



Controversy and Debate

I never would have imagined that “Controversy and Debate” would be the title of my introduction to a special publication dedicated to the Armenian Genocide. But after outlining the issues we wanted to see discussed and contacting the writers, it seemed that there was no escape from this title.

The sections on Turkish-Armenian dialogue, the internal dynamics in Turkey and the impact of the genocide on Armenia and the Diaspora abound with analyses and opinion editorials that will generate criticism and, hopefully, constructive discussion.

The papers by Balakian, Berkday, Theriault, Kotchikian, Aghjayan and Davidian deal with issues of power relations and the dynamics of Turkish-Armenian dialogue.

Insight on today’s Turkey and the prevailing atmosphere in its civil society and among its ruling elites and intellectuals is provided by Ungor, Zaman, Gunaysu and Erbal.

Panossian, Titizian, Kasbarian and Garbis discuss the impact of the Genocide on Armenians on the micro and macro level.

Comparative aspects of genocide, education and prevention of genocides are addressed in the articles by Kiernan, Cohen and Torosyan.

The section on historical research is fascinating in its own right. Kaiser and Aghjayan present new material on Amasia from the Ottoman archives, Der Matossian looks at the destruction of the “Armenian economy” in the Ottoman Empire, and Millhomme brings to light the story of one Armenian’s journey as told by the Foxboro Reporter.

The Weekly will continue to deal with the issues raised in this publication and document the different aspects of the history of the Genocide.

Khatchig Mouradian

Table of Contents

Turkish-Armenian Dialogue 3-10

Progress, Obstacles, Hope, 92 Years Later:
Some Reflections
By Peter Balakian

A Genocide, Three Constituencies,
Thoughts for the Future (Part I)
By Halil Berktaş

Criminalizing the Victim
By George Aghjayan

Post-Genocide Imperial Domination
By Henry Theriault

From Vertical to Diagonal Interactions:
The Multidimensional Aspects of Armenia(n)-
(Turk)ey Relations
By Asbed Kotchikian

Turkish-Armenian Dialogue: A False Start
By David Davidian

Perspectives on Turkey 11-14

'Excuse me, did you say genocide?'
On the Poverty of Debates on
Mass Violence in Turkey
By Ugur Umit Ungor

An Ever-Lasting Punishment For Us All in Turkey
By Ayse Gunaysu

Late at Night
By Ayda Erbal

Turkey at a Crossroads, as Always:
An Interview with Amberin Zaman
of the Economist
By Khatchig Mouradian

'We Are All Oxymorons'
By Ayda Erbal

Contemporary Armenian Views 15-17

The Impact of the Genocide on
Armenian National Identity
By Razmik Panossian

Hand-Me-Down Genocide: Live in Technicolor
By Lucine Kasbarian

Letter to Hovsep
By Tatul Sonentz

Fasting
By Diana Der-Hovanesian

More Than Ninety Years
By Diana Der-Hovanesian

From the Deportation Routes to Yerevan
By Maria Titizian

The 'Religion' of Genocide:
A Uniting Force Stronger than
the Armenian Church and Language
By Christian Garbis

Genocide Education 18

A Page to Learn and to Remember
By Apo Torosyan

A History Ignored ... Repeats Itself
By Sara Cohen

Comparative Approaches 19

Hitler, Pol Pot and Hutu Power:
Distinguishing Themes of Genocidal Ideology
By Ben Kiernan

Historical Research 20-24

The Ottoman Archives:
A Personal Look Back at the Past and the Future
By Hilmar Kaiser (Introduction by G. Aghjayan)

From Confiscation to Appropriation:
Historical Continuity and the Destruction of the
'Armenian Economy' in the Ottoman Empire
By Bedross Der Matossian

The Odyssey of One Armenian as Told by
the Foxboro Reporter
By Bill Milhomme

Cover Painting

The Weekly would like to thank Zareh (www.artistzareh.com) for allowing the reproduction of his painting above in memory of Hrant Dink.

The mouth and bird symbolize freedom of speech. Dink's words appear on the left, while the words of his assassin are on the right in Turkish ("I killed him because he said Turkish blood is bad blood.")

Progress, Obstacles, Hope, 92 Years Later: Some Reflections

BY PETER BALAKIAN

Talk given at the Armenians and the Left Symposium on March 31.

First, let me say how delighted I am to be here with you this evening, and to share the podium with professor Henry Theriault and professor Halil Berktaç, who has been an important, courageous, progressive voice in Turkey over the past decades.

When my memoir was published 10 years ago, my editor asked me, in a whisper voice, at our first meeting after she bought the book: "How far out on a limb are we?" She was afraid that the subject of the Armenian Genocide was so obscure, the book would go belly-up in a few days. I told her we'd be fine; but truthfully, I had no idea what would happen to a book that dealt with a history that had happened more than 80 years before. I just held my breath.

If you'd told me then that 10 years later—9 decades after the event—the Genocide would again be appearing on the front page of the New York Times and in the media regularly, I'd have said you were crazy. Sadly, it was Hrant Dink's assassination that wound up on the front page of the Times, but the Armenian Genocide is nonetheless news and at the forefront of contemporary affairs. The rapid advancement of scholarship on the Armenian Genocide, the EU accession process, and the forces of democracy and courageous intellectuals in Turkey are all responsible for this.

It is quite an extraordinary moment for this history; 92 years later, after decades of obscurity, the Armenian Genocide is an important ethical, intellectual and political issue. And yet, as a kind of leaping progress has been made due largely to a scholarly process and a culture of liberal education, for example, here in the States, there has been a violent backlash from forces inside Turkey. This has created a quandary, a conflict, a problem to be solved.

The assassination of Hrant Dink is in some way emblematic of it. An Armenian citizen of Istanbul who was writing and speaking about the Armenian Genocide openly in Turkey. He was taking democratic society seriously. And, for this, he was murdered. He was inhabiting a delicate, civic space in Turkey's complex world. In his final essay, he told us he felt like a pigeon—at once vulnerable, yet free, he so hoped. But he was gunned down, apparently by the "Deep State," by forces of repression and violence against free expression and thought, and he was demonized and made a pariah by Turkey's penal code Article 301.

Dink's murder resonated with Armenians because it evoked the murder of thousands of intellectuals and cultural leaders in 1915. There was a genocidal taint to it. It reenacted our history. Yet, Dink's murder also resonated with Turkish culture. It brought more than a hundred thousand people into the streets of Istanbul—Armenians and Turks—to express anger, outrage and solidarity. People in the streets shouting "We are all Hrant Dink, We are all Armenian." It was something new; Dink's assassination became one catalyst for the democracy movement in Turkey. It represented hope for change. And change is the key.

A hundred years ago, progressive Armenians were working with the Young Turk movement for change and for a new age of constitutional reform. It didn't work out, as we well know. A hundred years later, Armenians of the Diaspora and of the Republic—ironically—may still be able to play a role in Turkey's quest for genuine democracy. We are not citizens of Turkey but we are a long shadow of Turkey's conscience. (Armenians in the Republic are as well, although they have a unique situation to grapple with.) We are connected to an issue that is a cornerstone to Turkish democracy.

Diasporan Armenians are a complex community: they are American, French, Canadian, Greek and many other nationalities; and most have grown up in cultures and educational systems that value serious mechanisms of critique, and historical and cultural evaluation. This often creates a gap between Diasporan Armenians and Turks, who have been socialized by a different kind of culture. Because the issue of the Armenian past in Turkey embodies the idea of Turkey's democratic capacity for self-criticism and historical critique, might Armenians of the Diaspora be part of a process that brings about that change? Or are they a hindrance? Can Armenians enter into a productive dialogue with Turkish citizens or Turks in the diaspora?

First, let me note that while there has been a positive opening-up of dialogue between Armenians and Turks in recent years, there are some basic issues that create obstacles for deeper dialogue, and I encounter these issues when I speak with Turkish-Americans who come to protest my lectures and even with some of the Turkish scholars on the Armenian-Turkish listserv to which I belong.

As I note them, I know very well that Armenians need to understand things about Turks and their worldviews and their complex society. And, I in no way mean to suggest that Armenians and Armenian culture is any more fault-free than any other culture in the world. However, in the ongoing dialogue between Turks and Armenians, I feel it is important for Turks to understand the issue of power, and how asymmetrical it was in 1915 and continues to be between our two cultures. Armenians are often astounded when Turks respond to them as if, on the issue of the Genocide, we are on an even playing field.

First, the asymmetry of power is a key element in the act of genocide. In 1915 the perpetrator used its military, its state bureaucracy, and an unequal social structure to enact a plan of extermination against a people who were a defenseless, Christian minority. The Turkish government's subsequent denial became a further manifestation of such radical asymmetry in which a large, strategically important, nation-state uses all of its political and military means—including blackmail, coercion and cajoling—to get third parties to cooperate with it in delegitimizing the history of the Armenian Genocide. The goal is to absolve Turkey of responsibility for the events of 1915 and to undermine its moral definition. The main power that the Armenians of the Diaspora have is the truth of the ever-growing discourse about the history of 1915. (Yes, there are Diasporan lobbies and money, but this seems rather small potatoes compared to the Turkish state's massive efforts and its apparatus).

This asymmetry is also a factor in the dialogue about nationalism: Which culture's nationalism is worse and was more responsible for the problems leading to the Genocide, and which nationalism is now worse in resolving the pursuit of justice following the Genocide. Having come to this entire issue through the discourse of peace studies and human rights (I am not an Armenologist, a Middle East studies area scholar), I have little affinity with nationalist projects or modalities of any kind and from any culture. But it seems clear from having studied this history that, for the most part, dangerous Armenian expressions of nationalism have been reactive to Turkish power and its abuses. Whether Armenians were trying to dig out from under their infidel status as Christians in the Ottoman Empire, or were resisting massacre and deportation when possible during the Genocide, or reacting with anger and political activism in the face of Turkish government campaigns of denial, Armenians often felt and feel trapped in a syndrome of reactive-ness, because of the inherent asymmetry of power between the two cul-

tures. Not to acknowledge this is to de-contextualize history.

The Turkish government continues its abuse of power in its multi-million dollar denial campaign. How would it look if today the German government were going around the world blaming the Jews for what happened to them during World War II, or the Cambodian government were blaming the victims of Pol Pot's genocide for what happened to them? This abuse of state power for the purpose of inflicting on the third parties around the world a false narrative about the events of 1915 leaves Armenians with a sense of moral revulsion and it adds to their trauma. The Turkish state appears to many as desperate in seeking to suppress the reality of its past, and at costs that are dear to its own future. (I, for one, would like not to spend the rest of my life dealing with the mess of Turkish denial. I would like to be able to play golf, and play golf with Halil Berktaç).

Most Armenians—and I must say many, many others in the media, in politics, in intellectual life—are deeply troubled and even shocked by the Turkish state's present aggressive campaign of denial. In fact, what Turkey is now doing in Washington in its effort to stop a non-binding Congressional resolution commemorating the Armenian Genocide evokes Orwellian comedy and absurd theater. But it is not farce. It is tragedy, and tragedy for both cultures in different ways. Congressmen have told me that in their several decades on Capitol Hill they have never seen a foreign country come to our halls of government to intervene on any issue as Turkey is doing now. And for what purpose? For Armenians, to watch this kind of theater is bewildering, enraging, hard to fathom. Since the Armenian Genocide was carried out with impunity, these small acts of moral and historical acknowledgement have symbolic meaning, but symbolic meaning is at least some meaning for a survivor culture that has been robbed of a great deal more.

So this situation of asymmetrical power has resulted in a serious kind of trauma—that often misunderstood concept—that I hope Turkish people will come to accept. Armenians have been deeply traumatized by their history under Turkish rule and now by the denialist extremism of the Turkish state in the long aftermath of 1915. Let me say clearly that I am in no way an apologist for Armenian acts of wanton violence such as the killings of Turkish diplomats in the 1970s. These kinds of distorted manifestations of trauma have no place in conflict resolution and are destructive to all. Nor am I affirming anything like a cult of victimization, for such states are the result of trauma that has become one-dimensional and can find no creative way to move forward and heal. And, Armenians must always be seeking ways to heal and move forward, and not get stuck in the rut of their rage or rigidity.

This traumatic state is the result of being bludgeoned again and again by Turkish power. Armenians have had to work hard to repair themselves and make new worlds after everything was destroyed in 1915—a whole civilization, a homeland and millions of lives. This is not a history that individuals get over easily, and especially when the perpetrator's legacy continues to blame the victims and falsify the narrative. This creates a morally unacceptable situation that can produce a condition of moral chaos which Armenians are always struggling to stave off by insisting on the truth of history.

One would hope that as we get to know each other, Turks will not retort to Armenians by claiming that Turkish trauma is worse than Armenian trauma. In the particular context of 1915, with an understanding of power, this strikes me as unethical and inappropriate. Just as Germans don't equate their sufferings during WWII with the sufferings of the Jews during the Holocaust. Some space must be afforded with re-

spect. Conversely, Armenians need to listen to Turks talk about their issues, their anxieties, their traumas, their different worldviews.

As I look back at the past decade, I note many changes, and among them, the presence of Turkish friends and colleagues. Where once there was a black hole of abstraction about Turkey for many of us, now there is a more visible and complex world. In the past decade, Turkish intellectuals and others have made great inroads that are now visible to us and have given us a deeper understanding of Turkey as a place of many layers and nuances, a place not simply defined by ultra-nationalism and "Deep State" forces. Armenians need to embrace the new sense of complexity they have given us—of our shared history, of our shared humanity, of the understanding that there is no future in denying the past. Our Turkish friends are vital to our sense of a future and a hope for healing.

It's important for Armenians to accept that the Armenian Genocide is not only an Armenian issue; the discourse should be de-ethnicized as much as possible. The idea that this is a debate between two cultures is wrong and ahistorical. It is not "Armenians say" and then "Turks say." Here, there is an important place for the international scholarly community and I would also point to the community of genocide scholars. The first person to use the term genocide to define what happened to the Armenians was Raphael Lemkin (he used it on January 31, 1949, on American TV). In some ways, scholars of genocide can shed light on things that scholars who are part of national discourses or area studies can't. Rather than defending or rejecting a particular national narrative, scholars of genocide are able to see the anatomy of such events in a comparative context across a global expanse. They are able to show us that the Armenian Genocide is part of a human history that involves many perpetrators and many victims. Turkey is not to be singled out, nor is it alone. Just look at American history and its genocidal acts against Native Americans and African Americans.

It seems as if there has never been a more open moment for bonds to be forged between Turks and Armenians on the issue that haunts both their cultures. Hrant Dink was concerned that pressure on Turkey from the outside world would backfire or endanger the lives of people inside Turkey, and his perspective I respect deeply; he paid the highest price for it. And yet, while his fears were and are a genuine response to the effect of mechanisms of terror and repression inside Turkey, the fact remains, I believe, that the process of education about the history of the Armenian Genocide is an inexorable force, a ground zero of intellectual freedom and discourse. It can't be stopped, or controlled, by any entity. It is part of knowledge. We cannot allow the accepted history of the Armenian Genocide to be falsified by the blackmail and threats of the Turkish state.

In this new era, Armenians, I hope, will find ways of joining hands with their new Turkish colleagues and friends to work for change in whatever ways—creative ways and pragmatic ways, not rigid, ideological or romantic. Armenians in both the Diaspora and in the Republic must divest themselves of stereotypes and essentialist notions about Turks, and open themselves to the complexity of Turkish society. There are new openings in this landscape and there are new pitfalls and fears. There is anger, frustration and paranoia among Armenians. There are threats of violence from the new wave of Turkish ultranationalists; and there are many people inside Turkey asking for broad, democratic change, so that religious and ethnic minorities can achieve equality, and intellectual freedom and free speech can be realized. Only last week more than a

A Genocide, Three Constituencies, Thoughts for the Future (Part I)

BY HALIL BERKTAY

Talk given at the Armenians and the Left Symposium on March 31.¹

Thank you for inviting me to this special occasion. Over the past seven or eight years, I have become accustomed to talking about (various aspects of) the Armenian question mostly in Turkey, to Turkish audiences. Of course, there have also been some international conferences.

Notable in this regard was the first-ever Turkish-Armenian historians' workshop in spring 2000 in Chicago, organized by professors Muge Gocek and Ron Grigor Suny, which will probably come to be assessed in future histories as a crucial turning point. About a year later, in spring 2001, there was another conference in Muhlheim, which in contrast was marred by too much shouting and yay- or nay-saying (not surprising, perhaps, given that the audience was tensely polarized between a German-Turkish half and a German-Armenian Diaspora half). Over October 28-30, 2004, there was a conference in Venice organized by professor (Father) Levon Boghos Zekiyian, as well as an October 2005 NATO Rose-Roth Seminar in Yerevan. But apart from these, I cannot really say that I have had that much contact with Armenian (or Armenian Diasporan) audiences.

Now in the U.S. over the last two months or more, however, all that has been changing rather quickly, both by force of location and the tragic events enveloping us. While I was teaching for a month at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, first there was, there had to be, a major tribute meeting for Hrant Dink; and then there was also an evening that Murat Belge and I spent talking to and with an audience from the Armenian community of Detroit and its suburbs. Here, now, is this one-day symposium, which again I feel privileged to be a part of—though not for the purposes of a nebulous or ill-defined notion of “dialogue.” For example, in the two presentations by Henry Theriault and Peter Balakian, my perception is that there have been too many different concepts of “dialogue” floating around. Thus, so-called “dialogue” with Turkey or Turkish officialdom has been mentioned, and reference has been made to the ill-born, state-stacked, and therefore unsurprisingly abortive TARC as one of its second-track channels or avenues. All these are vertically embedded in, and a reflection of, institutionalized power relations. And therefore what they make out to be “dialogue” is actually bargaining in the narrow marketplace or diplomacy sense, for which I have no taste whatsoever.² On the other hand, there can also be genuine multi-lateral conversations aimed at insuring an autonomous efflorescence of information flow, opening more and more space for mutual un-learning and re-learning processes, and ultimately changing both “our” and “their” mentalities, between Turkish and Armenian civil society elements, groups, leaderships or individuals. As far as I am concerned, it is only this kind of lateral activity which really merits being addressed as dialogue.

A Habitus of the Left

This is especially so, I would submit, at a conference under the broad title of “Armenians and the Left,” where I might have preferred to take part not as a dialogue-bringer but as a comrade, if only history had been otherwise. I have various reasons for saying this, not the least being that I feel I have belonged to the Left, and not just a Turkish Left but a more international Left, from time immemorial. Well, not really from time immemorial, of course, but from my childhood onward, having been born into a rare Turkish Communist family and household (and a very intellectual one at that), since my father (Erdogan Berkday) was a

member of the old clandestine Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) that was the subject of a massive crackdown in 1951-52, at the height of the Korea-related tidal wave of McCarthyism that then hit Turkey. So inevitably, I grew up with memories of his being taken away when I was four, and being away for a long time, first in prison and then in “internal exile,” eventually returning with a more finely-lined face, emerging into the limelight (though all too briefly) as a leading public intellectual in the 1960s. Meanwhile, I myself was growing up, through adolescence to youth and young adulthood, in this dense atmosphere where one talked all the time of the French and Russian revolutions, and of the Soviet Union, and the International Communist Movement, and of China, and Cuba, and new Third World struggles—and precisely as part of that revolutionist culture, also of non-Marxist, non-Communist revolutions and revolutionaries, past and present, including most emphatically national-revolutionaries of an entire historical period when nationalism was (or was regarded as) a revolutionary ideology in close affinity with both liberal democracy and socialism, and was therefore contraposing itself to an entire generation of oppressive, defunct (Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman) empires.

This was why and how I became devoted to Chopin (persecuted by the Tsarist police), and not just for his Nocturnes but also for his *Etude Revolutionnaire*; and also to Byron not just for his ineffable love poetry but also for the heroic spirit which took him to fight and die at Missolonghi in the ranks of the Greek Revolution (not because he was “anti-Turkish,” as today Turkish nationalism makes him out to be, but because he was against “Ottoman despotism” as a Romantic revolutionary democrat.) Now this is pretty much what I am likely to have thought of the ARF or the Dashnaksoutian, too, if I had known of it (or them) in those days when I was still in my mid-teens, though I did not, because—and here is the point—although my household was very unusual for Turkey in the 1950s and 60s (imbued with this “proletarian internationalism” also fed by Enlightenment ideals, as well as this radical Left dislike of Turkish hard-nationalists, which led us to cherish a liberated, conscientious refusal to regard the Greeks and other Balkan peoples or indeed the Armenians as “the enemies of the Turks”), nevertheless, despite all these ethical attitudes and positions:

1) nationalism as such, as an ideology, was hardly ever discussed, dissected, criticized;

2) in particular, not much was ever said about all those “national disputes” attending the breakup of empire, which national-revolutionaries of different countries had once fought over, and which continued to pit, now, various CPs against one another, other than that those bloody, disgraceful incidents could all be put down to imperialist, colonialist “divide and rule” conspiracies against our “good peoples”;

3) even more specifically, nothing was said of the Armenian Genocide, which of course was the greatest horror of all.³

This probably explains why, while growing up as an enlightened internationalist, and also as part of an isolated, persecuted, marginalized milieu, thereby coming to sympathize with other cases of marginalization, exclusion or persecution, I had no sense of the Armenian national-revolutionaries of the early 20th century, because it was not part of the Left intellectualism and discourse that had become my habitus.

On top of this there came my own Left activism, first here in the U.S. in the context of the civil rights and the anti-war movements of the 1960s (when I became part of a circle that eventually initiated the founding of the Yale chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society), and then back in Turkey, where my reaction to the defeat of both the Paris and Prague Springs of 1968

led further and further away from a libertarian spirit into a more and more rigid and dogmatic utopian platform. In brief, out of an extreme quest for purity, for a fundamentalist Marxism supposedly untainted by any human frailty or impurity, I became and remained a Maoist for two decades, going through all the travails of an entire Turkish generation under the two successive military coups of March 12, 1971 and September 12, 1980, when tens of thousands went through cycles of arrest, torture and harsh conditions of imprisonment. The mid- or late-80s, however, became a time of more seriously critical self-questioning. It was then that, taking my distances vis-à-vis any espousal, however “scientifically” theorized, of a violent revolution or of revolutionary violence, I sought to re-commit myself, now as a critical democrat and an independent Left-intellectual, to a less directly power-oriented and more cultural-educational vision of social change. In the wake of the collapse of the USSR and Yugoslavia, and the emergence of a new generation of national(ist) bloodshed in the Balkans and in the Caucasus, as well as in south-eastern Turkey (not to speak of Africa or elsewhere in what used to be called the Third World), I also started moving to a much deeper and comprehensive critical engagement with nationalism, and therefore also to a new universalism of Turkish, Greek, Balkan, Armenian and other scholars or intellectuals, all of us standing in opposition to “our own” nationalism, nationalist education, mythologies, textbooks and conflict-inciting media—or simply, in W. H. Auden's words, to all the various sorts of “elderly rubbish that dictators talk / to an apathetic grave.”

Nevertheless, while all this has been happening, and my notions and many others' notions of future utopias and “long-distance” aims and objectives have all been changing, out of my four decades or so on the Left, I have still retained, I think, certain notions of strategy and tactics, and building alliances or even united fronts in pursuit of admittedly different and much more peaceful, much more democratic goals. So it is with this kind of background, experience and political culture that I would like to address the two or three big questions of 1) the historical reality of 1915; 2) what to call it; and 3) how to go about getting it recognized today. Before I go further, however, I should like to make a brief statement about one paper in particular that has been given before me. I am against virtually everything that Henry Theriault has said and argued for in his presentation—against his pseudo-philosophical, ahistorical absolutes and essentialisms, against his self-righteous moralizing about an eternal Turkish “dominance” versus an equally eternal Armenian “victimhood,” and also against the frightfully patronizing, condescending “advice” that he has volunteered at various points, such as his remarks about why dissident Turks should quickly move on from debating what to call 1915 to discussing reparations. But I suppose I should be thankful for this sort of discourse and position, since it so usefully represents all that I find problematic about certain Armenian attitudes.

The Historical Reality of 1915

“The 90th anniversary of the expulsion and extermination of the Armenians” (Zum 90. Jahrestag der Vertreibung und Vernichtung der Armenier) was part of the title used for a one-day symposium held in Berlin on April 18, 2005. It was organized by the Heinrich Boll Foundation, and from Turkey it was Hrant Dink, Etyen Mahcupyan and I myself that had been invited and participated. If you look at it, it is a pretty strong statement—“expulsion and extermination”—in itself, is it not? So, does this fit the definition of genocide? And if it does, as a verbal expression or statement does it become weaker or stronger, does it lose force or gather force because the “g-

word” is not present? Is the term “genocide” absolutely necessary, at all times and under all circumstances, for any and all conversations regarding the events of 1915? Does it, in other words, happen to be an absolutely indispensable norm for all such conversations to conform to? Should its absence in the Berlin title be construed as denialism, and therefore a victory for (Turkish) nationalism or a defeat for the cause of historical truth? And if we start thinking always in this way, what are some of the possible consequences?

First things first. Whether we say the “massacring” or “the expulsion and extermination” or “the uprooting and annihilation” of Ottoman-Armenians, or utilize any one of such long descriptions, does this fit the definition of genocide at least as understood by (or in terms of) the 1948 UN Convention? My answer is that it does, and that furthermore, we have to understand why. My understanding of what happened in 1915 comprises the following key elements. During and in the wake of the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the CUP (Unionist or Ittihatci) leadership moved with great haste and alacrity to a new ideological position of regarding the remaining non-Muslim, non-Turkish populations of the Empire as intrinsically suspect. Already in 1913-14, this led to an initial ethnic cleansing of a large Greek population, estimated at around 100,000 to 150,000, from parts of Thrace and western Anatolia—an expulsion achieved through methods of bullying and intimidation (short of outright bloodshed) that in retrospect appears very much like an unarmed dress rehearsal for what would happen in 1915. In between, the outbreak of World War I and various events on the Eastern front led to a further targeting of Armenians as unreliable and potentially treacherous. The war also put even greater power in the hands of the military triumvirate of Enver, Talaat and Cemal, rendering their dictatorship even less accountable both to the Ottoman parliament and to world public opinion, simultaneously isolating Ottoman-Armenians from Europe and the Great Powers. Under these circumstances, the Unionist leadership got parliament to pass a law legalizing tehcir or forced (internal) deportation and re-settlement. On that basis, when it came to implementation, Talaat Pasha as Interior Minister sent out (and kept sending out) not one but two sets of orders from Istanbul to the provinces. The first set of orders, delivered through normal channels to all governors, sub-governors or military garrison commanders, asked for all Armenians to be immediately rounded up and forcibly moved to pre-set destinations. This had to be done within 48 hours, and inevitably entailed forcing Armenians to leave all their immovable wealth and properties behind, as well as a good deal of their movable wealth (all of which were to be put at the disposal of special government commissions which were expected to channel this new wealth into the war effort). Hence among other things, this set of orders entailed not just a deracination but also a massive, drastic and irreversible expropriation of virtually the entire Ottoman-Armenian community, effectively destroying its conditions of existence. Furthermore, let me emphasize that no distinctions were made between, for example, loyal and law-abiding citizens (in the eyes of the state) and those involved in or suspected of criminal activities; no evidence was sought and given of Dashnak or Hnchak or other sympathies or affiliations. In other words, both the law and this first set of executive orders relative to its implementation targeted (all) Armenians for no other reason than that they were Armenians. In themselves, the orders could be construed as formally legal (in the sense of being based at least partially on a previous act of legislation), but were certainly not lawful (in the sense of conforming to any “spirit of the laws” as commonly understood since Montesquieu, or in other words to the basic

requirements of a state of law). In effect, what they did was to remove the Ottoman-Armenian population from protection by and under that state of law.⁴ Just this much, therefore, is roughly comparable to all the anti-Jewish persecution unchained by the Nazis from 1933 to around 1941-42, that is to say prior to the launching of the Final Solution. Hence, too, just this much is enough to satisfy Article C of the current UN definition, which has to do with “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”—even if additional killings had not been involved.

But actually, such acts of mass murder were also involved, and systematically and on an enormous scale; for Talaat, the Nietzschean amoral “evil genius” of the Unionist leadership, did not rest content with just this first set of orders, horrible as they were. In addition to his official Interior Ministry headquarters, he also set up a second and parallel “deep state” command center in his own apartment, replete with telephones and telegraphs, which he started using to control his Special Organization (literally *Teskilat-y Mahsusa*, henceforth TM) field operatives. This Special Organization was the secret armed wing of the CUP, thus a forerunner of many such “armed wings” that would become familiar in the course of the 20th century, standing to the party in roughly the same relationship as the IRA to Sinn Fein, or for that matter the SA’s to NASDAP—though Hitler’s Brown Shirts were much more numerous and public, while the Special Organization was narrow, elite and covert, comprising hard-bitten secret agents receiving their orders only from Enver and Talaat, and cloaked in totally non-accountable anonymity. Ahead of the late April roundups that marked the beginning of the end, Talaat had already sent some of his top TM men into the region, and as convoys of uprooted and destitute Armenian deportees began to move into central, eastern and south-eastern Anatolia, the latter came under attack from death squads of indeterminate mixture as well as tribal groups that had themselves been forced out of the Caucasus by the Tsarist expansion southward, and had therefore acquired a vindictive hatred for all things Christian, Armenian, or otherwise smacking of complicity with Russia. Such primary massacres (in the sense of being directly masterminded by the state⁵) would then seem to have conveyed to the general public the message that the Armenians were “fair game,” as a result of which a more general “shooting season” appears to have opened; in an extreme situation of the sort that brings out the best and the worst in humanity, such worst elements of the local population, too, came forth in a series of secondary massacres to claim their share.⁶ On long marches in the desert or over other difficult terrain, the cold and the heat, as well as hunger, thirst, lack of sanitation and the resulting outbursts of typhus or dysentery also took their toll⁷, as well as sheer brutalization at the hands of the gendarmes that were ostensibly there to guard and protect them. In the end, huge numbers died or were killed, frequently right in front of their parents or children, or their siblings, or other beloveds.

How many? No more than 250 to 400,000, as official or semi-official Turkish authors have claimed? Around 600,000 (or perhaps 800,000), as given by most 20th century editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*? As many as 1 or even 1.5 million, to which ceiling Armenian statements on the subject have been tending to escalate over the last decade? I rather doubt the first and last figures, though that is not so important in itself. What really matters is that an entire people were subjected to sudden, drastic and comprehensive ethnic cleansing, most of which was compressed into a single year, and which, unfortunately, was rather comprehensively successful, so that basically the large and significant Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire came to an end.⁸

Secondly, there is the question of intent. “Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group...” goes the 1948 definition

(italics mine). A lot of denialist time and energy is invested on just this point, trying to demonstrate that there was no such intent with regard to the Armenians.⁹ It is at this point, too, that the Ottoman archives are brought in. On a very general level, what this reflects is the rather ethnocentric belief that the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is to be found only in the Ottoman archives—and that by implication, all else, anywhere else in the world, must be unreliable. More specifically, it is thereby argued that if there was any such intent of partial or total group destruction, it must be embodied in written directives; conversely, if we cannot find any such statement of purpose in the archives, the case for genocide must be thrown out. But of course, even the most powerful dictators hardly ever commit such things to paper, which is why we do not have written orders for the Holocaust either. Fortunately, such evil discretion notwithstanding, intent also becomes something deducible from the overall context and march of events, and from the total picture—and it is here that the targeting of all Armenians qua Armenians becomes its own proof. Last but not least, there is the question of ideological motivation. Not only politicians and journalists, but even some respectable scholars in Turkey have carelessly repeated clichés to the effect that given the late-developing nature of Turkish nationalism, there can have been no such nationalist ethnic cleansing logic behind the 1915 deportations and massacres.¹⁰ What this overlooks is, yes, the late but also the extraordinarily rapid development of Turkish nationalism under the impact of Italy’s invasion of Tripoli in 1911 and then the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Recent research by both Taner Akcam and Fuat Dundar clearly demonstrates the following two points: 1) the CUP leadership, and Talaat in particular, had actually come up with a new policy for the Turkification of Anatolia; 2) it was in this context that over 1913-15, the Armenians (along with the Greeks and others) were coming to be eyed and targeted as a suspect population. It is further supported by new light shed (notably by Sukru Hanioglu) on the increasingly strident Social Darwinistic strain in Young Turk thought. It is also supported by large numbers of memoirs, reminiscences or recollections dating from the 1920s and 30s—when, as I shall later note, denialist ideology did not yet exist, and everybody knew and could be unselfconsciously frank about what had happened. It is also supported by my own ongoing research into Turkish literature of the period, where one can find ample evidence of the shaping of an anxious and fearful, and therefore also vindictively murderous nationalism, replete with all the Social Darwinistic justifications for its own malevolence.

Hence, thirdly, the horrors of 1915 also fit into a broader historical pattern. At the end of the day, I am not a lawyer but a historian. And for historians, frequently it is not an event by and in itself, but the overall context, if any, that that event can be fitted into, and from which it might perhaps derive a further meaning, that becomes important. Descartes and Newton both argued, let us remember, that science should strive to achieve a “complete” explanation of any given phenomenon, or at least as complete as possible. In terms of modern European history, 1915 fits into a pattern of nationalist, Social Darwinistically fed ideologies of mobilization and violence, and accompanying agendas of national purification and ethnic cleansing, extending increasingly harshly from the late 19th century to the 1942-45 Holocaust. With or without the extraneous help of Hitler’s apocryphical words (“Who remembers the Armenians?”), 1915 is indeed such a crucial link in this chain of expansion and escalation that, in its absence, the Holocaust, too, would be much more difficult to understand. In terms of my historical sensibilities and holistic aesthetics, this, too, is crucial.

So then, this was the genocide, and why it was genocide. The next question is what to do about it.

(Part II will appear in the Weekly in May.)

Criminalizing the Victim

By GEORGE AGHJAYAN

Over the past two years, I have been writing about the reasons Armenians should—no, must—be angry. The reasons are many: the malicious Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC) and the dismissal of any notion of reparations for the Armenian Genocide are just two of the most obvious.

The current phase in the assault on Armenian rights began with the near vote in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000 on an Armenian Genocide resolution. Even though the vote did not take place, it was obvious to all that the Armenian Genocide was accepted as historical fact. The debate centered on Turkey as a strategic ally of the United States, not whether the Genocide had happened. Initiatives around the globe since have only confirmed this view.

Those that worked so long and hard against any acknowledgement of the Genocide were desperate for a new ap-

proach. Thus, TARC was born.

While the unrelenting march towards justice for the Armenian Genocide has continued, so also have attempts to demoralize the Armenian community. In the past year, there have been a number of developments that twist the roles of victim and perpetrator.

First, the Turkish government has proposed an historical commission to “find out once and for all what really happened, and how it took place.” This concept has gained traction in some circles. Some liberal Turkish historians have suggested this proposal was a departure from the standard hard line for the Turkish government and, thus, offered a possible opportunity that Armenians should not dismiss as out of hand.

In response, Armenians have pointed out that contrary to being a move forward, it is actually a retreat from the current state of scholarship on the Armenian Genocide. The proposal is seen as yet another deflection by the Turkish government which will mire the discussion in the quicksand of an endless study that cannot possibly build consensus.

Some are quick to label Armenians as fanatics when they resist participating in events sponsored by deniers who have not distanced themselves from the denial.

ample. Again, the victim is being criminalized.

Free speech does not require us to supply a forum for deniers, nor does it require us to participate in dialogue with deniers. Deniers have the means to create their own venues; we all have the right to boycott. That is equally a measure of freedom and democracy, not of fanaticism (I would argue it is a measure of our sanity).

Finally, the next stage of Hai Tahd requires the democratization of Turkey and, thus, it is posited that the Armenian Genocide must be approached from that perspective. The corollary to this thesis is that a democratic Turkey will necessarily lead to security for Armenia.

While democracy leads to increased security and prosperity for a country and its citizens, it does not necessarily lead to security for its neighbors.

The truth is that varied players with very different agendas use the Armenian Genocide as a tool. The United States and Israel, as well as other countries, have used the Armenian Genocide as a weapon to extort concessions from Turkey. Within Turkey, there are agents that use the Genocide as a tool for increasing their own freedoms and democracy in general, while others use it as a tool to foster ultra-nationalist prejudice. Some in Turkey are starting to suggest that acknowledgement by the U.S. would free Turkey from the extortion without any negative consequences. Even within the Armenian community there are those that use the Armenian Genocide as a means to increase their own influence and personal agenda.

Increasingly, Turkish Armenian dialogue is being framed solely from the agenda of Turkey and the Turkish people without any consideration for the victims and their descendants. The victims are instead being criminalized, and that is the final insult to us all.

Post-Genocide Imperial Domination

BY HENRY THERIAULT

As a genocide recedes into history, past the point at which remembrance is mainly the labor of survivors, victim group members become more distant from—and even distance themselves from—the lived reality of that genocide. This is not because the impact of a genocide lessens in time; quite the contrary, the magnitude of its total destructive consequences compounds with each passing day that the original devastation remains unrepaired (at least to the extent that some reparation is possible), as initial losses of what would have been the bases of the victim group's future resource increases, political security, cultural and identity stability and other social, political, cultural, and economic gains as well as individual familial, economic, and other aspects of well-being, mean losses of all those gains. I am also not referring to emotions of sympathy or even empathy felt at reading or hearing of the suffering of genocide victims. I am referring instead to the emotional connectedness to the experience of genocide itself. Of course, those who did not directly experience a genocide can never feel and should never assume to feel what its immediate victims felt, but that does not mean that later generations can have no experience of the legacy of a genocide, of its impact—indeed, of the objective results of the genocide.

Imperial Domination, Not Mutual Negotiation

What do I mean? The most obvious example is the form of renewed assault against the victim group through denial of the genocide in question. Through the experience of denial—merely hearing or reading it, but even more so in struggling against it, being publicly attacked by deniers, etc.—those in the victim group are targeted by aggressors acting out of the same attitudes, ideologies, and agendas that motivated the genocide itself. (As an aside, it is for this reason that deniers' attacks on Turks who recognize the Armenian Genocide—whether with this term or some euphemism—and their resulting suffering should never be equated with what Armenians who recognize the Genocide experience. Such Turks might be victimized by aggression from other Turks, but they do not experience reassertion of the genocide perpetrator-victim relationship itself. They remain in the dominant position, even if within that position they are marginalized.) Israel Charny has offered the premiere analysis of the deep nature of denial along these lines.

But too great a focus on the extremism of deniers obscures the complexity of the impact of the Armenian Genocide on contemporary Armenian-Turkish relations and other—more subtle—forms of domination. As I argue in "Dehumanization or Hyper-Domination: A Philosophical Challenge to the Reigning Model of Genocide," forthcoming in *The Armenian Genocide: Cultural and Ethical Legacies* (edited by Richard G. Hovannisian and to be published by Transaction Press), underlying and driving the Armenian Genocide was a pre-existing imperial domination structure and normalized assumption of Ottoman Turkish/Muslim superiority over Armenians and other second-class subjects. This dominance relation was initially determined by the fact that Turks conquered Armenians (and the other groups, though I will focus here on Armenians, as my title suggests). It was made an enduring societal fact because the relation of imperial conquest was institutionalized in the millet system, complete with not only legal discrimination and other disadvantaging of Armenians, but associated violence against Armenians that continually extended the concrete experience of the initial conquest, replaying it in an almost ritualized manner as if to reassure the dominant Turks and other Muslims and to reemphasize for Armenians and other victims that the domination would

remain in effect.

The Armenian Genocide pushed this relation to its ultimate level. As I argue in "Dehumanization or Hyper-Domination," the determining force driving the Genocide was rejection of Armenian equality with Turks put into at least nominal and thus conceptual effect with the 1908 revolution and establishment of a liberal constitution for the Ottoman Empire. The Genocide was a means of maintaining the old form of domination in a new context that made a static hierarchy such as the millet system impossible. The strength of the imposition of dominance through the Genocide shows how fundamental this drive to domination was.

In my paper at the June 2005 6th Biennial Conference of the Association of Genocide Scholars as well as my presentation at the March 31, 2007, Armenians and the Left (AATL) panel on Armenian-Turkish dialogue, I extended this discussion to the post-Genocide era. My central point was that the hyper-domination of the Armenian Genocide did not end with the cessation of the killing, but rather established the post-Genocidal relation between Turks and Armenians as an extreme dominance hierarchy, the most obvious manifestations of which we can see in aggressive denialism and other anti-Armenian attitudes pervasive in Turkey, and even violence such as the assassination of Hrant Dink. But of course the broader, material forms of that dominance are its foundation, from the Turkish state's much great military strength, political security (including viability as a state), and economic power, to the stability of Turkish identity based in a strong state compared to the on-going erosion of Armenian identity due to the destructive effects of the Genocide in many aspects (cultural destruction, population dispersion, family destruction, etc.), and much more. This domination hierarchy conditions all aspects of the general Armenian-Turkish relationship, and yet in none of the various "dialogue" efforts of recent years has this been acknowledged. Quasi-governmental efforts such as TARC, formal academic exercises such as the University of Michigan Armenian and Turkish scholars conferences, and even informal email lists have operated as negotiative exchanges between "Armenians" and "Turks" treated as equivalent parties, parties with equal power, rights, history (even a "shared history," as if their roles in that history were similar), etc. Thus, by their very structures, these efforts have failed to engage the central feature of the general Armenian-Turkish relationship and cannot make meaningful progress, despite any even profound personal and academic changes that have occurred.

My further point in my AATL presentation was that the dominance relation has been normalized in the psychology of not only traditional elements of Turkish society (the less educated, the incorrigibly chauvinist, the propagandized) that are disparaged by progressive-minded Turks, but also progressive Turks themselves. I discussed the various ways this plays out. Three important examples from my AATL remarks are:

(1) Progressives often treat the Armenian Genocide instrumentally, as a tool for transforming Turkish society toward liberal democracy and progressive openness. Unfortunately, the meaning of the Genocide for Armenians drops out of consideration, and the resolution of the Genocide issue for Turks becomes democratization of Turkey. Progressive Turks thus take control of the Genocide issue itself, which becomes one more piece of appropriated property. Often, such progressives disparage—as "extremism," "nationalism," and other four-letter words in left circles—efforts by the "Armenian Diaspora" to retain some kind of priority in discussions of the Genocide and to keep the focus on issues of concern to the victim

group. The Armenian Genocide becomes an instrument for Turkish democratization along the lines of the agenda of a particular segment of the Turkish elite, rather than the crisis in the Turkish-Armenian (domination) relation it truly is. At best, "Turkish democratization" is presented as the ultimate solution of the Armenian Genocide that will resolve all outstanding issues for Armenians, too. While it could, of course, improve the situation of Armenians in Turkey, Turkish democratization is not at all inconsistent with anti-Armenianism. Democratization cannot address the attitude and material realities of imperial superiority; only directly engaging this domination of Armenians can. In fact, proper democratization depends on ending this domination, not the other way around. This is quite clear through even a cursory look at US history and, specifically, the compatibility of deep oppression of various groups inside and outside US borders with democracy for the US "majority" throughout the history of the United States.

(2) Progressives often equate Turkish and Armenian "nationalism" as equally retrogressive, misguided and dangerous. There are deep flaws in this approach. First, Armenian "nationalism" must be analyzed on its own terms, with recognition of the historical conditions of oppression and the civil rights struggle that gave rise to it. The effort to resist domination and to strive for basic human rights within an overarching Ottoman structure should not be equated with Turkish extreme and dominational nationalisms that justified and drove the destruction of Armenian "others" in an effort to nationalize the Ottoman Empire and have subsequently motivated an aggressive, intolerant, imperialist political outlook and acts. To equate the two nationalisms by counter-factually assuming that all Armenian nationalisms are like this as well and would do the same thing as standard Turkish nationalism given the chance despite the fact that Armenians have *not* committed a genocide, engaged in a history of imperial conquest, etc., is, in essence, to hold Armenian nationalisms accountable for the sins of Turkish nationalisms. Even to the extent that some post-Genocide Armenian nationalisms have come to take on territorial claims for land depopulated of Armenians through the Genocide is not the same as Turkish imperial/expansionist territorial desires, but it is often presented as such.

(3) Progressive Turks often choose not to label the 1915 violence against Armenians "genocide." They employ various rationales for this, such as the view that the word was not coined until years after the Armenian Genocide occurred—which of course neglects the fact that Raphael Lemkin coined the term "genocide" specifically to refer to a set of events that included very centrally the Armenian Genocide and applied it to the Armenian Genocide himself. Most prevalent is the view that using the term, even if proper, will just produce a defensive reaction by Turks that will prevent them from engaging the Armenian Genocide issue at all. Thus, because some Turks might get upset, we must not label the Armenian Genocide by the proper, correct, appropriate term. There are two obvious problems with this position. First, if the only way most Turks today will take seriously the history of genocide against Armenians is if it is presented as something less serious than it was/is, then will those Turks who are thus comfortable enough to talk about the "events of 1915" actually be engaging the Genocide at all? Indeed, if Armenians (and progressive Turks) have to worry about upsetting and even provoking a violent reaction by Turks by raising the Armenian Genocide issue in its proper form, then does this not signal the fact that there is a deep underlying refusal to accept the reality of the Armenian Genocide and to do the serious work of transforming contemporary Turkish society away from the

genocidal anti-Armenianism that has been perpetuated unchallenged for 92 years? To use the terms of Kibibi Tyeimba of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America, to let the "sleeping dog" of genocidal anti-Armenianism lie undisturbed and thus unchallenged means that it will remain present as a foundational element of contemporary and future Turkish culture and politics. Until the majority of Turks today can confront the harsh reality of the Armenian Genocide in its true form and full implications for Turks today, then what sense does it make to speak of progress in Armenian-Turkish relations?

Second, this sacrifice of the proper term reveals a subtle attitude on the part of progressives who embrace this approach. They are clearly much more concerned about upsetting Turks who possess an anti-Armenian attitude and who lack the moral courage to confront history as it truly was than they are about harming Armenians by yet again downplaying the reality of the Armenian Genocide. Indeed, no Turk that I am aware of who has adopted this strategy has even acknowledged the moral tension that this approach creates, signaling just how absent Armenian well-being is in their consideration of the Armenian Genocide.

I ended my remarks with recognition of the difficulties faced by progressive Turks who engage the Armenian Genocide in a context of hostility and repression, inside and outside of Turkey. Their efforts in this context should be applauded. At the same time, I cautioned against mistaking a "situational" appraisal of their views for an objective one. Relative to their situation, positions about not using the term "genocide" in reference to the Armenian Genocide, a focus on Turkish democratization, etc., are understandable. But that does not make such views objectively right, and it is against objective standards of morality that we must judge how anyone engages the Armenian Genocide. One could add that, relative to the heinous anti-Armenianism of deniers and Turkish imperialists, these progressives are quite laudable. But, being better than morally bad deniers does not automatically qualify one for superior moral status—despite the frequent standing ovations by appreciative Armenians. After genocide and so many years of denial, the very framework through which most Turks and Armenians view the "Armenian Question" is deeply skewed, and proper engagement of the Armenian Genocide requires first a critical analysis of this skewing and establishment of a balanced framework that has not been determined by denialism. So long as many Turks—and Armenians—see the issue through the skewed framework, genuine progress on it is difficult if not impossible. Only by directly confronting the domination relation and correcting through a variety of reparative measures for the victims and a deep social transformation away from genocidal imperial domination on the part of the perpetrator can the domination relation be overcome.

My views are certainly not in the mainstream of the general literature on "truth and reconciliation" after mass human rights violations such as genocides, and have been almost entirely absent from at least the academic discourse on the Armenian Genocide. In fact, I am not aware of any approach to the post-Genocide relation between Turks and Armenians that characterized it as a domination relation of Turks over Armenians marked by a material and conceptual power imbalance, prior to my introduction of this analysis in my June 2005 IAGS paper (final title, "Toward a New Conceptual Framework for Resolution: The Necessity of Recognizing the Perpetrator-Victim Dominance Relation in the Aftermath of Genocide"). But, that does not mean that the view can be dismissed as entirely unworthy of consideration. On the contrary, some Armenians and others have recognized this as a productive intervention in the contemporary

discourse on the Armenian Genocide. Peter Balakian, for instance, who attended my 2005 IAGS paper, appears to approve of the core of my analysis of the Turkish-Armenian dominance/power relation, as evidenced by his own AATL presentation, which drew on my 2005 IAGS analysis of the post-genocide dominance/power relation of perpetrator group over surviving victim group.

A Case Study of Imperial Domination

Given this, what happened in the third presentation of the March 31 panel was fascinating. Halil Berktaý, the final panelist to whom I showed respect in my remarks and after, rejected my presentation not through a critique of the specific points I made, but through personal attack. He dismissed my presentation as “patronizing” as well as guilty of a number of vague academic sins, such as being “reductive,” “ethically absolutist,” and more. My remarks were, according to him, “comprehensively wrong”—apparently so obviously so that they warranted no actual refutation.

Though the tone of Berktaý’s comments was rude and hostile, this would have been a minor issue had their content been meaningful academic discourse, that is, supported by a specific critique of at least some of the points I had made, stating precisely how I had been “reductive,” “ethically absolutist,” etc., or why my “reduction” and “ethical absolutism” was actually incorrect in the context. As for the last charge, it is significant that I included a full section (see above) discussing the ethical complexities of any appraisal of Turkish engagements with the Armenian Genocide. If my remarks manifested an objectivist view of ethical issues regarding genocide, I certainly did not take on this view naively—and I certainly invite concrete debate about the ethical theory I advanced and the application I made.

Perhaps it is unfair to say that Berktaý never made a concrete criticism of my views. In his talk, he stated that the use of the term “genocide” had become an obsession of the “Armenian Diaspora” (did he mean all Diasporan Armenians? did he assume we somehow all think the same on this or any other issue?) to the point of obscuring the reality that the term was supposed to refer to. He seems to have meant that, by using the term as a kind of buzzword or shorthand, Armenians had come to see the Genocide as a simple historical event without internal complexity. Presumably this meant not recognizing the currents and counter-currents in Turkish society and politics leading up to the Genocide and other such things. Apparently, he was unaware of my and many others’ repeated discussion of this complexity, but this is not the main problem here. During the brief “question and answer” session, he added that use of the term “genocide” caused students and others to focus on an overall unified event, instead of seeing the details of a complex process. I pointed out that his approach assumed that using the term “genocide” to recognize that in fact a general event had occurred and at the same time recognizing and exploring the complex, multi-directional elements in the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Genocide were mutually exclusive, but that there was no reason one could not look at the issue on both levels at once. I used the example of a microphone, which we can recognize as a particular object with a particular function and at the same time as a collection of individual atoms. His response was pejorative again, as he stated that “as a philosopher I should know better,” should know that a “genocide cannot be compared to a microphone.” Not only was this a mark of intellectual condescension, implying that I am not a good philosopher and do not understand what any minimally decent philosopher should find obvious, but he never explained why the analogy I drew between parsing a physical object such as a microphone and a historical event such as the Armenian Genocide did not hold in the *relevant* respects. I had, after all, prefaced my comments with a discussion of a philosophical approach to pars-

ing objects in the world (physical and social) that many prominent philosophers such as Hilary Putnam recognize as a perceptual activity that occurs relative to the conceptual frameworks (in the case here, levels of analysis, visible object or atomic) that are employed. I was hardly taking an unprofessional, underdeveloped, or irresponsible philosophical position. Rather than disagreeing with it as part of a productive intellectual exchange, he rejected my legitimacy to state it and thus to participate in such an exchange.

My intent here is not to go through a point-by-point expose of the academic and ethical faults of Berktaý’s remarks as they pertained to my views. To be honest, I cannot do justice with words on a page to the level of disdain he showed me (down to an angry glare after numerous statements in his hour-long talk that he must have felt were particular “zingers” against me, as a number of audience members commented to me after the program). An exhaustive presentation would be viewed as reflecting much more negatively on me than on him. I also do not mean to substitute my analysis of Berktaý’s talk and treatment of me for readers’ own: I encourage all readers to go to www.armeniansandtheleft.com to view the panel presentations themselves, and to form their own conclusions about what transpired. I invite any criticisms and corrections to my analysis as presented here, as part of the on-going discussion of Turkish-Armenian relations and my own educational process on them. To be honest, I would like to be convinced that I have overstated the issues here, in the hope that more progress is being made than my experiences indicate.

But, it seems unlikely that I have overstated. Numerous audience members after the panel and in later communications to me confirmed my understanding of Berktaý’s treatment of me. At one time, it turns out, an audience member had sent a note to one of the panel organizers pointing out to that audience member’s amazement that Berktaý was enacting the precise relation of imperial domination over me as an Armenian that I had detailed—and that no one was saying anything about it. Another (Armenian) audience member even said he/she had to leave the room because he/she could not accept witnessing the degradation of an Armenian in this way as it was allowed to continue.

Why did Berktaý act this way? To be honest, prior to March 31, I knew very little about him, except that he had publicly acknowledged in Turkey that the Armenian Genocide happened and had taken some heat for this. I certainly did not set out in my remarks to insult him, but rather to present an intellectual position on the topic at hand. And I did not insult him any more than Hrant Dink had “insulted Turkishness.” What I did was to point out (1) the real issue at the core of the contemporary Armenian-Turkish relationship, (2) the ethical challenges it poses, and (3) the fact that even many Turkish progressives, however much their strides forward might be appreciated, have not met these challenges. Far from insult, I provided Berktaý an excellent opportunity to engage these ethical challenges and to distinguish himself as a truly progressive force in Turkish-Armenian relations. I provided him tools that he might have used to reflect on certain neglected aspects of the construction of Turkish identity that might have led to a better understanding of it and Turkish relations to Armenians. I did this, as people of color have so often provided the service to whites in the United States, for us as whites to understand ourselves more deeply and better than we could in the absence of a discourse on race and racism. I even highlighted in my own talk how uncomfortable and difficult I knew facing these challenges is for all concerned, Armenians and Turks. I opened the door for him . . .

And he slammed it in my face. Again, why? As that audience member recognized (and as I did but could not say during the panel), Berktaý enacted the very imperial domination I described in my remarks. In his mind, apparently, it is accept-

able to demean Armenians when they do not agree with him, present uncomfortable ethical challenges, and do not cow-tow to progressive Turks. I did not insult him, but did something worse—I acted as his moral and intellectual equal. I asserted my views on a difficult issue and expected them to be taken seriously—views that included a challenge to progressive Turks. I provided a special opportunity—a “golden opportunity”—for Berktaý to show just how far Armenian-Turkish relations had come, by showing respect to an Armenian who had challenged the prevailing sense of their own political accomplishments held by many progressive Turks. I dared to make the challenge, to step out of the place where “good,” agreeable Armenians stay and make Turks, progressive and not, comfortable with their historical relationship to Armenians.

Berktaý’s reaction confirmed just how deeply I had challenged the self-understanding of at least some progressive Turks. He had no substantive response because a true response would have required recognition of the imperial dominance relation that he was participating in and the ways in which it has shaped his and many other progressive Turks—as well as the bulk of Turkish society’s—attitudes toward and concrete treatment of Armenians. Instead of accepting the critique as a responsible scholar and Turkish individual committed to transforming the nature of Turkish attitudes and treatment of Armenians, he reacted with academic aggression and denigrated me publicly. I am not saying that he had to agree with me, but as a Turk claiming to want to build positive relations with Armenians he should have recognized that my views came out of the horrific history of violence and domination of Armenians by Turks, and reflected on them to considered *why* given that history I would raise questions about various aspects of even apparent progress in Armenian-Turkish relations. He should have taken the responsibility to try to convince me, by argument but also by example, that my concerns were unnecessary, however much he recognized them as understandable. Instead, he attacked the cause of the discomfort he suddenly faced when forced to confront these difficult questions.

My challenge violated a sense of imperial superiority and entitlement to decide how he would engage the Armenian Genocide, to determine the bounds of what he would feel about it and what he should do about it. Berktaý displayed a sense of automatic (progressive or otherwise) Turkish legitimacy relative to Armenians, that Turks are always in some sense right or possessed of superior understanding, in an individual manifestation of the imperial dominance relations confirmed, extended, and intensified by the Armenian Genocide. From that skewed perspective, the problem could never be in the Turkish individual, but had to be in the Armenian. Thus, Berktaý could dismiss me and anyone else in the Armenian Diaspora who holds political views different from his and engages in civil rights activism for Armenians as narrow, simple-minded, extremist “nationalists.” We Armenians are the problem and deserve to be condemned—the old familiar tune once more. (Of course, plenty of Armenians have shown him the proper deference, and so these “good” Armenians can be accepted and even lauded.)

This hostile dismissal has become a ritual that is beyond simply blaming the victim. It is a permanent (flawed) ethical outlook and ideology that automatically delegitimizes any political action or view by an Armenian that challenges in a meaningful way the status quo of domination. The sense of Turkish superiority is so normalized that when an Armenian asserts him-/herself as an equal party in the discourse on the future of Turkey and its relation to Armenians and presents countervailing views, the Armenian appears to be taking a position of superiority, because the Armenian is claiming a position that is above his/her “rightful” place of subservience. Indeed, Berktaý’s belief that I was “patronizing” toward him and other progressive Turks seems to have been a

function of this skewed perspective: when an Armenian steps up to assume his/her own equality to a Turk and to exercise the autonomy of thought and engagement of the Armenian Genocide that a full human being has the right to, this appears to be an act of superiority because the Armenian has stepped above his/her properly inferior position. The imbalance in perception and power is quite clear: at least this prominent progressive Turk refuses to engage in self-reflection when positions he takes are questioned, yet he does not hesitate in the slightest to disparage the general attitudes, political activities, and intellectual level of Diasporan Armenians, as he did in his AATL presentation.

However progressive its possessor might feel, this reaction functions to help maintain the status quo of domination. It silences or marginalizes some Armenians, and disciplines others. So long as nothing is done to change the material facts of domination and the attitudes that buttress them and prevent serious discussion of changing this domination—yes, this includes responsible discussion of reparations aimed addressing the damage done to Armenians in order to mitigate *somewhat* the effects of the Armenian Genocide, including Turkish advantages over Armenians and Armenian disadvantage caused by the Genocide and the oppression before and after it—then the dominance relation remains unchanged. Denial can be defeated, but denial is just a symptom of the deeper problem, and defeating denial alone will not change the imperial domination of Armenians and the Turkish attitudes that at once support it and result from it. One can shift and change how the dominance relation is played out, abandoning denial as a well-used but now not so effective move, as a means not of overcoming the domination relation, but as an intentional tactical or unaware psychological effort to preserve domination in an outwardly new form.

From the skewed perspective within which Turkish imperial superiority to Armenians is normalized, it is legitimate to mistreat Armenians. Armenians do not deserve the basic respect that would be accorded Turks or others. Of course, there is no reason to target inoffensive Armenians, but when Armenians cross the line, get “uppity,” then from this perspective it is morally acceptable to demean them, condescend to them, to belittle them. But if degrading Armenians, particularly those who act like equal human beings, is acceptable, then we are always part-way down a slippery slope. Now, *even as an Armenian*, I for one would never be so disrespectful, presumptuous, and simplistic about my position in the world to claim that I am part of some “we” “who are all Hrant Dink.” And, I do not suggest that my experience in the face of Turkish imperial power was anything like what Hrant Dink faced in Turkey, which was a daily life and death matter for him. But, they are on the same continuum. While denial does not unite progressives to the militarist/chauvinists who pursue denial out of ideological delusion or political agenda, as my AATL talk pointed out, it has become clear that in their actual acts and statements that some progressive Turks maintain an imperial attitude that is also at the origin of denial. This does not mean that these progressives are in any way reducible to such deniers or militarists, who embrace the violence of the Armenian Genocide as they deny it, but that they are part of an overall imperial structure. The leaders who condemned Dink legally and publicly for insulting Turkishness did not actually fire the guns that killed him, but they did share a fundamental attitude with his killer(s). Progressives who maintain a masked form of imperial superiority likewise share in the attitude. In a similar way, the majority of whites in the United States might run the gamut from right-wing Christian fundamentalists to left-wing socialists, and yet still be united in their participation in a racist system, regardless of their perceptions of their individual attitudes toward non-whites. The racism might come out in different ways, with right-wing militarist Turks using aggres-

sion, threats, power-politics, money-lobbying, etc., and progressive Turks using dialogue that splits the Armenian community into “good” and “bad” Armenians and thus molds that dominated community toward accommodation to the final imperial order produced by the Genocide. But the core is the same—imperial privilege and dominance.

Two important caveats are necessary. First, I have focused on Halil Berktaş because his public imperialist assertion was so egregious and blatant that it requires correction, but perhaps more importantly because consideration of it brings into relief some of the key aspects of Turkish-Armenian relations with a depth and clarity not possible through a general treatment. But my goal is not to critique him particularly, but to use the example his behavior on March 31 provides to help Turks, Armenians, and others to understand the core issue of contemporary Turkish-Armenian relations. What is more, he is certainly not alone among progressives in displaying an imperial attitude toward Armenians. During the AATL panel, I treated the issue in general terms, highlighting views prevalent among progressive Turks rather than looking at specific individuals, in order to provide a framework of analysis for attendees.

Second, I am using the term “uppity” in this article advisedly. Of course it is meant to refer to the demeaning characterization of African Americans who, under slavery or Jim Crow, did not behave as inferiors to whites, as many whites expected them to, personally and politically. But, the denigration I experienced on March 31 was an isolated incident for me. It was not connected to any explicit possibility of violence, and did not “follow me home” after the program, as a permanent feature of my life invading the different aspects of my daily existence. While one could argue that the imperial domination of Armenians could have had and have in the future some career impact, as Armenians deferential to Turkish authority might be selected out for professional benefits, positions, etc., of such scholars as me, on the grand scale of things this is a relatively minor issue, if it exists. People of color, women, and others marginalized in our society and around the world face disparagement on a regular basis when they assert themselves as full human beings relative to whites, men, Euro-Americans, local elites, and others in positions of power. In our own society, the countless African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos/as, Asian Americans, women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, etc., who point out the violence, discrimination, and exploitation they face and the systematic domination foundational to US society are marginalized, ridiculed, attacked, and belittled continually as a matter of course. And there is no escape into the privileged “white male-hood” that I partake of. They are maligned and threatened by rednecks, blatant sexists, etc., but also dismissed as extremists, condescended to, ignored, academically defamed and degraded, and kept in their inferior positions by subtle assumptions and structural exclusions by “white liberal” progressives who are convinced of their own freedom from racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. I wish to be clear that, by using the term “uppity” my intent is to inform my analysis of Turkish domination of Armenians with an understanding of U.S. racial, gender, etc., domination, but not to suggest that as an Armenian I share the position, experiences, or level of oppression of people of color, women, etc., in our society—even if some Armenians in other historical and political contexts (during the Genocide, in contemporary Turkey, etc.) have and do.

An Uppity Armenian Gives Voice to His Dignity

During the panel discussion, I wished to respond to Berktaş’s degrading conduct toward me, but the context restricted me to making only substantive responses to the content of certain positions he took, not to his treatment of me and its implications for Turkish-Armenian relations. Had I pointed out the imperialist nature of his

personal attacks and their ethical unacceptability, I would likely have been perceived to have lowered the discourse to an interpersonal conflict, which would have obscured the fact that what was playing out, as many audience members understood, was a post-genocidal imperial dominance relation. My critique would have been relativized to one part of a mutual conflict. Even if recognized as political in nature, as a conflict between “a Turk” and “an Armenian,” the true political nature of what transpired would have been obscured.

Given my difficult position of having to take public debasement without response, it was a serious problem that not a single individual in the audience made clear that Berktaş was demeaning me and that this was not acceptable. And, because no audience member actually pointed this out publicly and I could not, Berktaş and many audience members presumably left the discussion with the experience of denigration of an Armenian as an acceptable activity. The lack of response reinforced the normalization of the inferiority of Armenians, as fit targets of vilification. Even those who reacted against this emotionally were left to feel that, if morally wrong, it was acceptable in the context of practical reality—that the reality of Turkish domination of Armenians makes such ill-treatment legitimate despite moral considerations.

My resistance to the normalization of Armenian inferiority is part of the reason I have included the critique of Berktaş here as part of my discussion Turkish-Armenian relations. If I could not speak out during the panel to challenge my disparagement and no audience members, who were in the position to respond to this treatment, chose to respond, then I feel I must speak out now. Of course, I risk just as much now, and my remarks here will surely be dismissed and derided in angry responses from Turkish and Armenian sources. This itself is an aspect of the imperial power dynamic. As John Stuart Mill points out in Chapter 2 of *On Liberty*, voices representing views against the established norms will inevitably be viewed as strident and extremist, regardless of their actual tone or content. Sometimes this criticism is justified, but often it is not. To follow this logic further, to the extent an imperial dominance relation between Turks and Armenians has been normalized then voices that challenge this norm will be perceived as disruptive, uncivil, aggressive, etc. The violence—past violence of the Genocide and potential violence ready to be unleashed should the imperial system be challenged, as Hrant Dink’s assassination shows—and power—political, economic, ideological, etc.—that supports the imperial system is hidden from view, safely relegated to past history or hidden behind a misleading “stasis” that is a stalemate between denialist and other imperial forces and challenges to them. Those in positions of relative power in this imperial relation have the luxury of not having to exert themselves under normal circumstances to enjoy the benefits of and to maintain the power differential. This situation is similar to that in the United States, where whites do not have to exhibit explicitly racist attitudes or behaviors in order to enjoy the benefits of a racial hierarchy, as that hierarchy remains frozen because decisive action is not taken against it and “egalitarianism” merely perpetuates the hierarchy by treating high and low status in the same way. It is those in a subjugated position who have to take exceptional action in order to challenge the hierarchy, which makes the resulting “conflict” appear to be their fault and renders reactions from those in dominant positions as “understandable” reactions to destabilizing forces. Those who do not acknowledge the dominance structure in place will see Berktaş’s behavior perhaps as a minor individual excess, but not as the mark of a power relation. My response on the other hand will be seen by such individuals as an extreme over-reaction to a subjective perception of ill-treatment, and the more strongly and logically I make the case that it was much more, the more I ex-

treme I will be seen to be. Just as Berktaş was in a position to dismiss my comments through denigration, rather than to engage them as legitimate concerns, so those who refuse to see the imperial order will dismiss the present analysis. They will likely say that I have presented a person “conflict” as a political issue. But, how can one speak of a purely personal relation between Turkish and Armenian individuals in the context of a discussion of the Armenian Genocide and its implications for the socio-political relations between the two groups? The “personal” here is infused with the political, and Turks who engage Armenians have the responsibility of understanding this and acting accordingly.

The subjugated are in a Catch-22. To say something meaningful about their oppression means being misconstrued as an extremist disruptor; to say nothing is to normalize yet another assault on their dignity, to further ingest the poison of an “accepted” inferiority and to confirm that inferiority by imposed inaction. (In one sense, of course, saying nothing is completely understandable. It is a function of the oppression of Armenians that we are put into this Catch-22 in the first place, and the mere fact of having to respond to assertions of domination is itself an unfair imposition of that domination.) The subjugated are forced to make a choice in a “double-bind” (to use feminist philosopher Marilyn Frye’s term and analysis, from *The Politics of Reality*): to accept domination or resist it, with each option entailing negative consequences. Regardless, my choice is clear: giving voice to my dignity is far more important than winning a public relations contest. And anyway, those Armenians and Turks who take seriously what I am saying will have, I believe, a useful tool for making sense of their experiences within the domination relation.

How does the foregoing shed light on the performance of the AATL panel audience? This, and not Berktaş’s comments, was what truly saddened me that night. It is not that many did not “get it”—so many made clear to me that they did that night and in subsequent communications to me. It is that they failed to raise their own voices publicly when it really mattered—for me and for them. I am not in the habit of attacking “Armenians,” the “Armenian Diaspora,” or smaller segments of the global Armenian community, such as organizations, political parties, etc. Except in rare circumstances I do not see any point in adding to the surplus of calumny heaped on Armenians generally or these or those Armenians particularly. (I should add that it is no more justified to engage in unjustified attacks on Turks, regardless of the situation Armenians are in. It is crucial to judge different Turkish individuals, including Berktaş, only and exactly on what they say and do, and to avoid generalizations. If criticisms are warranted in some or many cases, so is praise for the many Turks who from good motives saved Armenians during the Genocide and the key government officials, clerics, and other leaders who resisted the genocide, refused to participate in it, and often paid penalties for doing so.) Some Armenians spend quite a bit of time and effort deriding other Armenians, denialist Turks spend just as much vilifying most or all Armenians, and even some progressive Turks spend too much effort stating their disapproval of select Armenians, “Armenian attitudes” and Armenian groups. Much of the internal maligning among Armenians is a function of the internalized oppression resulting from the Genocide and the years of subjugation before and since. Some segments of a subjugated group, blocked from real equality with the oppressor group and subjected to reassertions of its power, claim a position of dominance against the only people to whom they have that kind of access, (some) other members of their own group. Rather than engaging in political activity to challenge the domination of Armenians, they relieve their feelings of inferiority by asserting superiority over and/or discharging anger and frustration against (some) other Armenians. (This is a simplified account, of course, but a full treatment is far

beyond the scope of this paper and not essential for the issues taken up here.)

Obviously some acts and attitudes by Armenians do deserve criticism, and it would be chauvinist to avoid this, just as much as to unduly criticize Turkish individuals or the group as a whole. My disappointment in the mainly Armenian audience of the AATL panel is deep. I would estimate that the audience contained on the order of 200 Armenians (in addition to some non-Armenians), who witnessed a noteworthy Turkish individual demean an Armenian based on the latter’s political views and made possible by his inferior Armenian status, and not a single one protested this treatment. I have long been trained by experiences with aggressive deniers to face bad treatment in public. While of course I felt the pain of denigration, I could have accepted it if it had not been so acceptable to everyone else. But the failure of others to protest forced me to recognize that the entire audience, including the organizers of the panel, seemed to accept my denigration, too. With only one exception, those who asked questions directed at Berktaş did so in deferential ways, further reinforcing his legitimacy and the illegitimacy of my recognition of ill-treatment. The moderator and other Armenians and the Left organizers had a special obligation to deal with Berktaş’s behavior, if not to intervene as it happened (the moderator, for instance, could have simply kept Berktaş to something close to his allotted time, rather than allowing him a full hour to speak, further reinforcing Berktaş’s special legitimacy), then at least to offer some balancing response after his remarks and thus to go on record pointing out that Berktaş’s conduct was not acceptable.

In the end, though, it was not my dignity that suffered, even as I take this opportunity to further reclaim it. Those Armenians who saw nothing wrong with what transpired were robbed of the important educational opportunity of a critical analysis that might have helped them reflect on the extent to which Turkish priority over and mistreatment of Armenians has been normalized in their own outlooks. It is not whether these Armenians agreed with what I said or not—that is not the issue, because my mere statement of a political viewpoint does not justify the maltreatment that occurred. Denial has trained us to accept mistreatment, expressions of hatred and prejudice, etc., as inevitable and thus in effect as acceptable. Here was an opportunity for some Armenians to become aware of this faulty norm and to begin the process of overcoming it.

As for those Armenians who did see something wrong but said nothing, they lost the opportunity to stand up for themselves by defending a fellow Armenian from denigration. As Aristotle tells us, developing virtues in practice is a matter of training oneself through habit to act appropriately. These Armenians reinforced the habit of accepting ill-treatment, making it yet harder the next time the situation calls for them to stand up for their dignity.

Both sets of audience members saw again and helped ensure for the future that, when a Turkish individual assumes his/her power and acts on that power, even to become angry and derisive, the “proper” Armenian response is to become ever more appeasing and deferential.

Fighting centuries of internalized oppression built through institutionalized subjugation in the millet system and driven as deeply as possible by genocide is a difficult task. I recall some years ago organizing with another Armenian a panel on genocide at a local university. We included presentations on the Holocaust, Nanjing Massacre and Armenian Genocide. In the days before the event, we found out that the many posters put up around campus to advertise the event had been torn down. We assumed, based on numerous past experiences and the fact that this was not usual for other events on this campus, that Turkish deniers had done this, but of course we had no proof. What is more, the

From Vertical to Diagonal Interactions

THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASPECTS OF ARMENIA(N)-(TURK)EY RELATIONS

BY ASBED KOTCHIKIAN

When referring to the issue of the Genocide, it is common to talk about Armenian-Turkish relations assuming that the issue at stake is based solely on the relations between the two nations, without realizing that the actors in that relation are more than nations and include states—including states not related to the two nations. This article is an attempt to address the issue of the Genocide within the contexts of state-state (Armenia-Turkey), nation-state (Armenian-Turkey) and nation-nation (Armenian-Turkish).

“Nation,” “State,” “Nation-state” or “State Nation”

Defining a nation or a state is a task that has been undertaken intensively and with various approaches. For the purpose of the current discussion, a nation will be defined as a group of people or community with a shared and common history and culture. A state, on the other hand, is a legal entity with borders (recognized or not), functioning government (legitimate or not), and with the symbols and institutions that accompany a statehood (such as flag, army, currency).

A nation-state is a derivative of the above two and is widely accepted to be a state with a homogenous—or near-homogenous—ethnic group; in most cases it is the byproduct of a nation aspiring for and achieving statehood. What is a hard task to define is the concept of “state nation,” which implies that a state—usually ruling over a multinational society—attempts to create a national identity and sense of belongingness based on the institutions of the state rather than the culture of a dominant national group. This idea is best exemplified by the research conducted on the concept of “state nation” which mentions that: “... some conceptual, political, and normative attention should be given to the possibility of state nations. The states we would like to call state nations are multicultural, and sometimes even have significant multinational components, which nonetheless still manage to engender strong identification and loyalty from their citizens, an identification and loyalty that proponents of homogeneous nation states perceive that only nation-states can engender.”¹

Based on the above definitions, the categorization of Armenia and Turkey could take a new dimension where Turkey is regarded as a “state nation” whereas Armenia, a “nation-state.”

This discussion leads us to the examination of the influence of one entity, the nation, onto another, the state and vice-versa. In other words, when talking about the Armenian Genocide, who are the actors on both sides and more importantly, how does each side view the other in the larger context of the politics of Genocide recognition?

There is no doubt that up until the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Genocide was viewed as an Armenian-Turkey issue and the Armenian nation was adamant to force the Turkish state to recognize the Genocide by utilizing other states (countries which passed Genocide recognition laws through active Armenian lobbying) as a means to exert vertical pressure on Turkey. The fact that the Genocide itself was an act perpetrated by a state (Ottoman) against a nation (Armenians) who were citizens—albeit before the development of the concept of citizenship—of that state, made the Genocide issue an Armenian-Turkey one. Furthermore, the fact that Turkish nationalism was to a large extent based on state sponsorship made that issue an Armenian-Turkish one as well.

Bringing the States In

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Ar-

menia, Armenian-Turkish bilateral relations took on a new turn and assumed a multilateral character. This multilateral nature, however, is not equally developed and some aspects of the relation are still determined by the nation on the Armenian side and the state on the Turkish side.

The uneven nature of relations is to a large part dependent on the nature of the states. Whereas Turkey has had an experience of statehood for over eight decades, Armenia is still struggling with the challenge of state-making. This does not mean, however, that the state formula on either side is monolithic, nor does it mean that the state is not a viable actor; the main question would be the extent to which both states are influential in providing inputs to the various processes between the two entities.

Turkey as a state has followed a path of state nationalism (not to be confused by civic nationalism) which aimed at developing a sense of belongingness to its citizens regardless of their ethnic or national background. Thus Turkey today is a state-nation where the state (as exemplified by the rules of governance and priorities set by those rules) is the basis for the common culture that it creates. Ethnicity, language and religion become much less of a factor in national identity, as they are subordinated to a belief in the underlying principles of the state as the designator of national identity. In sum, then, the idea of the nation associated with the “nation-state” approach implies creating one common culture within the state, while the idea of the nation associated with the “state nation” approach can contain more than one politically-salient culture.²

Based on the discussion above, Armenia is categorized as a nation-state with one twist to it: When it comes to the issue of creating a common culture, the state is as much of a subject to the shaping of the identity as it is an actor in it. In the Armenian case, the nation is an equal partner with the state within the context of identity making, and it influences and is influenced by the state.

Yet another dimension of this examination is the diversity within the two countries. Thus some scholars argue that the usage of terms such as “multicultural” and “multinational” is a byproduct of different types of politically activated socio-cultural divisions. At one extreme are societies where social divisions have a geographical concentration and are articulated in more than one “nationalist” vocabulary throughout the territory of the state. Such a society may be called a “multi-national society.” At the other extreme are societies where socio-cultural divisions exist but are not geographically concentrated and are not articulated in a “nationalist” vocabulary. Following the recent literature, we would call such a society a “multi-cultural” society.³

In this framework, Turkey is both a multi-national and multi-cultural entity mostly because of the differences existing in the country on an ethnic-national level (not ethnic Turks), but also because of the diversity existing regionally and among the various factions within the society. On the other hand, Armenia and Armenians could be categorized as a multi-cultural society where the different factions have different—and sometimes opposing—views over the role of the state and how relations with other actors should be conducted.⁴

Who are the Actors?

The above exercise in defining the various aspects of the Turkish and Armenian nations and states is not a simple mental or academic exercise. To develop a productive description of the various entities engaged in the issue of Genocide recognition requires the application of nuanced understanding on both sides of the divide. Within the confines of that understanding, it is also important to realize the opportunities and limitations that states and nations have and

to embark on a strategy of engaging all aspects of the state, society and nation.

On the Armenian side, the challenge of policy making is multifold. On the one hand, there is a state which considers itself to be a legal entity recognized by international law and is held accountable for its actions. On the other hand, there is a trans-state entity called the Armenian Diaspora which, while it plays a focal point in the issue of Genocide recognition is far from being legally recognized.⁵ The difference between the two entities in terms of outlook in general and in the specific case of the Genocide has its roots in the origins and metamorphoses of the two.

In the case of the Diaspora, the Genocide has been focal in the perceptions and identity of the group mostly because of the traumatic nature of the Genocide. The trauma which has been detrimental in the making of the Diasporan identity seems not to be focal in the minds of the citizens of the state. This does not mean that Armenians in Armenia have no interest to pursue Genocide recognition, neither is it a manifestation of seven decades of Soviet anti-nationalist policies. What it can be a result of is the experience of statehood—as Soviet Armenia was considered a form of a state—that helped the population to transcend the victim mentality and look at non-traumatic events to shape their identity.

The above duality has resulted in the development of what could be considered a juxtaposition of a state’s interest and a nation’s interest. These two interests, which do not always coincide, have been a point of contestation between the leadership of the state and the nation. The difference of strategy between the two is that while in the case of Diasporan Armenians, Genocide recognition is pursued without any other considerations, in the case of Armenia, the state has to have other considerations as well. This does not mean that the Armenian state has, is or will ever deny the occurrence of the Genocide; what it means is that the issue of Genocide recognition will end up being a part and parcel of a larger policy that the state would implement in its relations with Turkey.

In the case of Turkey, the main divide existing in the state is the growing number of social activism. Interestingly enough, it was around the same time as the state became a player on the Armenian side that the civil society movements in Turkey started developing into a formidable entity to be reckoned with. The processes that started influencing Turkish civil society over the last several years have been monumental. There has been a growing number of Turkish scholars, intellectuals and individuals who have grown vocal about the existing political situation in their country, and have advocated for change in the way the state controls the various processes within.

The changes happening in Turkey over the last decade have created a multilayered and nuanced society that not too many people fully appreciate. The concepts of “Turkey” and “Turkish” are being challenged everyday, and a growing number of Turkish citizens (be they Turks or non-Turks) have realized that it is time to challenge the monolithic perceptions and rhetoric of the state.

Vertical, Horizontal or Diagonal Relations?

With the above differences mentioned, the next question is over the kinds of interaction these entities should have. It has been argued elsewhere—mostly from the Armenian side—that to make Genocide recognition a reality, vertical pressure should be applied on Turkey by increasing the number of states and international actors who recognize the Genocide and hence put pressure on Turkey. On the other hand, some recent arguments—mostly on the Turkish side—have proposed that the way to move forward would be

through horizontal pressure, where state-state relations and nation-nation relations take precedence.

The problem with the above categorization is two-fold. First, the use of the word “pressure” has, for the most part, been in a negative context. What should be used instead is “relations” or “interaction” to designate a process and at the same time consider that interaction is not solely based on forcing or pressuring a side to do something against its will.

The second issue at stake is related directly to the idea that vertical pressure could eventually force Turkey to recognize the Genocide. The fallacy with this argument lies in the reality of modern international relations and the fact that the prestige of any state—as emotional as it seems—is one of the very few things that a government is not willing to sacrifice. Historically, this has been true in the case of Serbia when it was given an ultimatum to comply with the Austro-Hungarian demands; it accepted all of the points regardless of how humiliating they were, but rejected the one point that undermined its sovereignty and by extension its pride. That rejection eventually led to World War I. A modern equivalent of this issue is what is happening in Iran, where vertical pressure from the international community on the Islamic Republic’s nuclear program has only led to more resolve on the part of the Iranian government to resist any pressure it views as being a violation of its sovereignty.

To what extent, then, would escalating recognition by the international community—in other words, vertical pressure—force Turkey to recognize the Genocide? One plausible answer is that it probably will not. Given the categorization above that puts Turkey in the category of “state nation” the issue of state pride overlaps with national pride and makes any concession by any government in Turkey a blow to national pride. Hence, Turkey’s refusal to recognize the Genocide is, among other variables, inversely proportional to increased pressure from the outside. By the same token, Armenia resists any vertical pressure regarding this issue because of the “nation state” nature of the country—its national pride has superimposed itself on the state one. This issue is best exemplified with the failed experiment of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC). TARC failed not only because it did not represent all of the Armenian factions operating in the Diaspora, but also because it was viewed as outside pressure on Armenia’s leadership to pursue a policy popularly viewed as counter-national.

At the opposite side of the spectrum is the issue of horizontal relations, which has two dimensions to it. The first is state-state horizontal relations and the other is nation-nation. In the case of state-state relations, the analysis is quite simple and to the point: there is no such thing as official horizontal state-state relations. However, this does not mean that Turkey and Armenia are not interacting indirectly. Thus one of the methods of state-state interaction is Ankara’s position in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, where it took sides with Azerbaijan in the effort to put pressure on Armenia for the latter’s withdrawal from the land it occupied during the war.

The second dimension of the horizontal relation is Armenian-Turkish relations, which itself has two components. On the negative side, there are Diaspora-Turkish relations which are not cordial, to say the least, and are based on stereotypes shared by most in the two entities about the other. While most Armenians in the Diaspora view Turks as a single monolithic entity and as the descendants of Genocide perpetrators, Turks have formed their own opinion about Armenians as those who are constantly pushing for sanctions and isolations against their state and by extension their

Turkish-Armenian Dialogue: A False Start

BY DAVID DAVIDIAN

nation. There is also a positive side to nation-nation relations, that is, the increased number of Armenian citizens who go on business trips and vacations to Turkey—courtesy of direct flights between the two countries—and have managed to create personal relations with many Turks, shattering the myth that Turks are “killers” and that they cannot be trusted as business partners. One of the examples epitomizing this idea is the increasing positive attitude that exists in Eastern Anatolia where Turks (individuals or local governments) welcome the opening of the Armenia-Turkey border; this is both based on the economic advantages of such an act, and as a result of the interactions they have had with Armenians crossing the border via Georgia to conduct business.

A third interaction, which I would like to call “diagonal,” is multilateral in nature. Thus the basic premise of diagonal relations is confidence building measures by both states to attract people on the opposite side of the “divide.” While this idea has not been developed, it could help bring both entities together and create enough positive atmosphere to make both entities talk with each other rather than at or past one another. However, the challenge for the two states and nations is how such multilateral relations should be initiated or even regulated (if at all).

In this context, can one argue that the recent renovation of the Akhtamar church by Ankara was a confidence building measure aimed at the Armenians? If so, then it failed miserably not because of the renovation itself but mostly because of the usage of symbols—such as the picture of Atatürk placed at the church entrance—that most Armenians associate with the manifestation of Turkish nationalism at its highest level. One could also argue that the usage of Hrant Dink’s assassination by Armenians to claim that Turkey is still a genocidal country has reinforced the stereotype in the minds of many Turks that Armenians are “out there to get them.”

Towards Crisscrossing Relations

Any and all efforts by both states and nations to break the myths and stereotypes—built up over decades of non-interaction, and by historical and political revisionism—needs to be based on genuine confidence building measures and not on political opportunism to score points against the other group. Humiliating one state internationally and intentionally does not help dissipate the effects of propaganda, and prevents from building a strong foundation on which multilateral relations could develop.

Furthermore, the future of Armenia(n)-Turk(ey) relations is and should be based on horizontal and diagonal interactions crisscrossing the borders and boundaries of states and nations. For better or for worse the two countries share a common geography, and whether they admit to it or not the two nations share a common history that predates the Genocide and was not always based on the formula of oppressor-oppressed.

Crisscrossing relations would eventually result in the rewiring of wavelengths and hopefully lead to increased interaction based on understanding the multilayered aspects of the multilateral relations. Future relations should be based on achieving an understanding based on a willingness to do so, and not because the parties involved are forced to.

Endnotes

1 Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 34.

2 Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan & Yogendra Yadav, “Nation State” or “State Nation”? Comparative Reflections on Indian Democracy.” Revised draft of a paper prepared for a conference in Delhi. 2003. 5-6.

3 Ibid.

4 The term “culture” is used very loosely in this setting. It refers mostly to political culture in the sense that what individuals expect the state or the nation to act like in political atmosphere.

5 While some scholars refer to diasporas in general as trans-nations the usage of the term “trans-state” may be more appropriate in this context since the Armenian Diaspora operates in various states.

Reconciliation between Turks and Armenians is a worthy goal, but not when it comes at the expense of acknowledging the truth. There can be no reconciliation without recognizing the truth of the Armenian Genocide, just as there can be no resolution to this issue without justice also being administered. The current dialogue between Armenian and Turkish intellectuals is more like a monologue with the agenda being set by Turkish national interests, and Armenians once again being put into the position of supplicants. This reality is typified on the University of Michigan-hosted Workshop for Armenian/Turkish Scholarship (WATS) e-mail list, better known by its e-mail address, armworkshop@umich.edu.

This e-mail list is administered by Professor Fatma Muge Gocek, associate professor of sociology and of women’s studies at the University of Michigan. However, this initiative also includes University of Michigan professors Ronald Suny and Gerard Libaridian. This workshop began in 2000 and in the words of Libaridian from an article in the progressive Turkish magazine *Birikim* (Istanbul, May 2005), “WATS was initiated in 2000 to see if a

over, which trivializes Armenian losses and suffering. This process also trivializes the residual impact of prolonged and sustained Turkish state denial. Any comparison of the virulently anti-Armenian Turkish nationalist ideologue Ziya Gokalp with the Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg is met with a chorus of denunciations and outrage.

The notion that genocide resolutions serve neither the interest of Turks or Armenians and discourages dialogue is put forward and used as an example of the rabid nationalism of the monolithic Armenian Diaspora. Any claims for reparations for the crime of genocide are considered out of the realm of possibility, and its mere mention is tantamount to jingoism. The level of scholarly discourse can be seen during one exchange, when Prof. Baskin Oran of such and such university noted that Diaspora Armenians are not “true” Armenians but are the bane of Armenia’s future.²

These and other examples are hardly a healthy basis for free discourse between Turkish and Armenian scholars.

After joining this e-mail list a year and a half ago, I noted interesting exchanges of ideas and general information, but nothing of real substance. Periodically, Baskin Oran would post cryptic emails

Claims for reparations for the crime of genocide are considered out of the realm of possibility, and its mere mention is tantamount to jingoism.

common language and historical framework can be established; a language and framework within which the events in question could be looked at as historical phenomena and dealt with as objectively as possible by scholars whose intellectual integrity and scholarly rigor are more important than their ethnic background. The project is independent of any government and its gatherings are supported by academic institutions and individuals.¹¹

It has been claimed that there are about 500 members on the armworkshop list, mostly Turkish and Armenian scholars, professionals and students. But the vast majority of them remain silent, while a vocal and active minority of participants work hard to set an agenda that is devoid of critical analysis. Instead, the list has degenerated into a group therapy session, with some Armenians bending over backwards to praise their Turkish colleagues, even as some of these same Turkish intellectuals denigrate the very notion of genocide. Academic jargon and theoretically posturing have replaced rigorous analysis and discussion of the complexities of the Genocide and its implications.

The initiative has failed to create a language and framework for serious dialogue or critical analysis, but has rather established a discourse based on the strategic interests and indeed whims of Turkish academics and their supporters. In this dialogue, use of the term genocide, while not entirely avoided, is discouraged for introducing “bias” into the academic research on the subject. It is further claimed that use of the word “genocide” closes minds in Turkey and that we all need to be more sensitive to the trials and tribulations of Turkish intellectuals, even those who deny the Armenian Genocide. One never encounters an in-depth discussion of the role of Ottoman Turkish society in the implementation of the Armenian Genocide; instead a process of moral and historical relativism has begun to take

with denialist rhetoric usually followed by an absence of any response. Either Armenian academics could not respond (something very doubtful), chose not to respond (probable), or rather could but did not for the sake of dialogue above all. I find the results of this “experiment” reduced to a Turkish agenda supported by subservient Armenians currying favor very disheartening. Many times, Armenian academics or graduate students would go out of their way to distance themselves from topics that must be addressed for real progress to take place between Armenians and Turks. These include, but were not limited to: 1) referring to the extermination of the Armenians unequivocally as genocide, 2) the dismissal of the notion that genocide recognition simultaneously invokes the need for legal redress, 3) viewing genocide as a crime with no statute of limitations.

These three items should be among the basis for any discussion between Turks and Armenians. Naive Armenians think they are engaged in some kind of reconciliation with Turks simply because some Turks are listening after nine decades of silence. They equate dialogue with Turks as something different—and thus better—than efforts towards genocide recognition and reparations of previous generations. This is an erroneous assumption because if it were not for efforts of previous generations, not a single Turk would deign discussing such issues with Armenians today. (Curiously, the effects and results of the outside pressures are dismissed by the list’s Turkish members who at the same time maintain that the ongoing Armenian efforts on Armenian Genocide recognition is undoing progress that is taking place in Turkey around this issue). It was not more than a generation ago when Turks simply claimed no annihilation of a nation took place in 1915. It is not surprising that when Turkish and Armenian student groups meet, Turks

may agree there was some loss of Armenian life, but do not call it genocide; instead they refer to it by a number of terms such as *soykirim* (Turkish for genocide) or *mets yeghern* (its Armenian equivalent) and often “ethnic cleansing.”³ (And anyway, it was not planned and executed by Turks, not even the Turkish government and army, but rather by the CUP [Committee for Union and Progress, or Young Turks]).

It comes as no surprise that in dialogue with whatever Turkish group, student or academic, the single item that is both never discussed and deemed standing in the way of genuine progress is the Turkish socialization process. In fact, there is no acknowledgement of this phenomenon forthcoming from Turkish intellectuals, not even as a taboo, let alone its classification as a lynchpin that will help solve the Armenian-Turkish question.⁴ Turks are taught as small children that their “first duty is to defend Turkey and another of the national anthem—texts which appear again on the classroom walls and preface all their textbooks.” Throughout high schools “books will tell them European powers have their sights set on Anatolia and Turkey’s geography makes it vulnerable “to all kinds of internal and external threats.” A society that must forcibly indoctrinate its population will not unilaterally admit responsibility for a crime of genocide, especially when they are taught that Armenians killed Turks en masse, and that Turks led the world and brought civilization to it and thus are incapable of destroying peoples, etc. The belligerent Turkification of Anatolia, resulting in the genocidal extermination of the Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, etc., and the scraping clean their culture continues in Turkish classrooms in the form of glorification of a mythical Turkish past.

Elements of the human rights movement in Turkey want to change this archaic socialization process and they include groups who also call for greater freedom of speech and expression. Turks from such groups openly want to discuss the dark chapters of Turkish history, which include the genocide of the Armenians, Assyrians and Pontic Greeks during WWI, the Kurdish and Alevi issues, suppression of tens of minority languages, anti-Semitism, etc. However, these are Turkish problems to be solved by Turks; no other individual, group or nation will or can for them. For other Turks, the Armenian issue is but a means to an end for positive change in Turkey, or sometimes an issue to be dealt speedily to get it out of the way with minimum concessions so that a momentum can be attained to solve easier problems.

Discussing a taboo, or elements associated with it, does not automatically mean support for or even basic empathy regarding an issue. For example, Turkey periodically protests the presence on their border of the Armenian nuclear power plant. Clearly, Turkish protest does not signal concern for the well-being of Armenians or a bias against nuclear energy. One should not confuse sounds of water drops with the irrigation of a desert.

Endnotes

1. www.armturkworkshop.org/reporting.html.
2. Baskin Oran, a political scientist from Ankara University, and a human rights adviser to former Turkish President Ozal. Oran was a participant in the September 24-25, 2005 conference titled “Ottoman Armenians During the Decline of the Empire: Issues of Scientific Responsibility and Democracy,” held at Istanbul’s Bilgi University.

3. An example of a clear, non-genocide position: University of California, Davis, Religious Studies Program sponsored a lecture, “The Turkish State and the Armenian Ethnic Cleansing of 1915,” April 12, 2007 by Professor Fatma Muge Gocek.

4. “Seeds of Turkish nationalism sown at school,” April 2, 2007, Reuters.

'Excuse me, did you say genocide?'

ON THE POVERTY OF DEBATES ON MASS VIOLENCE IN TURKEY

BY UGUR UMIT UNGOR

Genocide: from emotion and morality to criminal law, politics and social science

It is self-evident that genocide is a poignant matter. Practically everyone confronted with a photo of a mass grave will be, as a primary emotional reaction, in the uttermost distress about the scene. We consider the image of thousands of human beings laying naked and dead in a large pit "gruesome" and "shocking." Contrary to popular belief, this moral condemnation of mass murder as the ultimate evil has not existed forever. In the late 19th- and early 20th-century international political ethics, only a handful objected against large-scale and violent population politics for the sake of nationally homogeneous and shapable, "sociobiologically pure" societies. World War I, an industrial total war with unprecedented numbers of victims, confronted Europe with the problem of having to redefine and prioritize the value of human life. Well before any thorough discussion in politics and culture, and in some degree as a result and continuation of WWI, a new world war erupted. This one would completely eclipse the suffering of its predecessor.

Since 1945, a fundamental reversal has occurred in the definition of the value allotted to human lives. The murder of the Jews ignited a renewed awareness of human rights, a standard that was declared valid even towards races formerly deemed inferior from the perspective of colonialism. This moral indignation against the misery prompted activists to undertake efforts to curb unrestrained mass violence. One of these intellectuals was the jurist Raphael Lemkin, who would introduce a new concept during WWII: genocide. According to him, genocide was a "coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves." Due to his professional background Lemkin generally formulated in legal terms: crime, guilt, perpetrators, intent, victims, punishment, prevention. When the United Nations defined the concept in 1948, the definition that emerged was one in which predominantly static and clinical preconditions had to be fulfilled for any event to constitute genocide. Despite all benevolence and goodwill, in international criminal law genocide has proven to be a difficult category to condemn individuals under. The law struggles with the task of isolating genocide—in fact a collective deed of violence—to the level of individual responsibility. Because of the division of labor and secrecy in the genocidal process, it is difficult to trace responsibility to higher officials.

In the realm of politics, too, genocide is a concept that is discussed and used in non-scholarly ways. In political relations, it serves as an instrument against adversaries, to secure concessions and interests, or to moralize. In this context, history is a resultant of negotiations or personal opinions, of selective memory and ideological appropriation, not an independent establishment and balanced judgment of historical facts. When it comes to genocide, the axis of tension between "political activism" and "pure science" is most salient. The difference lies in the ontological point of departure: knowledge to act versus knowledge to understand.

In social science, few concepts have been contested as much as the notion of genocide. In the past decades the word has been employed by various activists in such a wide definitional breadth that some scholars have entirely dismissed the term as an utter failure. Although from time to time newspapers report about instances of mass violence, few agree on how those

events should be interpreted. "Mass murder," "ethnic cleansing," "democide" and many other terms pertain to the analytical palette to describe and understand forms of mass violence. Nevertheless it is possible to sketch some of the major points of orientation of this phenomenon.

Most historians and social scientists define genocide as a most violent form of persecution in which groups of innocent and unarmed people are deliberately attacked and killed by a state. Scholars have concentrated on the genesis of ideologies of exclusion and the development of dictatorial power structures. Basic sociological concepts such as "state," "nation" and "violence" have proven to be useful in the description, analysis and explanation of genocidal episodes. Genocide has been researched in the context of topics such as war, nationalism, totalitarianism, colonialism, racism, culture, modernity, religion, crisis, bureaucracy, and many others. The academic literature on genocide is as copious as impressive, and any effort to summarize it here would not do justice to the quantity and quality of it.

In recent discussions on the Armenian Genocide among Turks in Europe and Turkey, two main problems have surfaced: on the one hand the relative ignorance on genocide in Turkey, and on the other hand the opposition to expertise on genocide.

Turkish violence: special or normal?

In Turkish milieu, people often think that Turkish history is completely free of any mass violence. The proposition that during the Turkish process of nation formation violence was used against various ethnic and religious minorities is waved away nonchalantly. When confronted with this violence, many Turks believe that a particularly bloodthirsty cruelty is attributed to them. Ostensibly, the "Terrible Turk" is a special case because his violence is a function of "Asiatic barbarism" and "oriental despotism"—as all of these are racist terms from 19th-century representations towards the Ottomans. This romantization and orientalization has created an equally romantic and narcissistic Turkish nationalist counterpart, in which the Ottoman Empire was a peaceful beacon of multicultural coexistence since time immemorial.

I would like to argue the opposite here: Modern Turkish history is not special at all, precisely because of its violent character. Which European country can honestly maintain that, especially during that dreaded first half of the 20th century, their societies have remained immune to mass killing? Spain? Germany? Russia? Yugoslavia? The normality of mass violence in this "era of destruction" has been discussed in several excellent recent publications by Eric Hobsbawm, Mark Mazower, Niall Ferguson, Volker Berghahn, Omer Bartov, Ian Kershaw and others. According to these authors, violence and nationalism in their mutual coherence have constituted some of the main components of modernity. That the Ottoman-Turkish case has not sufficiently been researched has its reasons, but this does not preclude Turkey with its violent past from basking in the permanent company of European states. Since there is considerable ambition to be "modern" and "European" among the Turkish political elite, the idea that between 1914 and 1945 extensive nationalist violence was unleashed should rather be perceived as a compliment for the fundamentally European character of Turkey.

For a variety of reasons, genocide has received little or no attention in most of the world. This does not only concern postcolonial areas with limited resources such as large parts of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, but also more developed regions in Central and Eastern Europe. The concept was only

vaguely known even in academia, and this is surprising. The presence of mass violence in history is only matched by the absence of the study of it in contemporary academic research and education. Turkey represents an exemplary case for this trend.

The effects of historical taboos on perceptions of genocide in Turkey

How do people apprehend genocide in Turkey? Anyone who follows Turkish publications on genocide will encounter an awkward combination of uninformedness, indifference and denial. It is obvious that due to the threatening political atmosphere regarding the Armenian Genocide, few researchers are willing to engage this topic. Official texts dismiss genocide as "something terrible, but not a Turkish problem." The profound politicization and tabooization leads to strange responses on hearing the very word, from Pavlov reactions about "disloyal Armenians" to obscene anti-Semitic statements such as: "Genocide studies? Isn't that controlled by the Jews?" Using three examples, I will argue that due to this politicization and tabooization, the public and intellectual debate on genocide is avoided by academics and is now being dominated by mediocre types that simply lack any serious involvement and knowledge.

One person worthy of mention for writing in the Turkish press on genocide is columnist and former official Gunduz Aktan. In reaction to publications on the Armenian Genocide, Aktan has to some extent read texts on genocide and has been trying to counter genocide claims. His method exists from breaking down the UN definition of genocide in components and reconstructing that definition in precisely such a way that, according to him, the new definition is no longer applicable to the fate of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915. Aware of the fact that biological racism did not play a significant ideological role during the genocide, he insists on racism as a *conditio sine qua non* of genocides. In a column Aktan elucidates this, aristotelic and apologetic: "Without racism there can be no genocide. There is no racism in Turkish history."

To disseminate his ideas among Turks, Aktan travels around a lot in Europe. On December 1, 2005, the Turkish embassy organized a lecture by Aktan in the Mercury Hotel in The Hague in the Netherlands. Approximately 50 people listened carefully as Aktan opened with a bold claim: "Genocide can only be defined by jurists, not by social scientists or historians." Hereafter he embarked on a tedious discussion of formulations and interpretations of the UN definition in an attempt to delegitimize its applicability to the Armenian case. The fact that the UN definition is limited to mass murder against ethnic and religious groups was an opportunity for Aktan to define Ottoman Armenians as a "political group." Unmistakably, this was a cynical attempt to justify the draconic measures retrospectively. Furthermore, Aktan claimed that "the West" had invented racism and therefore was responsible for all misery in the history of mankind. As a grand finale he fulminated: "We Turks are the ones who have been enduring a genocide for a century!" Recently, Aktan has abused the ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case brought by Bosnia-Herzegovina against Serbia by arguing that if there had been killings of Armenians in 1915, the Ottoman government was not responsible for them.

Another Turkish author who writes on genocide is Dr. Sefa Martin Yurukel, a social anthropologist partly educated in Denmark. Several years ago, Yurukel launched an ambitious project: a series of books on the history of genocide. The first volume has been published and aims, according to the introduction, "to strive for a scientific

and neutral perspective, prepared in a western academic discipline, using sources and theories of western scholars and rapporteurs." Not surprisingly, the content and tone of the book is dubious; in a highly involved and polemical way, he writes about the violent practices of colonialism and the persecution and expulsion of Balkan Muslims throughout the 20th century. His texts are, under the cloak of serious scholarship, a moral and political effort to project onto "the West" a comprehensive "guilt question" (*Schuldfrage*).

Yurukel often denied the destructive nature of the persecutions of Ottoman Armenians in 1915. Disputing the application of the term "deportation" and disregarding the vast body of academic literature on deportations (such as in the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany), Yurukel equates "deportation" with "expulsion." He contends that the treatment of the Ottoman Armenians did not constitute deportation but "relocation," since the Armenians were not forced out of the country but "relocated" within Ottoman borders. Obviously he confuses North American immigration laws (in which "deportation" means expulsion of illegals from the country) with the state-sponsored organized mass movements, indeed such as under Stalin. However, Yurukel did coin a new concept, when he noted in an interview that "the Turkish nation-state is facing a 'nation-state genocide.' This genocidal siege is conducted by the Westerners and their internal allies, the minorities and so-called intellectuals."

Returning to the difference in ontology, this manifests itself most clearly in a recent Turkish-language book on genocide written by Ahmet Sahin Aksoy. The book carries the suggestive title "Excuse me...did you say genocide?" (*Affedersiniz... soykirim mi dediniz?*) and comprises a recital of a long series of violations in the history of the United States and various European countries. Country per country, Aksoy superficially lists subjects such as colonialism, imperialism, slavery and genocide. The book is a hodgepodge of whole and half truths, bombastic propaganda and hollow rhetoric, poured in a furious moral condemnation of "the West" and "Europe." Aksoy's book represents the average, pitiful quality of popular scientific books sold and read in Turkey. Though they differ, all of these three authors assume the complacent position that there was no Armenian Genocide in order to render everything they discuss serviceable to this judgement.

The suggestion that one should read translations of foreign books in Turkey is equally problematic. I reached this conclusion by coincidence when reading the Turkish translation of Yehuda Bauer's classic *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), when I encountered in minuscule letters the following text in the colophon:

"The allegations and statements on the so-called Armenian Genocide, mentioned in this book belong entirely to the author Yehuda Bauer. Staff member of Phoenix Publishing and translator Orhan Yakyn, who invested efforts in this book, cannot be held responsible for these allegations and statements at all. Due to copyright agreements with Yale Representation Ltd. the aforementioned parts could not be removed from the book."

When Bauer was invited to deliver a lecture in Amsterdam in September 2006, he was unaware of this note in his own book. Moreover, during a conference in New York, a colleague from Sabanci University in Istanbul calmly reminded me that many Turkish translations of books on European history contained serious (self-) censorship and textual mutilation. In standard works such as Mark Mazower's *Dark Continent*, John Keegan's *The First World War*, Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the*

An Ever-Lasting Punishment for Us All in Turkey

BY AYSE GUNAYSU

It has been 92 years since April 24, 1915, since the knock on the door of Krikor Zohrab's home and those of Komitas, Siamanto, Taniel Varoujan and more than 300 Armenian intellectuals, deputies, writers, musicians and priests—in other words those who represented the best qualities of the Armenian people. The knock on the door was the signal of the first genocide of the 20th century, the annihilation of an entire civilization that would have been, if history had proceeded along a different course, one of the cornerstones—in fact creators—of a democratic, truly multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-cultural Turkey, rich in soul, enlightened in mind, and unreservedly open to the best that the human legacy can offer. History proceeded the other way around, however, and honored not the righteous but the strongest. Not only were one of the most progressive, most enlightened people in the world wiped off their homeland, together with any physical manifestations of its age-old existence, but those who were left behind, the Muslim inhabitants of Asia Minor, were condemned to a long-lasting punishment. Since that night, the night of April 23-24, 1915, the descendants of the guilty and the bystanders and all who were left behind have never known what it is like to live in a truly democratic country, where the flag, the territory and the state are not more valuable than human life. They have never known what it is like to co-exist with people of other identities without overt-covert humiliations, prejudices and hostilities. They have never known what it is like to live under the rule of a state that does not subordinate everything to the interests of its continuity, its alleged "survival." The immeasurable wealth usurped brought no richness, nor did it generate any prosperity or well-being.

The punishment was not only political, economic or social, but also moral. Those left

behind have never been part of a collective identity that knows what it is like to weep and to pray after their fellow countrymen who they once shared a life with. And they have thus never had the chance to achieve a spiritual and moral elevation of this kind. The darkest depths of human nature that enable one to see what one would like to see and to know what one would like to know, combined with a successful official strategy of disinformation, create a society trapped in a world of oblivion and ignorance where basic values are turned upside down and criminal acts are praised as acts of patriotism.

As for living in a world of oblivion and ignorance, the missing parts can't simply be replaced with the relevant pieces of knowledge, or by merely learning the facts, because the lack of this kind of knowledge generates, generation after generation, an inability of sharing the suffering of the other and of dissociating oneself from the attributed collective identity. By distorting the facts, the state apparatus distorts the system of values, convictions, and ability to reason and to draw conclusions.

Many dissidents in Turkey, including myself, discovered late that we were unaware of our ignorance, that we didn't even know that we didn't know. It is not a gap that can be bridged simply by reading and learning more. It has caused a delay in our intellectual and emotional capacities to truly grasp all aspects of the loss.

Ninety-two years after April 24, there seems to be no real hope for improvement in Turkey, at least not in the short to medium

term. Improvement can not be measured by economic indicators such as inflation figures, direct foreign investment inflow, or annual economic growth, nor sociological indicators such as the increasing use of mobile tele-

a never weakening Turkish nationalism engraved in the tiniest cells of the society and the ruling apparatus.

Justice and reconciliation, therefore, will remain a distant aspiration until the entire so-



Graphic by Firuz Kutsal (www.kutsal.com)

phones. It refers, instead, to the flourishing of a culture of true democracy. There is no hope in the near future because the spirit of April 24 and the elements of this spirit still prevails in Turkey: first, the concept of an omnipotent state ruling over all civil and human rights, a concept widely accepted and enthusiastically supported by the general public; secondly the dominance of violence both as a manner of government and as a popular culture of living, thirdly militarism not only a key component of the regime but also as a common psyche shared by the great majority of the society; and last but not least,

society begins to transform and not just the ruling elite. It is wishful thinking that Turkey will soon confront the truth of April 24 because of the vicious circle that is in operation and in full force: Without democratization, a confrontation is out of the question; and without such a confrontation, no democracy can prevail. So we, the Turkish dissidents, will have to face the fact that every April 24, for many years to come, we will voice our call for the recognition of the Genocide not out of any optimism or hope for immediate improvement but out of a moral obligation and responsibility we must carry as humans.

Late at Night

BY AYDA ERBAL

Some were born in Konia, some in Nicomedia (Adapazari), some in Gumushhane, some in Palu. Contrary to official history's distortions, they were not the voice of just a handful of people living in parts of the Armenian vilayets of the Empire. God knows when they came from Symrna, Adana, the Chenguiler village of Yalova, Yenidjeh of Green Bursa, Skopje, Cyprus, the many distant corners of Balkans and Anatolia, to end up in the music halls, publishing houses, classrooms, courthouses, banks and parliament of a then-grand Empire. They were the writers, musicians, publishers, architects, teachers, professors, bankers, lawyers, poets and journalists of the once-upon-a-time-cosmopolitan Ottoman Empire.

It was late at night...

The oldest was 60 years old, the youngest 23. They were writing, painting, thinking, singing. Did they suffer from a bemusement typical to writers and painters, of being lost in their thoughts? Or, on the contrary, were they alert and glittering because their hearts were filled with the joys of a new century promising brotherhood and equal rights? Did they know each other? Were they pro-Ottoman, pro-Russian or pro-American? Were they aware of the fact that their ideological and political differences would be rendered futile in a couple of days by the unforgiving hand of their own state—the guarantor of their rights? Did they have the slightest idea that they would be equalized

in torture and death when they asked for freedom and "equality before law" for all their compatriots, men and women, Muslim, Jew, Christian and atheist?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp...

Reminiscent of all mortals who are into thinking and writing, they probably assumed they could postpone their inescapable escapade—their death—by writing and raving and thinking, by leaving their mark on the sand to tease the monsters of total oblivion... To say, "To create is to resist death," is imperfect indeed. Yes, to create is to resist death but only—a big but only—in good times... Creating in troubled times is the knot of the gallows ready to attack a person from his most vulnerable side: his neck, the fragile flower of pleasure and death... Did their beloveds have time to kiss goodbye? How do you kiss your beloved, your best friend in life with the knowledge that this may be your last kiss? What do you say exactly? A naive "See you tomorrow"?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp... To be exact, April 1915 was the year and month...

Did they have time to say goodbye to their followers the day before, the month before or in their last issues? Did they not tell them, "We are about to leave this world, sa'laam to all remainders"? Were they disloyal or even uncaring of their readers? Speaking of readers, did not they have any close friends within the government? Didn't

anybody warn them of their heart-wrenching fate? Was there not a single corner left to hide in that huge Empire? What did they eat and drink during that unfortunate night?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp... To be exact, April 1915 was the year and month... It was the 11th of April on the old calendar...

The same night, hundreds of thousands—somewhat worrisome though not entirely persuaded by the rumors of an approaching tumultuous calamity—were sleeping sound and crawling deep in their dreams. Some were already sleepless and we still are...

How else do you explain the deep amethyst circles engraved around the eyes of most of us?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp... To be exact, April 1915 was the year and month... It was the 11th of April on the old calendar... Darkness grabbed some souls and declared its own evil republic...

How would you indeed go back to sleep if your beloved was uprooted from your bosom and taken to the heart of darkness, to the unknown deep forests where even trees wept and wanted to die? How on earth, please, tell us how could we?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp... To be exact, April 1915 was the year and month... It was the 11th of April

on the old calendar... Darkness grabbed some souls, declared its own evil republic and recruited a ruthless army of followers...

How did the door ring? What did the lovers, sisters, moms and dads say among each other the first time they heard the faceless darkness banging the door? What did they think it was? In how many different ways could you interpret "Some people from the government are asking for you" then and now? Did they even have time to dress? Did they shave? Did they resist?

It was late at night... Like all spring nights of Thrace it was a little cold and damp... To be exact, April 1915 was the year and month... It was the 11th of April on the old calendar and 24th on the new... Darkness, it was darkness all around...

They did not have their women by their side, they left us at home, barren. We are still looking for our halves. They had names, they had their books published, they had their newspapers, journals, they had their friends and they had their enemies.

Spring nights in Thrace would never be the same after that night...

They lingered around as a gentle zephyr on the cheeks and lips of their loved ones... Yet, against all odds they survived and are reborn out of their ashes like a proud Phoenix, they still live side by side with those who make this putrid life more bearable. Their names were Zohrab, Vartkes, Harutyun, Sempad, Karekin, Nazaret, Diran, Khachadur, Onnik among many others and now Hrant...

Turkey at a Crossroads, as Always

AN INTERVIEW WITH AMBERIN ZAMAN OF THE ECONOMIST

BY KHATCHIG MOURADIAN

"Turkey is always at a crossroads," I said. "That's what we have been reading in the newspapers in Turkey and in the West for years now. It seems it is convenient to stay at a crossroads."

There is no choice but to take the road to EU integration, he insisted. It is the only way to bring freedom of expression, minority rights and democracy to Turkey. For Turkish-Armenians, too, it is crucial. "There are people in this country who—if given the chance—would slaughter us again," he told me.

This was in June 2005 in Istanbul.

On Jan. 19, 2007, I woke up to a phone call from Turkey. "It is all over Turkish TV," I was told. "They killed him."

Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink was slaughtered in front of the editorial offices of his newspaper Agos. He had met one of the people who was "given the chance" and acted upon it.

Three months have passed since Dink's murder, and—you guessed it—the country is still at a crossroads. I talked about today's Turkey with Amberin Zaman, Turkey correspondent for the Economist.

"Even I, as a journalist, have to measure my words very very carefully, because I don't know when some extremist will consider what I said to be 'insulting Turkishness' and take me to court on that," Zaman says in this interview. "It's a very nefarious, poisonous atmosphere that we live in today, and all the more so because we really can't pinpoint where the danger is coming from. And what's really obscene about it is that these people use Turkish law to attack intellectuals," she adds.

Khatchig Mouradian—How does an election year differ from typical years in Turkey? What makes this election year special?

Amberin Zaman—In a typical election year, you have all of the issues in the country being debated and politicians claiming that they have the solutions to these problems. There's a lot of noise, a lot of propaganda. But this is a quite unique year because we have both presidential and parliamentary elections.

For the presidential elections, the government is in a position to elect its own candidate, because the ruling party has a majority in the parliament. We haven't seen this for a long time in Turkey, not since former Prime Minister Turgut Ozal managed to elevate himself to the presidency back in the early 90s.

The ruling AK [Justice and Development] party has brought political Islam closer to the political center; and despite all the scare mongering that's going on, it will win the next election. People don't buy the Islamist bogeyman stories anymore. That is not to say that the forces that oppose democracy won't keep pulling deadly tricks out of their bag. But I truly believe their days are numbered. The real threat to Turkey in my opinion comes from instability on its southern border. The worst thing that could happen would be for Turkey to intervene militarily in Iraq, and there is no dearth of hotheads calling for this. The other big issue is corruption and sadly the AK party is not as "white" as its name claims. The parallel economy, which accounts for roughly half of the economy by the Economy Minister's own admission, is sucking up huge resources that could help alleviate poverty in the southeast, for instance.

This time around, the issue has taken a particular significance because the secular camp, led by the military, is arguing that if the AK party manages to elect its own candidate, and particularly if this candidate happens to be Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's secularism, its westward

orientation, will be at stake.

On the other hand, there are liberals who argue that if Turkey is a democracy and if a party has a majority, then it is perfectly legitimate for it to have its own candidate—be it the Prime Minister or somebody else—and elevate him to the presidency.

In this case, there is the added twist of the Islamic style headscarf. Critics argue that the scarf, worn by more than half the spouses of members of Erdogan's cabinet, is a sign of Islamic militancy and not just an expression of personal piety. So there is incredible debate revolving around, I must say, a woman's head.

K.M.—It has become a cliché to say that Turkey is torn between the East and the West, Islam and secularism, totalitarianism and democracy, etc. What are your thoughts on this duality paradigm?

A.Z.—I disagree with that paradigm because over the past few years, and particularly with the AK party's rise to power, modern democracy, rule of law and human rights have all found expression in ways that have also captured the imagination of pious people in this country. I think the people who tend to portray overtly pious politicians as Islamic fundamentalists are just afraid of losing power. They are scared of change. They don't want a Turkey that's open and transparent.

K.M.—Does the ruling party push the democracy project because it is aware that this is the only way it can survive?

A.Z.—Yes, they fully understand that democracy is the only way forward for the country and indeed for their own survival, because the forces that oppose them can only be countered through democracy and the EU project.

Let us also not forget about market forces. The market economy has also played a big role in helping cement democracy in this country. The average Turk can now project 4-5 years into the future, something they were unable to do just a few years ago. The Turkish lira is now stable and inflation has been brought under control. The Turkish consumer is rather happy and does not want to see any of that threatened by political tension. And I think that lesson has been taken on board by the Turkish military, especially after the huge financial crisis in 2001 when everyone woke up to the reality of globalization—that what happens in Turkey has an impact abroad and vice versa.

K.M.—What are the main challenges Turkey faces on its path to democracy?

A.Z.—The Kurdish issue is a very key one. Being able to deal honestly with the past—the Armenian issue—is another key challenge. Accommodating Turkey's non-Muslims, non-Turks and non-Sunni Muslims is also a big challenge facing Turkey. And we still have quite a long way to go before finding solutions to all of these problems.

K.M.—You use the term democracy quite frequently when you talk about Turkey. How loosely are you using this term? How much of a democracy is Turkey?

A.Z.—If Turkey is to become a full democracy, there are several things that need to be fixed. First of all, it needs to reduce the role of the military. Unless you do that, it's pretty hard to fix the other problems.

K.M.—During Hrant Dink's funeral, tens of thousands of mourners chanted, "We are all Hrants, We are all Armenian." Yet, a nationalist backlash was also evident in the aftermath of the killing. What has changed in Turkey after January 19 [the day Dink was assassinated]?

A.Z.—I don't know if anything changed. I think it is a question of what emerged. I think what emerged during

Hrant's funeral was that a lot of Turkish people—despite all this nationalism, despite all this fear of the other—were able to empathize with the Armenians who have been portrayed as the enemy even though they happen to be Turkish citizens and have lived on these lands for thousands of years. This is an extremely important development.

Yes, there has been a backlash, but the very fact that over 100,000 Turks took to the streets raising placards saying they were all Hrant, were all Armenians is something quite extraordinary.

At Hrant Dink's funeral, the mourners—mostly middle-class Turks—felt horribly guilty, horribly ashamed. I think the forces that are opposed to change in this country were quite shocked and disturbed by that.

Yes, we have all these weird, creepy ultra-nationalists organizing across the country, but there is a parallel protest by an increasing number of Turks who want a more democratic, less paranoid country for themselves.

Regarding the Armenian issue, people are just trying to block what they suspect might have happened. There is "collective amnesia," as Elif Shafak calls it, carried down from generation to generation. I don't think it's a conscious denial. It's buried in the people's collective memory and now, finally, self-questioning has started in this country.

You also have to give credit to popular culture in this regard. A widely popular series called the "Valley of the Wolves," which appealed to all of our worst nationalistic instincts, has been taken off the air. This didn't happen because the EU told us to do so, but because hundreds of thousands of Turkish citizens believed that this was very harmful. And I think that Hrant's tragic death helped us realize this. And it was probably one of the very few instances as a journalist in this country that I ever saw this kind of spontaneous civic reaction actually materializing to something concrete.

We have this explosion of TV series that depict love affairs between Greeks and Turks. Indeed, one piece of extraordinary news emerged in the past few days that the very same production company that put out "Valley of the Wolves" also has a project to air a show about a love affair between a Turk and an Armenian. Popular culture is a very effective way to overcome stereotypes and taboos. It is not overtly political so people are much open to accept messages through popular culture than through the voices of various politicians and Western countries that lecture Turkey. I do believe civil society is really taking root in this country.

Still, there is this great resistance on the part of certain great forces to deal honestly with the past, because in fact it will challenge some of the notions on which the republic was founded. There is this almost existential fear about the issue—a siege mentality, a sense that these Western forces are using these "local collaborators" (Armenians, Kurds, non-Muslims) to dismember Turkey. Eighty years on, we still seem to be immersed in that sort of paranoia, which is very recklessly exploited not just by the army but by politicians as well.

It is my firm conviction that until Turkey deals honestly with its past, it will not be able to move forward. And I believe it is



now all coming to a head with Hrant's death. There is a collective malaise in this country born of the knowledge buried somewhere deep in the Turkish psyche that some pretty horrendous things happened before the Republic was formed. That is what propelled so many to take part in Hrant's funeral. It's almost as if they were trying to say, "We aren't all murderers." But then, so many other horrible things followed, though they were far from being on the same scale, that people didn't really have a chance to take stock. It's only now, after 10 years of largely uninterrupted democracy and a cooling down of the violence in the southeast, that we can reflect on the past. There has been a profusion of films and TV series questioning military interventions. Despite the intimidation campaign unleashed by the ultra nationalist thugs and their mentors, I think it's only a matter of time before the Armenian issue is debated in its proper context as it should be.

K.M.—But most people are still afraid to speak out in Turkey...

A.Z.—Even I, as a journalist, have to measure my words very very carefully, because I don't know when some extremist will consider what I said to be "insulting Turkishness" and take me to court on that. It's a very nefarious, poisonous atmosphere that we live in today, and all the more so because we really can't pinpoint where the danger is coming from. And what's really obscene about it is that these people use Turkish law to attack intellectuals.

K.M.—What are the prospects of Article 301 being removed?

A.Z.—The Prime Minister keeps saying that he is open to the idea of amending it, certainly not scrapping it altogether. It is an election year and like all politicians, the Prime Minister is very wary of losing nationalist votes. I frankly can't say with any certainty that we will see change in that law, but even if we amend Article 301, there are other laws out there that extremists can use to continue attacking intellectuals. What really needs to change as much as the law is the mentality in the country.

K.M.—How do you envision this change? Will it come from civil society, or are the powers that be so strong that change will only happen when they are ready to allow it?

A.Z.—I think it's a two-way process. There is a civil society that seems to be bearing fruit and at the same time there is some readiness to change at the top.

What makes the Turkish military very unique when you compare it to other mili-

'We Are All Oxymorons'

BY AYDA ERBAL

Seeing Hrant's lifeless body on a very familiar sidewalk in Istanbul prompted nightmares that every member of the Armenian community in Turkey consciously or unconsciously suppresses for the sake of sanity. For, we are the best pretenders in a sea of millions of other pretenders. What unites all of us as Turkish citizens, apart from language, culture, etc. is our pretending. If I may argue, the most revolutionary quote of Mr. Orhan Pamuk regarding the realities of Turkish society is, indeed, not the one that he uttered during his interview with the Swiss magazine *Das Bild*. As a matter of fact, one of his main protagonists in *The Black Book* confesses hopelessly: "Nobody can be himself in this country... In the country of the defeated and the sheepish, to exist means to be somebody else."¹

Despite being razor-sharp, Pamuk's observation still needs some qualifiers. The truth is the more you are perceived as a threat to the mainstream values of the republic, the more you have to excel in your denial of yourself. It's indeed fascinating that the only people that have been accused of *taqiyah*² in Turkish society so far are the adherents of Islamist ideology, whereas only a very small portion of Turkish society—its ruling elite, the intellectuals and the entertainment industry connected to this ruling elite—have the luxury of being themselves without being afraid for their lives. Unfortunately, if there is a kingdom of denial in Turkey, it has a couple of capitals, not just Ankara, and one of these capitals of daily denial is in the heartland of its minority communities.

Contrary to common belief, however, Armenians are not the only ones who have to practice the art of oblivion on a daily basis. If you are a Turkish Jew still adamant on sending your children to the only Jewish school operating in Istanbul, you have to forget that they will be attending school under heavy security measures. If you are an Armenian, you have to be even more prone to oblivion, so that you can send your children to schools whose demands for more security have been declined by the authorities. Now, besides your daily worries, you have to also think about ways for securing your schools. All this, because you are born as a minority in a country where intellectuals think that things got worse only because now they, too, need security guards. I have not heard of any intellectual terribly disturbed by the fact that, for example, Jewish kids have to go to school under heavy security measures or that synagogues have to operate under even tighter precautions since the 2003 synagogue bombing³ and the assassination of Yusef Yahya.⁴ But none of these made it in the discussion circles or the front pages of mainstream newspapers, let alone the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*. Indeed, it could not. We, as members of minority communities, should not talk about the afore-mentioned. And a few intellectuals who can get a spot in the major international newspapers would rather delve shamelessly into the business of PR for themselves and Turkey by framing and reframing Hrant's assassination.⁵

Still, you have to pretend as if everything is all right, if you want to live in a country where technically speaking you have a right to exist peacefully no less than your Turkish Sunni neighbor. Being an Armenian from Turkey not only means that you have to be a con artist for life, but that you also have to carry an extreme amount of patience so that your forcefully inflicted schizophrenia does not become real.

One way of coping with our miserable fate is to internalize our condition and start loving that which is not lovable under normal psychological conditions. In this situation, our need for and dependence on a political culture that acts pretty much like a hostage-taker may manifest itself as "love," and since we also believe that this must be love, we may indeed start thinking like our hostage-taker. This is called Stockholm syndrome⁶ and this is what the majority of Armenians

from Turkey have to suffer from all their lives. All of us, including the late Hrant Dink, suffer from Stockholm syndrome; and we usually tend to think that if we find a proper emotional language, our plight would be understood by the masses, who will maybe one day develop their own Lima syndrome.⁷ That's the ultimate dream of educated Armenians from Turkey who cannot make it elsewhere other than our homeland proper—the one that Hrant was also unable to leave. Either you chose to stay relevant and become politically involved and risk getting killed because of your involvement, or you choose to be reduced to total irrelevancy in another country—which is of course a subtle way of being killed. Especially if you are an intellectual, journalist, artist or writer, this second version of being killed over and over again during all those years of undoing and redoing yourself in different, strange and sometimes hostile cultures, is the only thing that you share with the other lucky (!) Armenians from around the world. Your ability to survive in partial-death situations connects you to your fellow Armenians, especially if they are from the Middle East.

Yet, you slowly become immune until one day, one of you gets assassinated again. Then you start asking yourself, Was he able to explain himself? Will they understand us this time? Were they aware of his and our limitations?

As others were glued to their computers and TV screens after the assassination, I struggled with these and many other existentially disturbing questions. Reading the media coverage on Hrant—an editor, among other things, whose newspaper few people took seriously—was a serious challenge, one that even Albert Camus' characters would have given up earlier.

I am not saying people did not love Hrant, but they loved him for the wrong reasons and with very little information about Hrant, the real man, and about Agos, an initially joint *Bolsahye* effort in which even the Patriarchate was indirectly involved. I unfortunately cannot demonstrate this, but I know for a fact that even the Turkish Intelligence Service read Agos and Hrant more than his so-called friends who inundated the world and the Turkish media with their crocodile tears. I cannot count 10 prominent Turkish intellectuals who were avid Agos readers for the last 6-7 years. Again, I cannot count 10 prominent Turkish intellectuals who have some organic ties with the Armenian community beyond Agos. It's not because the Armenian community was hostile or closed, it's because they did not want to ask real questions about the community; it was convenient for them to be taken up by the friendship and peace discourse partially authored by Hrant himself. Most of them atheists—which in the Turkish context translates to theologically illiterate—they could not have a real talk with the Armenian society without despising them deep down, the way they—and not just the military—secretly despise their own Muslims.

No wonder Hrant Dink, whose companion, lover and wife Rakel chose to wish farewell with a metaphorical speech highly ornamented with Christian symbolism, had to conceal this part of his identity very well. Maybe they were even surprised to learn after his death that he was occasionally visiting the Protestant minister asking him to pray for him; I do not know many atheist Turkish intellectuals going to an Imam and asking him to pray for them. For those of us who knew Hrant since we were teens, his visit was indeed just normal. Wasn't he one of the best pupils and friends of a former Istanbul Patriarch? But no, Turkish journalists would rather choose to reduce Hrant, who was a real character, to a type made up of exaggerations and incomplete information, to a type that they came to believe that only they were able to understand and only they were able to love. Even Perihan Magden, who had been tried numerous times because of her unbinding position regarding conscientious objection and whom I respect very much otherwise, could not escape from this fallacy of not being able to understand an Armenian

character, and not just any Armenian character but one from Turkey.⁸ It seems that these people had not even spent a little time to think about Shakespeare's *King Lear*. For most of us, the issue was crystal clear. Just as Albert Camus says, "I love my country too much to be a nationalist," we—even those of us who criticized him—loved Hrant too much to be a superficial Hrantist. We knew his limitations, we knew what it means to be an orphan always in need of love, because most of us third generation Anatolian Armenians grew up in total or semi-orphaned situations, just like Hrant; we spent enough time to think about denial psychologically and philosophically, not just genocide denial but other more subtle and much more intricate yet still human ways of partial self-denial; we were exposed to the giants of world literature and we knew a thing or two about a real character. Moreover, we understood Rakel's farewell letter with all its symbols and allegories, not just one freely chosen metaphor over others about a darkness who is able to create murderers out of babies.

Only a very small portion of the said newspaper columnists—so little in numbers that one can even remember them by their names—were able to understand what it is to be an Armenian in Turkey, and the reason Hrant, among all other public figures, was chosen as the target: his Armenianness. And not just any Armenianness. In this case, it was an Armenianness that had the courage to challenge the official Turkish historiography, and its semi-official academic and literary variations.

The rest were involved in an almost pornographic account of telling anecdotes about Hrant, trying to get a share from the bounty that was an assassinated Hrant. I could not help but remember a sentence from the introduction of Falih Rifki Atay's *Cankaya*, an unconventional biography of Atatürk.⁹ In it, Atay, albeit with Orientalist undertones says: "There is no such thing as true character in the East. There is either glorification or vilification. Either the man blinds you and you have to glorify him or he despises you and you have to tear him into pieces in mockery. People will tell you anecdotes about the man but few will spend time to understand the man." Such had indeed been the fate of Hrant. He and his ever-evolving legacy were recycled ruthlessly and emptied of their substance totally.

I am, of course, not implying that there should have been nothing written on Hrant¹⁰. But there were instances of high drama which at least some of us Istanbul-Armenians had a hard time believing in. A Turkish novelist, for example, tried to convince her audience in Turkish that she dried up after she heard about the assassination, that she could no longer think straight and write; but the same person was able to write a very rationally calculated piece for the *Wall Street Journal* the same day, as if going through a checklist of sorts, whose last item after her PR campaign for Turkey was to campaign for her own book. The same person would turn her own NPR segments to a locus of further, shameless PR campaigns full of some romantic and then unsubstantiated ramble about "who indeed the real Turkey was." She was trying to convince the world audience that the real Turkey is not that who killed Hrant Dink but those 100,000 people who filled the streets of Istanbul (which reminded us one more time that most, if not all, of the intellectuals in Turkey are indeed gatekeepers no matter how post nationalist they think they are). Hrant did not have another choice, yet these people, who are technically the owners of Turkey, could have been more unfeeling in their critique. But no, in all the international coverage they rather chose to behave like a peasant who has a hard time accepting that his yogurt is indeed sour.

Among other shocking things most probably written with good intentions, almost 95 percent of the coverage after Hrant's death could not help but refer to Hrant's being more patriotic than even themselves. In other words, while on the one hand every one of them was amazed by the fact that an Arme-

nian could love those lands more than they, on the other hand, they, not so discreetly, alluded to the proper ways of behaving for their minorities. As if everybody was trying to prove something to the Turkish right: "See you do not even know who you killed, you killed the greatest patriots of all times. Stupid you Ogun Samast and friends!" Almost all of them sounded as if it was a bigger sin to kill a Turkish Armenian who was able to finally prove his patriotism during his lifetime than a regular Turkish Armenian who did not feel it necessary to do so just to be heard.

These were the same people who did not even know how to defend freedom of speech against the likes of Kemal Kerinciz or the mainstream Turkish center and center right. I do not remember a single soul who had the guts to hypothetically ask: "So what, let's say he denigrated Turkishness. What's the big deal?" As if freedom of speech meant freedom of being interpreted correctly. The sad thing is that whoever tried to stand by Hrant did so by pointing at "misinterpreting judges." The same is true of Elif Shafak who instead of standing by her freedom of expression, generously used her freedom of escapism by saying "I did not say those words, my characters did." The only person who was able to show true intellectual courage was Taner Akcam, whose case that involved using the term genocide was recently dropped.

This narrative on patriotism was blended with an equally disturbing narrative of pitting Hrant against the Diaspora, based on a couple of writings, as if Hrant could have been an independent and unconstrained thinker in a country where Turkish Sunni Muslim intellectuals are afraid of their own shadows and have many trepidations about the subject being discussed, as if there really is a way for a Turkish Armenian to be, in this case, himself. Indeed, the sad thing is that a single week does not go by where there is not a meeting of intellectuals in which the ritual of the day is bashing the Diaspora...

Only one Turkish journalist—Yildirim Turker—seemed to be aware of Hrant's limitations, though he was not inquisitive about them. Indeed nobody, other than the few *Bolsahyes* who were aware of his limitations as a journalist, activist and as a man de plume would dare to make a fuss about it... The rest would rather choose to not connect the dots, and immerse themselves in a euphoria that will die down as years pass. A euphoria indeed that most of us who grew up in the '80s and '90s and witnessed one too many political assassinations (including the Sivas catastrophe that claimed 37 lives) are totally indifferent to and unimpressed by. For me, the seeds of their future performance are ingrained in their skewed perception of today's Armenian Diaspora, or rather their inability and unwillingness to grasp what the Armenian Diaspora is all about: a couple of million of stubborn individuals who on average had 7-8 Hrant's in their own immediate families. My impression is that just like they want the evil and obsessed Diaspora to bow down to bait and switch policies that they are packaging in fancy words and discourses which did not work and dead elsewhere—i.e., a wishy-washy reconciliation discourse (let's open the borders and let's call it off)—they will probably be ready to forget the chain of dark relations that killed Hrant for a brighter Turkish-Armenian future. As if such friendship based on shaky bait and switch grounds could ever happen. Unfortunately, they are the ones who would not mind killing a young child for a brighter future for all of us, a tough dilemma that Ivan Karamazov of the *Karamazov Brothers* leaves us alone with. They are trying to turn Hrant in a sense to that innocent child. But neither Hrant was an innocent child or angel—as none of us grown ups can indeed be—nor is it OK to expect goodness out of a murder.

Until we spend some real effort to understand why Hrant really got killed, my friends, we are all impossibilities, we are all oxymorons...

The Impact of the Genocide on Armenian National Identity

BY RAZMIK PANOSSIAN

The Genocide had a profound impact on Armenian national identity. The millennia-long evolution of collective identity formation on historic territories came to an abrupt end. The shock of the Genocide itself transformed the identity of the survivors. The following six factors emanating from the Genocide defined, to a large degree, what it meant to be Armenian in the 20th century. Of course, the Genocide is not the only defining characteristic of “Armenianness,” but it has come to be a dominant feature, particularly in the Diaspora.

First and foremost, the Genocide was the great “equalizer” of identity.¹ *Everyone* became a victim. Being Armenian meant being a survivor of the Genocide, and therefore a member of a community of sufferers. This mentality of victimhood, which was an important part of Armenian identity for centuries, and which the revolutionary parties had tried so hard to overcome from the late 19th century onwards, once again was ingrained as the central element of Armenian collective consciousness—at least until the 1970s, when a new wave of Armenian radicalism arose. Post-Genocide literature reflected the mentality of victimhood and trauma. The notion was perpetuated from year to year at Genocide commemorations and publications.

Armenians commemorate the Genocide every April 24. On that evening, in 1915, close to 600 Armenian intellectuals and political leaders were arrested in Constantinople and eventually killed. This decapitated the nation, and it was the opening act of the Genocide. The first formal commemoration was in 1919, and since then Armenians worldwide remember the victims every year. In Armenia, the population visits the Genocide memorial (Dzidzernagapert, in Yerevan), while in the Diaspora commemorative events are held in community centers and churches, and at local Genocide monuments. Four themes are intertwined in such commemorations: 1) the obvious point that “We are a victim nation” and all of our dead of 1915 are “martyrs”; 2) the notion of suffering a great injustice which still continues, because 3) “We have been expelled from our historic homeland.” This leads to a longing for the “lost lands” which are awaiting the return of their “true inhabitants”; and finally, 4) the more radical use of the opportunity to demand justice, revenge and retribution, often using the Armenian word *pahanjatirutiun* (to demand and protect what is your own).

The last theme had its precedent in the 1920s. It is based on the desire to redress the sense of victimhood through acts of revenge. In the early 1920s, the ARF devised a secret program to punish the main perpetrators of the Genocide and the 1918 Baku massacres. In what was known as “Operation Nemesis,” Dashnak volunteers tracked down and assassinated some of the key CUP members and a few other officials. Most famously, Soghomon Tehlirian killed the former Young Turk Interior Minister, Talaat Pasha, a key architect of the Genocide, in Berlin in March 1921. Tehlirian was subsequently acquitted by a German court.² Importantly, despite the overwhelming sense of victimhood, the acts of these assassins wove an element of revenge and retribution into post-Genocide Armenian mentality, especially among the Dashnak side of the Diaspora.

Even though the Genocide was the complete defeat of Western Armenia, there were nevertheless instances of resistance and rebellion. Coupled with the 1920s punitive assassinations, these moments of armed action entered Armenian

consciousness as yet other examples of heroic defense of the fatherland. The Armenians of Van defended their city against Ottoman forces in April-May 1915. But after a few weeks, they had to abandon the city in a new Turkish offensive. The surviving Armenians of Van retreated along with the Russian armies. Without the latter’s continuing support, resistance would have been futile. The most significant action celebrated by Armenians is the battle of Musa Ler (or Musa Dagh), in south-eastern Turkey near the Mediterranean coast, where a small group of villages chose to resist rather than obey the deportation order. For nearly two months (July-August 1915), they held at bay the far superior Ottoman army. Close to 4,000 Ar-

menians were eventually rescued by passing French ships. After moving around many times, the survivors were relocated to northern Lebanon (in Anjar) in the 1930s. This was a small victory given the scale of destruction elsewhere, and by no means typical of Armenian behaviour during the Genocide. Musa Ler, and to a lesser degree Van, occupy significant

The Diaspora condition was seen as a perpetuation of the Genocide: the loss of the homeland, followed by the loss of identity through the dangers of cultural assimilation in foreign lands.

places in national identity because they symbolize the Armenians’ will to resist. The second point about the Genocide and identity continues from the notion of victimhood. It is the transformation of the Diaspora into a community of genocide victims. Diaspora, by definition, was always associated with exile and hardship, but after 1915 these notions were magnified and reinforced. It was no longer a Diaspora of merchants, laborers, fortune seekers, intellectuals and political exiles. Rather, it was of refugees, starving survivors and a deeply scarred people. Moreover, the Diaspora and the homeland no longer co-existed as two parts of the same nation, with their strong reinforcing links. Since the homeland side was completely decimated—physically lost—the Diaspora no longer had the option to return. This exacerbated the sense of loss and of victimhood.

Diaspora was always associated with exile and hardship, but after 1915 these notions were magnified and reinforced. It was no longer a Diaspora of merchants, laborers, fortune seekers, intellectuals and political exiles. Rather, it was of refugees, starving survivors and a deeply scarred people.

Armenianness acquired additional layers of identity after 1915; the nation was not only a victim of genocide, but also a victim condemned to live in dispersion. The Diaspora condition was seen as a perpetuation of the Genocide: the loss of the homeland, followed by the loss of identity through the dangers of cultural assimilation in foreign lands. Armenians powerfully call the assimilation process “the white massacre.” Decades after 1915, the

wounds of 1915 remained open, and the notion of the “evil Turk” was perpetuated in popular Armenian culture. Turkishness was considered immoral, dirty and violent. Anti-Turkishness was therefore accepted as a “natural” and inherently “good” attitude. Only after three generations is this attitude beginning to change among the younger generations, particularly in the western Diaspora. Of course, this is a generalization, and some Armenians and Turks maintained good and even friendly relations at a personal level. However, such personal links did not translate to collective rapprochement—something that is only beginning now within certain academic and intellectual circles. The only significant community where Armenian perceptions of Turks evolved in a different manner is in Turkey.

The issue of identity politics and the Genocide, particularly in the Diaspora, is the fifth point. Much of the work of the Armenian lobby in Washington, in Paris, and in other capitals around the world, centers on the recognition of the Genocide by different governments as a means to put pressure on Turkey. For example, practically every April, the Armenian lobby in the United States tries to get a Genocide resolution passed in Congress. Part of the Armenian effort has to do with the terminology used to refer to the

events of 1915. Armenians insist on the use of the word genocide by the world community rather than the less forceful term massacres (which does not necessarily imply intent to eliminate a people). The politics of genocide recognition has come to affect Armenian political identity in the Diaspora, especially after the 1970s. One of the terrorist organizations active in the 1980s was even called “The Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide,” i.e. commandos for the recognition of the Genocide.

The sixth and final point to be made is a partial qualification of the preceding arguments. It also highlights the continuing division in the evolution of Eastern and Western Armenian identity in the 20th century. Although the Genocide was a pan-Armenian wound, it physically affected only the Western Armenians. Eastern Armenians, in the Russian empire, did not experience it first hand, nor did they lose their land, although hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Ottoman Empire did escape to Russian—subsequently independent and then Soviet—Armenia. Moreover, the Soviet Union put a freeze on the Armenian Genocide issue until 1965, when it was officially commemorated for the first time in Yerevan. The Genocide, therefore, did not become the central element of Armenian identity in Eastern (i.e. Soviet) Armenia until a couple of generations later.

However, it did permeate Eastern Armenian identity. The Genocide entered Soviet Armenian consciousness as a *learned* injustice rather than an experienced reality. The idea of being victims of the Turks did exist, and was further nurtured by Soviet-inspired historiography. After 1965, Eastern Armenians, too, had the 1915 Genocide at the core of their identity, albeit not as prevalently as their Western, diasporacized brethren.

It is impossible to understand 20th century Armenian consciousness—particularly until 1988—without situating the Genocide at its very center. The elimination of Armenians from their historic lands in the Ottoman Empire was the ultimate “Catastrophe.”³

Despite the devastation and the loss of Western Armenia, the Young Turks did not succeed in eliminating the Armenian nation. In fact, many of the survivors developed a stronger sense of national consciousness. Having been on the verge of annihilation, Armenians developed a powerful will to survive. Once the sense of victimhood eased its debilitating hold on the Armenian psyche, martyrdom, mixed with rage and a national cause, drove subsequent generations to pursue national(ist) goals. The Genocide itself, including its denial, became the defining moment—the founding “moment”—of contemporary Armenian identity. Post-1915 Armenians, particularly in the Diaspora, saw themselves as “the first Christian nation” and “the first victims of genocide in the 20th century.”

This essay was extracted, with minor revisions, from the author’s book, The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars.

Endnotes

¹ I have borrowed this notion from Gerard Libaridian.

² In total six men were assassinated by Dashnaks between 1920 and 1922, while the seventh, Enver Pasha, was gunned down in a battle near Samarkand by Bolshevik forces (it is widely believed that it was, rather ironically, a unit of Armenian Bolsheviks who shot him). The Nemesis operation was headed by Armen Garo and Shahan Natali. The first was one of the young militants who had taken over Bank Ottoman in 1896 and who was the ambassador of the 1918–20 Armenian republic to the United States.

³ The term is Marc Nichanian’s.

Hand-Me-Down Genocide: Live in Technicolor

BY LUCINE KASBARIAN

The opening scene is always the same: Someone is trying to kill me. It happens in dark alleys, police raids, mob scenes or on my doorstep. Sometimes the assailants stalk on foot, other times on horseback. They surround my house or break into it. They wield switchblades, daggers or just bare hands. But no matter what the setting, one thing is constant: the predators are the Turks, and I am their prey.

Welcome to the dream world of “Hand-me-down Genocide,” where an Armenian provokes the Turks just for being who she is.

*Welcome to the
dream world of
“Hand-me-down
Genocide,” where
an Armenian pro-
vokes the Turks just
for being who she is.*

When my mother was a girl, Medzmairig knew no fairy tales. So at bedtime, Medzmairig would repeat to my mother the only story she could tell: how she survived the Massacres. What a way to put a child to sleep. I, too, learned early about the history that haunts us. So why should my own nightmares surprise me?

It isn't so much surprise that I feel. It's agony and distress. Some nights I dread falling asleep for fear of what will unfold. Then, there's a special dream variety I call the “Home Box Office version.” These scenarios occur in Western Armenia, and there, the dreams feel most life-like of all.

It doesn't seem a coincidence that in 1999, prior to Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan's capture in Kenya, I dreamt of a wedding on the island of Akhtamar. After all, today, our Tushpa is a hotly contested outpost among Turks and Kurds. In the dream, the azure waters of Lake Van were transparent. The tuf stones comprising Sourp Khatch Church were colored bright apricot. The tangy flavor of prunus armeniaca lingered on my tongue. In the dream, I was viscerally experiencing the Armenian proverb, “Van in this world, paradise in the next.” The groom stepped out of the pages of Roupén Ter Minasian's memoirs, with bandoliers strapped across his chest. I looked down, saw that I was wearing a traditional Armenian costume, and discovered that I was the bride. Even though I'd only seen photos of Akhtamar, our celebrated island in this dream seemed especially real. The solemn ceremony was a tremendous moment. It seemed as if every person our family ever shook hands with were present and hyper-aware that we had not only returned to our natural habitat, but to our ancient capital—if only to celebrate a wedding. And then, just as the folk musicians were about to commence the festivities with their davul and zurna, hordes of Turkish gendarmes trampled over the hills, drew their scimitars, and massacred every last Armenian. Destruction governed in our Garden of Eden. Butchery and bloodshed appeared all around. Time came to a standstill, followed by haunting, excruciating silence.

I woke in a cold sweat, trembling and terrified. The wedding proved fatal, and my guilt was immense. America adopted us as her children. And yet, in this dream, our instinctive urge to re-attach to the bosom of our natural mother Massis caused us to be eliminated once again.

Eight years have passed, and I'm still not over that dream. To say in retrospect today that the dream was precognitive—that the good intentions of some Armenians to see Akhtamar reborn would be met with disaster—would seem accurate. Even so, no clairvoyance was necessary to predict how the Turkish government would conduct the Akhtamar venture.

Weeks ago, another Abdullah—this time, Gul—was making the news. As Turkey's tactic to prevent passage of the Genocide Resolution unraveled, we saw a cunning lurking beneath simulated courtesy—not unlike that which I've witnessed in some Turkish restaurants. As Gul laid down Turkey's terms to Condi, the absurdist theater played out under my eyelids. The dream scene was Pamukkale. My parents and I were with a tour guide and group. The guide encouraged us to climb atop the caves and mounds, and pick talismans off them. Our feats reminded me of how tourists in present-day Armenia are invited to pause near mountains of obsidian on the road to Lake Sevan, and gather shards as mementos. Only, in the Pamukkale dream, our harvesting caused a stir among a Turkish hunting group nearby. Smartly dressed in lambs-wool caps, they turned their rifles on us and sprayed gunfire. We lay flat on the ground dodging bullets until there was quiet. The same tour guide who advised us eventually returned. She pointed an accusing finger at me, and admonished, “Don't you know not to take what doesn't belong to you?” I froze, pondered our actions, and complied. I sheepishly encouraged the others to return that which we'd taken, only to stop again in my tracks. I turned back and said: “Weren't you the one who encouraged us? Who are you to tell me what belongs to whom? These lands don't belong to you!”

In the morning, this dream didn't exactly endear me to “Come Home to Turkey,” as the new tourism commercials beckon us to do. But, it did remind me of the necessity to challenge hypocrisy. Perhaps the best thing of all in that dream was that I refused to play an Armenian victim.

Things have improved since the Native American “dream catcher” from St. Joseph's Indian School appeared in my mailbox. But how long will the greater burden we carry persist? Is it better to keep silent and spare our children this agony, or to boldly expose them to our treasured and tragic history—which when taken in totality, is a form of a birthright? At best, these dreams highlighted that which is unresolved. System of a Down calls it “recognition, reparation, restoration.” The spirits of our ancestors and the need to reclaim our rightful inheritance will hover over us despite any wishes to live untroubled lives in the present. Unfortunately—or fortunately—our destiny will follow us wherever we go.

The considerable task of rehabilitating Western Armenian life, culture and customs—on or off our historic lands, and in the aftermath of our unnatural catastrophe—is the legacy left to us. And anyway, it could always be worse: For captive communities struggling to persist as Armenians on these very lands, their nightmares occur when they are awake.

Letter to Hovsep

When beheaded
on your native soil
on a bright April day
by those with dark souls
whose brood still do worship
gray wolves on moonlit nights
you were a much younger man
than my sons—your own grandsons
whose blood was spilled that day
long before they were born...

That—we're told—is our yesterday
that never was or ever happened
to be banished from memory
and to be interred in haste
with your severed head
in the name of today
as a pack of gray wolves
howl a loud dirge of sublime
rapture and joy at the final burial
of all recall of their forebear's crime...

Allow me to call you Hovsep
since I am your elder now
and in my mind you are
and will forever be
the young father
of my mother
loving husband
of my grandmother...
Hovsep—my faceless
headless silent forebear
forever spouse and parent
mute and blind memory
of a lost grandfather...

Tatul Sonentz

* * *

Fasting

I loved the Lenten foods Grandmother prepared:
salads of purslane, pepper and slivered egg,
round meatless lentil “keuftch” topped with onion
cooked in olive oil until translucent, limp.
“Lent” the time of deprivation, was in remembrance
of Christ's forty days of trial. And it was part of
growing up. Where did it go? Grandmother always
fasted but told us children to eat, eat the Lenten foods.
Nowadays most Armenians fast only on April 24th
for other grandmothers forced to march and starve.
For the young women raped and nailed to
crosses row on row. For Armenian soldiers drafted
then shot by Turks. For Armenians burned
in churches as they prayed. For the butchered,
hungry and those driven mad, and for the drowned, —
we do not eat on April 24th.
But Grandmother would say, “No. Breaking bread
in the name of the lost is the best way to salute life.”

More Than Ninety Years

and no witnesses left
except those who were
small children and not
burned or smashed against
the walls, small children
old enough perhaps to walk
or young enough to be carried
but old enough to recall
once there had been tables
where they were fed
before they had to walk and
walk and walk. Once they had
fathers who had disappeared,
grandmothers who did not last
the walking, small children
who survived deserts, mountains
and thirst but were never apologized
to or acknowledged except by
small poems and sad songs.

Diana Der-Hovanesian

From the Deportation Routes to Yerevan

By MARIA TITIZIAN

In a quiet corner of a cemetery north of Yerevan are three almost identical gravestones. A master carver has lovingly inscribed them at the behest of an old man. They bear the names of his mother, sister and uncle. Carefully carved into each stone is the year of their passing, 1915. To an ordinary visitor this might seem heartrending, but the real tragedy dawns on you when you read the epitaph, "Perished on the Deportation Route." You see, beneath those gravestones there are no bodies, only the barren, weeping earth. Just before he died, the old man's only request was to be buried next to his loved ones, a promise that his grandchildren fulfilled. Gayane and her brother had soil brought from Van in Western Armenia, their grandfather's birthplace, to mix in with the soil that would receive him in Eastern Armenia. For her, this memorial that her grandfather needed to erect to immortalize his lost family and to bequeath to his grandchildren is what the Genocide represents.

Gayane is only the second generation to be born in Eastern Armenia, a fate shared by over half of the current population of Armenia. Her grandfather was from Van and her grandmother from Igdir. Her roots, torn away from the lands of Western Armenia, still haunt her. Her grandmother's only wish was to see Igdir again. Gayane was brought up on the stories of their lost homes and villages, of their lost childhood. For her the lost homeland is what the Genocide represents.

In her house, Western Armenian intermingled with Eastern Armenian. Many years have passed and her grandparents have all died. And even now when she hears the melodic sounds of Western Armenia she feels nostalgic. She, like the nation, is divided, split in half, no longer whole. Melancholy follows her everywhere. She can never go to Van because she would feel a sense of guilt and shame to see the lost homeland.

"How can I go?" she asks me plaintively.

I went to the lost homeland a few months ago. I traveled to Gars, Ani, Igdir, Bayazit, Van, Mush and Erzeroum. Every site I visited made me feel as though I was walking on the ashes of my forefathers. The ghostly ruins of Ani, where a thriving civilization had once existed, were now pillaged and crushed beneath my feet making every step seem sacrilegious. Even now as I labor to find the words to describe the thoughts reeling through my head the few hours I spent there seem empty and meaningless. The dilapidated churches, the desolate stretches of undulating grass, the Akhurian River, Mt. Aragats and Mt. Ararat bearing witness as I walked eyes cast downward, too ashamed to acknowledge what had been lost and what I had not reclaimed. I was an unwelcome tourist in the land of my forefathers.

The Genocide has become an integral part of our national identity. It is the single, most powerful unifying element for a people who can't agree on much. My roots are in Western Armenia. I speak Western Armenian but the homeland or *yerkir* was merely a dreamland, a place from which I came but where I could not go. On some conceptual level the possibility or rather the right of return existed in my mind, however ethereal as it was. Yet now that I live in Armenia, I feel its loss even more acutely. It is right there within my grasp yet unattainable. A sentiment felt by most in Armenia. We must not forget that in 1965 while officials were quietly holding a commemoration ceremony of the 50th anniversary of the Genocide inside the Opera house in Yerevan, the Armenian citizens of the Soviet Union were outside in the tens of thousands chanting "Our Lands" and not recognition. For the overriding majority of Armenians here that is what the Genocide represents. It is the first thing they tell you when asked—the Genocide is indeed about the lost homeland.

To get to the Fortress of Gars we had to

walk past an Armenian church that had recently been converted into a mosque, void of a cross, forlorn and abandoned. I could not look at it, achingly beautiful as it was but no longer a place of worship for its people. As dusk was settling on the city, we began descending from the fortress. I looked out at the cityscape with an incredible feeling of familiarity so powerful as to make me feel a foreigner in Yerevan. But it was a sensation that quickly dissipated as evening prayer had begun. From all over the city, from microphones perched on minarets, the sounds of the evening prayer could be heard. My heart lurched when I realized that right beside the church where a minaret had been constructed was also beckoning the people of Islam to prayer. Our people's existence and my right of existence in Western Armenia was slowly being destroyed and then replaced.

While I walked along the shores of Lake Van, waves crashed against the beach as I collected rocks and sand. From my vantage point, Lake Van took on the appearance of an ocean; hues of green, blue and turquoise were mesmerizing. I stopped and wondered about this absurd obsession we have with trying to collect and bring back home with us shattered remnants of our history, showcasing them on our mantles like mementoes from a trip to some exotic locale. Once on Akhtamar Island, the church of Sourp Khatch was still under construction. How would I know then that it would be void of a cross, draped with the Turkish flag and a picture of Atatürk only a few months later at its opening as a museum? Cengiz Candar, in an article for the Turkish Daily News in March 2007, summed it up when he wrote the following, "This obsession with renaming, the cultural and religious intolerance shown towards the cross and the church bell, might well be perceived in the world as a 'cultural genocide'; nobody should be surprised if that turns out to be the case."

At the fortress of Van, with its foreboding architecture, Urartian inscriptions are left to decay against the ravages of nature and Kurds befriended us with the hopes that we would know where the gold was buried. High upon the fortress I looked down and saw Aygestan, or what remained of it—a footprint of my people, where decimated churches stood witness and the wind whistled through the barren stretches of abandoned neighborhoods. A young Kurd, a self-appointed guide, hearing me speak English walked up to me and began telling me the story of the Armenians of Van just as a flock of crows screamed past us. I shuddered when my friend told me she believed they are tormented by the ghosts that wander among these ruins. I felt as though I was in a nightmare and fled down the long winding path unable to breathe. I now understand why Gayane cannot go to Van.

Genocide, for Armenians who live in this cramped republic, is on display everywhere. The Armenians here don't see it in postcards or in paintings. Almost everyday they see Mt. Ararat with their own eyes following them, serving as a reminder of the past and symbolizing what was lost. They are the ones who are living in a blockade. They are the ones whose sense of security is threatened because they must live next door to a country much bigger, much stronger—a genocide perpetrator and denier who has effectively closed down the borders. When half of Armenia's population are descendants of Western Armenians who managed to escape the pogroms, genocide takes on a whole new collective present day meaning. It is not locked in the past or tucked away in memories; it is part of their everyday existence.

For Gayane, genocide is not about recognition; it is about having the courage to struggle. The founding of the first Armenian republic in 1918, the victory of Shushi which shifted the armed conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in our favor, and the reestablish-

The 'Religion' of Genocide

A UNITING FORCE STRONGER THAN THE ARMENIAN CHURCH AND LANGUAGE

By CHRISTIAN GARBIS

Armenians have been destined to endure tragedy—this fact cannot be dismissed. For nearly 2,000 years the Armenian people have endured mass deportation or home displacement, wandering from one area to the next in search of solace in a world plagued by utter chaos. They have endured massacres repeatedly during their existence, and for most of them the number of lives perished cannot be estimated. The Armenians have for much of their time on earth been persecuted by external forces, wedged in between a rock and a hard place as a result of the geo-strategic motives of dominating regional powers. But perhaps nothing can be as detrimental to their survival as the preoccupation with their own past, the obsession with their own genocide.

The horrors of 1915 continually plague the Armenians. They cannot be escaped, because they cannot be forgotten. No matter how much they may be willing to finally put the past behind them, the Armenians find it impossible. Their past is so painful, so devastating to them, that they have let it penetrate their souls and metabolisms. The Armenian Genocide has become their albatross, the anchor of their ancient ship at bay. They are so blinded by their torment that they cannot lay a course for their own future, a tranquil one that bears the fruit of a free nation, emerging as a phoenix from depressive darkness.

Indeed, the movement for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide has become a religion. Arguably millions of Armenians around the world are fixated by the fact that Turkey still disputes the events commonly regarded as genocide from 1915 and 1918 in particular, although many contest that the Armenian Genocide ended in 1923 (a thorny issue in and of itself since there are disputes as to the exact time period of criminal perpetration, even to the number dead). The Armenian Genocide has essentially beat out the church and the language as the key unifying force of Armenian nationhood in Diasporan communities, for they are comprised mainly of families whose extended members have suffered during the tragedy as well as its aftermath (with the exception of people whose roots were based in Eastern, or Russian, Armenia). Armenians currently present themselves as being the victims of the first genocide of the 20th century, rather than for their possession of a rich cultural legacy and a distinct, ancient language. The Genocide's acceptance is worshipped in the sense that people still struggle in coming to terms with the understanding that a tragedy occurred of some magnitude and thus still search for limitless knowledge to prove that the events did take place, not to mention the overwhelming desire to spread the gospel of the Armenian Genocide. Armenians are clearly obsessed—many live with the Genocide every day of their lives, imagining the horrors in their minds, studying it, finding modern comparisons to it, sifting through news articles daily for references to it. Others toil relentlessly at finding strategies for politically promoting the Genocide's recognition by government bodies. Each time a country in the world has officially passed legislation recognizing the Genocide, there are calls for exuberant celebration and wonder—those international acceptances, now numbering around 20, give faith and hope that justice is somehow being served, but exactly how no one can really pinpoint. It is sacrilege to question what the end result will be for the ultimate recognition—that by Turkey. No one dares to make any kind of prediction.

The Armenian Genocide topic has become a steady money-maker. Rock bands have recorded songs about the tragedy and have made countless millions of dollars in the process. Other types of music recordings, mainly in world or classical categories, are issued in dedication. Dozens of novels have been written by Armenian and non-Armenian authors alike discussing the tragedy in

one way or another, as a major theme or a passing reference. There are also films, paintings, sculptures and other forms of art. It perhaps cannot be gauged whether it is ethical to earn a salary from promoting a crime against humanity. Surely the fact that the Genocide is being propagated, especially in popular music and film, is not something that should be scorned. Yet the fact remains that profit is being made at the expense of 1.5 million dead to the enthusiasm of the masses. The boundary between the sacred and the renowned has worn thin.

In Armenia, the Genocide is for the most part only discussed on April 24, when tens of thousands make their way to the Dzidzernagapert Memorial to pay their respects to the dead. Many Armenian citizens do not have a direct connection with the Genocide since they were unaffected by it, being under the Russian protective cloak. In the Caucasus region no country, besides Armenia, has officially accepted the Armenian Genocide for fear of damaging relations with Turkey or because it does not serve national interests. There is little protest for Armenia's engagement in business transactions with its Western neighbor, although no diplomatic ties whatsoever exist between the two countries. Flights to and from Istanbul are offered every week carrying businessmen and tourists. It is commonplace to find Turkish goods in all sectors of the Armenian marketplace in virtually all retail outlets, including but not limited to construction and home improvement materials, domestic accessories, automotive parts and foodstuffs. And by far, Turkish-manufactured clothing dominates the garment trade. Suffice it to say, the Armenian consumer does not place lack of diplomacy with its immediate neighbor, and longtime abhorred enemy, before commerce.

For several years now the Armenian Cause, which is now fought for by numerous organizations and is not limited to the power of one, has merely referred to the acceptance of the Genocide. No one publicly mentions post-Turkish acceptance, in other words monetary reparations or land transfers. The reasons for this are not exactly clear, but the best explanation would be to promote an unconditional recognition, without the necessary expectation of retribution, in proving to the world that there are no strings attached. In other words, the mere admission of wrongdoing on behalf of the Turkish government seems to be the end-all solution. The Armenian Diaspora cannot make claims to Armenian lands on behalf of a separate, internationally recognized nation apart from the Republic of Armenia because it does not hold nation status; it is just an ambiguous entity, formed by a chain link between scattered communities. The Republic of Armenia makes no claims to ancient Armenian lands which are under the control of Turkey; on the contrary, it insists on the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border, which has been closed since 1993, without any preconditions whatsoever, ignoring any fears of repercussions, economic or otherwise. Moreover, the Armenian nation is disunited on the legitimacy or necessity of land transfer, which is probably the single greatest impediment to the greater cause. Thus there is no entity that can speak on behalf of the right of reparations by the Armenians—all countries in the region as well as those in the West have vested interests in Turkey, thus the reshuffling of borders and reallocation of lands is not something that can be realistically considered by any single nation or union of nations.

So Armenians can only be contented with a confession; it is all they are praying for, and all that seems to be needed given the current circumstances. Reconciliation will undoubtedly be the next plateau after affirmation; the steps have already been taken although they have not reached a significant distance. Nevertheless, one thing is fairly clear: reconciliation will be the ultimate placation, the supreme healing to a festering wound long incurable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

A Page to Learn and to Remember

BY APO TOROSYAN

I am a second-generation genocide survivor, and an artist and filmmaker. I was born and raised the son of an Armenian father and a Greek mother in Istanbul, Turkey, the old city of Constantinople. Like most Armenians liv-

I would start walking on the deadly march and go through the same path that my ancestors did: from Edincik, a few hundred miles from Istanbul in the northwestern part of Turkey to Syria, which is 800-1,000 miles away to the southeast.

ing in Turkey, my family had been almost wiped out by the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Entire towns and villages were forced from their homes into exile, where many died of starvation. Hundreds of thousands of others were killed in the most brutal ways imaginable—women, children, and elderly included—by drowning, burning, firing squads, swords, and other cruel ways.

My father survived as a 5-year-old orphan in Aleppo, Syria, after being forced to march with the rest of the family almost 1,000 miles from their home in Edincik on the Marmarian coast. The rest of the family died along the way or upon reaching Aleppo and beyond in Syria. Sometimes I used to question my father about those events. He would not comment; all he would say is “There is no God. If there was a God, what happened would not have happened!” However, my father did not teach me hate. On the contrary, he taught me love and tolerance, which is the message I try to give today: “Hope Not Hate.”

In 1968, I emigrated to the United States with my family. I became a U.S. citizen, established a visual design company, and since 1987 I have developed my art in this country. I did not go back to Turkey for 27 years. I finally returned to my homeland in 1995, and then again in 2000 and 2003.

I now believe I cannot go back home ever again, because the last time I was in Turkey I made a film “Discovering My Father’s Village,” and started speaking out about the Armenian Genocide in lectures and public presentations in the U.S. I realized that I could reach a larger audience and share my story beyond the borders of my environment or an art exhibition space by making movies.

In the past several years, I have had the privilege of sharing my family story with many audiences, including scholarly groups and others interested in history. In November 2006, I had a first-time experience with an audience at a public high school in West Roxbury, Mass.

I had been approached by the organization Facing History and Ourselves of Brookline. They were the liaison putting this presentation together. The subject of my presentation was the history of the Armenian Genocide, and my experiences growing up in Turkey as a second-generation genocide survivor. The audience was the senior class of mostly minority students.

I had 50 minutes to talk about growing up in Turkey and my first recognition that I was different and was discriminated against. I also spoke about my witnessing at age 14 the 1955 pogrom against the Greek civilian population and the destruc-

tion of the city of Istanbul, the fear of oppression and discrimination, and finally growing up and realizing that I had been in denial in order to survive while living in Turkey. I told of trying to blend into the culture, and finding a few Turkish friends that would accept me as a non-Muslim.

Following that, I gave a perspective of the Turkish tribes of the past millennium

and the circumstances of Christians living under the discriminatory rules of the Ottoman Empire. Then I discussed the establishment of the Young Turks, the hypocrisy of their “liberating” views, and the gruesome facts of the Armenian Genocide. I told the students my family survival stories and bread stories, and explained the meaning of the term “genocide” as coined by Raphael Lemkin.

The students, mostly African-Americans, had understood my past history living in Turkey as a minority under discrimination, facing a politically paranoid Turkish government that has a fear of its borders being dissolved. I explained how I was not allowed freedom of speech, that I would face imprisonment if I ever went back, and yet I have nostalgia for my homeland at the same time. I gave the students my message of “Hope Not Hate.”

The students understood how lucky they are to live in the United States where we have personal liberty, and not to take what they have for granted. They understood what it means to be deprived. The questions I had from the students were very impressive. One of them asked, “If you were allowed to go back to the land where you were born, what would you do?” They were asking me about my ultimate dream. Another one asked, “If you were given a choice to give your life back to one of your ancestors, would you exchange your life and if so for which one?”

The last 15 minutes went by very fast. A lot of risen hands did not get an answer, but I knew one thing. They knew that I knew how they felt, and I knew I had given them a key to open up hopeful doors in their future.

If I had had time to answer that first student’s question, this is what I would have said: My dream is to be able to go back to my father’s village, Edincik in Turkey, with a small film crew. I attach small portable camcorders to my body: one on my forehead, one on my chest, and one on each knee. My crew would have a few additional camcorders to record things happening around me.

The project would start by interviewing villagers in my father’s village, if I could do it without any fear of questioning them about the Armenians that once lived there. I would walk into those dilapidated, abandoned Armenian homes, visualizing a once happy life, and a people who had been erased from this land. I would listen and record their daily worries and needs as village residents. Then I would start walking on the deadly march and go through the same path that my ancestors did: from Edincik, a few hundred miles

from Istanbul in the northwestern part of Turkey to Syria, which is 800-1,000 miles away to the southeast.

I would record all of that long walk, the scorching sun, the dry earth, from one village to another, from one town to the other, and ask the villagers in each place for stories about the Armenians who had passed through or who were murdered or robbed by bandits on the way, or by soldiers or local people. I would ask about their ancestors, who had likely participated in the killings. I would record their faces and their bodies when they would remember the horror stories, or how their facial expressions would change when they would inevitably deny the atrocities. I would sit down and share food with the hospitable ones, and share painful memories.

I would film the wells and the rivers in which Armenian mothers and children were drowned or killed themselves, or from which they were forbidden to drink, causing them to die from thirst. I would record those dilapidated churches that are now used as barns for animals or have been converted to mosques. I would film those roads that had been lined with dead or dying bodies of elderly men or women, young boys or girls, or their mothers, being

eaten by vultures.

I would record valleys where the Armenian men of the towns were gathered to dig their own graves before they were shot, or climb the tall mountains where those poor souls jumped or were pushed to their deaths. I would record everything on my way, even from the level of my knees.

The final destination would be Syria, where my aunt and grandmother picked stones from the fields to buy a loaf of bread. The old streets or the outskirts of Aleppo, with the scorching sun above. I would focus my camera on a close-up of cow or horse dung to look for barley, as my grandmother did when looking for a food source. I would witness a sandstorm like my father did when he was five years old, in which he injured his retinas permanently. I would look for mass burial yards, and my grandfather’s and my grandmother’s lost graves. Who knows, I would probably walk on their unknown burial grounds. I would visit the German hospital in Rakka where my grandmother died, if it is still there. I would visit the old orphanages.

And finally, I would walk to Der-el-Zor. With a shovel, I would dig the dry ground and find a skull to bring home.

A History Ignored ... Repeats Itself

BY SARA COHEN

“We cannot maintain the moral force we need to take action against the genocide going on in Darfur, if the Administration continues to equivocate about the genocide against the Armenians.”

—Rep. Adam Schiff, March 2007

Representative Schiff’s warning resonates clearly in the minds of Armenian-Americans. We are born, live and die carrying the burden of genocide in our souls. As the survivors pass, those of us who knew and loved them remain. We remain with their testimonies and we remain in a country that denies our past. Year after year, we watch the political beast that is Washington, D.C. ignore our request for affirmation. At the same time, more genocides occur and people around the world are plagued with the same fate as us.

Today, over four hundred thousand civilians in the Darfur region of Sudan have been massacred in the first genocide of the 21st century. Not one government or the United Nations has effectively attempted to stop the genocide in Darfur. This is a historical reality that Armenians know too well. The people of Darfur are faced with the same political impotency that led to the demise of 1.5 million Armenians almost a century ago.

We must continue to demand the affirmation of the Armenian Genocide. With the same breath that we use to call for affirmation, we must also call for the end of the genocide in Darfur. It is a moral responsibility that cannot be shirked. We know the consequences of hate too intimately to turn our backs on our brothers and sisters in Darfur. Each of us has a child, a niece or nephew, or lives in a school district. We all pay for the education of the youth of this country and we need to demand that schools start teaching about genocide.

We are often taught in school that history repeats itself. This is one of the many incomplete stories we learn there. A history ignored...repeats itself. When genocide is denied, ignored or brushed into the closets of history, it emerges again and again. The first modern genocide in human history, the Armenian case, is denied, and it is therefore no coincidence that genocide continues to plague our world.

It is our moral responsibility to demand affirmation both for our ancestors and for those who suffer today. We can fight in Washington, but we can also take this to the classrooms and educate our youth about genocide.

Today, the U.S. government does not officially acknowledge the genocide of the Armenians and it may be years before it does. In the meantime, the subject should still be taught in American schools and it should be taught in a way that not only conveys the history but challenges students to take a stand against genocide today. By studying the Armenian Genocide at the secondary level, students are exposed to a particular history that deserves remembrance and illuminates human rights issues facing the world today.

Education initiatives must be ongoing and comprehensive. They must continue to target all levels of public education from policy making to teacher training. The history of the Armenian Genocide needs to find a place in state-mandated education standards. Textbooks must begin to carry a correct and responsible history of the event. More supplemental materials should be created to meet a broader range of teachers’ needs. Finally, adequate teacher training will ultimately ensure this history will become a standard component of every U.S. student’s education. Educational initiatives are an integral aspect of genocide prevention. Promoting genocide education is an activity in which we can all participate and make a difference.

Hitler, Pol Pot and Hutu Power: Distinguishing Themes of Genocidal Ideology

Holocaust and the United Nations Discussion Paper Series

BY BEN KIERNAN

The Nazi Holocaust of the Jews was history's most extreme case of genocide. The state-sponsored attempt at total extermination by industrialized murder of unarmed millions in less than five years has few parallels. Wholesale destruction of five to six million Jews and the cataclysmic invasions of most of Europe and the USSR that made it possible required an advanced economy and a heavily-armed modern state. Yet the Nazi killing machine also had a more antiquated power source. It was operated by interlocking ideological levers that celebrated race, history, territory and cultivation—all notions that may crop up in a range of technological contexts.

These powerful perpetrator preoccupations are also characteristic of other genocides. Common features of genocidal thinking can be identified even in cases that lacked the destructive power of the Holocaust. Indeed their perpetrators' ideological preoccupations can often be discerned from early stages of their careers, before they come to power or amass the military or organizational apparatus required to carry out genocide. Description of these features common to many cases may help in the prediction and prevention of future genocides.

I will juxtapose Nazi ideology with that of two other genocide perpetrators: the Khmer Rouge rulers of Cambodia from 1975 to 1979, and Rwanda's Hutu Power regime of 1994. Leaders of all three regimes held visions of the future partly inspired by ancient pasts—mythical and pristine—in which they imagined members of their original, pure, agrarian race, farming once larger territories that contained no Jews, no Vietnamese and no Tutsis. The perpetrators of genocide against those victim groups shared preoccupations not only with ethnic purity but also with antiquity, agriculture and expansionism. Genocidal thinking is usually racialist, reactionary, rural and irredentist.

Hitler praised Arminius ("Hermann"), who annihilated ancient Roman legions, as "the first architect of our liberty," and the aggressive medieval monarch, Charlemagne, as "one of the greatest men in world history." In 1924, Hitler urged that "the new Reich must again set itself on the march along the road of the Teutonic knights of old, to obtain by the German sword sod for the German plow."

A second model was Roman history itself, which Hitler considered "the best mentor, not only for today, but probably for all time." He considered Rome's genocide of Carthage in 146 BCE "a slow execution of a people through its own deserts." Classical Sparta was a third Nazi model. Hitler recommended in 1928 that a state should "limit the number allowed to live," and added, "The Spartans were once capable of such a wise measure... The subjugation of 350,000 Helots by 6,000 Spartans was only possible because of the racial superiority of the Spartans." They had created "the first racialist state." Invading the USSR in 1941, Hitler saw its citizens as Helots to his Spartans: "They came as conquerors, and they took everything." A Nazi officer specified that "the Germans would have to assume the position of the Spartiates, while ... the Russians were the Helots."

"I've just learnt," Hitler further remarked, "that the feeding of the Roman armies was almost entirely based on cereals." Now, he added, Ukraine and Russia "will one day be the granaries of Europe," but they merited that responsibility only with German agricultural settlement. "The Slavs are a mass of born slaves," Hitler claimed, but under the German peasant "every inch of ground is zealously exploited." Thus, "all winter long we could keep our cities sup-

plied with vegetables and fresh fruit. Nothing is lovelier than horticulture." Germans were more advanced because "Our ancestors were all peasants." But the country suffered from excessive, "harmful" industrialization, causing "the weakening of the peasant." Hitler considered "a healthy peasant class as a foundation for a whole nation. ... A solid stock of small and middle peasants has been at all times the best protection against social evils." Germany's future, he claimed in 1933, "depends exclusively on the conservation of the peasant."

Nazis saw Jews as archetypal town-dwellers. Anti-urban thinking reinforced virulent anti-Semitism. At the height of the Holocaust, Nazi ideologues remained preoccupied not only with racial theorizing, genocide and expansionist war, but also with antiquity and agrarianism.

The Pol Pot regime's guide to Cambodia's ancient temples revealed its own official preoccupation with antiquity. It began: "Angkor Wat had been built between 1113 and 1152." Enemies such as the local Cham minority, victims of genocide under Pol Pot, were perennial. The temple of Angkor Thom, the guidebook went on, was built "after the invasion of Cham troops in 1177, who had completely destroyed the capital." Another publication added: "The marvelous monuments of Angkor [are] considered by the whole Humanity as one of the master-pieces of the brilliant civilization and the creative spirit of the working people of Kampuchea." As Pol Pot put it, "If our people can make Angkor, we can make anything." His victory in 1975 was of "greater significance than the Angkor period." Stalinism and Maoism offered the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) the political means to rival this medieval model and restore the rural tradition of an imagined era when, Pol Pot claimed, "our society used to be good and clean."

Maoism reinforced a Khmer Rouge fetish for rural life. In the 1960s, Prince Sihanouk's regime denounced Khmer Rouge rebels for "inciting people to boycott schools and hospitals and leave the towns." Rebels said of Sihanouk, "Let him break the soil like us for once." In his memoirs the former CPK head of state, Khieu Samphan, recalled meeting guerrilla commander Mok in the jungle. His account suggests Samphan was mesmerized by a rural romance. He found Mok dressed "like all the peasants," in black shorts and unbuttoned short-sleeved shirt. "The diffuse glow of the lamp nevertheless revealed to us the deep and piercing eyes which stood out on his bearded face." Mok "moved about freely...sometimes bare-chested, revealing his hairy chest and arms. ... In fact, in the face of his activity, I became well aware of my limits. And more deeply, I felt pride to see this man I considered a peasant become one of the important leaders of a national resistance movement."

As it expanded through Cambodia's countryside, the CPK divided Khmer society into "classes." In theory the working class was "the leader," but in practice "the three lower layers of peasants" formed "the base" of the party's rural revolution. The victorious CPK forcibly emptied Cambodia's cities in 1975, and acknowledged: "Concretely, we did not rely on the forces of the workers...they did not become the vanguard. In concrete fact there were only the peasants." The CPK's main vision remained rural. Samphan claimed: "water is flowing freely, and with water the scenery is fresh, the plants are fresh, life is fresh and people are smiling. ... The poor and lower middle peasants are content. So are the middle peasants." Pol Pot added, "People from the former poor and lower middle peasant classes are overwhelmingly content...because now they can eat all year round and become middle peasants." That seemed to be the party's view of the future. It went beyond even Maoism when it an-

nounced that the countryside itself, not the urban proletariat, comprised the vanguard of the revolution: "We have evacuated the people from the cities which is our class struggle." In crushing "enemies," CPK cadres resorted to agricultural metaphors such as "pull up the grass, dig up the roots," and proclaimed that victims' corpses would be used for "fertilizer."

Territorial expansionism accompanied the agrarian cult. The regime launched attacks against all Cambodia's neighbors: Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. The cost in Cambodian lives is unknown, but according to Hanoi, the Khmer Rouge killed approximately 30,000 Vietnamese civilians and soldiers in nearly two years of cross-border raids. Pol Pot aimed to "stir up national hatred and class hatred for the aggressive Vietnamese enemy." Attacks into Vietnam would "kill the enemy at will, and the contemptible Vietnamese will surely shriek like monkeys screeching all over the forest." Cambodia declared an expanded maritime frontier and projected territorial changes in "Lower Cambodia" (Kampuchea Krom), land lost to Vietnam since the early 19th century. Many CPK officials announced their goal to "retake Kampuchea Krom." Pol Pot ordered troops to "go in and wage guerrilla war to tie up the enemy by the throat." A CPK report claimed that most of the people of Kampuchea Krom sought "to join with the Kampuchean army in order to kill all the Vietnamese [*komtech yuon aoy os*]." In Cambodia, the party accused most of its Khmer victims of having "Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds." The regime launched its biggest massacres of Cambodians with a call to "purify...the masses of the people." From 1975 to 1979, CPK rule caused the deaths of approximately 1.7 million people, from overwork, disease, starvation, and murders of political and ethnic "enemies," including Vietnamese and Cham minorities. Obsessions with race, history, cultivation and territory all played roles in the Cambodian genocide.

In ancient times, Rwanda had been a peaceful Hutu realm, "before the arrival of the Tutsis," wrote a leading perpetrator of the 1994 genocide. He asserted that "the Hutus of the great Bantu family and the Twa or pygmies of the smaller ethnic group were living harmoniously since as early as the 9th century." Then in the 16th century came a race of northern interlopers, the "Tutsis from Abyssinia."

In 2003, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda convicted the major Hutu chauvinist historian, Ferdinand Nahimana, of genocide. Nahimana began his research in 1978 in the northwest of Rwanda, home of then-President Juvénal Habyarimana and his wife, Agathe Kanziga, a princess of the former local Hutu court of Bushiru. Nahimana wrote that long before "the expansion and installation of Tutsi power" throughout Rwanda, northern Hutus had organized themselves into "States," each with a long history. From oral accounts by "direct descendants of the last Hutu princes," Nahimana listed nine kingdoms and their rulers. He projected these Hutu realms back into history, adding a generation of 33 years for each reign, and calculated that they had all "emerged in the course of the sixteenth century (6 monarchies) and the seventeenth century (3 monarchies)." The first king of Bushiru supposedly ruled from 1600 to 1633; Buhoma's founder "reigned between 1499 and 1532." Only after "429 years (1499-1928)," did Buhoma fall to "Tutsi occupation." In part, the genocide of Tutsis was an attempt to reverse that historical outcome.

Like the Nazis and Khmer Rouge, Hutu Power's genocidal ideology combined conceptions of history and race with notions of agriculture and territory.

Nahimana concluded, for instance, that the term *umuhinza*, applied to northwestern Hutu rulers brought under the Tutsi monarchy, derived from a word that denoted both

"agricultural prosperity" and "territorial security." These northwest Hutu princes had retained local ritual prestige through this title, which meant in part, "the farmer par excellence governing a people of cultivators," or "President of Crops." Hutu-dominated regimes saw Rwanda's Tutsi minority not only as historical oppressors, but also as urban dwellers or cattle-raising pastoralists, not hardy peasant cultivators like the Hutu. Rural life and work became a fetish of Hutu Power. Nahimana rhapsodized about intellectuals who "have taken up the hoe, the pruning-knife or any other manual tool and have joined with the peasant masses to move earth with their hands and to live the effective reality of manual labour... [T]ogether, they have restored value to the hoe." As director of Rwanda's Office of Information from 1990, Nahimana determined to allow "at last, 'rural truth' to come out."

The Hutu Power radio station, Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), combined agrarian themes with violent racism. It proclaimed in 1993: "Tutsi are nomads and invaders who came to Rwanda in search of pasture." RTLM's editor-in-chief announced three weeks before the genocide began in April 1994: "We have a radio here, even a peasant who wants to say something can come, and we will give him the floor. Then, other peasants will be able to hear what peasants think." At the height of the slaughter in mid-May, RTLM urged continuing efforts to "exterminate the Tutsi from the globe" and "make them disappear once and for all." A listener who became a killer told researcher Charles Mironko of hearing broadcasts of statements such as: "While a Hutu is cultivating, he has a gun," and "When the enemy comes up, you shoot at each other. When he retreats, then you take up your hoe and cultivate!" The hunt for Tutsis was expressed in slogans like "clear the bushes," or "separate the grass from the millet," and "pull out the poison ivy together with its roots." The official broadcaster, Radio Rwanda, also urged people to hunt down Tutsis, for instance on April 12: "Do communal work to clear the brush, to search houses, beginning with those that are abandoned, to search the marshes of the area to be sure that no *inyenzi* [cockroaches, i.e. Tutsi] have slipped in." The Prefect of Kigali later portrayed the 1994 killings as the result of provocation by ethnic Tutsi attacks on an agrarian Hutu paradise. He blamed the supposedly "inter-ethnic" massacres on the opposition "Monoethnic Tutsi Army," which had disrupted "the sweet years of the Second Republic, when milk and honey flowed in plenty."

Hutu Power's worldview was territorial, too, with an expansionism that was both internal and aimed beyond Rwanda's borders. Habyarimana's 1973 coup, Gérard Prunier writes, had not only brought to power a Bushiru princess, but also ushered in a wave of "northern revenge" by a "fiercely Hutu" faction against the more liberal and tolerant southern Hutu communities. After Habyarimana's death on April 6, 1994, the northern chauvinists immediately turned to conduct the genocide of Tutsi. Prunier calls them "the real northwesterners," the representatives of the 'small Rwanda' which had conquered the big one." Their campaign suggests that they aimed to extend throughout Rwanda the ethnic Hutu purity of Bushiru, turning a regional identity into a racialized form of domestic irredentism.

Hutu Power's ethno-territorial ambitions were also external. Nahimana pointed out that the pre-colonial Tutsi kingdom of Rwanda had also "extended its influence" to eastern Congo and southern Uganda, yet "this influence did not always signify political and administrative submission" by local

The Ottoman Archives: A Personal Look Back at the Past and the Future

The demographic composition of the population of the Ottoman Empire prior to the Armenian Genocide has been the subject of much speculation, but unfortunately little critical analysis. The expertise required intersects with disciplines so varied that few scholars are able or willing to invest the necessary resources. While there are extensive available sources, each is problematic in some way.

The primary sources for the Armenian population are the official Ottoman records and the records of the Armenian Patriarchate. Concentrating solely on the late Ottoman period for this article, the Ottoman government employed a continuous registration system and also periodic censuses. The Armenian Church also apparently carried out censuses at approximately the same time as the government. In addition, the church recorded baptisms, marriages and funerals. Numerous secondary sources of varied quality exist as well.

Outside of the material presented in the accompanying article by Hilmar Kaiser, Ottoman statistics have only been available in summarized form. While Armenian Patriarchate figures have been recorded at the village level, the underlying detailed records have survived for only a few areas—for example, almost complete records for Constantinople, baptismal records for Gesaria, and tax registers from Van.

Here I would just make some general comments about the statistics for the Amasia district to highlight some of the issues beyond those that are common in historical demography.

In the last years of the Ottoman Empire, Amasia was a district within the province of Sebastia. Subdistricts included Marsovan, Ladik, Khavza and Gumushhajikoy, among others.

The Armenian Patriarchate performed a census in 1912/3. According to this census, the district of Amasia contained 31,513 Armenians in 6,345 households. The 1906/7 Ottoman census enumerated 26,120 Armenians in the district. The overwhelming majority were living in the cities of Marsovan (10,381 Armenians) and Amasia (13,788 Armenians). In fact, the city of Amasia was the only town in the subdistrict of Amasia shown to have an Armenian population.

According to statistics in Kaiser's article, the Armenian population totaled 8,935 for the subdistrict of Amasia. Immediately we can see a large discrepancy between the Armenian Patriarchate and that of the Ottoman government. While this may come as no surprise given the demographic material often contained in Turkish denial, it is somewhat surprising given the numbers contained in other telegrams in the collection Kaiser has unearthed which are much closer to those of the Armenian Patriarchate.

The Armenian population was given as 9,979 in 1914 in other Ottoman statistics derived from the 1906/7 census and accounting for registrations during the intervening years. Thus, more questions are raised.

Other data presumably based on either the figures of the Armenian Patriarchate or the Ottoman government is varied and little can be discerned from this. Interestingly, the Kaiser statistics indicate there were small numbers of Armenians living in villages not identified by the Patriarchate.

As Kaiser so aptly points out, so much more work needs to be done. In the end, one can ask what relevance this holds, but some of the newest narratives of the Genocide indicate it was a policy founded on the demographic composition of the empire. Demographics may be able to offer additional insight into the mechanisms of the decision to commit genocide.

George Aghjayan

By Hilmar Kaiser

Despite all the substantive progress, research on the Armenian Genocide continues to suffer from inadequate resources and a weak institutional basis. Most of the production is the outcome of efforts that were undertaken despite this situation while organizational structures intended for such work are re-directed in their focus or remain dormant. Under such circumstances, archival research faces serious challenges. My own research in Turkey, while producing some significant new insights, resembles more a patchwork than a long-term and coherent program. Although the focus stayed on target, the challenges are discouraging, given the task at hand.

The Turkish Prime Minister's Ottoman Archives (BOA) are one of the major collections in Turkey that keep key-evidence on the Armenian Genocide. For approximately 25 years, it has been well known that critical information has been preserved and catalogued there. Notably, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior's code room collection became a widely publicized collection that, however, remained closed to foreign researchers until the spring of 1992. At that time, Ara Sarafian and myself

were able to obtain some first samples against many odds, but the collection was soon closed again, only to be reopened years later. The same happened with a collection of demographic materials that so far remains unavailable to any researcher. Returning to Istanbul on a regular basis from 1993 to 1995, I slowly managed to expand my collection of telegrams at a slow pace, receiving, like any other researcher, 75 documents per week and more often than not even less. Still, the new material provided fresh insights into the Ottoman government's policies, its demographic planning, the organization of the deportations, and many more issues. Initial papers were delivered at a workshop during an American Historical Association annual conference in 1995, as well as a series of conferences of the "Committee of Ottoman and Pre-Ottoman Studies" and similar occasions. The ensuing debates with Turkish historians were spirited and promising. This first phase came to an abrupt end in 1996, when the archival authorities canceled my research permit for political reasons while officially stating something else. The negative impact on my work cannot be overstated and was very damaging. Equally discomfoting was that some Turkish historians, self-proclaimed liber-

als, joined the state in an effort to undermine my credibility through statements that were at best hearsay, and often-outright slander.

The second phase of work in Turkey began in 2005. The electoral victory of the Justice and Progress Party of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan had brought about a profound change in the political climate and in the operations of the Turkish bureaucracy. Possibly equally important was the departure of several known right-wing radicals from top positions of the Turkish state archives and their replacement with fully-trained professionals and even widely respected historians. Starting in 2003/04, I received more and more encouraging signals, indicating that I could return to the archives. A short exploratory visit in July 2005 confirmed these suggestions and immediately rendered very important results. The changes at the BOA were profound. Professional courtesies were extended and the climate had very little in common with the difficult times I had to go through 10 years before. Importantly, the cataloging of the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior's files had made good progress and much more material was now available. A small circle of independent minded Canadian-Armenian friends mostly in Montreal was providing some limited funding, just enough to continue work periodically on a modest scale. The returns from these modest investments were spectacular and continue to be so.

Invitations from Turkish academic institutions, like the Turkish Historic Association and Istanbul University, made further visits possible and also offered opportunities to present the new results and jump start discussions and contacts that had faded a decade earlier. These exchanges were decidedly more friendly, informative and also productive than at any time in the past. Naturally, the really crucial exchanges took place outside the official program. On two occasions, Turkish colleagues gave an unofficial assessment of past problems in what can only be understood as a trust-building effort. Since then, I have been able to address problems directly and I am happy to say that appropriate and timely action is taken. Unlike in the past, the current administration of the BOA applies the regulations without discrimination and goes out of its way to render any kind of additional service it can possibly offer. This is all the more remarkable, as serious personnel cuts have been sustained. The procedures at the BOA resemble more those at the British National archives (formerly known as the Public Record Office) than the mode of operation at the BOA in 1995.

In 2006, I was able to consult for the first time the files of the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior's Directorate for Public Security's Second Department. This department covered the affairs of the Armenian provinces. Again, special efforts were made to provide access to files that had critically deteriorated due to humidity and other reasons. The officials provided high-resolution images for those files and undertook immediate rescue efforts in order to save the unique documents. Having worked in more than 70 archives worldwide, access to such delicate material was an all-time first. I take this as clear proof of the dedication of the BOA's management and staff to provide optimal access within the governing regulations. The courtesy extended to the researchers also provided many occasions for collegial exchanges, and I am happy to add that many Turkish colleagues have been very kind and helpful in sharing knowledge and advice.

Certainly, there is more to be desired. Some catalogued collections are not yet or not again available. The cataloging process could surely be accelerated with additional staffing and technical resources at the BOA. Other archives are unfortunately not governed by the same regulations as the BOA. Nevertheless, indications for similar positive changes and progress are plentiful. In sum, there is no reason not to take advantage of these positive changes and not make use of the important source materials. To the best of my knowledge, so far Garabet Moundjian has been the only Western Armenian historian to take up the challenge. His experiences were also amicable and productive. No discrimination took place, more likely the contrary could be said.

Academic production is slow and publishing even more so. Thus, it will take time for the results to become widely available, although some first examples are already at the publishers. For a general audience, one small example that nevertheless has very important implications might illustrate how crucial research in the BOA and other Turkish archives is and will remain to be so. Below you will find part of a document concerning the deportations in the province of Sivas, more precisely the district of Amasia. The statistics were drawn up by the local authorities and forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior. From the beginning of the deportations in May 1915, Talaat Bey repeatedly requested precise information on the number of Armenian deportees and the ethnic composition of the remaining population. The Amasia authorities gave precise count of the pre-deportation population and how they disposed of the Armenians. It is evident that the dates given do not reflect the actual timing of the deportations but simply indicate when the count was finished and the information came to hand. There is moreover some imprecision in the numbers as no Armenian deaths were counted while we know that people died in prison under torture. The Amasia deportations were very bloody and accompanied by massacres in killing fields nearby. Some of the foreigners indicated belonged to the German agricultural estate at Ata Bey. These farmers had close business relations with U.S. Consular Agent Peter in Samsun and briefed him in writing and personally on the events. They even collected from Armenian corpses bloodstained identity papers which passed on to Peter as evidence of the killings.

The statistics provide some important insights into the administrative logic of the deportations. Evidently, the able bodied men were deported first in cooperation with the military authorities. Their arrest and deportation was probably based on the local draft rolls. This could suggest that the military was part of the deportation apparatus empire-wide. It will be critical to ascertain whether these deportees were taken away by military escorts or local forces and under whose command these convoys were.

It appears that out of roughly 9,000 Armenians almost 1,500 were allowed to convert and remain behind. Evidence from nearby Marsovan shows that converts were nevertheless often deported later. Those who were allowed to convert needed the approval of the central government. Each family member was carefully registered with the old Armenian and the new Muslim name as well as his or her age. The profession was indicated and in certain cases special reasons for permission to stay were given. Being a spy for the government counted as a reason to be exempted. Others es-

caped because their professional skills were needed or they had enough money to secure their stay. Thus, jewelers escaped deportation although their services were perhaps less essential as those of pharmacists or engineers. Nevertheless, 1,500 exemptions appear rather high as compared to the 307 registered converts in Marsovan out of a considerably larger Armenian population. While the statistics show that converts were now counted as Muslims, their identification papers still showed their status as convert. They were not allowed to travel and needed a special ministerial permit indicating their travel was deemed necessary. Clearly, their position was precarious and far from safe. Other statistics from the area are more precise. They give numbers for each village and at times differentiate between Apostolic and Protestant Armenian converts or local and foreign Armenians. "Foreign" simply meant that those Armenians were still registered with their places of origin in a different district although they might have been living in their current location for decades. The Amasia statistics suggest that the authorities employed religion as the decisive criteria for counting Muslims. At Havza, however, this was not the case. In line with orders from Constantinople, the local officials carefully noted who was Turkish, Circassian, Tatar, Kurdish, Laz, Muslim Georgian, Albanian, and converted Armenian.

Readers might be impressed by the abundance of minute data, but they should keep in mind that this is only one statistic taken from one set concerning a single district. Counts were often repeated and there were many more districts. Very few of those counts have been located so far and doubtlessly more will be found in the future. The precise counting and accounting for Armenians discredits claims of a civil war, random Kurdish attacks, or administrative inefficiency as causes for Armenian deaths. These lists are an impressive illustration of what I understand to be the first administrative genocide of the modern age. Researchers are now challenged by an abundance of fresh data that will increase considerably in the near future as Turkish archives become increasingly accessible and their holdings catalogued and well maintained. Given the inadequate resources available, our understanding will, however, deepen at a much slower pace than necessary. Turkish officials more than once expressed their surprise that the expected wave of Armenian researchers storming their reading rooms did not materialize. I could not give an answer but shrugged my shoulders.

Muslim		Greek		Armenian		Foreigners		
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
26,905	25,275	1,368	1,176	4,488	4,447	28	24	
-	-	-	-	2,005	3,493	-	-	Deported by the police until Aug. 8, 1915.
26,905	25,275	1,368	1,176	2,483	954	28	24	Total
-	-	-	-	1,983	-	-	-	Deported as soldiers until Sept. 4, 1915.
26,905	25,275	1,368	1,176	500 (1)	954	28	24	Present population
500	954	-	-	500	954	-	-	(1) Converts added to Muslim population
27,405	26,229	1,368	1,176	-	-	28	24	Total

Population of Amasia Central District, Sept. 5, 1915

Muslim		Greek		Armenian		Foreigner		
Male	Fem.	Zükür	İnas	Zükür	İnas	Zükür	İnas	
5,921	5,710	602	562	4,462	4,429	24	22	Amasya Central District
2,552	2,391	59	45	3	-	-	-	Ulvi Subdistrict
4,412	3,948	381	319	-	-	-	-	Zanta or Akdağ Subdistrict
5,514	5,061	175	143	11	10	4	2	Zara Subdistrict
6,181	5,771	62	49	12	8	-	-	Ezine Pazar Subdistrict
2,325	2,394	89	58	-	-	-	-	Veray Subdistrict
26905	25275	1,368	1,176	4,488	4,447	28	24	Total

Population of Amasya Central District before the War.

Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Ezine Pazar Subdistrict
109	93	-	-	-	-	28	24	Ovasaray
153	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kızılca-i Kebir
97	83	42	36	-	-	-	-	Aksalur
21	17	-	-	12	8	-	-	Dadı
119	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	İlyas
133	137	-	-	-	-	-	-	Süncer
33	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mihmadlar
74	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kayrak
153	121	-	-	-	-	-	-	Göresler
113	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	İbecik
259	220	-	-	-	-	-	-	Bağcı Abdal
331	282	-	-	-	-	-	-	Uykur
53	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	Göresler-i Kayı
8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	Keçili
78	73	-	-	-	-	-	-	Çengel-i Kayı
296	256	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ezine Pazar
236	238	-	-	-	-	-	-	Heneske
136	131	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şeyh Sadi
123	109	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kara İbrahim
313	311	-	-	-	-	-	-	Asi Abdal
234	214	-	-	-	-	-	-	Saralan
69	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	Bayat
150	132	-	-	-	-	-	-	Böke
97	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	Karataş
188	192	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kirab
90	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	Eymük
304	297	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sarayözü
71	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	Karsak
177	190	-	-	-	-	-	-	Avsar
101	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	Zağla
112	112	-	-	-	-	-	-	Halifeli
91	106	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kara Ali
243	246	-	-	-	-	-	-	Efte
336	289	-	-	-	-	-	-	Vermiş
152	156	-	-	-	-	-	-	Murami
121	132	-	-	-	-	-	-	Abacı
97	67	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kızılca-i Sagir
59	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kızılca-i Sagir Muhacirleri
39	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	Keşlek
162	155	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tatar
290	254	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kal'a
160	147	20	13	-	-	-	-	Saz
6.181	5.771	62	49	12	8	28	24	Total

Fem.	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Veray Subdistrict
344	365	-	-	-	-	-	-	Veray Village
76	88	-	-	-	-	-	-	Çender
50	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sığır Çayı
80	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ağulu Tekye
139	155	-	-	-	-	-	-	Deli Hasan
254	271	-	-	-	-	-	-	Göynücek
214	240	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kara Yakup
39	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	Gökçeli
74	76	-	-	-	-	-	-	Gıryan Saray
40	42	-	-	-	-	-	-	Serkes
52	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kokeralan
68	59	-	-	-	-	-	-	Terzi
158	158	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tencirli
101	118	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ekeri
42	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mamuretülhamid
57	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şeyhler
69	77	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yeniköy
129	165	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şerefdir
122	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	Gaffarlı
41	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	Davdavi
76	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	Beitemür
100	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şarklı
-	-	89	58	-	-	-	-	Abacı
2.414	2.452	89	58	-	-	-	-	Total

Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Akdağ Subdistrict
350	313	-	-	-	-	24	22	Merkepci Kışlacığı
211	193	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mürekeç
75	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	Boyalı
22	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	Göresler
46	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	Çukurviran
258	225	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ağviran
38	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kıranbaşalan
142	121	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tadira
167	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	Başalan
193	147	-	-	-	-	-	-	Soku
40	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sika
23	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kozalan
34	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sofular
197	149	-	-	-	-	-	-	Karakese
25	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	Aktaş
82	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kozkilise
493	493	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kızılçışlak
202	151	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kızışözü
173	147	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yıkılan
214	170	158	157	-	-	-	-	Zana
194	181	-	-	-	-	-	-	Gündes
172	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sirecik
74	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sarılar
493	480	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yenice
494	432	-	-	-	-	-	-	Eyemi
-	-	178	106	-	-	-	-	Fındıklı
-	-	45	56	-	-	-	-	Avydersi
4.412	3.948	381	319	-	-	24	22	Total

Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Ulvi Subdistrict
37	52	-	-	-	-	24	22	Lab karyesi
31	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	Değirmendere
102	110	-	-	-	-	-	-	Halka
29	17	-	-	3	-	-	-	Harman Ağılı
114	112	-	-	-	-	-	-	Uzun Oba
36	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	Karasu Süflü
34	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yoz Beyi
90	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	Öyük
51	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	Küpeli
76	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kurnaz
70	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	Salucu
94	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	Dere
33	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sinzi
240	191	-	-	-	-	-	-	Bayırlı
197	187	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kolay
24	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kazganlı
9	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kerimoğlu Ağılı
36	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hacı Bayram
28	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	İmir
42	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	Firuz
58	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	Feyze
145	132	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mirdehor
193	166	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ulvi
65	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	Corlu
83	82	-	-	-	-	-	-	Deveci
29	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kulu
357	324	-	-	-	-	-	-	Arslan
63	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ködelez
101	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	Aruck
44	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	Alabedir
41	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	Abdulganı
-	-	59	45	-	-	-	-	Karaağaç
2.552	2.391	59	45	3	-	24	22	Total

Muslim		Greek		Armenian		Foreigner		
Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	Male	Fem.	
73	95	44	27	161	162	-	-	Bağ Helki
122	132	1	1	21	24	-	-	Sade Helki
31	31	-	-	5	4	-	-	Saray
33	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hatuniye
79	99	-	-	-	-	-	-	Karadağ
124	116	-	-	-	-	-	-	Cami-i Enderun
70	84	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ağ Saadeddin
152	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	Kurşunlu
99	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sebkeddin
153	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hızır Paşa
158	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şeyh Cui
261	249	-	-	-	-	-	-	Hacı İlyas
97	95	15	22	41	32	-	-	Gökmedrese
141	147	-	-	5	4	-	-	Şamica
62	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	Şeyh Garik
261	229	-	-	14	8	-	-	Küpceğiz
116	106	-	-	13	12	-	-	Recep
277	274	10	7	-	-	-	-	Üçler
58	50	67	60	175	161	-	-	Acem Ali
117	118	1	2	69	59	-	-	Devehane
125	116	12	15	177	182	4	2	Çeribaşı
30	24	42	41	115	122	-	-	Bozahane
6	5	41	34	28	28	-	-	Kazganlı
10	12	7	7	16	15	-	-	Köprübaşı
75	95	33	39	20	16	-	-	Eski Kethüda
38	39	11	4	5	2	-	-	Kocacık
11	3	8	4	24	28	-	-	Saraçhane
2	1	13	11	29	27	-	-	Uzun Mustafa
29	30	44	47	51	51	-	-	Pervane Bey
10	15	97	112	100	77	-	-	İslam
13	14	15						

From Confiscation to Appropriation

HISTORICAL CONTINUITY AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE 'ARMENIAN ECONOMY' IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE¹

BY BEDROSS DER MATOSSIAN

One of the marginalized topics in the historiography of the Ottoman Empire in general and that of the Armenian Genocide in particular is the fate of the "Armenian economy" during World War I. Historians always intend to highlight the great achievements that Armenians had made in the field of economy in the Ottoman Empire as *sarrafs*, bankers, merchants and industrialists. However, when a scholar starts examining or questioning the fate of the "Armenian capital" in the Empire, his intentions immediately become suspect or labeled as nationalistic in nature with a sharp political agenda. Having said that, scholars usually try to avoid dealing with this "sensitive" issue lest they anger the "lion in the cage" or be marginalized by their colleagues for venturing into dangerous territories. Hence, scholars always try to choose non-sensitive issues that deal with the social and economic dimension of Ottoman history. Why should discussing the issue of prostitution in 18th-century Istanbul, for example, or epidemics in the 19th-century Ottoman Empire be considered as legitimate subjects while questioning the fate of the "Armenian economy" is labeled troublesome and sensitive? The history of the Armenian contribution to the field of economy in the Empire and its subsequent destruction during World War I must be discussed as a regular/legitimate subject pertaining to both the history of the Ottoman Empire and that of modern Turkey.

Research on the fate of "Armenian capital" in the Ottoman Empire remains in its infancy for a couple of reasons. We know for a fact that hundreds of Armenian merchants, commercial houses, along with factories existed in the Ottoman Empire during the late 19th century. One would speculate that each of these entities at least kept a partial archival record of their business transactions. One such archive, that of Mr. Krikor Chatalian, is in the disposal of the author of this article. Chatalian was an influential Armenian merchant from Sivrihisar (Ankara) at the end of the 19th century trading in wool and cloths. His private papers consist of more than a thousand documents pertaining to the business transactions of Mr. Krikor Chatalian during the late 19th and early 20th century. In his public transactions with other merchants, Haroutiun Chatalian would communicate in Ottoman Turkish, whereas in his private notebook he wrote in Armeno-Turkish. The quantity as well as quality of these documents signifies, on the one hand, the capacity of the trade Krikor Chatalian was involved, and on the other, his strict administrative abilities of bookkeeping and archival recording. A detailed examination of these documents shed important light on the economic and the social history of Sivrihisar prior to the destruction of the "Armenian economy" in the Empire.

The private archives of these merchants, commercial houses, commercial firms and factories, if available, would demonstrate the complexity, richness and enormity of "the Armenian economy" in the Ottoman Empire. However, the archives of their commercial houses, private businesses and factories have not yet been examined or do not exist due to the destruction of the "Armenian economy" during the Armenian Genocide of World War I. Thus, the paucity of archival material on Armenian businesses creates a serious challenge to historians who aim to reconstruct the history of the

"Armenian economy" during the 19th century. One useful source is the history books that were written by Pan-Armenian Unions in the Diaspora during the post-genocide period. The main objective of these history writing practices was to preserve the local identities of the Armenians. Ninety percent of these works were written in Armenian. I would argue it was a way of mourning their lost homeland; whatever was written during this period is unique since as far as I know there is no popular counterpart mirroring the same period of time in Turkish. Although some of these pieces sound more folkloric than methodologically sound and historical, that does not undo the fact that they provide invaluable information about the "Armenian economy." For example Arshag Alboyadjian, Hovakim Hovakimian, Puzant Yeghayan (Kesaria, Trabizond, Adana) provide ample information on topography, Ottoman history, Armenians in Ottoman administration, and cultural and ethnographic dimensions, etc. However, one of the main sources for the reconstructing of the history of the "Armenian economy" is the Ottoman Archives, which hold a plethora of information on the economic history of the Empire. An important source for the reconstruction of the "Armenian economy" lies in the documentation of the liquidation of "Armenian capital" in the Empire during World War I, when a systematic process of confiscation began that terminated with the appropriation of "Armenian capital" during the Republican period. This confiscation process, which was initiated by the Abandoned Property Commission (*Emval-i Metruke Komisyonu*) and the Safety Commission (*Emniyet Komisyonu*), was highly bureaucratic and kept detailed registrars of the items, properties and capital that was confiscated from the Armenian deportees, with the claim that it would be returned to them in their "relocated" destinies. In other words, the documentation of the 'Armenian capital' during the confiscation process should be considered not only as an important source for the reconstruction of the "Armenian economy" on the eve of World War I, but as a blue print for population engineering in Anatolia.

The following article is a preliminary attempt to discuss the mechanism of this confiscation/appropriation continuum from the historical perspective, and will provide some answers regarding the fate of "Armenian capital" as an important component of the economic dimension in the extermination process of the Armenians. In addition, the movement of "Armenian capital" from the Ottoman Empire to the Republican era does not only demonstrate a historical continuity, but also sheds light on capital movements during different political regimes and the role that this capital plays in the creation of new economic classes.

The 'Armenian economy' in the Ottoman Empire: An Overview

The use of the term "Armenian economy" in the Ottoman Armenian is rather misleading. I prefer to use the concept in quotes because the "Armenian economy" in the Ottoman Empire was an integral part of the Ottoman economy, directly influenced and nurtured by the economic, political and social transformations experienced in the Empire during the 19th century. I use the term "Armenian economy" to represent all Armenians who were somehow involved in the economic activities of the Empire as merchants, industrialists, factory owners, middlemen, bankers, etc. This economy

was specifically destroyed and confiscated during World War I because it was run by Armenians.

In the 19th century, European merchants recognized the economic potential of Anatolia. For them, this was a land of opportunity for the export of manufactured goods from Europe and the import of agricultural products to the West. What gave a boost to the economic relationship between the West and the Ottoman Empire, however, was the Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1838, otherwise known as the Balta Liman Treaty. Armenian and Greek merchants became the biggest beneficiaries of these economic transformations. In the second half of the 19th century, several cities in Anatolia witnessed considerable population and economic growth. This was due to an increase in the phenomenon of urbanization, an expansion of the communication network, the opening of the Anatolian market to the West, administrative reforms and an increase in social mobility. This in turn led to the increase in the size of the non-Muslim bourgeois class, especially that of the Armenians and Greeks. The "Armenian economy" played a significant role on three geographic levels—the central cities (Istanbul, Ankara), the peripheral cities (Kesaria, Harput, Tokat) and the international cities (London, Manchester). For example, in the 19th century, Kesaria became an important center for manufacturing and supplying goods to Adana, Yozgat, Agn, Tokat, Sivas and Constantinople. Some 15,000 Armenians lived in the city of Kesaria by the end of the 19th century. The Armenian merchants of Kesaria played an important role in the economy of the city both locally and internationally. Soon, some of these merchants began expanding their business network to include such cities as Istanbul and Manchester. This network was controlled by such famous merchant houses as the Gulbenkians, Manugians, Frengians, Gumushians and Selians. Harput was an important center for the silk culture because of its climate and large mulberry gardens. Some Armenian students studied silk culture in Bursa's Silk School. The production process began with the raw cocoons and culminated with the packaging of new fabric. In the 19th century, two large families that controlled the silk production were the Fabricatorian Brothers in Mezere and Effendi Kiurkjian. The Fabricatorian Commercial House was founded in Mezere by Krikor Ipekian, who later adopted the name Fabricatorian. The silk that was produced in this factory was of such excellent quality that it was exempted from taxes and given free warehousing and dock facilities in Constantinople. The silk cloths produced carried the label "Fabrikator." In 1889, Ipekian began enlarging his factory by bringing machines from Europe and America. After his death in 1902, his five sons, Minas, Dikran, Samuel, Garabed and Aharon, took over and improved the business. The Fabricatorian brothers, along with their wives and children, were all killed during the Armenian Genocide, thus effectively putting an end to their commercial legacy in Harput. The *vali* of the district and other Turkish officials took the other houses.

The major commercial houses in Tokat in the end of the 19th century were in the hands of the Armenians. Towards the end of the 19th century, the main commercial houses importing *manifattura* in Tokat were the Ibranossian Brothers, Kevork and Hagop Papazian Brothers, Mardiros Zartarian, Karatavukian, and H. Kechejian and sons, whereas the merchants of

hurdavat (junk dealers) were Mardiros Kesdekian, Garabed Tashjian, Karnig Naregian, Hagop Peynirmezian. The most important house of export was the Gulbenkian firm, which like the Ibranossian firm, had agents in all of the provinces. Armenian merchants and industrialists were also very influential in the provinces of Trebizond. The prominent merchants of the *sanjak* of Trebizond were Boghos Arabian, Gayzag Arabian, Ibranossians, Marrantians, H. Tahmazian, A. Minassian, Gureghian, Aslanian and the Aghnavorian brothers, who controlled the hazelnut business in the province of Trebizond.¹ The Armenians in the *caza* of Samsun excelled in the cultivation and production of tobacco; famous merchants and tobacco producers included the Ipekians, Kherians, Ibranossian brothers, Gudugians, Meserians, Aprahamians, Bahcheghians and the Chekmeyans.

The situation changed, however, during the last two decades of the 19th century with the economic depression of 1870-1890 and the escalation of ethnic tensions in Anatolia. The "Armenian economy" received a huge blow during the Hamidian Massacres of 1894-96. The end of the despotic Hamidian regime by the Young Turk revolution of 1908 provided new hope for the "Armenian economy" in the Empire. There were calls to concentrate the "Armenian capital" in one institution, i.e. establish an Armenian Ottoman Bank.² However, the Adana Massacres of 1909 during the counter revolution took the lives of more than 20,000 Armenians and 2,000 Turks and shook the foundations of the "Armenian economy." In addition, the further deterioration in ethnic relations during the second constitutional period, which manifested itself in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and was followed by a massive boycotting of non-Muslim (Greek, Armenian and Austrian) products, led to the decline of Armenian trade. The radicalization of Turkish nationalism after the Balkan Wars led to drastic changes in the CUP's policy toward the Christian elements living in the Empire, in particular the Armenians. Meanwhile, a theory of national economy (*Milli İktisat*)³ was being crystallized that strove to eliminate the Armenian and Greek presence from the field of economy by calling on the Turkish element to develop a capitalist bourgeoisie that would assume the role played by the Armenians and Greeks.⁴ This encouraged economic boycotts by the Turks, which began during the Balkan Wars and intensified during World War I. The ensuing war and the Armenian Genocide led to the demise of the "Armenian economy" in the Empire.

Confiscation Process

The process of confiscating "Armenian capital" is important in understanding the institutional continuity approach evident in the transition period from empire to republic. The issue of confiscated goods—or the appropriation of "Armenian capital" during the Armenian Genocide—needs to be examined thoroughly to demonstrate the extent to which confiscated capital played a role in the economy of the then newly born Turkish Republic, for example. In this case, the institutional continuity is evident as it appears beginning during the Ottoman period (confiscation) and ending during the Turkish Republic (appropriation).

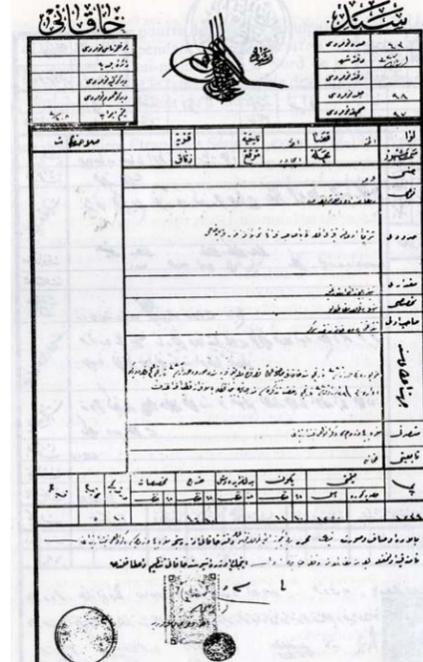
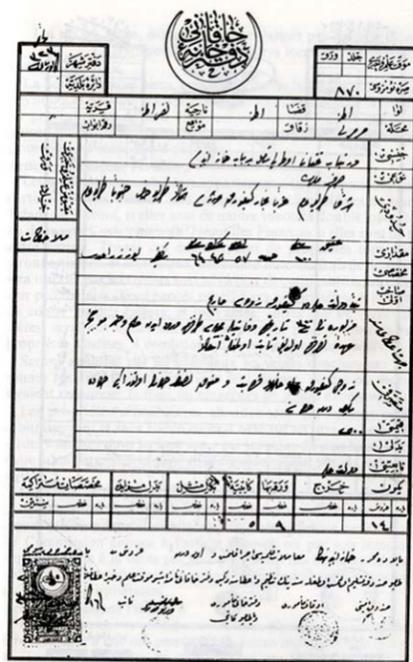
When the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, the Ottoman military's emergency measures assumed disproportionate dimensions of rigidity. The government enacted a series of Temporary Laws that aimed at making its policies malleable to the existing political

situation and easier to attain its objectives.⁵ Thus, a wide campaign of property confiscation took place in the eastern provinces, and included almost anything considered under the general category of supplies and provisions for the Ottoman Army. A supplementary law, enacted on June 10, 1915, contained instructions on how to register and protect the properties of the deportees, and how to dispose of others through public auctions (the revenues of which would be given to the owners upon their return from the war). This supplementary law, which consisted of 34 articles, was comprised under "The regulations concerning the management of the land and the properties belonging to the Armenians who have been sent elsewhere as a result of the state of war and extraordinary political situation."⁶ The government and those who were responsible for the abandoned properties were supposed to take protective measures to safeguard the properties of the Armenian deportees through the establishment of a special commission called *Emval-i*

Metruke Komisyonu (Abandoned Properties Commission). Indeed, the articles of the law provided careful and systematic treatment of the movable and the immovable properties of the Armenians. There were special registers in which the names of the owners, and the types of the goods that were confiscated, were to be registered in detail.⁷ Later on, the local government was to send these belongings to the places where the population resettled. List receipts of the confiscated properties were given to the Armenians before their "departure."⁸

For example, Article 1 of the law indicates that "The management of the land and properties belonging to Armenians who had been moved elsewhere [*ahir mahallari nakil icra edilen ermenliere*] will be carried out in compliance with these regulations by specially formed commissions and assigned officials whose authorities are indicated in the following articles,"⁹ whereas another article indicated that all the buildings belonging to Armenians "will be immediately sealed" and "taken under protection."¹⁰ Yet, despite the fact that the supplementary law aimed at paying great care and attention to the properties of the Armenians, it still contained contradictory information. The contradiction starts with Article 11, which indicates that "Migrants will be resettled in evacuated villages [*tahliyasi icra edilen koylere muhacir yerlestirelecek*] and the existing houses and the land will be distributed [*muhacirine tevzi' edilecek*] to the migrants through temporary documents by taking into consideration the capacity of work and demands of the migrant families."¹¹ Article 12 indicates that "The places of origin, settlement date, and resettlement places of the migrants [*muhacirinin*] will be registered in detail on the basis of their registers by the houses they move into. Furthermore, the houses as well as the type, amount and value of the land given to them will separately be registered and the migrants will be given a document showing the quantity of land and property given to them."¹² Whereas Article 14 indicates that "Following the resettlement of the migrants, the nomads will be resettled in the remaining villages [*muhacir iskandan mutabaqi kalan koylere civarda mevcud asair sayara*] in the region and the procedures related to the resettlement of the nomads will be similarly to those applied for the migrants."¹³ After Article 10, the articles begin dealing with the resettlement of the migrants (*muhacirler*) in the evacuated villages (*tahliyasi icra edilen koylere*). One wonders what is meant by the word migrants—if it refers to the Armenians or to the migrants that would be settled in those areas. This process of resettling was systematic, as well, as on of the articles indicates that "A book showing the type, quantity and value of the land distributed to the migrants as well as their

names will be kept as a basis for identity registration."¹⁴ Ironically, the second half of the Supplementary Law instructs how to settle the migrants in the evacuated areas. In fact, the Supplementary Laws provided instructions for the systematic registration of everything that dealt with the confiscation, and arguably represented a blue print for population engineering during World War I under the guise of wartime measures.¹⁵ A critical analysis of these registers, books, lists, if found, would shed light on the mechanism of the confiscation by area, city, village, family, religious denomination, etc. If the registration of "Armenian capital" was carried out in a systemic way, does this mean that the first half of the articles of the Supplementary Law were also implemented on the ground? American as



Documents 1 and 2. Receipts given by the Abandoned Properties Commission to Mariam from Adana.

well as European sources tell us another story, that most of the movable property was looted and parts of immovable properties were sold in auctions at a fraction of their original value or given as booty for Kurdish tribes to encourage them to participate in the war.¹⁶ One such report was sent from the American Consul in Trebizond, Oscar S. Heizer, to the American Embassy in Constantinople in July 1915:

The 1,000 Armenian houses are being emptied of furniture by the police one after the other. The furniture, bedding and everything of value is being stored in large buildings about the city. There is no attempt at classification and the idea of keeping the property in "bales under the protection of the government to be returned to the owners on their return" is simply ridiculous. The goods are piled in without any attempt at labeling or systematic storage. A crowd of Turkish women and children follow the police about like a lot of vultures and seize anything they can lay their hands on and when the more valuable things are carried out of the house by the police they rush in and take the balance. I see this performance every day with my own eyes. I suppose it will take several weeks to empty all the houses and then the Armenian shops and stores will be cleared out. The commission which has the matter in hand is now talking of selling the great collection of household goods and property in order to pay the debts of the Armenians. The German Consul told me that he did not believe the Armenians would be permitted to return to Trebizond after the war.¹⁷

In order to better understand the mechanism of confiscation, I would like to bring some examples from the province of Sivas.

A. Under the assumption of war tax (*teklif-i harbiyye*), large quantities of goods were taken from Armenian merchants and businessmen down to the last artisan. In the case of Sivas, for example, about 1,000 carts of goods were collected from the villages. The army later took these carts to

Enderis and then to Erzurum.

B. Before being deported, the majority of the people of Sivas entrusted large quantities of gold coins, valuable jewelry and bonds to the American missionaries. They thought that they were going to return soon. American Missionary Mary Graffam reported in Sivas, before setting out, that "... the Armenians brought us their jewels and other possessions to care for. They were so excited that they were almost crazy, and we had to shake some of them in order to get them to tell us their names. One man," she wrote, "was caught bringing his possessions and he was killed."

C. The government usurped the valuable deposits of the Armenians of Sivas, which were left as security against loans taken out from the Ottoman Bank.

D. When the Armenians were

together.

The issue of abandoned properties and damages inflicted to the properties appeared in conferences, treaties and congresses a couple of times before the establishment of the Turkish Republic. In 1919, the Armenian delegation at the Paris peace conference presented a report titled "Tableau approximatif des Réparations et Indemnités pour les dommages subis par la Nation arménienne en Arménie de Turquie et dans la République arménienne du Caucase." During the Treaty of Sèvres, the issue of abandoned property was raised. Article 144 of the Treaty of Sèvres read:

"The Turkish Government recognises the injustice of the law of 1915 relating to Abandoned Properties (*Emval-i Metrouke*), and of the supplementary provisions thereof, and declares them to be null and void, in the past as in the future. ... The Turkish Government solemnly undertakes to facilitate to the greatest possible extent the return to their homes and re-establishment in their businesses of the Turkish subjects of non-Turkish race who have been forcibly driven from their homes by fear of massacre or any other form of pressure since January 1, 1914. It recognises that any immovable or movable property of the said Turkish subjects or of the communities to which they belong, which can be recovered, must be restored to them as soon as possible, in whatever hands it may be found. Such property shall be restored free of all charges or servitudes with which it may have been burdened and without compensation of any kind to the present owners or occupiers, subject to any action which they may be able to bring against the persons from whom they derived title."

However, the Treaty of Sèvres was annulled by the Treaty of Lausanne leaving behind the implementation of Article 144. Even before Lausanne, the Grand National Assembly in Angora passed another law on April 15, 1923, which stipulated that the properties of all non-Muslims who had left before the Treaty of Lausanne pass to the Turkish government. After the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish government promulgated a law which forbade the return of the Armenians deportees of Cilicia and the eastern provinces to Turkey. A law promulgated on May 1927 put an end to the hopes of reclaiming confiscated property; it authorized the exclusion of Turkish nationality to anyone who had not taken part in the War of Independence and remained abroad between July 24, 1923, and May 27, 1927. Furthermore, during the republican period, the Turkish government appropriated the "abandoned" properties and put it on sale or gave it to the newly migrated population. Eventually, the issue of abandoned property was buried.

This article labored to demonstrate the fate of the "Armenian economy" in the Ottoman Empire. The Supplementary Law, with its contradictory articles, represented a draft of population engineering that aimed at the homogenization of Anatolia. However, it covered only one dimension of the confiscation process. The following points need to be taken into consideration when conducting future research about the fate of the "Armenian economy."

1) As mentioned earlier, the registers of the Abandoned Property Commission (*Emval-i Metruke Komisyonu*) and the *Emniyet Komisyonu* (Safety Commission) must be thoroughly examined. I have seen examples of these registers published in the Ottoman press. This will give us a better understanding of the economical dimension of the Armenian Genocide and the mechanism of confiscation, and will provide us with important information regarding confiscated materials with their geographical descriptions. (See for example documents 1 and 2 on this page.)

deported, the government confiscated their movable and immovable goods. The goods were sold at cheap prices by running a bazaar. On June 27, 1915, a ciphered telegram was sent by the Ministry of the Interior to the provinces of

Sivas, Trabizon and Mamuretulaziz, and to the governor of the *sanjak* of Canik regarding the regulations concerning the safekeeping of the possessions of Armenians whose "transfer" had been decided.¹⁸ Two months later, on August 11, 1915, a ciphered telegram from the Ministry of Interior was sent to the various provinces and governors of *sanjaks*, including Sivas, claiming that the immovable properties of relocated Armenians had been sold under value and the agreements pertaining to the sale of these properties had been cancelled.¹⁹ These last telegrams may have been sent when the huge wave of selling confiscated properties had commenced.

E. During the deportation, gendarmes regularly took 30-50 gold pieces for *selametlik* (safety commission) by force from each caravan. There was also a *toprak basti* (stepping on land) fee taken from the caravans when they entered the territories of Kurdish and Turkish *bey*s or when they entered another province on their way to the south.

F. The government sent special groups called the *Emniyet Komisyonu* (safety commission) who were charged with taking valuable possessions under the pretext that the roads were too dangerous and the Kurds were continuously attacking the caravans. When the caravans reached their destination, the safety commission was supposed to return these possessions to their rightful owners, but this never happened. The cash, gold, jewelry, stocks, bonds and other valuable items were taken from the caravans in the most vicious manner. Eyewitness accounts indicate that the Armenians were beaten by the safety commission officers to hand over their possessions. Ironically, the concepts of violence and safety (commissions) seemed to have been coined

The Odyssey of One Armenian as Told by the Foxboro Reporter

By BILL MILHOMME

On April 24, 1915, the Turkish government issued an order for the extermination of the Armenian people in their own land, where they had lived for centuries. On that date, writers, composers, intellectuals and priests were rounded up and killed. Their death presaged the murder of an ancient civilization. April 24 is, therefore, commemorated as the date of the unfolding of the Armenian Genocide.

Between the years 1895 and 1923, the Armenian people was subjected to deportation, expropriation, abduction, torture, massacre and starvation. The great bulk of the Armenian population was forcibly removed from Armenia and Anatolia to Syria, where the vast majority was sent into the desert to die of thirst and hunger. Large numbers of Armenians were methodically massacred throughout the Ottoman Empire. Women and children were abducted and horribly abused. The entire wealth of the Armenian people was expropriated. As a result, some 600,000 Armenians were killed or died of starvation.

These events may seem to be far removed from local residents, but they are not. Throughout greater Boston and southeastern Massachusetts, the children of first generation Armenians who survived the genocide live among us. This is the story of one of the surviving families and the town that embraced them.

In 1889, at the age of 24, Samuel Sakaian, an Armenian, left his young wife and children and emigrated to the United States. Several months later, responding to the need for skilled tradesmen in the local manufacturing industries, Sakaian relocated to Foxboro.

During the ensuing three decades, he would travel back to Armenia several times in search of his family members who remained in his native land. The archives of the Foxboro Reporter is a window to the past of the heartfelt love and concern of the residents of the town for the adopted son as he journeyed into danger. His final journey was celebrated by the return of his niece who was captured by Arab slave traders and sold into domestic servitude.

In 1894, when word of the fighting between the Turks and Armenians reached Samuel Sakaian, the Foxboro Reporter began recording the unfolding events. On August 24, 1894, in an article titled "Off for the Holy Land," it was reported that "Samuel H. K. Sakaian left Foxboro on Tuesday of this week for Worcester, from whence he will go to New York, and from there he sails on Wednesday, August 29th, for London. From London, England he goes to Paris, France, from Paris to Marseilles, France, and from Marseilles he boards a ship, which will carry him to Antioch, in the Holy Land. At Antioch, he will buy a horse at an expense of about \$25, on which he will be obliged to ride for 15 long days before he reaches his home in Central Armenia, near Mount Ararat. At Antioch he will also hire an ass and its owner. On the back of the animal will be carried his carpenter tools, which weigh several hundred pounds. These will be divided and packed in two boxes, each holding about an equal number of pound in order that they may be carried to better advantage. All along the route are located inns, at which travelers purchase necessities for man and beast.

"Samuel has resided in Foxboro for 4 years and it is 4 ½ years since he left his native land. During his absence a daughter 6 ½ years of age has died. He has three brothers and one sister, all married and all residing in the same house with his family. He was 55 days on his journey to this country, but expects to return in 40 days, under increased facilities, and with less delay along the route. During his resi-

dence here he has been nearly or quite all the time in the employ of Deacon Thomas B. Bourne, and engaged as a carpenter. He has gained many friends and carries back to his country the best wishes of all who know him. He also carries back a knowledge of various things as done in this country, which will be of great value and lasting benefit to him. He wishes to extend his thanks to Deacon T. B. Bourne, Robert S. Carpenter and their families, and to the many people here who have befriended him either by word or deed. It is a long and tedious journey, which he starts upon, and one beset by more or less danger."

Unfortunately, Sakaian's journey ended in Marseilles, France, for according to the Foxboro Reporter in September 1895, Sakaian started a second time for Armenia. The article recorded that "Samuel leaves many friends in Foxboro, who have learned to respect him; the prayers and best wishes of many people here accompany him on his long journey,

In 1919, the Foxboro Reporter recorded that Sakaian was traveling to Armenia "to locate if possible his wife and family, not a word from whom has he heard for years." The article also mentioned that "...He had a large number of relatives and has always held the opinion that many of them were victims during the Armenian massacre. He is undecided as to his future labors, but may devote his remaining year to the interests of his Armenian country and people."

and will be with him after he reaches his home. He has been absent from wife and children 5 years and 7 months, a daughter having died during his absence.

"Once before he started on this journey but met with misfortune before sailing from Europe, and returned to America. He will carry his carpenter tools with him, which he has purchased since his return to America, his first chest of these necessities having been stolen from him during his previous journey. Samuel wishes us to say that his heart is filled with thankfulness to the people of Foxboro for their many and great kindnesses to him during his stay among us, and we realized that his heart was filled with tender thoughts for our people who had befriended him, which could not be expressed."

Three months later, in December 1895, the Foxboro Reporter informed residents of the town that a letter had been received by Sakaian's former employer, Thomas B. Bourne. In the article, Bourne stated that Sakaian was in Marseilles, France, "in company with quite a body of his countrymen, all being detained there on account of the terrible ravages, which are taking place in Armenia, in which over 18,000 of his people, have been massacred. It is impossible for any of them to get passports to proceed. Samuel does not know whether his family are alive or dead, as no word of any kind has been received from them. The nearest post-office has been visited by marauders, and their fearful work of murder has been going on there. He still retains his chest of carpenter tools, and will probably be able to find something to do in this line to pay for his expenses." The article went on to mention that Sakaian "was followed from Foxboro

by many prayers, and kind wishes, and it would be a comfort for him to know that he has still a warm place in the hearts of many in this town."

Soon after, in February 1896, the Foxboro Reporter recorded that a "meeting in town hall Monday evening to raise money for suffering Armenia was fairly attended. Rev. J. W. Flagg presided. The speaker of the evening was Rev. E. P. Allen of Portland, Maine, who was a missionary at Harpoot, Turkey. His lecture was intensely interesting, and a generous collection was taken."

Several weeks later, on March 14, 1896, the Foxboro Reporter mentioned that Sakaian had safely arrived again in Foxboro from Marseilles, France. The article went on to state that Sakaian's arrival "was closely followed by a registered letter, from his home in Armenia, receiving it on Saturday. It was the fourth, which has been received by him, out of seven letters written to him by his people. The others have probably been inter-

cepted. He wrote fifteen letters from France to his home and to those acquainted with his people in other parts of Turkey. Nearly all of these have doubtless failed to reach their destination.

"The letter received Saturday was, as stated, forwarded to him from France, where he left his address upon leaving for his last journey back to the United States. It was written on Wednesday, January 15th and stated that his wife and son, his three brothers and their families, 15 persons in all, were alive. This was cheering news to Samuel although the letter received was written nearly two months ago."

Sakaian remained in town for several more years, but in 1900 he left Foxboro for his native Armenia. But 10 years later, on June 25, 1910, the Foxboro Reporter recorded that "Samuel Sakaian, who again arrived in this country from Armenia a week ago and who has once again settled in Foxboro, will bring his wife and other members of his family here as soon as he secures the necessary funds for them to make the long journey. Samuel has been absent ten years. He has four children living of the ten children born to them. One of these is a soldier in the army of his country. He with his wife also desire to come to America, but considerable money is required to secure his release from the army. Samuel has had varied and sad experiences since he left Foxboro, and at times has been in imminent danger of losing his life at the hands of the treacherous and wily Turks. He says he never desires to return to his native land, and life will seem worth living when his family are again here."

Apparently Sakaian's family never arrived in Foxboro, for almost a decade later

on July 19, 1919, the Foxboro Reporter recorded that Sakaian had received his passport and that he was traveling to Armenia "to locate if possible his wife and family, not a word from whom has he heard for years." The article also mentioned that "...He had a large number of relatives and has always held the opinion that many of them were victims during the Armenian massacre. He is undecided as to his future labors, but may devote his remaining year to the interests of his Armenian country and people."

On November 29, 1919, the Foxboro Reporter recorded that "The many friends of Samuel K. H. Sakaian will be pleased to learn that he has reached his native land in safety. We present our readers with a letter received from him by Thomas B. Bourne, dated Constantinople, October 20th, which is as follows: 'I am in Constantinople. New York to Constantinople twenty-one days on the water. We had a nice journey, nice food, nice bed; everything was good. My fare from New York was \$305. My health is good. By and by I will go to the English Consul to show my passport. Went to the American Consul, but he told me to go to the English Consul, because everything is in English powers hands. I think I will stay here this winter, but sometime I will see the English Consul to get advice to go to Aleppo. I found my brother's daughter. All the Armenian people have been without any clothing: all women, girls and boys, have been undressed: nothing to cover themselves. I do not want to write all the things, and I am not able to write. Thousands die of hunger and thirst, and many of them throw themselves into the river and kill themselves. I am sorry I am not able to write long letters, but I hope you will be satisfied. Best regards to you all. You cannot send any letters to me now.'

Apparently Foxboro residents were unaware of Sakaian's whereabouts for the next three and a half years. It was not until May 1923 that he returned to Foxboro and told his incredible story. As recorded in the May 12, 1923 Foxboro Reporter, "Mr. Samuel Sakaian, a former resident of Foxboro, returned Wednesday after a sojourn of almost four years in Turkey. Mr. Sakaian left here in June 1919. The 'Black Arrow', on which he sailed, left New York on September 26, 1919 and was 22 days on the way to Constantinople."

He experienced numerous difficulties in securing passports for passage both ways, notwithstanding the fact that he was an American Citizen; it had become practically impossible for an Armenian to live in Turkey.

His plan was to go to Harpoot in Asia Minor to locate his family. When he arrived, he learned that all members of his family, numbering 25 in all, which included his four brothers and their families, had been "sent down South"—in other words, massacred by the Turks. Mr. Sakaian does not want us to think, however, that all Turks are cruel as he tells us that some are humane.

In a small village, called Kuckuk Chekmeja, which is just outside of Constantinople, he found a few remaining relatives, who used to live there years and years ago.

One of his cousins had been shipped South to Aleppo by the Turks and there met one of his nieces, who had been claimed in the desert by an Arab. The procedure was to ship all Armenians to the desert where the Arabs overtook them and seized the girls and young women, all others being massacred or left to die of starvation and thirst. To quote Mr. Sakaian, "My niece, who comes from Harpoot, was shipped with the others to the desert by the Turks. There a crowd of Arabs came and took the girls. My niece, at that time only fifteen years old, was taken with two other girls by an Arabian

himself to be enthusiastic over the proposed Legion hall, and assured the members of his support in the matter. After the exercises a lunch was served in the banquet hall. It surely hit the right spot. Exit football, enter basketball.

Letter from Samuel Sakaian

The many Foxboro friends of Samuel K. H. Sakaian will be pleased to learn that he has reached his native land in safety. We present our readers with a letter received from him by Thomas B. Bourne, dated Constantinople, October 20th, which is as follows:

"I am in Constantinople. New York to Constantinople twenty-one days on the water. We had a nice journey, nice food, nice bed; everything was good. My fare from New York was \$905. My health is good. By and by I will go to the English Consul to show my passport. Went to the American Consul, but he told me to go to the English Consul, because everything is in English powers hand. I think I will stay here this winter, but sometime I will see the English Consul to get advice to go to Aleppo. I found my brother's daughter. All the Armenian people have been without any clothing; all women, girls and boys, have been undressed; nothing to cover themselves. I do not want to write all the things, and I am not able to write. Thousands die of hunger and thirst, and many of them throw themselves in the river and kill themselves. I am sorry I am not able to write long letters, but I hope you will be satisfied. Best regards to you all. You cannot send any letters to me now."

Patriotic Service.

The following is the program for a patriotic service to be held at Bethany church Sunday evening next at 7 o'clock. Franklin A. Pettee, organist: Organ Prelude Responsive Service, including

Rebecca R. Linphier, late of said County, deceased. Whereas two certain instruments of said deceased have been filed for Probate, by George Foxborough, who prays that they may be issued to the therein named, without official bond, You are hereby cited to a Court to be held at Queens of Norfolk, on the tenth A. D. 1919, at nine o'clock to show cause, if any you should not be granted. And said petitioner is to give public notice thereof, citation once in each week five weeks, in the Foxboro paper published in said County, and by mailing, post a copy of this citation to interested in the estate, before said Court. Witness, James H. Flint, said Court, this fourteenth day of the month of October, the year one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

J. R. M. boy

BayState Palmer-Fitchburn-Willimantic

Doctors Influenza Return

Be ready to germs! Build new reser by taking

VOLUME 40 1923

SAMUEL SAKAIAN RETURNS FROM TURKEY

Mr. Samuel Sakaian, a former resident of Foxboro, returned Wednesday after a sojourn of almost four years in Turkey. Mr. Sakaian left here in June, 1919. The "Black Arrow", on which he sailed, left New York on Sept. 26, 1919 and was 22 days on the way to Constantinople.

He experienced numerous difficulties in securing passports for passage both ways, notwithstanding the fact that he was an American citizen, the trouble between Armenians and Turks since the war has made it practically impossible for an Armenian to live in Turkey.

His plan was to go to Harpoot in Asia Minor to locate his family. When he arrived, he learned that all members of his family, numbering 25 in all, which included his four brothers and their families, had been "sent down South"; in other words, massacred by the Turks. Mr. Sakaian does not want us to think, however, that all Turks are cruel as he tells us that some are humane.

In a small village, called Kuckuk Chekmeja, which is just outside of Constantinople, he found a few remaining relatives, who used to live there years and years ago.

One of his cousins had been shipped South to Aleppo by the Turks and there he met one of his nieces, who had been claimed in the desert by an Arab. The procedure was to ship all Armenians to the desert where the Arabs overtook them and seized the girls and young women, all others being massacred or left to die of starvation and thirst. To quote Mr. Sakaian, "My niece, who comes from Harpoot, was shipped with others to the desert by the Turks. There a crowd of Arabs came and took the girls. My niece, at that time only fifteen

New York, he was referred to the American Ambassador, who, when appointed time came, had or military orderly escort ship. Mr. Sakaian states glad to be back in Foxboro and that he proposes to stay here.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

There are 11 articles 4 upon at a special meeting in Grange Hall next Tuesday. People who object to the thing passed and who are objecting to their high not exert themselves to meeting while all those in the different projects will masse and vote yes. Amended in the different articles \$250 for marking Public \$500 for expenses of running truck of the Highway D \$500 for 1/4 of the expenses facing parts of North and streets, the State paying 1/2. Other important articles in the Surveyor and election of Commissioners in place of purchase of a tractor for the Department, and the most new heating apparatus in School buildings.

DIRT IN OUR STREETS

Eugene Kirby was spotted other day of the matter in the streets of the town especially on Central street in the section below the corner the past, a gang of men work there every Saturday the dirt so that the center would be clean on Sunday. usually cost from fifteen to twenty dollars. Mr. Kirby now has a

Reporter

NUMBER 6

SAKAIAN MISSES SHIP DIVERTED FROM NEW YORK TO PROVIDENCE

Interesting Assortment of Tax Bills

Tax-payers paying the most in a year are the Foxboro Company, \$4448.88, and the next is Bleachery. Among the tax-payers paying over \$300 are included: R. Bristol, \$335.50; Wm. A. Carpenter, \$638.50; Annie Rocker, \$520.25; Frances L. \$347.73; Foxboro National Bank, \$530; Foxborough Savings Bank, \$414.34; Phoebe Fuller, Gordon Manufacturing Company, \$402.50; J. William Gove, \$402.50; J. Hayes, \$306.29; Sarah T. \$377.28; Anna A. Hodges, Inman & Kimball, \$489.10; Inman, \$24.95; Agnes F. \$600.15; Alice B. Newton, David A. Ouimet, \$432.45; M. Perry, \$405.85; Alice B. \$340; The Print Shop, Inc., Carleton Sawyer, \$562.80; I. Saart, \$392.20; Dorothy R. \$311.50; John H. Tarment, Edwin B. Truax, \$341.31; and Company, \$548.23; Robin Marion H. Whitten, \$304.74.

Armenian Immigrant is Finally Admitted

Was on One of the 26 Ships That Arrived from the 'Other Side' on the Same Day

Samuel Sakaian, a resident of the town for 40 years but a native of Armenia, visited several months his native land where he learned that all his family had been massacred except a niece, Alma Sakaian. He returned last Spring leaving Monday with the American Consul in Constantinople for the passage later of his niece. She arrived at Ellis Island June 30th, only to find that the quota from her country had already arrived. She was sent back to Europe and her money refunded. Ex-Representative Ellis and Congressman Frothingham took up the matter and she was allowed an entrance. She took passage again on the steamship Canada to arrive in New York last Monday. This vessel was diverted to Providence where it docked on Sunday. Samuel Sakaian went to New York Monday to meet his niece. She landed in Providence on Sunday and came to Attleboro where she was taken care of on Monday night by the Y.W.C.

The Foxboro Reporter from November 19, 1919; May, 12, 1923; and October 6, 1923.

and kept by him for three years. Fortunately, he was very kind, gave them work in the kitchen and did not trouble them. When the Armistice was signed, and everything was under English control, the Arab asked the girls whether they wanted to stay in his house or go into English hands. The girls wanted to go, so he took them over to the English. There, the refugees were in one large building, under English hands. There my niece met her uncle (above mentioned) who did not recognize her at first, as she was a little girl the last time they had met. She remembered him and told him of her experiences and thus were reunited. They were both sent to Constantinople by the English representatives and there I found her, the only one I have left. She was penniless and had only on robe which an Arab had given her to wear. I left her passage money and expect her to reach Foxboro some time next month where she will make her home with me."

"The girl was shipped by the Turks South together with thousands and thousands of women and children from the villages, cities and towns. On their march thru the desert, they passed the dead bodies of hundreds of fellow countrymen who had been massacred. The Turks did not give them a chance to take their own children with them. Women, who had their babies with them, stopped to rest by the road and were killed as they sat there, for they stopped the progress of the march. Many children and women died of thirst, when they were driven into the desert. The girl's mother had no water for days and when they came at last to water, she drank too much of it and died. The same fate befell thousands of other women."

Mr. Sakaian stayed in Constantinople for three years, waiting for a chance to go to Harpoot. After the Greeks had driven the Turks back and Smyrna was burned, the Turks got power enough to drive all foreigners of every nationality out of Constantinople. Many Americans, English, Italian and French were rushed out of Constantinople by train and boat.

After the foreigners were driven out of Constantinople, there was very

little disturbance, so Mr. Sakaian was told by the American Consul that he could stay longer if he wished but that it would be better to come back to America. He experienced many difficulties in securing the passport as it was taken from

him by the Turkish government on the grounds that it "was against International Law" for Mr. Sakaian to become an American citizen without notifying the Turkish Consul in this country.

In order that Mr. Sakaian might get safely aboard the steamer for New York, he was referred to the American Ambassador, who, when the appointed time came, had his "qavas" or military orderly escort him to his ship. Mr. Sakaian states that he is glad to be back in Foxboro again, and that he proposes to stay this time.

Samuel's niece, Alma Sakaian's voyage to America was beset with the immigration complications that were common in the post-WWI era. On October 6, 1923, the Foxboro Reporter, in an article titled "Mr. Sakaian Misses Ship Diverted From New York To Providence: Armenian Immigrant is Finally Admitted," recorded the odyssey for the local residents. "Samuel Sakaian, a resident of this town for over 30 years but a native of Armenia, visited several months in his native land where he learned that all his family had been massacred except a niece, Alma Sakaian. He returned last Spring leaving money with the American Consul in Constantinople for the passage later of his niece. She arrived at Ellis Island on June 30, only to find that the quota from her country had already arrived. She was sent back to Europe and her money refunded. Ex-Representative Ellis and Congressman Frothingham took up the matter and she was allowed an entrance. She took passage again on the steamship Canada due to arrive in New York last Monday. This vessel was diverted to Providence where it docked on Sunday. Samuel Sakaian went to New York on Monday to meet his niece. She landed in Providence on Sunday and came to Attleboro where she was taken care of on Monday night by the Y.W.C.A. and finally arrived here safely on Tuesday."

Alma Sakaian was 21 years old when she arrived in Foxboro in 1923. She was born in Arghan, Turkey, in 1902. Several months after arriving in Foxboro, she married Archie Shahabian, an Armenian who also was born in the village of Arghan in 1885. Like Sakaian, Shahabian had emigrated to the United States and moved to Foxboro in 1904. Archie and Alma married in 1924 and lived in Foxboro for the rest of their lives. Archie died in 1975 and Alma passed away in 1982.

Several years after the death of her husband, Alma agreed to be interviewed by a local reporter, George Patisteads. For the first time, Alma recalled publicly her recollections of the events that transpired 60 years earlier. On November 9, 1978, the Foxboro Reporter recorded her story. "...Alma Sakaian was born in the town of Arghan, the youngest in a family of eight children, it was not the best of times. On the verge of the First World War, nationalism was running at a fever pitch. Instigated by years of fighting that resulted in about 200,000 Armenian deaths, the Turks were once again growing resentful of their country's sizable minority.

"What followed as a result were a number of purges of small hamlets and towns throughout the country that began in Alma's hometown when she was eight. At that time, out-of-town Turkish soldiers, prodded by the Germans, blindfolded and shot all the male members of her church over the age of 16. The group included Alma's two brothers, father and an uncle... After the Arghan massacre took place, Turkish harassment of the Armenians continued until a more organized purge began one month later. The Armenian members of the community, Alma recalls, were uprooted from their homes and told to take only what could be carried on their backs and donkeys or horses. Herded from their homes, the refugees were soon stripped of their animals as well, as they headed into the deserts of Mesopotamia.

"The reason for the hostility between the two groups of people was singular: religion. The Turks believed in the word of Muhammed. The Armenians followed the teachings of Christ.

"Lagging behind the caravan of refugees because she was attending to her younger brother, Alma was beaten by a Turkish soldier with a ball and chain, as was her brother. The beating was so severe that the two were left for dead, even though she was still alive.

"What Alma witnessed next, however, was worse than the beating: 10,000-15,000 Armenian refugees, including her mother and brother were being burned in their shelters while soldiers stood guard ready to shoot any person trying to escape. All remaining members of her family were killed in the blaze save for her two older sisters, who had married and moved to Russia before the purges began."

Alone in the deserts of Arabia, where the Armenians had been herded, Alma was picked up by Arab slave traders and deposited in the household of a rich sultan and his wife, where she became personal maid to the lady of the house. Her name and origin was then placed in area newspapers, including the Boston Globe. It was in that paper that Samuel Sakaian, visiting a friend in Watertown, was told of Alma. Sakaian stayed with his niece for four years, married, then decided to return to Foxboro. Because of his marital status, immigration officials recommended he leave his niece and then send for her a few months afterward.

Alma's attempts at emigrating, however, were a bona-fide disaster. Aboard a Greek ship that docked in Ellis Island in New York, she and about 50 other Armenians were denied entry because of filled quotas. The boat returned across the Atlantic, not to her home but to the home of the ship.

In Greece for a month with little money, Alma managed to scrape by until it was time for another try. However, when custom officials looked at her passport, taken early in Alma's life, they balked, thinking it was a forgery. They were convinced that the woman they saw was not the child of the picture, even though only a couple of years had elapsed. "If you were in my place, you'd look older, too," Alma recalls telling them. Allowed to proceed, she this time landed in Providence. Unable to speak a word of English except "Foxboro" and "Sam", Alma found her way to town with the assistance of helpful attendants and train conductors.

After residing in Foxboro for a few months she met Archie Shahabian and they were married soon after in 1924. Archie, like Alma, was a former resident of Arghan. Archie had come to this country as a stowaway to escape what he correctly predicted would be bloodshed in his native land. Alma and Archie Shahabian raised two sons in Foxboro, John and George. The former resides in California and George still lives in his hometown of Foxboro with his wife, Rose.

The Sakaian/Shahabian story, as recorded in the Foxboro Reporter archives, makes very personal an international story of remembrance that may seem at times to be far removed from our local events and memories.

Balakian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

hundred students at Bogazici University in Istanbul staged a protest with the slogan “against the darkness,” and they chanted Hrant Dink’s name and their solidarity with Armenians. These are the forces that Armenians want to join with and work with in pursuit of an open and free society in Turkey.

As it is wrong of Armenians to essentialize or demonize Turks, I think it is also unfair of the Turkish world to demonize the Armenian Diaspora because it seeks to deal with this history and its own traumatic past with passion and a need for truth and resolution. To do this to the Armenian Diaspora is to decontextualize history and the moral reality of 1915, and it essentializes what is a complex and multilayered international community and culture. Armenians of the Diaspora have little choice but to continue their role in the educational process, for it is only through scholarly discourse, school curricula, and educating the media and public that an important history will find its proper place in the world’s history, and perhaps some resolution to the conflict with Turkey can happen.

William Butler Yeats wrote in his poem Easter, 1916: “He too has been changed in his turn,/Transformed utterly;/ A terrible beauty is born.” And in that same poem: “Too long a sacrifice/can make a stone of the heart.” Yeats had thought deeply about what a struggle for justice can embody. For many Armenians, the cause of pursuing justice in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide has been going on for nearly a century; and this can turn the heart into stone. We cannot let our hearts turn to stone. We must find the human in the other, the spaces of camaraderie with our Turkish colleagues and all people who cherish human rights. We must find ways to push democracy forward in Turkey, and openness in our own culture. We must defuse our own tendencies to totalize, generalize, to over-simplify, to use history to impede dialogue. We live in a time of a terrible beauty; the power of the truth of history has been born and it comes with responsibilities.

Berklay

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Endnotes

1 This is the full and expanded text of what I originally prepared for the Armenians and the Left conference on March 31, 2007. It is considerably longer even than what was probably an insufferably long talk on the day, since I have incorporated both what I had already written but did not read, and also some subsequent additions.

2 In fact, liberated scholarship and civil society dissidence, on the one hand, and second-track diplomacy, on the other, can be perceived by some people to be contrary to each other. In spring 2000, there was the Chicago conference, as I have already noted. Later that year, I spoke out on the Armenian Genocide in the mainstream Turkish press, when, on October 9, 2000, the daily *Radikal* published a full-page interview with me done by Ms. Nese Duzel. There was a furore, and many more subsequently. I felt I had contributed to the cause of recognition and reconciliation. Not so, I was told by one of the organizers of the TARC enterprise. For some reason, his view was that I had ruined what they were trying to do. It is this same TARC that, in the Turkish Daily News article that I have just seen online (April 19, 2007), David Phillips credits with breaking “the taboo on discussing Armenian issues.” He writes: “The taboo on discussing Armenian issues was broken by the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission, which was established in 2001.”

3 In retrospect, I would put this down not only to considerations about the USSR and Soviet Armenia in a Cold War context, but also to Marxism’s, and especially Comintern and Third World Marxism’s unhappy marriage with nationalism at both a tactical-political and also a theoretical level. It was this entire edifice that resulted in the Turkish Left’s protracted unwillingness to challenge Kemalism over its two most sacrosanct taboos: the Kurdish question and the Armenian Genocide. Why, after all, does even Nazim Hikmet have so little to say about the Armenians?

4 So unlawful were these orders in a broad

sense, that numerous members of the Ottoman-Turkish bureaucracy either refused to believe them (thinking that they were being tested by the center), or else did not want to implement them. In many cases, these orders could therefore be implemented only after repeated commands and dire warnings from Istanbul, and in some cases after the removal and replacement of the reluctant functionaries.

5 Do we have direct proof of these secret orders? No, we do not. That is to say, we do not have a single telegram or two that we can point to as actually ordering state functionaries or operatives to slaughter this or that group of Armenians. But we do have an enormous amount of indirect evidence, of circumstantial evidence, so that in fact whether things that surface from illegality or extra legality, it is fairly clear what happened. We have something very close to a smoking gun, in terms of present American political idioms.

6 Turkish nationalist discourse typically obliterates this distinction between primary and secondary in a causal sense, trying to make it seem as if whatever massacres that took place were purely the work of “bandits” which were both unpremeditated and could somehow not be prevented, though clearly it was the signals emitted by the TM-organized primary massacres that emboldened the worst elements of the local population for the rest.

7 Once more, in Turkish nationalist apologetics there is the pretense that this was all that happened—and that it was basically an unforeseen, unfortunate accident. Even supposing for a moment that there were no massacres, by what logic might the death of tens of thousands of detainees supposedly under state protection due to hunger, thirst or disease be regarded as not coming under the responsibility of that state?

8 From a population of around 1.5 million or more, only a few tens of thousands have been left. Such decimation notwithstanding, the latest “wisdom” from some varieties of denialism is that “even if there is a single survivor, it cannot be called genocide.”

9 Many of the retired diplomat Gunduz Aktan’s newspaper columns, for example, are devoted to legalistic hair-splitting around just this point.

10 In an article published in the immediate aftermath of the September 24-25, 2005 “Ottoman Armenians” conference, professor Zafer Toprak, for example, has gone so far as to call the notion of the CUP’s Turkification policy “a fabrication.”

Theriault

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

other Armenian and I did not even react to the news; we just accepted it as what usually happens when one tries to publicize an event involving the Armenian Genocide. But those from the school’s Holocaust Center, which was sponsoring the program, had not internalized years of denialist abuse and saw what happened as an outrage that demanded serious action, including possible criminal justice measures. This was the first time that I realized how much my own perspective on Turkish-Armenian relations had been skewed by denial, and ever since I have worked to counter this skewing. Even if it is unfair that I have been burdened by Turkish domination with the writing of this piece and dealing with the backlash that will come against it, this article is my next step in that process.

Armenian readers, what will yours be?

Author’s Note: In addition to Marilyn Frye’s *The Politics of Reality*, my understanding of the Turkish-Armenian domination relation is informed by Franz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, bell hooks’ *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, and Robert Ackermann’s *Heterogeneities: Race, Gender, Nation, Class, and State*. Fanon’s and hooks’ work provided important stylistic models for the rhetorical approach of “An Uppity Armenian.” The discussion of “white liberal” racism in various parts of *Feminist Theory* and the “Benign Racism” chapter of *Heterogeneities* has especially influenced my understanding of progressive Turkish imperialism. My appreciation of the morphing capacity of Turkish imperial domination of Armenians owes much to Etienne Balibar’s discussion of “neo-racism” in his and Immanuel Wallerstein’s *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*.

Ungor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Holocaust, or Eric Hobsbawm’s *Age of Extremes*, entire paragraphs on the Armenian Genocide had simply been removed or altered.

To sum up

“Being a sociologist,” Johan Goudsblom wrote prudently, “is like being a know-all.” Goudsblom meant that many people wrongly believe they have an understanding of societies—as many believe they have an understanding of being a football coach. The legitimacy of the social scientist’s expertise is not accepted and repeatedly questioned, whereas no layman will endeavour to comment on equally specialistic fields such as hematology, architecture or linguistics. This general problem manifests itself in the field of genocide studies as well. A genuinely uninformed reader should assume an agnostic position towards as sensitive and complex a theme as genocide. The aforementioned trio, however, in no way possesses the required disciplined imaginative strength, analytical ability, knowledge of other cases, and especially intellectual distance and political independence to comment on genocide the way they do. Their political perversion, opportunistic manipulation, and hypocritical abuse of a legitimate academic concept like genocide does not serve any other purpose than to blur the view of Turkish readers. Far from being an argument of authority, this is an invitation to seriously interested laymen to join a debate on a topic that may be intellectually and morally difficult to access, but, precisely for this reason, should not be eschewed. After all, the famous Turkish proverb says: “It is not a shame not to know, it is a shame not to learn.” (*Bilmemek ayip degil, ogrenmemek ayip*).

Mouradian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

taries in developing countries is that it has always drawn much of its popularity from the Turkish people. Let us not forget that it continues to be the most popular institution in this country and I think Turkish officers and generals would never want to lose that support. They understand that as Turkey becomes more open and democratic in this global world, people’s perceptions are changing and that they, too, have to change. Reasonable people in the military fully appreciate and understand that their actions now have a very direct impact on the economy, and that there’s no better way to antagonize your citizens than to make them poor.

K.M.—Let us talk about the Kurdish issue. What does the average Kurd suffer from in Turkey?

A.Z.—First of all, there are the very real problems of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment in the regions of Turkey mainly populated by Kurds. That is a very big challenge. Also, if you are an ordinary Kurd living in the southeast and you want to express yourself on the basis of your very distinct ethnic and cultural identity, you still run into problems. I’ve been down to that region countless times. I can give you the example of a private radio station in the province of Hakkari, where the owner told me that he is constantly in trouble with Turkish authorities because he plays Kurdish music on his channel, even though the lyrics of the songs are in no way offensive or threatening.

There are so many other examples that I can give you. In recent weeks, we have seen an enormous amount of pressure brought to bear on the leaders of the largest pro-Kurdish party. The president and co-president of the party were sentenced to six months in jail because they had handed out flyers in the Kurdish language.

Also, you still need to have 10 percent of the national vote in order to make it into parliament. This needs to be lowered to a

reasonable level because it automatically excludes pro-Kurdish parties. A Kurdish politician cannot go to parliament and represent the cultural demands of the Kurds. Until you allow this people to be a part of the political system and empower them in that way, there will always be non-political actors such as the PKK who continue to advance these goals on behalf of the Kurdish people.

K.M.—How is the U.S. intervention in Iraq viewed in Turkey?

A.Z.—I think that everyone—from the leftists to the centrists to the rightists to the Islamists—is pretty much opposed to the U.S. intervention in Iraq. Insofar as how they view Turkey’s interests in light of the situation there, you have different voices, but the strongest one says that the emergence of an independent Kurdistan in northern Iraq is being encouraged by the U.S., and that this poses an existential threat to Turkey. The strongest evidence of this, they argue, is the fact that the U.S. has not taken military action against the PKK. The common perception is that the U.S. favors Iraqi-Kurdish leaders Massoud Barzani and Jelal Talabani over the Turks, and that this is partly due to Turkey’s refusal to allow U.S. troops to open a second front against Saddam Hussein using Turkish territory in 2003.

There is this tunnel vision on Iraq. They see everything through the PKK lens.

K.M.—What about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict? On one hand, there is popular support for the Palestinian cause, and, on the other, there is the strategic alliance with Israel...

A.Z.—There seems to be a contradiction between Turkey’s strategic alliance with Israel and this huge wave of support and sympathy for the Palestinians. But that contradiction in many ways exposes broader contradictions in the way Turkey thinks about itself and the world. Because on the one hand, they believe that the alliance with Israel will make Turkey stronger in the region. Before the Iraq war, it helped Turkey gain favor in Washington and gave it a lot of maneuvering space, certainly vis-à-vis the EU. You had that sort of structure in place, that sort of idea that if you have good relations with Israel then America will always be behind you and you can flex your muscles more effectively vis-à-vis the EU, Iran even, and the entire region. Certainly, that whole paradigm has shifted following the U.S. occupation of Iraq. It’s one that was already beginning to unravel after the first Gulf War. I think that we are now seeing significant realignment of that power equation.

K.M.—Talk about Turkey’s relations with Iran, especially in the context of the nuclear issue.

A.Z.—Turkey is increasingly seeing this as an opportunity to exercise its regional power and influence. It seems to have portrayed itself as an honest broker in this crisis. As a Muslim, pro-Western country and a member of NATO, Turkey has credibility on both sides, and certainly its credibility in the Muslim world has been greatly enhanced by the AK party. There are many examples of Turkish behavior that suggest it wants to embrace the Muslim world in a way that none of its predecessors did. I think the Turks see all of it as more of an opportunity than a problem.

K.M.—If the confrontation deepens, will Turkey be forced to choose sides?

A.Z.—I think Turkey will be on the side of European governments and the U.S. as long as it’s confined to non-military measures. But beyond that, Turkey will remain decidedly neutral. In my opinion, Turkey will not allow the U.S. to use its territory or airspace to launch attacks against Iran.

K.M.—Where do you see Turkey going? Will we witness more EU integration or will extreme nationalist feelings and growing pressure from the EU take the country in another direction?

A.Z.—I like to remain optimistic and hopeful that Turkey’s general direction will be towards a modern democratic soci-

ety. There is going to be plenty of towing and throwing along the way. That's what we are witnessing now, strong nationalist pressure. But you have to look at the historical perspective. Turkey has been trying to modernize since the 19th century and from that time until today we have had reactions and counter reactions.

Today, the military enjoys more influence than it should in a democratic society but I think the winds are blowing in the direction of more democracy and not less.

Erbal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Endnotes

1 My translation.
2 Precautionary denial of religious belief in the face of potential persecution. Stressed by Shii Muslims, who have been subject to periodic persecution by the Sunni majority. The concept is based on Quran 3:28 and 16:106 as well as hadith, tafsir literature and juridical commentaries. Oxford Dictionary of Islam. John L. Esposito, ed. Oxford University Press Inc. 2003. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press.

3 Public and private security personnel, even before the bombings, were in charge of protecting the synagogues, the Jewish community centers and the only Jewish school of Turkey. After the 2003 bombing their security got tighter.

4 Yasef Yahya was a Jewish dentist in Istanbul who was assassinated in August 2003. The only thing that was missing from his dental office was his address book full of names and addresses of prominent Jews. Indeed a similar address and data confiscation happened right after Hrant's death and this time from the Sisli Municipality, a municipality heavily populated by Armenians and Jews. Whereas the mainstream media spent only a paragraph or two on the event, the municipality itself pretended as if there was nothing to get alarmed over, and simply stated that the data was scrambled and password protected. As if we are not living in a world where hacking data is the next thing nerdy kids learn after—or sometimes even before—calculus.

5 One exception was Selcan Hacaoglu's more critical Associated Press coverage.

6 "Psychological response sometimes seen in an abducted hostage, in which the hostage can show signs of having feelings of loyalty to the hostagetaker, regardless of the danger (or at least risk) in which the hostage has been placed. Stockholm syndrome is also sometimes discussed in reference to other situations with similar tensions, such as battered person syndrome, rape cases, child abuse cases, and bride kidnapping. The syndrome is named after the Norrmalmstorg robbery of Kreditbanken at Norrmalmstorg, Stockholm, Sweden, in which the bank robbers held bank employees hostage from August 23 to August 28 in 1973. In this case, the victims became emotionally attached to their victimizers, and even defended their captors after they were freed from their six-day ordeal. The term Stockholm syndrome was coined by the criminologist and psychiatrist Nils Bejerot, who assisted the police during the robbery and referred to the syndrome in a news broadcast." en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_syndrome.

7 "Unlike Stockholm syndrome, where hostages develop sympathy for their abductor, Lima syndrome is the result of the abductor/kidnapper sympathizing with his hostages. Occurred in the Japanese Embassy hostage crisis of 1996, when members of a militant movement took hostage hundreds of people attending a party in the official residence of Japan's ambassador to Peru. Within a few days, they set free most of the hostages, including the most valuable ones." www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Lima+syndrome.

8 www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=210592, "Ermeni cemaatindekiler seni begenmediler, Patrikhamedekiler seni begenmediler, Diyasporadaki kokozlar seni begenmediler." ("The ones from the Armenian community [Istanbul] did not like you, the ones from the Patriarchate [Armenian] did not like you, the kokoz (slang) of the Diaspora did not like you.")

9 Falih Rifki Atay was one of Ataturk's biographers, besides being a journalist and Bolu and Ankara deputy in the second Turkish parliament.

10 Indeed one such journalist, Nuray Mert of Radikal, solemnly chose not to write and instead put a picture of Hrant and herself at a dinner with a brief note saying she was indeed speechless. However, in another piece written on January 30, 2007, she would go back to her own ways of denialism and superficial explanations regarding 1915: Some totally unsubstantial and one dimensional "Usual Suspects" discourse, where the blame is put on the "Imperialists" and almost total amnesty is given to local actors or political conditions. <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=211601>. (I thank Mr Rifat Bali for pointing out this article.)

Titizian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

ment of an independent republic is a result of that struggle. If we are to survive, then there must be a rebirth of our national identity. The Genocide has become the gateway to attaining distinction, our trump card, the first thing we need to tell the world about while bypassing 3,000 years of cultural and national heritage. We have allowed the Genocide to consume us.

Others insist that we have inherited the pain of our ancestors. Regardless of which corner of the globe we live in, the need to remember, the yearning for the lost homeland is passed down through the generations; it is in our genes, inescapable. Participation in commemoration ceremonies every year is a sign of respect and remembrance and a stark reminder that this chapter in our history has not been resolved. We cannot consider ourselves whole when the lost homeland is on the other side of the border waiting for its children to come and reclaim it. Just as no family can live in peace when a loved one has been ripped away from them through a violent crime, so is the Armenian nation unable to find peace as long as half of its children are dispersed. For them the Genocide is no longer about tears, it is about having the capacity to demand.

Gayane struggles. The fact that we even have to discuss the issue of dual citizenship in Armenia is a result of the Genocide. We are a nation divided; we have become so different, so distant, two languages, two different sets of experiences. Diaspora and Homeland. This idea of "us" and "them" is a result of the Genocide. Let's no longer allow ourselves to say mine and yours, *hayastantsi* and *spirkahay*. Some of us ended up in foreign countries, far away from the birthplace of our ancestors; some of us found our way to Armenia. We all suffered the same tragedy. Her grandfather's memorial is a testament to the desire to remember. And just as years before, this April 24th will see hundreds of thousands of Armenians solemnly marching toward Dzidzernagapert, the Genocide Memorial, perched upon a quiet hill in Yerevan to pay tribute, to remember, to condemn, to demand justice and to add their voice to the millions of voices around the globe who through a small gesture of placing a flower will collectively declare, "Recognition, Reparation, Restitution."

Kiernan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

polities. Like the Hutu kingdoms of north-west Rwanda, "these territories beyond modern Rwanda never ceased to be ruled by their own authorities." A historical potential therefore existed for an anti-Tutsi alliance transcending Rwanda's frontiers. Nahimana complained that European colonial regimes, too, had "murdered and mutilated" Rwanda, and "amputated" it by transferring Kinyarwanda-speaking districts to their colonies in Congo and Uganda. By the time of the fall of Hutu Power in July 1994, traditional Hutu claims to the northwest extended beyond the rest of Rwanda and now spread outside its borders as well. Hutu Power took its genocidal violence into neighboring countries and attacked their Tutsi minorities. As Rick Orth has noted, they "not only continued to kill Tutsis in Rwanda but also targeted Banyarwanda Tutsis living in Eastern Congo." There, Hutu militias ranged across the Kivu provinces, massacred the local Tutsi cattle herders, and penetrated the Masisi plateau in an attempt "to eliminate the Banyamasisi Tutsi." Prunier explains that in this way they could create "a kind of 'Hutuland' which could be either a base for the reconquest of Rwanda or, if that failed, a new Rwanda outside the old one."

A brief comparison of three 20th-century genocides shows that the history of the Nazi Holocaust includes warning signs that throw light on subsequent and possibly future cases. Along with violent racism or religious prejudice, obsessions with antiquity, agriculture and expansionism may often become signposts to genocide.

Der Matossian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

2) A detailed examination of the records of the Ottoman Bank in Turkey may provide us with a better understanding of the fate of Armenian accounts, bonds and shares. In other cases, Armenians preferred to put their money in European banks. The best example of this is the French Bank Crédit Lyonnais.

3) Armenian citizens of the Empire held insurances with the Ottoman Public Insurance Company (*Osmanli Umum Sigorta Sirketi*) or the Turkish National Insurance Company (*Turk Milli Sigorta Sirketi*). A detailed examination of the list of names of the insurance holders would tell us the numbers of Armenians who held insurances with the Ottoman versus European or American companies.

4) A comparative study on the abandoned properties from the perspective of "nation-state building" could prove useful. For example, after the 1948 war and as a result of the expulsion of the Palestinians, the state of Israel dealt with the same issue of abandoned property (*Amlak Gha'ibin*) and enacted a law titled "Absentee Property Law." Also, through a series of laws enacted during the early 1950's, the state of Israel appropriated the "abandoned properties."

For more information about the confiscation of Armenian property during the Genocide, please check:

1) Kévork Baghdjian, "La confiscation, par le gouvernement turc, des biens arméniens...dits 'abandonnés,'" Montreal, 1987.

2) Dikran Kuyumjian, "La confiscation des biens et la destruction des monuments historiques comme manifestations du processus génocidaire" in "L'actualité du génocide des Arméniens: Actes du colloque." Organized by the Comité de défense de la cause arménienne at Paris-Sorbonne, April 16-18, 1998, préf. de Jack Lang.

3) Levon Marashlian, "Finishing the Genocide" in *Remembrance and Denial: The case of the Armenian Genocide*, ed. Richard Hovannisian

4) Shavarsh Toriguian, "The Armenian Question and International Law," Beyrouth: Hamaskaïne, 1973.

5) Various documents published by the records in the Prime Ministry General Directorate of the State.

Endnotes

¹ Parts of this article will appear in Der Matossian's "The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of the 'Armenian Capital' in the End of the Ottoman Empire," which he will present during the NYU and CUNY Graduate Student Conference from May 4-5, 2007, titled "Historical Continuities, Political Responsibilities: Unsettling Conceptual Blind-Spots in Ottoman and Turkish Studies."

² Haykakan Pank [Armenian Bank] Jamanag, December 5, 1908, p.1.

³ See Zafer Toprak, *Turkiye'de "Milli İktisat"* (1908-1918) (Ankara: Yurt, 1982)

⁴ On the economic dimension of the Armenian Genocide, see Stephan H. Astourian, "The Armenian Genocide: An Interpretation," *The History Teacher*, Volume 23, Number 2, February 1990. Aghan Aktar, "Economic Nationalism in Turkey: The Formative Years, 1912-1925," *Bogazici Journal, Review of Social and Administrative Studies* 10/1-2:263-290. 1996; idem, "Homogenizing the Nation, Turkifying the Economy: Turkish Experience of Populations Exchange Reconsidered." In *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Exchange between Greece and Turkey*. Edited by Renée Hirschon, New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003. Ss. 79-95. idem, *Turk milliyetçiligi, gayri muslimler ve ekonomik donusum* (The Turkish Nationalism, non-Muslims and the Economic Transformation) Istanbul : İletisim Yayinlari, 2006.

⁵ These temporary laws varied from telegraphic laws to the postal system to the release of criminals. Glancing through the official gazette *Takvim-i Vekayi* from November 18, 1914 to November 13, 1915, one notices numerous examples of Temporary Laws.

⁶ The 34 articles of the law are reproduced in "Documents," Vol. 1 (Ankara, 1982), pp. 76-80.

⁷ An example of a registers can be seen in *Takvim-i Vekayi* # 2343.

⁸ Kévork Baghdjian, "La confiscation, par le gouvernement turc, des biens arméniens...dits 'abandonnés,'" pp. 287-88.

⁹ Article 1 of the Supplementary Law.

¹⁰ Article 2 of the Supplementary Law.

¹¹ Article 11 of the Supplementary Law.

¹² Article 12 of the Supplementary Law.

¹³ Article 14 of the Supplementary Law.

¹⁴ Article 17 of the Supplementary Law.

¹⁵ See articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 17, 21

¹⁶ The majority of the Kurdish tribal leaders in Dersim refused to take part in the war on the side of the Ottoman army. The government had to resort to other ways in order to encourage the Kurdish participation from the area of Dersim. On August 10, 1915, a telegram was sent from the central police authority of the Ministry of the Interior to the Sabit Bey Vali of Harput ordering him to choose suitable tribal leaders from Dersim and bestow on them the rank of officer and "make it up with goods from the abandoned property." BOA (*Basbakanlik Osmanli Arsivi*) DH.SFR 54-A/354. Cited by Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Some Remarks on Alevi Responses to the Missionaries in Eastern Anatolia (19th-20th cc.)," in "Altruism and Imperialism: The Western Religious and Cultural Missionary Enterprise in the Middle East," Middle East Institute Conference: Bellagio Italy, August 2000.

¹⁷ U.S. National Archives, Record Group 59 (NA, RG 59), 867. 4016/126, Oscar Heizer to Morgenthau, July 1928, 1915, cited in the *Armenian Review* 37, no.1 (Spring 1984): 106. Cited by Levon Marashlian, in "Remembrance and Denial: The case of the Armenian Genocide," ed. Richard Hovannisian (Detroit : Wayne State University Press, 1998), p.115.

¹⁸ BOA.DH.SFR, nr.54/202.

¹⁹ BOA.SFR,nr.54/381.

click for justice



www.anca.org

About the Contributors

George Aghjayan is author of numerous ANCA publications, including “A Century of Human Rights Violations in Turkey” and “Genocide Denial: The Armenian and Jewish Experiences Compared.”

Peter Balakian is Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities at Colgate University and the author of many books, including *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response*, winner of the 2005 Raphael Lemkin Prize.

Halil Berktay is associate professor of history at Sabanci University in Istanbul, Turkey. He is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Middle East Studies at Harvard University. Over the last decade, his research interests have included the initial construction of Turkish national memory in the early 20th century; the Young Turks and Kemalist revolutions in comparative perspective; the role of ethnic cleansing, atrocities and genocides in revolutions and nation-building; and the construction of national forgetting, self-exoneration or denial, with special emphasis on the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Sara Cohen is education director of the Genocide Education Project, a nonprofit that assists educators in teaching about human rights and genocide, particularly the Armenian Genocide, by developing and distributing instructional materials, providing access to teaching resources and organizing educational workshops.

David Davidian is a senior technical intelligence analyst and was an advisor for Armenia's Minister of Communications in 1992. In 1994, he met with Karabakh officials to draft an international telephone and data system. In 1997, he founded the Genocide Archive Project, one of the largest digital genocide archives. During the 1990s, Davidian engaged Turkish students and government-sponsored agents in what has been known as the longest running debate on the Internet. Articles about it have appeared in the New York Times, Washington Post, and the Economist.

Diana Der-Hovanesian is author of 22 books of poetry and translations, and has received numerous awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Society of America, and the PEN-Columbia Translation Center, among others. She was Fulbright professor of American poetry at Yerevan State University in 1999.

Bedross Der Matossian, a native of Jerusalem, is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Middle East and Asian languages and cultures at Columbia University in New York. He can be reached at bvd2001@columbia.edu.

Ayda Erbal is a Ph.D. student at the department of politics at New York University.

Christian Garbis is a writer based in Yerevan. His blog, “Notes from Hairenik,” tells about his personal experiences and observations of life in Armenia. It can be read at <http://noteshairenik.blogspot.com>.

Ayse Gunaysu is an activist from the Istanbul Branch of the Human Rights Association of Turkey.

Hilmar Kaiser specializes in the Armenian Genocide and Ottoman social and economic history. He has done research in more than 60 archives worldwide, including the Ottoman archives in Istanbul.

Lucine Kasbarian is a journalist and the author of *Armenia: A Rugged Land, an Enduring People*, who wonders if there will ever come a time when we no longer feel like exiles.

Ben Kiernan is Whitney Griswold Professor of History, professor of international and area studies, and director of the Genocide Studies Program at Yale University.

Asbed Kotchikian is lecturer of political science and international relations at Florida State University, and will be the assistant director of the international affairs program in the fall of 2007. His area of research includes foreign policy of small states and the relations between states and nations, with a focus on the South Caucasus and the Middle East. He can be reached at akotchikian@fsu.edu.

Bill Milhomme has been documenting the history of local Catholic churches for 25 years in an effort to pass on the knowledge and historical experiences of individuals, communities and cultures. From 1985-2005, he was the field archivist and deputy historical records coordinator for the Massachusetts State Archives. He is currently the director of volunteer services for the Massachusetts Department of Correction. He lives in Foxboro, Mass.

Razmik Panossian is director of programmes and policy at Rights and Democracy in Canada. He is author of *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, which traces the evolution of Armenian collective identity and the formation of “multilocal” identities in and outside of Armenia, notably in Diasporan communities from India to Venice. Panossian argues that national identity is modern, predominantly subjective and based on a political sense of belonging, yet acknowledges the crucial role of history, art, literature, religious practice and commerce in preserving the national memory of the Armenian people.

Tatul Sonentz is the publications director of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) International Office and editor of “Hai Sird,” the multi-lingual periodical of the ARS. His poems and editorials appear regularly in the Weekly.

Henry Theriault is associate professor of philosophy and coordinates the Center for the Study of Human Rights at Worcester State College. His research interests include genocide denial, mass violence against women, and long-term justice for genocide and other mass human rights violations. His publications include “An Analytical Typology of Arguments Denying Genocides and Related Mass Human Rights Violations,” “Free Speech and Denial: The Armenian Case” and “Universal Social Theory and Genocide Denial.”

Maria Titzian is president of the Women's Committee of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun Party in Armenia, which formulates the party's policies on women's issues and empowers women within the party by providing training and advocacy building skills. She represents the ARF in the Socialist International Women (SIW). The ARF Women's Committee is active in as well as The Women's Committee also works with NGO's and has visited several regions throughout the republic. She is also a founding member of the Women's Coalition of Armenia and board member of the Women's Forum of the National Democratic Institute. Beginning on April 24, she will co-anchor the Western Armenian language news segment “Haylour” for Armenia's public broadcasting station, H1.

Apo Torosyan was born in Istanbul and emigrated to the United States in 1968. His artwork is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art in France, the AGBU Manoogian Collection in Canada, and the Ararat Eskijian Museum and Armenian Western Diocese in the U.S. He is an active member of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.