toucher le Sénat' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, September-October 1998, pp. 34-35.

Delong,<sup>60</sup> François Bayrou,<sup>61</sup> Pierre Lelouche,<sup>62</sup> François Hollande,<sup>63</sup> Noël Mamere,<sup>64</sup> Philippes Douste Blazy,<sup>65</sup> Alain Krivine,<sup>66</sup> Jack Lang,<sup>67</sup> Philippe De Villiers,<sup>68</sup> Jean Tibéri,<sup>69</sup> Christian Poncelet,<sup>70</sup> Jean-Paul Bret,<sup>71</sup> François Rochebloine,<sup>72</sup> Jean-Claude Gaudin,<sup>73</sup> Bertrand Delanoë,<sup>74</sup> Patrick Devedjian,<sup>75</sup> Hélène Luc,<sup>76</sup> Jean-Paul Bret,<sup>77</sup> Marie Anne Isler Béguin,<sup>78</sup> André Santini.<sup>79</sup>

As it can be seen, the opinions of all politicians are taken and their interest with the subject is made certain in this way. Except from these politicians, the addresses of the deputies and senators are given in the media to make sure that the Armenians will be able to put pressure on them.<sup>80</sup> This pressure has become denser especially when the law recognizing the genocide, has been waiting to be discussed in the Senate. Great demonstrations have been organized (on March 11, 2000, 12 000 people marched in

- 60 'Quel est l'intérêt de la France dans cette affaire' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, November 1998, pp. 34-35.
- 61 'Pour la reconnaissance...' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 1999, p. 24.
- 62 'Histoire d'un coup fourré' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, July-August 1999, p. 66.
- 63 'Réponse à Pierre Lelouche' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, September-November 1999, p. 66.
- 64 'Du génocide arménien à la solution du problème kurde' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 1999, p. 64.
- 65 'Pour rejoindre l'Union, la Turquie devra reconnaître le génocide arménien' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 2000, p. 66.
- 66 'La reconnaissance du génocide est un enjeu pour l'avenir de l'Europe' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, February 2000, p. 66.
- 67 'La victoire de mémoire sur la realpolitik' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, March 2000, p. 66.
- 68 'Le blocage au Sénat est de fait imputable au gouvernement Jospin', in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 2000, p. 66.
- 69 'La reconnaissance du génocide arménien : de l'enjeu français à l'exigence européenne', in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 2000, p. 66.
- 70 'Devoir de mémoire et de réconciliation à l'aube du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 2000, p. 65.
- 71 'Puisque la vérité est dite' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, July-August 2000, p. 66.
- 72 'Responsabilité partagée' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, September 2000, p. 66.
- 73 'Une nécessaire reconnaissance' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, October 2000, p. 66.
- 74 'Au nom de l'avenir' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, November 2000, p. 66.
- 75 'Un devoir républicain universel' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 2000, p. 74.
- 76 'Ensemble nous avons réussi' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, January 2001, p. 66.
- 77 'Quel sens donner à l'imprescriptibilité si la réparation n'est pas envisagée' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 2001, p. 66.
- 78 'Caucase : la solution européenne' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, July-August 2001, p. 74.
- 79 'Un nouvel espoir pour l'Arménie' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, September 2001, p. 66.
- 80 'Ecrits à votre sénateur' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 2000, p. 64.

Paris<sup>81</sup>) and slogans like "Turkey massacres, the Senates buries" have been used. Of course it was out of discussion to expect any of these politicians to resist this pressure. At last on November 8, 2000 the Senate has recognize the law of 'genocide' with 164 Yes and 40 No votes<sup>82</sup> and on January 18, 2001 the National Assembly has recognized the law unanimously.<sup>83</sup>

It will be wrong to say that everyone in France appreciates this event. There have been objections and criticisms,<sup>84</sup> but yet the French public opinion has accepted the decision without much reaction. After this acceptance, the two purposes of Armenian Lobby is still continuing, first to make France and Europe put pressure on Ankara for the same recognition and as a result of this to be able to demand reparation, and second is to gain the right to make the ones who refuse the 'genocide' punished by the law.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the recognition process in the other countries and cities have been watched closely,<sup>86</sup> the pressure and propaganda are being directed to EU.<sup>87</sup>

### CONCLUSION

I would like to put an end to this article taking the attention on an important point. It is a reality that there is sympathy for the Armenians in French public opinion. The reasons of this sympathy are both sociological and historical. I think it is not wrong to say that sociologically French people feel sympathy for the armed struggle in general even if it is terrorism. The activities of the organizations like PFO, IRA, ETA and PKK are considered to be activities of independence by a number of French and they don't give reactions to such organizations like other countries (Turkey, Spain, England, etc.). Even the terror of the FLNC organization in Corsica gets approval of a part of them. In this aspect, the

<sup>81</sup> *Le Monde*, 12.03.2000.

<sup>82</sup> *Le Monde*, 08.11.2000.

<sup>83</sup> *Le Monde*, 18.01.2001.

<sup>84</sup> For example, Pascal Boniface, 'Une diplomatie sous influence ?' in *Le Figaro*, 26.01.2001.

<sup>85</sup> 'Et maintenant' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 2001, p. 18

<sup>86</sup> 'Génocide : il n'y a pas le feu au lac' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 2001, p. 7, 'Génocide : le scandale anglais' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 2001, p. 13, 'Le parlement italien reconnaît le génocide arménien' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, December 2000, p. 6

<sup>87</sup> 'Le parlement européen prend prétexte de la commission de réconciliation arméno-turque pour zapper le génocide' in *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie*, November 2001, pp. 16-17

murders of ASALA are not reacted enough and even after the Orly event. Armenian terrorists are not completely included to the list of 'the bad ones.' The most famous of these terrorists, Varoujan Garabedian, has been released recently after being kept imprisoned for 18 years, and has settled down in Armenia.<sup>88</sup> In this way the last ASALA terrorist has left the French prisons without getting any negative reaction from the public opinion.

It is possible to think that under this sympathy there lays very popular Armenian origin Frenchmen. The singer Charles Aznavour, the film directors Henri Verneuil and Robert Guédiguian, the speaker Daniel Bilalian, the footballers Youri Djorkaeff and Alain Boghossian are only a few current examples. But all these notables are not enough to explain the sympathy shown towards everybody with the names of -ian- endings. I think that the historical root is Michel Manoukian subconsciously. All French people over the age of 15, have heard of this name. This Armenian origin communist resistant, who was murdered by Vichy government during the Nazi occupation and whose murder was announced on the "Red billboard", has become identical poster with positive ideas such as freedom, resistance, heroism and martyrdom in the subconscious of the French people. With a careful look we can see that all these persons Manoukian to be at the top, are popular in France not because they are Armenians, but because of their performances and for this reason the individual sympathy is reflected to the society indirectly.

Summarily I conclude that a number of Armenians for variety of reasons still believe in the the 'genocide' claims. I don't think these people have got any materialistic demands from Turkey or hate Turks totally. The main problem is that for the notables in Diaspora, who conduct the activities of lobbyism and propaganda, the 'genocide' allegations have become a political instrument to be used for their particular interests. This event has become so ossified that this group takes even the painful works of proximity between Armenia and Turkey negatively.

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<sup>88</sup> 'Les premiers pas d'un homme libre' in *Les nouvelles d'Arménie*, June 2001, pp. 20-21.



# INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN TURKEY BETWEEN EARLY 1950S AND 1970S: CRISES AND SUCCESSES

Umut Koldaş\*

**Abstract:**

*Within theoretical frameworks of democratic consolidation and integration theories this article analyzes the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the society at institutional and individual level between the years of early 1950s and early 1970s. In this respect, it evaluates the integration of Armenian minority in political, economic and cultural spheres at individual and institutional levels in line with the implications of successes and crises of efforts towards democratic consolidation. While doing this it puts particular emphasis on domestic socio-economic developments, the integrative role of main institutions of Armenian minority and international dimensions of the integration in terms of linkages between the foreign policy issues and the situation of Armenian minority in Turkey in this era. The article concludes that notwithstanding the crises and precariousness which appeared in the efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey, the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority was not exposed to devastatingly injurious challenges in economic, political, cultural spheres of social life in this era until the negative impact of violent acts of terrorist organizations started to be felt in Turkish public opinion from early 1970s onwards*

**Keywords:**

*Keywords: Armenian Institutions, Armenian Minority, Crises, Democratic Consolidation, Integration, Progress, Restoration, Turkey.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The years between early 1950s and early 1970s are significant in the history of political culture of Turkey within the context of efforts towards democratic consolidation and socio-economic integration of Armenian minority. Differing from the periods of difficult and conflictual relationships, this era

\* Research Assistant, Ph.D Candidate at the Department of International Relations, Middle East Technical University.

**This article will have four main arguments, with regard to the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority.**

symbolizes growing efforts of integrity and inter-communal interaction and communication among the Armenian minority, as well as the rest of the society at both institutional and individual level. In this respect, despite some crises and structural challenges, socio-

economic and political integration of Armenian minority into the society took place less problematically and more progressively in this particular era of efforts towards democratic consolidation (which had gained impetus from late 1940s onwards following the introduction of multi-party system in Turkey) until the violent political acts of Armenian terrorist organizations beginning from early 1970s.

Following the main premises of this line of thought, this article will have four main arguments, with regard to the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the socio-economic, political and cultural structures of the new Republic between 1950s and 1970s. First, as the efforts towards democratic consolidation accelerated from the beginning of 1950s, the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority took place without facing seriously damaging challenges apart from some exceptional cases and other than the implications of crises in the efforts for democratic consolidation. Second, the integration, which took place in political, economic and cultural spheres at both institutional and individual levels, was affected by the developments in political, civil and economic societies, rule of law, and the nature of bureaucracy in Turkey in the different periods of efforts towards democratic consolidation within this era. Third, during these developments institutions of Armenian minority provided the necessary institutional grounds and forums where the process of integration could take place institutionally. The contribution of these institutions mainly affected and shaped by implications of the domestic and international developments, which took place parallel to stages of the efforts towards democratic consolidation. Finally, although the minority policies of Turkish state and thus the integration processes of minorities recognized by the Lausanne Treaty have been influenced negatively by the foreign policy necessities or linkages, regional/international developments, and political acts of

diasporas or supportive countries the Armenian integration either was less or positively affected from such developments until early 1970s.

In line with these arguments this article will try to analyze the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority within the theoretical context of democratic consolidation and social integration. After putting forward the theoretical framework on democratic consolidation, the significance of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey regarding Armenian minority will be discussed in three historical stages within this particular era. The following part is devoted to the analysis of integration process in political, economic and cultural spheres and at individual and institutional level, while emphasizing socio-economic and cultural phenomena of urbanization and immigration and other socio-economic dynamics in this era. While analyzing the patterns of integration in different spheres of social life, the basic institutions of Armenian minority and their contribution to integration process will be put forward in order to understand the institutional dimensions of the integration. Finally, the international dimension of the integration will be discussed in order to shed light on the integrative or disintegrative impact of linkage policies between the foreign policy issues and the situation of Armenian minority. Moving from the analyses of different aspects of socio-economic integration the article will end some concluding comments on overall picture of the process.

## 2. CONCEPTUALIZING DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

'Democratic consolidation', which mainly implies the phase of stabilization and maturation of an already established democratic system and functioning democratic practices,<sup>1</sup> has become one of the pivotal notions within the literature of democracy especially in the 1990s following the emergence of new democracies worldwide and with the collapse of alternative ideologies to democracy. In consolidation phase, 'democracy becomes the only game in town (where) no one can imagine outside the democratic institutions'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Øyvind E. Lervik, *A New French Revolution? An Integrative Approach In The Analysis Of The Romanian Transition*, A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Cand. Polit. in the Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Norway, February 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 26

In other words consolidated democracy is one that is unlikely to break down.<sup>3</sup> The process of democratic consolidation is multifaceted in the sense that it brings in many democracy-related issues for the transforming regimes such as 'popular legitimation, the diffusion of democratic values, the neutralization of anti-system actors, civilian supremacy over the military, elimination of authoritarian enclaves, party building, the organization of functional interests, the stabilization of electoral rules, the routinization of politics, the decentralization of state power, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, judicial reform, the alleviation of poverty, and economic stabilization'.<sup>4</sup>

As it may be deduced from its aforementioned multifaceted nature, there are different structural, contextual and actor-centered conditions, determinants, processes and variables for consolidation phase of democracy to take place following the democratic transition in a country.

In the following part, I will evaluate different approaches within the literature of democratic consolidation in order to shed a theoretical light to Turkish society's experience and efforts towards democratic consolidation and thus to draw the boundaries of contextual and structural framework in which the socio-economic integration process of the Armenian minority took place. While establishing the necessary theoretical basis for the further discussions, this article will mainly introduce a synthesis of structural and process-centric approaches towards the democratic consolidation as Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan did in one of the magnum opus of the relevant literature. Similar to many scholars of democracy, for Linz and Stepan, the main logic of 'democratic consolidation' simply rests on the idea that 'the democracy must become the only game in town'. Here, the main question may appear to be 'how democracy will become the only game and how all relevant political actors as well as the overwhelming majority of the mass public will fundamentally accept its institutions'.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Andreas Schedler, 'Measuring Democratic Consolidation', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Spring 2001, Vol. 36, No.1, pp. 66-92.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted from Andreas Schedler, 'What is Democratic Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 9, No.2, 1998, p.91 by John Ishiyama, 'Ethnopolitical Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Post-Communist Eastern Europe' in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol.7, No.3, Autumn 2001, pp.25-45.

<sup>5</sup> Judith Kullberg, 'A Unified Theory of Democratic Change', *Mershon International Studies Review*, 1998, Issue 42, pp.125-127, Review of J. Linz and A. Stepan's *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

Linz and Stepan define consolidation behaviorally, attitudinally, and constitutionally,<sup>6</sup> and introduce a recipe of democratic consolidation, which consists of five interconnected and mutually reinforcing conditions: a lively civil society, an autonomous political society, the rule of law, a state with effective and loyal bureaucracy, an institutionalized (certainly in a liberal way) economic society.<sup>7</sup> Within this framework, a robust civil society is necessary at all stages of democratization in the sense that it can help transitions get started, help resist reversals, help push transitions to their completion, help consolidate and deepen democracy with its capacity to generate political alternatives and to monitor government and state.<sup>8</sup> This lively civil society of course could be effective only if it is accompanied and supported by a political society, which would function in line with the democratic values, norms and principles in a competitive political structure. Both political and civil societies need legitimacy basis on which they would exercise their political and socio-economic acts. In this respect, for a democracy to be consolidated the rule of law must be bounding not only for the citizens but also for all the political actors in the political sphere of the society.<sup>9</sup> Thus, these political actors should act in line with the rule of 'the laws, constitution and mutually accepted norms of political conduct'<sup>10</sup> and democratic officials 'must give up the habit of placing themselves above the law'.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, both civil and political societies and rule of law and bureaucracy need a liberally institutionalized economic society where they would function freely and competitively.<sup>12</sup> Overall, the progress of the countries

<sup>6</sup> For Linz and Stepan, "Behaviorally, democracy becomes the only game in town when no significant political groups seriously attempt to overthrow the democratic regime or secede from the state. Attitudinally, democracy becomes the only game in town when even in the face of severe political and economic crises; the overwhelming majority of people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas. Constitutionally, democracy becomes the only game in town when all actors in the polity become habituated to the fact that political conflict will be resolved according to the established norms and that violations of these norms are likely to be both ineffective and costly. In short with consolidation, democracy becomes routinized and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological life as well as in calculations for achieving success." See Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems...*,

<sup>8</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems...*, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> For further analysis of relation between rule of law and democracy also See Stephen L. Esquith, 'Toward a Democratic Rule of Law: East and West', in *Political Theory*, Vol 27, No 3, June 1999, pp.334-356.

<sup>10</sup> Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Carothers, 'The Rule of Law Revival', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.77, No.2 March-April 1998, pp. 95-106.

<sup>12</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of...*, p. 11

**Alternatively some scholars focus on the structural aspect of the democratic consolidation.**

towards democratic consolidation depends on their success in fulfilling of these five conditions.

For Beetham, on the other hand, the framework of this conditionality mainly based on four hindering or facilitating conditions for democratic consolidation: the process of transition, the character of country's economic system, its received political culture, and the type of constitutional arrangements. He mainly put forward around ten hypotheses on the factors, which influence the consolidation process through the assessment of different approaches and studies on democratic consolidation. Thus, hypothetically, the character of previous regime, the mode of transition, nature of economic system (whether it is market economy or not), level of economic development, social and political agency (organization of socio-economic forces), religion of the people, intra-cultural diversity/unity, institutional design and electoral systems, and system of devolved regional government appear to be the main factors that play role in the consolidation of democracy in a country. Beetham argues that the consolidation of democracy is a product of these several factors or conditions operating together. In this respect democracy can become capable of withstanding pressures or crises without abandoning electoral process or political freedoms on which it depends if the historical origins of regime, economic and social structure, political agency and constitutional arrangements operate harmoniously in the direction of democratic consolidation in a country.

Alternatively some scholars focus on the structural aspect of the democratic consolidation. Within this structuralist framework, Mark Gasiorowski and Timothy Power join Karen Remmer in

<sup>13</sup> For Power and Gasiorowski with the few exceptions the new literature on consolidation is dominated by the process-centric approaches of scholars such as Gunther, R., Diamandouros, P. N. & Puhle, H. J. (eds.) *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Higley, J., & Gunther, R. (eds.), *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press 1992); Mainwaring, S., O'Donnell, G., & Valenzuela, J. S. (eds.). *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); and Tulchin, J., & Romero, B. (eds.) *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995). For another perspective within structuralist line and further criticism of overemphasis on the role of process factors, also See J. Mark Ruhl, 'Unlikely Candidates of Democracy: The Role of Structural Context in Democratic Consolidation Studies', *Comparative International Development*, Spring, 1996, Vol.3, No 1, pp. 3-23.

criticizing the process-centric trends dominating the literature of democratic consolidation which privilege political processes and actor-centered and contextual variables over structure<sup>13</sup> in the sense that such approaches pay inadequate attention to the effects of structural factors. Gasiorowski and Power on the other hand, put emphasis on interconnections between the structuralist approach, which is based on rich paradigms that examined the impact of economic development,<sup>14</sup> political culture, political institutions and economic crises on democracy on one hand, and the political processes and actor-centered variables on the other.<sup>15</sup> By means of empirical analyses they mainly identify three structural factors, which clearly affect democratic consolidation; development-related socio-economic factors, economic crises and contagion effect of democratic neighbors.<sup>16</sup> Structurally while economic development, which is mainly associated with country's level of wealth, the size of its middle and working classes and the extent of education and urbanization have positive effect on the likelihood of consolidation;<sup>17</sup> the economic crises contribute to breakdown and thus have adverse effect on consolidation.<sup>18</sup> Conduciveness of international environment for the consolidation of democracy in a country, on the other hand, would be important for transmission and adoption of ideas, norms and political pressures that are contributing to consolidating democracy.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> In this respect, for instance, Lipset put it as early as 1959, there exists an important connection between growth of [liberal] economy and differentiation of civil and political economy, which could lead to constitutional and bureaucratic reforms and rule of law within the context of democracy. See, S. M. Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No 1, 1959, pp. 69-105.

<sup>15</sup> Mark J. Gasiorowski and Timothy J. Power, 'The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation', *Comparative Political Studies*, December 1998, Vol.31, No 6, pp. 740-772.

<sup>16</sup> Gasiorowski and Power, 'The Structural...'

<sup>17</sup> Beetham agrees with Gasiorowski and Power regarding the connection between the economic development and democratic consolidation. For him, despite the fact that there are examples both of underdeveloped democracies and developed economies with little democracy; the chances for sustainable democracy are indeed improved by economic development and market economy. For evaluation of Beetham's arguments on this connection, See: David Beetham, 'Conditions for Democratic Consolidation', *Review of African Political Economy*, June 1994, Vol.21, No 60, pp.157-171.

<sup>18</sup> Gasiorowski and Power, 'The Structural...', p.10

<sup>19</sup> Gasiorowski and Power base their arguments on this factor on the approaches and studies of Whitehead and Starr. For further analyses of these approaches See L. Whitehead 'International Aspects of Democratization' in G.A. O'Donnell, P.C. Schmitter & L. Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and H. Starr 'Diffusion Approaches to the Spread of Democracy in the International System', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1991, pp. 356-81.

**The integration of the minorities into the socio-economic and political structures of the society become necessary for the success and survival of such a process.**

Valenzuela, Whitehead and Przeworski contribute this theoretical framework of democratic consolidation from an institutionalization perspective. For them consolidation necessitates democratic institutionalization where the decentralized strategies of all relevant political forces reach the equilibrium through compliance to the democratic institutional framework. This institutional framework of open and competitive political expression of democratic regime would be internalized within the context of democratic consolidation and free elections would be the only recognized legitimate means for the constitution of government within this institutional framework.<sup>20</sup>

This entire theoretical framework provides us necessary hints about the link between main premises democratic consolidation and integration of minorities. As the democratic consolidation is one of the pivotal conditions of the socio-economic integration of different segments of the society into the democratic domestic socio-economic and political systems; it may be possible to apply several aspects of abovementioned theoretical approaches to the case of Armenian minority's situation during the years of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey. In fact in the final analysis, the Armenian minority was among the minorities in a democratizing society, which would be able to express their differences within the political culture of tolerance based on democratic values that were supposed to diffuse among the different segments of the society during the consolidation process. Looking from the other side of equation, as the democratic consensus among all politically significant groups, which would be bounded by democratic rules<sup>21</sup> is vital for democratic

<sup>20</sup> For further analysis of institutionalist approach, See Lawrence Whitehead 'The consolidation of fragile democracies' in Robert A. Pastor (ed.) *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum*, (London: Holmes and Meier, 1989), pp. 76-95; Przeworski, *Democracy ...*; and J. S. Valenzuela, 'Democratic consolidation in post-communist settings: notion process, and facilitating conditions' in Mainwaring, O'Donnell & Valenzuela (eds.) *Issues ...*

<sup>21</sup> Richard Gunther, P.Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 1-32.



consolidation, the integration of the minorities into the socio-economic and political structures of the society become necessary for the success and survival of such a process. In the following parts the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority to the society will be evaluated by referring the dynamics of efforts towards democratic consolidation process (under the light of abovementioned approaches) and the socio-economic and political structure of Turkish society.

### **3. EFFORTS TOWARDS CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY BETWEEN EARLY 1950S AND EARLY 1970S: CRISES AND SUCCESSES**

The situation of Turkey just after the end of single party regime resembles the definition of Ellen Comisso of 'procedural democracies'. In other words, in the late 1940s it could be possible to claim that Turkey fulfilled very well the prescriptions of Schumpeterian definition of what democracy should be like. In this respect, on procedural grounds, it had conducted free elections, it experienced peaceful transfer of power, it had enforced necessary reforms in order to diffuse political culture of democracy among the different segments of the society, it tried to pave the way for creation of environment conducive to consolidation of democracy in the country. Nevertheless on substantive grounds it faced some problems.<sup>22</sup>

The first half of the 1950s signified a considerable change in this situation. Beginning from the early 1950s, this period witnessed attempts and efforts towards consolidation of democracy at substantive level as well. Although it may not be possible to talk about a fully consolidated democracy as proposed by the scholars of democratic consolidation, it was possible to

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<sup>22</sup> From Comisso's point of view, the problems which Turkey faced were: "From a liberal perspective the state was still involving into markets, entrepreneurship was not rewarded excessively, [...] civil liberties still were not fully applicable as long as newly liberalizing parties control the governments. From a national perspective, the state was in hock to international finance" [despite the etatist measures and protective policies], traditional middle class could not be strengthened considerably [in fact there had not been 'traditional' middle class in Turkey], [...] ethnic minorities were collaborating with foreigners to create a protected position for themselves and they were still seen as the agents of foreign economic intrusion. From egalitarian perspective, new civil rights could hardly be utilized by a population to make ends meet and what was supposed to be democracy for everyone has turned into the rule of the few who were only tenuously accountable to the many." See, John Nagle and Alison Mahr, *Democracy and Democratization: Post-Communist Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (London: Sage Publications, 1999), p. 223 and See Feroz Ahmad's comments on the last years of İnönü government in Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, (Istanbul : Kaynak, Yayınları 1999) pp. 125-133

**It is possible to talk about three periods in Turkish experience and efforts towards democratic consolidation between late 1940s and early 1970s.**

towards the democratic consolidation, which mainly derived from the nature of democratic transition<sup>24</sup> and legacy of previous political culture<sup>25</sup> Turkey's experience with democracy was one of considerable progress towards the consolidation of democracy.<sup>26</sup>

It is possible to talk about three periods in Turkish experience and efforts towards democratic consolidation between the late 1940s and early 1970s: periods of progress, crisis and restoration. In the following part I will briefly evaluate the conditions and circumstances of efforts towards democratic consolidation in line

argue that expectations, attempts and efforts towards democratic consolidation gained impetus with the introduction and development of multi-party regime in Turkey during the period of our analysis. In this respect, despite the problems and the systemic crises<sup>23</sup> on the way

- <sup>23</sup> In fact although this process of democratic consolidation was not immune from systemic crises, as Bozkurt Güvenç argues democratic parties and their coalitions managed to remain in power from 1950s onwards "despite several military interventions since for causes of national unity (1960), peace and order (1971), and the 'restoration' of "Kemalist Reforms" (1980)". For further analysis of this approach, See Bozkurt Güvenç, 'Quest for Cultural Identity for Turkey' in Baidyanath Saraswati (ed.) *Interface of Cultural Identity and Development*, (New Delhi: IGNCa and D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 1996) or see on internet at [http://ignca.nic.in/ls\\_03.htm](http://ignca.nic.in/ls_03.htm)
- <sup>24</sup> As Heper puts it, democracy in Turkey was introduced by state elites rather than political elites who represented socio-economic groups. In fact, socio-economic groups neither had effective demands for increased political participation, nor played a significant role in the transition to democracy. For further discussions on the nature of transition to democracy, See Metin Heper, 'The Consolidation of Democracy versus Democratization in Turkey' in Metin Heper and Barry Rubin (eds.) *Political Parties in Turkey*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002); pp. 138-146.
- <sup>25</sup> For Özbudun, four basic characteristics of state-society relations in Turkey can be considered as a source of problems and challenges to consolidation of Turkish democracy: the strong state tradition, weak civil society, corporatist political culture and center-periphery relations. For Heper, on the other hand, Turkey had the same problems, which are faced in consolidating democracies; that of reconciling the approaches of statist and political elite. In this respect, striking the balance between horizontal and vertical dimensions of consolidation of democracy had been rather difficult in Turkish case. For further discussions on the problems of and challenges to democratic consolidation in Turkey, See, Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), and Metin Heper, 'The Strong State as a Problem for the Consolidation of Democracy: Turkey and Germany Compared', *Comparative Political Studies*, July 1992, Vol.25, Issue 2, pp. 169-195.
- <sup>26</sup> For Heper this progress towards the consolidation of democracy took place in the absence of a diffusion of democratic values among the political elite as a result of the fact that state-centered political regime was replaced not by a civil-society-centered political regime but by a polity-centered one. In this respect the progress towards consolidation of democracy has been a consequence of the fact that democracy was perceived as an end rather than as a means. For further evaluation of this approach See Heper 'The Consolidation...'

with the main theoretical premises, which were discussed in the first part in order to give an idea about the domestic environment of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the society in the period of analysis.

The initial stages of multi-party regime and the early years of the Democratic Party rule can be characterized as the era of progress in democratic consolidation process in Turkey. As Ali Yaşar Sarıbay argues, the Democrats came to power in the belief that free competition without any bureaucratic restraints in economy and polity would result in consolidating democracy in Turkey.<sup>27</sup> Regarding the developments connected to civil society, we can argue that it is possible to see main tenets of lively civil society before and after the crises in the efforts towards consolidation of democracy in Turkey in the period between the late 1940s and early 1970s in line with the evaluation of Linz and Stepan of lively civil society for the progress towards democratic consolidation.<sup>28</sup> Especially in the years of progress of democratic consolidation, as the DP's goal was advancing the democracy by decreasing the government's interference and the prestige of the bureaucracy to the societal issues, increasing individual freedoms, encourage the political participation of the previously deprived segments of the society; the civil society flourished to a considerable extent with the rapid growth and diffusion of voluntary associations of different type.<sup>29</sup> In terms of rule of law, first half of 1950s witnessed the liberalization efforts such as amendment of restrictive laws and adoption of liberal Amnesty and Press laws and establishment of a committee to list undemocratic laws<sup>30</sup> in order to increase the confidence of civil and political societies to the rule of law. Meanwhile, although it was not easy to expect an

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<sup>27</sup> Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, 'The Democratic Party, 1946-1960', in M. Heper and J. Landau (eds.) *Political Parties and democracy in Turkey*, (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1991), pp. 119-134.

<sup>28</sup> Here I refer the Linz and Stepan's the definition of civil society for our theoretical purposes in Turkish case, as the "arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests". See Linz and Stepan, *Problems...* p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Despite some scholars, like Walter Weiker, undervalue the development of new interest groups or other organizations during the DP period, the number of associations multiplied eight-fold to exceed 17.000 by 1960. For the comments of Weiker, See Walter F. Weiker, *The Modernization of Turkey: From Atatürk to the Present Day*, (London: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1981), pp. 129-131 and for the numbers of voluntary associations in this period, See Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, 'The Democratic Party...' p. 126.

<sup>30</sup> Sarıbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

immediate change in political culture of governance;<sup>31</sup> political society and bureaucracy were exposed to a temporary transformation in line with DP's efforts to decrease bureaucratic restraints in economic and political society in order to facilitate democratic consolidation. Liberalization of economic society appeared as the main goal in the early 1950s. In this respect, market economy was enthusiastically encouraged and supported by the economic policies of the government. From the structural perspective, in terms of economic and social development, the progressive era of efforts towards democratic consolidation witnessed a considerable level of economic and social development, which was accompanied by urbanization causing an increase in the amount of political participation in the society (as the social mobilization theorists would argue).<sup>32</sup>

The period of progress in the efforts towards democratic consolidation began to experience a crisis parallel to problems, which emerged as a consequence of unplanned liberal economic policies from mid-1950s onwards. For Schedler, the crises may be terminal, debilitating or stabilizing which means they may result in break-down of democracy, weakening the institutions and creating permanent fragility of democratic patterns or establishment of lasting precedent of democracy by the winner democratic actors.<sup>33</sup> In Turkish case the crisis took place in mid-1950s in a considerably debilitating way although it did not completely terminate the process.

During the years of crisis in the efforts towards democratic consolidation, civil society lost its liveliness to a certain extent due to the restrictions introduced by the government especially to the potentially oppositional circles.<sup>34</sup> Rule of law was begun to be

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<sup>31</sup> For further analysis of political culture and political elite in Turkey; See, Ilter Turan 'The Evolution of Political Culture in Turkey' in Ahmet Evin, (ed.) *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change*, (Opladen: Leske Verlag, 1984); Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1965); and Kemal H. Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959).

<sup>32</sup> In this respect, following the argument, which associates the political participation with democracy, one may conclude that the early 1950s until mid-1950s were the years of high level of political participation (as a result of socio-economic modernization) and thus the years of progress towards development of democracy in Turkey. See Ergun Özbudun, *Social Change and Political Participation in Turkey*, (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 3-23

<sup>33</sup> See Schedler, 'Measuring...'

<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, as the statistics show, despite the crisis the civil society continued to prosper, at least in terms of increase in the number of voluntary institutions, even if in a decelerated way. For the statistical data regarding the increase in the number of voluntary associations, See Weiker, *The Modernization...* p.74.

questioned as a result of the restrictive laws introduced in several fields of social life. Political society became conflicting in a disturbing way because of the exacerbated relations between the ruling and the opposition parties. Market economy was disturbed by the protectionist measures and thus economic development started to face important problems. The crisis in economy, which was characterized by rising prices, spiraling inflation, shortage of goods and spread of black-marketing<sup>35</sup> brought about the end of liberal policies both in economic and political spheres. Structurally international environment became problematic. Pressure on the governments exerted due to the foreign policy issues negatively influenced the relations between the state and the minorities. Minorities felt disturbed especially by the 1955 events. Nevertheless even these did not avoid them supporting the DP during the 1957 elections.<sup>36</sup>

The restoration period started with another crisis, but this time a stabilizing one, the military intervention of 1960, against the manipulation of democratic values for suppressive purposes. The restoration period was institutionalized with the initiation of the 1961 Constitution<sup>37</sup> and replacement of temporary military-civil bureaucratic administration by the political elite. In this respect, the rule of law was reestablished with the initiation of a new constitution with full of civil liberties and revitalization of the institutions to enact these laws. The efforts towards the democratic consolidation were reinitiated through introducing economic policies and liberalizing acts in order to increase level of economic development in a planned way; restructuring the social political agency and socio-economic relations between different segments of society: strengthening the social, legal and political bases of civil society by introduction of constitutional guarantees for the political and civil freedoms, and introducing democratic amendments to the institutional design and electoral system.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sanbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

<sup>36</sup> Rifat N. Bali, 'Cumhuriyet Döneminde Azınlıklar Politikası', *Birikim*, No.115, November 1998, p.83

<sup>37</sup> In Habermasian terms, 1961 Constitution was designed, to a considerable extent, in line with the basic argument of the rule of law, which requires that democratic will-formation not violate human rights that have been positively enacted as basic rights, See Jürgen Habermas, 'Constitutional Democracy: A Paradoxical Union of Contradictory Principles?' in *Political Theory*, Vol.29, No. 6, December 2001, pp. 766-781.

<sup>38</sup> For further analysis of this period, See. Feroz Ahmad *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy (1950-1975)*, (London: C. Hurst 1977); Avner Levi, 'The Justice Party 1961-1980', in Metin Heper & Jacob M. Landau (ed.), *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), pp.134-151; and Ergun Özbudun, 'Turkey's Second Try at Democracy (1961-1980)' in Ergun Özbudun (ed.), *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey*, (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Assoc., Sevinç Matbaası, 1988), pp.19-25

In overall context, during this period, minorities in general and Armenian minority in particular felt connected to the system without being exposed to any open and direct discriminative political or economic acts of the state and/or other segments of society (with the exception of 1955 events). Political participation of Armenian minority was significant in political societal issues in this era as well. The Armenian community was represented in the parliament even in the years of crisis in the efforts towards democratic consolidation without any obstacle. Their trust to the rule of law was strengthened especially with the initiatives for the introduction of the laws and decrees aiming to clarify the status of foundations and property rights. In economic terms, the psychological pressure caused by the legacy of suspicion towards them in the years of protectionism in national economy was relaxed with the initiation of free trade regulations regarding the foreign investment and free enterprises.

In this respect, being one of the contending parties of democratic consolidation, Armenian minority tried to legitimize its socio-economic and political claims within the context of integration to the dynamics of the society and by appeals to universal principles of democracy as well.<sup>39</sup> The following part will mainly focus on the process of integration of Armenian minority in the different stages of democratic consolidation in Turkey in different fields. It will mainly focus on the developments in socio-economic structure and their implications on the lives and institutions of Armenian minority in the fields of religion, education, culture, sports, politics, and economy.

#### **4. THE PROCESS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY**

##### *4.1 Conceptualizing the Integration of Armenian Minority:*

Following theoretical framework of Anthony H. Birch on the patterns of socio-economic and political integration,<sup>40</sup> Armenian

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<sup>39</sup> Chris Rumford, 'Placing democratization within the global frame: sociological approaches to universalism, and democratic contestation in contemporary Turkey', *Sociological Review*, May 2002, Vol. 50, Issue 2, pp. 258-278

<sup>40</sup> Birch categorizes the integration as social, economic and political. Social integration is argued to take place in the forms of assimilation, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism. Economic integration transpires as full integration, partial integration and economic segregation. Political integration occurs in the forms of political assimilation, accommodation, ethnic conflict and majority control. For the further evaluation of these categories and the forms of integration in Birch's conceptualization, see Anthony H. Birch, *Nationalism and National Integration*, (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 48-51.

minority's situation in this era can be evaluated from three aspects: social, economic and political.

In social arena integration can be analyzed in line with a synthesis of melting pot and cultural pluralism approaches in the sense that the Armenian community (with the exception of 'Dönme's) had not become completely assimilated in Turkish society via accepting the values and customs of that society while losing the distinctive values and customs it once had. In other words, thanks to its intra-communal structure, Armenian minority was successful in boundary maintenance against the probable external attacks to its communal patterns of existence in different fields of societal life. In this respect, according to Birch's conceptualization, it is not possible to discuss the process of integration of Armenian minority into the society in this period within the context of assimilation-perspective. On the other hand, despite the fact that Armenian minority had some problems in becoming merged into the society while contributing its distinctive values to the society it was still possible to evaluate the Armenian integration into the society within the context of melting point approach in some ways and to some extent. In addition, the perspective of cultural pluralism would also make sense in analyzing and understanding the situation of Armenian community from certain aspects in the sense that in Birch's terms, Armenian minority remained culturally distinctive to a significant extent while being a part of the larger society in terms of government, free trade and communications.<sup>41</sup>

In terms of economic integration, it is not so easy to associate the case of Armenian minority's integration with one of Birch's categories, which were classified as full integration, partial integration and economic segregation. In fact, despite some problems, which paralyzed full integration it is also not possible to argue that the Armenian minority had worse chance of economic success than the members of other segments or groups within the society. In various cases, as it will be discussed further in this article, it may even be argued that some members of the Armenian minority had significantly better chances of economic success than the members of other groups. In this respect it is possible to put the process of economic integration of Armenian minority between the partial and full integration (closer to full

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<sup>41</sup> Birch, *Nationalism...*, p.49

integration with the exceptional cases) in the scale of integration categories listed by Anthony H. Birch.

At political level, the situation of Armenian minority can be analyzed according to the premises of approaches of political assimilation and political accommodation in the different stages of efforts towards democratic consolidation and restoration of endeavor for democratic consolidation in Turkish society in this period. During the early years of efforts towards democratic consolidation it was possible to observe a condition of political assimilation where ethnicity was of no/ or little political significance with candidates in governing political party (the Democratic Party) chosen irrespective (or positively discriminative way) of their ethno-religious origins. In the early years of restoration of democratic rules and institutions, on the other hand, the transition regime paid significant attention to accommodate equal number of minority representatives within the Constituent Assembly. In this framework, an Armenian minority representative was accommodated in the Assembly in line with an awareness of ethnic and cultural differences and in a way where members of Armenian community would not feel left out or discriminated against.<sup>42</sup> As it may be seen along these lines, the political absorption and political accommodation took place respectively in the political integration of Armenian minority into the political society in Turkey in this era.

It may well be argued that in this era there were no crucial structural obstacles against the socio-economic integration/accommodation of Armenian minority in the society without assimilation. In other words, there was no crucial impediment against accommodation of Armenian minority without assimilation in the 1950s in the sense that the members of Armenian minority did not face so many detrimental obstruction and restrictions exerted by the state or other segments of society in front of preservation of their culture with their values, their communal structure, and their traditions.<sup>43</sup> In this respect, diacritical characteristics of Armenian minority were not expected to create any problems in inter-segmental communication with the other segments of the society. In addition it is not easy to oppose

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<sup>42</sup> Birch, *Nationalism...*, p.50

<sup>43</sup> Dimostenis Yagcioglu, 'Nation-states vis-à-vis Ethnocultural Minorities: Oppression and Assimilation versus Integration and Accommodation' at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8945/minor.html>



the view that Armenian minority members did not face any additional difficulty other than the systemic problems which were relevant for all members of the society even as accommodating themselves to the mainstream and dominant culture while maintaining their own culture. In this respect, during this accommodating process they were well able to confirm their cultural identity and while at the same time improving the necessary skills which would facilitate the possibilities of peaceful interaction and communication (and thus of integration) with the majority.<sup>44</sup> In the following parts the article will evaluate on how the integration took place in different spheres of social interaction, at individual and institutional levels and how the international structure affected this integration process.

#### *4.2. Integration of Armenian Minority in Political Sphere:*

As broadly argued and accepted by most scholars, 1950, the year of transfer of power to the Democratic Party, which (at least in its rhetoric) was committed to dismantling the structures of one-party state,<sup>45</sup> marked a watershed in the transformation of political and socio-economic structures and units of Turkey.<sup>46</sup> This watershed resulted in the acceleration of efforts towards democratic consolidation process in Turkey throughout the 1950s with the democratic practices, which had already begun to take root in late 1940s.<sup>47</sup>

In this political framework Armenian minority (like most of the other minorities) was attracted by the promises of the Democratic Party for opening up the society, economics and politics in line with the principles of liberalism. Thus it was not unexpected that most of the members of Armenian minority voted for and supported the Democratic Party in the elections of 14 May 1950 and played a role in DP's taking over the power.<sup>48</sup> Some researchers define the political relationship between the

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<sup>44</sup> Hugh Mehan, Lea Hubbard and Irene Villanueva, 'Forming Academic Identities: Accommodation without Assimilation among Involuntary Minorities', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, Vol.25, No.2, pp.91-117.

<sup>45</sup> Chris Hann, 'Subverting Strong States: The Dialectics of Social Engineering in Hungary and Turkey', *Daedalus*, Spring, 1995, pp.133-153

<sup>46</sup> See Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development*, (London: Verso, 1987)

<sup>47</sup> Hugh Poulton, 'The Turkish State and Democracy' in *The International Spectator*, Vol. XXXIV, No.1 January March, 1999.

<sup>48</sup> Bali, 'Cumhuriyet ....', p.83.

Democratic Party rule and minorities as a 'honeymoon' due to non-discriminative policies of the Democratic Party regarding the minorities.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the Democratic Party tried to preserve its good relationship with the minorities due to their high voting potential especially in big urban constituencies like İstanbul and İzmir.

Political elite of the Armenian community found an opportunity to express the socio-economic, cultural and political demands of the community among the ranks of Democratic Party within the parliament in the 1950s. This participation prevented the Armenian political elite from turning into a segmental elite (which would not have any general and sustained socio-political impact on intra-societal and inter-societal relations) within the political structure and thus it precluded any potential institutional alienation of the Armenian community in the political sphere within this framework, Dr. Zakar Tarver and Migirdiç Sellefyan were among the MPs who served in Turkish Parliament in this period. They had the opportunity to raise the needs of the Armenian community in parliamentary meetings. In the era between late 1940s and early 1970s the DP was not the only political party in which Armenian minority tried to sound their voices. Some Armenian political and cultural elites having different political stance on political issues, such as Zaven Biberyan tried to take part among the MPs at Worker Party ranks. Zaven Biberyan<sup>50</sup> then became an active political figure in local politics at municipal level after he was elected as member of İstanbul Municipality Council in 1968 local elections and he served as vice-chairperson in the municipal council of İstanbul. Such participation and representation of the community's interests both among the ranks of the governing party in the parliament at national level and in the municipality councils at local political level had a positive and constructive impact on the political efficacy of ordinary Armenian citizens of Turkey as well.

Parallel to the integration of political elite of Armenian minority into the political sphere in the political society and bureaucracy, there was also a wave of integration, which was taking place at

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<sup>49</sup> Bali, 'Cumhuriyet ...',

<sup>50</sup> Being a journalist and author, Zaven Biberyan was among the cultural elite of this era as well. He was the publisher of *Nor Tar* (a political-literature magazine), and author of *Babam Aşkale'ye Gitmedi* and *Yalnızlar*. See Aras Yayıncılık webpage, at <http://www.arasyayincilik.com/turkce/biberyan.html>

civil societal level with through the institutionalization of political efficacy of Armenian community members specially in Armenian voluntary associations. In fact these years witnessed a considerable increase in the numbers of Armenian minority associations as the number of minority associations within the emerging and progressing civil society<sup>51</sup> increased almost four-fold from 1950 to 1968.<sup>52</sup> As mentioned above, the growth of Armenian voluntary associations appeared as an important indicator of increase in their socio-political participation in this era. As the participation in public affairs by minorities is central to their sense of identity and is crucial to their feeling a part of the state and wider community;<sup>53</sup> existence of MPs at the parliament, and having functioning voluntary associations gave the Armenian minority further motivation in terms of integration in political arena. In this respect even in the years of crises in democratic processes the Armenian minority did not face detrimental problems in terms of political participation and representation.

The restoration period also witnessed increased support for this participation and representation within the framework of the 1961 Constitution, which provided new grounds for democratic consolidation with its democratic provisions that introduced more and more freedom to all segments of society. The minorities were not forgotten in the egalitarianism of the new democratic institutionalization. In 1961 the minorities were represented in the Constitutive Assembly by enjoying the quota, which was reserved for them by President Cemal Gürsel. In this context, the Armenian minority was represented in the Constitutional Assembly of 1961 by Hermine Agavni Kalutsyan.<sup>54</sup> In fact, such a move was significant in the sense that it indicated intensive attention of political and state elite in accommodating Armenian elite within the political society.

<sup>51</sup> For Robert Bianchi "[this] rapid emergence and diffusion of this network of groups representing specialized interests suggest that the Turks have been particularly precocious in developing 'the art of association' while implementing broad social and economic change within the context of liberal democracy" See Robert Bianchi, *Interest Groups and Political Development in Turkey*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p.3.

<sup>52</sup> Weiker, *The Modernization...* p. 74.

<sup>53</sup> Yash Ghai, 'Report on Public Participation and Minorities', (London: Minority Rights Group International, April 2001), pp. 1-25.

<sup>54</sup> TBMM Albümü 1920-1991, (Ankara: TBMM Genel Sekreterliği Yayınları, 1994); Bali, 'Cumhuriyet...', p.83.

**Armenian minority first politically absorbed (until the early 1960s) and then politically accommodated by and within the political society, bureaucracy and the state elite.**

Overall, it can be concluded that the Armenian minority first politically absorbed (until early 1960s) and then politically accommodated by and within the political society, bureaucracy and state elite in Turkey in line with the political developments regarding the democratic consolidation efforts and crises within political sphere during this era.

#### *4.3. Integration of Armenian Minority in Economic Sphere:*

Having experienced the destructive impacts of the economic dependence and of intrusive capitulations Turkish State and society had become skeptic about the foreign economic intrusion to the national economy. The impact of skepticism showed itself in the shaping of national economy of the new Republic from late 1920s to end of 1940s. The era of protectionism was mainly characterized by enforcement of protectionist economic policies and supporting creation of national bourgeoisie in order to keep national economy immune from foreign manipulative economic acts. In these early stages of creation of national economy in Turkey the minorities could not be immune from the consequences of their economic activities, which took place in the economic history of the country prior to establishment of new republic. In this respect, as Brian W. Beeley puts it, prior to the 1950s, members of minority communities were perceived as agents of outside economic intrusion and an organic part of the unequal capitulatory system.<sup>55</sup> Thus, until late 1940s, it would not be easy for minorities to integrate into the economic structure of the new republic and to conduct their economic activities freely due to the shadow of this legacy of suspicion of foreign economic interference with which they were associated as collaborators.

The more Turkey became integrated to the liberal economic world at international level, the less it became suspicious towards the foreign interference to domestic economy. The decrease of suspicion towards the foreign economic actors had constructive

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<sup>55</sup> See Brian W. Beeley, 'On the geography of development in Turkey', in Eric Watkins (ed.) *The Middle Eastern Environment*, St. Malo Press, at <http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/~jpap/beeley.htm>

impact on the perceptions of Turkish state and society towards the minorities, which were seen as foreign elements within the national economy. As the negative perceptions were transformed in line with the transformation of the attitudes towards foreign investment, the economic activities of the minorities were no more, perceived as the practices of economic enclaves, which kept their special ties and economic relations with the foreign economic circles. In fact, it would be ironical to concern about the possibility of suspicious attitude of state and other segments of society against the economic activities of non-Muslim minorities, which previously were considered as foreign agencies, in an era where the foreign investment was encouraged to enter the country directly with the initiation of 1951, 1954 Foreign Investment Laws and 1954 Petroleum Law.

As many scholars of Turkish political history argue Democratic Party's (DP) economic policies were designed to support mainly commercial and industrial bourgeoisie.<sup>56</sup> Institutions were established in economic sphere in order to encourage and assist free enterprise in the country in line with the DP's dominant rhetoric, which linked the free enterprise with democracy.<sup>57</sup> In fact, these policies did not only strengthen the economic elite in economic sphere but they paved the way for the transfer of political leadership from the bureaucratic-political elite to the economic one parallel to the campaigns which aimed at diminishing the privileged place of the bureaucracy. Indeed as Şerif Mardin and Engin Akarlı argue, it was the new interest groups, which supported the DP to accelerate the socio-economic development that constituted their power basis.<sup>58</sup> The minorities took their place among these interest groups as well. In this respect, within such a context, the defense of the DP of the private enterprises and commercial interests<sup>59</sup> improved the situation of the minorities who took their places both among the big city merchants and within the service sector, both in economic and political sphere.

<sup>56</sup> See Eroğul, *Demokrat...*, Sanbay, 'The Democratic...'

<sup>57</sup> Atıla Eralp, 'The Politics of Turkish Development Strategies' in Andrew Finkel (ed.) *Turkish state, Turkish society*, (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 219-259.

<sup>58</sup> See Engin Deniz Akarlı, 'The State as a Socio-cultural Phenomenon and Political Participation in Turkey' in *Political Participation in Turkey; Historical Background*, (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Printing House), 1975, p.146.

<sup>59</sup> Sanbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

Although it is not adequately empirical to generalize the economic prosperity enjoyed by some segments of the Armenian minority to whole community; it may be possible to find some hints from the personal biographies of the Armenian industrialists and merchants of the time about the economic progress and integration which was experienced during the years of economic liberalization in this period. As mentioned in the biography of Yarmayan family, the years between mid-1940s and 1960s had been remarkably satisfactory and constructive years for their businesses.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless the economic integration of Armenian minority did not take place only in the upper strata of economic structure. In fact, the members of Armenian minority integrated into the economy not only as merchants and employers but also as employees and low-paid workers. In this respect, not all the members of Armenian minority, which tried to integrate into domestic economy, became prosperous businessmen. Especially, non-qualified people of Anatolian rural areas, which immigrated to İstanbul, found it difficult to obtain a place in the economic sphere of urban life at the beginning. Eventually, like most of their Turkish counterparts, some of them tried to engage in the urban economy by working in the low-paid service sector (like doormen, cleaning, etc.),<sup>61</sup> which expanded as a consequence of economic revival in the cities. Some others adapted to socio-economic conditions of İstanbul in time and especially the ones who started to work near the merchants in Mahmutpaşa, one of the lively trading centers of the city, became merchants themselves<sup>62</sup> through a merchantalization process.<sup>63</sup>

As it may be well observed liberalization took place in Turkish economy mostly as a respond to exogenous change which occurred in international economic structure in the early 1950s. In

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<sup>60</sup> Gülay Dinçel, 'Yarmayanlar: Üç Kuşak Sanayici Bir Ermeni Ailesi', *Toplumsal Tarih*, September 1999, pp. 22-33.

<sup>61</sup> Ayşe Berktaş, 'Minasyan Ailesinin Albümü: Biz Sözde mi Yaşadık?', *Toplumsal Tarih*, November, 1998, pp. 22-31.

<sup>62</sup> Hrant Dink, 'Türkiye Ermenilerinin Nüfus Hali', *Tarih ve Toplum*, No. 202, October 2000, pp. 31-35.

<sup>63</sup> The "merchantalization" of immigrated Anatolian Armenians and their adaptation to the urban economy of İstanbul drastically change the patterns of relationship between the urban and rural Armenians of Turkey and added a new meaning to the 'İstanbullu Ermeni' (Armenian who is originally from İstanbul) with the transformation of the immigrated Anatolian Armenians beginning from early 1950s. See Dink, 'Türkiye Ermenilerinin...

fact, there were not political, cultural or economic absolutes at the beginning of 1950s. With the integrative attempts towards liberal world economy, which were mainly encouraged and promoted by DP governments a structural change began to take place in Turkish economy.<sup>64</sup> Incidentally, communal adaptation to this changing socio-economic and political environment would take place for all communities within the society and the Armenian community was not an exception. Thus, in line with these changes, efforts towards democratic consolidation took place in economic sphere through the steps headed for adopting liberalism in the economy. Despite the fact that these attempts became exposed to transformation for the purposes of 'a program of planned import-substituting industrialization' with the changing attitudes of Turkish state elite towards means of national development<sup>65</sup> shortly after they started; they appeared as important steps towards the economic liberalization in early 1950s. During the restoration of democratic consolidation process which followed the army's interference in 1960, the Justice Party reinitiated the economic principles of the early years of progress in democratic consolidation, which mainly 'promised continuing industrial growth through a freer economy, continued encouragement of the private sector and further attraction of foreign capital, which had been important in the expansion of the 1950s'.<sup>66</sup> Within this liberalization context, economic integration of Armenian minority continued in several arenas of economy until the early 1970s without facing fatal problems mostly in the benefit of the Armenian minority. In fact, Armenians in İstanbul were second only to the Greeks of that city in wealth even at the beginning of 1970s.<sup>67</sup>

In brief, it is possible to argue that integration of Armenian minority into the economic sphere did not face many discriminative or opposing economic acts from the other segments and actors of economic sphere. The integrative attempts with the liberal world economy and efforts towards democratic

<sup>64</sup> It is not easy to call this change as a structured change where the change was supposed to occur in well-organised steps. It was rather an attempt to adopt to the exogenous change that was taking place as a respond to the external developments out of the domestic socio-economic and political systems.

<sup>65</sup> Çağlar Keyder, 'Whither the Project of Modernity? Turkey in the 1990s' in Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (eds.) *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 37-52.

<sup>66</sup> Weiker, *The Modernization...*, p.132

<sup>67</sup> R. Thomas Duval, *Area Handbook for the Republic of Turkey*, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p.106.

consolidation strengthened the confidence of Armenian economic elite and work force to the economic system and state economic bureaucracy. In this respect, although it may be more adequate to argue that economic integration took place between the scales of full and partial integration by considering the problems, which the process faced; it may well be possible to argue that there were not critical individual, structural and institutional obstacles against the full integration of Armenian minority into the economic sphere both at employer and employee levels in this era.

#### *4.4. Important Socio-economic Phenomena of 1950s and 1960s*

##### *Immigration, Urbanization and Consequences on Armenian Minority*

As above-mentioned integration took place in economic sphere it was accompanied and affected by different socio-economic developments such as immigration and urbanization as it will be discussed below. The phenomena of urbanization (or rurbanization) and immigration had an important effect especially on the economic integration and/or re-integration of rural families of Armenian minority to the economic and political and cultural spheres of social life.

The shift of population from rural to urban areas accelerated since 1950 by exceeding the national average with the rise of 4 per cent from 1950 to 1965 and 6.3 per cent in 1970.<sup>68</sup> Armenian minority did not remain indifferent to this general immigration and urbanization waves.

Another factor which accelerated the immigration process of remaining Anatolian Armenian citizens of Turkey was the activities of the Armenian Church which sought new candidates of monks or young Armenian people to be trained in better conditions especially in the newly opened seminary in İstanbul. As a consequence of these activities the families of the Armenian youth immigrated to İstanbul. Within this context under the auspices and guidance of Patriarchate, in 1950s Priest Şahak played an important role in organizing of the rural-urban immigration. These activities continued in the following years through the prominent

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<sup>68</sup> Dural, Area..., pp.77-78



initiatives and effective activities of Hrant Küçüküzelyan (Chairperson of Gedikpaşa Armenian Church Foundation) and Der Girogos (Priest of Church of Diyarbakır). As a consequence of these activities a flow of students and their families took place from different towns and villages of Anatolia such as Bitlis, Samsun, Diyarbakır, Siirt, Mardin, Tokat, Sivas, Kayseri, Malatya, Elazığ and from Silopi (where the Arto tribe lived) to İstanbul.<sup>69</sup> As the flow of Armenian community reached to considerable numbers and their as their settlement in the cities which they arrived began to necessitate a better organization and regulation, Armenian community leaders established a commission of immigrants, 'Kagtagonats Hantsankhump'.<sup>70</sup> The activities of this commission took place under the laws of Turkish Republic and they were not disqualified or precluded by the government.

In this respect, on the contrary to abstractions of some scholars, the Armenian community, which continued living in Anatolia in 1950s and 1960s, were not subject to corporate and directive action of the state in order to leave their homelands and move to İstanbul.<sup>71</sup> In other words, the rural-urban migration of Armenian minority from Anatolian towns to İstanbul and other urban areas was an economic, voluntary and free migration rather than a political one. In this respect, the scholars who put emphasis on the shrinking of Armenian parishes outside of İstanbul in 1960s seem to neglect the socio-economic and demographic changes, which had started already a decade ago in Turkey.<sup>72</sup> Thus, immigration of Armenians who used to live in Anatolia from 1950s onwards was not a state-led project of expulsion of Armenian citizens from these regions. It was rather a part of general immigration movement, which had started all over the country from the villages to the urban areas as a result of economic urbanization. In fact the intentions of Armenian rural populations were not much more different than their rural Turkish counterparts, who started to seek a better life in the urban areas of Turkey. Thus they became actors of the phenomenon of

<sup>69</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye...',

<sup>70</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye...',

<sup>71</sup> Tessa Hoffman is very critical in her approach towards the mobilization of Armenian communities from different parts of Anatolia. See Tessa Hofmann, 'Armenians in Turkey Today: A Critical Assessment of the Situation of the Armenian Minority in the Turkish Republic', (The EU Office of Armenian Associations of Europe, Bruxelles, 2002)

<sup>72</sup> Hofmann, 'Armenians...', p.10

immigration chain, from villages to new cities and towns of the republic, which resulted in urban agglomeration and which added new dimensions to the process of integration in political, economic and cultural spheres.

#### *4.5. Integration of Armenian Minority Cultural Sphere*

This era witnessed integration of Armenian minority into the overall social culture within the context of developments in cultural pluralism rather than unilateral acculturation (or cultural conditioning). In fact, possibility of such acculturation was avoided to a great extent in the sense that the Armenian community was not deprived of its contra-acculturative means to resist such a possibility. The members of Armenian minority had their own newspapers and other means of press in which they were able to encode and deliver their economic, political and social messages within the richness of their language. In fact, the consolidation period witnessed the new Armenian publications and newspapers in addition to already existing ones. As the means of representing different voices within the Armenian community and in the overall society; Rupen Masoyan's *Tebi Luys* (1950) and the publication of Armenian Patriarchate *Soğagat* took their places within the family of Armenian and Turkish press in the early 1950s.<sup>73</sup> Apart from the daily press, Armenian magazines of art such as *Kulis* (established by Agop Ayvaz in 1946), continued to contribute to the cultural accumulation of the Armenian community and the overall society while the society had already started to watch the world from the objective of Ara Güler's camera in the journal *Hayat*. The field of literature welcomed the works of talented authors of Armenian minority in this era as well. In this respect, the Armenian and Turkish literature was enriched with the valuable contributions of authors such as Migirdiç Margosyan (with the stories shedding light on the daily lives along the axis of İstanbul and Diyarbakır and socio-economic dynamics of the years of immigration and afterwards); Yervant Gobelyan (with his poems and stories which carried the smell of Eftalopos Café of Taksim Square and the warmth of friendship among the peoples of

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<sup>73</sup> For further analysis on the development and situation of Armenian minority press in this era, see, Pars Tuğlacı, '200.Yıldönümünde Türkiye'de Ermeni Basının Dünyü Bugünü', *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 22, No. 132, December 1994, pp. 38-39 and Karin Karakaşlı, 'Gazetelerin Satıraralarında', *Görüş*, Ağustos 2001, pp. 66-69.

Istanbul); Kegam Kerovpyan (with his works on Armenian dictionary –Levzi- and Mitolojik Ermeni Tarihi -Mythological Armenian History-); Anton Özer (with his plays, poems and stories about the different aspects of social life), Zaven Biberyan (with his works in different journals and with his editorship of literary/political journal 'Nor Tor' -New Century-); Hagop Mintzuri (with his stories on Erzincan region with particular emphasis on rural life); Kirkor Ceyahan (with his stories on the socio-economic structure of 1930s) and others. These years also witnessed the works of Kevork Pamukciyan, an important representative of Armenian culture, in Turkish language,<sup>74</sup> who, as well, contributed the promotion of both intra-cultural and intercultural communication in Turkey as one of the founders of 'Association for Promotion of Cultural Research' which was established in 1953.<sup>75</sup>

The press and literature were not the only fields where the voices of Armenian artists and thinkers reflected in the overall culture. Meanwhile, for instance, in the field of music, İstanbul Radio was playing the performances of Valantin Mazlum of Chopin in 1951. From this year onwards radio programs, which was prepared by Valantin Mazlum and her students became the frequent guests of radio receivers in the houses of classical music admirers in Turkish society. Mazlum contributed to the cultural development of radio audience not only by getting them acquainted to the masterpieces of classical music but also by introducing many future composers and practitioners of classical music which would add to the development of 'high culture' in Turkey with their performances in different occasions.<sup>76</sup>

While notes of Chopin and other masterpieces of classical music were listened by the radio audience, Baron Panosyan was teaching the moves of new dances such as tango, foxtrot, swing,<sup>77</sup> which became popular dances in the changing popular culture as a result of increasing cultural interaction with the cultural representatives of liberal world. 'Professor' Panosyan had students from different segments of the society who wanted to harmonize their paces in line with the 'westernization' in the dance culture.

<sup>74</sup> Garo Abrahamyan, 'Ermeni Kültürünün Son Kaybı: Kevork Pamukciyan', *Tarih ve Toplum*, September 1997, pp. 4-6

<sup>75</sup> Abrahamyan, 'Ermeni...'

<sup>76</sup> Sevan Ataoğlu, 'Müziğiyle Hep Ayakta', *Agos*, 20 June 1997, p.4

<sup>77</sup> "1950'lerin Renkli Kişiliği Baron Panosyan", *Agos*, 26 April 1996, p.5

In the fields of cinema and theater Armenian actors, actresses, and directors such as Nubar Terziyan, Toto Karaca, Hagop Ayvaz, Vahram Papazyan, Nişan Hancer and other respected and valuable representatives either started their careers or continued to contribute the cultural life of society in this period.

Overall, an important degree of integration was experienced almost in all fields and spheres of social life during this era in different scales and forms. This integration could not have taken place without the initiatives and guidance of the Armenian institutions. Institutions of Armenian minority played a crucial role in institutionalization of the intra-communal and inter-communal integrative acts among the members of the Armenian minority and the other segments of the overall society. The next part will analyze the institutionalization of socio-economic integration in different fields of Armenian community's social life.

### **5. INSTITUTIONAL PATTERNS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY:**

It may well be argued that the period between late 1940s and early 1970s was the period in which the Armenian citizens of the Turkish Republic did not experience the feeling of normative and political alienation deeply in the socio-economic, political and legal spheres within the societal system thanks to the integrative and constructive approaches of Armenian institutions and conduciveness of the political and civil societies in Turkey for such approaches.

As the participation in public affairs by minorities is central to their sense of identity and is crucial to their feeling a part of the state and wider community;<sup>78</sup> the Armenian community's institutions became the bridges and binders of Armenian community to the socio-economic, political, and cultural norms, values and processes within the overall society in achieving a greater competitiveness and social mobility in society regardless of the ethnic, linguistic or religious attribute. In this respect, they appeared as central agents of integration at institutional level, which enhanced the social links that allowed prevalence and exchange between Armenian community and different segments

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<sup>78</sup> Yash Ghai, 'Report on Public Participation and Minorities', (London: Minority Rights Group International, April 2001), pp.1-25.

of the society, while simultaneously binding them to act in line with socio-economically, politically and culturally coded patterns within the society.

### *5.1. Armenian Institutions and Socio-economic Integration of Armenian Minority within the Transforming Socio-economic Structure*

Stabilization and maturation of existence and involvement of minority institutions into the public affairs is another indicator for democratic consolidation. Within this context, the situation of Armenian Church and Armenian Schools and Armenian foundations during 1950s and early 1960s needs some evaluation for our purposes.

Throughout consolidation period, some institutions of Armenian minority such as Yedikule Surp Pırgıç Hospital continued to get aid from the state budget until 1956 in accordance with the Article 4, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, which stated:

“In towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds under the State, municipal or other budgets for educational, religious, or charitable purposes. “The sums in question shall be paid to the qualified representatives of the establishments and institutions concerned.”<sup>79</sup>

After 1956 Yedikule Surp Pırgıç Hospital and other community foundations did not demand any aid from the state and thus the aid was cut upon their own wishes.<sup>80</sup> The mutual understanding of integrity between the state authorities, civil society and the Armenian institutions continued without facing grave problems until the early 1970s. In the following parts the institutional patterns of socio-economic integration will be evaluated through the analyses of acts of Armenian minority’s leading institutions in several fields of social life respectively.

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<sup>79</sup> Lausanne Treaty, Text of Agreement from web pages of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupe/ed/eda/edaa/Part1.htm> and Hellenic Resources Network <http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/>

<sup>80</sup> Diran Bakar, 'Vergi Kanunları ve cemaat vakıfları', *Agos*, 18 December 1998, p. 2

## 5.2. Religion and Church

Scholars such as Tessa Hoffman and Florian Bieber argue that the non-Muslim minorities of Turkey have been exposed to dual assimilatory pressure, religious through secularization and ethnic through nationalism.<sup>81</sup> I believe such a generalizing approach which would encompass whole political history of Turkish governments lacks necessary empirical basis and a careful analysis of policy differences regarding the religious and minority affairs among the political parties which came to power in the history of "Kemalist Republic". Despite the fact that secularism has been one of the major founding principles of Turkish Republic, the understanding and interpretation of this principle was not the same for all the governments, which led Turkey. In fact the period, which I analyzed, is a good example of these different interpretations.

During the years of The Democratic Party rule the understanding of secularism became more flexible and thus the religion regained its primary place in the daily lives of the citizens of the Republic. In fact, as K. Boyle and J. Sheen put it, the number of religious institution increased rapidly while the strict grip of the state over religion was relaxed in almost all spheres. Thus as the 'Democratic Party set about undoing excesses of secularism during the single party era'; the practices of secularist principles were interpreted differently and in a loosened manner by the Democratic Party leadership. In fact the Democratic Party governments gained popular support in 1950s by identifying itself as the liberalizer of the religion without compromising Atatürk's reforms.<sup>82</sup> Within this context, DP rather loosened the premises of secularism<sup>83</sup> and revitalized the religious concerns in the social lives of the people of Turkey. In this respect, what has been argued by Florian Bieber regarding the "assimilatory pressure towards non-Muslim minorities through secularization by Kemalist regime" seem to lose its practical and empirical bases in this era in the sense that the non-Muslim minorities in general, and Armenian minority in particular, were not exposed to planned and constant pressure exerted by the Democratic Party governments and successive governments in line with the secularist concerns of the Republic.

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<sup>81</sup> Florian Bieber, 'Religious Minorities between the Secular State and Rising Islam: Alevis, Armenians and Jews in Turkey', at <http://www.juedisches-archiv-ehfrank.de/kehilot/turkei/TY-mind.htm>, and Hoffman, 'Armenians in Turkey Today...' p. 10

<sup>82</sup> Ahmad, *Turkish...*, p. 370.

<sup>83</sup> Eroğul, *Demokrat...*, p. 89.

1950s and 1960s were not only significant for the relations between the state and Armenian minority in the field of religion. These years also signified the end of intra-communal crisis within the Turkey's Armenian community. For Sarkis Seropyan, the years between 1944 and 1950 witnessed intra-communal conflicts and instability, which were caused by organizational and leadership problems within the Armenian minority.<sup>84</sup> These intra-communal crises came to an end with the promulgation of Decree on Patriarch Elections with the permission of Council of Ministers in 19 September 1950. Meanwhile 1950s and 1960s were celebrating the establishment, restoration and opening of new Armenian Churches in the different corners of Anatolia and in İstanbul. The Surp Hovsep Armenian Catholic Church, which was under the control of military until 1949, began to be administered by Armenian Catholic Community from 1949 onwards and reopened in 30 July 1950.<sup>85</sup> This church, later on, did not only serve the Catholic Armenian community of Mardin and neighborhood as a religious institution simply monitoring the basic religious services but it also became an important institution for the religious education of Armenian children and youth in the region.<sup>86</sup>

These years also witnessed an increased religious liveliness in İstanbul following the immigration movements from Anatolian towns and villages. The scope of these lively religious activities reached to the point that some of the existing churches in İstanbul became insufficient for meeting the needs of Armenian Gregorian community so that these churches were rebuilt in order to meet these needs of Armenian and Assyrian prayers in İstanbul. One of these churches, Surp Asdvadzadzin (Meryem Ana) Beyoğlu was rebuilt in 1961 and was opened for religious services for the prayers in 1963 by Assyrian Patriarch Yakup III and Armenian Patriarch Şınorhk Kalutsyan.<sup>87</sup>

As it is widely accepted among the majority of Armenian community in Turkey, the Armenian Patriarchate has not only been

<sup>84</sup> Edited by Sarkis Seropyan, 'Her Dönemin Aynı Hikayesi', *Agos*, 3 July 1998, p.12.

<sup>85</sup> Tomas Çerme (ed.), 'Mardin Surp Hovsen Ermeni Katolik Kilisesi Tarihçesi', in *Agos*, 20 December 1996, p.2

<sup>86</sup> Despite the fact that the priest of church, Çandın, was declared persona non-grata in 1954 and that no other priest was appointed afterwards, the church functioned as an important religious institution of the region in the following years in spite of the negative impact of chain immigrations from Anatolian towns in 1950s.

<sup>87</sup> Tomas Çerme, 'Surp Asdvadzadzin (Meryem Ana) Beyoğlu, Ermeni – Süryani Kilisesi', *Tarih ve Toplum*, October, 2000, No.202, pp.36-7.

the most active and central institution regarding the organization of religious lives of Turkey's Armenian citizens; but it also played a crucial role in preservation of Armenian socio-cultural identity and language.<sup>88</sup> The Church and patriarchs played an important role in the intra-societal organization and demographic structure of the Armenian minority in this period as they used to do before as well. The noteworthy rural-urban immigration wave of Anatolian Armenian citizens of Turkey to İstanbul, which started in early 1950s, gained impetus under the guidance and leadership of 81st Patriarch Karekin Khaçaduryan and 82nd Patriarch Şınorhk Kalutsyan with the aim of gathering students for the newly established Tibrevank Seminary.<sup>89</sup>

1960s were significant years for the restoration of Armenian Church and other Armenian religious institutions both in terms of the physical appearances and administrative structure. In terms of physical appearances the churches of İstanbul were restored under the guidance and with the initiatives of Patriarch Şınorhk Kalutsyan. Regarding the institutional restoration, 1961 welcomed the introduction of Procedural Decree for Election of the Patriarch which was prepared according to the Decree of Council of Ministers dated 18.9.1961 No.5/1654 and the protocol of İstanbul Mayor dated 29.9.1961 No.19607 and in line with the traditions and customs of Armenian community.<sup>90</sup>

All these developments improved the relations and strengthened the integrity between the religious institutions of Armenian minority and the institutions of overall society in different spheres of social life. Such integrity was expressed openly by the Armenian Church several times (especially during the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora against Turkey in the spring of 1965). In general, the religious institutions of Armenian minority contributed the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority not only in religious sphere but also in other spheres in the different stages of efforts towards democratic consolidation in this era. These contributions took place more efficiently when they were encouraged by political and civil societies and regulations that could clarify and enhance intra-

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<sup>88</sup> See, 'The Folklore of the Armenians of Constantinople at <http://davidashen.aa.am/folklore/6Bois.html> and also see, 'Interview with Patriarch Mesrob II of İstanbul and Turkey' by Florence Avakian at [http://www.15.dht.dk/~2westh/interview\\_with\\_patriarch\\_mesrob.html](http://www.15.dht.dk/~2westh/interview_with_patriarch_mesrob.html)

<sup>89</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye ...', pp.31-35

<sup>90</sup> '1961 Patrik Seçimi Talimatnamesi, Agos, 31 July 1998, p. 2



institutional structure and situation of religious institutions of Armenian minority in legal terms.

### 5.3. Education and Armenian Schools

According to procedures of Armenian Schools, these institutions of educations were supposed to educate the Armenian children in a way that they would be contribute public culture and respect Turkish state and country.<sup>91</sup> It is possible to argue that the Armenian schools functioned in line with these baselines in 1950s and 1960s. In fact they played an important role in socio-economic integration of not only the Armenian minority children and youth but of their families in this period.

The first and only seminary school (Surp Haç Tıbrevank Seminary) which was opened throughout the Republican era was opened in 1954 in Üsküdar<sup>92</sup> under Democrat Party rule<sup>93</sup> and then transformed into a civil high school in 1967. Tıbrevank was not only noteworthy because it was the first and only school that was established during Republican era but also due to its significant role (as mentioned above) in the socio-economic integration of the Armenian students (and of their families which immigrated to İstanbul following their children) who were collected from different Anatolian towns in mid-1950s into the society.

In fact, the main contribution of Armenian schools for the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority to the society took place in four interconnected and respective fields. First of all they played crucial role in adopting the Armenian children to the cultural, social and political values of overall society while at the same time preserving the communal values. Secondly they contributed the existing socio-cultural structure of society while educating the children in line with the cultural differences of Armenian minority. Thirdly, they functioned as the forums of Armenian minority where the educated members of minority could contribute the civil society through the socio-political activities of Alumni organizations (such as Tıbrevank and Getronagan).<sup>94</sup> In

<sup>91</sup> *İstanbul Ermeni Okulları Talimatnamesi*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Kültür Direktörüğü Talimat ve Programlar Serisi, Halk Basımevi, 1969), pp. 7-11.

<sup>92</sup> The Homepage of İstanbul Armenians, <http://www.bolsohays.com/webac.asp?referans=1>

<sup>93</sup> 'Tarihçe Ermeniler' in [www.bolsohays.com](http://www.bolsohays.com), <http://www.bolsohays.com/webac.asp?referans=1>

<sup>94</sup> Özel Getronagan, Ermeni Lisesi Web Sitesi, <http://www.getronagan.org/tr/default/htm>

fact, both the number of the Alumni organizations and their publications rendered a considerable increase in this period. In fact, alumni organizations of the schools also became active associations within the liveliness of the civil societal atmosphere in the field of education. Their publications did not only keep the relations alive between the alumni of these schools but also contributed to the cultural and social life of the community in particular and the society in general.<sup>95</sup> Finally as the Education institutions were active in enrolling students from Anatolia in 1950s and 1960s, they became one of the main institutional means of the urbanization not only for Armenian students who immigrated from Anatolian towns and villages but also for their families in their adaptation efforts to their environment in Istanbul.

Overall, along with these contributions, Armenian minority's institutions of education played an important role in consolidating process of integration among the members of Armenian minority through strengthening both the intra-communal and inter-communal social and cultural links, while simultaneously educating the youth and their families about the socio-economically, politically and culturally coded patterns within the society.

#### *5.4. Armenian Foundations*

Turkish Armenian Community has emphasized its deprivation about the status of the minority foundations, which had limited their rights of purchasing property apart from the immovable properties listed in "1936 Manifest" (1936 Beyannamesi). Nevertheless, despite the number of properties were set and frozen by the 1936 manifest,<sup>96</sup> the minority foundations managed to purchase ownership of immovable properties through the means of donations, disposals which were connected to death, auctions of the court of debts and bankruptcy cases until 1974.<sup>97</sup> While purchasing these properties, the minority foundations were able to get documents of authorization for their competence of ownership of these properties from the mayor of the cities where

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<sup>95</sup> In this respect, the publications, which started to be published from late 1940s onwards (like 'San' of Pangaltı High School and Hantes Misaguyti of Getrongan High School) promoted intra-communal and inter-communal integration especially in the field of education in the society. For further information about the publications of Alumni organizations, See, Karakaşlı, 'Gazetelerin Satıraralarında...', pp. 66-69.

<sup>96</sup> Yervant Özuzun, 'Kanun Önünde Eşitlik', *Agos*, 20 June 1997, p.2

<sup>97</sup> Murat Cano, 'Azınlık Vakıflarının Durumu', *Agos*, 19 May 2000, p.2

**This era appeared as a non-problematic era for the integration of Armenian foundations in the economic and social spheres.**

they used to inhabit.<sup>98</sup> In this respect, as Cano argues there was no mention of any 'de facto' or 'de jure' problem in the reports of inspections of state regarding the properties which were repossessed by the minority foundations even until 1974.<sup>99</sup>

Until 1949, the administrators of the minority foundations used to be appointed by the General Directorate of Foundations in line with the amendment made to the Law of Foundations with the Law No.3513 dated 28 June 1938. The Law 5404, which was promulgated in 1949, provided these foundations a new status other than *Mazbut* (state-governed) and *Mülhak* (self-governing), in connection to practices regarding the property rights and administrations of these foundations.<sup>100</sup> The Law which was accepted 31 May 1949, left the control of the foundations to the elected personalities or councils. According to some authors, initiation of this law signified 'the golden age of the community foundations'.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, the lack of statutes, which expectedly would put forward the ways of practicing this law in the legal cases, brought about some complications with regard to this issue. Despite this problem, in overall context, this era appeared as a non-problematic era for the integration of Armenian foundations in the economic and social spheres. As long as they were encouraged to regulate the property situation and intra-communal economic structure of Armenian minority they became interactive especially within domestic economic sphere and played an important role for the economic integration of Armenian minority into overall society at institutional level.

<sup>98</sup> Murat Cano, 'Türkiye Azınlıklarının Kurumları', *Görüş*, Eylül 2002, p. 39

<sup>99</sup> Cano, 'Türkiye...'

<sup>100</sup> Organization of Istanbul Armenians, 'Türkiye Ermeni Cemaati Kurumlarının Yaşamsal Sorunları', OIA Community News Articles, in [http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999\\_06\\_17newsfile9816.html](http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999_06_17newsfile9816.html)

<sup>101</sup> Diran Bakar, 'Tek Parti, Tek Mütevelli', *Agos*, 20 December 1996, p.8.

## **6. INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT, FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES AND THE SITUATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY**

In the 1950s, in general terms, international environment was favorable for democratic consolidation in Turkey. It was just after the victory of the democratic regimes in the Second World War, which paved the way for the diffusion of modernization and democratic values all over the world. Another important factor was the social reaction against the difficulties, which were experienced during the war under the rule of one party regime despite the existence of comprehensive minority right instrument in legal terms for the non-Muslim minorities living within the borders of Turkish Republic<sup>102</sup> based on Lausanne Treaty. The democracy and the new political formations, which entered the political sphere in early 1950s, were representing the hope for the future as the untried alternatives for the Armenian minority as well as other segments of society. This international wave of liberalization was also significant for the situation of the minorities within the country. Since they were reactionary to the single party regime and its policy choices towards the minorities during the war, they perceived the Democratic Party as a representative of liberal change within the domestic socio-economic and political arenas. In this respect the significant political support, which was given to Democratic Party in the in the elections throughout all 1950s was not surprising.

In the years between early 1950s and early 1970s the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority was influenced by the consequences of two different stages of a same foreign policy issue, namely Cyprus issue, in two different phases of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey.

In 1955, the domestic implications of Cyprus issue, which were materialized in the destructive acts of the mobs in İstanbul on 6-7 September, created unconstructive environment for socio-economic integration of Armenian minority although they did not mainly target the Armenian minority. During the and development of events, since the DP government could not establish necessary mechanisms to enjoy built-in control to keep variations occurring in the socio-economic and political system within certain limits they could not deal with the domestic implications of the foreign

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<sup>102</sup> Nigar Karimova & Edward Deverell, 'Minorities in Turkey', *Occasional Papers*, No.19, (Stockholm: Utrikepolitiska Institutet, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2001), pp. 6-8

policy developments in a very structured and organized way. Thus they could not avoid the reactions of the Turkish society from being directed to the minorities and when they could not (produce efficient solutions for foreign policy problems and thus) effectively intervene the issues in international arena.<sup>103</sup>

Despite DP government of the time tried to compensate the losses of minorities from state budget and through initiating nation-wide campaigns which became civil societal initiatives (consisting of representative of Armenian minority)<sup>104</sup> it was not easy to eliminate the negative impact of the events on the efforts towards democratic consolidation and the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority (like Greek and Jewish) minorities. Nevertheless as mentioned above, although their motivation for socio-economic integration and their confidence to the Democratic Party was negatively influenced due to the implications of crisis of democratic consolidation; the Armenian minority was not late to realize the linkage between the Cyprus

<sup>103</sup> In this respect, Bieber has a point in his thoughts about the impact of the context of Turkish foreign policy on the attitudes towards the non-Muslim minorities. (See Florian Bieber, 'Religious Minorities...') In fact, such a linkage was established between the Cyprus issue and Greek minority living in Turkey in mid 1950s, which resulted in 1955 events. As Erođul puts it, Cyprus issue is a good example for linkage between the domestic and foreign policy issues. When Cyprus issue came to the agenda of Turkey in mid-1950s Democratic Party decision-makers wanted to use it in order to change the domestic political agenda and to attract the attention of political actors to a foreign policy problem in order to disguise the crisis of democratic consolidation. Nevertheless, the consequences of these efforts brought about the linkages between the Cyprus issue and the minorities created intra-social conflict. The anger, which was promoted against the Greece's and Greek Cypriots' political and violent acts against the Turkish Cypriots, resulted in reactionary acts against the Greek minority in 1955. The events, which took place in Istanbul in 1955, were a sign of a crisis of democratic consolidation. Istanbul surrendered to ochlocracy (rule by the mob) for two days until the government could get them under control. In fact the events took place as a consequence of a foreign policy issue, (developments in Cyprus issue). Since they were flamed by the antagonism against the political acts of Greek state's and Cyprus administration with regard to Cyprus issue the anger of the mobs mainly targeted the Greek minority living in Istanbul and Izmir. For Erođul's comments on linkage issue, See Cem Erođul, *Demokrat Parti : Tarihi ve İdeolojisi*, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi Yayınları, 2nd ed. 1990), pp. 108-111 and For further analysis on development of Cyprus issue and linkages between the foreign policy and the domestic politics See Hüseyin Bağcı, *1950'li Yıllar Dış Politikası*, (Ankara: METU Press, 2001), pp. 109-119 and see discussions in 'Kıbrıs Sorunun Gelişmesi Bağlamında 6-7 Eylül Olayları', *Tarih ve Toplum*, September 1986, No.33, pp. 139-154.

<sup>104</sup> The campaign which aimed to compensate the losses of victims of 1955 Events became a civil societal activity which would bring the representatives of minorities and political and economic elite of the country together in order to deal with the consequences of this destructive/disintegrative event In fact the local committee which was established for determining the losses and to collect the donations consisted of Armenian representatives such as Onnik Balıkcıyan, Asgasar Boncuk as well. Within the context of this campaign Armenian schools, which had damages were given compensations in line with their claims. Although the campaign was hardly capable of diminishing the negative impact and consequences of the events on the socio-economic integration process of Armenian minority, it delivered the impression that the government tried to mobilize the society to compensate the losses of victims in these events. For further analysis of this donation campaign see, Uygur Kocabaşođlu, '6-7 Eylül Olaylarından Sonra Hasar Tespit Çalışmaları Üzerine Birkac Ayrıntı', *Toplumsal Tarih*, September 2000, pp. 45-49

issue and the 1955 events and thus tried to distance itself from the probable negative consequences of such linkage.<sup>105</sup> In this respect, it would be possible for the socio-economic integration process of Armenian minority to get less incurable wounds from September 1955 crisis in relative terms.

The second foreign policy development, which took place in connection with Cyprus issue and had an impact on the integration process, was the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora in April 1965 targeting Turkey.<sup>106</sup> In this framework, demonstrations which were planned to take place in several cities and towns of world for the 'commemoration of victims of the deportation' appeared as a test case for socio-economic integration of Armenian minority. They were also significant in the sense that they would show whether the linkage approach was relevant for the political acts of Diaspora against Turkey and the situation of Armenian minority in Turkey.

On the contrary to speculations, these political acts of Diaspora in 1965, which took place in several parts of world, did not create a devastatingly negative impact on socio-economic integration of the Armenian minority.<sup>107</sup> On the contrary, they rather played integrative role since they resulted in creation of the civic and political forums where the Armenian minority expressed their loyalty to the country they used to live in.

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<sup>105</sup> Thus, the members of Armenian minority soon became aware of the fact that these events were outcome of the developments in Cyprus and that they were not the main target of these reactionary political and violent acts. In fact such understanding would be seen in the events of 1965 when the members of the Armenian minority characterize the political acts of Armenian Diaspora as a political game organized by the Greeks who want to get the upper hand in Cyprus issue. In this respect they tried to distance themselves from the foreign policy issues, which might be linked to the other minorities within the country.

<sup>106</sup> Especially, for Turkish press there was an obvious linkage between the Cyprus issue and these political acts, which were targeting Turkey. Thus, in Turkish press, these political acts were presented as a part of Greek and Greek Cypriot strategy in order to change the agenda regarding the violent acts of Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots by directing the attention of world public opinion to the old issues. For Arcayürek this linkage could be deduced from the speech of Cyprus Foreign Minister Kyprianu , which was delivered in United Nations General Assembly in April 1965. See 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler Katliamının 50nci Yilini Anacak', *Hürriyet*, 8 April 1965. For the presentation of the acts in Turkish press in connection to the 'provocations of Greek Cypriots', see Arcayürek, 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler ...; Osman Aykut, 'Ermenileri Tahrik Başladı', *Milliyet*, 9 April 1965; Kadircan Kafılı, 'Ermeniler ve Rumlar', *Tercüman*, 28 April 1965, p.3. and 'Lübnan'daki Ermeniler Katliam Törenini İptal Etti', *Tercüman*, 18 April 1965

<sup>107</sup> Despite the some studies put emphasis on the negative impacts, I would argue on the contrary. For the arguments about negative impacts, See Necla Başgün, *Türk Ermeni İlişkileri: Abdülhamid'in Cülusundan Zamanımıza Kadar*, (Töre-Devlet Yayınevi, 1973), pp.120-123.

From the very beginning of the incidents, Armenian minority distanced itself from these events and used all civic forums<sup>108</sup> in order to put emphasis on the idea that the members of Armenian community in Turkey had no connections with the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora targeting the Turkish state and society in line collaborative manner serving the strategies and political maneuverings of the Greek Cypriots. In line with this understanding, at institutional level, the Armenian Patriarchate expressed that the Turkey's Armenians saw themselves as an inseparable part of this country and that they would not approve any movement opposing the interests of this country.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, at individual level, the members of Armenian community of Turkey accentuated their grief and even anger towards these political acts, which they believed, were encouraged in line with the Greek Cypriot's policies and strategies regarding the Cyprus issue.<sup>110</sup>

Parallel to these acts, press and local authorities delivering messages regarding integrity and peaceful relations with Armenian minority. In fact, in most of the news articles that took place in the Turkish press during these incidents the Armenian minority members were represented as the clever, hardworking and loyal citizens of Turkey,<sup>111</sup> who shared the similar feelings and interests with the overall society in many occasions in different fields of their daily lives;<sup>112</sup> and who actively contributed to the scientific, artistic, cultural accumulation of this country.<sup>113</sup> The common point in almost all news articles or comments was that Turkish citizens of Armenian origin would be offended by such incidents and organized political acts of Diaspora as much as any other ordinary Turkish citizen.

<sup>108</sup> While the political, economic and cultural elite of Armenian community gave interviews to the newspapers, some groups of Armenian minority put flowers to the Monument of Republic in Taksim Square in Istanbul. See, 'Ermeni yurttaşlar anıta çelenk koyacaklar', *Milliyet*, 23 April 1965; 'Ermeniler Türkiye'ye Bağlılık Çiçekleri Sundu', *Tercüman*, 25 April 1965; and for a comprehensive collection of interviews, see *Facts from the Turkish Armenians*, published by *Jamanak* Newspaper (one of the major newspapers of Armenian minority) (Istanbul: Jamanak publication, 1980).

<sup>109</sup> 'Ermeni Patrikliği Memleket Menfaatine Aykırı Bir Hareketi Tasvip Etmiyor', *Hürriyet*, 10 April 1965

<sup>110</sup> Serbest Kürsü 'Ermeni Vatandaşlarımız Ateş Püskürüyor: Biz Türküz ve Huzur İçindeyiz', *Hürriyet*, 10 April 1965, p. 2

<sup>111</sup> Arcayürek, 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler...; and editorial 'Türkiye'deki Ermeniler Bu Eski Oyunlara Gelmeyecektir', *Tercüman*, 21 Nisan 1965, p. 1 and p. 7

<sup>112</sup> Bülent Ecevit, 'Ermeni', in *Görüş*, *Milliyet*, 12 April 1965, p. 2

<sup>113</sup> 'Takvimden Bir Yaprak, Biz ve Ermeniler', *Milliyet*, 10 April 1965, p. 2

Overall, both Turkish press, Turkey's national and municipal political and state elite and Armenian minority's political, economic, religious and cultural elite expressed the commonly shared belief that such political acts would not be able to damage the peaceful relations between the Armenian minority and the overall society through via giving messages of integrity by using all possible occasions at local and national level.<sup>114</sup> In this respect the incidents, which took place in the spring of 1965 in several parts of world such as France and Lebanon created an integrative impact on the Armenian minority and the rest of the society rather than shaking this integrity. As a result, unlike the Greek minority, the Armenian minority did not become a subject of such linkage between the foreign policy issues and the attitudes towards the minorities until the violent political activities of ASALA in early 1970s.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Despite the crises in and instabilities that appeared in the efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey, the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority did not face destructive challenges until the implications of political and violent acts of terrorist or fanatic Armenian organizations began to be felt in domestic spheres of socio-economic interaction from the early 1970s onwards.<sup>115</sup> Until the 1970s, the Armenian minority both suffered from the crises and enjoyed the benefits of efforts towards democratic consolidation together with the other segments of the society. In other words, during this era, within the context of its socio-economic integration to overall society, the Armenian minority did not face any excessive problems<sup>116</sup> other than the problems, which were faced by most of the citizens in the

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<sup>114</sup> While for instance political, economic and religious elite of Armenian minority were expressing their views in the columns of newspapers; Istanbul's mayor Aki and local authorities were emphasizing the integrity of all society with the Armenian minority by stating that they were among the primary actors in the population of thirty millions at a dinner given by the Beyoğlu Armenian Church Branch of Aid for Poor People in Kervansaray Hall, in 12 April 1965. See, "Vali Aki Ermenilere 'Otuz Milyonla Berabersiniz' Dedi", *Milliyet*, 12 April 1965, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless it would also be a reductionist approach to simply link all the problems in the socio-economic integration after 1970s to the activities of these organizations. Any further study on the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority after this period needs to take into account the structural dynamics and developments within the social, economic and political spheres of Turkey as well as intra-communal dynamics of Armenian minority while conducting a research on the nature of integration during and after these years.

<sup>116</sup> Maybe with the exception of 1955 events.



process of democratic consolidation deriving from its ethno-religious difference from the majority.

The integration, which took place in economic, political and socio-cultural spheres at both individual and institutional levels, was influenced and shaped both by domestic and international developments of three different periods between early 1950s and early 1970s within the context of democratic consolidation. Thus the developments in political, civil and economic societies, in rule of law and the bureaucracy; and the changes in structural dynamics such as economic development, international environment, and political culture of the country played important role in determining the nature of integration of Armenian minority in the respective spheres. In the overall picture, as the Armenian minority integrated to the society in the forms of political absorption and accommodation; economic full/partial integration; and cultural pluralism through the institutional or individual socio-economic, political and cultural acts; it enjoyed a considerable degree of communal mobility and integrity within the society in this era. This progress of integration continued until the violent and political acts of Armenian radical and/or terrorist groups against Turkey from the beginning of 1970s without confronting any serious challenge.

# ASSASSINATION OF TALAT PASHA and HAROOTIUN MUGERDITCHIAN

Etruks Türker\*

## INTRODUCTION

**A** young man named Tehlirian was brought to Berlin by an Armenian secret organization. He was helped to rent an apartment close to where Talat Pasha resided and he waited for the day to kill him. All of the members of this secret Armenian organization were informed of this murderous act that was going to take place on the 21 March 1921. Everything was well planned and on that tragic day Tehlirian walked behind Talat Pasha in Berlin, Germany, who was strolling along, pulled out his gun and shot him behind his head. Although Tehlirian attempted to escape, he was caught by the German authorities and arrested. The news of this murderous act spread fast and some of the German newspapers published headlines referring to the event as "the loss of a friend of Germany who remained true up to the last few days before the Ottoman Empire finally collapsed" (see p.15 Ref. 1). The Armenians worldwide celebrated this murderous act and they even referred to Tehlirian as a hero.

Since I was very intrigued by the assassination of Talat Pasha, I decided to investigate Tehlirian's background to find out who this man was, was he a hero or just a simple murderer and how the German court system was misled in this tragic event. As the proceeding chapters will show that Turks never really knew well Armenians with whom they lived together for centuries. Furthermore, it will shed some light into the Armenian secret organization known as NEMESIS.

It was never known how much money Talat Pasha had in German banks. According to the Armenian sources, Talat Pasha had a fortune of 10 million Deutsch marks in safe keeping in a Deutsch Bank (p. 15, Ref. 1). It is very mysterious how the Armenians found out such confidential information. Furthermore, this appears to be a completely fabricated since Aubrey Herbert,

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\* A Reader of Our Journal from the United States

an English writer interviewing Talat Pasha in Germany prior to his assassination, revealed in his book (p. 164, Ref. 4) that in his three days of interviewing Talat Pasha, he was dressed modestly but appeared to be in poverty and he would even bring his lunch to the meetings.

Tehlirian was visited by an Armenian Catholic Priest while in jail in Germany, who blessed him "for having killed the monster and wreaking revenge for all" (p. 21-22, Ref.1). Is it proper for a religious man to make such a statement? Furthermore, the Priest said to Tehlirian that he was en route to Rome and 'I shall ask the Pope to bless you for your work since you have performed as a gift to your nation.' Can the Pope bless such a murderous act as a gift? I went to a Lutheran Church to ask the Priest whether a Priest could bless a man who had committed a murder. His response was a simple NO and he was shocked to see such things were written in the book. He even provided a copy of an article written by Martin Luther praising the Turks.

After celebrating the assassination of Talat Pasha, many Armenians attended his funeral like his friends. This really made me realize we never knew Armenians. Isn't it dishonorable to arrange to kill a person and then to attend his funeral like you had nothing to do with it? No matter what denomination one belongs to, such an act would not be acceptable in any religion.

Tehlirian was 22 years old when he murdered Talat Pasha in 1921. In 1915 he was living in Erzincan, a city in the Eastern part of Turkey. When the World War I started in 1914, Armenians in the Eastern part of Turkey were armed and starting a guerilla warfare. The Ottoman authorities could not control the situation and the whole region was in chaos. The life was not safe for subjects of the Ottoman Empire living in the area, including Turks, Kurds, Armenians and even Greeks. The armies were dispatched to the fronts to fight Russians attacking in the eastern front and the internal police force was too weak to control the situation. Under the circumstances the militia forces of Kurds, Armenians and Greeks were active trying to carve up part of the territory for their own gains. During this time, Tehlirian traveled east to Tbilisi, Georgia crossing the border over to Russia to join the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) fighting the Ottoman forces (p. 41, Ref. 1). Tehlirian signed up as a member of ARF and fought the Ottomans as a guerilla for three years.

The Armenian sources also admit that Armenians living in the Eastern part of Turkey crossed over to participate in terrorist activities to help the Russian forces to defeat Ottomans. Like many other Armenians living in that area, Tehlirian took part in the killings of many Turks and Kurds within those three years. It is stated that (p.41, Ref. 1) 'within the next four years as his missions took him from one corner of Anatolia to other'. It is certain that the missions of such a person were to annihilate as many Turks, Kurds and Armenians as possible who did not side with his cause. Armenian guerilla activities were not new since Armenians started these activities back in 1895 (p. 86, Ref. 8). 'Hunchaks desperately in need of funds, turned their weapons on rich Armenians and demanded that they contribute financially to the national revolution. On 2 December 1895 two merchants of Tbilisi, Zakar Abovian and Petros Makarian, were wounded by Hunchaks and the less fortunate Stepan Gevorkian was killed on the business street in the city.' These events are testimonial to the facts that Armenians created the first terrorist organization in the world. They claim to be the first Christians and no doubt that they are also the architects of a first terrorist organization.

Dashnaks adopted a different style known as taxation and terrorism and they carried this out within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. According to some sources, Dashnaks assassinated a rich Armenian in Izmir and another rich Armenian businessman in Bursa. I am confident that there were many more of such murderous acts known to Armenians living in Turkey but, being afraid of their own lives, they would not speak about them. Tehlirian most likely took part in the activities of both Armenian groups. While Armenians were enjoying the citizenship of the Ottoman Empire and at the same time undermining the country, most of the Turkish citizens were not aware of their activities.

The Armenian Church had the freedom in its activities and was never monitored by the Ottoman authorities. Armenians were free to practice their own language as well. On the surface they appeared to be friendly with their Turkish counterparts, but underneath they carried out their agenda. When I first met Mr. Ararat, an Armenian friend, he told me that he was not a Dashnak and I should not be afraid to make his acquaintance. Now, I understand what he meant by that. He further revealed to me that his grandfather advised him never to become a member of the Dashnak party and to stay away from them. When I asked him how

would I know who is Dashnak, he smiled and said, 'it is your problem'.

### **ARMENIANS ATTACK MUSLIMS**

There are two important periods of Armenian attacks against the Muslims within the Ottoman Empire. The first one took place at the beginning of World War I in 1914 and the second one at the end in 1918. Tehlirian was in the Eastern part of Turkey while the killings of innocent Muslim citizens were being carried out by Armenians. According to British sources, (p. 221-222, Ref. 7), at the end of World War I, there were mass murders of 300,000 to 400,000 citizens within the vicinity of Van and Bitlis by Armenians active in the Russian armies (U.S. 18402/184021/265 meeting with Colonel Wooley of British Army on 12 September 1919).

Tehlirian returned to his native city of Erzincan when it was occupied by Russian forces in 1916. (p. 41, Ref.1). Many of the houses in Erzincan were destroyed due to the civil war. Tehlirian found the family home and his objective was to search for gold in the house which was buried by his father some years earlier. Recalling the instructions his father had given, he determined the spot where the gold was buried and began to dig. After very little effort, he found the gold coins worth 4,800 Turkish pounds (p.71, Ref. 1). This was a great deal of money and it is not known what he did with this money or how did he carry it around. It is very bizarre that his family would have moved by leaving such a great deal of money in the house. Tehlirian remained in Erzincan for about six weeks.

During this time, Muslim villagers around Erzincan suffered in the hands of Russian army deserters and were inflicted even more casualties from attacks of the armed Armenian units (p. 221, Ref. 7). The unarmed Muslim citizens were killed, they were kidnapped and some of them were never heard of from again. The Armenian units burned the stores and houses of Muslim citizens, they looted their property and raped their women.

Let us look at the events that took place while Tehlirian was in Erzincan in 1916. Although he neglected to mention these facts in his testimony during the trial in Germany, it is worthwhile to review some of these events (pp. 220-225, Ref. 7).

- 1- Men living in Erzincan and the villages within the vicinity of Erzincan, were taken away as prisoners, with their hands tied behind their backs and they were all shot to death in the barracks.
- 2- Many of the men living in Erzincan were taken away, locked in buildings and burned alive.
- 3- Armenians burned down the houses belonging to Muslims, city hall and the mosques.
- 4- Approximately 500 citizens from villages near Erzincan were collected and brought to Erzincan, later to be killed in the center of the city.

The town of Tercan was completely burned down by Armenians. The buildings were destroyed by dynamites and close to 700 children were found among the ruins (p. 227, Ref. 7). Similar atrocities were carried out in and within the vicinity of Erzurum on 10 February 1918. (p. 228, Ref. 7). The Muslim population in Erzurum were collected and killed at the entrance of the city. According to Ottoman archives, approximately 8,000 people were eliminated. The worst of these Armenian atrocities took place in villages within Erzincan, Erzurum and Trabzon triangle and in these areas Armenians did have help from Greek guerillas (p. 229, Ref. 7). Armed Armenian groups attacked Muslim homes in Iskenderun looking for the so-called abducted Armenian girls. Only a few of the women taken away by Armenians were actually Armenian (pp. 234-235, Ref.7).

The Armenian attention was directed to the Caucasus where in May of 1918 victorious Armenian forces proclaimed an independent Armenian Republic. However, none of the Armenians were relocating there, instead they were migrating to the West with the hope of becoming wealthy (p. 43, Ref. 1). Tehlirian himself returned to Tbilisi in 1918 suffering from typhus. Since he killed so many people, may be it was God's way of punishing him. Anahid, a friend of his family, nursed him through this crisis until he got well to travel again. The events showed that Tehlirian was a witness and most likely he participated in the murderous acts inflicted upon the Muslim citizens. It is hard to believe how Tehlirian managed to travel at ease during the most difficult times in the history of the Ottoman Empire. During the civil war, Tehlirian managed to cross the border to join the Russian side and then back in Anatolia traveling everywhere.

In his testimony at the trial Tehlirian stated that the War ended in 1918. But not in Turkey. When the French forces were trying to occupy the southern part of Turkey in November of 1918, the Armenian population living within the vicinity of Dordyol joined forces with armed Armenian forces to attack Muslim villages.

*Tehlirian Commits a Murder in Istanbul (on behalf of the secret Armenian Organization)*

Istanbul is a mystique city at the cross-roads of two continents separated by beautiful Bosphorous that attracts people to itself. In addition to its historical monuments, mosques and churches which were preserved by Ottomans for generations to enjoy, there was an individual who loved his country and who wanted to continue to live there. May be it was the last day of an Armenian who loved Turks. We never got to know him but from now on everybody will remember Harootiun Mugerditchian. He was accused by the militant Armenians to bring news to Talat Pasha and this was sufficient for them to condemn him to death. It was sad that we lost an Armenian friend. Let us now investigate how this crime took place since it was an important start of the Armenian terror that later extended to the killings of many Turkish diplomats.

When Tehlirian traveled to Istanbul, he was welcomed into a circle of Armenians better educated than him (pp.42-44, Ref. 1). It was most likely that the NEMESIS group in Istanbul investigating whereabouts of Talat Pasha welcomed him among themselves. One of the members of this group, Yeranoohi Danielian, became very friendly with Tehlirian and informed him that Talat Pasha was no longer in Turkey. Tehlirian was further surprised to find out that other members of Talat Pasha's cabinet such as War Minister Enver Pasha, Navy Minister Jemal Pasha and the Education Minister Nazim Bey also had left Turkey. Since Talat Pasha was no longer available, Tehlirian was convinced to murder Harootiun Mugerditchian, an Armenian agent of Talat Pasha. It was alleged that Mugerditchian gave a list of Armenian activists in Istanbul to Talat Pasha and they were later arrested. Yeranoohi showed Tehlirian Mugerditchian's house and the arrangements were made to assassinate Mugerditchian at a dinner party he was giving in his house. Tehlirian approached from outside the window of dining room where the dinner was being held.

'Whose son had purchased five bottles of cognac from a café opposite to entertain guests. Looking in the window of the house, Tehlirian saw ten people seated around the table. He felt contempt for self satisfied demise Mugerditchian displayed before his guests. His pulse pounded in his temples and voice within him to shoot through the window. Tehlirian armed the gun which he owned since the days in Tbilisi, aimed at Mugerditchian's heart, pulled the trigger and the informer crumbled in his chair. As the guests stared in horror at their host, Tehlirian fled.'(p.44, Ref.1).

- 1- This is a proof that the Armenians were organized for an armed struggle to over throw the regime with guerilla and terrorist tactics.
- 2- One cannot but question who else Armenians killed in Istanbul during that time and placed the blame on Turks, Kurds or Jews.
- 3- In Baku alone anywhere from 8,000 to 10,000 Muslims were murdered by Armenians (p.250, Ref.7).
- 4- Lord Curzon listed the persons responsible for these crimes. Although Armenians tried to put the blame on Azerbaijan Muslims, the records showed that most of the crimes were committed by Armenians. (p.252, Ref. 7).
- 5- Armenians murdered more than 300 Jews trying to escape from their persecutions towards Hakkari and thus annihilating the oldest Jewish population living in Anatolia (p.210, Ref.7).
- 6- Tehlirian for the next four years, as his missions took him from one corner of Anatolia to the other (p. 41, Ref.7). When Russian forces occupied Erzincan in 1916, he returned.
  - a) One wonders how many other Armenians did this terror organization murder and place the blame on Turks. Their actions were definitely an internal cleaning activity.
  - b) Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C. was requested to write to the Armenian Church in Istanbul to obtain information about Mr. Mugerditchian from their historical records.
  - c) According to what I was told, Armenians blamed Turks for the murder of Mugerditchian and, may be, as a result of this all of his family and friends escaped from Istanbul in fear!
  - d) There is no doubt that this murder was committed by



Tehlirian. Since Mugerditchian was a friend of Turks, I believe that Turkish Authorities should invite his surviving relatives and honor this courageous man. All this of course depends on whether his surviving relatives are not afraid of the Armenian terror organization to come forward.

- e) It is important for Turkish Foreign Service to warn the Europeans and the North American governments that there might many other Tehlirians on the loose in their countries planning to commit terrorist acts any time.
- f) The records show that even during the War, Armenians were involved in terrorist acts.

The following day, Tehlirian was not sure whether he was successful in killing Muderditchian. Yeranoohi Danielian came to Tehlirian's house, shook his hand and said with a smile that she learned from a friend that Mugerditchian hours were numbered. "Mugerditchian died the next day and Armenians of Constantinople celebrated with exuberance." (p.44, Ref. 7). After hearing the news, even the Armenian Patriarch Zaven in Istanbul was happy with the news and blessed Tehlirian for his actions.

- 1- This clearly shows that Armenians had a big celebration every time they killed a Turkish diplomat. We used to live in the Netherlands when the Turkish Ambassador's son Ahmet Benler was gunned down in his car by the Armenian terrorists in the downtown Hague. Approximately one month later, there were death threats to Turks working for NATO.
- 2- According to an Armenian friend, although some of the Armenians did not want to get involved in terrorist activities, they were forced to it by Dashnak Armenians and most importantly by some of the priests. Patriarch Zaven was one of these priests and he managed to have a following to chase a dream unfit to a religious man at any cause. Therefore, even before 1915, prior to the start of tragic events, many Armenians had left Istanbul by selling their properties. The following is a testimonial to what my Armenian friend had told me: (p.45, Ref.1)) "One day Tehlirian was summoned by Patriarch Zaven. Zaven was exiled in 1915 and the Armenian Church suffered greatly as a result of Mugerditchian's betrayal. The Patriarch received and blessed Tehlirian and stated that Mugerditchian was three times worse than a traitor and he officially condoned Tehlirian's act."

- 3- Harootiun Mugerditchian, as a person loving his country, must have given very important vital information together with a list of Armenians to Talat Pasha to save the country from further disaster since Armenians were revolting all over the country.
- 4- Hovanisian always claimed that those arrested were sent into exile in Anatolia, later to be killed. All those authors who were or are the enemies of Turkey repeated the same story by copying it from each other. It should be remembered that there is no evidence to justify this accusation (p.41, Ref.6).
- 5- On 20 April 1915 Russian forces forced all of the Muslims living in Russian territories over the border into Anatolia. This created further chaos and unrest in the Eastern part of Turkey since it was becoming impossible to put down the revolting Armenians. To solve this problem, Enver Pasha proposed two options to Talat Pasha. The first one was to drive all of the Armenians over the border into Russia and the second one was to disperse them to the rest of the country (p.43, Ref.6).

While Tehlirian was in Erzincan in 1916, Armenian guerilla forces were inflicting great losses on the population, all of the villages between Cardakli Passage and Erzincan were attacked, houses burned, fruit trees burned and cut down and the villagers murdered. Such barbaric acts were never seen there before and corpses spread on roads and many of them cut into pieces. The infants, elderly women and men were slaughtered and bodies scattered all over the fields. Those that survived could not do anything else but spend days collecting and burying the corpses. The authorities recovered wells near Erzincan full of Muslim corpses, again all of them cut into pieces and some of them spread over the fields. These atrocities are documented in the memoirs of Vehip Pasha (p.225, Ref.7). I am confident that Tehlirian was a witness to these atrocities but I am not surprised that he never mentioned them during the trial in Germany. It is also known that "Armenian volunteer units had been organized for the sole purpose of engaging in guerilla activities against the Turks." (p.41, Ref.1). This of course also justifies misplacement of many Armenians for their own safety and for the good of the country.

When Tehlirian returned to Tbilisi again, he was suffering from typhus. This signifies that diseases were plentiful in the area and

some of them fatal. While Tehlirian was an Ottoman subject, he did not hesitate to cross the border to join Russian forces. Although this was the act of a traitor, it was worse than that. These are Ottoman subjects who lived together with Turks for 500 years and who were friendly with Turks on the surface and carried out all sorts of crimes secretly with their hatred. It is a pity that I found this out today after reading all of these books written by Armenians and other English authors.

*Inconsistencies in Tehlirian's Testimony*

Tehlirian was born in Erzincan and his parents were not highly educated. He claimed that except for himself, all of his family members were killed. He did not reveal the fact that the region he lived in was where the Armenians took arms to fight the authorities. It is also very doubtful that his family members were killed the way he described.

1. He was in Erzincan with his mother, brothers and sister. His father was in Belgrade seeking to have his family join him (p.40, Ref.1).
2. With time in his hands, Tehlirian traveled to Greece where he had distant relatives and from there he went on to Serbia to visit his father and brothers (p.45, Ref.1).

(Page 206, author Edward Alexander, a Foreign Service Officer of Armenian descent)

3. His father was killed before his eyes in the first massacre and his sister was a victim of the second (p.206, Ref.1). But his father was working in Serbia. It is amazing that within the same book a person was dead in one instance and the same person was well alive at a later scene.

These are certainly proof that the facts were twisted and some events were fabricated as convenient. When a nation was being blamed for atrocities, not with facts but with fabricated lies, how can one believe the validity of those claims? Tehlirian used to carry an Iranian passport (p.18, Ref.1). All of the Iranian Armenians left prior to 1915 with the fear of Dashnak terror and probably his family also left for similar reasons and they were all alive and well contrary to what he claimed.

- 1) An incident relayed to me by a friend of mine made me sad. In California a young student was on the school football

team and one day a group Armenian descent youngsters tried to beat him up. The other players on the team prevented the incident and he was saved.

- 2) Armenians are continuously preaching to their children, particularly in churches, to hate Turks. This is very similar to fundamentalist teachings to young Muslim children by fanatics with hatred of the west and western culture. Both of these actions lead people to terror and this is not what the humanity needs.

Armenians nearly worshipped Tehlirian. In the basement of churches they always preached to hate Turks. I obtained a book that belongs to an Armenian church and I was astonished to read the following passage. "Again the hall reverberated with shouts cheers and hammering on tables. Then, women of all eyes ahead of the men lined up to meet him (Tehlirian)." (pp.205-206, Ref. 1). This man had committed murder after murder and he was being greeted as a hero. I guess the author was very young when the atrocities against Turks were carried out by Armenians. He revealed in his book that he was also in the Church when Tehlirian was greeted as a hero. He turned to his father and asked "who is this man?". His father replied that his name will not mean anything to him now but someday it will. The author continued "He turned looking down at me in the front seat and said in a trembling voice which I can still hear "because with that hand he avenged our people. Never forget him." It is sad that Mr. Alexander managed to seed such a hatred in his son that it served no purpose. This is a typical oriental mentality.

How can anybody with a clear head and loving heart accept to have young minds of children filled with nothing but hate, especially in churches. None of the Christians I know agrees with this and they all cry out that this is not Christianity.

There is one important question that needs to be asked:

- 1) Was Tehlirian a hero or a simple murderer?
- 2) He was a member of a secret organization and today it is referred to as a terror organization.
- 3) How can Balakian as a priest defend Tehlirian in the name of Jesus knowing that he committed a murderous act?
- 4) The terrorist acts of September 11 were wake-up calls to the World. Prior to this event, more than 30,000 innocent

civilians were killed by the terrorist P.K.K. organization in Turkey.

- 5) It is well known that Armenians were very successful for years to collect sympathy in the name of Christianity.
- 6) It should be known that Tehlirian was blessed by the Armenian Church for his killings since he was an Armenian.
- 7) Today all religions would have to be united to fight terrorism. However, as the author stated in his book; "Search was finally over; NEMESIS had found its man and Sogomon Tehlirian was selected from among other agents would be the assassin of Talat Pasha." (pp.50-51, Ref.1).
- 8) The assassination of Talat Pasha was masterminded by Armen Gero (Karakin Pasdermajian) who was very close to Talat Pasha at one time. They were planning reforms and they respected each other. However, the War and the interference of external powers in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire encouraged Armen Gero to plan an Armenian revolt thus destroying Talat Pasha's trust.

NEMESIS is still active today and one wonders if it is an underground organization just like Nazism. When our diplomats were killed, did the Armenian Church bless these murderous acts? Ahmet Benler murdered in the Netherlands was the only the son of a Turkish Ambassador. I am sure NEMESIS knew who carried out this killing and if an Armenian writes a book on this subject, like they had written about other killings, we will all find out how this was planned. More importantly it is crucial that the American lobby find out the facts about this incident. Unfortunately everything can be bought in the name of lobbying activity: VOTE plus MONEY plus SYMPATHY is EQUAL to LOBBY.

### **Conclusions**

This is a partial story of two groups of people who lived together in Anatolia for centuries but did not get to know each other very well. For a strange reason it is always the Turks that are blamed for every wrong doing while there were many other people of different religious and national origin living there. It was not probably easy to get along with people of varying cultures and religions. It must be the economic situation since we do not notice the same problems in the USA. When the economy of the Ottoman Empire

was doing well, every ethnic group was prospering and getting along well with each other. There was religious and language freedom.

I am not in favor of any Empire in the World. However, the Ottoman Armenians have no right to criticize and to be angry at the Ottoman Empire that has helped them to prosper while neglecting its own subjects. Therefore, the Turks have the right to be angry not the Armenians. There is no doubt that the First World War caused many hardships to both the Armenians and the Turks and only big powers such as British and French benefited from that conflict. Ottomans showed enormous tolerance and probably there was no other country in the World which allowed that many missionaries and consulates to be established. I have no doubt that the circumstances would be much better than today if both sides managed to share their knowledge and wealth and helped each other. If one is sharing a country, what is important is to help the country to prosper, not to divide it up. This certainly could have been accomplished since the Armenians and the Turks have many similar customs and Turks, in general, like Armenians.

I think the World is getting too old and the genocide is being committed against the World. There is an economic genocide that is being conducted in the World, billions are being spent on weapons to kill people and millions are being spent on lobbying activities to dictate or deprive people of basic rights. Our great leader Ataturk taught us to get along with people, not to carry-on any hatred and to live in peace.

We get along very well with Armenians living in Turkey and there is no reason why this cannot be done with Armenians residing either in Europe or in North America. I believe 24 April should be accepted as a day of remembrance for those who died in the World War I and also for those killed from terrorism. We should stop preaching our children one sided view of the events to fill them with hate and archives on both sides should be accessible to historians. As my friend Mr. Ararat explained, the big powers tried to control the situation by making false promises. There were extremists on both sides and many innocent people lost their lives.

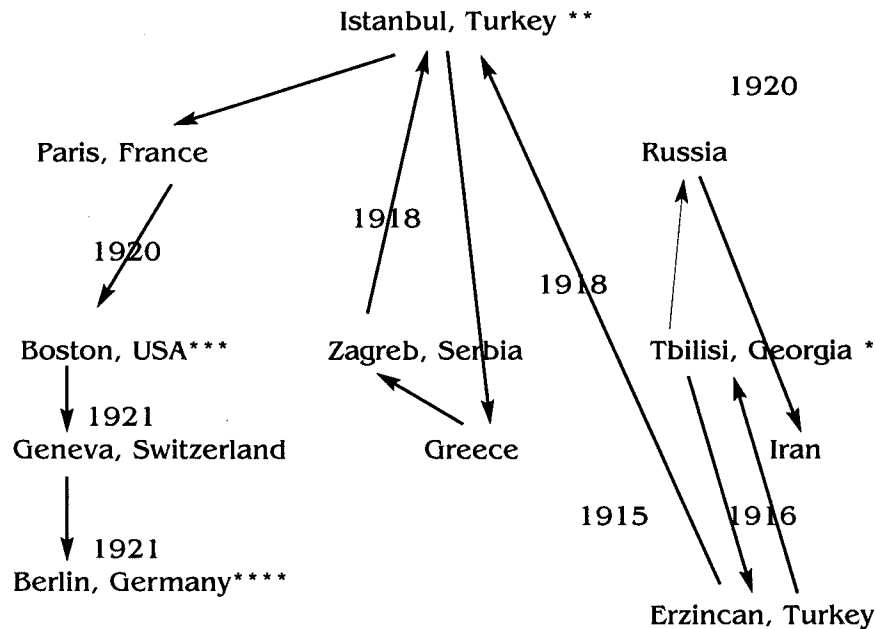
I do not think people mature by education or by religion and money certainly do not make anyone more civilized. As I stated earlier, the World is going through an economic genocide, the air is

becoming polluted, water supplies are diminishing, and the nature is gradually disappearing. I strongly believe that we have not become a mature civilization if we are still continuing to argue an unsubstantiated event that took place more than 80 years ago.

I believe that this incident should be made into a documentary to convince the members of the US Congress and other lobbying groups on what really happened. One should not forget the saying that "a picture is worth thousand words". I remember the effect of a short television program on the members of the House of Representatives during a committee hearing on the Armenian issue in Washington, D.C. few years ago. That documentary was prepared with funding from the Armenians and had an enormous impact on the members of the committee deliberating the Armenian issue. I am ready to provide all of the materials I have in my possession for such a movie.

**SOGOMON TEHLIRIAN'S TRAVEL ROUTES**

(Travel arrangements and expenses arranged by NEMESIS)



- \* Tehlirian joined Armenian Revolutionary Federation
- \*\* Tehlirian murdered Harootiun Mugerditchian
- \*\*\* Met with NEMESIS terrorist organization to receive instructions and money. Personally met with Armen Gero, Pan-Armenian leader of NEMESIS
- \*\*\*\* Murdered Talat Pasha

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**Mourad Topalian:** (from court records; The United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division; The United States of America, the Plaintiff, versus Mourad Topalian, the Defendant, 12 October 1999)

From about 1 June 1976 to 13 September 1996 Mourad Topalian and other persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury, committed offenses against the United States. They were charged with conspiracy to acquire, receive, transport, store, possess firearms and explosive materials in excess of 100 pounds, including fully automatic firearms and stolen explosives, with the intent to use them against persons of Turkish descent as well as against buildings and facilities used in interstate and foreign commerce by persons of Turkish descent. Their intent was to bring publicity to killings of Armenians in 1915 by carrying out acts of violence and acts of property damage against Turkish government facilities, Turkish businesses and persons of Turkish descent.

Topalian was the National Chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America. He and his accomplices devised a scheme to steal and to obtain dynamite and other explosives to be used in violence acts. These explosive materials were transported in interstate commerce and were stored in rented self-storages to be used in training as well as acts of violence. They conducted training exercises for members of the so-called the "elite" group in the use of firearms and explosives at Camp Haiastan in Franklin, Mass. and in Beirut, Lebanon. In mid-1976, Topalian directed persons, identities known to the Grand Jury, to travel to Beirut, Lebanon and to receive specialized training in the use of firearms. While in Lebanon, these persons met with high ranking officials of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), identities known to the Grand Jury.

Between 1979 and 1980, Topalian directed various individuals to travel to Manhattan, NY, for surveillance of the building in which the Turkish Mission to the UN was located. Topalian himself traveled to New York on 11 October 1980 to transport explosives to bomb the Turkish Mission to the UN. Finally on 12 October 1980 Topalian and two other persons detonated the bombs causing damage to a stolen car they were using and to the Turkish Mission at the UN destroying property belonging to Turkey. In this act three innocent by passers were injured.

Topalian instructed his wife Lucy Topalian to rent a self-serve mini storage facility in Ohio and Topalian himself moved firearms and explosive materials into this storage several times between 1980 and 1996. However, later they were separated and his wife did not hesitate to testify against him since she did not approve his terrorist activities.

Topalian and his accomplices were active in California as well, and on 20 November 1981 they managed to detonate an explosive device at the Turkish Consulate in Beverly Hills, CA, causing property damage. In addition, explosives were transported from California to Mass. with the intend to detonate another explosive device at the office of the Turkish General Consul in Philadelphia, PA, on 22 October 1982.

On 12 April 1988 Mourad Topalian made false statements to FBI and denied any knowledge of participation in the bombing of Turkish Mission at the UN. He also denied any charges for possession of stolen explosives or having dispatched anybody to Beirut, Lebanon for training. It is very interesting that according to the Court records, Topalian's lawyers requested on several occasions communications and files of the CIA on this matter. The US District Attorney argued that CIA has no records since this was a domestic law enforcement matter. Furthermore, it is very intriguing that the defense argued to obtain a copy of the file the White House allegedly requested from CIA regarding Mourad Topalian. The US District Attorney's counter argument was that it was not clear when such a file was requested by the White House. It was further argued that George Stephanopolous, who supposedly made the request, was no longer in the White House since he left his post after the November 1996 general election. It was known that as a prominent member of the Armenian society in the USA, Topalian visited the White House on various occasions lobbying against Turkey while carrying out his terrorist agenda.

Topalian telephoned convicted Armenian terrorist Viken Havsepian moments after he learned that the explosives had been found by police in the storage unit near the day care center. Some of the other accomplices of Topalian known to FBI were Hagop Gebeshian, who provided false statements about the Camp Haiastan, and Vartkes Hagopian , who was interviewed by FBI regarding this case and the contents of the interview were not disclosed. It was believed that Hagopian fled the USA following the arrest of Topalian.

One of Topalian's justifications for renting the storage place was his claim that ARF in Lebanon asked him to coordinate the defense forces to protect 300,000 Armenians in central Beirut who were caught up in cross-fire between the Christians and the Muslims during the Lebanese civil war. The Armenian communities around the World were volunteering and collecting money and the storage place was rented to protect their names, addresses and correspondence. The storage later was used for storing explosives and firearms.

Mourad Topalian was charged in October 1999 with conspiracy acts, possession and storage of explosives and firearms, and transportation of them in interstate commerce. The Bedford storage facility used by him and his accomplices was within the vicinity of Childtime Children's Day Care Center, an operating gas station, and an office complex. The storage was less than 300 feet from a public highway with a daily traffic volume of 3,000 vehicles. The charges of terrorism were taken out after the plea-bargaining and his admission of the charges. The US authorities knew very well his association with other Armenian terrorist and convicts. They even knew his correspondence with the ARF and despite of all these facts terrorism charges against Topalian were dropped. This is very mysterious, to say the least. Can one imagine what would have happened if those explosives in the storage area exploded accidentally? This certainly would have caused casualties similar to September 11 terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers. Topalian was guilty of putting the life of those innocent children in the day care center as well as the people in the office complexes in danger, not counting the persons driving by on the nearby highway.

*Mourad Topalian*

Sixty people, including some priests, provided "good-character" letter for Topalian. How could anybody consider a man having "good-character" who acted as a terrorist?

This was no different than the Tehlirian case where Balakian, an Armenian priest, blessed him for his terrorist acts. Let us not forget that the names of two Armenian priests, James Karnusian, living in Switzerland, and Arthur Helvadjian, from Marseilles, were mentioned after the killing of Mehmet Savas Erguz, a Turkish international civil servant working in Geneva on 19 June 1981. Mr. Erguz's wife, Esther Erguz, is a Swiss citizen and he had two young children.

It was shocking to see the picture of President Clinton with Mourad Topalian during his lobbying activities at the White House prior to being caught for his terrorist acts. The Armenian lobby with the leadership of a terrorist like Topalian,

*September 11*

Nobody could understand better than Turks the suffering Firefighters and their families went through.

Ara Toranian defended the Armenian terror in Switzerland. How can anybody defend terror after what happened on September 11?

President Clinton visited Turkey after the earthquake of August 2000. When he got to know Turkish people better who were full of passion, love and respect, I am confident that his opinion of Turkish people changed for the positive. Who can forget the incident with that little boy who squeezed President Clinton's nose. When one imagines this scene and the 100 pounds of dynamite stored by Topalian that could explode and take the lives of numerous children,

It is not difficult to realize extend of the Armenian terror.

Why did September 11 take place? The deep reasons for this terrible act would have to be discussed in the media with

*Armenian Terror*

Europeans never took the Armenian terror very seriously since it was against Turks, until it started to hurt them. The killings of Turkish Ambassadors were exploited for publicity purposes by strong Armenian groups. Even the French government issued an ultimatum to Turkey to obtain the sympathy of Armenians living in France.

Ambassador Ismail Erez and his driver Talip Yener were murdered in Vienna on 24 October 1975.

Turkish Counselor Mehmet Baydar and his associate Bahadir Demir are gunned down by Yanikian in Santa Barbara, CA on 27 January 1973. Yanikian approached them with an excuse to present the Turkish government with an Ottoman painting that he was carrying with him. His lawyer defended Yanikian as a hero who fought against Turks in the city of Van during the Armenian uprising in 1915.

God saved people in Cleveland, OH. Mourad Topalian

tried to have the genocide bill approved in the Congress in addition to placing economic embargo against Turkey.

Mourad Topalian claimed to be a hero by his lawyer Mark Gerogo and declared that nobody in the Armenian community could call him a terrorist. He was no hero. Those that tried to take back the airplane on Flight 93 in Pennsylvania on 11 September 2001 are the heroes.

The Armenian Church in Turkey condemned the terrorist acts committed by Armenians outside of Turkey. They admitted that these terrorist acts would be remembered as shameful incidents in history.

Topalian's young daughter is ill and we wish her all the best. How could someone who has a child himself, possess such a hatred that he places the lives of many children in danger by storing more than 100 pounds of dynamite near their day-care facility and at the same time ruining his own life .

objective reasoning. It needs to be asked, is Topalian really a hero? How did this man who hid explosive and firearms and carried-out terrorist acts succeeded in visiting the White House? I am confident that the Ottoman leaders were also misled by such trickery. How could President know? This certainly is a proof that we as Turks were never successful in impressing upon the Christian community the true face of the Armenians.

When the 55 year old Turkish Counselor Kemal Arikan was murdered by two Armenian terrorist in Los Angeles, CA on 28 January 1982, an American who witnessed the incident suffered a heart attack and died. Thanks to the pursuit of a citizen involved in law, these terrorists, 19 years old Hampig Sasunian and 18 years old Ara Sasunian, were caught.

Robert R. Raid, a security officer, who investigated Mourad Topalian stated that the authorities were very concerned about the stability of the

stored more than 100 pounds of dynamite in a mini-storage facility near a gas station within the vicinity of a child day-care center and an office complex. Yanikian issued a message that young Armenians should pursue same tactic that he had selected to use. It is sad that to honor Yanikian a cell in prison was named after him.

Elliot (an FBI agent) investigating Topalian soon found himself plunged into an aging Armenian underground once militant youth now had kids and moreover some broke down and cried as he interviewed them. How sad it is that these people were brainwashed by their parents and grandparents to carry out such hatred! This is no different than today El Kaide brainwashing children to hate the West and Western values.

In the aftermath of September 11, when President Bush made his speech, he called upon Israelis and Palestanians to rid of their pasts from their

The French news-media tolerated the terror against Turkish diplomats by acting like they never took place until it hit home when a suitcase bomb carried by an Armenian terrorist waiting to check-in for a Turkish Airlines flight exploded at the Orly Airport.

Assassination in Athens. Counselor Galip Ozmen, his wife, his daughter Neslihan and his son visiting visited him, were all gunned down by Armenian terrorists.

explosives. The explosives were taken to a dump site in Walton Hills and set-off. He furthermore stated that "God saved, Jesus Saved the Cleveland people and the children."

hearts and learn to live in peace.

It is written in the Bible that "the God sent us the Life and the Death but we chose the Life."

Turks and Armenians, as neighbors, have to live in peace by helping each other.

This World does not need people like Topalian who has no regard for humanity and would carry-out crimes against other people that he hates at any cost no matter what the circumstances or the results are.

## BOOK REVIEW

### ERMENİ İDDİALARI VE GERÇEKLER (THE ARMENIAN CLAIMS AND THE REALITIES)

Author: Dr. Hüsamettin YILDIRIM

(Ankara: Sistem Ofset, 2000). 181pp. Documents,  
Bibliography.

#### Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Sıtkı BİLGİN\*

The Armenian question has long been a controversial field for the international historians. It thus still remains a delicate historical issue and needs to be examined scholarly and carefully. The correct use of original historical material will help to the better understanding of the issue. As this question, by its nature, is open to the use of political prejudices and abuses many historians have unfortunately approached it as being excessively rigid, one-sided and opinionated. Many of these authors have generally failed to conduct a comprehensive research based on comparatively use of the Ottoman and other foreign sources. The unscholarly methods have therefore produced wrong prejudicial allegations serving only to the political and ideological interests of particular groups. Luckily, however, there have appeared a number of scholarly works on the academic environment as such a book written by Dr. Yıldırım.

Based on the use of vast amount of archival material, it is a brief and well-organized book and concentrates specifically on the event of relocation (*tehcir*) of the Armenian population by the Ottoman administration in 1915. The author used comparatively the Ottoman, British, American, and Russian sources in order to explain this event in an objective manner. The central theme in the book is that the statistics on the movements of the Armenian

\* Doctor of International History at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University. E-mail:msbilgin@eraren.org

population in different times in the Ottoman Empire shows that the Armenian losses during the event of relocation was not that much as alleged by the Armenian historians. Rather, the limited number of deaths, during the event of relocation in 1915, occurred as a result of technical, economical and health problems caused by severe war conditions. The Armenian historians, however, have unjustly called it as 'genocide'. As it can easily be seen, there is a sharp contrast between the two views. The publication of this work, therefore, is a crucial step towards understanding the historical facts that led to the event of relocation of the Armenians in 1915.

In the introduction, the author makes some generalizations to explain the main reasons behind the Armenian claims against Turkey. Then he goes on to say (in page 6) that 'the Armenians, after they had, in many times, been deported and persecuted by the Persian and Byzantine Empires, found the Turkish Justice and Islamic tolerance as a great relieve to themselves'. The author makes it clear that the Armenian population had received such a great deal of freedom and tolerance from the Ottoman administration that they had been called as the trustworthy subjects, *millet-i sadıka*. Then Yıldırım states that the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire were able to occupy such highest posts in the government as the ministries of internal and external affairs, and that of marine and finance. He makes an emphasis on a particular point that Turco-Armenian relations began to worsen at a time when the Ottoman Empire declined from the power. This was because the Great Powers at the time wanted to use the Armenian question as a lever to interfere in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire and thereby seizing the opportunity to destroy this Empire.

After listing many numbers of the Armenian rebellious activities against the Turks and the massacres committed by the former against the latter, the author places a special emphasis on the decision taken by the Turkish authorities to relocate the Armenian population who assisted the rebels and the Russian soldiers in 1915. In the pages (10-11) the verbal and legal meanings of 'tehcir' is examined and shown that this has similar meaning with the word 'relocation'. Then, in pages (20-23), attention is paid to the issue of passing the Tehcir Law in 27 May 1915 to explain the main reasons behind it. It is made clear that this law was prepared for those 'who insurrected against the state authority' and helped



the enemy. The Tehcir Law also contained a number of articles to protect the safety and health of those Armenian people subjected to relocation process with all necessary measures during their journey.

The last parts of the book examine the statistical movements of the Armenian population within the different periods of the time in the Ottoman Empire and show that, compared to the great number of Turkish deaths, the amount of the Armenian losses were quite small during the Great War. The author hence concludes that the 'Genocide' claims made by the Armenian historians are not based on the historical facts and evidence but rather they are based on false allegations.

**BRITISH POLICY AND THE APPLICATION OF REFORMS FOR  
THE ARMENIANS IN EASTERN ANATOLIA 1877-1897**

Author: Musa ŞAŞMAZ

(Ankara: Turkish Historical Society Printing House, 2000). 307  
pp. ISBN 975-16-1253-5

**Hasret DİKİCİ\***

Musa Şaşmaz deals with the Armenian Question from an international relations perspective in his book. He mainly concentrates on the policies of Britain in the context of reforms applied to the Armenians in the Eastern Anatolia. He points out that he does not deal with the Armenian disturbances, rather he deals with the causes of the events.

In the first chapter, he analyses the way in which the reform question emerged and what kind of role Britain played in this respect. The author begins his study with the treaties of San Stephano and Berlin, and specifically focuses on the Article 16 and Article 61 respectively. Then Musa Şaşmaz turns to Britain and questions why not the other European powers, but Britain was interested in this issue.

In the second chapter, Şaşmaz investigates the Reform Question in terms of the British-Ottoman relations in the years between 1878-1880. In this period, discussions between Britain and Ottoman Empire started on the reform scheme. How the commissioners would be sent to the Eastern Anatolia was planned afterwards. With a closer look, the author particularly explain the activities of two Imperial Commissions in Erzurum, Van, Diyarbakır, Harput and Sivas. These commissions had aimed to find out the the needs of the country for reform and to draw a programme in accordance. The mission of Baker Paşa is paid special attention in the context of the reforms.

The third chapter broadens the agenda of the book in the sense that this chapter deals with an international coalition. In this chapter, it deals with how Britain tried to convince Russia and France for a coalition in order to make the reforms applicable for the Armenians. This process corresponds to the years between

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\* ASAM, The Institute for the Armenian Research, Assistant. E-mail: hdikici@eraren.org

1880 and 1894. The author reviews the reforms applied in Eastern Anatolia between these years at the end of the chapter.

The settlement of the reform question is scrutinized in the next chapter. Britain had attempted to bring together the above mentioned international coalition in order to present a reform package to the Ottoman Empire. This diplomatic process went on with the replies of the Porte towards the reform proposals. Then an agreement was reached on the 6 points and the final shape of the reform schedule was discussed also in this chapter.

In the final chapter, Şaşmaz concentrates on the application of the reforms in a two-year-time period. First of all, the author begins with the appointment of the Inspector-General of Reforms, and takes a further look to his mission to carry out the reforms. The author concludes the book with the execution of the articles concerning the Commission of Control, Administrative Reforms, Reorganization of the Communes, the Police and the Gendarmerie, Judicial Matters, Taxation, Control of Kurds and Other Matters.

Although the book is a historical study dealing with 19th century Armenian Question, it is also significant in the sense that it provides an international relations dimension, and it's contents provide a connection with the current issues related to the Turco-Armenian relations.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sedat LAÇINER\*\*  
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