

REVIEW OF
ARMENIAN STUDIES
A Biannual Journal of History, Politics, and International Relations

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Facts and Comments

Ömer E. LÜTEM

The Advanced Stage of Russia-Armenia
Military Cooperation: The Joint Military Force

Ali ASKER

The Factors Which Give Ground for the United Nations
Security Council to Determine Armenia as an Aggressor State

Ramila Bahlul DADASHOVA

The Ethno-Religious Origins of International Terrorism Perpetrated
by Armenian Nationalists (Historical-Cultural Analysis)

Oleg Yuryevich KUZNETSOV

An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the
Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the
Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey

Ömer Lütfi TAŞCIOĞLU

APPENDIX

ARF's Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide

BOOK REVIEW



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As always, the first article in the 35th issue of our journal is “**Facts and Comments**”. This article examines Turkey-Armenia relations during the first half of 2017, in which no significant development took place within the said period. The article additionally looks at President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s message to Turkey’s Armenians, April 24 commemorations in Turkey and elsewhere, and developments concerning the Armenia Question in certain countries such as the US and France.

In the article titled “**The Advanced Stage of Russia-Armenia Military Cooperation: The Joint Military Force**,” Ali Asker analyzes the nature and content of the close military cooperation between Russia and Armenia ever since the latter’s independence after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The author also analyzes the most recent culmination of this close cooperation; the Joint Military Force of Armenia and Russia. Asker points out that Russia has transferred substantial amounts of armaments throughout the years to Armenia through this cooperation, which Armenia sees vital due to its sense of vulnerability against Azerbaijan and Turkey. The author points out that through this cooperation, Russia has been slowly but surely strengthening its influence on Armenia, threatening Armenia’s sovereignty and projecting power into the region.

Ramila Bahlul Dadashova’s article titled “**The Factors Which Give Ground for the United Nations Security Council to Determine Armenia as an Aggressor State**” argues that Armenia has fulfilled the necessary factors for it be designated as an ‘aggressor state’ by the United Nations Security Council, but that despite this, it has to this day not been designated as such. In her article, Dadashova exemplifies her argument by outlining the actions carried out by Armenia in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that fit into the category of actions that an aggressor state might carry out. The author argues that the failure to designate Armenia as an aggressor state is the main factor for the continued nature of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Oleg Yuryevich Kuznetsov, in his article titled “**The Ethno-Religious Origins of International Terrorism Perpetrated by Armenian Nationalists (Historical-Cultural Analysis)**,” seeks to understand the theoretical and cognitive aspects of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. For this endeavor, Kuznetsov examines the identity-based and motivational factors that induced Armenian nationalist formations to carry out aggression against Azerbaijan in the events that constitute the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. He argues that

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was not truly about a yearning for autonomy or independence, but rather an attempt to enable the Armenian diaspora, taken as a whole, to expand itself both politically and militarily in other countries, as well as in the Republic of Armenia itself.

The article titled “**An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey**” by Ömer Lütfi Taşcıoğlu aims to systematically examine the content of and the arguments put forth in the Montebello Statement prepared by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. The author argues that the content of the Montebello Statement rests on a weak basis and that members of the Armenian diaspora and Armenia that espouse such statements serve no constructive purpose, and that in terms of international norms and court rulings, they are at the wrong side of the law.

The 35th issue of the Review of Armenian Studies contains two book reviews.

The first book review, by Hazel Çagan Elbir, examines *Legislating Reality And Politicizing History: Contextualizing Armenian Claims Of Genocide* authored by Brendon J. Cannon. Elbir emphasizes that the aim of the book is to relay to the reader how the Armenian campaign to have the 1915 events recognized as genocide changed throughout time and the content of the accusations leveled against Turkey in regard to this campaign. Elbir points out that Cannon highlights identity formation as a driving force behind Armenians’ campaign to have the 1915 events labelled as genocide, and how the legally defined term ‘genocide’ has come to be used differently in public discourse.

The second book review is by Sean Patrick Smyth regarding Talin Suciyan’s book titled *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History*. Smyth’s review, while also mentioning the positive aspects of the work, emphasizes some glaring deficiencies that must be taken into consideration. These include the seemingly innocuous attempts by Suciyan to deny the role of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation’s collaboration with Nazi Germany.

Have a nice reading and best regards,

Editor

FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

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Abstract: *This article deals with Turkey-Armenia relations during the April-June 2017 period. The message of President Erdoğan to Turkey's Armenians and the commemorations of 24th of April in Turkey and Armenia are also studied. Lastly, the developments concerning the Armenian Question in the U.S, France, and in other countries are also addressed.*

Keywords: *Turkey, Armenia, Armenian Diaspora, U.S.A, France, Czech Republic, Lebanon, Jordan, Sweden, Canada, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Serzh Sargsyan, Donald Trump, François Hollande, Emmanuel Macron, Washington Armenian Genocide Museum*

Öz: *Bu incelemede Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerinde Nisan, Mayıs ve Haziran 2017 aylarındaki gelişmeler ele alınmaktadır. Ayrıca Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ın Türkiye Ermenilerine mesajı ile 24 Nisan 2017 tarihinin Türkiye ve Ermenistan'da anılması ve Ermeni Sorunu konusunda ABD, Fransa ve diğer bazı ülkelerdeki gelişmeler anlatılmaktadır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Türkiye, Ermenistan, Ermeni Diasporası, A.B.D., Fransa, Çek Cumhuriyeti, Lübnan, Ürdün, İsveç, Kanada, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Mevlut Çavuşoğlu, Serj Sarkisayan, Donald Trump, François Hollande, Emmanuel Macron, Washington Ermeni Soykırım Müzesi*

ARTICLES

1) TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS

During the period we analyze here (April-May-June 2017), no significant development took place with regards to Turkey-Armenia relations.

However, in the previous period, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey himself had reiterated Turkey's proposal of establishing a "Commission of Historians".¹

Furthermore, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had made a significant statement that Russia is ready to contribute to the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey when they sit at the negotiating table

and that current problems between the two countries can be resolved.² However, since Turkey-Armenia relations are far from the point where both countries can begin negotiations, it was not possible to talk about Russia's contributions. If one day the two countries begin negotiations, the selection of Russia as a mediator or facilitator will certainly be a more realistic choice than the selection of Switzerland.

If one day the two countries begin negotiations, the selection of Russia as a mediator or facilitator will certainly be a more realistic choice than the selection of Switzerland.

It is seen that the issue of security is at the forefront in Armenia when it comes to relations with Turkey.

The most logical way for Armenia to resolve this issue is to find a way around problems with Turkey and establish close cooperation with its bigger neighbor.

However, Armenia chooses to not adopt this approach and tries to keep problems, such as genocide claims, reparations (and even territorial demands) and return of properties, alive via the diaspora, while avoiding an agreement with regards to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, which is considered as crucial by Turkey for peace and security in the Caucasus. As a result of Armenia's approach, the issue of security grows bigger and Armenia tries to resolve this issue with "outside help".

This "outside help" is the alliance with Russia and the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

1 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 56 (2017): 17-20.

2 Lütem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," Issue 56: 15.

In a statement he made in February,³ Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, after mentioning the above two factors for Armenia's security, stated that Armenia will continue to work with NATO and its members states to further strengthen international peace and security. Sargsyan then continued by stating all these factors (alliance with Russia, Collective Security Treaty Organization and cooperation with NATO) are important to neutralize the less-than-friendly - not to call hostile- policy of neighboring Turkey.

What is interesting here is the fact that Armenia sees NATO, of which it is not a member but Turkey is, as a component of its security.

1.2) Armenia and NATO

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Western countries had proposed to post-Soviet states EU and/or NATO memberships to develop relations with them. Armenia, in consideration of its tough conditions and its problematic relations with Russia, had accepted these proposals. However, an association agreement between Armenia and the EU was called off by Armenia at the last moment due to pressures from Russia, and Armenia was forced to join the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Maintaining its relations with NATO within the framework of "Individual Partnership Action Plan," Armenia's participation in peacekeeping missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan was seen as the success of the Armenia-NATO cooperation. In the face of Russia's expansionist policy in the recent years, NATO did its utmost to maintain close relations with Armenia which is under the thumb of Russia. Ultimately, Armenia, starting to see itself as an "honorary member" of the NATO, began to join every possible event of the organization in order to promote its policies and even vilify its opponents within NATO. The most recent example of this took place during the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Istanbul in November 2016 when an Armenian parliamentarian accused Turkey of committing genocide and aiding ISIS.⁴

This behavior which amounts to acting as a NATO member without being one did not meet with any significant reactions from NATO and its members, and NATO continued its policy of developing close relations with Armenia. The fact that an Armenian general was appointed as the Secretary General of the

3 "Union With Russia One of Vital Elements for Armenia's Security – President," *Sputnik*, February 20, 2017, <https://sputniknews.com/politics/201702201050879757-armenia-russia-president-security/>

4 "Çavuşoğlu'ndan Ermeni Vekile İŞİD Tepkisi: Önce Dürüst Olalım," *Sputnik*, November 19, 2016, <https://tr.sputniknews.com/turkiye/201611191025886982-cavusoglu-ermeni-vekil-durust-isis-nato/>

Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which is generally considered as being established against NATO, did not also receive attention from NATO. During President Sargsyan's visit to NATO in Brussels in February, NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg expressed his pleasure at NATO's cooperation and relations with Armenia, and mentioned Armenia's important contributions to NATO missions and fighting terrorism.⁵ Lastly, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia James Appathurai labeled Armenia as a reliable partner and participated in the now tradition of praising its contributions to the peacekeeping missions in Afghanistan and Kosovo.⁶

While the importance of having close relations with a country under the thumb of Russia is appreciated, there must be a limit to these relations. No matter how friendly NATO is with Armenia, even if unwilling, Armenia is obliged to follow Russia's policies, and NATO's policy of developing closer relations with Armenia will not change this reality.

On the other hand, it will be beneficial to take the other side of the coin into consideration. NATO'S excessive interest in Armenia led Armenian leaders to believe that Armenia is of critical importance for the NATO, leading to NATO being regarded, as mentioned above, as an element of Armenia's security especially against Turkey.

This interest by NATO has influenced the Karabakh conflict as well. It is clear that Armenia, believing that it has the support of NATO, in addition to the support of Russia, for the settlement of the conflict without the use of force, will show no effort to withdraw from the territories of Azerbaijan, including Karabakh, which are still occupied by Armenia despite UN Security Council resolutions. Armenia also easily continues to make aggressive demands from Turkey, such as the recognition of genocide allegations and reparations, as it does not face any objections from NATO. Furthermore, it is seen that among some Armenian intellectual circles, there is a belief that NATO, when necessary, (e.g. during a war in Karabakh) will prevent any intervention from Turkey to Armenia.⁷

5 "Jens Stoltenberg: NATO, Ermenistan'la Mesaisine Sadıktır," *News.am*, February 2, 2017, <https://news.am/tur/news/375816.html>

6 "NATO Representative Visits Yerevan, Calls Armenia a Reliable Partner," *The Armenian Weekly*, June 13, 2017, <http://armenianweekly.com/2017/06/13/nato-representative-visits-yerevan-calls-armenia-a-reliable-partner/>

7 Emma Gabrielyan, "David Shahnazaryan: Do Not Measure it by , It's Not Relevant," *Aravot*, June 15, 2017, <http://en.aravot.am/2017/06/15/195736/>

2) DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY

Several developments took place in Turkey with regards to Armenians and the Armenian Question during the period we are analyzing.

Foremost among these is the election of a new patriarch to replace Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Mesrob II Mutafyan who has been unable to perform his duties due to his illness. This election, which is of great importance for the Armenian community of Turkey and is attempted to be interfered with by Armenia via the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, will be discussed in a later issue after the election takes place.

2.1) President Erdoğan's April 24 Message

As done in recent years, President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's message to Aram Ateshian, the General Vicar (Acting Patriarch) of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, on April 24 this year was another important development with regards to the Armenian community of Turkey.

In his message,⁸ President Erdoğan, in brief, stated that he respectfully commemorated the Ottoman Armenians who died under the difficult conditions of the First World War and offered his condolences to their grandchildren. President Erdoğan continued by stating that the Armenian society raised great people, both during Ottoman times and the Republican era, and made great contributions to the development of Turkey, and that the aim of the two peoples is to dress the wounds of the past and strengthen their relations further. Stating that many steps have been taken in the last 14 years in this regard with historic reforms, President Erdoğan indicated that efforts for protecting the Armenian cultural heritage will continue, and that the peace, safety, and happiness of the Armenian society is of particular importance. He continued by stating that the marginalization, isolation, and disparagement of citizens of Armenian origin will not be tolerated, and expressed his wish that the patriarchal election will be held as soon as possible.

This message, while resembling the message of 2016, also includes several differences. Last year's message⁹ was focused on the Armenian losses during the First World War. Within this context, last year's message offered

8 "Erdoğan'dan 24 Nisan Mesajı," *Agos*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/18332/erdogan-dan-24-nisan-mesaji>

9 For the 2016 message, see: Ömer Engin Lütem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 53 (2016): 25-26.

condolences to the relatives of the victims, and expressed that their memories would be protected and that the pains were common to all.

This year's message, while touching upon these topics mentioned last year for the most part, is observed to also include current issues. Within this context, this year's message mentions steps taken and historic reforms by the AKP government in the last 14 years, as well as the importance of the happiness and safety of the Armenian society and that marginalization, isolation, and disparagement of citizens of Armenian origin will not be tolerated. Also touching upon the election of a new Patriarch, which is an issue of great importance for the Armenian community, the message hopes that the patriarchal election will be held as soon as possible.

General Vicar of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, Archbishop Aram Ateshian, in his response on 27 April 2017 to the President's message,¹⁰ expressed gratitude for President Erdoğan's special message sharing the pains of Armenians, and stated that the utterance of the contributions of the Armenians to the development of the country and the particular importance given to their peace, safety, and happiness was well-received and welcomed by the Armenian community. He also stated that the Patriarchate will support steps taken by the government to protect the Armenian cultural heritage. Finally, paying his respects to the President, Ateshian expressed that they will continue to pray for an everlasting Turkish state.

It is our belief that the General Vicar's message represents the majority of the Armenian community of Turkey.

On the other hand, President Erdoğan's message was negatively received by Yetvart Danzikyan, the Chief Editor of the AGOS newspaper that is gradually acting more and more like a Diaspora newspaper.¹¹ In his article, Danzikyan, after indicating that the critical question was what happened to the Ottoman Armenians and why they were killed, reiterated the claim that the Armenians were deliberately killed within the framework of an operation planned by the Committee of Union and Progress, and that the victims of this were Armenians whose deaths were denied or those who "died under the difficult conditions of World War I". He also claimed that Armenians were unable to mourn as long as this "denial" continued. Furthermore, trying to avoid the suggestion of new demands, he mentioned the granting of the

10 "Basın Bildirisi," *Türkiye Ermenileri Patrikliği*, April 27, 2017, <http://www.turkiyeermenileripatrikligi.org/site/basin-bildirisi/>

11 Yetvart Danzikyan, "24 Nisan Hissiyati," *Agos*, April 27, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/18372/24-nisan-hissiyati>

following to Armenians with regard to April 24: a monument where Armenians can visit and leave flower on, and a holiday for Armenians on April 24 even if they work in private sector. Lastly, with a more realistic approach, Danzikyan stated that the extension of condolences was a positive step considering the history of the Republic of Turkey but there were several political organizations that avoided doing this.

Furthermore, speaking at an event of 24th April Remembrance Platform in Turkey, Murat Çelikkın said the following:

“We all have said that this is our common pain. We said that some wounds do not heal in time. We have apologized, we apologize. We are coming to terms, and we will continue to come to terms. We will not stop. It’s been 102 years; don’t wait for 103rd year. Apologize!”

In the same event, a poster of the platform also read as follows: “Armenian Genocide, recognize, apologize, compensate.”¹²

As a result, it is possible to say that while the majority of the Armenian community, via the message of the General Vicar, expressed their appreciation for President Erdoğan’s April 24 message, a small number of Armenians and Turks, in an effort to emulate the Diaspora, did not find Erdoğan’s message as being satisfactory and demanded for an apology. However, these demands did not generate much interest in the Turkish public opinion.

It is possible to say that while the majority of the Armenian community, via the message of the General Vicar, expressed their appreciation for President Erdoğan’s April 24 message, a small number of Armenians and Turks, in an effort to emulate the Diaspora, did not find Erdoğan’s message as being satisfactory and demanded for an apology.

3) COMMEMORATION OF APRIL 24 IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES

3.1) The Commemoration of April 24 in Turkey

As in previous years, this year, several far leftist groups in Turkey held events to commemorate April 24 in front of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts on Sultanahmet Square, as well as in the Taksim and the Tunnel Square. Speaking on behalf of the 24th April Remembrance Platform, Meral Çıldır,

¹² “‘Recognize, Apologize, Compensate,’ Say Turks During Istanbul Commemoration,” *Horizon Weekly*, April 25, 2017, <https://horizonweekly.ca/en/recognize-apologize-compensate-say-turks-during-istanbul-commemoration/>

member of Human Rights Association, stated that today, in the anniversary of the “Armenian Genocide”, it was necessary to remind that Assyrian people had been subjected to genocide in Asia Minor between 1914 and 1923, and Pontus Greeks were subjected to genocide both by the Ottoman state and Kemalist movement. She criticized that Talat Pasha and Enver Pasha are buried in mausoleum (The Monument of Liberty), and invited “all people who object against genocide denial to protest the naming of schools after Talat Pasha and his grave.” She also argued that “Anatolia is a land of genocide. Turkey is a land of genocide denial. Today, the mentality of genocide and denial still prevails.”¹³ Thus, she proved that she has adopted the stance of the Diaspora as well as its expressions.

The event in Taksim was attended also by HDP deputy Garo Paylan.¹⁴ A couple of days prior to the event, Paylan had presented a research proposal to the Presidency of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey for the examination of the results of the Temporary Relocation and Resettlement Law of 1 June 1915. According to press reports,¹⁵ the proposal is as follows:

“Following the Temporary Relocation and Resettlement Law, the Armenian population living in the Ottoman Empire was subjected to relocation, leading to devastation in the Assyrian, Chaldean, Yezidi, and Greek peoples. The results of this law have not been investigated by the Turkish Grand National Assembly for more than 102 years. It has been known that a large number of casualties have been experienced due to the Law. A lot of cultural assets and property have been seized or confiscated as a result of the implementations of the Law. The exploitation of the responsibilities of the government and civil servants of the period, the effects of the consequences of the relocation, the benefits of confronting the past and the truth in ensuring social peace as a whole in our country, in order to prevent abuse of the subject, with the aim of contributing to the uncovering of ‘truth’ and providing more opportunities for future generations to live together in Turkey freely and peacefully, I would like to offer and propose to open the Parliamentary Survey in accordance with Article 98 of the Constitution, Articles 104 and 105 of the Internal Regulations.”

It should be pointed out that there was limited participation to the “April 24” events. Armenian American historian Ronal Grigor Suny, who is understood

13 “‘Recognize, Apologize, Compensate,’ Say Turks During Istanbul Commemoration.”

14 “‘Recognize, Apologize, Compensate,’ Say Turks During Istanbul Commemoration.”

15 “‘Geçici Tehcir Kanunu’ İçin Araştırma Önergesi,” *Agos*, April 21, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/18308/gecici-tehcir-kanunu-icin-arastirma-onergesi>

to be invited to these events as sort of a guest of honor, spoke of this situation by stating that “the crowd was small.”¹⁶ Khatchig Mouradian, who completed his PhD under the supervision of Taner Akçam at Clark University and is currently a freelance writer with special interest in Turkey, attributed the limited participation to this year’s April 24 events in Turkey to the 15 July 2016 coup attempt and said that the Diaspora Armenians are afraid to come to Turkey.¹⁷ However, what is important here is not the limited number of participants from abroad, but the limited number of participants from Turkey. This shows that there is a limited number of people who support the commemoration of April 24 and ask for the recognition of the genocide allegations, and that these people consist only of certain left-leaning citizens of Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian origin and are far from comprising a ‘grassroots movement’.

3.2) The Commemoration of April 24 in Armenia

April 24 was also commemorated in 2017 in all countries with Armenian communities. Great ceremonies were held in some cities of the US and France, which are countries with high Armenian population, as well as in Beirut, Lebanon. However, there is no information on whether such events were held in Russia, which has the largest Armenian population. This may be due to the fact that the websites of the Armenian community in Russia are in Russian. On the other hand, it should be noted that the Armenians in Russia are very different from Diaspora Armenians, and that they think and react similarly to the Armenians of Armenia. While for the Diaspora Armenians it is the genocide allegations that form the foundation of the Armenian identity, for the Armenians of Russia, it is the Armenian culture, customs, and traditions.

In Yerevan, on the other hand, as in previous years, a torchlight procession toward the Genocide Memorial was organized and Turkish flags were burned as it has become a custom now. However, this year, as a novelty, Armenian children were seen to trample on the Turkish flags. In a written statement, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey said the flag “symbolizes all the fundamental values, beliefs and the freedom of a nation.” The statement further read: “The attack against our flag, which is considered to be synonymous with the existence of the Turkish nation, has given rise to a strong

16 Ronald Grigor Suny, “Suny: Zor Mesele Es Geçilmiş Oldu,” *Agos*, April 26, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/18349/suny-zor-mesele-es-gecilmis-oldu>

17 Amberin Zaman, “Erdogan Offers ‘Condolences’ During Armenian Genocide Events,” *Al Monitor*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/04/armenian-genocide-anniversary-erdogan.html>

resentment and reaction among our people. Given the importance attributed by the Turkish nation to these values and to the Turkish flag, we strongly condemn this action and its perpetrators.”¹⁸

On the same day, Armenian President Sargsyan, along with Armenian Catholicos of Etchmiadzin Karekin II and ministers and top officials, laid a wreath and prayed at the Genocide Memorial. Making a speech at the event, President Sargsyan stated that “the Eghern, carried out under the disguise of deportations, was a state program of the Ottoman Empire, and was executed with the unprecedented cruelty and meticulousness”.¹⁹ He further stated that the Armenians suffered great material, cultural, and political losses, with the greatest loss being the people which were bearers of the ancient, rich, and unique civilization. Sargsyan said that the Armenian culture and science was survived thanks to the survivors and their children.²⁰

4) DEVELOPMENTS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES

4.1) Developments in the US

It was a matter of concern how the US President Donald Trump, who came from the business world and not politics, and claimed that he will consider America’s interests first, would act with regard to an issue such as the recognition of the “Armenian Genocide”, which has nothing to do with US’ interests and rather stems from the desire to satisfy a minority’s emotions of vengeance and grudge about a past event, and whether he would use the word “genocide” in his April 24 message.

On the other hand, the fact that the Republicans, compared to the Democrats, attach lesser importance to minority issues, and that the Armenians, in the background, worked against the election of Trump as president²¹ were factors disadvantageous to the Armenians.

Following the presidential elections, Armenians took the first step to establish a relationship with Trump by swiftly congratulating him for his victory.

18 “Turkey Strongly Condemns Burning of its Flag in Armenia,” *Anadolu Agency*, April 24, 2017, <http://aa.com.tr/en/politics/turkey-strongly-condemns-burning-of-its-flag-in-armenia/804357>

19 “President’s Address on Armenian Genocide Commemoration Day,” *Public Radio of Armenia*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.armradio.am/en/2017/04/24/presidents-address-on-armenian-genocide-commemoration-day/>

20 “Armenians Mark Remembrance Day,” *Voice of America*, April 24, 2017, <https://www.voanews.com/a/armenians-mark-remembrance-day/3824351.html>

21 Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 56: 21.

Subsequently, they tried to promote the Armenian “cause” to the new government with the participation of representatives from the US Department of State and members of the US Congress.

4.1.1) The Commemoration of April 24 in the US

Another attempt by the Armenians was a letter by the Congressional Armenian Caucus (a group composed of several pro-Armenian members of Congress) to President Trump with the aim of convincing him to recognize of the 1915 events as “genocide” in his April 24 message.²² The said letter,²³ which was sent to the President on 10 April 2017 with the signature of 83 members of Congress, stated that the President Trump, in commemorating the “Armenian Genocide”, would stand with Presidents Reagan and Eisenhower. Indicating that the “Armenian Genocide” was commemorated by the US House of Representatives in 1975 and 1984, the letter tried to insinuate that the characterization of the 1915 events as genocide will not be something new. The letter also mentioned the pro-Armenian stance of Henry Morgenthau who was the United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, and the operations of the Near East Relief, which was founded during the war and raised 2.5 billion dollars in today’s money. Lastly, the letter asked the President to mark April 24 as a day of “American remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.”

The letter was signed by approximately one sixth of the Congress. Yet, only twelve of the signatories were members of the Republican Party, of which President Trump is also a member of. Furthermore, majority of the signatories were from states that have a large Armenian population such as California. In short, neither the number of the signatories nor their geographical distribution was not enough to deem the letter as an important document.

4.1.2) Draft Resolutions Presented to the Congress

Since the late 1990s, Armenian Americans have tried to have the US House of Representatives and/or the US Senate pass a resolution recognizing the “Armenian Genocide”, but failed due to Turkey’s objections to American

22 Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 56: 23-24.

23 “Congressional Leaders Call on President Trump to Properly Commemorate Armenian Genocide - Bipartisan Letter Urges President to Reject Turkey’s Gag Rule,” *Armenian National Committee of America*, April 10, 2017, <https://anca.org/press-release/congressional-leaders-call-president-trump-properly-commemorate-armenian-genocide/>

governments. Yet, they have not given up on their efforts for the introduction of their demands to the House of Representatives and sometimes the Senate. This year saw the same scenario, and similar draft resolutions were introduced to both houses of the US Congress.

The title of the draft resolution (H.Res.220) which was introduced to the House of Representatives on 23 March 2017 is “Expressing the Sense of the House of Representative Regarding Past Genocide and for Other Purposes.”²⁴ The number of co-sponsors to the draft resolution is 52 (it is remarkable that this number is below the number of signatories of the letter sent to President

Trump on 10 April). The preamble of the draft resolution mentions the ongoing conflict in Syria and Iraq and the massacres and other difficulties suffered by civilians, Christians in particular, and discusses efforts of the US in this regard with a reference to the situation of Armenians during and after the First World War.

The conclusion of the draft resolution reads as follows:

“That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States, in seeking to prevent war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against Christians,

Yezidis, Muslims, Kurds, and other vulnerable religious and ethnic groups in the Middle East, should draw upon relevant lessons of the United States Government, civil society, and humanitarian response to the Armenian Genocide, Seyfo, and the broader genocidal campaign by the Ottoman Empire against Armenians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, Greeks, Pontians and other Christians upon their biblical era homelands.”

The purpose behind such complex and ambiguous wording is to interject the phrase “Armenian Genocide” while talking about the past and present difficulties faced by Christian in the Middle East. Thus, in case the draft resolution is passed, the phrase “Armenian Genocide” will be adopted by the House of Representatives.

24 “Reps. Trott, Schiff Spearhead Bipartisan Genocide Prevention Resolution,” *Asbarez*, March 22, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/161540/rep-trott-schiff-spearhead-bipartisan-genocide-prevention-resolution/>

A similar draft resolution (S.Res.136) was introduced to the Senate on April 24. The draft resolution was submitted by New Jersey Senator Robert “Bob” Menendez who made a name for himself by supporting Armenian interests in all fields. The draft resolution was co-sponsored by 13 Senators.

Differently from the draft resolution introduced to the House of Representatives, this draft resolution directly refers to the “Armenian Genocide”. Making an exaggeration with the claim that 2 million Armenians were subjected to deportation,²⁵ of whom 1.5 million were killed and 500 thousand were scattered across several countries, the draft resolution claims that the more than 2,500-year presence of Armenians in their historic homeland was thus eliminated. Then, the draft resolution mentions what the US has done for the Armenians since the First World War, especially in the form of resolutions within the Congress, and touches upon developments in other countries in this regard.²⁶

The conclusion of the draft resolution reads as follows:

“That it is the sense of the Senate—

- (1) to remember and commemorate the 102th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2017;
- (2) that the President should work toward an equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relationship that includes the full acknowledgment by the Government of the Republic of Turkey of the facts about the Armenian Genocide; and
- (3) that the President should ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide.”

The purpose of this draft resolution is also force the phrase “Armenian Genocide” upon the Senate.

25 According to Raymond Kevorkian’s book *Le Génocide des Arméniens*, which is considered by Armenians to be the most competent source, the number of Armenians that lived in the Ottoman Empire on the eve of the First World War was 2 million. However, Ottoman sources give this number as 1.3 million.

26 Robert Menendez, “A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the 102nd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide,” Pub. L. No. S.Res.136 (2017).

Is there a chance that these draft resolutions could be adopted? For years, by way of persuading several Congress members, the adoption of such draft resolutions has been prevented by US governments in consideration of relations with Turkey. There is no reason for this to change this year. In fact, these draft resolutions, which have a limited number of co-sponsors, have very little chance of being adopted. Nevertheless, the Armenians insist on the introduction of such draft resolutions to the Congress and have no trouble in finding Congress members that could help them in this regard.

4.1.3) President Trumps April 24 Message

No one, including the Armenians themselves, had a clear idea what kind of a message President Trump was going to publish on April 24. The Trump administration, similarly to previous administrations, could have used the 1915 events and the presidential message in this regard as a political pressure tool against Turkey. However, no one expected the new administration to go for such venture at time when the cooperation of Turkey is much needed due to the development in the Middle East.

The President Trump's April 24 message was published on time and was similar to the messages of previous presidents. However, in form, his message was different from the previous ones. Since President Clinton, these messages, although not including the term genocide, were long texts that praised Armenian Americans. President Trump's message, on the other hand, is fairly shorter. To give an idea, while President Obama's final message was composed of 37 lines of text, Trump's was composed of 17 lines and avoided exaggerations when praising the Armenians. Thus, the message appears to be not prioritizing and or placing much importance to Armenian allegations, and gives the impression as if it was written to get it over with quickly.

As to the content of the message, it is seen that topics that were in Barack Obama's latest message were also covered in President Trump's message, but in shorter form. As expected, the message does not include the term "genocide", and uses the term "Metz Yeghern", which Armenians consider to mean "genocide" and can be translated as "The Great Calamity" to English, thus imitating Obama, who himself imitated Pope Jean-Paul II. Ultimately, like President Obama, President Trump's message tried to appease both the Turks, by avoiding the usage of the term "genocide, and the Armenians, by using a term that is synonymous with the term "genocide".

The expressions such as “mass atrocities”, that Armenians were “deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths” were taken from Obama’s message.

As mentioned above, parts of the message praising the Armenian Americans are short. However, the statement that Armenians established one of the great civilizations of antiquity in their historic homeland is new and is quiet an exaggeration since history books have no such judgment.

Points in Trump’s message such as that it is necessary to remember atrocities to prevent them from occurring again, that the efforts of Turks and Armenians to acknowledge and reckon with painful history are welcomed can also be found in previous messages.

However, references to Henry Morgenthau, who was United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1915, and Rafael Lemkin, who coined the term “genocide”, and other points, such as the appreciation towards Armenia for hosting 17 thousand Syrians, that could be found in Obama’s message was not mentioned in Trump’s message.

Trump’s April 24 message was met with criticism by Armenians and their supporters for not describing the events of 1915 as genocide.²⁷

4.1.4) Turkey’s Reaction to President Trump’s Message

Turkey reacted to President Trump’s message with following statement of the Turkish Foreign Ministry dated 24 April 2017:

No: 127, 24 April 2017, Press Release Regarding the Statement by the U.S. President Trump on the 1915 events

We consider that the misinformation and false definitions contained in U.S. President Trump’s written statement of April 24, 2017 regarding the 1915 events are derived from the information pollution created over

²⁷ For such criticisms, see: Harout Sassounian, “Pres. Trump Succumbs to Turkish Pressures By not Recognizing the Armenian Genocide,” *The California Courier*, April 25, 2017, <http://www.thecaliforniacourier.com/pres-trump-succumbs-to-turkish-pressures-by-not-recognizing-the-armenian-genocide/>; “Trump Fails to Properly Characterize Armenian Genocide,” *Asbarez*, April 24, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/162519/trump-fails-to-properly-characterize-armenian-genocide/>; Robert Fisk, “Will Donald Trump Have the Guts to Call the Armenian Genocide What it Was?,” *Independent*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/armenian-genocide-donald-trump-babies-ottoman-empire-turkey-a7698941.html>; Jordan Fabian, “Trump Declines to Call Mass Killings of Armenian Genocide,” *The Hill*, April 24, 2017, <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/330215-trump-declines-to-call-mass-killings-of-armenians-a-genocide>

the years by some Armenian circles in the U.S. by means of propaganda methods.

We expect from the new U.S. Administration not to accredit the one-sided historical narrative of these circles which are known for their tendency to violence and hate speech and to adopt an approach which will take into consideration the sufferings of all sides.

We would like to remind the U.S. Administration that the Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives during the First World War, were commemorated again this year on April 24 at a ceremony held by the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, with the respect they deserve.

The main reason why it is easy to have a resolution adopted in state legislatures is that they are sensitive to demands from the public. Furthermore, the fact that they bear no international responsibility makes their decision-making process easier. However, these resolutions have no validity even in the relevant state, let alone in the US; they only reflect the opinion of the relevant legislature on the Armenian allegations.

The statement conveyed to this ceremony by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan reflects the approach of Turkey on this issue.

As seen above, the Turkish Foreign Ministry's reaction is quiet moderate. The statement attributes the misinformation in Trump's message to the information pollution created by Armenian circles in the US, and states the sufferings of not only Armenians but of all sides should be

taken into consideration. Furthermore, referring to President Erdoğan's message to the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul on 24 April 24, it reminds the US of Turkey's humanistic approach towards the issue.

4.1.5) US States and Genocide Allegations

As it is known, the US is a federal state consisting of 50 states. The individual states generally have bicameral legislatures composed of a Senate and House of Representatives. Resolutions with regard to the recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations have been adopted, sometimes more than once, in almost all of these legislative houses in each state.

The main reason why it is easy to have a resolution adopted in state legislatures is that they are sensitive to demands from the public. Furthermore, the fact that they bear no international responsibility makes their decision-

making process easier. However, these resolutions have no validity even in the relevant state, let alone in the US; they only reflect the opinion of the relevant legislature on the Armenian allegations. Therefore, such resolutions of state legislatures do not draw the criticism of Turkish governments; even if Turkey criticizes, there is slim to none chance to directly make a difference. Only US lawmakers of Turkish origin have the ability to oppose such resolutions, providing that they hold enough seats to do so.

Currently, 46 out of 50 states adopted resolutions with regard to the “Armenian Genocide”.²⁸ Some states adopted more than one resolution. The best example is the State of California; in California, where Armenians have great influence, the number of adopted resolutions as well as Governors’ statements is more than thirty.²⁹

The recognition (or re-recognition) of the Armenian genocide allegations by US states were also among this year’s activities to commemorate 24 April.

a. Wyoming

The Armenian genocide allegations were recognized in Wyoming for the first time via a commemorative letter by Wyoming Governor Matthew H. Mead, in which he, besides the Holocaust that is commemorated every year, mentioned the Armenian allegations.³⁰

b. Colorado

Both the Colorado House of Representatives and Senate unanimously recognized the Armenian genocide allegations.³¹ However, this is not the first time; since 1981, these allegations were recognized thrice by the Governor of Colorado and twelve times by both legislatures.

28 States that have not adopted such resolutions are Alabama, Indiana, Iowa, and Mississippi.

29 Detailed information about country and state assemblies, city and municipal councils that adopted the Armenian genocide allegations can be found from the “International Affirmation” section of the “ArmenianGenocide.org” website: <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/>

30 “Wyoming Becomes 45th US State to Recognize the Armenian Genocide,” *Public Radio of Armenia*, April 22, 2017, <http://www.armradio.am/en/2017/04/22/wyoming-becomes-45th-us-state-to-recognize-the-armenian-genocide/>

31 “Armenian Genocide Resolution Adopted in Colorado Legislature,” *The Denver Channel*, April 27, 2017, <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/local-news/armenian-genocide-resolution-adopted-in-colorado-legislature>

c. Pennsylvania

Adopting a similar resolution, the Pennsylvania Senate stated that Armenians were systematically exterminated by the Ottoman Government in their historic home within the present-day Republic of Turkey. Furthermore, in the resolution, 24 April 2017 was designated as “Pennsylvania’s Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide”.³² It would be beneficial to remind that prior to this, the State of Pennsylvania had already recognized the Armenian genocide allegations nine times.

d. Rhode Island

The Rhode Island House of Representatives and Senate, at the same time but separately, adopted resolutions to commemorate both the “Holocaust Remembrance Day” and “Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day”.³³

Since 1990, the Rhode Island House of Representatives and Senate have adopted around 30 resolutions recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations.

e. Texas

Although the newspaper *Asbarez*, which is the most significant newspaper of the Armenian minority in the US, in its 19 May 2017 issue, wrote that the Texas became the 46th state in the US to officially to recognize the “Armenian Genocide” following a resolution adopted by Texas House of Representatives on the same date,³⁴ there is a message by the Texas Governor in 2006, a House resolution in 2006, and a resolution of the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission about the Armenian genocide allegations. Therefore, the latest House resolution is not the first about the Armenian allegations.

f. California

California is the US state with the largest Armenian population. While Armenian sources indicated the Armenian population in the state as one

32 Daylin Leach, “Pennsylvania’s Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923,” Pub. L. No. Resolution 86 (2017).

33 “Armenian Genocide and Holocaust Recognized at R.I. State House,” *The Armenian Weekly*, April 17, 2017, <http://armenianweekly.com/2017/04/17/armenian-genocide-%E2%80%8Band-holocaust-%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8Brecognized-at-r-i-state-house/>

34 “Texas Becomes 46th U.S. State to Recognize Armenian Genocide,” *Asbarez*, May 19, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/163544/texas-becomes-46th-u-s-state-to-recognize-armenian-genocide/>

million, this number is very exaggerated; perhaps half a million is more realistic.

The Armenians of California are known for their extreme behavior and approach in defending the genocide allegations and opposing Turkey. It could be remembered that on 24 April 2015, the centenary of 1915 events, 130-160 thousand people marched towards the Turkish Consulate General in Los Angeles.³⁵

Armenians of California attach much importance to attain a place in the political organs of the State of California (Senate, House of Representatives, etc.) and in fact, are successful in being elected to these organs. Thanks to this, Armenians have able to achieve a combined total of 38 resolutions/statements from the state legislatures or governor since 1968.

This year, upon the initiative of California State Senator Anthony Portantino, who is quite new in advocating Armenian allegations, the California Senate adopted a resolution (Senate Resolution 29) declaring April as a month of “Armenian Genocide” recognition and commemoration, calling for Turkey to return historic church properties to rightful congregations and requesting that the United States Government formally recognize the “Armenian Genocide”.³⁶ Differently from the resolutions in previous years, this resolution mentions the return of church properties to congregations, which could be a reference to Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia Aram I’s request for return of the church and monastery in Kozan and although not related to this subject, the re-opening of the Greek Heybeliada Seminary.

On 2 June 2017, on the initiative of Adrin Nazarian, who is a member of the California State Assembly of Armenian origin, the California State Assembly adopted a bill “calling for the divestment of California public funds from Turkish government controlled financial instruments, ensuring taxpayer funds are no longer used in this manner to aid and abet Turkey’s century long obstruction of justice for the Armenian Genocide.”³⁷ Commenting on the bill, Nazarian stated that “if Turkey continues to fund Armenian Genocide deniers they must be financially punished”.³⁸

35 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 51 (2015): 143.

36 “‘The Promise’ Screens in Sacramento as State Senate Commemorates Genocide,” *Asbarez*, April 18, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/162345/the-promise-screens-in-sacramento-as-state-senate-commemorates-genocide/>

37 “California State Assembly Adopts Bill Calling for \$500 Million Divestment from Turkey,” *The Armenian Weekly*, June 2, 2017, <http://armenianweekly.com/2017/06/02/calif-divest-turkey-ab-1597/>

38 “California State Assembly Appropriations Committee Approves “Divestment From Turkish Bonds” Bill,” *Armenian Assembly of America*, May 31, 2017, http://www.aaainc.org/index.php?id=7&no_cache=1&newsID=726

What is important here is the fact that the bill was not adopted for financial reasons, but due to racial hatred. Indeed, there is no other explanation for such a punitive financial measure against Turkey about an event that took place more than a century ago and is not determined as “genocide” by international law. This bill will come into effect if approved by California Governor Jerry Brown.

4.1.6) Freedom of Expression in California

In our previous issue, we had given examples for acts and attempts by Armenians to limit freedom of expression for some Turks in California in recent years.³⁹ Recently, anti-Turkey sentiments manifested themselves also in another incident. A “Turkey Business Forum”, which was planned to be organized on 25 May between twelve Turkish firms operating in various sectors and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, was cancelled by the Chamber in response to the request by Los Angeles City Council Member Paul Krekorian to cancel the Forum on charges that the brawl between President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s security staff and several protesters during President Erdoğan’s visit to Washington D.C. was a breach of US laws.⁴⁰

What is important here is the fact that this commercial meeting had nothing to do with the brawl in Washington D.C. Whether the brawl incident was a breach of US laws or not should not be of concern to Los Angeles City Council Member Krekorian or the Chamber of Commerce as it does not fall under their authority or responsibility. Therefore, the cancellation of the Forum is nothing but a cheap show of anti-Turkey sentiments.

4.1.7) The Denial of Amnesty for a Terrorist

In our previous issue, we had mentioned that Hampig Sassounian, who is one of the assassins of Turkish Consul-General to Los Angeles Kemal Arıkan and has been serving life-sentence, had become eligible for parole after being behind the bars for long years and was granted parole by the relevant court in the final hearing on December 2016 after several failed attempts.⁴¹ The parole

39 Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 56: 27-28.

40 “Turkey Business Forum Cancelled Due to Security Detail Attack,” *Agos*, May 25, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/en/article/18596/turkey-business-forum-cancelled-due-to-security-detail-attack>

41 Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 56: 25.

decision, which was subject to the approval of California Governor Jerry Brown, was expected to be approved by Governor Brown due to his close relations with the Armenians.

However, contrary to expectations, Governor Brown reversed the parole decision. As justification, he cited the letter opposing Sassounian's release from the US Department of State, which came a day before President Erdoğan's visit to the US, and indicated that he was not convinced that Sassounian regretted his actions and that he was committed to peace. Governor Brown further stated that Sassounian would still pose "an unreasonable danger to society if released".⁴²

Another reason for the Governor's decision is the great awareness in the US against terrorist movements that emerged following the attacks on 11 September 2001 and led to massive casualties in different parts of the world especially in recent years.

Another reason is the strong efforts of Turkish American associations, especially the Turkish American National Steering Efforts (TASC), against the release of Sassounian.

There was no significant reaction from Armenians, save for Sassounian's lawyer, to the denial of the Sassounian's parole. Perhaps, Governor Brown's decision to allocate one million dollars for an "Armenian American Museum", which is planned to be constructed in Glendale near Los Angeles, played a role in this (an additional three million dollars was later inserted to the State Budget for this project).⁴³

The denial of Sassounian's release is also important in terms of dealing a blow to the idea among Armenians to heroize certain Armenian terrorists. As it is known, Soghomon Tehlirian, who assassinated Talat Pasha, is at the top of the list of such "heroes". Even a statue has been erected in his name in

However, contrary to expectations, Governor Brown reversed the parole decision. As justification, he cited the letter opposing Sassounian's release from the US Department of State, which came a day before President Erdoğan's visit to the US, and indicated that he was not convinced that Sassounian regretted his actions and that he was committed to peace. Governor Brown further stated that Sassounian would still pose "an unreasonable danger to society if released".

42 Bob Egelko, "Gov. Brown Vetoes Parole for Killer of Consul General," *SF Gate*, May 17, 2017, <http://www.sfgate.com/crime/article/Gov-Brown-vetoes-parole-for-killer-of-Turkey-11151278.php>

43 "State Senate Budget Committee Approves \$3 Million for Armenian American Museum," *Asbarez*, May 23, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/163635/state-senate-budget-committee-approves-3-million-for-armenian-american-museum/>

California, and every year, Armenians hold a ceremony in front of the statue. Furthermore, as a more recent example, Monte Melkonian, who was an ASALA leader, has been regarded as a “hero” in Armenia after his death during the Karabakh war.

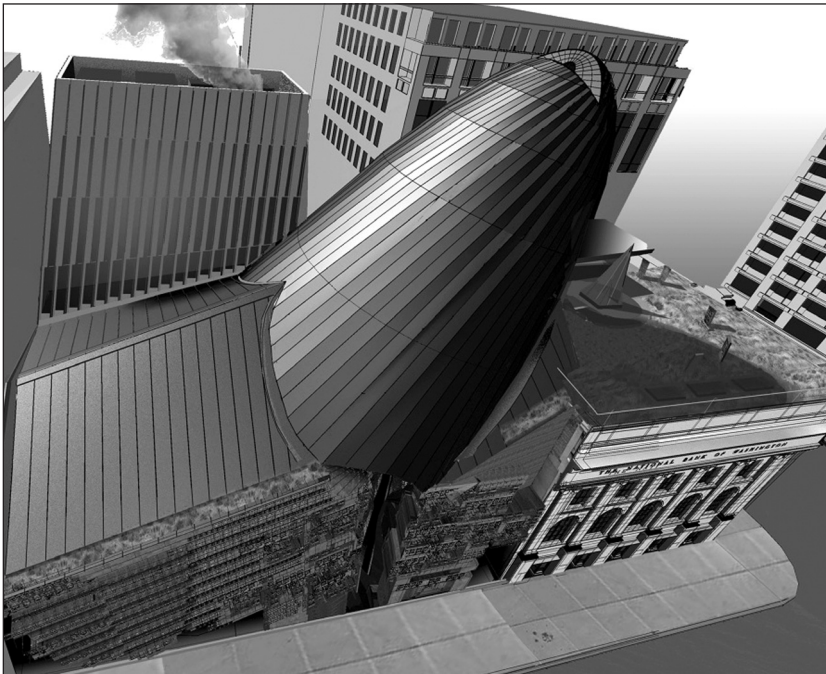
4.1.8) The Demise of the Armenian Genocide Museum of America

In 1993, a Holocaust Memorial Museum was opened in Washington D.C. Thanks to its original design and the successful showcasing of items, the museum has quickly become a major attraction with large numbers of visitors. Seeing this, several Armenians began works for an “Armenian Genocide” museum in the same city. For this purpose, the Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial Inc. was established jointly by the Cafesjian Family Foundation, which is known for its art activities, Anoush Mathevosian, a wealthy individual of Armenian descent, and the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA), which is an influential Armenian association, and the partners began to purchase buildings necessary for the museum. The most important among these buildings is the former building of the National Bank of Washington along the 14th Street. However, due to the relatively small size of the building, four more buildings adjacent to the bank building located on a side street (G Street) were purchased. Thus, a space of 8,500 square meters was acquired for a total spending of approximately 20 million dollars.⁴⁴

The close proximity of the planned museum to the White House was seen as the guarantee for high interest to the museum. It is also our opinion that if the museum had been established, it could have the Armenian genocide allegations to be perceived as fact by the American and even the world public opinion.

As it was not possible to demolish or remodel the bank building due to its historical value, it was foreseen to use the bank building as the entrance of the museum and to demolish the remaining four buildings on the side street in order to construct a new building that would cost approximately 100 million dollars as the main museum building. In the architectural plan by architect Edgar Papazian, a map of Turkey on the façade of the new building was seen to be shattered by a bomb like structure representing the “Armenian genocide” that fell on and devastated Anatolia.

44 For more information, see: Ömer Engin Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 30 (2008): 36-44; Ömer Engin Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 37-38 (2010-2011): 146-147.



While the Cafesjian Family Foundation supported this project, the remaining partners, especially the Armenian Assembly of America, were in favor of a humbler project; they believed the old bank building was enough for the museum and that the four adjacent buildings should be sold, with the revenue to be used for modifications in the museum building. Thus, two different concepts emerged for the museum: one larger (see above photos) and one smaller. Failing to come to an agreement, the sides went to court.

Ultimately, after a long trial process, the properties on G Street, later the old bank building were awarded to the Cafesjian Family Foundation. As a result, Armenian Genocide Museum of America project was not realized.

Meanwhile, real estate prices in that part of Washington D.C. greatly increased. It was later revealed that the bank building was sold to a real estate agency for 57 million dollars.⁴⁵ Hayk Demoyan, the Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, learning about the hefty price tag of the bank building during his visit to the US on April, criticized this transaction by stating that “it’s disagreeable to be ruled only by business interest in this kind of issue [the genocide issue]”.⁴⁶

As mentioned above, if the Armenian Genocide Museum of America project had been realized, the museum would have attracted high interest and many visitors due to its close proximity to the White House. Research made in that period showed that Turkey could not legally prevent the construction of this museum. Nonetheless, although preliminary authorization for the construction of the Museum was granted, following the opening of the Museum, it could have been argued that exhibited materials, such as documents and photographs, were forgeries.

Since numerous forged documents, such as the telegrams attributed to Talat Pasha, form the basis of the Armenian genocide allegations, and since photos such as those of Armin Wagner are yet to be proven to be related to the “Armenian Genocide”, it could have been possible to prevent the exhibition of these materials by taking legal action. Despite the length of this process, ultimately, the credibility of the museum would have been dealt a blow. However, eventually, there was no need for such a process; the greed of the financiers destroyed plans for the museum. Considering these factors, it is possible to say that the fact that the plans for a museum fell through did not only benefit the Turks, but also the Armenians.

4.1.9) Armenian Genocide Library in Washington

The Armenian National Institute (ANI), which was established in Washington D.C. in 1997 under the guidance of the Armenian Assembly of America

45 Rebecca Cooper, “Building formerly slated for Armenian Genocide Museum sells for \$57M,” *Washington Business Journal*, April 5, 2017, <https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2017/04/05/building-formerly-slated-for-armenian-genocide.html>

46 “Hayk Demoyan: Alienation of Building in Washington where Armenian Genocide’s Museum Was Planned to be Opened, Provokes Bewilderment,” *Arminfo*, April 21, 2017, http://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=25428&lang=3

(AAA), contains many documents with regard to the Armenian genocide allegations, which can be accessed by researchers via the internet. Among these, the most referred documents are resolutions by parliaments and local assemblies recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations. The institute can be accessed from their internet address (<http://www.armenian-genocide.org>). Dr. Ruben Adalian has been serving as the director of the Institute for many years.

Lastly, it was reported that over 5,000 publications were opened for access to researchers with the newly-established Armenian Genocide Library. On the other hand, while it was also reported that a Turkish-language version of the Institute's website will become operational, it has not yet happened.⁴⁷

4.1.10) Armenian American Museum Project in Glendale

Glendale is a town located near Los Angeles, California with a population of around 200,000, of which %35 is Armenian. The "Armenianization" of this town is something rather new. It is understood that thanks to the rising Armenian population in the Glendale, more and more Armenians have come to live in the town. This has led to militant Armenians to picture Glendale as a base of operations for Armenians in the US. The election of Vartan Gharpetian as the Mayor of Glendale in early May has also reinforced Armenians' position in the town.

The construction of an Armenian American Museum in Glendale has been long in the agenda of Armenians. The building is planned to be serve not only as museum, but also as a culture center. The "Armenian Genocide" is planned to have an important place in the museum.⁴⁸

The financing of the museum is expected to be covered by some Armenian organizations and wealthy individuals of Armenian descent. Thus, many organizations and persons will be contributing to the financing. This financing system is different from that of the failed Armenian Genocide Museum of America project in Washington D.C., and perhaps thanks to this system, the Armenian American Museum has better chance to be achieved. Furthermore,

47 "ANI Armenian Genocide Library Opens, Special Remarks by Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Director Dr. Hayk Demoyan," *Armenian Agenda*, April 10, 2017, <http://www.armenianagenda.com/post/159426347856/ani-armenian-genocide-library-opens-special>

48 Aram Arkun, "Major Armenian Museum is Planned for Southern California," *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, January 26, 2017, <http://www.mirrorspectator.com/2017/01/26/major-armenian-museum-is-planned-for-southern-california/>

it is understood that the monetary assistance will be provided from the California State Budget for the construction of this museum.⁴⁹ We already mentioned above Governor Brown's decision to allocate one million dollars for this museum, and that an additional fund of three million dollars was inserted into the State Budget for this project.⁵⁰

While the land for the museum has already been found, there are no detailed plans regarding the structure of the museum since it will be determined based on the amount of the donations. Yet, a representation of the building found in the internet is as below:



4.1.11) The Education of the “Armenian genocide” in California Schools

During the term of former California Governor George Deukmejian, who is of Armenian descent, in 1985, it was considered to teach the “Armenian Genocide” in schools, and a new curriculum was prepared and printed in 1987. Based on this, it is understood that it was begun to be taught in some schools. In 2001, the curriculum was expanded to also include the topic of human rights. Still, the teaching of the “Armenian Genocide” was not as widespread as desired, especially due to the inadequate training of teachers, leading to

49 “Jerry Brown Reaffirms Allocation of 1 Million Dollars for Construction of Armenian-American Museum in Glendale,” *Armenpress*, May 13, 2017, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/890493/jerry-brown-reaffirms-allocation-of-1-million-for-construction-of-armenian-american-museum-in-glendale.html>

50 “California Approves Millions for Armenian Museum and Genocide Education; ANCA-WR Praises State Legislators,” *The Armenian Weekly*, June 16, 2017, <http://armenianweekly.com/2017/06/16/california-approves-millions/>

discussions on the allocation of more funds. Ultimately, on 15 June 2017, The California Legislature passed a State Budget Act, which allocates 10 million dollars to support the History-Social Science curriculum framework for the education of the “Armenian Genocide” and other human and civil rights issues.⁵¹ It is likely that large amount of money will allow the education of the “Armenian Genocide” in a more widespread manner.

4.1.12) Protests against President Erdoğan in the US

On 16 May 2017, during President Erdoğan’s visit to Washington, President Erdoğan’s security staff interfered in a demonstration by Armenians, Kurds, Greeks, Yezidis and Assyrians,⁵² due to the demonstration endangering the Turkish Ambassador’s Residence, which also hosted President Erdoğan at the time, and the American security forces failing to take necessary measures. Several people were injured during the ensuing brawl. The American media and political circles labelled the incident as an attack to the freedom of expression, causing the launch of an anti-Turkey campaign.

After the issue was brought before the Congress, on 25 May, the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee adopted a resolution demanding that Turkish security forces (security staff of President Erdoğan) involved in the incident should be prosecuted under United States law, and that steps should be taken to strengthen freedoms for the press and civil society in countries such as Turkey.⁵³ In response to a question regarding this topic, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey stated that the incident was caused as a result of the refusal of US authorities to take necessary security measures, despite repeated official warnings, and that the further advancement of the issue in the legislative process in the House of Representatives with a view to changing the basis will not help the settlement of the matter.⁵⁴ Although this issue normally should have been resolved at that

51 “California Legislature Allocates \$10 Million For Human Rights Curricula, Includes Armenian Genocide Education Training,” *Armenian Assembly of America*, June 16, 2017, http://www.aaainc.org/index.php?id=7&no_cache=1&newsID=732

52 Bridget Johnson, “Armenian Witness to Bloody Protest: Erdogan Regime Violence ‘Has Now Been Exported Here’,” *PJ Media*, May 17, 2017, <https://pjmedia.com/news-and-politics/2017/05/17/armenian-witness-to-bloody-protest-erdogan-regime-violence-has-now-been-exported-here/>

53 “House Set to Condemn Erdogan-Ordered Attack on Protesters Tomorrow,” *Asbarez*, June 5, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/164107/house-set-to-condemn-erdogan-ordered-attack-on-protesters-tomorrow/>

54 “SC-26, 25 Mayıs 2017, Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü Büyükelçi Hüseyin Müftüoğlu’nun A.B.D. Temsilciler Meclisi Dış İlişkiler Komitesinde Oylanan Karar Tasarısı Hakkında Bir Soruya Cevabı,” *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, May 25, 2017, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc-26_-disisleri-bakanligi-sozcusu-buyukelci-huseyin-muftuoglu_nun-abd-temsilciler-meclisi-dis-iliskiler-komitesinde-oylanan.tr.mfa

point, it was further advanced and the above-mentioned resolution was unanimously passed by the House of Representatives (H.Res.354). The Foreign Ministry of Turkey considered this resolution as unconstructive “steps taken by the US legislative branches to distort and politicize the matter”, and stated that it was “against the spirit of alliance and partnership between Turkey and the US”.⁵⁵

When closely analyzed, the incident gives the impression that it was some sort of a premeditated “trap” to cause President Erdoğan’s visit to go badly: members of minorities in Turkey organize a demonstration based on their right to protest, but overstep the limits of this right by attacking the Ambassador’s Residence, and while doing this, they do not meet any resistance from the American security forces; several people get injured after the interference of President Erdoğan’s security staff; this interference leads to the launch of an anti-Turkey and anti-Erdoğan campaign, leading to the adoption of the above-mentioned resolution by the House of Representatives.

It appears that the main reasons for such a plot is Islamophobia, which has begun to dominate the US, and anti-Turkey sentiments, which is a reflection of Islamophobia. It is also seen that Aram Hamparian, the Executive Director of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), which is an affiliate of the Dashnak Party, played a key role in the implementation of this plot. Hamparian, who joined the protests, led the protestors, filmed the brawl, disclosed the footage to the press, gave testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, and alleged that Ankara was exporting its intolerance and violence to the US.⁵⁶

There is no doubt that racial hatred against Turkey and Turks lies at the heart of this behavior. Yet, at the same time, as mentioned above, it was likely expected that the negative atmosphere caused by this incident would facilitate the adoption of several anti-Turkey resolutions.

4.2) France

When it was clear that French President François Hollande, who during his term supported the Armenians in nearly all fields, would not become a

55 “SC-29, 7 Haziran 2017, Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü Büyükelçi Hüseyin Müftüoğlu’nun A.B.D. Temsilciler Meclisinde Onaylanan Karar Tasarısı Hakkında Bir Soruya Cevabı,” *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, June 7, 2017, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc-29_-disisleri-bakanligi-sozcusu-buyukelci-huseyin-muftuoglu_nun-abd-temsilciler-meclisinde-onaylanan-karar-tasarisi-hakkinda.tr.mfa

56 “ANCA’s Hamparian Testifies Before Congress Urging Strong Response to Erdogan-Ordered Attacks,” *Asbarez*, May 25, 2017, <http://asbarez.com/163783/ancas-hamparian-testifies-before-congress-urging-strong-response-to-erdogan-ordered-attacks/>

presidential candidate for another term, the French Armenians engaged in efforts for the election of a president who would protect Armenian interests. However, when looking from outside, it appeared that this was not a difficult task since nearly all of the politicians in France have had a favorable attitude towards Armenians.

Nevertheless, prior to the elections, French Armenians tried to obtain a promise from candidates that they will protect Armenian interests. For this, they sent certain question to the candidates and asked them for their answers.

This is a method commonly used by the Armenian Americans. In this way, based on their answers, candidates are informed on whether they will get Armenian votes. Those who need Armenian votes answer these questions in a manner that would satisfy the Armenians. However, there is no guarantee that candidates will act in accordance with these answers after being elected. A case in point is former US President Barrack Obama. Obama, who had promised twice to the Armenians that he would describe the 1915 events as genocide if elected, did not keep this promise after his election and instead used the Armenian term “Metz Yeghern,” dissatisfying the Armenians. The Dashnaks had reminded Obama in every possible occasion that he did not keep his promise during his presidency (8 years). However, by doing this, they have harmed their relations with the White House. Perhaps influenced by this, Donald Trump did not respond to the questions sent by the Armenians.

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French Armenians, via the Paris-based magazine *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, sent a questionnaire to the six presidential candidates in order to learn their approach on the Armenian issue.⁵⁷ When examining the answers of Emmanuel Macron and his closest competitor Marine Le Pen, who both won the first round of the presidential elections, it is seen that Macron's answers, compared to those of Le Pen, are more accordant with the Armenian views. However, when closely analyzed, it is seen that Macron's support for Armenian views is rather superficial, such as attending 24 April ceremonies and including 24

57 *Nouvelles d'Arménie Magazine*, Issue 238 (March 2017): 24-30.

April in the French Republic's calendar, and that he does not go into main topics such as the international recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations, Turkey's EU membership and Karabakh, suggesting that he will follow the traditional French policy. Most probably concerned by this, Murat Papazian, the Chairman of the Coordination Council of the Armenian Organizations of France, stated that Macron told him during a conversation that he will oppose Turkey's membership in the EU, will support efforts for the recognition of Armenian genocide allegations, and will work for a pro-Armenian solution in the Karabakh conflict.⁵⁸ There has been no confirmation or refutation from Macron or his office with regard to this conversation. Normally, with regard to Turkey's membership to the EU, Macron should act based on Turkey's fulfilment of the criterion set by the EU, and with regard to the Karabakh conflict, he should act in unison with the OSCE Minsk Group.

It appears that Armenians will have the sympathy and support of the new French President Macron, although not to the extent of former President Hollande. On the other hand, there are other names in the new French government who are known for their sympathy towards Armenians. Foremost among these is the new Minister of the Interior Gérard Collomb. Collomb, prior to his appointment as Minister of the Interior, was the mayor of Lyon, a city with a large Armenian population, since 2001, and a Senator for the Rhône region since 1999. In order to gain votes, he has been always close to and supportive of the Armenians. He ensured the building of an "Armenian Genocide Memorial" in Lyon in 2006. He visited Armenia numerous times. While on an official visit in France in March, President Sargsyan visited Lyon and awarded Collomb with the Armenian Order of Honor for his "considerable contribution to the strengthening and development of the Armenian-French friendly relations".⁵⁹ Collomb has been supporting the Armenian views in the political arena as well. During a speech he made on the occasion of the centenary of the 1915 events, he claimed that the Young Turks exterminated two-thirds of the Anatolian Armenians (allegedly 1.5 million) within a couple of months, and stated that Turkey was still not recognizing the existence of genocide even after a century. Indicating that to recognize the crimes of the past does not mean to lower oneself but, on the contrary, to grow, he stated that a society can be at peace with itself only by recognizing its past. Finally,

58 "French-Armenians Have Positive Expectations from Macron – Murat Papazyan," *Tert.am*, May 9, 2017, <http://www.tert.am/en/news/2017/05/09/murad-papazian/2365179>

59 Mathilde Régis, "Gérard Collomb décoré par le Président de la République d'Arménie," *Lyon Capitale*, March 9, 2017, <https://www.lyoncapitale.fr/Journal/Lyon/Politique/Politique/Gerard-Collomb-decore-par-le-president-de-la-Republique-d-Armenie>

he stated that he is in solidarity with not only the Armenians also with all those who, within Turkish civil society, want to put an end to denial.⁶⁰

The appointment of Gérard Collomb as the Minister of the Interior led to hopes that Georges Képénékian, Deputy Mayor of Lyon, could become the new mayor.⁶¹

The mayors of Paris and Marseille, which are cities heavily populated by Armenians, also maintain good relations with the Armenian community. Each year, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo attends 24 April ceremonies, and on the same day, hosts hundreds of people, including Armenia's Ambassador to Paris, at a big event at the city hall. Making a speech at this year's event, in reference to Turkey, Hidalgo stated "if we deny history, it can repeat itself". She also stated that she is working for the establishment of an Armenian Cultural Center in Paris.⁶²

Marseille mayor Jean-Claude Gaudin, in consideration of the fact that a population of 80 thousand well organized Armenians live in the city, is also in good relations with the Armenian community of Marseille. The Deputy Mayor of Marseille, Didier Parakian, is also of Armenian descent.

French Armenians' support towards Macron in all fields led to speculations that an Armenian would be appointed as a minister in the new Macron government. Consequently, it was claimed that Astrid Panosyan, a businesswoman, could be appointed as Minister of Labor.⁶³ However, ultimately, Muriel Péricaud was appointed as Minister of Labor.⁶⁴

60 "Tribune - Gérard Collomb : 'La Turquie Doit Accepter son Histoire Sans en Trier les Faits'," *Le Point*, April 24, 2017, http://www.lepoint.fr/politique/tribune-gerard-collomb-la-turquie-doit-accepter-son-histoire-sans-en-trier-les-faits-24-04-2015-1923869_20.php

61 Paul Terra, "Qui Pour Remplacer Collomb à Lyon et à la Métropole?," *Lyon Capitale*, May 17, 2017, <http://www.lyoncapitale.fr/Journal/Lyon/Politique/Elections/Municipales-2014/Lyon/Qui-pour-replacer-Collomb-a-Lyon-et-a-la-metropole>

62 "Commémoration à la Mairie de Paris - Anne Hidalgo : « L'histoire de ce génocide est aussi mon histoire car c'est l'histoire de l'humanité »," *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, April 24, 2017, http://armenews.com/imprimersans.php3?id_article=140978&nom_site=Nouvelles%20d%92Armenie%20en%20ligne&url_site=http://armenews.com

63 "Astrid Panosyan, Ministre du Travail du Gouvernement Macron?" *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 16, 2017, http://armenews.com/imprimersans.php3?id_article=142066&nom_site=Nouvelles%20d%92Armenie%20en%20ligne&url_site=http://armenews.com

64 "Astrid Panosyan ne Figure Pas Dans la Liste des Ministres du Gouvernement Macron," *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, May 17, 2017, http://armenews.com/imprimersans.php3?id_article=142109&nom_site=Nouvelles%20d%92Armenie%20en%20ligne&url_site=http://armenews.com

Prior to the end of his term, François Hollande, for the last time as president, attended commemoration ceremonies at the genocide memorial in Paris (the monument of priest and composer Komitas) and made a speech. The highlights of his speech are below:

- François Hollande announced the introduction of an annual “week of research on genocide, crimes against humanity and mass crimes” in schools which will symbolically begin on 24 April.⁶⁵

- He announced the creation of a commission for judicial archives of the “Armenian Genocide”, which will be directed by historian Raymond Kevorkian (it is not understood how this commission will be created as nearly all of the judicial archives are located in Turkey).⁶⁶

- Referring to the annulment of a law on denial by the Constitutional Council of France at the beginning of the year, Hollande stated that other ways can be found and if necessary, that the recognition of adapted texts by the European Court of Human Rights can be ensured.⁶⁷ Thus, he suggested that the Constitutional Council of France can be by-passed. Time will show whether the newly-elected Macron will go as far as Hollande.

Yet, it should be mentioned that Emmanuel Macron visited the “Armenian Genocide” memorial in Paris and laid a wreath. Making a speech, Macron stated that he will fight for the international recognition of the “Armenian Genocide” if elected as President of France.⁶⁸

The failure of France’s last two presidents, Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande, in coping with the country’s problems led to the easy victory of Emmanuel Macron, who was a young and a rather unknown politician at the time, in the presidential elections. Macron, although serving as Minister of Economy for a while during François Hollande’s presidency, entered the presidential race as an independent candidate, then he founded a centrist political party “En Marche!” (En. Onward!/Forward!) for the parliamentary elections. In the parliamentary elections held in June 2017, “En Marche!” won

65 Ara Toranian, “Mauvais 24 Avril Pour le Négationnisme,” *Nouvelles d’Arménie*, April 29, 2017, http://armenews.com/imprimersans.php3?id_article=141168&nom_site=Nouvelles%20d%92Armenie%20en%20ligne&url_site=http://armenews.com

66 Toranian, “Mauvais 24 Avril Pour le Négationnisme.”

67 “Génocide Arménien: Hollande Annonce une Semaine d’Étude dans les Établissements Scolaires,” *Le Parisien*, April 24, 2017, <http://www.leparisien.fr/societe/genocide-armenien-hollande-annonce-une-semaine-d-etude-dans-les-etablissements-scolaires-24-04-2017-6886281.php>

68 “Ermeni Teziyle Başladı,” *Hürriyet*, April 25, 2017, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ermeni-teziyle-basladi-40437340>

an absolute majority in the French National Assembly. The MPs of the party are relatively young and new to politics. Furthermore, a large number of MPs elected from this party are women.

Several members of the Armenian community, which attaches great importance to have a voice in French internal politics, were also nominated as MPs by the party “En Marche!”, and ultimately, four of them were elected as MPs - a first in history.⁶⁹

How can four MPs of Armenian origin influence France’s policies with regard to issues such as the recognition of the genocide allegations, reparations by Turkey, the return of Armenian properties, Turkey-Armenia relations and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict? It should be mentioned that this number of MPs do not hold the power to change or form a policy. Therefore, as we will explain below, France most probably will not change its policy towards Turkey.

Lastly, let us mention Serzh Sargsyan’s visit to France in March.

According to President Sargsyan, Armenian Presidents visited France 25 times. While he attributed this to the depth of relations between Armenia and France, relations between the two countries does not require this many visits. Furthermore, it is very unorthodox to conduct visits to a country on the presidential level every year.

It is understood that Sargsyan, who conducted most of these visits, is trying to use Armenia’s good relations with France as a means to develop his countries relations with the EU. It also appears that good relations with France is also considered as a balance against Russia, which is very influential in Armenia in all fields.

On the other hand, it is understood that, other than to appease the Armenian minority in its territories, France attaches importance to its good relations with

On the other hand, it is understood that, other than to appease the Armenian minority in its territories, France attaches importance to its good relations with Armenia to prevent Armenia from going further into Russia’s orbit and to ensure that Armenia preserves its ties with the EU. However, it is not possible to say that Armenians and the Armenian diaspora are satisfied with the foreign policy of France.

⁶⁹ Their names are as follows: Guillaume Kasbarian, Danielle Cazarian, Nadia Essayan, Jacques Marilossian.

Armenia to prevent Armenia from going further into Russia's orbit and to ensure that Armenia preserves its ties with the EU.

However, it is not possible to say that Armenians and the Armenian diaspora are satisfied with the foreign policy of France:

- France wants a resolution to the Karabakh conflict within OSCE and its Minsk Group format. Such resolution does not foresee an independent Karabakh or the annexation of Karabakh to Armenia.

- France maintains good relations with Armenia's nemesis, Azerbaijan. Shortly after Sargsyan's above-mentioned visit, Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev and his wife visited France and received a warm welcome. Azerbaijan economically occupies an important place for nearly all countries due to its oil and gas reserves and its generated income. Armenia, on the other hand, is economically the opposite.

- While adopting an approach satisfactory to the Armenians with regard to the genocide issue, France has been completely silent on the topics of reparations and return of properties, which are brought up by Armenians as part of their "elimination of the consequences of genocide" formula.

- With regard to the topic of the cession of Turkey's territories to Armenia, since Armenia has not made an official demand, France, like other countries, is not required to adopt a stance on this issue. If such a demand is made, France will definitely not support it given its relations with Turkey in all fields. In fact, except for Greece and the Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus, all countries would be expected to act similarly. No country would accept a dream dating back to the First World War to disturb today's world which is already dealing with many problems.

As a result, it is not possible to say that the seemingly good relations between France and Armenia covers all aspects.

4.3) The Czech Republic

We had previously mentioned Czech Republic's approach towards the Armenian genocide allegations.⁷⁰ To sum up, Czech official authorities and generally the public, due to the reasons such as the country being Catholic,

70 Lütem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," Issue 51: 164-165; Lütem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," Issue 53: 31.

an EU member and under the influence of Germany, are in favor of the recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations. However, due to favorable relations with Turkey especially in the economic field, they avoid drawing the negative reaction of Turkey.

The Czech President Milos Zeman, probably in an effort to imitate former German President Joachim Gauck, appears to have an approach in favor of the Armenian claims. Zeman, who had described the events of 1915 as “genocide” during Sargsyan’s visit to Prague in 2014, also visited the Genocide Memorial during his visit to Armenia in 2016 and stated that 1.5 million Armenians were killed in 1915.⁷¹

Following the footsteps of the President, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies, on 14 April 2015, unanimously adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations, condemning genocide denial, and expressing solidarity with the Armenian nation.⁷² In June the same year, Czech Foreign Minister Lubomír Zaorálek visited Yerevan but made a speech in a way that avoided a clear recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations.⁷³

Thus, a legal uncertainty with regard to the Armenian genocide claims emerged. In order for the allegations to be officially recognized, a resolution must be adopted by the Czech parliament or the government, and there is no such resolution. However, there are the statements of the President and the resolution of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which was not approved by the parliament itself.

Although it was most probably thought that the issue can be gotten by with a “semi recognition”, ultimately, the Chamber of Deputies, on 25 April 2017, unanimously adopted a resolution that openly recognized the Armenian genocide allegations. According to the resolution,

“The Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic condemns the crimes against humanity committed against the Jews, Roma and Slavs in the territories conquered by the Nazis during the Second World War; condemns the Armenian Genocide and genocides

71 “Turkey Denounces Czech Recognition of the Armenian Genocide,” *Prague Daily Monitor*, April 28, 2017, <http://praguemonitor.com/2017/04/28/turkey-denounces-czech-recognition-armenian-genocide>

72 “Çek Cumhuriyeti de ‘Ermeni Soykırımı’ nı Tanıdı,” *T24*, Nisan 15, 2015, <http://t24.com.tr/haber/cek-cumhuriyeti-de-ermeni-soykirimini-tanidi,293632>

73 “Czech MFA: Our Country Will Continue Discussions on Armenian Genocide,” *News.am*, June 25, 2017, <https://news.am/eng/news/273680.html>

of other ethnic and religious minorities which took place within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, as well as genocidal acts committed in other parts of the globe”.⁷⁴

A day before the adoption of this resolution, President Zeman, in a letter he sent to the Armenian community in his country, wrote that history should not be interpreted by politicians because they often used it to promote their political interests, and expressed sympathy to the people of Armenia and the Armenian minority in the Czech Republic.⁷⁵

On 26 April 2017, the Turkish Foreign Ministry released the following statement regarding the resolution adopted by the Chamber of Deputies and President Zeman’s letter:

“No: 132, 26 April 2017, Press Release Regarding The Resolution Adopted By The Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic On the Events of 1915 and the Statement Made By President Zeman on the Same Issue

We condemn and reject in the strongest terms the resolution adopted by the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic on 25 April 2017.

We are also disappointed by President Zeman’s letter of 24 April 2017 addressed to the Armenian diaspora in his country with regard to the events of 1915, as it includes serious inconsistencies.

President Zeman, while stating in his letter that history should not be interpreted by politicians, and exposing the fact that politicians abuse history for their political interests, and that the past should first and foremost be analysed and interpreted by historians; contradicts his own words as he makes political assessments with regard to the events of 1915.

Our reaction to these political actions that openly contradict historical facts as well as the basic tenets of law has been conveyed to the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Ankara.”

74 “Parliament of Czech Republic Recognizes Armenian Genocide,” *Agos*, April 26, 2017, <http://www.agos.com.tr/en/article/18340/parliament-of-czech-republic-recognizes-armenian-genocide>

75 “Turkey Denounces Czech Recognition of the Armenian Genocide.”

As it can be seen, while briefly condemning and rejecting the resolution adopted by the Chamber of Deputies, the Turkish Foreign Ministry laid stress on the inconsistencies in the letter sent by President Zeman. Indeed, Zeman, while mentioning that history should not be interpreted by politicians, he himself looks out for his own political interests.

The Czech government, on the other hand, distanced itself from the resolution of the Chamber of Deputies. In a press statement, the Czech Foreign Ministry stated that the assessment of this regrettable event (the events of 1915) was up to independent historians.⁷⁶ The Czech Foreign Ministry further stated that Ankara was informed that the Czech Chamber of Deputies' resolution was not legally binding and that "it is the cabinet, not lawmakers, who is responsible for Prague's foreign policy".⁷⁷

As a result, the Czech government, while failing to prevent the Chamber of Deputies from adopting a resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations and to force President Zeman to act in accordance with the policy of the Czech government, tried to preserve its relations with Turkey by stating that Chamber of Deputies' resolution was not binding for the government.

4.4) Lebanon

In our recent issues,⁷⁸ we pointed out the position of Armenians in Lebanon and certain circles who are under their influence with regard to the "Armenian Genocide" and other Armenian allegations.

Within this context, we mentioned that Lebanon, which recognized the Armenian genocide allegations twice, was represented by delegations both from the government and the parliament in the ceremonies held on 24 April 2015 in Yerevan, and that all schools in Lebanon were closed on 24 April. We also mentioned that demonstrations were held in Lebanon, which were supported by Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia Aram I (of the Armenian Apostolic Church) who is based at Antelias near Beirut, and that Bedros XX, Armenian Catholic Catholicos-Patriarch of Cilicia (of the Armenian Catholic

76 "LN: Genocide Resolution May Harm Czech Diplomatic Aims," *Prague Daily Monitor*, April 28, 2017, <http://praguemonitor.com/2017/04/28/in-armenian-genocide-resolution-may-harm-czech-diplomatic-aims>

77 "Formin: Czech MPs' Armenian Genocide Resolution Not Binding," *Prague Daily Monitor*, April 28, 2017, <http://www.praguemonitor.com/2017/04/28/formin-czech-mps-armenian-genocide-resolution-not-binding>

78 Lüttem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," Issue 53: 84-68; Ömer Engin Lüttem, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar," *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 54 (2016): 36.

Church), defended the “Armenian cause”. In 2016, the Minister of Culture of Lebanon Roni Arayji also made statements embracing the Armenian views, in which he accused Turkey of denying historical facts.

This year, the new Minister of Tourism of Lebanon Avedis Guidanian, who is of Armenian descent, in an interview he gave to a TV channel, disparaged his own country by stating that he would prefer Armenia over Lebanon. Furthermore, as for Turkey, he said: “Currently, there are many problems in Turkey. These problems, while being bad for them, it is an opportunity for us. I am very happy about this because I don’t like them (Turks)”. To the question on whether he would encourage Turkish tourists to come to Lebanon, he responded: “I would not promote anything related to Turkey, none of their products, or establish relations with them.”⁷⁹

These openly racist comments were criticized in the social media in Lebanon, and the former Minister of Justice Ashraf Rifi asked him to step down.⁸⁰ However, there was no known public reaction by the Lebanese government, especially the Prime Minister, to Guidanian’s comments.

The Lebanese Minister of Planning Michel Pierre Pharaon made an official visit to Armenia on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Lebanon. Of course, during his stay, Pharaon also visited the Genocide Memorial.⁸¹

The 102nd anniversary of the “Armenian Genocide” was commemorated by the Dashnak Party in Lebanon in a grandiose manner. The ceremony was attended by the above-mentioned Minister of Tourism Avedis Guidanian, Dashnak Party leader Hagop Pakradounian and several non-Armenian Lebanese MPs. Making a speech at the ceremony, Pakradounian, in reference to the aftermath of the Armenian relocation, stated that the consequences of uprooting and loss of identity was still being felt, and that the crime (genocide) would continue unless Turkey recognized its crime, apologized for it, offered reparations, and returned the territories of the State of Armenia.⁸²

79 “Lübnanlı Ermeni Bakanın Türkiye Hakkındaki Sözleri Tartışma Yarattı,” *Milliyet*, March 31, 2017, 2017, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/lubnanli-ermeni-bakanin-turkiye-dunya-2424131/>

80 “Lübnanlı Ermeni Bakanın Türkiye Hakkındaki Sözleri Tartışma Yarattı.”

81 “Le Ministre Libanais Michel Pierre Pharaon s’est Recueilli au Mémorial du Génocide des Arméniens à Erévan,” *Nouvelles d’Arménie*, April 30, 2017, http://www.armenews.com/article.php3?id_article=141208

82 “Pakradounian Exige Que La Turquie Moderne Offre Réparation au Peuple Arménien,” *L’Orient-Le Jour*, May 1, 2017, <https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1049421/pakradounian-exige-que-la-turquie-moderne-offre-reparation-au-peuple-armenien.html>

What lies behind the Lebanese Armenians' ability to show their hostility towards Turkey in an open and blatant manner is that Lebanon has a state structure that is grounded on religious communities. Under Lebanon's constitution, the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of parliament a Shiite Muslim. Furthermore, each community has an allotted number of seats in the Parliament (Armenians have 6). With how many ministers each community will be represented in the cabinet is also determined (at least 1 for Armenians).

As a result, the system in Lebanon, which features religious communities instead of "national will" as in other countries, operates very slowly. In Lebanon, it takes months to elect a president, to form a cabinet, and to resolve issues that are quickly resolved in other countries, and the hardly established balances are always fragile. Within this uncertainty, Armenians are able to easily defend and promote their "cause" (their demands and their hostility towards Turkey).

What lies behind the Lebanese Armenians' ability to show their hostility towards Turkey in an open and blatant manner is that Lebanon has a state structure that is grounded on religious communities.

Meanwhile, it should be also mentioned that anti-Turkey sentiments are not limited to Armenians. In the 19th century, Christian elements in Lebanon and partly in Syria fell under at least the cultural influence of certain European countries, particularly France, and, inspired by them, began to demand independence from the Ottoman Empire. This attitude of Maronites during the First World War increased the possibility of a rebellion. However, Cemal Pasha, the Commander-in-Chief of the Fourth Army, who was responsible for the administration of that region, did not allow these movements to grow, and established tribunals for the trial of suspects, which resulted in the executions of some. Among these were also Muslims. It must be noted that this act by Cemal Pasha was completely legal under Ottoman law.

During the war, the Allied fleet imposed blockades against the Ottoman Empire and blocked food imports to the Empire. This led to food shortages in coastal towns. Coastal towns in Anatolia, despite difficulties, were able to receive food from the inlands. However, Lebanon, whose inland regions were not as fertile, shortly suffered from famine.

Lastly, contagious diseases seen in nearly all over Ottoman due to conditions of war,⁸³ also caused many casualties in Lebanon. Famine and contagious

83 For more information see: Hikmet Özdemir, *Salgın Hastalıklardan Ölümler 1914-1918* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005).

diseases are the natural result of wars. Therefore, no fault can be attributed to Cemal Pasha for these.

However, when Lebanon and the surrounding regions were occupied by the French, Maronites and some Muslims began to blame Cemal Pasha for executions, famine, and contagious diseases. This also served the purpose of the French who wanted to remove Ottoman influence in Lebanon. Thus, an anti-Ottoman climate emerged in Lebanon through hatred towards Cemal Pasha.

As a result, the system in Lebanon, which features religious communities instead of “national will” as in other countries, operates very slowly. In Lebanon, it takes months to elect a president, to form a cabinet, and to resolve issues that are quickly resolved in other countries, and the hardly established balances are always fragile. Within this uncertainty, Armenians are able to easily defend and promote their “cause” (their demands and their hostility towards Turkey).

In time, famine and contagious diseases began to be forgotten, but executions by Cemal Pasha became some sort of a uniting element. As a result, in 1960, a martyrs’ monument was built, and 6 May began to be observed as martyrs’ day.⁸⁴

The negative sentiments in Lebanon against the Ottoman Empire due to Cemal Pasha’s actions provides the Armenians with an environment that facilitates their anti-Turkey activities.

However, it is also possible to say that today, as in the past, there is a sympathy towards Turkey among the Sunni Muslims of Lebanon.

On the other hand, Lebanese governments have been attaching great importance to having good relations with Turkey. However, due to fragile political balances, Lebanese government has been unable to prevent the anti-Turkey activities by Armenian ministers, and has been trying to distance itself from these activities by stating that they are the personal acts of the ministers.

4.5) Other Countries

During the period we analyze here, several developments regarding Armenian genocide allegations, which we can characterize as minor, also took place in other countries, among which we will mention Jordan, Sweden and Canada.

84 Youssef Mouawad, “La Légende Noire de Djemal Pacha, Comment Le Liban a Construit sa Mémoire,” *Orient XXI*, April 3, 2017, <http://orientxxi.info/l-orient-dans-la-guerre-1914-1918/la-legende-noire-de-djemal-pacha,1792>

4.5.1) Jordan

In April, Princess Dina Mired of Jordan, who is also the president of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), visited Armenia on the occasion of the Cancer Survivor Congress.⁸⁵ During her visit, she met with President Sargsyan, visited the Genocide Memorial, laid a wreath and signed the Book of Honorary Guests where she wrote that she remembers the war brutalities, wherever they occur, referring to the violence against the civilian population throughout the world where women and children are the primary victims. The Princess of Jordan also watched the movie “The Promise”, a movie promoting Armenian genocide allegations.⁸⁶

4.5.2) Sweden

In 2010, the Parliament of Sweden (Riksdag) had adopted a resolution claiming that Armenians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Pontic Greeks were subjected to genocide. However, the fact that the resolution passed by a one vote margin, the then Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt’s statement that “historical events should not be judged at political level, but should be left to the parties concerned to discuss” and that the Parliament of Sweden was not unanimous regarding Armenian genocide allegations, and the fact that foreign policies are determined by governments, not parliaments, had rendered the resolution insignificant.⁸⁷

Margot Wallstrom, the successor of Bildt, characterized the 1915 events only as “tragic”. She also stated that that an independent committee would need to be established to investigate the 1915 events.⁸⁸

Unlike many other countries, the Parliament of Sweden did not adopt a resolution on the centenary of the 1915 events.

In April 2017, the Swedish Social Democratic Party rejected a motion about the Armenian genocide allegations.⁸⁹

85 “President Sargsyan Hosts Her Royal Highness Princess Dina Mired of Jordan,” *Armenpress*, April 29, 2017, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/888825/president-sargsyan-hosts-her-royal-highness-princess-dina-mired-of-jordan.html>

86 “Princess Dina Mired of Jordan Visited Armenian Genocide Memorial,” *Panorama.am*, April 29, 2017, <http://www.panorama.am/en/news/2017/04/29/Princess-Dina-Mired/1769783>

87 Lüttem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 53: 41.

88 Lüttem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 53: 42.

89 “İsveç’te Sosyal Demokrat Parti 1915 olayları önerisini gündeme almadı,” *Anadolu Ajansı*, April 12, 2017, <http://aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/isvecte-sosyal-demokrat-parti-1915-olaylari-onerisini-gundeme-almadi/795543>

Lastly, on 20 April 2015, the municipal council of Norrköping, which is located about 160 km from Stockholm, had adopted a resolution to erect a “Seyfo Genocide Memorial” within the borders of the municipality. However, upon the appeal of Kenan Gündoğdu, a Turkish citizen, in May 2017, this resolution was cancelled by court decision.⁹⁰

4.5.3) Canada

Thanks to the efforts of the small but active Armenian minority in Canada, the Canadian Senate and House of Commons had adopted separate resolutions recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations. Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, on behalf of the government, had also recognized the genocide allegations, and thus formalized Canada’s recognition. Harper’s attitude had caused sort of a crisis between Turkey and Canada with the Canadian Foreign Minister trying to preserve good relations between the two countries. We have provided detailed information about these developments in our previous issues.⁹¹

Stephen Harper, who lost the 2015 elections, was succeeded by Justin Trudeau as Prime Minister. Trudeau, in his statement on 24 April 2016, had used a moderate tone and stated that this matter should not lead to divisions in Canada.

The message Prime Minister Trudeau issued this year on the occasion of the 102th anniversary of the “Armenian Genocide” was also moderate. In his message, Trudeau mentioned that the House of Commons declared April 24 as “Armenian Genocide Memorial Day” in 2015, paid tribute to those who lost their lives and their descendants, and stated that they will “never stand indifferently in the face of fate or violence in any form”.⁹² What is noteworthy in his message is that there are no references to the Ottomans.

90 “Türk vatandaşı başvurdu: İsveç’te ‘Soykırım Anıtı’ iptal etti,” *ABC Gazetesi*, May 11, 2017, <http://www.abcgazetesi.com/turk-vatandasi-basvurdu-isvecte-soykirim-aniti-iptal-etti-53080h.htm>

91 Lütem, “Olaylar ve Yorumlar,” Issue 53: 70-73.

92 “Prime Minister Trudeau’s Statment on the Occasion of the 102nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide,” *Horizon Weekly*, April 21, 2017, <https://horizonweekly.ca/en/prime-minister-justin-trudeaus-statement-on-the-occasion-of-the-102nd-anniversary-of-the-armenian-genocide/>

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THE ADVANCED STAGE OF RUSSIA-ARMENIA MILITARY COOPERATION: THE JOINT MILITARY FORCE

(RUSYA-ERMENİSTAN ASKERİ İŞBİRLİĞİNDE İLERİ AŞAMA:
BİRLEŞİK ORDU GRUBU)

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Abstract: *After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the military and political power of Russia in many regions deteriorated significantly. The emergence of newly independent republics induced Russia to redetermine its regional policies. In this context, Russia developed new policies with regards to the Caucasia region. As South Caucasian republics, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia's relations with Russia are different from one another. While Georgie exhibited a stern stance against Russia (especially during M. Saakashvili's term), Azerbaijan was forced to follow a relatively balanced policy. At the same time, both republics paid a heavy price during their independence struggle and lost their territorial integrity. Armenia, however, prepared a safe environment for itself under Russia's patronage, and furthermore was used as a tool for the establishment of Russia's hegemony in the Caucasia region. Today, the relations between Russia and Armenia are attempted to be presented as if they are relations between two sovereign states. However, Russia's coercive policy on Armenia is intensifying day by day. As some Armenian researchers highlight, the Joint Military Force (or Joint Group of Forces) that is being recently formed between the two countries gravely harms Armenia's status as a sovereign state. The government of Armenia, however, evaluates this development as Russia's assurance towards Armenia. This article seeks to evaluate the legal status and military potential of the Joint Military Force, as well as the reactions, criticisms, and support expressed in the public opinion of Armenia towards this Force. Since the forming of the Joint Military Force is part of Russia's military hegemony policy and its support given to Armenia, the article seeks to consider this process from a comprehensive perspective and also looks into the contents of the previously signed agreements.*

Keywords: *Azerbaijan, Armenia, the Russian Federation, Russian military, security*

Öz: *Sovyetler Birliđi'nin dađılması ardından Rusya'nın birçok bölgedeki askeri ve siyasi gücü ciddi şekilde gerilemiştir. Yeni bağımsız cumhuriyetlerin meydana çıkması Rusya'nın bölge politikalarını yeniden belirlemesine neden olmuştur. Bu bağlamda Rusya Kafkaslar bölgesine yönelik yeni politikalar gelişmiştir. Güney Kafkasya cumhuriyetleri olarak Azerbaycan, Gürcistan ve Ermenistan'ın Rusya ile ilişkileri birbirinden farklıdır. Gürcistan (özellikle M. Saakaşvili döneminde) Rusya'ya karşı sert bir tutum sergilerken, Azerbaycan görece dengeli politika izlemek zorunda kalmıştır. Aynı zamanda her iki cumhuriyet de bağımsızlık mücadelesi sürecinde çok ağır bedel ödemiş ve toprak bütünlüklerini kaybetmişlerdir. Ermenistan ise Rusya'nın himayesi altında kendisine güvenli bir ortam hazırlamış, ayrıca Rusya'nın Kafkas bölgesindeki hegemonya tesisinde bir araç olarak kullanılmıştır. Bugün Rusya ve Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkiler sözde iki egemen devlet arasındaki ilişkiler olarak sunulmaya çalışılmaktadır. Oysa Rusya'nın Ermenistan üzerindeki baskı politikası her geçen gün artmaktadır. Bazı Ermeni araştırmacıların da vurguladıkları gibi, son dönemde iki ülke arasında oluşturulan Birleşik Ordu Grubu (veya Ortak Askeri Birlik) Ermenistan'ın egemen devlet statüsünü ciddi şekilde zedelemektedir. Ermenistan yönetimi ise bu gelişmeyi Rusya'nın Ermenistan'a yönelik bir güvencesi olarak değerlendirmektedir. Bu makalede, Birleşik Ordu Grubunun hukuki statüsü, askeri potansiyeli, ayrıca Ermenistan kamuoyunda dile getirilen tepki, eleştiri ve destek nitelikli açıklamaların değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Makale; Birleşik Ordu Grubunun oluşturulması Rusya'nın askeri hegemonya politikası ve Ermenistan'a verdiği desteğin bir parçası olduğu için bu süreci bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla ele almakta, bundan önce imzalanmış sözleşmelerin içeriğini göz atmaktadır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Azerbaycan, Ermenistan, Rusya Federasyonu, Rus ordusu, güvenlik*

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet military was among the most numerous and well-equipped in the world. The civil war in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Second World War and the numerous military interventions to other socialist countries were events that showcased just how powerful the Soviet military was. From the 1980's onwards, the dissolution process of the Soviet Union's political, economic, and cultural institutions, as well as its military, began. By the end of the 1980's, there were serious social reactions towards the Soviet military especially in the Baltic Republics, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

In the strategically crucial Southern Caucasus region, within the Transcaucasian Military Zone (*okrug*), there were stationed land, sea, and air forces, and large polygons and military exercise areas. With the start of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, these stationed forces became a contentious issue between Russia, appropriating the heritage of the Soviet Union, and the newly independent republics. Military barracks, ammunitions, tools and supplies, as well as weapons resulted in a negotiation process between Russia and the said republics. Both the republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia, once they proclaimed their independence, took action to remove military bases belonging to Russia from within their borders. However, during this process, Russia was attempting to keep the Russian forces within the borders of the republics as much as it could. Among the South Caucasian republics, the first state to remove the Russian military from its territory was Azerbaijan. The Russian forces here left the territory of Azerbaijan in 1992, and the military bases became the property of the new Azerbaijani Republic. Among these bases was Gebele (Gabala-2, RO-7, base 754),¹ which was a radar station. As it was one of the eight largest missile defense systems of the Soviet Union, it was of utmost importance to Russia. In 2012, when there was a disagreement over the leasing price of the base, Russia ceased its operations in Gebele.

With the start of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, these stationed forces became a contentious issue between Russia, appropriating the heritage of the Soviet Union, and the newly independent republics. Military barracks, ammunitions, tools and supplies, as well as weapons resulted in a negotiation process between Russia and the said republics.

The efforts of the government of Georgia for the withdrawal of the Russian military took a long time. The process finally ended in 2007, one year earlier than scheduled.

1 The construction of this facility possessing a 'Daryal' system started in 1976 and was finished in 1985.

As a result, Russia was unable to attain the expected results from its policies regarding the preserving and strengthening of its military presence in the Caucasus. In this context, Russia decided to again position its military troops in the north and south of the Caucasus, and in line with this, strengthened its military presence in Armenia both in legal and physical terms.

In such a circumstance, Russia waited for an opportunity to strengthen its military presence in the Caucasus through “legitimate” means. Such an opportunity presented itself in 2008 with the outbreak of the 5-Day Russia-Georgia War;

“Since the 5-Day Russia-Georgia war, Russia has consolidated its military presence in the South Caucasus. In 2009-2010, Russia homogenized its military presence by signing military agreements with South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Armenia and modernizing the military equipment deployed on its bases there. By these agreements, all parties agreed to prolong Russia’s presence in Armenia and Georgia’s separatist territories (recognized as independent states by Moscow in August 2008) for a period of 44 years.”²

The signing of the treaty for the formation of the Joint Military Force between Russia and Armenia could be seen as a profoundly important development for the strengthening of Russia’s military power in the region.

The legal process for the formation of the joint military unit between the two countries began with President of Russia Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin’s 11 November 2016 dated order.³ The treaty text prepared in line with this order was signed by the ministers of defense of Armenia and Russian on 30 November 2016. Upon the said treaty being ratified by the Russian Duma on 14 June 2017 and by the Russian Federation Council on 19 June 2017, it was signed by President Putin on 26 July 2017.

When one examines the legal basis of the military cooperation between Armenia and Russia, the previously mentioned Russia’s military assertiveness strategy clearly manifests itself. In fact, one can come across criticisms pointing to the fact that this military cooperation is a threat to Armenia’s sovereignty.

2 “Russian Military Presence in the Eastern Partnership Countries,” Workshop (Belgium: Policy Department, Directorate-General for External Policies, European Union, June 2016), 27.

3 “Распоряжение Президента Российской Федерации От 12.11.2016 № 359-Рп ‘О Подписании Соглашения Между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения Об Объединенной Группировке Войск (Сил) Вооруженных Сил Республики Армения и Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации’” (Russian Federation, November 14, 2016), <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001201611140002>

1) THE SOUTHERN REGION FORCES OF THE RUSSIAN MILITARY

Today, the military base in Armenia is within Russia's Southern Military Zone.⁴ During the era of the Soviet Union, many changes were made in the administrative and geographic regional layout structure of the USSR Armed Forces. According to the structure before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Transcaucasian Military Zone (*okrug*) was the highest unit of the USSR Armed Forces in the South Caucasus. In 1991, after Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia declared their independence, Russia was forced reposition its forces in the region. An important part of these forces were transferred to other territories of Russia. The Soviet military forces that were maintained in the South Caucasus were reorganized within the structure of the Russian military and the new status of this zone was decided in 19 March 1992. In January 1993, the military forces here were reorganized as the Transcaucasian Military Forces Group. The Russian administration was working with considerable effort to make the presence of these troops in the South Caucasus permanent. The forces that were withdrawn, first from Azerbaijan and then from Georgia, were relocated in other parts of the Caucasus and in Armenia.

During the restructuring process for the military regions (*okrug*), the Russian military base in Armenia was within the North Caucasus Military Zone.⁵ In 2010, with an executive order from the Russian President, important changes were made in the Russian military's command structure. With this measure, published under the name "Executive Order on the Military Organization of the Russian Federation," the North Caucasus Military Zone ceased to exist and the Southern Military Zone was created.⁶ Russian forces present in Armenia were placed under the command of this new structure. The Black Sea fleet and the 4th command of the Air and Air Defense Forces are also under the same military zone (*okrug*). These forces took part in Russia's military intervention to Georgia in 2008. Today, the borders of the Southern Military Zone overlap with the administrative borders of the Southern and Northern Caucasus

4 This zone, initially named "North Caucasus Military Zone," was instituted on 4 May 1918. After going through a few structural changes, this zone was reinstated on 4 October 2010, with an executive order of the Russian President (20 September 2010) titled the "Executive Order on the Russian Federation's Military Organization," as the South Russia Military Zone, within the North Caucasus Military Zone.

5 It was instituted on 4 May 1918. In the Soviet era, many changes were made in the structure of this military zone. In 1945, the Don, Stavropol, and Cuban military zones were created in its place. A year later, it was reinstated under the name of North Caucasus Military Zone.

6 Before this change, there were the Moscow, Leningrad, North Caucasus, Volga-Ural, Siberia, and Far East Military Zones within the Russian Military. With the 2010 change, these zones were removed and four zones in total were created: 1) The Central Military Zone, 2) The Southern Military Zone, 3) The Western Military Zone, 4) The Eastern Military Zone. Please see: "Медведев подписал указ 'О военно-административном делении РФ'," *Ria.ru*, September 21, 2010, <http://ria.ru/politics/20100921/277669145.html>

Regions. It should be emphasized here that Crimea too lies within the borders of the same region (the Southern Federal Region).⁷ The central headquarters of the Southern Military Zone is in the city of Rostov-Don. Except for the Strategic Rocket Forces and the Air and Space Defense Forces, all military and paramilitary units as well as the military bases in Armenia and in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (which are both legally a part of Georgia but nevertheless behave separately from it) are under the command of this Military Zone (*Okrug*). The Ministry of the Interior, the FSB border guards, the Ministry of States of Emergency and similar corps of other ministries and institutions are also under the command of the Southern Military Zone.⁸

2) THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RUSSIA-ARMENIA MILITARY COOPERATION

2.1) The Start of the Military Cooperation

The Transcaucasian Military Command, both strategically and in the domain of military and material capacity, was among the foremost units of the Soviet military. During the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia was in no position to keep hold of its military bases abroad.⁹ This situation, aside from being part of the Russian foreign policy's new reality, also arose from a lack of economic and material means. Meanwhile, some new independent republics were trying to obtain "inheritance shares" from the Soviet military, but they also expected the Russian military to withdraw from their countries. Both Georgia and Azerbaijan were putting in significant efforts for such a withdrawal, while Armenia was following a completely different policy. To succeed in its

7 As known, today, there are eight units recognized as Federal Regions in Russia. These were constituted directly by the authority of the President, and are units open to dispute under the Constitution and Administrative Law. The federal regions were constituted with the Presidential Executive Order (*Ukaz*) dated 13 May 2000 during Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin's first term as president, and were seven in number: Center, North-West, South, Volga (Privoljskiy), Ural, Siberia, Far East federal regions. With the executive order dated 19 January 2010 produced during the presidential term of Dmitry Medvedev, a portion of the Southern Federal Regions was separated (the northern part of Caucasia), and the North Caucasus Federal Region (*okrug*) was created. After the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, the Crimea Federal Region was created. With the executive order of the President of the Russian Federation dated 28 July 2016, the federal region status of Crimea was abolished, and Crimea was incorporated into the Southern Federal Region. Military (defense) units and economic regional properties are considered during the formation of these regions for which there are no provisions in the Constitution. However, this does not mean that the administrative borders of federal regions and military zones completely overlap.

8 "Южный военный округ," *Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation*, accessed: September 20, 2017, <http://structure.mil.ru/structure/okruga/south/history.htm>

9 In 1989, there were approximately 620,000 soldiers stationed outside of the USSR's borders. With the dissolution of the USSR, the position of these troops was removed, soldiers in Eastern Europe were recalled, and military bases in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Cuba were closed.

occupation policy against Azerbaijan, Armenia was in need of Russian military support.

Russia's military cooperation with Armenia started immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In truth, the situation between the two countries could be more accurately described as Russia's military support for and hegemony over Armenia, rather than "military cooperation."

The first legal change introduced by Armenia to authorize the presence of foreign military troops on its territory was during the last years of the Soviet Union. In the 5th Article of Armenia's Declaration of Independence in 1990, Armenia's right to have its own military forces and to obtain a share from the Soviet Military Forces was indicated. Apart from this, any foreign military presence, whether it was a base or troops, could only be decided by the Armenia's Supreme Soviet.¹⁰

On 29 December 1991, the Russian Federation's and Armenia's presidents signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Security. This treaty included close cooperation in the domains of defense industry and national security, as well as provisions on cooperating on placing troops of one country on the territory of the other.¹¹

In 1992, the Armenia-Russia Treaty on the defense of the borders of the Commonwealth of Independent States was signed. As Armenia was the weaker side in these bilateral-relations, Russia was able to determine the conditions. It was seen for certain that the troops to be withdrawn from Azerbaijan and Georgia would be positioned in Armenia. For that reason, Russia was as willing as Armenia for improving the military cooperation, or in other words, for the creation of a legal status for its troops to be on Armenia's soil.

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10 "Декларация о Независимости Армении" (Republic of Armenia, August 23, 1990), <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=2602&lang=rus>

11 "Договор о Дружбе, Сотрудничестве и Взаимной Безопасности Между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения. Дипломатический Вестник," 1992. № 2-3. С. 19 (Russian Federation and Republic of Armenia). Additionally, for this and many other treaties' texts, please see: "Договоры и Соглашения между РФ и РА," *Rus-Arm.org*, August 12, 2010, <http://rus-arm.org/dogovory-i-soglasheniia-mezhdu-rf-i-ra/napravleniia-rossiisko-armianskogo-sotrudnichestva/dogovory-i-soglasheniia-mezhdu-rf-i-ra>

as Armenia for improving the military cooperation, or in other words, for the creation of a legal status for its troops to be on Armenia's soil. After 1994, preparations for a legal draft on this subject were initiated and a year later, on 16 March 1995, the parties signed a treaty on the Russian base in Armenia.

2.2) The Treaty of 16 March 1995 and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Protocols

On 16 March 1995, the "Treaty between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia regarding Russia's military base on the territory of the Republic of Armenia"¹² was signed. This treaty was ratified by both countries' parliaments within the next two years.¹³

The treaty consisted of an introduction and 27 articles. In the text of the treaty, there is a reference to the 21 August 1992 treaty between Armenia and Russia, stating that the reason of the existence of the base is for "safeguarding stability and security in the region."

The first article of the treaty contains definitions, the terms "Russia's military base", "military entity", "base personnel" (military personnel, civilian personnel, assigned personnel), the families of the personnel, "competent bodies", "governing bodies of the base", immovable and movable property were defined (Article 1).

In the third article of the treaty, there are important provisions regarding the status of the base. According to that article;

"Russia's base will fulfil the duties arising from the treaties between the two parties. As long as Russia's military base is within the borders of the Republic of Armenia, besides from the Russian Federation's national interests, it will also seek to maintain the security of the Republic of Armenia, within the framework of its old borders within the USSR, along with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia. The armed forces in the Russia's military base will be deployed and used within the framework of the Treaty between the Parties, the Collective Security Treaty of 15 May 1992, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and

12 For the text of the Treaty and the three protocols, please see: "Договор Между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской Военной Базе На Территории Республики Армения," ФЗ ОТ 26.05.1997 N 85-ФЗ (Russian Federation and Republic of Armenia, November 2007), http://www.lawrussia.ru/texts/legal_673/doc673a332x809.htm

13 It was ratified by the Russian Parliament on 26 April 1997 and by the Armenian Parliament on 29 May 1997.

Mutual Security between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia.” (Article 3).

The protocols added to this treaty further reinforced the decisions on military cooperation between the two countries.

The 1st Additional Protocol¹⁴ dictates that the use of the military base within the borders of Armenia will be decided by the relevant authority of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (Article 8). The Armenian side will respect the status and legal situation of the base personnel and their families (Article 9).

The organization and maintaining of communication with the base is defined by the 2nd Protocol,¹⁵ which is an essential part of the Treaty (Article 12).

With the 3rd Protocol,¹⁶ the amount of prescribed conventional weapons limited by Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is defined (Article 13). Whether it is for the flight of Russian military airplanes on Armenia’s air space or the transportation of military hardware through customs, the entries and exits were regulated by a special regime. It is provisioned that, except for the Russian military base, the entry of military entities linked to Russia’s Armed Forces should be allowed with the accord of the two parties (Articles 17 and 18).

In the treaty, there is also an original agreement on the costs and financing of the military base. Unlike Russia’s other military bases abroad, the costs of the 102nd Base in Armenia will be financed jointly by Russia and Armenia. A separate agreement was made about the ratios and the amount of the financing (Article 19). The energy, water, infrastructure, and other services necessary for the normal functioning of the base will be provided by Armenia (Article 20). In the bilateral treaties of the following years, Armenia committed itself to providing the financing for electricity, sewage, water, and other infrastructure costs of the military base. The amount of these expenses will be calculated according to the tariffs implemented within Armenia’s Armed Forces and they

14 “Протокол N 1. К Договору между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения,” *LawRussia.ru*, November 2007, http://www.lawrussia.ru/texts/legal_673/doc673a332x809.htm

15 “Протокол N 2. К Договору между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения,” *LawRussia.ru*, November 2007, http://www.lawrussia.ru/texts/legal_673/doc673a332x809.htm

16 “Протокол N 3. К Договору между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения,” *LawRussia.ru*, November 2007, http://www.lawrussia.ru/texts/legal_673/doc673a332x809.htm

will be covered 70% by Russia and 30% by Armenia. Even though the heating energy in the base was expected to be provided by Armenia, this has been delayed due to Armenia being “under a blockade” regarding transportation and transfer of energy.

For the resolution of incompatibilities in the treaty, a Mixed Commission was created in Yerevan. The issues that cannot be resolved by the Mixed Commission are to be solved through diplomatic channels (Article 21). It has been foreseen that Armenian citizens can be employed in the base. For these employees, the provisions of Russian labor law are in effect. The families of the Russian personnel working in the military base are allowed to work in Armenia and Armenian labor law is in effect for them (Article 22). This treaty has been signed for 25 years. After the completion of this time, the treaty will be automatically renewed every five years. The Parties (the two sides), under the condition to inform the other side at least six months before the expiry of this time, can end the application of the Treaty (Article 26).

When the Treaty was signed, it was stipulated by the 3rd Protocol¹⁷ that it would not exceed the ceiling level defined by CFE. Within the framework of the ceiling level defined CFE, the A and B Clauses of the Protocol’s 1st Article, the number of armored vehicles and weapons that can be possessed by Russia and Armenia have been defined. According to these decisions:

17 “Протокол N 3. К Договору между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения.”

The Advanced Stage of Russia-Armenia Military Cooperation: The Joint Military Force

<i>A. The unit limit for the Russian Federation that had been determined by CFE will be increased as follows:</i>	<i>Increase in the number of units</i>
Battle Tanks	80
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	80
Infantry fighting vehicles	160
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	160
<i>Within this scope, infantry fighting vehicles and heavy armament combat vehicle</i>	75
100 mm and large caliber artillery	85
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	85
<i>B. The unit limit for Armenia that had been determined by CFE will be decreased as follows:</i>	<i>Decrease in the number of units</i>
Battle Tanks	80
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	80
Infantry fighting vehicles	160
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	160
<i>Within this scope, infantry fighting vehicles and heavy armament combat vehicle</i>	75
100 mm and large caliber artillery	85
<i>In addition, for regular forces</i>	85

According to the 2nd Article of the Protocol, within the framework of the values and using rules of the European Conventional Armed Forces Treaty of 15 May 1992, the parties will be able to change the ceiling limit.

2.3) Other Bilateral Treaties between the Governments

Asides from the Treaty and Protocols previously mentioned, many state and government level treaties were signed between the parties.¹⁸ In 1996, the treaty on the financing of the military base, the treaty on the deployment of international military supplies, the land provision treaty for the placement of the military base, the treaty on the fulfilment of the housing needs of the military personnel and their families, and the treaty on the opening of Russian Defense Ministry middle schools within Armenia's territory were signed. In 1997, treaties concerning mutual legal aid on cases involving the base, and the

18 For the article of General A. S. Tretyakov who was involved in the preparation process of legal documents for the military cooperation of Russia and Armenia between 1991 and 2000, please see: А.С. Третьяков, "Вооруженные силы РФ в республике Армения: некоторые правовые аспекты пребывания," *Журнал Право и безопасность*, Номер 1-2 (6-7), June 2003, http://dpr.ru/pravo/pravo_5_19.htm

use of weapons by Russian troops outside of the base were signed between the two states. In 2000, a state-level treaty on the coordination for the use of armed forces in maintaining the security of Russia and Armenia was signed. In the same year, state-level treaties about common air defense systems, on the duties and competences of the base and the Armenia's Armed Forces air defense and air force were signed. Also, a treaty was signed on the cooperation between the two defense ministries for the use of both countries' airspace and the mutually cooperative administering of flights by military units.¹⁹

In December 2005, in the treaties between Armenia and Russia, it was provisioned that the Russian military base in Armenia would be expanded. Subsequently, Armenia's administration reserved land and immovable property for the 102nd Military Base.²⁰

2.4) The 4th Protocol

On 11 November 2003, the 4th Protocol in addition to the Treaty was signed. This treaty, ratified on 20 December 2004 by the Russian Parliament, only contained two articles. In the protocol, the aforementioned Treaty's 3rd Article was changed and the principal ground for the use of the base was designated as the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Security between Russia and Armenia that was signed on 29 August 1997.²¹

2.5) The 5th Protocol

An important development on the legal status and mission duration of the base happened on 20 August 2010 with the signing of the 5th Protocol.²² With this protocol, the 3rd Article on the legal status and the 26th Article that determines

19 For the treaties, please see: Третьяков, "Вооруженные силы РФ в республике Армения: некоторые правовые аспекты пребывания."

20 Ali Asker, "Tehlikeli Anlaşma: Rusya Türkiye'yi Sivazlıyor, Azerbaycan'a Aba Altından Sopa Gösteriyor," *21. Yüzyıl Türkiye Enstitüsü*, August 7, 2010, <http://www.21yyte.org/arastirma/ermenistan/2010/08/07/5172/tehlikeli-anlasma-rusya-turkiyeyi-sivazliyor-azerbaycana-aba-altindan-sopa-gosteriyor>

21 "Протокол N 4. К Договору между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения," 11 ноября 2003 года, *LawRussia.ru*, November 11, 2003, http://www.lawrussia.ru/texts/legal_668/doc668a570x571.htm

22 "Протокол N 5 между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о внесении изменений в Договор между Российской Федерацией и Республикой Армения о Российской военной базе на территории Республики Армения от 16 марта 1995 г.," *Zaki.ru*, August 20, 2010, <http://zaki.ru/pagesnew.php?id=58430>

the mission time of the base was changed, effectively extending it to 49 years.²³ According to the protocol, besides from Russia's national interests, the base will also ensure Armenia's security along the Armenia's Armed Forces. During the restructuring of the base, all leftover weapons and ammunition was given to Armenia's Armed Forces.²⁴ Another significant aspect of this change is that the expression "protecting the Republic of Armenia in accordance with its old borders within the Soviet Union" is removed from the text, therefore also removing any limitation. The Armenian side, with the removal of this limitation, gained confidence that it would be safeguarded against any intervention coming from Turkey or Azerbaijan. In order to pay the price of this "assurance," Armenia authorized Russia to possess military bases within Armenia's borders.

3) THE MILITARY POTENTIAL OF THE 102ND BASE

The 102nd Military Base, situated in Gyumri and 120 km from Yerevan, was structured on 1 September 1994. It was initially constituted within the authority of the 127th Brigade connected to the 7th Army, itself under the command of the Transcaucasian Military Department. This Brigade was deployed to Armenia in 1953. In 1995, the base was constituted with the name 102nd Military Base. In the base, there are the Yerevan (Erebuni Airport)²⁵ and Gyumri garrisons. In here, there are the Russian Federation's operational force within Armenia, the 123rd Motorized Division, the 3624th Air Base, a military hospital, postal services, the garrison court, the radio station of the General Intelligence Administration connected (GRU) to the Russian Armed Forces Chief of Staff. Within the Gyumri garrison, there are the 128th Motorized Division, the 124th Motorized Division, the 988th Air Defense Regiment, and the 992nd Artillery Regiment. In addition to this, there are also tanks, recon, repair, radiation, chemical, and bacteriological defense, anti-tank divisions, radio electron, medical and military police divisions, a military hospital, depots, a bank, and a Federal Security Service (FSB) branch.²⁶ Within the base, there are three education centers that are active. The first one is Nubasaran, 25-30

23 The duration is calculated on the basis of 1995, which is year the treaty was signed. In 1995, when the treaty was signed, the duration was determined to be 25 years. With the signing of the new protocol, this deadline has been extended to 49 years (calculated on the basis of 1995). Consequently, the treaty will be in effect until 2044.

24 "МО РФ: Россия будет передавать ВС Армении вооружение на безвозмездной основе," *Panorama.am*, June 22, 2011, <http://panorama.am/ru/politics/2011/06/22/andrey-gusev/>

25 This is the aviation department linked to the base in Gyumri (3624th Air Base).

26 "Госдума РФ одобрила протокол о продлении срока размещения российской военной базы в Армении," *Yerkramas.org*, June 18, 2011, <http://www.yerkramas.org/article/17667/gosduma-rf-odobrila-protokol-o-prodlenii-sroka-razmeshheniya-rossijskoj-voennoj-bazy-v-armenii>

km from Yerevan, the second is Kamhud, 15-17 km from Gyumri, and the third one is the Alagoz polygons, 15-109 km from Artik. According to the treaty signed between Armenia and Russia on 30 September 1992 (the one on the status of Russian border defense units within Armenia), Russian soldiers are given the task of protecting Armenia's borders with Iran (45 km) and Turkey (345 km).²⁷

Since 2010, the structure of the 102nd Base and there was changed to a brigade system.

4) THE MILITARY SUPPORT PROVIDED BY RUSSIA TO ARMENIA

It has to be stated that, in line with the conditions imposed by the treaty signed in Tashkent on 15 May 1992 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, neither the process of determining quantitative limit for armaments to be given to former Soviet Union republics nor the methods to monitor the giving of such armaments is compatible with the principles of justice.

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helicopters. However, if surface area and population were considered, Azerbaijan should have obtained 565 tanks, 860 armored vehicles and 566 artilleries. During this process, Armenia, did not heed the imposed armament limits and continued to purchase weapons from Ukraine, Belarus, Kirghizstan, China, Bulgaria, and especially Russia. Within the framework of the Tashkent Treaty, Russia transferred 2/3 of its bases in Armenia, 180 T-72 tanks, 60 BTR-

²⁷ The treaty on status of the Russian Federation border defense troops in the Republic of Armenia was signed on 30 September 1992. Border troops in Russia are under the authority of the Federal Security Service (FSB). As stipulated in this treaty, Russian units are committed to protecting Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran. As of now, four units of the FSB are stationed in Gyumri, Armavir, Artasat, and Mehri in Armenia. Moreover, Yerevan's Zvartnots International Airport's control entrance gate is under the supervision of the FSB. Today, the number of Russian border defense troops on Armenia's territory is estimated to number around 4.5 thousands.

60, and BTR-70, 25 BRM-1K, 130 artillery and mortars, and tens of Osa, Igla, and Silka type air defense complexes to Armenia. However, even this was not the end of it, as Russia equipped the Armenian military in 1993 and 1996 with weapons, military technology, and ammunition.²⁸ Russia's armament aid to Armenia continues today as well. It is a known fact that Russia donated to Armenia armaments worth a total of 1.8 billion dollars.²⁹

According to the statements made by officials in the Russian Armed Forces, the number of personnel in the base is 4245, among them, 370 are officers and 500 are civilian experts.³⁰ According to articles in the Russian media, half of officers and almost all of the contracted soldiers are Armenians who obtained Russian citizenship.³¹ According to Armenian sources, the number of personnel in the base is 12,000. During the 2008 war against Georgia, Russia sent important amounts of supplies and soldiers to this base.³²

On 21 June 2010, during the approval of the 5th Protocol, Colonel Andrey Gusev who is the head of the Cooperation Agency with CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) States within the Russian Ministry of Defense gave a speech in front of Russian senators and stated that during the restructuring of the base, leftover weapons, armored vehicles, and ammunition was been to the Armenian Armed Forces.³³

We could say that there are serious doubts about the transparency of Russian armament transfers to Armenia. On 2 December 2013, during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to the 102nd base, "Smerc" and 9K37M1-2 "Buk-MI-2" systems were among the displayed weapons. On the 9A39M1-2 start-charge set up, there were two different 9M38M1 and 9M317 anti-aircraft guided missiles. These weapons were not previously within the 102nd Base's

28 Hatem Cabbarlı, "Bağımsızlık Sonrası Ermenistan-Rusya İlişkileri." Ankara Çalışması (Ankara: ASAM, 2004).

29 According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute data from between 1991 and 2014, the total worth of Russia's armament sales to Armenia was 521 million dollars. This number does not conform to reality. According to the data of the United Nations Conventional Weapons Registry system, the total value of Armenia's armament procurement from Russia was 16 million dollars in 2013. Within this scope, 35 tanks, 110 armored combat vehicles, 50 launching mechanisms, and 200 missiles linked to them were purchased. "Военно-техническое сотрудничество между Россией и Арменией. Досье," *Tass.ru*, December 2, 2013, <http://tass.ru/info/803760>

30 "Личный состав российской военной базы в Армении готов выполнять задачи по предназначению," *Yerkramas.org*, June 22, 2011, <http://www.yerkramas.org/article/17787/lichnyj-sostav-rossijskoj-voennoj-bazy-v-armenii-gotov-vypolnyat-zadachi-po-prednaznacheniyu>

31 Владимир Кравченко, "Зонтик для российского форпоста." *ZN,UA*, August 13, 2010, https://zn.ua/POLITICS/zontik_dlya_rossiyskogo_forposta.html

32 "Ermenistandaki Rusiya bazasinda 12 min herbci var," *Musavat.com*, August 26, 2010, http://musavat.com/news/gundem/ermenistandaki-rusiya-bazasinda-12-min-herbci-var_83610.html

33 "МО РФ: Россия будет передавать ВС Армении вооружение на безвозмездной основе."

armament potential. According to the information given to Putin, “Smerc” was sent “during the summer of 2013” and the “Buk-M1-2” was sent to the base in 2012.³⁴

The last weapon delivery to Armenia was made during the summer of 2016. Russia, to provide weaponry, accorded a 200 million export credit, paid by interests throughout 10 years starting in 2018, to Armenia. According to the weapon purchase contract, the Armenian military purchased from Russia “Smerc” bullets, an “Igla-S” missile complex, the radio recon “Avtobaza-M”, “Soltntsepek” flame machine system with TOS-1A transportation-firing device, 9M113M guided missiles, RPG-26 bomb launcher, Dragunov sniper rifles, “Tiger” armored vehicles, and engineering and communication tools from Russia.³⁵

Levon Ayvazyan, head of defense policy department of the Ministry of Defense of Armenia, even stated that the supplying of certain types of armaments had been carried out earlier than scheduled. Drawing attention to the privilege granted to his country in the armaments trade between Russia and Armenia, Ayvazyan continued as follows:

“We have specific agreements with Russia which allow Armenia to carry out cooperation with Russia in military-technical field at specific terms, for instance we can buy arms, military technique from Russia with domestic prices. This is a great advantage and unique privilege for our country”³⁶

Simultaneously with this contract, Russia’s “Uralvagonzavod” enterprise won the tender for the modernization of tanks of the Armenian armed forces. According to Leonid Nersisyan, the military observer of the news agency REGNUM and the chief editor of the *The New Defense Order* magazine, numerous T-72 and (in the 1980’s) T-72B model tanks were produced during the Soviet era. Ever since the date of their production, many of these tanks have remained in depots without being sent to military units, and can be acquired for a very reasonable price. However, today, Armenia is not acquiring these available tanks, but is instead acquiring the latest model tanks produced in mid-

34 “Какое вооружение продемонстрировали Путину на военной базе в Армении: военные топ-новости недели,” *REGNUM*, December 8, 2013, <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/1742378.html>

35 “Поставки российского оружия в Армению начались,” *Interfax.ru*, June 29, 2016, <http://www.interfax.ru/russia/515955>

36 “Supply of Russian armaments to Armenia is carried out in accordance with schedule,” *Armenpress*, May 23, 2017, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/891900.html>

2000's.³⁷ Without a doubt, in the absence of Russia's direct credit support to and privileged sales policy for Armenia, Armenia lacks the capability to compete with Azerbaijan in the realm armament acquisition.

In 2016, the formation of the Joint Military Force, a joint force of Armenia and Russia, will further increase Armenia's capability to get weapons and ammunition from Russia. In fact, in that case, the weaponry and ammunition sold to Armenia will not cost the standard export price but the internal tariff decided by the Russian State Defense Orders Unit (Gasoboronzakaz).³⁸ Another important element is that Russia has repeatedly transferred weapons to Armenia "off the record". Among this weaponry, there are the "Iskandar" missiles. These tactical missiles have a range between 280 and 500 km and have extremely accurate target hitting capability. Even though "Iskandar" had been developed in the beginning of the 1990/2000's, it had never been exported until today. Only in 2005, Russia planned to sell "Iskandar" missiles to Syria, but abandoned this attempt after a request by Israel.³⁹ The information on the provision of these weapons gained certainty during the 21 September 2016 military parade in Yerevan. It is also interesting to note that, while the United States and European countries increased their pressures on Russia after it decided to deploy "Iskandar" missiles in Kaliningrad (Russia's exclave right in the heart of Europe), these countries chose to remain silent when Russia sold of this missile system to Armenia.⁴⁰

The acquisition of the Iskandar missiles somewhat relieved the Armenian armed forces against a possible maneuver from Azerbaijan;

"The Armenian missile arsenal currently includes Soviet-era Scud-B and Tochka-U systems with firing ranges of 300 and 120 kilometers respectively. The Azerbaijani military has implied that it can neutralize them with S-300 surface-to-air missiles supplied by Russia in 2009-2010 as well as other missile-defense systems reportedly purchased from Israel in 2012. But these systems would most probably be unable to

37 "В Армению поставляется огромное количество нового оружия - эксперт," *GeoClub.info*, November 16, 2016, <http://geoclub.info/v-armeniyu-postavlyaetsya-ogromnoe-kolichestvo-novogo-oruzhiya-ekspert/>

38 Ольга Божьева, "Эксперт объяснил создание единой военной группировки России и Армении," *МК.ru*, November 14, 2016, <http://www.mk.ru/politics/2016/11/14/ekspert-obyasnil-sozdanie-edinoy-voennoy-gruppirovki-rossii-i-armenii.html>

39 Алексей Никольский, "Гришкин Д. «Искандеры» доехали до Армении," *Vedomosti.ru*, September 9, 2016, <http://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2016/09/19/657501-iskanderi-dochali-armenii>

40 Hatem Cabbarlı, "Güney Kafkas Jeopolitiği ve Güvenlik Sorunları: Dağlık Karabağ Örneğinde," *Karadeniz Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Sayı: 53 (2017): 62.

intercept Iskander-M missiles, one of the most potent weapons of their kind in the world.”⁴¹

According to the dominant view in Armenia, the acquisition of armaments from Russia reliably “freezes” the possibility of conflict with Azerbaijan. No dissident voice can be heard in Armenia’s society against the acquisition of armaments. On the contrary, Russia’s military support is seen as an assurance against a possible attack by Azerbaijan.

In 12 January 2015, Private Valeriy Permyakov stationed in the base attempted to desert by crossing the Turkish border and on 12 January 2015, he massacred the Avetisyan family. This event caused great upheaval in Armenia, and demonstrations were held for the closure of the military base and the extradition of Valeriy Permyakov to be judged in Armenia.

5) PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE MILITARY BASE

Russia has certain problems linked to its military bases abroad. Notably, the fact that the cost of rent of these bases is proportionally large in terms of Russia’s economic power, the financing question, the difficulties related to covering the expenses, and also the discipline problem frequently come up on the agenda. The fact that, along with Russian soldiers, citizens of the host countries also work in these bases aggravates the discipline problems. In 12 January 2015, Private Valeriy Permyakov stationed in the base attempted to desert by crossing the Turkish border and on 12 January 2015, he massacred the Avetisyan family

(7 people were killed by Permyakov, among whom were two elder persons and one 6 months old child) in Gyumri.⁴² This event caused great upheaval in Armenia, and demonstrations were held for the closure of the military base and the extradition of Valeriy Permyakov to be judged in Armenia.

In 12 August 2015, the Gyumri Garrison Military Court found Permyakov guilty of desertion, theft of and illegal carrying of arms, and sentenced him to 10 years of imprisonment on the condition that it takes place in a heavy regiment prison.⁴³ The case for the murder of the Avetisyan family was seen at

41 Emil Danielyan, “Why Armenia’s Military Alliance With Russia Is Not At Risk,” *RFE/RL*, November 7, 2016, <https://www.rferl.org/a/caucasus-report-armenian-russia-military-alliance/27351046.html>

42 The Avetisyan family members were killed in their home by an automatic weapon while the 6 months old baby was heavily wounded by a bayonet and passed away in a hospital seven days later. Please see: “В Гюмри пришли за российским солдатом,” *Kommersant.ru*, January 15, 2015, <http://www.kommersant.ru/Doc/2646031>

43 “Пермякова приговорили к 10 годам тюрьмы,” *Sknews.ru*, August 13, 2015, <http://www.sknews.ru/rubriki/transcaucasus/69293-permakova-prigovorili-k-10-godam-turmy.html>

Armenia's court of general jurisdiction of the Shirak Region. The court tried Permyakov under the crimes manslaughter, brigandly assault, and illegal passing of borders as defined by Armenia's Penal Code, and sentenced him to life imprisonment.⁴⁴ On 18 May 2017, Permyakov was extradited to Russia to serve his sentence.⁴⁵

In the aftermath of the Permyakov incident, the Russian General Staff declared that all the conscript privates will be dismissed from the base to be replaced by contracted soldiers by 2016. However, according to open sources, there are very few contracted soldiers who are commissioned in the base.

Another important issue is that deployments to this base are very expensive and difficult. Until the recent period, due to a treaty, these deployments were taking place through Georgia. In 2008, after the Russian-Georgian war, the deployment of Russian soldiers and supplies to Gyumri through land was effectively stopped and all communication and supplying has taken place via air. On 20 April 2011, the Georgian Parliament voted to annul the treaty in unanimity and forbade any kind of passage to Russian soldiers and supplies headed for the base through Georgian soil. The Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs of the time, Grigol Vashadze, in a statement to the Azerbaijani news outlet APA, warned that "The increase of the military potential of the Russian base in Gyumri constitutes a danger for Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia."⁴⁶ In Georgia's decision process, it could be said that suggestions by the US had an effect. According to certain news articles from 2017, it has been observed that supplies have been deployed to the Russian army in Armenia through Georgia. However, these claims have not been officially confirmed.

Georgia's denial of airspace pushed Russia to examine the option of the Iranian corridor. Russia considers making the deployments to the base through the Anzali Port in the Caspian Sea and then to Mehri.⁴⁷ Among the least likely possibilities, it is considered that Russia could transfer the base to Armenia and focus its attention to the North Caucasus. However, with the international sanctions that followed the invasion of Crimea, its inflexible policy regarding

44 "Валерий Пермяков приговорен к пожизненному заключению," *Sputnik*, August 23, 2016, <https://ru.armeniasputnik.am/armenia/20160823/4711964.html>

45 Дарья Ерёмкина, "Армения передала России осужденного за семикратное убийство солдата," *Deutsche Welle*, May 18, 2017, <http://www.dw.com/ru/армения-передала-россии-осужденного-за-семикратное-убийство-солдата/a-38894451>

46 "Вашадзе: продление сроков пребывания российской военной базы в Армении опасно для региона," *Aze.az*, September 7, 2010, http://www.aze.az/news_vashadze_prodlenie_srokov_41264.html

47 "Грузия заблокировала российскую базу в Гюмри," *Army-News.ru*, April 22, 2011, <http://army-news.ru/2011/04/gruziya-zablokirovala-rossijskuyu-bazu/>

Syria, and the airplane crisis between Turkey and Russia, the public opinion debates about the military have been pushed to the background and taking a stance against the international “imperialist powers’ exclusion and isolation policy” against Russia has been presented as a national duty. Today, Russia is seeking to increase its presence against the United States not only in the South Caucasus but around all of the Caspian Sea and the Middle East and has gone into an “attack mode” against the US. The Russian presence in Hamedan, and the desire for commissioning of a permanent sea base and air base in Syria, the pursuit of negotiations for military bases in Vietnam, Egypt, and Cuba could be seen as part of this offensive stance.⁴⁸

Speculating about Russia abandoning or closing its base in Armenia is almost impossible. If anything, it is expected that this base which is right next to Turkey and constitutes a threat to regional states will see its military potential increased. Russia, by making bilateral treaties with Armenia and reinforcing the Armenian Armed Forces, is rendering Armenia increasingly dependent to itself. Armenia, as a state pursuing occupation policies against Azerbaijan, does not have many options to resist this dependency. This is so because, Russia, by sporadically also selling weapons to the Azerbaijani military, is benefiting from the continuing dispute between the two sides.⁴⁹

6) THE JOINT MILITARY FORCE

Russia’s military cooperation with Armenia is not limited to the 102nd Military Base. Russia’s goal in the middle to long term is to create a hegemony over the Armenian military while referring to it as “military cooperation”. This policy of Russia is being implemented gradually.

First of all, it is necessary to underline that Armenia and Russia’s common military formation dates to 2000. This formation was composed by the 102nd

48 Ирина Джорбенадзе, “Америка и Россия могут сделать Закавказье «местом для драки»,” *Rosbalt.ru*, October 20, 2016, <http://www.rosbalt.ru/world/2016/10/20/1560360.html>

49 The Russian Presidential aid Yuri Usakov has said that Russia is selling arms to its ally Armenia and that there was nothing to disprove about this, however, that Russia is also selling arms to Azerbaijan. Please see: Джорбенадзе, “Америка и Россия могут сделать Закавказье «местом для драки».” Russia’s importance in the Azerbaijani market has been felt since 2010. According to the 2014 statistics of the Azerbaijani military, the country has bought substantial amounts of arms and ammunitions from Russia: 24 Mi-35M helicopters, 60 Mi-17 helicopters, the S-300PMU-2 air defense missile system, 130 T-90SA tanks, 100 BMP-3 infantry combat vehicles, 70 BTR-80/82 armored battle vehicles, around 450 artillery systems and multi-barreled rocket-launchers, 300 portable anti-aircraft missile launchers and 1500 rockets for these launchers were included in the deal worth 2 billion dollars between Azerbaijan and Russia. Please see; Екатерина Тесемникова, “Как обеспечивается баланс сил в Закавказье,” *Vestikavkaza*, July 14, 2014, <http://www.vestikavkaza.ru/articles/Kak-obespechivaetsya-balans-sil-v-Zakavkaze.html>

Military Base and the Fifth Brigade forces of the Armenian Armed Forces. On 23 December 2015, a treaty on the creation of a joint Armenian-Russian air defense system was signed in Moscow⁵⁰ and was ratified on June 2016 by the Armenian Parliament.⁵¹ With this treaty, Armenia obtained the opportunity to use S-300 missile systems and 4th generation jet fighters. During peacetime, Armenia's part of the air defense system will be under the command of the Armenian Armed Forces Air Defense Command.⁵²

A further step to strengthen Russia's military presence in Armenia was taken in 2016. On July 2016, a governmental proposal on the creation of the Joint Military Force was made, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave a positive answer to this proposal on 14 November 2016. The commander of the Joint Military Force is to be appointed by the Commander-in Chief of the Armenian armed forces. However, this appointment will be subject to the confirmation of the Russian Armed Forces' Commander-in-Chief. During peacetime, the Joint Military Force will be under the command of the Armenian General Staff.⁵³

In a statement by the Ministry of Defense of Armenia, it was stated that certain legal and organizational issues that lie under confidentiality are currently being worked out. Also, it has been reported that the new formation's mission to safeguard Armenia's borders as well as regional security in general, and the different weapons and ammunitions to be deployed are reportedly being negotiated.⁵⁴

It would be insufficient to explain the formation of the Joint Military Force from the perspective of a security issue. This formation is not only important in terms of Russia's military and economic cooperation with Armenia, but also important in terms its regional policies. In this context, different factors are highlighted in the evaluations written after the signing of the treaty. Containing evaluations from four experts, the expert commentary titled "What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean for Security in the South

50 "Парламент Армении одобрил создание объединенной системы ПВО с Россией," *Interfax.ru*, June 30, 2016, <http://www.interfax.ru/world/516175>

51 There were 102 votes for and 8 votes against the treaty.

52 Парламент Армении одобрил создание объединенной системы ПВО с Россией.

53 "Путин одобрил создание объединенной группировки войск России и Армении," *Interfax.ru*, November 14, 2016, <http://www.interfax.ru/russia/536849>

54 Тигран Петросян, "Минобороны Армении сообщило о перевооружении объединенной группировки войск с Россией," *Kavkaz-uzel.eu*, November 16, 2016, <http://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/292706/>

Caucasus?”⁵⁵ published by the Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP)⁵⁶ is noteworthy in this respect.

In the commentary, Director of the Regional Studies Center (an independent thinktank in Armenia) Richard Giragosian evaluates the treaty from the perspective of Georgia. According to Giragosian, the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force poses two concerns for Georgia:⁵⁷ 1) In April, Azerbaijani military offensive against Armenia succeeded, the first military victory for Azerbaijan since 1994. Despite Georgia’s neutral status, this new conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh has posed new risks for the stability of the region, and 2) Russian-Armenian military relationship has over the years gradually eroded Armenia’s independence in exchange for security guarantees. Armenia’s sovereignty may become questionable due to this process. This is another risk for Georgia.

According to Dr. Tracey German of King’s College, the creation of the Joint Military Force serves to enhance Russian military power’s presence in the Caucasus. This Force has similarity with the Joint Group of Force between South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Russian armed forces. The Russian sphere of influence is getting stronger with Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), which, like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), “...considers an attack on one member-state to be an attack on all and guarantees mutual military assistance if a member is attacked.”⁵⁸ German states that Armenia wants protection against Turkey and Azerbaijan and that;

“Moscow is determined to retain its influence in the South Caucasus and by maintaining weak states in its neighborhood that are dependent on it for political, economic and military support, Russia seeks to keep them within its geopolitical orbit and counterbalance the growing presence of Western actors. This latest development should act as a stark reminder of the need for greater international attention paid to the region and the imperative of negotiated settlements to its unresolved conflicts.”⁵⁹

Nona Mikhelidze, Senior Fellow at the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Italy, states that there are several reasons for regional actors to be concerned

55 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean for Security in the South Caucasus?” *Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP)*, December 1, 2016, <http://gip.ge/what-does-the-russian-armenian-joint-military-force-mean-for-security-in-the-south-caucasus/>

56 According to its website, the Georgian Institute of Politics (GIP) is “a Tbilisi-based non-profit, non-partisan, research and analysis organization founded in early 2011.” Please see: <http://gip.ge>

57 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 1-2.

58 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 2.

59 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 2.

regarding the Joint Military Force between Russia and Armenia:⁶⁰ 1) Under the Joint Military Force, it will be Russia's armed forces, and not Armenia's, that will patrol Armenia's borders with its neighboring countries, 2) In case of the breakout of a war, Armenia's armed forces will be placed under the command of Russia's Southern Military District, 3) The creation of the Force debunks Russia's argument that it is an impartial party in the peaceful resolution process of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict headed by OSCE Minsk Group. Furthermore, according to Mikhelidze, there may be a counter-reaction from Azerbaijan;

“Baku could abandon its balanced foreign policy and seek to upgrade military relations with Ankara. All these developments would lead to extensive military mobilization in the South Caucasus and eventually to escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.”⁶¹

Finally, Dr. Rick Fawn, Professor of International Relations at University of St. Andrews, draws attention to five points regarding the Joint Military Force:⁶²

1) The West did not react much to the creation of the Joint Military Force, 2) Armenia's military cooperation with Russia is very comprehensive in terms of its content. The creation of the Force is meant to bolster primarily Russia's but also CSTO's presence in the former Soviet world. Therefore, the creation of the Force should come as no surprise, 3) The creation of this Force is ominous for Azerbaijan; it clearly showcases Russia's support for Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, 4) The creation of this Force presents a danger to the stability in the Caucasus and is meant to further Russia's interests in the region. However, it is unlikely that this instability will spread to Georgia, 5) Georgia lacks the ability to affect this Force, but in any case, it is not directly affected by its creation or presence. However, the creation of such a Force represents an interesting opportunity for Georgia; Georgia can serve as an intermediary between the feuding Armenia and Azerbaijan, and thereby promote itself as a positive platform for the conflict.

Meanwhile, in Armenia, while some commentators express discomfort with the Treaty for the creation of the Joint Military Force, an important section of commentators emphasizes the major importance of the creation of such a military force for the security of Armenia.

According to some Armenian commentators, the country's economy entered Russia's sphere of influence at an earlier time. Today, by offering its military,

60 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 3.

61 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 3.

62 “What Does the Russian-Armenian Joint Military Force Mean...” 3-4.

which is the most important component of the security apparatus, to Russia, the Armenian government has seriously violated the sovereignty rights of Armenia. The essential goal of this treaty is the expansion of Russia's sphere of influence, regardless of Armenia's national interests. Therefore, while the Joint Military Force is not ensuring Armenia's protection, it is actually making it a target for NATO.⁶³

In sum, one needs to emphasize that in Armenia, there are very few who think critically of the Joint Military Force. Both for experts and for the general public opinion, Russia is the protective shield for Armenia against "enemy countries" (Azerbaijan and Turkey). Economically and socially, it is also impossible for Armenia to support itself without the Russian market. There is a general view in Armenia that Russia's support is vital for the protection of occupied areas suffering from developmental problems.

On the other hand, the arguments of those who support the treaty can be summarized in the following way: Russia and Armenia created such a military force by being aware of the new political reality. Regardless of this arrangement, there was *de facto* such a Russian-Armenian joint unit since the first headquarters command drill in 1995. After the April 2016 skirmish, the possibility of an Azerbaijani attack (especially from Nakhichevan) became an important problem.⁶⁴ Moreover, the headquarters structure of the Armenian military, its tactics and strategy, weapons and ammunition are the same as those in the Russian Armed Forces. An important part of colonels and higher-ranking

Armenian officers are graduates of Russian military schools. Their military planning and education methodology is also the same. All these factors considered, the Joint Military Force will be a unit possessing high combat capability. The existence of such a unit constitutes no threat for Armenia.⁶⁵

63 For the statement of the Armenia Political and International Research Centre expert Ruben Megrabyan, please see: Петросян, "Минобороны Армении сообщило о перевооружении объединенной группировки войск с Россией."

64 The ceasefire signed in 1994 has been violated hundreds of times due to the border skirmishes between Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, because most of these violations are small in scale, they do not attract much attention. On 2 April 2016, the situation arising from Armenia's breach of the ceasefire led to a large-scale conflict. The skirmish happened on the 23rd anniversary of Armenia's occupation of Kalbajar, while both countries' presidents were in the United States for the nuclear security summit. The skirmish could only be stopped on 6 April, with the ceasefire proclaimed by the Azerbaijani side. Nazim Cafersoy, "'4 Gün Savaşı' ve Bölgesel Dengeler," *Deutsche Welle*, April 6, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/tr/4-gün-savaşı-ve-bölgesel-dengeler/a-19168839>

65 For the statement of Sergey Minasyan, the Vice-Director of the Caucasus Institute, please see: Петросян, "Минобороны Армении сообщило о перевооружении объединенной группировки войск с Россией."

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For this reason, it would be very difficult to say that Armenia will pursue a realistic and critical policy regarding its cooperation with Russia in the near and medium term. In the political and social life of Armenia, in terms of the relations between the West and Russia, the pro-Russian forces are in the clear the majority. On the issue of military cooperation, the voices of the pro-Western sections, who are low in number and weak in influence, was already not being heard much;

“Pro-Western circles in Armenia rarely discuss these specific security issues in their critique of Russian-Armenian dealings. Nor do they question the underlying motive behind successive Armenian governments’ pursuit of close ties with Moscow: continued Armenian control over Nagorno-Karabakh. So far the pro-Western camp has been unable or unwilling to disprove the notion that, as long as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains unresolved, Armenia’s ability to resist Russian pressure and seek deep integration with the West will be seriously limited.”⁶⁶

Besides it’s the enormous military support it provides to its strategic ally Armenia, Russia’s selling of armaments to Azerbaijan from time to time clearly showcases its commercial interests. This policy that Russia has pursued all along to keep Caucasia under its control has given the “cease-fire” in the region the attribute of a bomb that can explode at any moment.

CONCLUSION

Russia’s 102nd Military Base in Armenia is considered as the important military force in the Southwest wing. This base, besides from providing military power, is a tool for Russia to exercise psychological leverage in the region. The Armenian government thinks that in the possible event of a war with Azerbaijan, it will be able to use the 102nd Military Base. The claim that more

66 Danielyan, “Why Armenia’s Military Alliance With Russia Is Not At Risk, November.”

than half of the personnel in the base are Armenians, and that, according to certain unofficial sources, that the personnel of the base is not 4-5 thousand but 12 thousand, present in media outlets and open sources, is thought-provoking.

Russia, having discontinued CFE towards the end of July 2007 and having withdrawn from the Treaty in December 2007, is pursuing an armament policy in the Caucasus. The treaty on the prolonging of the use of the 102nd Military Base has also emboldened Armenia, which holds the position of being an aggressor state. Regarding this situation, certain analysts suggest that Turkey needs to establish a military alliance with Azerbaijan and place a military base in Nakhichevan. On the other hand, some think that Turkey should not take part in this conflict because it would further accentuate the militarization in the area. In any case, these developments are an important concern for the frontier state that is Turkey.

As of 2016, the Russia-Armenia military cooperation has reached a further level. The fact that Armenia, pursuing an aggressive and invasive policy, establishes a common military unit, the Joint Military Force, with Russia, is an expression of Russia's support for Armenia. This entity, as a source of threat in the Caucasus, is increasing its strength as we speak.

According Armenia's public perception, the Joint Military Force is preventative strategy against an external attack threat emanating from Azerbaijan (even Turkey). The 2011 Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Support reflects this public perception, since with this agreement, Russia and Armenia pledge to use "all possible means" if one of them becomes faced with an attack or aggression. However, Armenia, as the side that has rejected for the last twenty years the positive offers of both Azerbaijan and Turkey for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, is the direct source of the instability in the region.

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THE FACTORS WHICH GIVE GROUND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL TO DETERMINE ARMENIA AS AN AGGRESSOR STATE

(ERMENİSTAN'IN BİRLEŞMİŞ MİLLETLER GÜVENLİK KONSEYİ
TARAFINDAN SALDIRGAN DEVLET OLARAK TESPİT EDİLMESİNE
ZEMİN HAZIRLAYAN UNSURLAR)

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Abstract: *All facts that identify the definition of aggression in the UN General Assembly Resolution 3314 (1974) have been realized by Armenia against Azerbaijan. In all resolutions of the UN Security Council regarding Nagorno-Karabakh, the sovereignty of Azerbaijan, the integrity of its territory, and the principle of inviolability of the internationally recognized borders are confirmed. But in none of the resolutions has Armenia been determined as an aggressor state and this is the main reason for the conflict having remained unresolved. The Security Council must differentiate the aggressor party and self-defensive party in its resolutions. The Security Council must request Armenia to stop its aggressive policy according to the Charter of the UN. Although Armenia conducts an undeclared war against Azerbaijan and disguises its aggressive policy from the world community through different means, there are many facts proving that Armenia is an aggressor state and that its intention is the annexation of the territory of Azerbaijan. Armenian government's plans to join territory of Nagorno-Karabakh with the territory of Armenia, the direct participation of Armenia's armed forces in the occupying of the lands of Azerbaijan, the supplying of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians with military ammunition by the state of Armenia, the expulsion of the Azerbaijanis from their own lands by Armenia through terroristic tactics, the ethnic cleaning policy, the scorched earth policy in the occupied lands, the keeping of military captives and hostages in its lands, the active work of the state for transferring the Armenian inhabitants to the occupied regions, the embezzling of the natural resources of the occupied lands of Azerbaijan by Armenia, the replacement of the toponymies by the Armenian ones in*

the occupied lands, and the changing of the historical, cultural monuments all give ground for the Security Council to define Armenia as an aggressor state..

Key words: *aggressor state, ethnic cleaning, illegal migration, embezzling of natural resources, changing of toponymies*

Öz: *BM Genel Kurulu'nun 1974 yılı 3314 sayılı saldırının (tecavüzün) belirlenmesi konusunda aldığı kararında tecavüzü sınıflandıran tüm eylemler Ermenistan tarafından Azerbaycan'a karşı gerçekleştirilmiştir. BM Güvenlik Konseyi'nin Dağlık Karabağ sorunu konusunda kabul ettiği tüm kararlarda Azerbaycan'ın egemenliği, toprak bütünlüğü ve uluslararası tanınmış sınırların dokunulmazlığı onaylanmaktadır. Ancak hiçbir kararda Ermenistan saldırgan devlet olarak tanımlanmamıştır ve bu da Dağlık Karabağ sorunun çözülememesinin temel nedenidir. Güvenlik Konseyi kabul ettiği kararlarda saldırgan tarafı ve öz-savunma tarafını birbirinden ayırmalıdır. BM Sözleşmesine uygun olarak Güvenlik Konseyi, Ermenistan'dan saldırgan politikasını durdurmasını talep etmelidir. Azerbaycan'a karşı ilan edilmemiş bir savaş sürdüren Ermenistan, saldırgan politikasını dünya kamuoyundan çeşitli yollarla saklasa da, onun saldırgan devlet olduğunu ve Azerbaycan topraklarını ilhak etmek amacıyla olduğunu kanıtlayan olgular bulunmaktadır. Ermenistan hükümetinin Dağlık Karabağ'ı kendi topraklarıyla birleştirmesi hakkında kararlar alması, Azerbaycan'ın topraklarının işgalinde Ermenistan silahlı kuvvetlerinin doğrudan yer alması, Ermenistan'ın Dağlık Karabağ Ermenilerine askeri mühimmat sağlaması, Ermenistan'ın terör yöntemleriyle Azerbaycanlıları yurtlarından kovması, etnik temizlik politikasını hayata geçirmesi, işgal edilmiş topraklarda yanmış toprak (yakıp-yıkma) politikası uygulaması, Ermenistan'ın askeri esir ve rehinelere kendi topraklarında barındırması, işgal edilen arazilere Ermeni nüfusunun aktarılması konusunda hükümetin aktif çalışma yürütmesi, Ermenistan'ın işgal ettiği toprakların doğal kaynaklarını istismar etmesi, Ermenistan'ın işgal ettiği bölgelerde yer isimlerine Ermeni isimler vermesi ve tarihi ve kültürel anıtları değiştirmesi; Güvenlik Konseyi'nin Ermenistan'ı saldırgan devlet olarak tanımlaması gerekliliği için haklı sebeplerdir.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *saldırgan devlet, etnik temizlik, yasadışı göç, doğal kaynakların zimmete geçirilmesi, toponimlerin değiştirilmesi*

INTRODUCTION

Armenia has pursued military aggression against Azerbaijan since the year 1988, and has occupied Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (a territory of 4388 km²) and the surrounding districts – Akhdam, Fuzuli, Lachin, Kabajar, Jabrayil, Kubadli, Zangilan. As a result of the ethnic cleaning policy of Armenia, more than 250,000 Azerbaijanis from today's Armenian territories became refugees in only 1988-1992. As a result of the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) and 7 surrounding districts, nearly 700,000 Azerbaijanis became refugees as well. In addition to that, more than 20,000 people were killed, and more than 50,000 people were wounded or became disabled, about 4866 people were taken captives during 1988-1993. 314 of them were women, 58 of them were children, and 255 of them were elderly people.¹

The UN Security Council adopted four resolutions regarding Nagorno-Karabakh.² All of these resolutions have confirmed the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. But in none of the resolutions has Armenia been identified as an aggressor state and this is the main reason Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have remained unresolved.

The Security Council declared itself to be a supporter of solution of the problem within the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Minsk Group. According the Chapter 8 of the UN Charter, the discussion of local conflicts can be entrusted to the regional and sub-regional organizations prior to submitting them to the Security Council. Since 1990, the UN prefers the carrying out of the mediation mission in cooperation with the regional and sub-regional organizations. However, if the regional organization cannot cope with the solution of the conflict and the conflict is escalating, the responsibility of the resolution of the conflict will be elevated to the Security Council. Despite Azerbaijan joining OSCE on 20 January 1992, and although the Minsk Group was formed with the participation of 11 states (Azerbaijan, Armenia, USA, Russia, France, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Belarus, Turkey, and Czech Republic) according to the resolution of the Council of Ministers adopted on 24 March 1992, the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan one after another has shown that OSCE is not capable

1 *Сборник документов ООН по армяно-азербайджанскому нагорно-карабахскому конфликту* (Баку: Министерство Иностранных Дел, 2009): 367.

2 “Резолюции Совета Безопасности ООН 1993 года,” United Nations, accessed September 29, 2017, <http://www.un.org/ru/sc/documents/resolutions/1993.shtml>

of solving this conflict. For example, the Azerbaijani side exerted pressure so that progress could be attained in the of negotiations of the Minsk Group. Although Azerbaijan insisted for the Republic of Armenia to be recognized as an aggressor, the “equal responsibility of the parties” applied to the conflicting parties became a serious constrain for solving the conflict. The showing of Nagorno-Karabakh as a conflicting party in the documents of OSCE stimulated the occupation policy of Armenia.³

Regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk group, especially Russia and USA, attempt to realize their geostrategic interests through the use of the Minsk Group to avoid responsibility and hinder the Minsk Group from acting as an independent organization. The reason for the unresolved status of this conflict is that the aggressor state and the state with the right of self-defense have not been determined by the Security Council. At the same time, the co-chairs of the Minsk Group that was created for resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, do not differentiate between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Considering that the US Congress allocated developmental aid to the NK separatists on December 2009,⁴ that Russia takes advantage of Armenia in the Southern Caucasus and supported it during the first stage of the NK conflict, and that France prioritizes the

interests of Armenia, it is not possible to believe that the Minsk Group Co-chairs will demonstrate a fair position for the resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. There is no ground to believe that the Minsk Group will solve the conflict while it has ignored the Shusha and Lachin problems and stated the Lachin region to be vital for NK Armenians as a “humanitarian corridor” even though it is used for transferring of ammunitions and manpower to the NK from Armenia. Forwarding many ambiguous requirements for Azerbaijan for the removal of the armed forces of Armenia from the occupied territories and leading the policy of “double standards,” the Minsk Group ignored the unconditional requirements of the resolutions of the Security Council.

3 *Azərbaycan BMT ailəsində* (Bakı, 2000): 330-333

4 “Ermanistan-Azərbaycan münəqişəsi sənədlər bölməsi,” *Diplomatiya Aləmi Jurnalı*, № 13 (2005), 70.

The Factors Which Give Ground for the United Nations Security Council to Determine Armenia as an Aggressor State

Informing the Security Council about the aggressive policy of Armenia, Azerbaijan requested for the halting of economic relations with Armenia and the complete or step-by-step application of sanctions on railway, sea, and air transportation, postal service and telegraph, radio and other means of media as considered in Articles 41 and 42 of the UN Charter.⁵ According to the Article 34 of the UN Charter, the Security Council has the right to investigate any conflict or any situation for determining if the said conflict or situation can create a threat for international peace and security. The Security Council may propose collective measures and recommendations after the identification of a threat.⁶ The facts shown in the report of the UN representative in the conflict regions gives ground for the Security Council to apply sanctions against Armenia. According to the Article 39, the Security Council defines aggressive action against peace, gives recommendations and makes decisions about taking measures regarding Articles 41 and 42 for maintaining international peace and security.⁷ Initially, the Security Council takes peaceful measures. In the Article 40, it is stated that:

“In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures.”⁸

According to the Article 41, the Security Council may apply the economic sanctions and other means of coercion against the guilty party.⁹ If the above-mentioned measures are not sufficient, Article 42 is to be applied. This means that the Security Council may take the measures necessary to maintain and restore the international peace and security by means of air, naval, and land forces.¹⁰ The Security Council did not differentiate the conflicting parties and

5 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 26 октября 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности, Документ S/26647, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за октябрь, ноябрь, декабрь 1993 года” (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997), 137.

6 *Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatının Nizamnaməsi* (Bakı, BMT-nin Azərbaycan Respublikasındakı Nümayəndəliyi): 23.

7 *Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatının Nizamnaməsi*, 26-27.

8 “Charter of the United Nations - Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression,” *United Nations*, accessed: September 29, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/index.html>

9 *Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatının Nizamnaməsi*, 27.

10 *Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatının Nizamnaməsi*, 27.

instead of applying political, economic, and other sanctions on Armenia, convened the world states to render the humanitarian assistance to this aggressor country. The failure to indicate Armenia as an aggressive state in the resolutions and decisions of world community prevents the solving of the conflict by the sanctions of the Security Council. The Security Council's decision about sanctions depends on the five permanent members of the Security Council who have the right of veto such as the US, Russia, and France (which always prioritizes the interests of Armenia).

The UN General Assembly Resolution 3314 (1974) titled "Definition of Aggression" classifies the aggression on the basis of the below mentioned criteria:¹¹

- a) The attack of a state's armed forces to the territory of another state or any military occupation, or the annexation of the territory of another state by the use of force,
- b) Any armed attack to the territory of another state,
- c) Armed forces being sent by the state or on behalf of the state to carry out the above-mentioned actions against another state. Moreover, in the Clause (f) of Article 3 of the resolution, it is stated that any state must not allow its territory to be benefited for aggression against another state, and in such a case, this action itself is considered to be an aggressive action.¹²

1) THE MAIN FACTORS REGARDING THE AGGRESSIVE POLICY OF ARMENIA

1.1) The Decisions of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia on the Integration of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia

The Supreme Soviet of Armenia's decision for the integration of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia in 1989 proved its aggressive policy against Azerbaijan. The Supreme Soviet of Armenia, continuing its violation of the sovereignty of the state of Azerbaijan, made the decision for the establishment of the election constituency in the territory of Azerbaijan and the holding for

11 "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly - 3314 (XXIX). Definition of Aggression - A/RES/29/3314 - 14 December 1974" (United Nations General Assembly, New York), accessed: September 29, 2017, <http://www.un-documents.net/a29r3314.htm>

12 L.N. Hüseyinov, *Beynəlxalq hüquq: Dərslük* (Bakı: Hüquq ədəbiyyatı, 2002): 79.

elections of the Supreme Soviet there. The acceptance of the official document titled “About the integration of the Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia SSR” on 1 December 1989 can be regarded as a policy aimed towards violating the territorial integrity of another state, because the Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh had never been a single state. In Article 3 of the decision, it is stated; “The Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR and the National Assembly of Nagorno-Karabakh declare the integration of the Nagorno-Karabakh to the Republic of Armenia. The inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh are the citizens of the Armenian SSR.” In Article 4, it is shown that “Armenian SSR Supreme Soviet and Nagorno-Karabakh will establish a joint commission to do practical work for the integration of the Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh.” In Article 6 it is noted that; “In the system of the single state, taking the necessary measures for the real integration of the political, economic, cultural structures of the Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh is entrusted to the staff of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR, the Soviet of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, and the Administrative Staff of the National Assembly of the Nagorno-Karabakh Self-Defense Union.”¹³

Thus, the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan was committed by its supreme legislature organ – the Supreme Soviet. The Supreme Soviet adopted the state program of economic development, including the economic development program of Nagorno-Karabakh. When Armenia joined to the UN and the OSCE, basing itself allegedly on international law, the Armenian Supreme Soviet, which did not recognize the fictitious Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] as a part of Azerbaijan, stated that the below decision had been made: “To provide the defense of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and its population; to consider the agreements indicating the Nagorno-Karabakh as an integral part of Azerbaijan to be impossible; to conduct the military mobilization in the Republic of Armenia.”¹⁴ Arguing that it did not recognize the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic” as a part of Azerbaijan based on international law, Armenia implied the “right of self-determination of peoples” principle without understanding international law. The Supreme Soviet did not adopt any act about the cancellation of the above-mentioned decisions after conducting the referendum about the sovereignty of Armenia.

13 “Официальные отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за январь, февраль, март 1994 года” (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997), 129 – 130.

14 “Официальные отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1993 года” (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1996), 90.

1.2) Having the separatists in the Armenian administration

The leader of the armed forces of the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic”, Robert Kocharyan was elected as a deputy from election constituency number 99.¹⁵ Such separatists being members of parliament once again proved the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. The occupation of Jabrayil, Zangilan, Fuzuli was arranged by Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan, both of whom were involved in terrorist actions perpetrated in the above-mentioned three places (which will be explained later in this article).

Kocharyan, who was the President of the fictitious NKR from 1994 to 1997, later became the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, and from 1998 to 2008, he served as its President.

Elected as the President of the Republic of Armenia in February 2008, Sargsyan began his career as the President of the “Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Self-Defense Forces Committee.” He later became the Minister of Defense of Armenia in 1993, and later became the country’s Prime Minister.

Kocharyan had worked as a guide for the “NKR”, and had supplied the Armenian groups that arranged attacks resulting in the killing of thousands of people and the massive expulsion of more than one million Azerbaijanis from Khankendi and the other settlements. Now, the Armenian government under Sargsyan continues to carry out similarly morally reprehensible acts against Azerbaijanis at the state level in Armenia as Kocharyan did during his term in office.

On 12 February 1988, the first rally against Azerbaijanis was also organized under Kocharyan’s leadership. Since the first months of those events, subversion actions resulting in the burning of four houses at the entrance of Khojali City and injury of some Azerbaijani residents were committed in particular under the organization and direct leadership of Kocharyan, Sargsyan, and Arkadi Kukasyan.¹⁶ Coming to Asgaran District Education Department from Khankendi in 1988 to carry out propaganda work against Azerbaijanis and arranging a meeting, Kocharyan requested the tutorial collective to never forget past tragedies and educate the pupils in the nationalistic spirit, reminding that the Turks and Azerbaijanis had committed

15 “Официальное отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1993 года,” 94.

16 “R.Köçəryan və S.Sarkisyan Dağlıq Qarabağdakı soydaşlarımıza qarşı törədilən zorakılıqların müəllifləridir,” 1905.az, February 22, 2017, <http://1905.az/r-koc%C9%99ryan-v%C9%99-s-sarkisyan-dagliq-qarabagdaki-soydaslarimiza-qarsi-tor%C9%99dil%C9%99n-zorakiliqlarin-mu%C9%99llifl%C9%99ridir>

the “notorious genocide”. The Director of Jamilly village school Gasim Girxqizli and his assistant Khudayar Kuliyeu who attended in the meeting, stated that they had left the meeting protesting against the nationalistic speech of Kocharyan.¹⁷

The current President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, was born in Khankendi City, and was educated in Yerevan. Being elected the President of Armenia in February 2008, Sargsyan was acting as the First Secretary of the City Komsomol Committee of the Khankendi City when the events started. He was an active member of “KrunK” and “Dashnaksutyun” Parties. The provision of the Armenians of Khankendi with weapons, the killing of 25 people by first stoning and then firing at the buses transporting Azerbaijanis on the route of Akhdam-Shusha, the shooting down of the “Mi-8” helicopter on flight from Akhdam to Shusha in 1989, the first attack to Malibeyli Village and the killing of two Azerbaijanis in the border of Asgaran-Akhdam regions were in particular arranged by Sargsyan.

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During that period, Sargsyan was dealing with the transferring of the firearms and ammunitions from Armenia and distribution of them to the NK Armenians.¹⁸ In an interview with the British writer and journalist Thomas de Waal (a specialist on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict), Sargsyan, admitting that Azerbaijani civilians had been killed but claiming that there were exaggerations, states the following regarding the Khojali Massacre (deemed by Azerbaijanis to constitute a genocide):

“Before Khojalu [Khojali], the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We needed to put a stop to all that. And that’s what happened...”¹⁹

17 “R.Köçəryan və S.Sarkisyan Dağlıq Qarabağdakı soydaşlarımıza...”

18 “R.Köçəryan və S.Sarkisyan Dağlıq Qarabağdakı soydaşlarımıza...”

19 Thomas de Waal, “A President, an Interview, and a Tragic Anniversary,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 24, 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/24/president-interview-and-tragic-anniversary/9vpa>

In an interesting note, the fictitious NKR has not even been recognized by Armenia. In truth, it is under Armenia's control and administration, and this once again shows that Armenia established a fictitious NKR and integrated it to its territory. Armenia, by creating the fictitious Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, carries out its own administration there in violation of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

1.3) The direct participation of the Armenian military in the occupation

The secret visit of the Minister of Defense of Armenia to Akhdere Region of Azerbaijan on 10 March 1993, the assessment of the combat ability of the Armenian forces, and the statements of the military captives prove that Armenia was directly involved in aggression.

Some Armenian soldiers were taken captive when the military of Azerbaijan repelled the attack at the Chanli Village of Kalbajar Region. The Head of the 4th Military Commissariat Division in the Gyumri City (Leninakan), Captain Grigoryan Ashot Agasiyevich, the Assistant of the Chief Military Officer of 2nd Military Commissariat Division, Senior Lieutenant Badoyan Samvel Derenikovich again of Gyumri were among the captives.²⁰ The meeting of Armenian military captives was arranged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of National Security of Azerbaijan, the UN diplomatic accredited corps in Baku, and also local and foreign journalists. The captives unambiguously stated that it was Armenia who lead the war in the territory of Azerbaijan, and that the Armenian government showed disapproval of antiwar protests in different cities of Armenia. On 14 of January 1994, the government representatives themselves dispersed the antiwar meeting in Yerevan.²¹

The 83th Brigade of the Armenian armed forces occupied Fizuli Region, and since May 1992, took the occupied Lachin Region under its control. The representative of the UN confirmed the use of T-72 tanks (acquired during the dissolution of the Soviet Union), Mi-24 fighter jets, and modern military aviation and that the attack was not solely carried out by the local ethnic forces (Armenians).²² However, UN General Secretary did not identify who the

20 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 1 февраля 1994 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности, Документ S/1994/108, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок девятый год дополнение за январь, февраль, март 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997 год), 103.

21 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 1 февраля 1994 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности, Документ S/1994/108....," 103.

22 "Официальное отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1998), 378-380.

additional forces were. The commission did not organize for the identification of the source of the weapons used by NK “self-defense” forces. In their report, OSCE observers stated that, there were many Armenian military servants in Kalbajar Region of Azerbaijan in the period of the presidential elections of 1998 in Armenia.²³ The serving of the Armenian soldiers at the NK was stated in the report of 2005 of the international group of preventing the crisis at the NK of the US State Department.²⁴ In the report, it was shown that in the NK armed forces, there were 8500 soldiers from amongst the NK Armenians and 10,000 soldiers were from Armenia, and that men who had completed their military service were sent to the occupied territory by force.²⁵ The documents obtained when the Armenian military servants sent to Azerbaijan for occupation of Kalbajar were taken as captive, the military map (map scale: 1:50,000) with the gryphon of “Sekretnoekr number-1” regarding to the occupation of Kalbajar and the keeping of the occupied lands of Azerbaijan signed by G. Andresyan, the documents about assigning military ranks to soldiers based on the service provided during the occupation of Lachin and Kalbajar are the facts confirming the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan.²⁶

Russia supported the invasive policy of Armenia from the very beginning of the outbreak of the conflict. Issues like the existence of Russia’s 102nd Military Base in Armenia and the significant transfer of armaments to Armenia by Russia should worry neighboring countries as well. The location of Russia’s military base in Armenia serves as a physiological pressure tool in the region in the interests of Russia.²⁷ In July 2016, the decision was made for the establishment of the Joint Military Force between Armenia and Russia, showcasing just how much military support Russia has provided to Armenia throughout the years.²⁸

1.4) The intensification of Armenia’s military aggression

Jamilli Village on 15 December 1991, Mehsali on 24 December, Karkijahan on 28 December, Nabiler Village on 18-19 January 1992, Imaret Garvand Village of Akhdere Region and Malibeyli and Gushchular Villages on 12

23 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 122.

24 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 123.

25 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 339.

26 “Официальные отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за январь, февраль, март 1994 года,” 103, 120, 124.

27 Ali Asker, “Rusya’nın Ermenistan’da Askerî Varlığı: Hukuki Ve Politik Bakış Açısıyla Bir Değerlendirme,” *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Sayı 41 (2012), 107.

28 Asker, “Rusya’nın Ermenistan’da Askerî Varlığı...,” 69.

February were burned down by Armenian forces. Additionally, Armenian forces killed the inhabitants of these villages: 28 people were killed and 39 people were seriously injured. In Meshali Village, Armenian forces killed 27 inhabitants, and seriously injured more than 15 people. Among the killed were the underaged, pupils, and a 75-year-old man. The remains (corpses) of 11 of these people were burned. The Karadagli, Axullu, and Salaketin Villages of Khojavend Region were exposed massacre from 13 to 17 February. 146 people were killed, 118 people were taken captive (children, women, elderly), and 33 people were shot by Armenian forces during the attack against Karadagli Village. At the same time, the said Armenian forces kept the remains of the killed people and the injured people together, throwing them into the farm well. 77 of captives were killed, 6 of them were burned alive, while 50 people were released from captivity with great difficulty. 18 people released from captivity subsequently died from their wounds. The cruel treatment of the captives in such a manner; the cutting of peoples' heads, burying them alive, forcibly removing their teeth, depriving them of food and water, and killing them with torture constitute severe crimes against humanity. In Karadagli Village, four people were killed in each of the two families, 42 families lost their heads of family, and nearly 140 children were orphaned. In total, in this village where the inhabitants were systematically exposed to massacre, 91 people were killed, meaning 1 out of every 10 people in the village were killed.

On the night bridging 25 February to 26 February of 1992, one of the most severe tragedies of recent memory, the Khojaly Massacre was committed. Armenian forces occupied Khojali with the involvement of Russia's 366th motorized unit in Khankendi. In this massacre perpetrated against Azerbaijanis: the city was burned down, 613 people were killed by torture, 487 people were wounded, 1275 people were taken captive, 8 families were completely wiped out, 25 children lost both parents, and 130 children lost one parent. 106 of the killed were women, 83 were children, and more than 70 were the elderly. 56 people were burned alive by torture, the skin of their head was peeled off, their eyes were removed, the heads were cut off, and the abdomen of the pregnant women were engraved with bayonets.²⁹

1.5) Keeping the military captives and hostages in the Armenian territory

In the resolution number 1553 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe regarding disappeared people, the necessity the relevant

²⁹ *Azərbaycan tarixi: 7 cildə, VII c* (Bakı: Elm, 2003): 324; T. Mustafazadə, "Erməni məsələsi"ndən erməni terrorizminə (Bakı: "Turxan" NPB, 2016): 130.

parties reporting about the disappeared people during armed conflict, the worry of the Parliament regarding the hiding of the number of disappeared people, and the disappearance of 4499 Azerbaijanis during NK conflict is stated.³⁰ According to the report of the State Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan related to military captives, hostages and disappeared people on 1 January 2008, the number of disappeared people is 4210. 47 of them are children, 256 of them are women and 355 are the elderly.³¹ The Armenian separatist groups tortured civilians as well as captives, brutally beating them, insulting their dignity, turned them into objects to be bought and sold (thereby violating the international law norms), at most cases did not release the captives after obtaining large sums of ransom money, killed them with torture or sold their organs, and conducted experiments on them. Out of 300 Azerbaijani captives kept in the camp near Spitak City of Armenia, 23 people were shot dead. Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Armenia reported that 8 Azerbaijanis were shot because of their attempts at escape.³² On 23 March 1993, by the initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Azerbaijan was able to receive ten corpses. Healthcare authorities of Azerbaijan and the independent expert doctor Derek Paundor confirmed that these were the remains of military captives who had been shot.³³ Researches of the Forensic Medical Examination Commission of the Ministry of Health of Azerbaijan, rejecting the report of Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Armenia's Press Service, demonstrated that the captives were beaten and exposed to torture prior to being killed. Military captives R. Agayev, E. Ahmadov, E. Mammadov, G. Mammadov, F. Guliyev, E. Ahmadov were shot from the gut, B. Giyasov were shot from the chest from a near distance. R. Agayev, E. Mammadov and E. Ahmadov's ears were cut off. Also, the internal organs of R. Agayev -heart, liver, and spleen- were removed. On the remains of I. Nasirov, there were the signs of odor proving extended periods of starvation. On the remains of F. Huseynov, many signs of torture were observed.³⁴ UN representatives also witnessed brutal torture applied to

30 R. Dadaşova, "Ermenistan'in Azerbaycan'a Silahlı Saldırı: Uluslararası Humanitar Hakların Pozulması Meseleleri," *Turkish Studies*, Volume 9/5 (Spring 2014), 647.

31 Dadaşova, "Ermenistan'in Azerbaycan'a Silahlı Saldırı..." 647.

32 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 21 февраля 1994 года на имя Генерального секретаря, Документ S/1994/206, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок девятый год дополнение за январь, февраль, март 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997), 168-169.

33 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 26 апреля 1994 года на имя Генерального секретаря, Документ S/1994/505, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок девятый год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1998 год), 117.

34 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 1 апреля 1994 года на имя Генерального секретаря, Документ S/1994/393, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок девятый год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1998), 15.

hostages and captives in Armenia. For instance, the UN representative in Baku, M. Al-Said was shown an Azerbaijani civilian's remains. This man was exposed to torture and brutality during his captivity, his fingers were removed by rope, and his chest was cauterized by a cigarette.³⁵

1.6) The Acts of Terror Committed by Armenian Forces

The study of terrorism is proven difficult by the fact that there is no universally accepted definition of terrorism in international relations. However, for the purposes of this article, we can use the definition of “terrorism” and “terror” provided by Meriam-Webster, a well-known English-language dictionary;

When one looks at the examples to be given below, the reader can see the merits of designating some of Armenia's and various Armenian groups' actions against Azerbaijanis as terrorism.

“Terrorism: the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion,”³⁶

“Terror: violent or destructive acts (such as bombing) committed by groups in order to intimidate a population or government into granting their demands.”³⁷

Moreover, it can be stated that aggression, war crimes, genocide, racism, making illegal experiments upon people, torture, turning people into slaves, brigandage, illegal actions against seafaring vessels, the highjacking of airplanes, the kidnapping of the diplomats, taking civilians as hostages, harming the environment, and the general violation of human rights can all serve as the elements of acts of terror.³⁸

When one looks at the examples to be given below, the reader can see the merits of designating some of Armenia's and various Armenian groups' actions against Azerbaijanis as terrorism. First, it should be noted that thousands of Azerbaijanis were expelled from their own lands through acts of terror and that significant acts of terror were perpetrated in Nagorno-Karabakh. There are, of course, more examples that can be given.

35 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 15 августа 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности, Документ S/26307, Совет Безопасности. Официальные отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за июль, август, сентябрь 1993 года” (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1995), 210.

36 “Terrorism,” *Merriam-Webster*, accessed: September 29, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/terrorism>

37 “Terror,” *Merriam-Webster*, accessed: September 29, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/terror>

38 “Аль-Обейд А.С. Угрозы терроризма и борьба с ним,” *Азия и Африка*, № 4 (2004), 43.

Iranian airplane S-130 (Hercules), coming from Moscow to Tehran, was shot down on the Khankendy space by Armenian armed forces on the 18 March 1994. As a result of that, 32 people were killed, most of which were women and children, as well as 7 members of the Iranian delegation in Russia. The outcome of the investigation of the special commission of Iran arranged to investigate this crime proved that it was committed by an Armenian group. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran declared that the Republic of Armenia was responsible for this tragedy. Because of the results of the special commission organized by the Government of Iran, it was confirmed that the shooting down of Iran's aircraft was done by Armenian armed forces.³⁹

At the same time, the profit obtained from narcotics after occupation of the NK was directed to control the occupied territory and to fund mercenaries. The US State Department noted this in its report titled "About The Strategy Of International Control Upon The Narcotics" in March 2000. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also noted on this fact in its report.⁴⁰

Taking advantage of the Armenian origin separatist citizens, the Azerbaijan committee of "Karabakh" with the leadership of Levon Ter-Petrosyan organized a separatist movement. With the establishment of terrorist groups, Azerbaijani inhabitants were expelled from Armenia through terror tactics and many acts of terror were committed in NK. Within only the last 10 years, 4 acts of terror were committed in transportation alone, where 68 people died and 132 were injured. 8 acts of terror were committed on passenger and freight trains. 14 people were killed and 125 were wounded. 3 acts of terror were recorded in the metro system of Baku, tens of people died as a result of these attacks and hundreds were wounded. The terrorist organization ASALA's members Davidyan and Melkonyan, actively participating in the carrying out of the explosions in "20 January", "28 May-Ganjlik", and "Ulduz-Narimanov" stations of Baku Metro, were designated to the desert commander rank by R. Kocharyan in Karabakh. 3 acts of terror were committed in air transportation, where 104 people were killed. 25 people were killed and 88 were severely wounded during a terrorist act in Krasnovodsk-Baku passenger ferry.

39 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 31 марта 1994 года на имя Генерального секретаря, Документ S/1994/377, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок девятый год дополнение за январь, февраль, март 1994 года" (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997), 3.

40 "Письмо представителя Азербайджана при Организации Объединенных Наций от 28 февраля 2005 года на имя Генерального Секретаря Приложение1письму космические снимки оккупированных территорий Азербайджанской Республики," *Diplomatiya Aləmi Jurnalı*, №10 (2005), 110.

In total, in the 337 acts of terror on civilian targets carried out by Armenian groups, 881 people died and 1239 people were wounded. 8 acts of terror were committed to civilian and state targets. As a result of these attacks, 10 people died and 30 people were wounded. Due to such attacks, the economy of Azerbaijan was exposed to large scale losses. Using factual information, the tragic consequences of terrorism perpetrated by Armenian groups were reflected in the book titled “Armenian Crimes (Based on Documents)” prepared by Ministry of National Security of the Republic of Azerbaijan.⁴¹ Acts of terror perpetrated by Armenian groups against Azerbaijan people and constitutional order, sabotage, military encroachment, and armed separatism were demonstrated in detail in the book titled “Nagorno-Karabakh: the Chronicle of the Events (1988-1994)” published by the Ministry of the Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.⁴²

The extremist “Dashnaksutun” Party, the culprit of many violent and terroristic acts in late nineteenth and twentieth century, currently acts under the name of “Armenian Revolution Federation” and is part of the coalition government in Armenia.⁴³ The Armenian investigator A. Enokyan states that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is used as a tool for furthering domestic politics in Armenia. Enokyan notes that, currently, the main aim of the nationalist-socialists of the “Dashnaksutun” in Armenia is to “return back all Armenian lands” by force and to punish designated historical enemies. Additionally, Enokyan considers R. Kocharyan having obtained political power in Armenia to be illegal due to him being a Karabakh citizen.⁴⁴

The scorched earth policy of Armenia and the laying of mines seriously harms the environment of Nagorno-Karabakh, makes the lands unfit for inhabitation, and leads to the desertification of the lands. In 1993, foreign news agencies reported that Armenians were employing scorched earth tactics by burning the Azerbaijan-Iran border area.⁴⁵

41 “Ermənistan-Azərbaycan münaqişəsi sənədlər bölməsi,” 128-159.

42 *Dağlıq Qarabağ: hadisələrin xronikası (1988-1994-cü illər)*. Azərbaycan Respublikası Daxili İşlər Nazirliyi (Bakı: Vətən, 2005): 108.

43 *Ermənistan Respublikası (məlumat-sorğu kitabçası)*. Qafqaz Etno-siyasi Araşdırmalar Mərkəzi, “Bölgə” silsiləsindən I buraxılış (Bakı, 2006): 77.

44 “Енокян А. Армения: противоречивые подходы к урегулированию Карабахского конфликта,” *Центральная Азия и Кавказ*, № 1 (2002), 115-121.

45 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана от 15 ноября 1993 года на имя Генерального секретаря, Документ S/26762, Совет Безопасности. Официальное отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за октябрь, ноябрь, декабрь 1993 года” (Организация Объединенных Наций, Нью-Йорк, 1997), 251-252.

1.7) Migration Policy to the Occupied Lands of Azerbaijan

1.7.1) Armenia's Migration Policy to the Occupied Lands at the State Level

The exposure of the Azerbaijani territory to occupation, the destruction, the policy of ethnic cleaning in these lands, the expulsion of the Azerbaijanis from their permanent places of residence gives ground for defining Armenia as an aggressor state. The active work carried out in terms migration policy at the state level to move people from Armenia to the Kalbajar, Kubadli and Zangilan regions is another factor proving the encroachment of Armenia against the territory of Azerbaijan, because the settlement of Armenian citizens in the occupied territories constitutes an illegal act.

In international practice, it is known that the citizens are legally migrated into another country's territory from the country whose borders will be rearranged. The change in citizenship can be implemented by optation (the right of moving to another country's citizenship) and in such cases, voluntary decisions are applied. The migration of the citizens through the ways of both transfer and optation can be executed on the basis of the mutual agreement of the involved governments. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination mentioned in its decision of 17 August 1995 about the condition at Bosnia and Herzegovina that any attempt to change the demographic composition in a region constitutes a violation of international law. Especially, the reporter Al-Xasaun, in his report to the commission about the prevention of discrimination and defense of minorities, mentioned that the forced migration of the inhabitants is prohibited by the international law norms. This idea was recognized by the commission.⁴⁶ Geneva Convention is the main legal document prohibiting the relocation of the population of occupying states to the occupied territories to change the demographic balance in favor of the occupying state. The disturbance of the demographic balance in the occupied territories is condemned by the UN Security Council in its resolutions as well.⁴⁷ According to the international law norms, Armenia does not have any legal status in the occupied territories. Violating these norms, Armenia transfers its own people (the Armenians) to the Azerbaijani territory that is occupied. The transfer of them to the occupied territories has been executed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Vazgen Sargsyan, his assistant Suren Abramyan, and the Public Administration of Refugees. The charity union called "Ayrudzi" was created to give this transfer campaign a

46 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 350.

47 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 349-350.

socially conscious veneer. This union allocated large amounts of money by taking responsibility of the provision of the migrants.⁴⁸ Arrangement of the transfer project on the level of the minister, his assistant, and government administration proves that the transfer of the Armenian population to the occupied territory of Azerbaijan was organized in the direct control of the Armenian administration and it is a part of the government policy of Armenia.

1.7.2) Identification of the Facts Related to the transfer Policy of Armenia

On 24 November 2004, in the meeting of the officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan with co-chairs of the Minsk Group, the creation of an independent expert group within the OSCE to identify facts related to the settlement policy of Armenia was discussed.⁴⁹ The OSCE Fact-Finding Mission revealed the illegal settlement of the Armenian population in the occupied territory of Azerbaijan in 2004.⁵⁰ In the 36-page report of the Mission, the number of the settled population in the occupied territory was shown to be 15-16 thousands. In the report, the settlement of 8000-12,000 people in Lachin, 1500-2000 in Kalbajar, 1000 in Agdam, 1000 in Zangilan, 1500 in Kubadli, 100 in Fuzuli, and 100 in Jabrayil was stated.⁵¹ Furthermore, an Armenian citizen settled in Nagorno-Karabakh or its surrounding regions is provided with a house and receives 365 USD payments per month.⁵² Until 2010, with the intention to increase the number of Armenians up to 300,000, the government of Armenia transferred thousands of Armenians from Iran, Russia, Lebanon, and other countries to the occupied regions by means of giving numerous privileges, giving long term loans, and providing exemption for them from taxes.⁵³ According to the conclusion of the OSCE's mission of collection of the facts of illegal immigration, the co-chairs called for preventing the further transfer of people to the occupied territories, and noted that the change of the demographic situation and maintaining this situation for an extended period complicates the peace process and any economic activity in the occupied lands. The CD's of the videos of the transfer of Armenian people to the occupied territory of Azerbaijan filmed by Abkhazian and Georgian journalists, photos taken from satellites and comments related

48 "Официальное отчеты сорок восьмой год дополнение за апрель, май, июнь 1994 года," 225-226.

49 "Ermənistan-Azərbaycan münəqışəsi mətbuatda," *Diplomatiya Aləmi Jurnalı*, № 9 (2004), 74.

50 *Həydər Əliyev: «Biz Azərbaycan ərazisində ikinci bir erməni dövlətinin yaranacağına yol vermərik»* (Bakı: Əbilov, Zeynalov və oğulları, 2006): 92.

51 "Ermənistan-Azərbaycan münəqışəsi mətbuatda," *Diplomatiya Aləmi Jurnalı*, №10 (2005), 122.

52 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 351.

53 "Ermənistan-Azərbaycan münəqışəsi mətbuatda," № 9 (2004), 72.

to them were sent to the OSCE. This information was also introduced to the fact-finding mission of the Minsk Group of OSCE in the occupied zones.⁵⁴

Anna Matveyev, in the report to the working group on minorities which was a sub-commission of the Committee of Defense of Human Rights in Southern Caucasus noted that since 1990, the transfer policy was being applied by the Armenian armed forces to the surroundings of Nagorno-Karabakh. The transferred people received aid from the Armenian government, either did not pay taxes or paid a small amount of taxes, and by this way, the Armenian government has attempted to build physical and public infrastructure.⁵⁵ The report of the US State Department's International Crisis Group on Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2005 states that, Stepanakert (author's note: Khankendi) sees Lachin as a part of NK. NK's demographic structure has been changed. 47,400 Azerbaijanis and Kurds used to live there until the break out of the war (author's note: According to the data of 1992, 66,646 people lived there during occupation of Lachin). According to the data given from the officials holding power in NK, there are currently 10,000 Armenians living there. These people are provided with free clothes, social infrastructure, money, and livestock, and are required to pay very minor taxes. Nearly 85% house houses were restored and redistributed in the city center.⁵⁶ The electric lines, transportation routes, and other objects linking Armenia and the NK are more connected now than they were up to the war.⁵⁷

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According to the “Return to Karabakh” program realized by State Department on Affairs of Refugees of the government of Armenia, Yerevan officially funds the separatist regime of NK. With the help of the “Erkir” non-governmental organization and G. Egakyan, the Head of the State Department of the Affairs of Refugees of Armenia, 35 families were transferred in Spring 2004, and

54 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана при Организации Объединенных Наций от 28 февраля 2005 года на имя Генерального Секретаря...,” 102-114.

55 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 352.

56 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 352.

57 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 352.

500,000 USD were allocated for the transfer of 80 families. Again, in the same year, international funds were used to allocate 400,000 USD for the building of 90 houses.⁵⁸

1.8) Armenia Exploiting the Natural Sources in the Occupied Territories

Exploiting of the natural resources in occupied lands is another fact demonstrating Armenia's policy of aggression. The large gold deposits of Soyudlu Village of Kalbajar and Vejnali Village of Zengilan is being illegally explored by Armenian companies. The Armenian company FerstDynasti Mains LTD in Canada (it is named Sterlight Gold LTD since 2002) reached an agreement with the Armenian government to explore Soyudlu deposits for 63 million USD. The Armenian government declared that American and Canadian companies agreed for the exploration of Vejnali gold deposits with 4.5 tons of gold deposits.⁵⁹

1.9) Changing the Toponymies in the Occupied Regions to Armenian Names, and the Armenianization of Cultural and Historical Monuments

It is necessary to note that, the changing of the toponymies in the occupied regions to Armenian names, the Armenianization of the monuments, are another set of facts proving the policy of aggression of Armenia. Armenia has changed the name of the Kalbajar Region to Karvachar, Lachin to Kashatakh, Qubadli to Kashunik, Zangilan to Kavsakan. It has also attempted to introduce the important old Albanian religious monuments – Khotabank in Kalbajar (VI-VII centuries), V-XI century monuments in Lachin, the church in Kangarly Village of Akhdam as Armenian monuments. The old Albanian writings on these monuments, ornaments on the walls and crosses have been replaced with Armenian symbols.⁶⁰ In these excavations in Akhdam territory, more than 15 famous kurgans (tombs) related to Khojali culture were destroyed and the obtained evidences were taken to Armenia. Restoring the Shahbulaq Palace complex in Akhdam region, the establishment of the museum called “Tigranakert” was announced. The opening of the museum was solemnly celebrated and the news regarding it was distributed via internet websites.⁶¹

58 “Ermənistan-Azərbaycan münəqışəsi mətbuatda,” № 9 (2004), 72.

59 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана при Организаций Объединенных Наций от 28 февраля 2005 года на имя Генерального Секретаря...,” 110.

60 “Письмо представителя Азербайджана при Организаций Объединенных Наций от 28 февраля 2005 года на имя Генерального Секретаря...,” 110.

61 “Ermənilər Ağdamda “Tigranakert” muzeyi yaradıblar,” *Musavat.com*, May 13, 2011, http://musavat.com/news/kivdf-layiheleri/ermeniler-agdamda-tigranakert-muzeyi-yaradiblar_100410.html

2) IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC

For the first time, the factors that provide ground for the UN Security Council to recognize Armenia as an aggressor state have been researched comprehensively and the relevant evaluations have been done. The UN Security Council is the only organization capable of applying coercive action against an aggressor state. For this to be done, the aggressor state must first be identified.

The Security Council has adopted 4 resolutions related to NK conflict. In none of these resolutions has the aggressor party and self-defensive party been defined. Armenia has been hiding its aggressive policy from the beginning of the conflict under the argument of defending the people of the NK. In connection to this, Armenia has supplied false information to the world community by claiming that NK territory has historically belonged to Armenia and that NK Armenian inhabitants are under the threat of Azerbaijan government.

Armenia has taken advantage of the fictitious NKR administration to conceal its aggressive plans and has made initiatives for the fictitious NKR to engage in negotiations with Azerbaijan as an independent state. Skillfully using of members of the Armenian diaspora in world's most influential countries, Armenia has been able to affect the policy of such states, giving false information to the UN Secretary-General about discrimination of the national minorities in Azerbaijan and attempting to damage Azerbaijan's international reputation.

In order to avoid being designated as an aggressor state, Armenia has concealed its aggressive policy by blaming Turkey for intervening in the conflict. Stating that in response to Turkey defending the interests of Azerbaijan, Armenia claims that is justified in defending NK Armenians.

Armenia has skillfully dodged being defined as an aggressor using strong disinformation, even resorting to attempts at emotional blackmail.⁶² This happened, for example, when Azerbaijan accused Armenia for being an aggressor party in international summits. Amidst statements and objections involving President of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev and President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan during the OSCE Lisbon Summit in 1996, Ter-Petrosyan

62 R.B. Dadaşova, "Ermənistanın 'Dezinformasiya Müharibəsi'nin Münəqişənin Nizama Salınmasına Təsiri" (Gənc Alimlərin I Respublika İnnovativ İdeya Yarınması çərçivəsində keçirilən "Gənc alim və tədqiqatçıların innovativ inkişafı üçün intellektual potensialın stimullaşdırılması və təkrar istehsalı" adlı konfransın materialları, Bakı, November 18-23, 2010), 282-285.

stated that massacres had been committed against Armenians in Azerbaijan during 1988-1991, and these were being continued.⁶³ Ter-Petrosyan statement shows that Armenia attempted to use the accusations of Armenians' being subjected to massacres to divert the international community's attention away from its own aggressive policy against Azerbaijan.

The main reason of the conflict having remained unsolved is the failure to identify Armenia as an aggressor state. Despite this however, various international documents have confirmed the occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan by Armenia. The occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia

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is stated in the UN Committee on Elimination of The Racial Discrimination's final document of 12 April 2001, in the 22 December 1997 dated final document of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights related to Azerbaijan, in reports of the US State Department's international organization on prevention of crisis in NK.⁶⁴ However, the UN Security Council is the only organization capable and authorized to apply coercive action against an aggressor state. For doing this, the Security Council must first recognize Armenia as an aggressor state.

Investigations confirm that, all acts listed in the Resolution number 3314 (1974) of UN General Assembly have been applied against Azerbaijan by Armenia. For this reason, the facts outlined in this article are crucial in creating a convincing argument for the Security Council to go ahead and designate Armenia as an aggressor state.

3) COUNTER OPINIONS

Works of some foreign investigators have created false impressions in the world public opinion about the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. For example, in the book titled "Ethnic cleansing in progress: war in Nagorno Karabakh" written by Caroline Cox and John Elbern, Azerbaijan is described as the aggressor state instead of Armenia, and NK Armenians are introduced as the first victims of this conflict.

63 Əliyev H.Ə. *Müstəqilliyimiz əbədidir: 46 kitabda*, 8-ci kitab (Bakı: Azərneşr, 1998): 127.

64 *Сборник документов ООН...*, 335-337.

It is claimed in the book that Azerbaijan attacked the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and Armenian villages of its Shaumyan (From 29 April 1992 it has been called as Ashaghi Aghcakand, its historical name) region with 4th Soviet Army, that thousands of Armenian people live as refugees in NK, that Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia are subjected to a blockade and that this creates constraints for humanitarian aids to be given to the inhabitants of NK, that Azerbaijan has used its military capabilities against civilian inhabitants, that it has killed women, children, and elderly during its alleged aggression. Emphasizing the interests of Turkey, Russia, and Iran in NK, the authors argue that Turkey is taking advantage of Azerbaijan for the continuation of the “Armenian Genocide” and that it agitates for the continuation of the NK conflict. However, when the sources of this book are analyzed, it can be seen that the book’s arguments are, in essence, based on Armenian sources, demonstrating the biased perspective with which the book has been written.⁶⁵

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the above, it should be noted that the UN Security Council is the only organization capable of implementing a coercive mechanism against an aggressor state. This is reflected in the regulations of the UN. The state of Armenia, by making decisions regarding annexation the Nagorno-Karabakh to its territory, the direct participation of Armenian armed forces in the occupying of the lands of Azerbaijan, the provision of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians with military ammunition by the state of Armenia, the expulsion of the Azerbaijanis from their own lands by Armenia through acts of terror, the carrying out of an ethnic cleaning policy, the use of scorched earth policy in the occupied lands, the keeping of military captives and hostages in its lands, the active work of the state for the transferring of Armenian people to the occupied regions to change the demographic balance, the embezzling of the natural resources of the occupied lands, the replacement of the toponymies with Armenian names in the occupied lands, and the changing of the historical and cultural monuments give ground for defining of Armenia as an aggressor state for the UN Security Council and for the application of appropriate economic and political sanctions against it.

65 Caroline Cox and John Eibner, *Ethnic Cleansing in Progress: War in Nagorno Karabakh* (Institute for Religious Minorities in the Islamic World, 1993).

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THE ETHNO-RELIGIOUS ORIGINS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM PERPETRATED BY ARMENIAN NATIONALISTS (HISTORICAL-CULTURAL ANALYSIS)

(ERMENİ MİLLİYETÇİLER TARAFINDAN GERÇEKLEŞTİRİLEN
ULUSLARARASI TERÖRİZMİN ETNO-DİNSEL KÖKENLERİ
(TARİHİ-KÜLTÜREL ANALİZ))

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Abstract: *This article seeks to understand the theoretical and cognitive aspects of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. For this endeavor, it examines the identity-based and motivational factors that induced the involved Armenian groups or organizations to carry out aggression against Azerbaijan in the events that constitute the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. This article highlights that subconscious factors that stretch back to the days of pagan beliefs still have a noticeable effect in the actions of today's people. This article also argues that Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was not truly about a yearning for autonomy, independence, or a desire for resources, but rather an attempt to enable the Armenian diaspora, taken as a whole, to expand itself both politically and militarily in other countries, as well as in the Republic of Armenia itself.*

Keywords: *Nagorno-Karabakh, terrorism, identity, religion, Armenians*

Öz: *Bu makale, Dağlık Karabağ çatışmasının kuramsal ve kavramsal yönlerini anlamaya amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç için makale Dağlık Karabağ sorunu ortaya çıkaran olaylarda, olaylara karışan Ermeni grupların veya örgütlerin Azerbaycan'a saldırmalarına sebep olan kimlik esaslı ve teşvik edici etkenleri incelemektedir. Bu makale, kökleri putperest inançların hüküm sürdüğü günlere kadar uzanan bilinçaltı etkenlerin, günümüzdeki insanların üzerinde hâlâ fark edilebilir etkiler yarattığına dikkat çekmektedir. Bu makale ayrıca Dağlık Karabağ*

çatışmasının gerçek anlamda sadece özerklik, bağımsızlık veya doğal kaynak elde etme arzusundan değil, onun yerine Ermeni diasporasının, bir bütün olarak, kendisini başka ülkelerde ve Ermenistan Cumhuriyeti'nde siyasi ve askeri bakımdan genişletmesi çabasıyla kaynaklandığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dağlık Karabağ, terörizm, kimlik, din, Ermeniler*

During the last quarter of the century, the concrete existence of Armenian-Azerbaijani armed conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region (which currently Armenia occupies with military forces) and the Azerbaijan's territories that are adjacent to it, is not solely within the domain of historical events, but is also a main factor for the lack of stability and security in the South Caucasus. This situation brings the necessity for a neutral analysis of the inciting motivations and driving forces of the aggression of the involved Armenian groups. In this paper, we will not attempt a victim analysis study involving the collective behavior and actions of the Azerbaijani people who were the main victims of the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war, nor will we study the events surrounding the background and the aftermath of the conflict. We will instead examine the relevant Armenian groups' worldview (in the possibility of which, the common reflexes embedded in the subconscious of Armenians) and the ideological (or intellectual) paradigms of their identity that led the Armenian people to commit armed violence. To create settlement mechanisms that are neutral, independent, unaffiliated with the ideologies arising from the 20-year war, and compliant with international law, and to ensure their application, we need to understand the theoretical and even cognitive aspects of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict more than ever.

The mentality of the Armenian people (and not the political will of the Armenian government), which provokes the fixed ideologies within the national consciousness and which currently prevents peaceful solutions to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in accordance with international law, is the main obstacle for resolving this issue.

Today, the international community supports the Republic of Azerbaijan's right of sovereignty by expressing Armenia's need and obligation to let go of the occupation regime in Azerbaijani territory, to withdraw all its military forces and the militias integrated to the illegal armed groups in Nagorno-Karabakh from the area belonging to Azerbaijan. However, the mentality of the Armenian people (and not the political will of the Armenian government), which provokes the fixed ideologies within the national consciousness and which currently prevents peaceful solutions to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in accordance with international law, is the main obstacle for resolving this issue. The main purpose of this article is not to provide misleading propositions and giving hope to the parties of the conflict and the international society about the resolution of the conflict, but to systematically and comprehensively illustrate our perspective to interested readers.

As we have expressed many times in various monographies and scientific articles, the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh does not solely consist of a

temporary political and military situation, but has a deep and even national character¹ and we retain this point of view in this article. As we have expressed before, within the deep layers of the consciousness of the majority of the ethnic Armenian society, there are pushing forces and stimulating causes that forms the basis of Armenian identity and national-religious existence (this applies to other groups of people as well). The irrationality as well as the logical foundations of the ideological components of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have been studied by us in the article titled “The Clash Of Civilizations - How Does Samuel Huntington’s Theory Explain The Cultural Basis Of The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict?” (Stockholm 2013), presented as a separate section in the monograph called “The Realities Surrounding The Myths Of The Karabakh Conflict” (Moscow 2013). Consequently, this paper will not study in detail the subject discussed in the mentioned article, but will only examine the elements that constitute the key views and findings of the work.

Between 1988 and 1994, the Nagorno-Karabakh war was not an interstate war, because the forces that were mobilizing against the official state police and army of Azerbaijan were not the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia, but were international terrorists and separatist groups comprising soldiers from the United Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, mercenaries from the Middle East, Europe, and the United States of America, and Armenian nationalists who previously lived in Transcaucasia and who were formerly Soviet citizens. In fact, in its most intense phase, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was a military intervention by the Armenian international coalition (or Hay Dat) against the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people.

The attack of the international Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh against the Azerbaijani people was not a colonial war in today’s terms, which means

1 О.Ю. Кузнецов, *Правда о «мифах» карабахского конфликта* (М.: Минувшее, 2013): 181-202; О.Ю. Кузнецов, *История транснационального армянского терроризма в XX столетии: Историко-криминологическое исследование* (Баку: Шарг-Гарб, 2015): 195-222; О.Ю. Кузнецов, “Нагорно-карабахский конфликт: «столкновение цивилизаций»? Как теория Самюэля Хантингтона объясняет культурологическую суть конфликта вокруг Нагорного Карабаха”, *Кавказ & Глобализация: Журнал социально-экономических и политических исследований*, Вып. 1-2 (2013, Т. 7), 93-108; О.Ю. Кузнецов, “Национально-религиозный экстремизм и политический терроризм националистов как движущая сила этногенеза армянского этноса (очерк социально-политической истории)”, *Кавказ & Глобализация: Журнал социально-экономических и политических исследований*, Вып. 3-4 (2014, Т. 8), 175-200; O.Yu. Kuznetsov, *History Of Transnational Armenian Terrorism In The Twentieth Century: Historical And Criminological Study* (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Köster, 2016): 154-174; O.Yu. Kuznetsov, “The Conflict In Nagorno-Karabakh: It Is A ‘Clash Of Civilization’? How Samuel Huntington’s Theory Explains Its Culturological Dimension”, *The Caucasus & Globalization: Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*, Issue 1-2 (2013, Vol. 7), 82-94; O.Yu. Kuznetsov, “National-religious extremism and political terror of nationalists as a driving force behind ethnogenesis of the Armenian ethnicity (essay of social-political history)”, *The Caucasus & Globalization: Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*, Issue 3-4 (2013, Vol. 8), 163-182.

one aiming to obtain control of natural resources or the settlement in the area. The military victory in this war did not bring Armenians any new raw materials, a new product market, nor did it constitute a change in the vector or the balance of economic-commercial relations (especially considering the fact that feudal attitudes prevail in the economy of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh). The expenses of the Armenian side for invading and, for the last quarter of the century, supporting the administrative-political branch of the occupying regime (without mentioning that there was no prospect of obtaining any future profits or returns), have not been paid for by the Armenian aggressors.

The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh was not one carried out for the usual causes of autonomy, decolonization, or national independence. At that time, the separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh were not merely attempting to separate their region, but they aimed to explicitly support the political and military expansion of the Armenian diaspora in other countries and the Armenian Republic itself. The takeover of the country by the military structure of the Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh and the integration of this structure called “The Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army” into the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia have been among the most interesting manifestations of this process. For this reason, for the Armenian side, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was not merely for the control of Transcaucasia and the Caucasus, but it constituted the basis for a colonial war aiming to create a dominion over the whole of Southwest Asia and even Central Asia by the Armenian people. However, between 1988 and 1994, the victory in the Nagorno-Karabakh war did not bring any geopolitical, military-strategic, or economic gain either to the Republic of Armenia or the separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh. Moreover, the international community, foremost being the United Nations, and other international organizations (most prominently the OECD and the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe), view Armenians as interventionist and as aggressors, which means that sanctions that did not exist in the practice of international relations until the last 25 years could be put to use against the state occupying Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijani territories. We are talking about the possibility of an internationally enforced no-fly zone over Armenia and the territories it occupied or the ban heavy weapon sales to Armenia.

As seen, when the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war is analyzed in a rational and empathetic way, it brought more damage to Armenia and Armenians than it brought benefits. It is causing such damage now, and it will cause economic, material, and human loss in the future. Consequently, from the ongoing nature of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, one can deduce that political-ideological considerations outweigh military or economic interests. Therefore, this

conflict could be defined within the framework of Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" theory. In other words, when analyzed with hindsight, this war was in truth started by Armenians to protect the Armenian identity for the benefit of Armenians.²

Today, Armenians are among the few peoples that mostly live outside of their natural geographic boundaries. In other words, the individuals who live abroad and who do not have any citizenship link with the "historical motherland" are more numerous than the population of the "motherland" country. Mostly, when these separations increase, to increase the sense of ethnic identity, there is a need for an irrational-ideological unifying factor like the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, not only for a rational-commercial one. In this context, there is a need to articulate the concrete circumstances at the start of the conflict: in Soviet times, there was an "iron curtain" enforced and strengthened by the initiative of the state that constituted an ideological barrier between the citizens of the Armenian Socialist Soviet Republic and the diaspora Armenians that were more numerous than them. At the end of the 1980's, a process that consisted in the active and internationally supported forceful integration of Soviet Armenians into other Armenian societies around the world took place, because the ratio of the Armenian diaspora exceeded the population of Armenia, and this trend is continuing today. Armenia and its diaspora had to inevitably unite under political and ideological conditions and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been a supporting element and stimulating motivation for such a unification. This war has been an "entry opportunity" for Soviet Armenians to integrate to the global Armenian community (one must add that without the help of the global Armenian community, it was impossible for the Republic of Armenia to become an independent state according to the necessities underlined by international law; especially within the first 10 years where the industrialization and the constitution of the political structure takes place).

The 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war that we examined multiple times has been, for the Armenian side, the "First Terrorist War" in the history of humanity.³ This is not surprising. This is so because, as we have stated before,⁴

2 Кузнецов, "Нагорно-карабахский конфликт: «столкновение цивилизаций»? ...," 98-100; Kuznetsov, "The Conflict In Nagorno-Karabakh: It Is A 'Clash Of Civilization'? ...," p. 86-88.

3 For more details, please see; О.Ю. Кузнецов, *История транснационального армянского терроризма...*, 178-194; Kuznetsov, *History of transnational Armenian terrorism...*, 142-154; О.Ю. Кузнецов, "First Terrorist War: A Look from Russia (Transnational Armenian Terrorism and Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict of 1988-1994)", *IRS-Heritage: International Azerbaijan magazine*, 2015, № 2 (21), 54-60; № 3 (22), 46-51; № 4 (23), 58-63.

4 Кузнецов, *История транснационального армянского терроризма...*, 195-222; Кузнецов, "Национально-религиозный экстремизм и политический терроризм националистов...", 175-200; Kuznetsov, *History of transnational Armenian terrorism...*, 154-174; Kuznetsov, "National-Religious Extremism And Political Terror Of Nationalists...", 163-182.

beginning from the last quarter of the 19th century, terrorism and political extremism were perhaps the only instruments and basic driving forces of Armenian ethnogeny during their modern transformation process from being subjects or a church congregation, which they had been even one and a half centuries ago not only in the Muslim world, but also in the Russian Empire according to its internal legislation, into a nation as a political structure. We will not repeat this thesis that has been previously stated and submitted to the science world in this study. Thus, we will limit ourselves by showing certain arguments of ours.

During their existence in the Muslim world, Armenians were an aggregate of followers or supporters of the Armenian Apostolic Church dogma and the religious rituals of some early Christian churches, and belonged to different ethnic and language groups (both Semitic and Turkic). Armenians never existed as an ethnic majority in their places of residence to separate and establish themselves as a national and religious state. They therefore lacked the possibility to establish long-term independent control with considerable territory and to have an opportunity to use resources of this area (material, human, natural) inside any Muslim state. The Armenians, deprived of the possibility of using resources in their national struggles, were forced to use the means of collective insurrection and terrorism, the least costly form of resistance, or the tools that would not add an extra burden to the existing economy. Unlike other groups of people who constituted a majority in the regions they lived, to the dismay of Armenian nationalists, Armenians as a people never had sufficient resources to pursue a guerrilla or civil war that would enable them to obtain their national and political independence.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, Armenians living in the Ottoman and Russian territories with a wide variety of ethnic origins introduced themselves as a community of the Armenian Apostolic Church. If we start our argument from the typological resemblance of the most important ethnographic elements of the various peoples of the Southwest Asia region, the ethnographic characteristics of the Armenians include elements of Kurdish, Assyrian, Persian, and Turkish origin. This presents evidence for the thesis of the multi-ethnic nature of the Armenians as one of the religious communities living in the periphery of Islam (a foreign religion to them) that is attached to the teachings of one of the early Christian churches. In order to integrate the diverse people of this mosaic community and representatives of tradition into a unified social structure, it is necessary for this social community to have some material basis for public resources and self-collective social cohesion as well as for the basis of the general world view. The integration of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which constituted its own legal entity by virtue of the material donation of each member, constituted the

basis of the material source of a single root of a multi-ethnic society. The Armenian Apostolic Church did not only fulfil its duties as the spiritual center of the Armenian ethnic community, but at the same time fulfilled its social function as the guardian of the well-being of the people, as Church's disciples proved themselves not only in the religious sense but also in terms of social material solidarity.

Due to the lack of a living place for Armenians as an ethnic or ethno-religious majority, the protection of their national and religious identities meant not

Due to the lack of a living place for Armenians as an ethnic or ethno-religious majority, the protection of their national and religious identities meant not only the protection of the region they lived in, but that the attack of any foreign state against the Church, such as by the Ottoman or Russian state, began to be perceived as an attack against all the members of the people and necessitating the protection of the property of the common church.

only the protection of the region they lived in, but that the attack of any foreign state against the Church, such as by the Ottoman or Russian state, began to be perceived as an attack against all the members of the people and necessitating the protection of the property of the common church. As mentioned above, Armenians did not have the means of military action to defend themselves because of their inadequate resources, as many other people did, and so they were forced to use terrorism due to it being the least-costly tool, a tool that uses sacrifices from their own community members or co-religionists.

Because of this, apart from the perception of religion and the world, two separate moral and psychological dominant powers emerged, not theologically, but as a social

religion, by the Armenian Apostolic Church. The first one is the glorification of terrorism as a means of war in the formation of national and religious identity. The second one is the culture of sacrificing oneself for the realization of social or organizational interests in a simpler form. This tendency was the main character of the Armenian people throughout the two centuries in all their national and religious rituals in the cultural orbit of the Russian nation. Therefore, these can be considered as the identity consciousness of the Armenians who represent the ethnic church and the subjects.

The “Russian Federation official, religious, national and traditional festivals calendar”, which was published for the year 2016 with the support of the Russian Federation Public Chamber and with the financing of the Russian Assistance Fund, has an extremely up-to-date and guiding content to fully

understand and describe the present situation of the ethnic and religious identity consciousness of the Armenian people.⁵ The project has been conducted by the Russian Academy of Sciences Ethnology and Anthropology Institute (RAD EAI), Federal Jewish National and Cultural Autonomy (FJNCA) and Moscow Regional Jewish National and Cultural Autonomy (MRJNCA). The result of these institutions' intellectual and published work became a source of information for the daily activities of the Armenians, spreading between the state and municipal institutions of Moscow and its region. In fact, the content of this calendar reflects official views on the festivals and commemoration days of different communities of Russia, so that Russia does not in any way allow xenophobia or extremism to appear in the interpretation of their semantic content. This is extremely important in terms of understanding that the content of the calendar is a result of introducing itself to the religious and national social fabric, which inevitably negates possible negative comments from the outside. The materials required to compile the schedule for the traditional religious and national festivals and holidays of the Armenians were provided by the Soviet Armenians, which removes the possibility of deliberate distortion of the information supplied during the reprinting and editing of the calendar.

The Armenian national and religious festivals, which were reported to the compilers of the calendar, who are the Armenian diaspora representatives in Russia and which was added without any change and uncensored by the persons mentioned. In the context of the subject we are examining, Saint Sarkis' Day (23 January), Vardanank (4 February), Terendez (13 February), Zatik or Armenian Easter (27 March), Vichak (5 May), Vardavar (3 July), are particularly interesting. In addition to the national and religious festivals mentioned above, two additional important dates have been added: These are the day of remembrance of the victims of the military and police raids conducted towards the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire on April 24th, and the December 7, 1988, the memorial to the victims of the Spitak earthquake. But we take no account of these because they have emerged in the late 20th century and are derived separately from the pre-existing ethnic and cultural traditions, and thus do not reflect the modern Armenian mentality under analysis here. In the light of the concrete examples reflecting the national and religious intellectual views of the Armenian people, we will explain below the explanation of the most important ethnic-religious festivals that will provide a clear view of the dominant collective worldviews. The comparison and analysis of the examples will enable us to determine and show the

⁵ *Календарь государственных, религиозных, национальных и традиционных праздников Российской Федерации на 2016 год* (М.: ООО «РЕНКАМО», 2016).

archetypal features of these festivals that reflect and settle in the religious tradition of the Armenian people.

“24 January, Saint Sarkis’ Day

This holiday is celebrated 64 days before the Holy Easter (Holy Zatik (easter)). St. Sarkis (320-350) is one of the most sacred saints of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Born in the state of Gemerek, lived in the time of Emperor Constantine the Great in 363, during the time of the Emperor Julian, suffered for his faith in God. Saint Sarkis became the guardian of travellers, soldiers, pregnant women, and especially young lovers. One night before the festival, young people eat the salty lavash and wait the arrival of the bride or groom destined for them in their dreams. The church invites people to pray St. Sarkis in these days. This holiday is preceded by the five-day “khashil” fast.”

“4 February, Vardanank, Day of Compassion and National Respect for Heroes

It is celebrated for the Battle of Avarayra in honor of the defeat of the Armenian troops led by Vardan Mamikonyan in 451. The Persians, who suffered great losses and faced fierce resistance by the Armenians, had to give up their opposition to the national identity of the Armenian people and the Christian religion. According to the chronicles, ‘everyone is both a church and a priest.’ Vardan Mamikonyan, who died as a hero in order to protect his motherland, the Armenian church and Christian religion, and his 1036 friends-in-arms are the great saints of the Armenian Apostolic Church.”

“13 February, Terendez

At the beginning, Terendez was a ritual pagan feast of the Zarathustrans and was called Drndez, which meant a desire for the abundant harvest, and when translated from Armenian, it meant ‘a bunch of hay in front of your house’. After the Armenians accepted Christianity, the festival changed both in name and essence. The main participants of Terendez are the newly married or young boys and girls who have gathered for marriage. The most important characteristic of the festival is that young people who have fallen in love are holding hands and jumping over the open fire. It is believed that if they can jump over the fire without

leaving each other's hands, both the families will be strong and their love will be infinite. Women without children jump over the fire after the loving couples, hoping that the fire will help them get pregnant. In the end, everyone joins their hands and moves in a circular fashion around the fire. According to ancient Armenian beliefs, whoever touches his tongue at the feast of fire that day will enjoy abundance. When the fire goes out, the remaining ashes are collected and the fields are scattered so that the next autumn will bring a good harvest."

"27 March, Zatik or Armenian Easter

The Armenian word 'Zatik' probably comes from the words 'azatutun, azatel' (freedom, freeing) and means getting rid of suffering, evil, and death. The Armenian Christians say to one another, 'The Messiah is resurrected from the dead!' And 'Jesus is the Messiah!' The idea of a resurrection is the foundation of Christianity, meaning a new life from death, the transition from earth to heaven. One day before, on Saturday, the women painted a large number of eggs, the youngsters prepared small bags for the eggs, and the men engaged in the joint sacrificial organization. In the night bridging Saturday to Sunday, around the fire where the slaughtered sacrifices would be cooked in large copper cups, after everyone's festival service, the akhar time of games and dancing joined by everybody started."

"5 May, Vichak, Day of the Ascension of God

Armenians call the Day of Ascension Vichak ("fate") or Katnapuri Ton (the festival of milk porridge). In Armenia, these festivals are associated with the growth of flowers. Especially, livestock capable of giving milk were decorated with flowers, and on the eve of the feast, the festivities of young girls and women started on the mountains and the fields where they gathered flowers and water on Wednesday."

"3 July, Vardavar/Rose Festival, Celebrated in Honor of the Transfiguration of Jesus

Vardavar (Ar. 'Blossoming roses'), according to another adaptation, is made up of the words of 'vard' (water) and 'var' (flowing) and means 'sprinkling the water'. The roots of this festival go to the beginning of

Christianity and the god of maternity and fertility Anahit absorbed most of the features of this feast. The relationship with the water cult is not a coincidence: the feast celebrated 98 days after the Zatik/Armenian Easter occurs during the arid time of Armenia. According to the customs of this feast, everyone is watered and washed away. Among the traditional Armenian holidays, Vardavar/Rose Festival is the most important summer festival of the Armenian church and one of the most popular holidays of the Armenian people. Vardavar festivals were accompanied by games, sports, and horse riding competitions. The festival took place in honor of the Messiah's transfiguration on Mount Tabor. According to the Bible, the three apostles of Jesus (Peter, Jacob, and John) climbed up Mount Tabor, where they saw the Prophets Moses and Elijah, and there Jesus transfigured, his clothes were whiter even than snow.”

After completing the quoted explanations of the major national and religious festivals of the Armenians from the “Official, Religious, National and Traditional Holiday Schedule of the Russian Federation” in 2016, it is worthwhile to continue to give our attention to the most important typological features in the contents of the festivals.

First, the main Armenian festivals “being associated” with the Zatik festival in temporal or chronological order is attention grabbing; the St. Sarkis' Day is celebrated 64 days before the Zatik day and 98 days after the Vardavar (this is especially obvious because of the incongruence between the celebration date in 4 February 2016 and the actual date for 26 May for the Battle of Aravayr). This means that traditional Armenian festivals do not have an exact date in the calendar, but they are movable, meaning that their date changes every year depending on positional relationship of heavenly bodies. This shows the cosmogonical, but not the Christian essence of Armenian religious festivals, which contain Christian rituals, and but also contain qualities left over from paganism. Supporting this thesis, there is a fact that all the Armenian autochthonous festival celebrations are accompanied with traditional rituals more inherent to Hellenistic Saturnalia (Saturn festivals)⁶ or Bacchanalia (Bacchus/ancient vine harvesting festivals⁷ than to the religious ceremonies of Christian churches. Rituals such as jumping over the bonfire, pouring water, collective preparing and eating of common sacrificial

6 Saturnalia: the festival held on 17-23 December dedicated to the goddess of agriculture Saturn. During this festival, all class differentials are lifted and everybody is free to do what they want.

7 Bacchanalia: Bacchus/Dionysus is the ancient Greek god of wine. Bacchanalia festivals are held during grape harvesting times. In this festival, the tearing apart of wild animals and eating raw meat takes place. This is a reference to the tearing apart of Bacchus by tyrants when he was small.

food etc., demonstrate that they emanate from people's tribal roots. This circumstance is an indirect evidence of the idea that the level of social-cultural view of the world of the majority of people representing Armenian ethnos still corresponds to patrimonial type of social relations organization which was characteristic during the "kingdom period" in the ancient age and Hellenistic period or basic modern theocracies.

In this context, we should mention another main feature of the aforementioned Armenian groups' world view; this world view remains constant in the framework of the changing world order. The content of the social and religious rituals of the Armenians in the beginning of the 21st century is not principally different from the rituals conducted 150 years ago. In the book written by Lieutenant General H. F. Dubrovin (Member of the Military Research Commission during the period of the General Staff of the Russian Empire Army, permanent secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russian historian and ethnographer) which is titled "History of Wars and Russian Domination in the Caucasus", which was published in St. Petersburg in 1871, also contained in the religious, national, and traditional festivals of the year calendar of the Russian Federation printed in 2016, when the contents of the text of the Caucasian Armenian religious rituals and the specific ethnographic description of the culture are compared, this situation is very evident. Considering all the elegance of the formal and bureaucratic political correctness towards Armenians, the academician N.F. Dubrovin writes:

"Although the Armenians have long embraced Christianity, they still maintain paganism rituals in some religious ceremonies. They sacrifice to Migr, protector of war heroes who brings victory to courageous and brave people... Today's Armenians are conducting a festival in honor of Migr or the Savior of the Lord or on his eve. This ceremony takes place inside or outside the church or takes place outdoors..."

Among many Armenians, sun worship, called 'arev', is quite common. There are still people who call themselves arevardi today, meaning the child of the sun. They turn the face of the dying person to the east, and when they put the dead into the coffin, they always turn the face to the east. The funeral ceremony almost always takes place before the sun goes down. According to many Armenians, they regard the Anagida, who protects the Armenian kingdom, as the god of wisdom and grandeur. Every year in the summer, when the roses bloom, Armenians celebrate the day of these gods and call this ceremony "vartavar". On this day, they decorate sculptures, public spaces, and even themselves, in honor of the temples of the gods. Armenians, honoring the same

goddess, adorn the altars with their flowers, and while the liturgy is performed, they sprinkle people with rose water.”⁸

Note that these words were written at the beginning of the third quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Armenian Apostolic Church was officially recognized as a Christian faith, according to the laws of the Russian Empire.

The quotation from the basic work of N.F. Dubrovin above shows that the mentioning of the existence of the pagan god Migr, the guardian of the 19th century warriors of the Armenian cult, which is similar to the Hellenistic god Ares or the Roman god Mars, including the human sacrifice which is incompatible with the religious tradition of Christianity. The special form of worship offered by the victims is of special interest. In connection with this, we should pay attention to the expression “Armenians are conducting a festival in honor of Migr or the Savior of the Lord or on his eve” mentioned by Dubrovin. In all the Christian churches, this feast was celebrated 40 days after the birth of Christ. It is done 32 days after festival of the circumcision of Jesus. This festival takes place on 2 or 15 February in accordance with the church calendar, which is accepted in this or other religious doctrine.

In the present Armenian tradition, the pagan festival in honor of the god of war Migr coincides with Vardanank, the day of compassion and national reverence for traditional heroes. As a reminder, the content of “calendar of state, religious, national and traditional holidays in the Russian Federation”, this day was established by the Armenian Apostolic church “to commemorate the defeat of Armenian army lead by Vardan Mamikonyan in the Battle of Avarayr in 451”, although even one and a half centuries ago, this day was the festival for offering sacrifice in to the pagan god Migr. While talking about this coincidence, it should be kept in mind that the true history of the Battle of Avarayr, which is present in all the encyclopedic dictionaries of the world, is 26 May. On this day, which is a living example of offering human blood as sacrifice for the honor of God Migr in the religious or cultural tradition, the Armenians honor the memory of “the great saints of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Vardan Mamikonyan and his 1036 brothers-in-arms,” although the actual date of this battle is at least three months apart. In this context, even though it takes place in a somewhat more modern form, in the contemporary religious tradition of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the cult of mass human sacrifice offered in honor of the pagan god Migr is still considered to be holy. This does not reflect in any way to the religious ritual and practices which

8 Н.Ф. Дубровин, *Истории войн и владычества русских на Кавказе: В 5-ти тт., 8-ми кн. Т. I, кн. II. СПб.: Тип. Н.И. (Скорородова, 1871): 409-410.*

remain paganist in their subconscious, and which externally appear as being intrinsic and unique to the Armenians.

For this reason, it is not surprising that although the actual date of the Battle of Avarayr is three months after the Vardanank celebrations, the pagan festivals for the Armenian God Migr, the Christian festival of the Presentation of Jesus to God in Temple, and the day of compassion and national respect for heroes Vardanank coincide on the same day. “Sretenie” means “meeting” when Slavic church language is translated into modern Russian. The festival was established to commemorate “the meeting” as described in the Gospel of Luke, which happened on the 40 days after birth of Jesus. That day, Virgin Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus to the Temple of Jerusalem to offer thanksgiving to God for the firstborn child according to the determined law. According to the Old Testament law, a woman who gives birth to a boy is banned from entering the temple for 40 days (for 80 days, if it is a girl). She was also required to offer a one-year-old lamb and a pigeon as sacrifice for purification and the “forgiving of sins”, but if the family was poor, they could sacrifice a pigeon or a pair of doves or two young pigeons instead of a lamb. In addition, if the first child in the family was a boy, on the 40th day of him being born, his parents would come to the temple for the completion of his circumcision. As you can see, here is a bloody sacrifice ritual not only of birds or animals, but also a body part (the prepuce of the penis) of a human baby. At the end of the ritual, a blood stream is required which completely overlaps with the sacrifice of the bloody sacrifice to the God Migr of the Armenian pagan tradition. For this reason, the mention of Vardan Mamikonyan and his 1036 brothers in arms is nothing but a camouflage and or decoration designed to hide the festival’s the blood shedding ritual associated with human sacrifice rituals from the non-Armenian foreign eyes.

If we use a terminology that belongs to clinical psychiatry on the basis of this, it is obvious that this mechanism is “substitution”, the highest form of defense mechanism in psychology. In such a mechanism, an individual or a society perceives the consequences of psychological trauma, shock, stress, or other negative effects, and is compelled to transfer responsibility for past events from themselves to other people or unfavorable of external circumstances, meaning is a kind of psychological countermeasure to alleviate one’s own sufferings.

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perceives the consequences of psychological trauma, shock, stress, or other negative effects, and is compelled to transfer responsibility for past events from themselves to other people or unfavorable of external circumstances, meaning is a kind of psychological countermeasure to alleviate one's own sufferings. Being pagan in their mentality but forced to adopt to Christian cultural traditions, Armenians had to use the memory of the Battle of Avarayr, which did not coincide with the traditional festival in honor of Migr in terms of date but did coincide the content (because Armenian blood was shed in this battle). For this act of slight balancing and addition, Armenians combined the blood sacrificing ritual in honor of the god Migr with the Christian festival of the Circumcision of Jesus (or the Presentation of Jesus in the temple). In fact, what we are witnessing here is the adaptation of the archetypal pagan culture to the changing objective reality and the bidirectional initiative of the peculiar modernization of the sacrament during the preservation of the mental and divine essence of God Migr.

The keeping of the Armenian "Holy Spear of Longinus the Centurion", one of the sacred relics of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Echmiadzin Monastery clearly reveals the Christian imagery and the synthesis of pagan traditions in the world view of the Armenians. In Christian theology, the "Spear of Longinus" (sometimes called the "Spear of the Fate") in the body of Jesus Christ (one of Jesus' Sufferings), was used -according to St. John- by the Roman warrior Longinus (in Orthodox tradition, Longinus was commander of the execution of Jesus and leader of the two bandits) to pierce Jesus (who had been put up for crucifixion) in his hypochondrium to make sure that he was dead. Several modern Christian churches in the world store several similar replicas supposed to be spear or parts of the spear of Longinus. One of these is the Armenian spear mentioned above, the second is the Vatican spear kept in the basilica of San Pietro in Rome, and the third is the Vienna spear in the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, kept in the imperial treasury. According to Armenian sources, the Echmiadzin version of "The Spear of Longinus" was placed in its present place of storage only in the 13th century. Before this date, it was in Gerardavank, which means "Monastery of the Spear" when translated from Armenian. The spear itself is interpreted as the means of the sacrifice of Jesus. Thus, as accepted in all the traditional Christian churches, Armenians perceive Jesus Christ, who sacrifices himself for the forgiveness of mankind's sins, not as a body of God, but as a direct sacrifice, as in the Old Testament and Talmudic traditions. This explains why the Armenians identified themselves as monophysites or miaphysites, and why they did not recognize the Holy Trinity as a sign of God. According to Armenians, Jesus is not one of the hypostases of God, the Father-Son or the Holy Spirit, but the sacrifice offered only to the supreme being through special rituals, so there is

nothing to do with God's own being, God's creation, or laws, or commandments of the rules of morality. We can conclude that the unlike other Christian churches and their populations (where the praying of gratitude to God is accepted as being the most important ritual), the ritual of blood sacrifice is the most important ritual in the religious tradition of the Armenians.

The first person to draw attention to this discrepancy between the Apostolic Armenian Church and the Orthodox Christian Churches was Zephaniah, the Archbishop of Turkestan and Tashkent (Bulanov at birth, Stefan Vasilyevich Sokolsky in his life outside religion), the theologian who was an outstanding author of many studies on Christian history and also a preacher. Among these works, the book "The Dispute Between Armenian and Universal Orthodox Churches" was compiled and published by an Orthodox Christian with footnotes and attachments. It was translated from Greek by the episcopate of Novomirgorod (Odessa, 1867). The second work is, "Non-Orthodox Christian Liturgy and Modern Life" (St. Petersburg, 1987), which was formed by adding brief summary of the hierarchical formations of the Iakovites and the Nestorians to the church services (especially liturgies), their churches and religious ceremonies, and the translation notes of the "Dispute between Armenian and Universal Orthodox Churches" that was translated from Greek. As viewed by Orthodoxy and the generally by Christianity, the Apostolic Armenian clergy's unique interpretation of Christ was explained by Zephaniah as the general backwardness of cultural development and particularly the inadequate development of language and (tied to that) world view through the preserving of the influence of the pagan mentality or Armenian traditional ceremonialism. Fanatically preserving their pre-Christian world view, Armenians refused to affirm the deficiencies of the Armenian language as a means of social communication, and argued that this was an outcome of the problems regarding civic development, rather than affirming that problems of civic development were caused by this deficiency.

Archbishop Zephaniah wrote the following while talking about the problems related to the socio-cultural development of Armenians as a result of the current conflict between the laws of the Christianity as a whole and the Armenian Apostolic Church:

"However, regarding the Armenians, I find it necessary to add the inadequacy of the Armenian language. It does not have the productivity of the Greek language in the expression of the theological terms and it is not possible to understand the difference between the concepts of *hypostasis* and *nature* in the Armenian language. When our people (the

Greeks) said that there were “two natures” in our God, Jesus Christ, the Armenians took it for “two faces” [author’s note: two hypostases] and, wishing to express that there are not two but “one face” in Christ, they said “one nature”, in reference to the allure of our argument.”

After this explanation, Archbishop Zephaniah, who supported his viewpoint with various examples of the ritual and service content of the church, makes the conclusion that Armenians completely ruled out the “Holy Trinity” and respected the “only the veneration of Jesus Christ”.

The main difference in the religious tradition or liturgy between Orthodoxy and Apostolic Armenian doctrine is that, according to Zephaniah, the “Bless Three Times Chant” is read as “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!” in Orthodoxy, while Armenian Apostolic doctrine it is read it as “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, crucified for us, have mercy on us!”. To the extent that we clearly see, the Armenians address not God, but one of his hypostasis - Jesus Christ, the God-Son or the Holy Spirit, the sacrifice for the sins of man.

Archbishop Zephaniah directly states this in his theological review as: “Not only at that time, but nowadays [author’s note: in the 1870’s] the Armenians talk about the Third Nature of God as belonging to the Second Nature [author’s note: the hypostasis of God], they do not attribute the pain to the Divine, but to the Messiah who suffers as a human for us.”⁹

Zephaniah, without expressing it directly and openly, allows us to understand that Jesus is perceived by Armenians not as a source of the New Testament, which is the criteria of the Christian legal regulations and moral stance that are prevailing for the disciples of all these dogmas, but as a similarity to the atonement sacrifice. Thus, the Armenian theological tradition does not obligate the religious and spiritual values and norms accepted by Jesus by imposing the function of the worship object like an idol, which contradicts all religious aims of Christianity, to Jesus Christ. In other words, the idea of Christianity, including the saving of the spirit of mankind through faith, in the Armenian Christian theology – the teaching Jesus Christ’s existence, did not overcome the ritual of purifying the human soul through the sacrifice of the pagan product or just sacrifice. The continuing sacrificial

9 Архиеп Софония (Сокольский), *Современный быт и литургия христиан инославных, иаковитов и несториан с кратким очерком их иерархического состава, церковности, богослужения и всего, что принадлежит к отправлению их церковных служб, особенно же их литургии. С присовокуплением переводной записки о несогласии Церкви Армянской со Вселенскою Православною* (СПб: Тип. журнала «Странник», 1876): 399-400, 470-471.

cult is inevitably a source of sacrifice cults unique to Armenian cultures. According to the words of Archbishop Zephaniahis (Sokolsky), this is the result of the Armenian Apostolic Church's planned withdrawal of itself from the Christian and Orthodox churches of the 11th century, and to isolate the church-spiritual hierarchy.

The perception of Jesus Christ as a bloody and ritual sacrifice that provides purification and forgiveness to the one who sacrifices has nothing in common with the Orthodox or with the traditions of Christianity. In the Apostolic Armenian history, the worldview of the disciples of the Armenian Apostolic Church for hundreds of years is that it is the essence of the ethnic and religious identity of the Armenian people. In the past, the perception of the victims by the Armenians gave rise to two opposing insights that lifted the moral boundary between them: sacrificing yourself (as in the model set forth by Jesus) and presenting a sacrifice. This, in turn, transforms the world perception of the Armenians into a cult of casting, inevitably, the blood of a victim of a universal ceremony. Every blood shed for the sake of common interests begins to be perceived as a moral victory by the Armenians, whether the blood that has been shed is from themselves or from others. In this context, we can refer to the Armenian Apostolic teaching as a unique socio-cultural structure, since the association of two different religious traditions as a long-accepted religious model (Christianity in this case) and its archetypal foundation (the pagan content of our research). As a result, the Armenian Apostolic teaching, which became the accepted form of Christianity, could not eliminate its own pagan essence, which led to significant consequences for all the rest of the world.

In describing the moral status of the Armenians as a national or religious community in the mid-19th century, Archbishop Zephaniahis (Sokolsky), as an official of the Christian and Russian Orthodox Church, far removed from all kinds of xenophobia against Armenians as related to the formation of a religious organization and ethnicity, states:

“The principles and beliefs of Enlightenment spread amongst the Armenian people only in the previous century [Author's note: 18th century]. Despite their original purity, they did not have time to develop in a completely proper manner, to strengthen their practice and the church discipline. However, what is more important is that they did not have time to free themselves from the influence of solidified pre-Christian and completely barbarian customs that had long persisted among the sons of Haik and Aram after the adoption of Christianity. In such a situation, the variations regarding Orthodoxy that has emerged seem to be an inevitable consequence of their lack mental and moral

maturity, meaning a lack of firmness on the one hand, and a lack of strong political and church pressure on the other hand.”

In other words, when referring to the existence of the Armenians before they were orbiting the official political influence of the Russian Empire, Archbishop Zephaniahis attempted to explain with strong hints (but without directly asserting it) that some of the representatives of this ethnicity (the Armenians) lived within pagan customs while being only formally referred to as a Christian people.

While developing the above-mentioned idea, the archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church wrote about “rooted pre-Christian and completely barbarian traditions” as:

“First of all, we should pay attention to the traditions that are described as the crudest and inhumane customs. For example, after the spread of the Christian faith, the Armenians drove all the lepers and those carrying the elephantiasis (elephant) disease from their own dwellings, to forests and deserts, where unfortunate long-time sufferers were fed alive to predators and birds; those who were weak and disabled were not driven from their surroundings, but were left to their fate without any charity or help; they did not give shelter nor food to the travelers who were passing by. But, if we were to talk about a full pagan tradition among the Armenians who embraced the Christian religion, it would be about that brutal tradition of voluntarily self-immolation during the burial of relatives.”¹⁰

The expulsion people which inevitably doomed them to death, the abandonment of people without help, and self-immolation according to pagan rules are varieties of purifying sacrifice, which once again demonstrates the existence of archaic and archetypical sacrifice culture in the mentality and ideology of Armenians. This existed and was actively practiced not only in parallel, but contrary to the canons, dogmas, and traditions of Christian teaching. And if Armenians treated their co-religionists and own kinsmen like this, then we should not be surprised when they behaved in a more brutal fashion to people of other beliefs and ethnicities.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the religious worldview of this nation have been incorporated into politics. Thus, the Armenian people’s archaic stereotypes of worldviews were presented to the service of the Armenian

10 Софония, *Современный быт и литургия христиан...*, 482-483.

Revolutionary Federation “Dashnaksutyun” and other similar terrorist organizations. Their leaders and ideologists have actively mobilized their own religious and racial advocates to armed conflict in order to achieve a national state structure and have used the “holy grail of the sacrificial Armenian blood”, an archetype of ethnic worldviews, as time has shown, to reach their broader aims. According to the words of Russian Consul General V. F. Mayevsky in Van, this thesis was the driving force of the popular uprisings surrounding the northern provinces of Anatolia or Asian Turkey in the last five years of the nineteenth century. As a person from those days and a witness, the Consul Mayevskiy conveyed his own impressions of what he saw and heard in his publication titled “Armenian-Tatar Turmoil in the Caucasus as a Stage of the Armenian Question” (1st edition, Tbilisi, 1915, 2nd edition, Bakü 1993);

“However, I can say that during this period (1895-97), I had to travel around the Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and partly in Diyarbakir and Mosul provinces. And I really had to observe some things that were impossible to describe. What could be superior to one’s love for the homeland? ... But how did such love turn into this?

A tremendous tragedy flared up in front of my eyes under the titles ‘Blood needs to be shed! Armenians will get what they want!’ The Armenian language is foreign to me, but I had to hear this sentence dozens of times from the translator, and these sentences traveled to the far corners of Asian Turkey. I have witnessed that hidden Armenian organizations (serving to create a greater confusion in a possibly larger field) exhibited such inhumane and brutal behavior even to their own Armenian brothers, which caused me to doubt the existence of any human emotion within these people.”¹¹

Of course, this Russian diplomat did not understand the facts of ethno-psychology and the subtleties of the Armenians' religious-moral worldview as a person without education and experience in this field, nor did he have to understand it. However, despite this lack of knowledge and experience, being caught in the turbulence of the occurrences he was surrounded by, he was able to see and outline the bloody debauchery of those years in the northeastern Ottoman Empire, the realities of the events taking place and the irrationality of the relations of the members of those events.

11 В.Ф. Маевский, *Армяно-татарская смута на Кавказе как один из фазисов армянского вопроса*, Изд. 2-е (Баку: Шур, 1993): 15.

Of course, this Russian diplomat did not understand the facts of ethno-psychology and the subtleties of the Armenians' religious-moral worldview as a person without education and experience in this field, nor did he have to understand it. However, despite this lack of knowledge and experience, being caught in the turbulence of the occurrences he was surrounded by, he was able to see and outline the bloody debauchery of those years in the northeastern Ottoman Empire, the realities of the events taking place and the irrationality of the relations of the members of those events. While trying to find a logical explanation for this present situation, he attributed the Armenian groups' inclination towards excessive violence to the corruptive influence of the agents of Great Britain, the chief geopolitical rival of the time of the Russian Empire. He believed that these agents were behind the criminal acts of mass bloodshed, which was carried out by the "Dashnaksutyun" and other militants of Armenian terrorist organizations. He was not aware that he was a witness to a great sacrifice to the Armenian pagan god Migr. This bloody ritual should have resulted in the achievement of the Renaissance ideal (Greater Armenia), according to the deep beliefs of the victims themselves, as well as the organizers and performers of this ritual. This was entirely in accordance with the archetype of attaining an irrational new ideal through sacrifice, or the attainment of a new qualification, the practice of purification.

The existence of the collective national-religious consciousness of the archetypal within the Armenian ethnicity, the dominant pagan world view fully explains the existence of this mental-psychological phenomenon. According to this; it is not considered a crime for the Armenians to conduct terrorist acts. Moreover, the Armenian Apostolic Church and its whole union perceive them as heroic acts in the name of their followers. We argue that radical (or Orthodox) Armenians subconsciously perceive the conducting of a terrorist act resulting in human victims as a bloody sacrifice to the god Migr, such as killing, bombing, and arson. So far, this culture of sacrifice has been kept up to date, in a veiled form, not only among the Armenian people, but also by the Armenian Apostolic Church. To speak truthfully, it is necessary to say that in the cultural traditions of the Armenians over the past one and a half centuries, the ritual of sacrifice and sacrifice offering, rather than the "field of god-sacrifice" itself, has been made absolute. As a result, the direct action itself is sanctified, not the myth.

The widespread and well-known facts of sacrificial rituals performed by illegal and separatist armed militants of Nagorno-Karabakh during the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabagh war serve as proof of this conclusion. The book titled "My Brother's Road: An American's Faithful Journey to Armenia" written by Markar Melkonian, the brother of Monte Melkonian, who was one of the most

well-known Armenian field commanders of Nagorno-Karabakh and killed by Azerbaijani troops in the field of conflict in 1992, depicts the human sacrifice ritual in a very detailed way. Chapter 15 of this book is devoted to the narration of war crimes committed by Armenian militants against the Azerbaijani prisoners of war and the civilian population. He, as a direct participant of the 1988-1994 Nagorno-Karabakh war and as a witness of the events that he wrote, refers to these war crimes only “disciplinary problems” in his book (at least, the title of the relevant chapter –“Disciplinary Problems”- showcases that he views them as such). This text by itself can be a testimony in any international trial regarding the crimes of the Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh. However, we are interested in this book because it validates our argument that even today, Orthodox or extremist Armenians have not abandoned the pagan tradition of human sacrifice, and are thus not really the followers of today’s Christianity, but are in truth the followers of the of the pagan cult of Migr (the god of war). The value of this source lies in the fact that an Armenian militant, who participated in war activities and undoubtedly did not feel antipathy towards his fellow religionists, wrote about the facts of these kinds of sacrificial actions. Let us look at a few pieces of Markar Melkonian’s book;

“... in November 1990, Kechel¹² had kidnapped a young Azerbaijani Popular Front activist from a village across the border... The young Azeri, Syed, spent a month chained to the wall of a cottage near Yerevan. On New Year’s Eve 1991, Kechel and a couple of buddies, including a local police officer and their friend Ardag, dragged the captive to the top of Yeraplur, the burial hill near Yerevan. There they kicked Syed to his knees under a spreading tree next to the grave of a fellow fighter named Haroot. Then Kechel, a father of three children, began cutting Syed’s throat with a dull knife. At first Syed screamed, but after a while the screaming gave way to moaning and gurgling. Finally, when Ardag could no longer listen, he pushed a knife into Syed’s chest, putting an end to it. They drained Syed’s blood on top of Haroot’s grave and then left...”¹³

As we have seen, the basic elements of the bloody victim ritual are depicted in detail in this citation: killing for revenge in the form of a ritual on the grave by cutting the throat and puncturing the heart with the stab of a blunt knife.

12 The codename of Serzh, one of the militants of the Patriotic team under the command of Monte Melkonian.

13 Markar Melkonian, *My Brother’s Road: An American’s Fateful Journey to Armenia* (London - New-York: I.B. Tauris, 2005): 212.

In addition, in all rural areas, people kill livestock in the same way, to consume their meat as food. If this crime had an individual character, it could have been regarded as the extremity of drunken activists. However, Markar Melkonian's book also contains further evidence of the rituals of human sacrifices carried out by the militants of the illegal armed formations of the Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh separatists. Describing the ethnic cleansing of Karadagli rural area in Azerbaijan, at the end of February 1922, he wrote:

“As news spread that Karadaghlu [Karadagli] had been ‘cleaned out,’ several delegates arrived from the village of Krasnyi Bazar, fifteen kilometers to the south... Now, their fellow villagers politely requested four of the Azeri captives for the *madagh* [madakh] – a blood sacrifice. It was written, after all: an eye for an eye...”¹⁴

The most remarkable thing in this citation is that the name of “madakh” (or “matakh”), which is the ritual of presenting human sacrifice, is mentioned. As understood from the memoirs of Markar Melkonian, the local Karabakh Armenians, who were semi-educated villagers whose consciousness was shaped by ethnographic or national-religious values rather than civic values, emerged with the desire to practice this ritual. With all certainty and clarity, this statement alone proves that the Karabakh Armenians living in the country knew the meaning of the word “madakh” and understood it very well and were ready for this ritual practice in accordance with the preserved tradition. In addition, it is remarkable that this ritual is briefly explained by the principle of “an eye for an eye”, which is not in any way compatible with Christian morality that directly prohibits all forms of revenge, not only blood revenge. The fact that Armenians were present for seventeen centuries within Christianity under the administration or spiritual rule of the Armenian Apostolic Church could not change the pagan worldview of the clear majority. For this clear majority, the liturgical ritual of the Armenian Apostolicism continues to be a convenient cover for the unquestioning and unconditional fulfillment (if favorable external conditions are present) of traditions of archetypal dominant world views consistent with the bloody rituals and rituals of Armenian paganism.

The validity of this conclusion is demonstrated by the example of another traditional or pagan Armenian festival, which acquired an external Christian expression but nevertheless completely preserved its pagan essence in the Armenian Apostolic Church. In this case, we are referring to N. F. Dubrovin's ethnographic description of the Caucasus and the Armenian national festival Vardavar which we encountered in the “Russian Federation Official,

14 Melkonian, *My Brother's Road...*, 215.

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Religious, National and Traditional Holiday Calendar”. Moreover, this festival is interpreted afterwards as the reincarnation of Jesus Christ’s Transfiguration, which is a Christian festival. We read from N.F Dubrovin these words;

“Many of the Armenians, according to their thoughts, respect Anagida, the god of wisdom and glory, who protects the Armenian kingdom... Every year in the summer, when the roses have flowered, they celebrated the goddess’s day and the ceremony was called ‘Vardavar’. These days, in honor of the goddess, they decorate temples, sculptures, public spaces, and even themselves. Still, in honor of the same goddess, the Armenians decorate altars with flowers and sprinkle people with rose water during the ritual.”

At the same time, we read the following from the “Russian Federation’s Official, Religious, National and Traditional Holiday Calendar”:

“This festival dates back to the pre-Christian festival, which is dedicated to Asthik, the goddess of beauty and the guardian of the waters, and had many features of the festival of the goddess Anahit, the fertility god... According to celebration traditions, everybody is willing to pour water and swim. In a series of traditional Armenian festivals, Vartavar is the biggest summer festival, one of the most popular festivals of the Armenian Church and the most popular festivals among the people. Vardavar entertainment was accompanied by games, sporting events, horse races.”

However, these have no commonalities with the worship of Christianity, and are literally repeating the ancient Bacchanalia and Hellenistic Saturnalia.

It must be said that the modern descriptions of the traditions of Vardavar festival among the Armenians are no different from those that were described in the written ethnographic evidence a hundred years ago. In particular, in the festival description carried out in the Village of Chaikend (the Elizavetpol district of the Elizavetpol province), published in the Collection of materials for the description of Caucasian places and tribes in the the official publication of the Caucasian Training District Administration (Tbilisi, 1894, Issue 18), it is written: “... Every one of them necessarily comes with a bagpipe of a considerable size filled with wine and a few sheep to offer sacrifices. All this is eating and drinking on Vardavar day, with the noise and joy of the prayers which are accompanied by the sound of zurna.”¹⁵ This ethnographical writer,

15 А. Калашов, *Вардавар* // *Сборник материалов для описания местностей и племен Кавказа: Издание Управления Кавказского учебного округа. Вып. № 18* (Тифлис: Тип. Канцелярии Главноначальствующего гражданской частью на Кавказе, 1894. Отд. II): 2-3.

A. Kashalov was a teacher of the Elizavetpolsky Mikhailovsky Craft School. It is hard to believe he had a xenophobic attitude against Armenians. Even he was aware of the tradition of the Vardavar festival when he told that there was “sacrifice” and “prayers”; all activities carried out on this day had a concrete ritual character, and had a religious connotation and context that had no relations whatsoever with either Christian belief, Christian liturgical or worshipping tradition.

As we have seen in the example of this traditional Armenian festival, Christian ritualism serves as a camouflage image, a window dressing, to conceal the pagan essence. From here, we can make the following conclusion with great accuracy; a strict adherence to the laws and customs of paganism (which takes different forms depending on the immediate needs of the geopolitical situation) and other ideological world views are the main source of national-religious consolidation in its primitive existence in social and ethnocultural environment conditions based on the principles of common life and communication.

Paganism, which manifested itself most vividly and openly in the Soviet Socialist Armenia period, has always served as a tool in keeping the national consciousness of Armenians.

The Soviet government, including the Armenian Apostolic Church, saw all the churches in essence as 'opium for the people', as well-organized opponents against an absolute ideological authority and at the same time as institutions with a dominant role in public life.

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Armenian Apostolic Church, saw all the churches in essence as ‘opium for the people’, as well-organized opponents against an absolute ideological authority and at the same time as institutions with a dominant role in public life. That is why there was an immediate, effective persecution against all the churches. In this case, the Soviet Armenian government showed an effective administrative feature in order to not lose the Armenian national identity, and even directly supported the different phenomena of the Armenian culture. Based on these facts, it contributed to the formation of the national ideological neo-pagan cult. The simple proof of this are the appearance of Armenian pagan gods’ images in the streets of Yerevan and that information regarding them can be found in all modern guide books of the Armenian capital. The most famous of these are the three sculptures made of forged copper by the

sculptor Karlen Nuridzhanyan in the 1970s and 1980s, which has become kind of business card for Yerevan in recent years. These sculptures are the “Vaagn the Dragon Reaper” on Mashtots Avenue, and the “Hayk Nahapet” and “Tork Angeh” monuments in the Nor-Nork area of Yerevan. According to the Armenian pagan mythology, the god or semi-god (hero in antiquity) Vahagn the dragon reaper is a counterpart to Zeus from the god-king pantheon of ancient Greek gods. The mythological hero Hayk Nahapet is considered the founder of the legendary Armenian dynasty, Haykazuni, extending to Armenians until the Patriarch Fogorma, the great-grandson t of Noah. The stonemason god Tork Angeh, who is a deformed giant, is the grandson of Hayk Nahapet.

It is quite clear that in the years when Soviet forces dominated in Armenia, the publication of such sculptures on the streets of Yerevan could not have taken place without direct order or without the permission of the republican authorities. These authorities were trying to fight against the influence of the Armenian Apostolic Church through the propagation of pagan symbols, confirming the spread of neo-paganism (or old paganism) associated with the worst forms of archaic traditional ritualism, including the offering of human sacrifices. Yerevan was the sole capital in the Soviet Union with such monumental representations on the streets, which was far from the official party-state ideology (proletarian internationalism) in form and content. This shows that, according to the worldviews and ideological structures of the Armenian communists, they are no different from the militant pagan that actively contributes to the formation of ideas that are compatible with pre-Christian collective and individual worldview archetypes. Therefore, it is not surprising that the ritual of “madakh” human sacrifice, which is fully consistent with the cultural tradition of the Armenian community established in the 1960-70s by the local Soviet party forces, has been implemented many times by the Nagorno-Karabakh separatist Armenian during the war against Azerbaijan.

If we can come to the conclusion regarding what was mentioned above, we can summarize the characteristic ideas that trigger the aggressive attitude of Armenian nationalists to other peoples and religious groups and the origin of modern ideologies.

As believers of the Christian teachings and as the adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church, and although their national and religious affiliations are explicitly mentioned, Armenians use rituals similar to Christianity to conceal their archetypal pagan worldviews. Although the basic festivals of the Armenian Apostolic Church coincide with the basic or most important twelve

festivals of traditional Christianity, these festivals ideologically have a pagan character and culture close to the Hellenistic spiritual tradition of antiquity within their sacred tradition. Sacrifice for the sake of common national, religious, or unity interests is the cornerstone of Armenian national-religious worldviews. Moreover, depending on the shape and character of the sacrifice, there is a hierarchy in the Armenian national-cultural tradition, corresponding to practices ending with offering human sacrifice starting from material donations to general, public or religious needs.

The last type of the sacrifice act has its own hierarchy. The first place is the bloody revenge or the ritual killing of the captive enemy to take revenge for the death of his own co-religionist and kinsmen. The killing of the enemy, which threatens the interests of the union, society or religion, takes place in the next step of this hierarchy. In both the first and second case, the victim is perceived as an object of sacrifice to the pagan god Migr. As we have seen from the “official religious, national and traditional holiday calendar of the Russian Federation”, the cult of this god has been respected by the Armenians up to now. At the very top of the ritual of offering the human sacrifice in the perception of the Armenians is voluntary self-sacrifice in the name of national-religious or unity interests. Such people are regarded as folk heroes, and they are included as saints in the Armenian Apostolic Church, regardless of whether these people previously led a pious life or not.

The whole of the above gives us a reason to talk about this; in the worldview system of the Armenian people, terrorist action perpetrated against the enemy or hostile state has not only been permitted, but has also been encouraged by the traditional norms of religion. This is why representatives from Armenian ethno-religious union did not consider such an action as a crime against God’s commandments or against the order of the world, but, in accordance with national and religious traditions (and approved by Armenian society), considered it as a commitment of the cult for pagan god Migr. For this reason, far from being considered a reprehensible act, it is considered to be a duty. And with this, the following can be explained; in the political programs of the Armenian Revolutionary parties “Hunchak” and “Dashnaksutyun”, terrorism has always been the main instrument of political struggle, and the modern Armenian state structure itself is a natural result of the terrorist activities of Armenian national-religious militants, regarded as radicals according to international legal norms.

The dangerous blend of Christianity ritualism and pagan mentality, which has increased with the political efforts of the Soviet-era Armenian administration of this newly-formed state, determines the spread of the neo-pagan ideology

in society and the necessity of moral-psychological dominants and Armenian people lives in the 21st century. As a result, terrorism and the theory and practice of terrorism, or this as a concept of foreign policy activity, as a means of war for national and official interests, have become an instrument of the internal politics of this country. The almost legitimate existence of private or collective armed formations associated with political parties or bureaucratic groups, which are easily used by parliamentarians for extra-parliamentary competition, has become an ordinary rule for modern Armenia.

The most obvious proof of the validity of this assertion is the latest armed revolt in Yerevan in the summer of 2016. During the two weeks between 17 and 30 July, the “Sasna Tsrer” (can be translated as the Daredevils of Sassoun/Sasun) militants with thirty or so people equipped with military-grade automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades, captured a police precinct in Yerevan, killed four police officers and took hostages. They demanded the release of one of their leaders, the well-known international Armenian terrorist Zhirayr Sefilyan, known as the former specialist in the destructive and subversive activities of the Nagorno-Karabakh separatist illegal armed organizations and partisan warfare, and the formerly known as the “American green beret”. Sefilyan had been arrested multiple times, and in the last time, he was arrested by the Armenian government on suspicion that he was preparing to carry out a coup d'état against the government. The establishment of illegal armed formations in modern countries of the world and the taking of hostages for political demands aimed at the state are considered terrorist offenses. However, such criminal acts are not considered a crime in contemporary Armenia; the militants who surrendered count themselves as “prisoners of war”. The state merely charges these militants for the crimes of killing, subjugation, destroying the property of another, and illegal arms circulation in accordance with the provisions of the national criminal law, as if there has been no mention of a coup d'état attempt by an illegal armed formation and armed revolt.

The situation regarding the rebels from the group “Sasna Tsrer” shows us in an open and effective manner that, while the actions in modern Armenia are described as terrorist offenses according to the criminal law of other countries and international law, the present situation in Armenia is the reality of everyday life. It is even perceived as a principle of the functioning of the country's domestic politics. It is not surprising, however, when one considers the dogmas and moral-ethical imperatives of the religious worldview that have shaped the mentality of Armenian society for centuries. In fact, the political terror practice used by Armenians against the other countries throughout the 20th century is the main threat to the national security and existence of

Armenia, and it is now firmly in place in the everyday life of Armenia's internal political life. Georges Jacques Danton, one of the leaders of the Great French Bourgeois Revolution of 1789, who was sentenced to death by his own brothers-in-arms, said these words as he stepped into the scaffold of the guillotine; "Revolution eats its own children." We can say the following by changing these words: "The terror that gives birth to the state will inevitably destroy its own baby."

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE MONTEBELLO STATEMENT OF THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION IN LIGHT OF THE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS OF THE ARMENIAN DIASPORA ON TURKEY

(ERMENİ DEVRİMCİ FEDERASYONU'NUN MONTEBELLO BİLDİRİSİNİN
ERMENİ DİASPORASININ TÜRKİYE ÜZERİNDEKİ BÖLGESEL
İDDIALARI İŞİĞİNDA İNCELENMESİ)

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Abstract: *The demands contained in a statement issued by Regional Convention of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) of the Western United States, in Montebello on June 22, 2014 are significant as they reveal both the attitude of Armenian Diaspora towards Turkey and their political strategy. This article analyzes the aforementioned statement in terms of its relationship with the historic Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Armenia and comments on the weak basis of the statement's content.*

Keywords: *Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), Armenian Diaspora, Armenia, Turkey, 49th Regional Convention, Montebello, Armenian Relocation*

Öz: *Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu'nun (ARF/Taşnak Partisi) Batı Amerika Bürosu 22 Haziran 2014 tarihinde ABD'nin Kaliforniya eyaletinin Montebello şehrinde bir bildiri yayımlamıştır. Söz konusu bildiride yer alan talepler, Ermeni Diasporasının Türkiye'ye ilişkin tutumunu ve siyasi stratejilerini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu makale Montebello bildirisini Ermenistan Bağımsızlık Bildirgesi ile bağlantısı çerçevesinde değerlendirmekte, aynı zamanda bildirinin içeriğinin oturtulduğu temellerin zayıflığı hakkında yorum yapmaktadır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu (ARF), Ermeni Diasporası, Ermenistan, Türkiye, 49'uncu Bölgesel Kongre, Montebello, Ermeni Sevk ve İskanı*

INTRODUCTION

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) branch in the Western United States adopted a series of decisions and demands with unanimous vote in their 49th Regional Convention that was held on June 22, 2014 in Montebello, California.

The most striking aspect of the statement is the fact that it is written like an ultimatum. Since it contains similar demands, the Montebello Statement reminds us of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Armenia ratified on August 23, 1990 in the Armenian Parliament. In this respect, the statement is not merely reflecting the demands of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, but the demands put forth by Republic of Armenia in its declaration of independence as well.

The fourteenth paragraph of the Montebello Statement is similar to the 11th Article of Republic of Armenia's Declaration of Independence (henceforth to be referred to simply as the "Declaration of Independence"). The most relevant statement relating to Turkey in the Declaration of Independence is as follows:

"The Republic of Armenia considers it a duty upon itself to achieve the international recognition of the genocide committed during 1915, in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia¹ as well as supporting of these efforts and the will standing behind the aim of having these demands recognized by Turkey."²

In the aforementioned declaration and ARF's statement, Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, which was a part of the Ottoman Empire for six centuries and which remains as an integral part of the Republic of Turkey since its foundation in 1923, are referred to as "Western Armenia", in other words, both documents view part of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Turkey as an integral part of the Republic of Armenia.

1 Armenia (as per its Declaration of Independence) and the Armenian Diaspora quotes 19 provinces of Turkey as "Western Armenia" and regards this territory as Armenian soil.

2 "Armenian Declaration of Independence" (Government of the Republic of Armenia, August 23, 1990), <http://www.gov.am/en/independence/>

MONTEBELLO STATEMENT³

The statement which includes a list of demands was published by the ARF-aligned *Asbarez*⁴ newspaper and translated into Turkish by the officials of the “Repair-Future” initiative.⁵

The leaders of the ARF have issued the demands summarized below in the name of the Armenians living in Western United States:

• Recognition of Genocide and Restitution

ARTICLE No: 1 - “The Republic of Turkey must unequivocally acknowledge and bear the consequences of the Armenian Genocide planned and implemented by the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1919, continued to be perpetrated by the Kemalist Movement from 1920-1923, and leading to ethnic cleansing by its own predecessor regime of the modern Republic of Turkey from 1924-1937. The Republic of Turkey must take prompt and meaningful steps toward restitution to the Armenian Nation for its Genocidal Crime Against Humanity.”⁶

The Armenian Diaspora and the Republic of Armenia use the false pretext of an “Armenian genocide” as the starting point for all of their political demands.

In the absence of a substantive arguments to establish the claims of ill-intent on the part of the Ottoman government officials regarding the relocation of Armenians in 1915 from areas designated as security zones in the east of the Ottoman Empire, where armed Armenian groups and a certain portion of the Armenian populace (willingly or unwillingly due to being coerced by armed Armenian groups) were aiding and abetting the Russian invading forces,⁷ or elsewhere where they constituted a security risk for Ottoman military forces, nor proving with historic facts that those events fit the United Nations’ definition of genocide as per the Convention of 1948, the Armenian Diaspora and the Republic of Armenia use the false pretext of an “Armenian genocide” as the starting point for all of their political demands.

3 The full text of the statement can be found in the Appendix section of this issue.

4 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide,” *Asbarez*, June 22, 2014.

5 REPAIR – FUTURE Armenian-Turkish platform” is a project conducted by the French-Armenian NGO Yerkir Europe. This project aims to debate the Armenian-Turkish issues by allowing various people in the Turkish, Armenian and Armenian Diaspora civil societies to voice their standpoints.

6 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

7 Mehmet Perinçek, *Rus Devlet Arşivlerinden 150 Belgede Ermeni Meselesi* (İstanbul: Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, 2012), 141.

Some Armenian statesmen who lived in that period accepted legitimacy of the decisions taken by the Ottoman Empire in relation to the relocation. The report, of which a summary is given below, presented by Hovannes Katchaznoui, the first Prime Minister of the Armenian State which was established in July 1918, during a Dashnaksutyun Party meeting held in Bucharest in 1923, emphasized that the Ottoman government was justified in relocating Armenians in 1915:⁸

“The winter of 1914 and first months of 1915, were a period of excitement and hope for the Russian Armenians including the Dashnaksutyun. We had embraced Russia wholeheartedly. Without any grounds to do so, we were caught up in an atmosphere of victory; in return for our loyalty, efforts and assistance, we were sure that the Russian Tsarist government was going to gift us an independent Armenia encompassing South Caucasus and Armenian vilayets to be liberated from Turkey. Our minds were foggy. By imposing our own desires onto others, giving great importance to empty promises of irresponsible people and with the impact of self-hypnosis we did not comprehend reality and got swept away in illusions... but the Turks knew what they were doing, and today there is no reason for them to have any regrets.”⁹

Even though the forced migration process during the relocation were started in June 1915 and was halted due to harsh winter conditions in November 1915,¹⁰ and the law of relocation was rescinded on February 21, 1916 with a royal decree,¹¹ it is claimed by the ARF that the migration process was continued without interruption from 1915 to 1919 and further during 1919-1923 until the foundation of the modern Republic of Turkey and continued further during the early years of the Republic. The statement further continues as if the world powers at the time did not exclude the warring parties from the 1948 Convention of Genocide. The ARF neglect to mention the fact that a noteworthy portion of the Ottoman Armenians were waging a war against their

8 Türkaya Ataöv, *An Armenian Source: Hovannes Katchaznoui*, (Ankara: Ankara University Faculty of Political Science, 1985), 3–13.

9 Ovanes Kaçaznoui, *Taşnak Partisi'nin Yapacağı Bir Şey Yok* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2005), 4–5; *The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksoution) Has Nothing to Do Any More* (New York: Armenian Information Service, 1955).

10 Yusuf Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, n.d.), 81; “Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi” (Ottoman Empire, Ministry of Interior, n.d.), 57/273; “Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi” (Ottoman Empire, Ministry of Interior, n.d.), 58/124; “Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi” (Ottoman Empire, Ministry of Interior, n.d.), 58/161; “Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi” (Ottoman Empire, Ministry of Interior, n.d.), 59/123; “Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi” (Ottoman Empire, Ministry of Interior, n.d.), 60/190.

11 Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 81.

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own state (the Ottoman Empire) and its armies, that they fought alongside the Russian armies on the Eastern Front,¹² and later alongside the French armies in the south of the Ottoman Empire.¹³ The ARF thus attempts to gloss over the military necessity underlying the Ottoman government's decision to relocate its Armenian subjects from areas designated as security zones.

In World War One, the Ottoman Armenians who engaged in war against their own state did exactly what was needed to aid Russian victory: holding down Ottoman units many times the size of the rebel forces, crippling military communications, forcing hundreds of thousands of refugees on to the roads to hinder army movements, and ultimately making the Ottomans abandon strategies that might have won the war in the East.¹⁴

Similarly, the support provided to the occupying French forces was expressed by Boghos Nubar Pasha (who acted as the leader of the "Armenian National Delegation" during the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-20) with the following words:

"... In 1919 and 1920, when the Kemalists carried out an offensive against the French troops, the Armenians fought for France. This was also the case in Maras, Haçin, Pozantı and Sis (Kozan). The French were able to take over Antep thanks to the Armenians. That is the reason why Armenians are France's ally in Cilicia."¹⁵

I hold the opinion that the arguments put forth by the Armenian Diaspora reduce the value of the term "genocide" because their arguments fail to distinguish between the term "genocide" and the relocation of rebellious populations during wartime. The term "genocide" is a specifically defined legal term. It describes a crime specifically defined by the 1948 Genocide Convention and must be addressed accordingly. The existence of the crime of genocide can be legally determined only by the judges of a competent tribunal on the basis of the prescribed legal criteria and after a fair and impartial trial.¹⁶

12 "Genelkurmay ATASE Arşivi" (Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, n.d.), No: ½, Kls:528, Dos:2061, Fih:21-18, No: 4/3671; Aram Turabian, *Les Volontaires Arméniens Sous Les Drapeaux Français*, 1917, 6.

13 Yusuf Halaçoğlu et al., *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu yayınları, 2004), 141.

14 Justin McCarthy et al., *The Armenian Rebellion at Van* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2006), 250–51.

15 Halaçoğlu et al., *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç*, 137; "US Archives," n.d., T1192, Roll 4, 860J.01/431.

16 Pulat Tacar and Maxime Gauin, "State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility: The Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey and the Armenian Genocide: A Reply to Vahagn Avedian," *The European Journal of International Law* 23, no. 3 (n.d.): 825.

To term the events of 1915 as genocide is to detach genocide from its legal definition and to use it for political or moral purposes. Whether it is sound to keep hammering on a legal term based on non-legal considerations is doubtful. It adds to a wrong conceptualization of the legal system and eventually could lead to a devaluation of the norm itself.¹⁷

This principle of law was confirmed by the decision of Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case of *Perinçek vs. Switzerland* case:

“...Not only was the Court [EChHR] not required to determine whether the massacres and mass deportations suffered by the Armenian people at the hands of the Ottoman Empire from 1915 onwards could be characterised as genocide within the meaning of that term in international law; it also had no authority to make legally binding pronouncements, one way or the other, on this point.”¹⁸

However, the lobbying groups on behalf of the Armenian Diaspora and some of their allies have deliberately sought to avoid discussions relating to the legal aspects of this issue, because they are probably aware of the fact that it would weaken their genocide claims that they aim to impose through having parliaments pass resolutions or laws recognizing the events of 1915 as genocide. They have chosen to adopt a dogmatic political approach to underline the tragic nature of the incidents so that they can make genocide claims more easily acceptable to the public.¹⁹

• Redrawing the Borders

ARTICLE No: 3 - “Restitution of territorial property rights of the Armenian Nation shall include the redrawing of international borders on the basis of the final and binding Arbitral Award of United States President Woodrow Wilson issued on November 22, 1920, including but not limited to reunification with the Republic of Armenia of the territories and provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and Trabzon²⁰ to

17 Tacar and Gauin, “State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility...,” 123.

18 “*Perinçek v. Switzerland* [GC] - 27510/08 - Judgment 15.10.2015 [GC]” (European Court of Human Rights, October 15, 2015), [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{"itemid":\["002-10930"\]}](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{); (Legal summary of the Grand Chamber’s verdict regarding the *Perinçek v. Switzerland* Case)

19 Tacar and Gauin, “State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility...,” 824; Gündüz Aktan, “The Armenian Problem and International Law,” n.d., <http://web.itu.edu.tr/~altilar/tobi/e-library/TheArmenians/InternationalLaw.pdf>

20 The names of provinces refer to the Ottoman provincial divisions. According to the provincial partition of Republic of Turkey, these provinces includes 20 cities of current day Turkey.

provide unrestricted access to the Black Sea, as well as the regions of Kars and Ardahan from within the borders of the First Independent Republic of Armenia, and including Mount Ararat and its surrounding territories.”²¹

ARF’s statements on the matter reveal their political strategy to have the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres implemented. This treaty (which was actually not ratified by the Ottoman government) was to be enacted in the aftermath of World War One with the intention of partitioning the remainder of the Ottoman Empire among the victorious powers, with provisions given to the Armenians and Greeks for states in Anatolia. Consequently, such a strategy could potentially result in the destabilization of regional peace.

The current strategy of the Armenian Diaspora, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, and the Republic of Armenia is rested in the century goal of a state with vast lands stretching all the way from the Caspian Sea, where lies considerable oil riches of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Black Sea to the Mediterranean coasts of present-day Turkey. Such lands would give enormous strategic value to this hypothetical Armenian state.

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On the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia (besides the reference to “Western Armenia” in Armenia’s Declaration of Independence), there are multiple references to “Western Armenia”,²² which is imagined by the ARF and other nationalist Armenians to stretch from the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea to the coasts of the Black Sea and overlaps with the Eastern Anatolian territory of the Republic of Turkey.

21 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

22 Please see these examples: “Genocide,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Republic of Armenia*, accessed September 26, 2017, <http://www.mfa.am/en/what-is-genocide/>; “Cultural Genocide,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Republic of Armenia*, accessed September 26, 2017, <http://mfa.am/en/cultural-genocide/>; “History,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Republic of Armenia*, accessed September 26, 2017, <http://www.mfa.am/en/armenia-history/#armenia>; “The Crime of Genocide: Prevention, Condemnation and Elimination of Consequences,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Republic of Armenia*, accessed September 26, 2017, http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/the_crime_of_genocide.pdf

Furthermore, the political elite of Armenia continue to this day to remain ambiguous²³ about whether the Republic of Armenia recognizes its borders with the Republic of Turkey, and thus refuse to explicitly state that Armenia recognizes Turkey's territorial integrity. Two clear examples of this are the issuance of the "Pan-Armenian Declaration on the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide" and Shavarsh Kocharyan's (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia) refusal to make a statement about Armenia recognizing its borders with Turkey.

The Pan-Armenian Declaration was "ceremoniously issued by the President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan" in January 2015, and makes references to the "the Treaty of Sèvres²⁴ and US President Woodrow Wilson's Arbitral Award (which aimed to give a large part of the Ottoman Empire's territories to Armenians, territories in which Armenians had never been anywhere near a majority)."²⁵ One month after the issuance of the Pan-Armenian Declaration, Shavarsh Kocharyan, in a TV show airing in Armenia, refused to answer the following question posed by the TV show's host, "Does Armenia recognize Turkey's borders or not?" and diverted the discussion when the show's host insisted on getting an answer to his question.²⁶

All of these show the extent to which the Republic of Armenia desires to flout international law related to the inviolability of national borders if given the opportunity. Without any substantive logical arguments, both Armenia and ARF claim that the Republic of Turkey illegally occupies what they term "Western Armenia." By considering a part of the sovereign territory of Turkey as "Western Armenia", the government of Armenia is in violation of Chapter I, Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations that instructs "all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations."²⁷

23 Mehmet Ođuzhan Tulun, "The Art Of Dodging The Question," *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Commentary No: 2015 / 36, March 19, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/THE-ART-OF-DODGING-THE-QUESTION>

24 To remind the reader, 1920 Treaty of Sèvres was signed between the victorious Allied Powers of the First World War and the defeated Ottoman Empire. The Treaty was designed to partition Ottoman Empire's territories and confine Turks to a relatively small piece of land in Central Anatolia where they would be open to interventions and attacks by surrounding powers. The Treaty was never ratified, and became null and void with the signing of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.

25 Tulun, "The Art Of Dodging The Question."

26 Tulun, "The Art Of Dodging The Question."

27 "Charter of the United Nations Chapter I, Article 2" (United Nations, n.d.), <http://www.United Nations.org/en/sections/United Nations-charter/html>

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Eastern Anatolia has been under the sovereignty of Turks one way or another from the year 1071 onwards. The population of Turkish citizens currently living in those lands is approximately 14.5 million, which is five times more than the total population of Armenia.²⁸

Upon examining history of Armenians in the area, it can be observed that Armenians never had any kind of sovereignty over Eastern Anatolia, except for an Armenian kingdom under the reign of Tigranes II (95–55 BC). During various periods, Armenians were under the rule of Arabs, Persians, and Byzantines.²⁹ Until the Seljuks defeated the Byzantines and gained control of Anatolia, Armenians had been living in principalities as the vassals of the Byzantine Empire.³⁰ But they were not content with the rule of the Byzantines. When the Byzantine Emperor Justinian tried to persuade the Armenians to accept Byzantine rule instead of Arabs, Armenians replied him that:

“During the period in which we have acknowledged Byzantine rule we have received, in times difficulty and hardship, nothing but the most ludicrous forms of assistance. Our allegiance has consistently been rewarded by insults. To swear allegiance to you means abandoning ourselves to ruin and destitution. Allow us to remain under the rule of our present masters, who well know how to exercise their authority over us.”³¹

Armenians dissatisfaction of the Byzantine policy towards Armenians was also emphasized by other writers. Christopher J. Walker evaluates the early eleventh century Byzantine policy towards Armenians as expansionist and annexationist.³²

Once the Turks started to rule over these lands, Armenians then became dependent on the Seljuks, who were praised by the Armenian writers of the time.³³ Armenian historian Mateos of Urfa’s following words in reference to Seljuk ruler Melik Shah demonstrates the views Armenians held towards their rulers:

28 The population of Armenia is 2,986,100 (as of January 1, 2017).

29 Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question* (İstanbul: Alas Ofset, 1988), 289–90.

30 Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File, The Myth of Innocence Exposed* (London, Nicosia and İstanbul: K. Rustem & Bro. and Weidenfeld & Nicholson Ltd, 1985), 9–17.

31 Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, 290.

32 J. Christopher Walker, *Armenia, The Survival of a Nation* (New York: St. Martin’s Press Inc., 1980), 30.

33 Mateos of Urfa, *Vekayiname (952-1136) and Father Grigor’s Zeyli (1131-1162)*, trans. Hrant D. Andreasyan (Ankara, 1987), 171.

“The (Turkish) Sultan’s heart was filled with compassion for Christians. He gazed upon the people of the countries he passed through with the affection of a father. Thus, he gained dominance over many states and cities without any battle.”³⁴

After the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, the Armenians became an integral part of the state. During the rise of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians became loyal subjects of the state and a great number of Armenians were chosen to serve in high governmental posts. In the Ottoman government, there were a total 22 Armenian ministers, 33 members of parliament, 29 generals, 7 ambassadors, 11 consul generals, 11 academicians, and 41 senior government officers.³⁵ 10 Armenians served as members of parliament in the first parliament and 11 served in the second one.³⁶

However, during the downfall period, driven by provocations of the Great Powers, Armenian nationalists began to formulate ideas relating to an independent Armenia on territory that they could grab from the fragments of a disintegrated Ottoman Empire.³⁷ They almost succeeded with the declaration of the short-lived First Republic of Armenia over a small territory with the support of Britain in 1918.³⁸ The republic lasted for over two years and was eventually annexed by the Soviet Union in 1922. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the republic regained its independence in 1991. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the issue of territorial claims against Turkey has become an issue again. The contested landmass from Turkey is significant. It includes vast historical Turkish territories such as the regions of Kars-Ardahan including Ağrı Mountain (Mount Ararat) and the surrounding cities like Van, Bitlis, and Erzurum together with the port city of Trabzon in order to gain access to the Black Sea coast on the north.

In this regard, both the government of the Republic of Armenia and the ARF consider the Republic of Turkey as if it is an occupying a sovereign part of Armenian territory and they view the Turkish Armed Forces as an occupying force. These statements bare similarity with these of the terrorist organization

34 Mateos of Urfa, *Vekayiname (952-1136) and Father Grigor’s Zeyli (1131-1162)*.

35 Salih Yılmaz, “Statements against Turks and supposed Armenian genocide in a 10th grade history school book taught in the Armenian Republic”, *Research on the Turkish World*, Number: 177, December 2008, 112

36 “Aide-Mémorie on the Rights of Minorities in Turkey” (National Association for The Ottoman Society of Nations, 1922), 31.

37 *Historical Facts in Turkish-Armenian Relations* (İstanbul: Talaat Pasha Committee Publication-2, 2015), 30.

38 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia*, (Los Angeles: University of California, 1971), 271.

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PKK³⁹ and the two separatist Kurdish parties, in Turkey HDP⁴⁰ and its predecessor BDP,⁴¹ and which mentioned their support for the Armenian Diaspora in their proclamation statements. The first official meeting between BDP and ARF took place during the Washington Kurdish Conference on October 28-29, 2013. The conference, the first ever organized in Washington by the U.S. office of the BDP, the leading pro-Kurdish political party in Turkey at that time, was held in the National Press Club. An Armenian delegation headed by ARF Bureau member Hagop Der Khatchadourian attended the conference and also held consultations regarding prospects for increased cooperation with several political leaders and other key Kurdish stakeholders.

In the opening speech, Der Khatchadourian stated that:

“We welcome this inaugural BDP conference in Washington, D.C., and the opportunity it afforded for meaningful dialogue about Armenian Kurdish cooperation, Western Armenia⁴², and Kurdistan, and, more broadly, the realization of the national and democratic aspirations of the Armenian and Kurdish nations.”⁴³

10 days later after the first meeting, a high-level meeting between delegations representing the ARF and the BDP was held in Istanbul on November 12. This was the first time since 1923 that an official ARF delegation visited Istanbul. As BDP and ARF announced the Istanbul meeting was part of an ongoing dialogue about the possibilities of Armenian-Kurdish cooperation, “Western Armenia” and “Kurdistan”, as well as the national and democratic aspirations of the Armenian and Kurdish nations.⁴⁴

On November 30, 2013, an AYF (Armenian Youth Federation - Dashnaksutyun Youth Organization) delegation participated in the first youth congress of BDP. The congress was organized by the Youth Assembly of the BDP and was held in Diyarbakir. The AYF representatives addressed the attendees outlining their views on a number of regional and international issues faced by both the Armenian and Kurdish people. The speech, which was delivered first in Armenian and then in Turkish, focused on the shared history

39 PKK: Partiya Kerkera Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers Party)

40 HDP: Halkların Demokratik Partisi (Peoples’ Democratic Party)

41 BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) changed her name to DBP (Democratic Regions Party) in 2014

42 As it was mentioned in the introduction of this work Armenia and Armenian Diaspora quotes 19 provinces of Turkey as Western Armenia and regards this territory as Armenian soil.

43 “ARF Attends Washington Kurdish Conference,” *The Armenian Weekly*, October 29, 2013.

44 “BDP, ARF Hold High-Level Meeting in Istanbul,” *The Armenian Weekly*, November 12, 2013

and the cooperation of the two peoples.⁴⁵ Both sides emphasized the importance of mutual cooperation between ARF and BDP.

On the other hand, BDP declared that it would establish a platform in their party with the aim of accepting the Armenian genocide claims, and apologizing for the role played by the Kurdish population during the horrific events of World War One (1914-1918).⁴⁶

As for the PKK, BDP and ARF cooperation, CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) of the United States released the secret documents related to the cooperation between ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) and the PKK in 2016.⁴⁷ Sean Patrick Smyth states that:

“From the mid-1970s onwards PKK, ASALA and the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide desire to bring attention to the claims that the Ottoman Empire committed genocide against its Armenian population in 1915. According to the published notes of a joint press conference conducted by ASALA and the PKK in 1980, the two organizations had reached an agreement on issues including the foundation of a federal state and had also agreed to conduct joint armed actions against Turkey”.⁴⁸

• Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan

ARTICLE No: 4 - “Complete and unequivocal restoration of territorial property rights of the Armenian Nation shall include recognition of the independence and international sovereignty of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, Nakhichevan and their current borders.

The Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall immediately remove any and all blockades of Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) and allow unrestricted access through their borders.”⁴⁹

45 “AYF Participates in First BDP Youth Congress in Diyarbakir,” *The Armenian Weekly*, December 2, 2013

46 “Demokrasi ve Barış Konferansı Sonuç Bildirgesi” (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, May 27, 2013), <https://bdpblog.wordpress.com/20130527/demokrasi-ve-baris-konferansi-sonuc-bildirgesi#more-2791>

47 Hazel Çađan Elbir, “CIA, ASALA ve PKK İşbirliđi Belgelerinin Gizliliđini Kaldırdı,” *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Yorum No: 2017 / 16, February 14, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/tr/Yorum/CIA-ASALA-VE-PKK-ISBIRLIGI-BELGELERININ-GIZLILIGINI-KALDIRDI-1>

48 Sean Patrick Smyth, “Relations Between the PKK and ASALA,” *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Commentary No: 2017 / 42, May 29, 2017, <http://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/RELATIONS-BETWEEN-THE-PKK-AND-ASALA>

49 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

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The history of the Karabakh region is rooted in antiquity. It is one of the historic provinces of Azerbaijan. Karabakh has never been a part of the Armenian state until Armenian forces captured it by force in 1992.⁵⁰

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict started parallel to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The active phase of the conflict began in February of 1988 when the separatist powers of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan Republic, incited by the Republic of Armenia, started to gather for mass public meetings, cause riots and other acts of civil disturbance and disobedience promoting the idea of breaking off from Azerbaijan and joining with Armenia.⁵¹

Armenians' accusation of Azerbaijan for discriminating against the Christians that they used to solidify their claims have little basis in reality. The foremost reason was that the Armenians harbored desires to expand their tiny state at the expense of their neighbors.⁵² This process was completed when the Armenian administration within Karabakh declared their own state after the Azeri population had been expelled. This state, called the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, is not recognized by the international community, including Republic of Armenia itself.⁵³

As it currently stands, Nagorno-Karabakh fully controls five of the territories which surround it, including Kelbajar, Lachin, Kubatly, Jibrail and Zengelan, and has partial control of two other territories, Aghdam and Fizuli. This means that, all together, Armenia has occupied a great part of Azerbaijan's territory since the war period of 1993 and 1994.⁵⁴ These territories were stripped of its entire Azerbaijani population and other nationalities that lived there and resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands wounded.⁵⁵

Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the Republic of Armenia upon its establishment in 1991 after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, the policy pursued by the Republic of Armenia in an effort to annex the Nagorno-Karabakh region demonstrated the willingness of independent Armenia to subject neighboring country of Azerbaijan's civilians to massacres and to exile them from their homes in their

50 Samuel Weems, *Secrets of a "Christian" Terrorist State Armenia* (St. John Press, Dallas, 2002), 362.

51 Namig H. Aliyev, *International Law Issues in Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict* (Tbilisi: Publishing House "Universal," 2009), 13.

52 Weems, *Secrets of a "Christian" Terrorist State Armenia*, 364.

53 Weems, *Secrets of a "Christian" Terrorist State Armenia*, 364.

54 "Nagorno Karabakh: Understanding Conflict, Conflict Management Program Student Field Trip to the Region," (Johns Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies, 2013), 173–74.

55 Aliyev, *International Law Issues in Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*, 17.

effort to grab more land.⁵⁶ Within a few months, the conflict flared up into a full-size war, even involving Armenian regular troops and whole detachments of the former Soviet military on the side of the Karabakh Armenians.⁵⁷ Consequently, Azerbaijan, within less than two years of fighting, lost the entire territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast but also many of its neighboring and surrounding areas, which previously had a homogeneously Azeri population. In total, over 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan

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remains under occupation. Over a million Azeris have been forced to leave their homes in Armenia, Karabakh or its surrounding areas since the beginning of the conflict in 1988.⁵⁸ In an effort to stop the unprovoked attacks, the Republic of Turkey decided to close its borders with the Republic of Armenia as a result of that war.⁵⁹ Since that period, the Republic of Armenia has been illegally occupying one fifth of the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan, in spite of the United Nations Resolutions demanding Armenia to withdraw to the borders recognized by the international community.⁶⁰

Without mentioning that the Republic of Armenia invaded the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan together with seven (five fully, two partially) other regions of Azerbaijan

against international legal norms, ARF is attempting to portray as if the Republic of Turkey's closing of its border with Armenia was an act of aiding and abetting the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a co-conspirator and accomplice in an aggressive campaign against the Republic of Armenia.⁶¹ The reality was

56 Weems, *Secrets of a "Christian" Terrorist State Armenia*, 364.

57 Svante E. Cornell, "Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 1 (January 1998): 54.

58 Cornell, "Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh...", 51.

59 "Nagorno Karabakh: Understanding Conflict, Conflict Management Program Student Field Trip to the Region," 140.

60 "Security Council Resolutions" (United Nations, November 12, 1993), 884; "Security Council Resolutions" (United Nations, July 29, 1993), 853; "Security Council Resolutions" (United Nations, October 14, 1993), 874; *ibid.*; "Security Council Resolutions" (United Nations, April 30, 1993), 822; "General Assembly Resolution" (United Nations, March 14, 2008), 62/243.

61 Dr. Sabir Shahtakhty, *Chimerical "Great Armenia": Facts and Evidences* (İstanbul: Araz Yayınları, 2016), 37.

that the aggressive side was the Republic of Armenia, and the Republics of Turkey and Azerbaijan had simply responded to this aggression.

The Republic of Armenia and the Armenians of Karabakh continue to this day to defy the United Nations' calls for their withdrawal from the seven regions of Azerbaijan, which contain six cities, 12 towns, and 830 settlements. During Armenian occupations, as alluded to earlier, 1 million Azeri people were deported from their land, 20,000 were killed, more than 20,000 were wounded, 50,000 were disabled, and 5,101 remain missing.⁶²

During 1992-1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions (822, 853, 874 and 884) and made six statements of the UNSC President on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Each of the abovementioned resolutions and statements confirms the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, condemns the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and adjacent territories, demands the immediate cease-fire, suspension of hostilities, and withdrawal of all occupying forces from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Similarly, the demands of other international organizations have fallen on deaf ears. The Nagorno-Karabakh issue was elaborated upon in Resolution 1416 (2005) of OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) which states that the conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 25 January 2005 have acknowledged the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian armed forces and which stressed that the "occupation of foreign territory by a member state constitutes a grave violation of that state's obligations as a member of the Council of Europe."⁶³ However, none of these resolutions were taken into consideration by Armenia, and Azerbaijani territories remain under occupation. As such, article 4 of the Montebello Statement is revealed to be baseless when examining both historical events and international law and the stance of the international community.

• Restitution and Economic Assistance to the Republic of Armenia

Article 11: "The Republic of Turkey must make financial restitution to the descendants of the victims of the Armenian Genocide or their designated community or organizational representatives and provide

62 Elshan İzzatov, "Tarihten Günümüze Azeri-Ermeni İlişkilerinde Karabağ Sorunu" (Master, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2006), 76.

63 Aliyev, *International Law Issues in Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*, 35.

economic assistance to the Republic of Armenia in amounts and manners to be determined by a duly appointed international tribunal assembled for this purpose.”⁶⁴

When we look at the case history of the matter of reparations, it can be observed that a number of Armenians and Greeks who were former subjects of the Ottoman Empire (or people who are their descendants) and some American companies that had economic interests across the Ottoman territory demanded compensation from the Republic of Turkey for their pecuniary losses during the years 1914-1922.

The issue was also frequently brought to the agenda during the Lausanne Conference of 1922-23. The United States concluded a separate treaty with Turkey during the Lausanne Conference. Within this framework, it initiated talks with Turkey concerning the compensation of the abandoned properties of their own citizens. After signing the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey and the US agreed for talks on the issue of compensation.

Two committees were established in order to investigate such demands. The US committee was represented by G. Howland Shaw and Edgar W. Turlington under the chair of Rear Admiral Mark Bristol and Turkish committee by Dr. Adnan Adıvar with two other representatives namely Münir (Erteğün) and İbrahim Bey. At the end of the talks, the two sides agreed on the establishment of a commission to address the issue of compensation. With the exchange of notes on December 24, 1923, this agreement came into force. In this note, it is stated that 6 months after the mutual exchange of documents with regard to the ratification of the Turkish-American Treaty of Lausanne by the parliaments, a commission would convene in Istanbul consisting of two American and two Turkish members. This commission was to examine the files concerning the claims and to reach a conclusion within six months.

Upon the rejection of the Turkish-American Treaty of Lausanne in the US Congress, the signatory parties agreed that the talks concerning the claims would not be suspended. Within the framework of a “modus vivendi” regarding the establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the United States on February 17, 1927, it was agreed that the exchange of notes in Istanbul in relation to the claims would be implemented and a commission would be established. According to the reconciliation reached, if the Treaty of Lausanne in the US Congress would not be ratified until June 1, 1928 the Commission would gather six months after the exchange of ratification of a commercial

64 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

convention and a convention of establishment and residence. Finally, six months after the agreements were implemented on February 15, 1933, the Commission convened on August 15, 1933 in Istanbul. This time, the Turkish members of the commission were Fevki Bey and Esat Bey, while the American members were G. Howland and Julian E. Gillespie.⁶⁵

Treaty of Lausanne in the US Congress would not be ratified until June 1, 1928. The Commission would gather six months after the exchange of ratification of a commercial convention and a convention of establishment and residence. Finally, six months after the agreements were implemented on February 15, 1933, the Commission convened on 15 August 1933 in Istanbul. This time, the Turkish members of the commission were Fevki Bey and Esat Bey, while the American members were G. Howland and Julian E. Gillespie.⁶⁶

This US committee announced in the newspapers that those claiming compensation from the Republic of Turkey for their pecuniary losses that may have occurred between the years 1914-1922 should inform the committee. In this context, 1880 files were examined initially. Afterwards, 750 new files were also added to the list of claims examined.⁶⁷

Investigation of these committees revealed that most of the documents in the files presented were forgeries and a large number of cases (approximately 600) were found to be legally groundless by the American commission after a cursory examination. The US committee assessed that the necessary compensation to be paid totaled 55 million dollars on April 4, 1933. However, the committee reduced the figure to 5 million dollars soon after. Turkey notified that it could pay 500,000 dollars.⁶⁸

In September 1934, Turkish and US commissions agreed that the fair amount of payment would be 1,300,000 dollars as compensation in installments and payment of the first installment would be made on June 1, 1936. But after Turkey paid the 9th installment, the USA declared that no more payment was necessary because no more indemnity was left.⁶⁹

75 years after the compensation procedure was completed, some Armenian-Americans started to file lawsuits against the Republic of Turkey, seeking

65 Kemal Çiçek, "The 1934-1935 Turkish-American Compensation Agreement and Its Implications for Today," *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 23 (2011): 94–100.

66 Çiçek, "The 1934-1935 Turkish-American Compensation...", 100.

67 Çiçek, "The 1934-1935 Turkish-American Compensation...", 100.

68 Çiçek, "The 1934-1935 Turkish-American Compensation...", 108.

69 Çiçek, "The 1934-1935 Turkish-American Compensation...", 118.

compensation. These lawsuits also targeted the Central Bank of Turkey and the Ziraat Bank as financial instruments of the Turkish government.⁷⁰ These lawsuit procedures are in progress. If you look in these lawsuits carefully it can be easily observed that main object of these lawsuits is not only compensation but also bring the genocide claims as a part of the USA domestic law.⁷¹

• Designation of April 24 as a Day of Remembrance

Article 15: “The Republic of Turkey shall adopt as a part of its national educational system a full and complete acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide. The Republic of Turkey shall designate April 24 of each year as a Day of Remembrance for the Victims of the Armenian Genocide and shall permit and encourage unrestricted commemorative events within its current and future borders, starting with April 24, 2015, the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide.”⁷²

By means of these demands, ARF seeks to compel the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge the Armenian claims without also giving space to the nuanced nature of the claims, and the corresponding Turkish civilian losses. ARF seeks to influence younger generations in Turkey, in cooperation with civil society organizations, publishing houses, and separatist organizations, to bring the issue of the Armenian genocide claims to public attention in pursuit of their political objectives. The ARF and their political allies within Turkey also aim to create feelings of guilt among the new Turkish generation so that they can blame their ancestors with a crime that they did not commit.

The date ARF symbolically chose, April 24, to commemorate what they term the “Armenian Genocide” is the date on which prominent leaders of the Armenian revolutionary organizations were taken under custody in Istanbul and other major cities.⁷³

70 “Armenian-Americans File Multi-Billion Dollar Lawsuit Against Turkey,” *Huffington Post*, August 4, 2010, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/armenian-americans>.

71 Aslan Yavuz Şir, “Amerika Birleşik Devletleri Mahkemelerinde Açılan Tazminat Davaları Üzerine,” *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Yorum No: 2011 / 27, September 26, 2011, <http://avim.org.tr/tr/Yorum/AMERIKA-BIRLESIK-DEVLETLERI-MAHKEMELERINDE-ACILAN-TAZMINAT-DAVALARI-UZERINE>

72 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

73 Kemal Çiçek, *Ermenilerin Zorunlu Göçü 1915-1917*, vol. 110, XVI (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2005), 34.

Before the decision to arrest the leaders of Armenian revolutionary organizations, a significant number of persons, including Armenian member of parliaments, left the Ottoman Empire to join the voluntary troops formed by the Armenians in Russian territories. According to an Ottoman official document, “Armenian committees have been working to accomplish autonomy for the Armenians by means of political and revolutionary societies,” and this goal led them to cooperate with the Allied Powers, primarily the Russians, against the Ottoman government.⁷⁴

Cooperation between Allied Forces and Armenian Revolutionary Committees

It is recorded in official Ottoman publications even before the Ottomans entered the war that the British, French and even Italian consuls in addition to the Russians were helping the revolutionary Armenian committees to communicate with the outside world and were assisting them with money, arms, and other ways.⁷⁵

The Armenian writer M. Varantyan in his work *The History of the Dashnak Party* explains the political program of the Armenian committees as follows, “the aim of the organization is to incite rebellion and as a consequence of this rebellion to gain independence or freedom as in Bulgaria and Lebanon.” Similarly, the slogan of the committees was, “kill the Turks and Kurds wherever you find them. Kill reactionaries, those who aren’t true to their word, Armenian collaborators and attain your revenge.”⁷⁶

The commander-in-chief of the Ottoman army reported that the Dashnaks at the Erzurum congress had adopted the following plans:

1. To preserve loyalty in tranquility pending the declaration of war, but to carry on with the preparations for arming with weapons being brought from Russia and others to be obtained locally.
2. (Armenian soldiers in the Ottoman Army) To join the Russian army with their arms if war is declared.

74 Yusuf Sarıay, “What Happened on April 24, 1915, The Circular of April 24, 1915, And the Arrest of Armenian Committee Members in Istanbul,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 14, no. 1&2 (2008): 75.

75 Mim Kemal Öke, *The Armenian Question 1914-1923* (Nicosia: K. Rustem & Brother, 1988), 70.

76 *Süslü, Azmi, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı*, vol. 5 (Ankara: Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü Yayın, 1990), 55.

3. To remain calm if the Ottoman army advances.
4. To form armed bands and begin programmed operations behind army lines should the Ottoman army then retreat or come to a standstill position.⁷⁷

Similar reports and the discovery of a number of bombs and weapons by security searches in several provinces convinced the government that the Armenian organizations were in preparation for an all-out rebellion.⁷⁸ An instruction of the Ottoman Supreme Military Command, delivered on February 27, 1915, cited the capture of these weapons as well as bombs and ciphered documents ordering that Armenian soldiers in the army be kept away from armed duties but also adding that loyal Armenians would not be harmed.⁷⁹

In this context, 226 Armenian committee leaders were arrested. Those arrested in Istanbul were not ordinary Armenians, but were committee members. Of the 19 Mauser guns, 74 Martini rifles, 111 Winchester guns, 96 mannlicher, 78 gira, 358 filovir, 3,591 pistols, and also 45,221 pistol bullets found by police searches conducted in Istanbul under the April 24 circular, all were delivered to the Maçka Military Warehouse in case the army needed them.

Circular on April 24, 1915

Since these measures did not produce the consequences desired, the government decided to close down the committees that had armed and incited the Armenians and to arrest their leaders. For this purpose, on April 24, 1915, the Ministry of Interior sent a circular to fourteen vilayets

(provinces) and 10 mutasarrıflık (counties). This circular ordered closing of the Armenian committees, namely, Hınçak, Dashnak and the like, seizure of their documents; arrest of the chiefs of the committees and the Armenians notorious for dissident activities; and gathering in more appropriate places those whose existence in their present places was regarded as dangerous. In this context, 226 Armenian committee leaders were arrested. Those arrested in Istanbul were not ordinary Armenians, but were committee members. Of the 19 Mauser guns, 74 Martini rifles, 111 Winchester guns, 96 mannlicher,

77 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey, A Disputed Genocide* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), 44.

78 Sarııay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 73; "Dähiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," n.d., 2/67-A; BOA., DH. EUM.

79 Sarııay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 76; "Document No. 1999," *Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi*, no. 85 (December 1985): 23–24.

78 gıra, 358 filovir, 3,591 pistols, and also 45,221 pistol bullets found by police searches conducted in Istanbul under the April 24 circular, all were delivered to the Maçka Military Warehouse in case the army needed them.⁸⁰

The Ministry of Interior sent a message to the Governorship of Ankara Province on April 25, 1915, stating that about 180 Armenian committee leaders whose stay in Istanbul was considered dangerous would be consigned to Ankara by train that day. Some 60-70 of these Armenians would be imprisoned in the Ayaş military warehouse, and about 100 of the rest would be sent to Çankırı.⁸¹

Those who sent to Çankırı were not put in prison. They were allowed to wander about the town freely, they were scattered into houses in groups of three to five men, and some were resided in the summerhouses about half an hour's walk from town. The only thing they were obligated to was to show up at the police station every twenty-four hours.⁸² The needy among the exiles were provided with daily payments from the funds allocated by the Ministry of Interior.⁸³

Either the Armenians subjected to compulsory residence themselves or their relatives petitioned to the Ottoman government claiming their innocence and asking for their release. After careful examination of these petitions, the Ottoman central government set free those found innocent, foreign nationals and the ill.⁸⁴ For instance, upon the order of the Ministry of Interior, Vahram Torkumyan, Agop Nargileciyan, Karabet Keropoyan, Zare Bardizbanyan, Pozant Keciyan, Pervant Tolayan, Rafael Karagezyan and Vartabet Gomidas were released and were granted permission to return to Istanbul. Vartabet Gomidas was in the first group set free, after having stayed in Çankırı for

80 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 76-78; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 16/48.

81 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 7/52.

82 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," n.d.

83 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 6/29.

84 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 6/10; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 7/22; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 7/56; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 7/36; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 8/82; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/122; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/23; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/46; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/47; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 10/4; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2.Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 9/60.

thirteen days. When he became ill in Istanbul and applied to the Ministry of Interior on August 30, 1917, to travel to Vienna for treatment, he was duly granted permission and went to Vienna in September 1917.⁸⁵

Diran Dilakyan was released on condition that he would live with his family somewhere outside of Istanbul.⁸⁶ On May 29, Hayik Hocasaryan,⁸⁷ and on June 27, Agop Begleryan and Vartanes Papasyan were set free. By the order of the Ministry of Interior, Serkis Cevahiryman, Kirkor Celalyan, Bagban Bardiz and fourteen other prisoners returned to Istanbul On July 18, three prisoners and Apik Canbaz were granted permission to return to Istanbul on August 10.

Vahan Altunyan and Ohannes Terlemezyan, exiled to Kayseri from Çankırı, were also released and allowed to return to Istanbul.⁸⁸ A Bulgarian subject, Bedros Manukyan; an Iranian subject, Migirdic Istepniyan; and a Russian subject, Leon Krigorkyan, were set free to be expelled from Ottoman lands.⁸⁹

Serkis Sahinyan, Ohannes Hanisyan, Artin Bogasyan and Zara Mumcuayan were among those pardoned on condition that they leave Istanbul for good.⁹⁰ A member of Dashnak committee, Serkis Kılınçyan, having been pardoned and given permission to go to Eskişehir, first escaped to Istanbul. Then with the help of the German firm Grupi he fled to Bulgaria, where he continued carrying out his activities.⁹¹ Some of the Armenians in Çankırı were sent to prison in Ayaş.⁹² Others were exiled to places such as Ankara, Izmit, Bursa, Eskişehir, and Kütahya, and the rest were dispatched to the relocation center of Zor.

85 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 42/69.

86 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 52/266.

87 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 79; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 53/49.

88 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi" (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 56/60.

89 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 54-A/177.; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 57/57.

90 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 57/57.

91 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 57/23.

92 Sarımay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...," 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 57/273.

An Analysis of the Montebello Statement of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Light of the Territorial Claims of the Armenian Diaspora on Turkey

The total number of Armenians subjected to compulsory residence in Çankırı between April 24 and August 31, 1915, was 155. Of these, 35 were found to be innocent and allowed to return to Istanbul. Twenty-five were found guilty and imprisoned in Ankara or Ayaş, and 57 were exiled to the Zor region. Of the 7 foreign nationals, 3 were exiled from the country and the rest were detained in custody. The remaining 31 Armenians were pardoned and of these, 13 were consigned to Izmit, 10 to Eskişehir, 2 to Kütahya, 2 to Bursa, 2 to Kastamonu, 1 to Geyve and 1 to Kayseri.⁹³

As for the Armenians imprisoned in Ayaş most of them were arrested in Istanbul as committee members of the ARF and sent to the Ayaş military warehouse. Some of them were sent to the other cities, Hamparsum Boyacıyan to Kayseri, Marzaros Gazaryan to Develi, A. Dagavaryan to Diyarbakir for court martial,⁹⁴ Hacik Bogusyan to Ankara for trial, Hirant Agacanyan to Istanbul,⁹⁵ Teodor Manzikyan and Akrik Keresteciyan to Zor, and Sahbaz Parsih to Elazığ to be imprisoned there.⁹⁶ Leon Sirinyan, a U.S. citizen, was deported.⁹⁷ Viram Sabuh Samuelof and Rotsum Rostusyon were first released but later prosecuted.⁹⁸ Akrik Keresteciyan was sent to Zor but also soon released.⁹⁹

The Armenians dispatched to Ayaş apparently were kept under arrest throughout World War One because they were members of the executive board of the Hinchak and Dashnak parties. Dikran, son of Serkis Bagdikyan, a Dashnak member, died on March 9, 1918, in Ayaş.

The petition submitted by Andon Panosyan, a Dashnak propagandist, on April 8, 1918, asking for pardon and his return to Istanbul, was not accepted.¹⁰⁰ Only after the signing of the Mudros Armistice did Katnik Madukyan, Kirkor

93 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 80; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 10/73.

94 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 57/214.

95 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 54 N 63.

96 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 54/5.

97 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 6/47.

98 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 11/12.

99 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 54 A/366.

100 Sarınoy, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 50/10.

Hamparsumyan, Pantuvan Parzisyán receive the chance to be discharged on November 10, 1918. The rest were freed after the Allied Powers took control of the Ottoman Empire following the armistice.¹⁰¹

This detailed information proves that the April 24, 1915 is not a date during which Armenians were killed by the Ottomans and cannot be considered as the starting date of a genocide.

As for the other parts of the country, the Armenian committees formed gangs in areas where they instigated riots including Zeytun,¹⁰² Kayseri-Everek-Develi,¹⁰³ Trabzon-Giresuni,¹⁰⁴ Ankara,¹⁰⁵ İzmit-Adapazarı,¹⁰⁶ Bursa,¹⁰⁷ Adana,¹⁰⁸ Halep,¹⁰⁹ İzmir,¹¹⁰ and Samsun.¹¹¹

On March 25, 1915, it was reported by the Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs that Armenians in Tekirdađ, especially their last attack on Bođaz, were storing guns and ammunitions in the Armenian Church in accordance with the plan they have agreed upon previously to incite an upheaval against the local administration.¹¹²

On March 27, 1915, it was reported by the 10th Army Corps to the office of the Chief of Staff that the Dashnak Committee had set up a revolutionary group in the province of Sivas and waiting for the most delicate times for insurrection.¹¹³

In Kayseri, it has been reported by the 15th Division Command that upon the death of an Armenian who had been making bombs in Develi, search was conducted by the Ottoman administrators and other officials, weapons and gunpowder have been unearthed in the Armenian cemeteries. After detailed

101 Sarııay, "What Happened on April 24, 1915...", 81; "Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumi 2. Şube," (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, n.d.), 93/210.

102 *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri (1914-1918)*, vol. 1 (Ankara: Genelkurmay ATASE Yayınları, 2005).

103 "Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918" (Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etütler Başkanlığı, 2005), 1.

104 "Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918."

105 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları* (Ankara: Genelkurmay ATASE Yayınları, 2003).

106 "Genelkurmay ATASE Arşivi."

107 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları*, 193.

108 *Süslü, Azmi, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı*, 5:90.

109 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları*, 194.

110 Halaçođlu et al., *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç*, 131.

111 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları*, 195.

112 "Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918," 77.

113 "Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918," 79.

investigations, 21 bombs have been found in the courtyard of an Armenian Church and in an Armenian school in Develi on March 28, 1915.¹¹⁴

On April 8, 1915, it was reported from Hasankale to the Ottoman Army's General Headquarter that Turkish troops had seized of 52 guns in Pular and that Armenians were preparing for a riot in the region. The Armenians in the Puruk village of Suşehri had likewise attacked a civilian convoy passing by on February 25, 1915. Some Armenian bandits opened fire on the Turkish forces. Searches carried out in and around Armenian villages and 139 guns were seized.¹¹⁵

All these preparations obliged the Ottoman army for precautions to relocate those Armenians living in sensitive security zones. Especially in the Eastern Anatolia, sections of the Armenian populace made many attempts to hamper the Ottoman Army. Many Armenians conscripted to the Ottoman Army fled with their weapons and joined the ranks of the enemy, while Armenian civilians and even their religious leaders spied on behalf of the enemy armies.¹¹⁶ It was even reported that Armenian bakers had poisoned Ottoman troops with the bread they had baked.¹¹⁷

However, not all Armenians in Anatolia were subjected to relocation and those that were compelled to migrate were later allowed to return back to Anatolia.

Upon the continuance of subversive activity in spite of the decision to arrest the committee leaders, the Ottoman government made a decision on May 27, 1915 to remove Armenians from the areas they were in rebellion and to transport them to places (like Damascus and Mosul), which were provinces within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁸

However, not all Armenians in Anatolia were subjected to relocation and those that were compelled to migrate were later allowed to return back to Anatolia.¹¹⁹ The Armenian Patriarch himself made the following statement in regard to this issue;

“Istanbul Armenians and Armenians from the Kütahya and Aydın provinces were not forced to migrate. Armenians from Izmit and Bursa,

114 “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918,” 54.

115 “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918,” 124-125.

116 “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918,” 57-59.

117 *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amaçları*, 7, 141-142, 146-149, 152, 155-157, 162-166, 191, 193-194, 201.

118 *Süslü, Azmi, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı*, 5:111.

119 BOA. Bab-ı Âli Evrak Odası, ŞFR. No:341055.

Kastamonu, Ankara, and Konya provinces were forced to migrate but have currently returned back. There are many Armenians in Kayseri and Sivas, Harput, Diyarbakir and especially in Kilikya and Istanbul who have returned but cannot make their way back to their villages. The remainder of all Erzurum and Bitlis Armenians are in Kilikya.”¹²⁰

In addition to the provinces mentioned above, rebellious Armenians in the eastern provinces of Kars and Van were also not a part of the forced migration as these regions were under Russian occupation, however, both during the occupation and after the withdrawal of the Russian army, Armenians of Kars and Van committed major massacres in these two provinces.¹²¹

There were additional exceptions. Those who did not breach government orders in the defense of the Ottoman Empire and who did not violate public order, those who were not engaged in espionage for enemy countries, those who were Catholics and Protestants, soldiers, officers, deputies, military doctors, employees in the battalions, railway civil servants, laborers, servants and their families who were employed by Muslim families, and those whose loyalty was not in question were not subjected to forced migration.¹²²

Measures Taken to Ensure the Safety of the Displaced Armenians

The Interior Ministry of the Ottoman Government had taken various measures to protect the security of relocated Armenians and to ensure they reached their destination safely. Some of these measures included the following: before the implementation of the forced migration policy, the Ottoman government sent a written order to all provinces, asking them to take all required precautions to meet the needs of the convoys passing through their areas and ordered food to be stocked for them.¹²³ Housing and Refugee Director Şükrü Bey (Kaya) was assigned in person for identifying and procuring all required necessities as well as allocating funds to the provinces to meet the needs of the convoys during transportation.¹²⁴

120 Süslü, *Azmi, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı*, 5:149–50; Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 62–63.

121 McCarthy et al., *The Armenian Rebellion at Van*, 245–47.

122 Süslü, *Azmi, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı*, 5:149–50; Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 62–63.

123 Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 66; Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemı: No. 55-291, 55-341, 55-A/17, 55-A/77, 55-A/135, 57/110.

124 Halaçođlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 66–67; Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemı: No. 55-A/17, 53/305.

Local administrations were responsible for the safety of the Armenians and their goods while they were being transported, the government was held responsible for allocating funds for their sustenance. All movable and non-movable possessions left behind by the relocated Armenians were officially recorded and protected. A government delegation was formed to conduct auctions to sell movable goods that could be damaged. The proceeds were placed in a government trust on behalf of the owner for safekeeping. Specific information about the goods sold, such as the type, quantity, value, details of the purchaser was recorded in a special manuscript and once it was confirmed by the government delegation, records were prepared. The original documents were given to the government and an official copy was given to the “Commission for the Goods Left Behind”. The Armenians who returned had received back the ownership of 98% of their movable and immovable properties.¹²⁵

The Ministry of Interior also took measures to ensure that the relocated Armenians reached their destinations safely. The main method of transportation used was trains and river boats. Almost all those who were relocated from Western Anatolia were transported by train to their new location of settlement. Those who left via the city of Cizre were transported by trains and river boats called “shahtur”. In regions where there were no trains or river transportation vehicles, the convoys were transported, with animals and carts, to certain centers and put on trains from there.

It has been confirmed by officials of foreign missions that the government, despite the difficult conditions and the lack of resources, transported the Armenians subjected to forced migration to their new settlements in an orderly manner. Edward I. Nathan, the US Consul in Mersin, sent the following report to Ambassador Henry Morgenthau on August 30, 1915;

“The whole route between Tarsus and Adana is filled with Armenians. From Adana onwards they purchase tickets and travel by train. Despite the misery, suffering caused as a result of the big crowds, the government is handling this situation in an extremely orderly manner; violence and disorder is not allowed. The migrants are provided with enough tickets, and help is provided for those in need.”¹²⁶

125 Bülent Bakar, *Ermeni Tehciri* (Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi: Ankara, 2009), 200–212.

126 Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 58; Dahiliye Nezareti, Emniyet Umum Müdürlüğü 2. Şube, No: 2D/13

Edward I. Nathan's report dated September 11, 1915 is as follows;

“Since the time I sent report number 478 (dated 30 August 1915) hundreds of thousands of more Armenians have reached here and are being sent to Aleppo. In the Damascus camp, a hospital was set up for the sick. During my visit 50 patients were being treated there. According to the information I have received nobody has died in the camp, and the government is distributing food to all the exiles.”¹²⁷

In their new settlements, Armenians were given homes with title deeds, cultivable land as well as tools to perform their professions and places to store their seeds. Additionally, debts owed to the government or to individuals by those Armenians subjected to forced migration were deferred or completely wiped off as well as prosecution of criminals and suspects were also postponed.¹²⁸

The Genocide Convention in International Law and the Relocation Decision

First of all, after the Second World War, “genocide” was legally defined by the UN Genocide Convention, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948, and then entered into force on January 12, 1951.¹²⁹ The Convention does not apply retroactively. The Republic of Turkey did not exist when the relocation of Armenians took place, and additionally, Turkey is only bound with regard to events subsequent the date 12 January 1951.

Moreover, the events of 1915 do not even fit the definition of “genocide” as accepted by the United Nations in 1948.¹³⁰ That convention requires *dolus specialis* (special intent) on the side of the aggressor government for the destruction of the people as such (i.e. for belonging to that specific “race”, “nation”, “ethnicity” or “religion”). In the case of the events of 1915, the Turkish government relocated the Armenians from sensitive security zones where they were aiding and abetting the invading army forces, not because of their religious background or ethnicity.

127 Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 58; US Archives NARA 867.4016/193, Copy No: 484.

128 Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi: No. 54-A/226; Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, 67-68.

129 Michael M. Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide* (New York: Palgrave & Macmillan, 2011), 28.

130 “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Article 2” (United Nations, 1948), http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/p_genocide.htm.

Furthermore, national and international court decisions further weaken the basis of the calls for the 1915 Armenian relocation to be considered as genocide.

1. The decision of the United Kingdom: During the occupation of Istanbul after World War One, the armed forces of the United Kingdom arrested several prominent figures including leaders of the wartime Ottoman government and exiled them to Malta. An international court was established under the direction of a British judge with the purpose of trying these persons in relation to the Armenian issue. After an inconclusive two-year search of the Ottoman, English, American, Egyptian, and Iraqi state archives, the charges were dropped on July 29, 1921 given a lack of evidence.¹³¹ This decision is important because it was taken at a time when the Ottoman Empire had been defeated. That is to say, during a period when the events, witnesses, and archival documents were in the open and the relevant foreign powers had access to them.

2. The Decision of the European Court of Justice: An Armenian association based in France opened a court case on the basis that as the “European Parliament had reached a decision that Turkey committed genocide, Turkey’s admission to the European Union must be suspended.” In its December 17, 2003 decision, the European Court of Justice (part of the Court of Justice of the European Union - CJEU) noted that the European Parliament’s 1987 resolution regarding the “Armenian Genocide” was a political statement and had no basis in law.¹³² This decision was appealed by the applicant of the case on 16 January 2004, however, the Fourth Chamber of the Court rejected this appeal, and the decision of the Court became finalized on 29 October 2004 (Case: C-18/04 P).

3. Decision of the International Court of Justice (ICJ): In relation to a court case which Croatia instigated against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999 (Serbia became a party to the court case as deemed by ICJ), in its decision dated February 3, 2015, the ICJ dismissed by the genocide claims of both Croatia and Serbia.¹³³ The Court stated that both parties failed to demonstrate

131 Uluç Gürkan, *Malta Yargılaması, Özgün İngiliz Belgeleriyle* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 89–90.

132 “Order Of The Court Of First Instance, 17 December 2003 (Non-Contractual Liability of the Community - Action Manifestly Lacking Any Foundation in Law), Case T-346/03” (Court of Justice of the European Union, December 17, 2003), <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=48869&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=407605>

133 “Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Croatia v. Serbia) - Overview Of The Case,” *International Court of Justice*, accessed September 26, 2017, <http://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/118>

that the other side had possessed genocidal intent. Furthermore, the Court stated that "...genocide presupposes the intent to destroy a group as such, and not to inflict damage upon it or to remove it from a territory, irrespective of how such actions might be characterized in law."¹³⁴ This means that the removal of people from a territory (such as the relocation of Armenians away from sensitive zones during the First World War) does not by itself mean there was genocide, the intent to "destroy a group as such" must be firmly demonstrated first. ICJ's

verdict removes genocide claims from the realm of political considerations, and enforces the strict legal requirements necessary for determining genocide.

The Second Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, in its decision dated December 17, 2013 regarding the Perinçek-Switzerland case, noted that the relocation of Armenians in 1915 could not be compared to the Holocaust, which is universally considered as the event that triggered the preparation and the signing of the 1948 Genocide Convention. In the Grand Chamber decision of the same case dated October 15, 2015, the ECtHR additionally stated that it was not authorized to make a judgment on the nature of the 1915 events.

4. Decision the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR): The Second Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, in its decision dated December 17, 2013 regarding the Perinçek-Switzerland case, noted that the relocation of Armenians in 1915 could not be compared to the Holocaust, which is universally considered as the event that triggered the preparation and the signing of the 1948 Genocide Convention.¹³⁵ In the Grand Chamber decision of the same case dated October

15, 2015, the ECtHR additionally stated that it was not authorized to make a judgment on the nature of the 1915 events.¹³⁶ The ECtHR's verdict thus enforced the notion that only a competent court as prescribed by the Convention may deem an event as genocide or not.

In spite of the decisions in the aforementioned court cases, the continued persecution or attempts at persecution of Turks in relation to this issue can only be summarized as a lack of respect for the law.

134 "Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Croatia v. Serbia) - Summary of the Judgment of 3 February 2015" (International Court of Justice, February 3, 2015), <http://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/118/18450.pdf>, 24.

135 "Perinçek v. Switzerland - 27510/08 Judgment 17.12.2013 [Section II]" (European Court of Human Rights, December 17, 2013), [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{"itemid":\["002-9265"\]](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{) (Legal summary of the Second Chamber's verdict regarding the Perinçek v. Switzerland Case)

136 "Perinçek v. Switzerland [GC] - 27510/08"

Michael Gunter posits that “to have 1915 events recognized as genocide [is] the only bond strong enough to bind the otherwise territorially, linguistic and religiously diverse Diaspora communities together.” Gunter further argues that the “Armenian Diaspora communities, in large part rely on and gain succor from the traumatic events of 1915 because they provide the only glue that binds these disparate linguistic, religious and geographically atomized communities together.” He maintains that “the trauma that was 1915 for Armenians is now the bond that unites the Diaspora community.” Thus, “the campaign for Armenian genocide recognition issue is the single, most unifying theme that mobilizes the heterogeneous Armenian Diaspora.”¹³⁷

• **“Hidden” and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey**¹³⁸

Article 14 “The Republic of Turkey shall take all steps necessary to reverse, prevent and punish any attempts to discriminate against, intimidate, or harass ethnic Armenians because of their ethnicity, within its current and future borders and to allow without any hindrance hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish and to practice religious and ethnic freedom without restriction or fear of retaliation.”¹³⁹

One of the most striking demands in the statement is the enunciation of “hidden and/or Islamized Armenians.” It is claimed in the statement that the aforementioned group refrain from revealing their true identity and are afraid to openly practice their religion. In this respect, ARF wants the Republic of Turkey to take all necessary steps for these “hidden” and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish.

Since this statement’s coming to public attention, many authors have referred to this statement in regard to the Turkish-Armenian relations, especially on the subject of “hidden” and/or Islamized Armenians in Turkey. One of the books written on this subject is *The Hidden Legacy of Lost Armenians in Turkey*. The book was written by Ayşegül Altınay and Fethiye Çetin whose ancestors were adopted by Turkish families during the Armenian relocation.

Fethiye Çetin first published her groundbreaking memoir in Turkey, entitled *My Grandmother* in which she spoke of her grandmother’s hidden Armenian

137 Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide*, 75.

138 What is meant by the term ‘hidden Armenians’ is people who, for whichever ever reason they prefer, refrain from disclosing that they have Armenian ancestry.

139 “ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide.”

identity. The book sparked a conversation among Turks about the fate of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915. This resulted in an explosion of debate on Islamized Armenians and their legacy in contemporary Muslim families. *The Grandchildren* (translated from Turkish) is a follow-up to *My Grandmother*.¹⁴⁰

Çetin was born and raised in Turkey and became a lawyer, writer, and human rights activist. The Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies of Ramapo College and the Armenian National Committee (ANC) of New Jersey had co-sponsored a talk by Fethiye Çetin entitled, “Hidden No More: Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians in Turkey” on November 12, 2015 at Ramapo College.¹⁴¹ Çetin’s grandmother, Seher, was an Armenian Christian who was adopted by a Turkish military officer as a child during the Armenian relocation. Her grandmother’s roots were discussed at this presentation.¹⁴²

Another book written on this subject is *The Essence of Identity: Islamized and Hidden Armenians in Turkey*. The book was written by Laurence Ritter from L’Écol des hautes études and sciences sociales (EHESS), and Cafer Sarıkaya from Bosphorus University, Istanbul.¹⁴³ Laurence Ritter was likewise invited by AGBU (Armenian General Benevolent Union) to speak in Yerevan, Armenia on October 13, 2016.

Description of “hidden” Armenians

The historian Karen Khanlarian noted that “one who considers himself an Armenian, and is aware of his Armenian origin and routes, is Armenian, indisputably, no matter where he lives, what language he speaks, what his name is, or confession he was forced to accept.”¹⁴⁴ Another author, Arsen Artsruni, noted that “an Armenian is one who in his cumulative entity has at least a single element within his overall identity allowing him to declare and admit that he is Armenian.”¹⁴⁵

140 Fethiye Çetin and Ayşe Gül Altınay, “Armenian Studies,” in *The Grandchildren: The Hidden Legacy of “lost” Armenians in Turkey*, trans. Maureen Freely (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2014).

141 “Çetin to Speak about Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians in NJ,” *The Armenian Weekly*, November 6, 2015.

142 “Çetin to Speak about Challenges Facing Islamized Armenians in NJ.”

143 Laurence Ritter and Cafer Sarıkaya, *The Essence of Identity: Islamized & Hidden Armenians in Turkey* (Yerevan: Armenian General Benevolent Union, 2016).

144 Ruben Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” *21-St Century* 1, no. 3 (2008): 88.

145 Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 89; “Արծրունի ԱՀայկական ինքնության ճգնաժամը քաղաքական հոգեբանական առաջխաղացման փայլուն առիթ,” *Եզերք*, թիվ 2, Երևան, օգոստոս, 2007, թիվ. 128-130

There is another viewpoint put forward by Armen Aivazian, a political scientist, that “An Armenian is one, who adopts Armenia as his unique home country, has a strong psychological attachment to Armenia’s land, nation, language and culture, has a feeling of personal responsibility for Armenia’s future, and is a carrier of Armenian language and culture.”¹⁴⁶

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

Armenian authors have been emphasizing this topic in their articles since 2005. Ruben Melkonyan, from Yerevan State University (YSU) and the Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences, states that “it should be noted that the issue of apostate Armenians is also a delicate question for Turkey, since it is directly linked with the question of ethnic identity.”¹⁴⁷

The amount of Islamized and/or hidden Armenians

According to Ruben Melkonyan, different sources indicate the number of hidden Armenians in Turkey as being anywhere between 80,000 and 600,000.¹⁴⁸ Another Armenian author Karen Khanlarian indicates that the number of hidden Armenians in Turkey is around two million, of which 700,000-750,000 are hidden Armenians, and 1,300,000 are the Islamized Armenians.¹⁴⁹

Haykazun Alvrtsyan, Director of the Study Centre for Western Armenian Issues,¹⁵⁰ estimates the number of Armenians living in Turkey as being 3 million,¹⁵¹ of which more than 1 million are converted Muslims Armenians

146 Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 89; “Արծրունի Աշակական ինքնության ճգնաժամ քաղաքական հոգեբանական առաջխաղացման փայլուն առիթ,” 128-130.

147 Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 97.

148 Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 98.

149 Melkonyan, “The Problem of Islamized Armenians in Turkey,” 98; ԽանլարիԿ., ՀայրենակյութեանէթնոկրօնականվերակերպումներըԹուրքիայիՀանրապետութիւնում (1923-2005թթ.), Երևան, 2005.

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

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

who have accepted their fate and do not want to talk about it, nor others to raise the issue.¹⁵²

These different estimations indicate that Armenian authors have not yet come to any consensus on the number of hidden Armenians in Turkey.

Many Armenian authors and ARF claim that the Republic of Turkey has engaged in discrimination, intimidation, and harassment of ethnic Armenians. Although there have been individual cases of discrimination against Armenians in Turkey on a citizen vs. citizen basis, Turkey has no state policy of discrimination against her citizens on the basis of their ethnicity. On the contrary, there are many examples of Armenians who served in the high-level posts in the Republic of Turkey.

As an example, Berç Keresteciyan was employed by the Ministry of Finance after his graduation from university. When the Turkish Red Crescent was re-established for the third and last time in 1911, Berç Keresteciyan was a co-founder, became the only non-Muslim member of the executive committee and later vice-chairman of the humanitarian institution. With the outbreak of World War One, and the participation of the Ottoman Empire in the war, Berç Keresteciyan served as deputy general manager the Ottoman Bank and later became general manager of the Bank. He served for a period as a Deputy at the Meclis-i Mebusan (the Lower House) of the Ottoman Parliament.

An anecdote is being told about his contribution to save the life of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as he informed Atatürk's lawyer about a British plot to sink his ship SS Bandırma in the Black Sea, on which Atatürk left Istanbul in 1919 to initiate the Turkish War of Independence. He was awarded the white stripe Medal of Independence after the war. Following the surname reform on June 21, 1934, Atatürk gave Berç Keresteciyan the family name of "Türker" (means "Valiant Turk" in Turkish) for his patriotism.¹⁵³ He stood as an independent candidate for a deputy seat from Afyonkarahisar at the 1935 general elections and became a member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on March 7, 1935 as the first Armenian and one of the four non-Muslims in total. He continued his membership of parliament for two terms more after the general elections in 1939 and 1943. During his political career in the parliament, Berç Türker Keresteciyan made significant contributions to issues of general political, economic, social and international developments.

152 Israelyan, "Haykazun Alvrtsyan; There are more than 3 million Armenians living in Turkey."

153 Fehmi Akın, *Afyonkarahisar milletvekilleri: yaşam öyküleri ve meclisteki faaliyetleri* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2009): 107

In connection to Berç Keresteciyan, today, despite the fact that Turkish Armenians make up less than one percent of Turkey's current population, the 550-seat Turkish Grand National Assembly has three members of Armenian ethnicity, one (Markar Eseyan) from the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), and two (Selina Doğan and Garo Paylan) from two of the opposition parties, Republican People's Party (CHP) and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP).¹⁵⁴ One must question the validity of Armenian authors' and ARF's claim of discrimination by Turkey against Turkish Armenians when there are currently three Turkish Armenian deputies serving in the Turkish parliament.

Agop Martayan Dilaçar is another example. As a linguist, he invited to the first language congress by Atatürk and appointed as the head specialist of the Turkish Language Association in 1934. His surname Dilaçar was given by Atatürk in 1935. He worked as a teacher of language at Ankara University and served as the head advisor of Turkish Encyclopedia. He continued his studies and research on language and his office as the secretary general of Turkish Language Association until his death.¹⁵⁵

One must question the validity of Armenian authors' and ARF's claim of discrimination by Turkey against Turkish Armenians when there are currently three Turkish Armenian deputies serving in the Turkish parliament.

Torkom Istepanyan, Levon Panos Dabağyan Nerses Yeramyanyan, Elmas Garagor are the other notable examples of the Armenian citizens of the Republic of Turkey who were content with the Turkish administration and, in many cases, were active in public life, including politics. One study of more than 50 Turkish Armenians found that they were content and prosperous in Turkey and felt patriotic towards their country.¹⁵⁶

One of those who content with the Turkish administration was Professor Avedis Simon Hacınliyan, whose testimony deeply affected the members of court of Orly case. In July 15, 1983, a bomb exploded in front of the Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport, Paris. The explosion killed eight people, of which four were French, two were Turks, one was Swedish, and one was American, and

154 The individual pages at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey's website of the three deputies are as follows: Markar Eseyan, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/milletvekillerimiz_sd.bilgi?p_donem=26&p_sicil=7308; Selina Doğan, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/milletvekillerimiz_sd.bilgi?p_donem=26&p_sicil=7116; Garo Paylan, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/milletvekillerimiz_sd.bilgi?p_donem=26&p_sicil=7274

155 "Agop Dilaçar," *Biyografya*, accessed: September 26, 2017, <http://www.biyografya.com/biyografi/15830>.

156 Gunter, *Armenian History and the Question of Genocide*.

wounded about sixty people. The court found guilty three ASALA members and sentenced them to life time imprisonment. In the course of trials, the court called for the testimonies of some Turkish academics as experts on the Armenian issue. One of them was Associate Professor Avedis Hacınliyan.

His testimony below illuminates the situation of the Turkish Armenians in Turkey:

“I was born in Istanbul in 1944 and attended elementary school, high school and university in Turkey. Following my graduation from the university I went to the University of for graduate studies on a scholarship. After commencing my doctorate I returned to Turkey from United States of my own wish, although I could have located job opportunities abroad with my background. I was first appointed as instructor at the Middle East Technical University. I did my military service as a reserve officer in the Research and Development Section of the Ministry of Defense, a sensitive department where I had access to classified material. After my military duty, I returned to the university. During my childhood, education and my career in the university I have not been subjected to any form of discrimination because of my Armenian origin as openly expressed in my family name. Citizens of Armenian origin carry out their religious obligations freely and govern their foundations such as schools, hospital and churches. The members of the Armenian community are economically in a better shape than the average citizen of Istanbul in particular or Turkey as a whole. The fact that the Armenian community is living comfortably as equal citizens of the Turkish Republic, and is not faced with discrimination.”¹⁵⁷

This testimony is a sincere response to ARF’s statement about the Turkish Armenians. Additionally, as a form of protest against the violence perpetrated by the Armenian terrorist organizations in pursuit of their genocide claim, Turkish Armenian Artin Penik set himself on fire in Taksim Square in 1982. He unfortunately passed away from his burn wounds a short while later.

But as for the “hidden “and/or Islamized Armenians the situation is a little bit different. Due to their wish to remain hidden and they fact that they have adopted Islam and assumed Turkish names, it would be very difficult to carry out research regarding them by gaining their consent and it would be difficult to make generalizations regarding them (their outlook on life and Turkey, their numbers etc.)

157 *Terrorist Attack at Orly, Statements and Evidence Presented at the Trial, February 19-March 2, 1985* (Ankara: University of Ankara, Faculty of Political Science, 1985): 33-37.

Recently, some of the hidden Armenians have given up concealing their identity and have started to criticize their parents for giving them Turkish names. One of those people stated to the Istanbul based weekly *Agos* newspaper that he has changed his previous name from “Selahattin Gültekin” to the Armenian name “Miran Pırğıç Gültekin” and had been baptized 2 years ago. He added that together with 70 others who had switched to their old Armenian identity, they had established an association named “Faith and Social Benevolent Society of Armenians of Dersim.” He claims that the number of hidden Armenians in Turkey exceeds 500,000, but there is no need for them to hide themselves anymore.¹⁵⁸ He complained of being criticized by the hidden Armenians among his acquaintances for uncovering their real identity. His admission demonstrates that most of the “hidden” Armenians do not want to return their Armenian origin. It appears that only a small minority prefer returning to their original identity.

CONCLUSION

During the centenary of 1915, the Republic of Armenia, the Armenian Diaspora and their supporters launched a campaign for the recognition of what they term the “Armenian genocide”. The Montebello Statement is a prominent example of the campaigns waged by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

As Michael Gunter points out, the Armenian Diaspora communities rely on and gain profit from the traumatic events of 1915 because they provide the only glue that binds atomized communities together. The ARF’s Montebello Statement and demands for recognition of genocide should be evaluated in this context.

Despite the lack of a competent court’s verdict regarding the 1915 events and the accusations of genocide and decisions of national and international courts that enforce this legal fact, Armenia and the ARF insist that Turks have committed genocide against Armenians. Armenians would do well to change their approach on the conceptualization of genocide and realize that developing good, or the least functional, relations with Turkey will not be possible by making unsubstantiated, incessant accusations. Especially following the decision of the European Court of Human Rights dated 15 October 2015 regarding the *Perinçek-Switzerland* case, which noted that the forced relocation of Armenians in 1915 cannot be considered genocide, it has become practically impossible for the Armenian Republic and the ARF to force Turkey to recognize the relocations as genocide.

158 “Gizli Ermeniler Gerçek Kimliklerine Dönüyor,” *Agos Gazetesi*, February 9, 2012.

On the other hand, the ARF yearns for and demands virtually an empire with vast lands stretching all the way from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea Mediterranean coasts of present day Turkey. Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora quote 19 provinces of Turkey as “Western Armenia” and regard this territory as Armenian soil. The term “Western Armenia” is to be seen in the Montebello Statement and in the Armenian Declaration of Independence.

By considering a part of the sovereign territory of Turkey as “Western Armenia,” the Armenian government and the ARF are in violation of Chapter I, Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations which instructs “all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

Another groundless claim of the ARF is regarding restitution and economic assistance. Since Turkey and the USA agreed on the amount of compensation in 1933 and after Turkey paid the 9th installment, the USA declared that no more payment was necessary because no more indemnity was left. Resurrecting old issues that have been solved will not help achieve any goal.

It should be mentioned that the Republic of Armenia invaded the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan together with 7 other adjacent regions in overt violation of international legal norms. The ARF also requests from the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan to remove blockades and allow unrestricted access through the borders of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. If Turkey opens her borders before Armenia complies with the resolutions of the UN and withdraws her troops from the Karabakh and adjacent 7 regions of Azerbaijan (which contain six cities, 12 towns and 830 settlements) signify that Turkey has accepted the Armenian aggression.

Another demand mentioned in the ARF’s statement is about hidden and/or Islamized Armenians. The ARF demands that the Republic of Turkey must take all steps necessary to enable hidden/Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish.

Recently, activities of the hidden and Islamized Armenians have started to interest the public. Most of the hidden and Islamized Armenians are apparently content with their Turkish names and are reluctant to return to their true identities. There is no restriction or intimidation for the ones who want to return to their true identities.

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Hidden and Islamized Armenians have the right to be baptized and return to their roots by assuming Armenian names. In this respect, allowing the hidden and Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities could be considered to be the only reasonable claim of the ARF in the Montebello Statement.

It seems that from the centenary of 1915 onwards, Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora will hold on to their claims for genocide recognition and will make greater use of parliamentary resolutions of other countries and decisions of international organizations to force the Republic of Turkey to recognize the claimed genocide and to open her border with Armenia. But in view of national and international court decisions which are in favor of Turkey, Armenia and the ARF constitute a serious barrier to the achievement of their goals. It is therefore advisable for Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora to give up unreasonable demands, to comply with the United Nations' resolutions on Karabakh and develop constructive relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan.

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APPENDIX

(EK BELGE)

“ARF’S STATEMENT OF DEMANDS FOR JUSTICE FOR THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE”¹

(“EDF’NİN ERMENİ SOYKIRIMINA İLİŞKİN ADALETİN
SAĞLANMASI İÇİN TALEPLER BİLDİRİSİ”)

MONTEBELLO–The Armenian Revolutionary Federation Western US’s 49th Regional Convention on Sunday unanimously approved a statement delineating the organization’s list of demands for justice on the eve of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. Below is the text of that statement:

Armenian Revolutionary Federation Western U.S.A. Statement Of Demands For Justice For The Armenian Genocide

WHEREAS, the Armenian Nation was subjected to a systematic and premeditated Genocide officially beginning on April 24, 1915, at the hands of the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1919 and continued at the hands of the Kemalist Movement of Turkey from 1920-1923 whereby over 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered or marched to their deaths in an effort to annihilate the Armenian Nation in the First Genocide of modern times, while thousands of surviving Armenian women and children were forcibly converted and Islamized, and hundreds of thousands more were subjected to ethnic cleansing during the period of the modern Republic of Turkey from 1924-1937; and

WHEREAS, the planning and implementation of Genocide is indisputably recognized in international law as a Crime Against Humanity and is punishable as such; and

WHEREAS, this Genocidal Crime Against Humanity has remained unpunished for nearly one hundred years, as the Government of Turkey is allowed with impunity to distort history and to deny the Genocide and its consequences perpetrated both by its Ottoman predecessor and its own predecessor regimes despite international recognition of the Armenian Genocide by 23 countries, including the United States of America; and

1 “ARF’s Statement of Demands For Justice for the Armenian Genocide,” *Asbarez*, June 23, 2014, <http://asbarez.com/124379/arfs-statement-of-demands-for-justice-for-the-armenian-genocide/>

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WHEREAS, Armenians were the indigenous and native inhabitants of their ancestral homeland for thousands of years preceding the Armenian Genocide as evidenced by the ruins of hundreds of ancient Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries and other readily identifiable religious and cultural structures, sites and antiquities still remaining on such land as proof of their ongoing presence there up until the Armenian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, the ancestral homeland of the Armenian People, and especially the six historically Armenian regions of Van, Erzerum, Kharpert, Bitlis, Dikranagerd-Diyarbakir, and Sepastia-Sivas, all within the current borders of the Republic of Turkey, have been stripped of their native inhabitants by virtue of the Armenian Genocide, except for thousands of Islamized or hidden Armenians who have been subjected to silent oppression, while some of whom have recently begun to acknowledge their true ethnic identities and should be encouraged to return to their roots; and

WHEREAS, the ancestral Homeland of the Armenian People continues to be illegally occupied by the Republic of Turkey which makes every attempt to erase any proof of the historic Armenian presence on such land; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Nation survived the Genocide despite the attempt by Ottoman Turkey and the modern Republic of Turkey to exterminate it; and

WHEREAS, the survival of the Armenian Nation from the horrors of Genocide was due in significant part to American and international efforts spearheaded by Near East Relief, an organization created and sanctioned in 1916 by the United States Congress which rescued over 132,000 Armenian orphans and hundreds of thousands of Armenian refugees who went on to survive and thrive outside of their ancestral homeland all over the world and specifically within the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the First Independent Republic of Armenia was internationally recognized in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide through the Treaty of Sevres; and

WHEREAS, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, issued his final and binding Arbitral Award on November 22, 1920, restoring some of the territorial rights of the Armenian Nation taken from it by the Government of the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of the Armenian Genocide, by redrawing international borders to include the provinces of Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, and Trabzon with access to the Black Sea within the Republic of Armenia; and

“ARF’s Statement of Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide ”

WHEREAS, despite its legally binding terms, the Wilsonian Arbitral Award was never enforced, and the Turkish occupation of the lands which legally belong to Armenia continues in blatant violation thereof to date; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian People, individually and collectively, have been deprived of their real and personal property, culture and life on their ancestral Homeland for nearly a century since the Armenian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation of the Western United States consists mostly of members who are the direct descendants of those survivors of the Armenian Genocide who eventually immigrated to the United States of America and who, as U.S. citizens, and as the largest organized community of the Armenian Diaspora, have the right to demand justice in the name of the Armenian Nation, including but not limited to the implementation of the Wilsonian Arbitral Award, and petitioning the U.S. Government at local, State and Federal levels to do so; and

WHEREAS, the Government of Turkey continues its predecessor governments’ campaign of Genocide and attempted destruction of the Armenian Nation with impunity by:

- (a) illegally occupying Western Armenia;
- (b) illegally blockading the western border of the current second independent Republic of Armenia;
- (c) aiding and abetting the Republic of Azerbaijan, its co-conspirator and accomplice, in its illegal blockade of the eastern border of the current second independent Republic of Armenia;
- (d) aiding and abetting the Republic of Azerbaijan, its co-conspirator and accomplice, in its illegal blockade of the current independent Republic of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh);
- (e) aiding and abetting the Republic of Azerbaijan, its co-conspirator and accomplice, in its attempt to erase any proof of the historical presence of the Armenian Nation and its rightful claims to Nakhichevan, including but not limited to the destruction with impunity of the ancient Armenian cemetery at Djulfa by the Azeri military;
- (f) aiding and abetting the Republic of Azerbaijan, its co-conspirator and accomplice, in perpetrating and then engaging in a campaign of denial

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and distortion of massacres perpetrated against the indigenous Armenian populations of Baku, Sumgait and Kirovabad;

- (g) aiding and abetting radicalized militant action and ethnic cleansing against the indigenous Armenian population of Kessab and other parts of Syria;
- (h) failing to bring to justice the perpetrators of the murder of Hrant Dink, a crime linked to the highest levels of the Turkish State;
- (i) continuing its silent oppression and intimidation of hidden and Islamized Armenians, most of whom fear revealing their true identities or practicing religious freedom under threat of retaliation; and
- (j) generally taking any and all steps within its power to eradicate any proof of the historical presence and valid claims of the Armenian Nation as a consequence of the Genocide perpetrated against it; and

WHEREAS, the Peace & Democracy Party (BDP), the current leading party of the Kurdish population of Turkey, should be acknowledged and encouraged for its formal adoption as a part of its party platform an acknowledgement and apology for the role of the Kurdish population in the Armenian Genocide, a plan to try to restore some of the property rights of the Armenian Nation, and a call upon the Government of Turkey to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and offer restitution; and

WHEREAS, the municipal government of the City of Diyarbakir (Dikranagerd) in Turkey, democratically controlled by the Kurdish Peace & Democracy Party, has in fact recently taken concrete steps toward reconciliation by restoring the Armenian Sourp Giragos Cathedral, erecting a monument to victims of Genocide, allowing and encouraging Armenian language and religion classes to be held for Islamized or hidden Armenians, erecting a highway welcome sign into the City in Armenian, and other such measures for which it should be commended and encouraged; and

WHEREAS, the current geopolitical conflicts in the Near East and Middle East have the significant potential of resulting in a redrawing of international borders in the region which can and should include the Western Armenian homeland and an independent Kurdistan which would necessitate dialogue, cooperation and peaceful co-existence based on a concrete framework for reparations and restitution as outlined herein;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on the eve of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide widely recognized as April 24, 2015, and on behalf of the descendants of the Armenian Genocide currently living in the Western United States of America, the Regional Convention of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation of the Western United States hereby delineates its Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide, as follows:

1. The Republic of Turkey must unequivocally acknowledge and bear the consequences of the Armenian Genocide planned and implemented by the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1919, continued to be perpetrated by the Kemalist Movement from 1920-1923, and leading to ethnic cleansing by its own predecessor regime of the modern Republic of Turkey from 1924-1937.
2. The Republic of Turkey must take prompt and meaningful steps toward restitution to the Armenian Nation for its Genocidal Crime Against Humanity, fully acknowledging that any attempt at restitution cannot possibly restore the Armenian Nation to the quality of national life and quantity of numbers it would have enjoyed but-for the Genocide perpetrated against it, but nevertheless showing good faith in attempting to right the wrongs of history by restoring all rights taken from the Armenian Nation.
3. Restitution of territorial property rights of the Armenian Nation shall include the redrawing of international borders on the basis of the final and binding Arbitral Award of United States President Woodrow Wilson issued on November 22, 1920, including but not limited to reunification with the Republic of Armenia of the territories and provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzerum and Trabzon to provide unrestricted access to the Black Sea, as well as the regions of Kars and Ardahan from within the borders of the First Independent Republic of Armenia, and including Mount Ararat and its surrounding territories.
4. Complete and unequivocal restoration of territorial property rights of the Armenian Nation shall include recognition of the independence and international sovereignty of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) and its current borders.
5. Complete and unequivocal restoration of territorial property rights of the Armenian Nation shall include Nakhichevan.

6. Complete and unequivocal restoration of the aforementioned property rights shall include unrestricted and free access and use of all natural resources and natural and man-made avenues of transportation, movement and land use.
7. The Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall acknowledge, protect and preserve the hundreds of ancient Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries and other historical and cultural structures, sites and antiquities within their current and future borders at their expense and shall refrain from making, encouraging or tolerating any attempts to destroy, deface, or eradicate them.
8. The Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall immediately remove any and all blockades of Armenia and Artsakh and allow unrestricted access through their borders and take other such good faith measures to normalize and cultivate relations amongst said countries anchored in a full and complete acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide, its consequences, and an overall plan for just reparations as outlined herein.
9. The Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall refrain from taking any military or other action to provoke cross-border violence or in any way disrupt the peace with the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh.
10. The Republic of Turkey shall restore to the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, the Holy See of the Great House of Cilicia, and/or any other entity designated by duly appointed representatives of the Armenian Nation full and unencumbered property rights and access to all Armenian churches, monasteries, cemeteries and other religious, faith-based, historical or cultural structures, sites and antiquities within its current and future borders, waiving any demands and exempting them from any past and future property taxes or other such potential obligations as a part of its measures toward restitution.
11. The Republic of Turkey must make financial restitution to the descendants of the victims of the Armenian Genocide or their designated community or organizational representatives and provide economic assistance to the Republic of Armenia in amounts and manners to be determined by a duly appointed international tribunal assembled for this purpose.

12. The Republic of Turkey shall provide unrestricted access to its judicial system and courts for any descendants of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, individually and collectively, or any representative organizations or entities of the Armenian People to assert real and personal property rights without regard to and with a complete waiver of any statutes of limitation, theories of abandonment, adverse possession and/or any laws which existed either during the Ottoman period and/or post-Ottoman Republic of Turkey, or any other legal hindrances that may affect the validity of such claims.
13. The Republic of Turkey shall adopt as a part of its national educational system a full and complete acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide and the consequences thereof and shall allow and encourage open and frank dialogue and research concerning this dark chapter of its history.
14. The Republic of Turkey shall take all steps necessary to reverse, prevent and punish any attempts to discriminate against, intimidate, or harass ethnic Armenians because of their ethnicity, within its current and future borders and to allow without any hindrance hidden and/or Islamized Armenians to return to their true identities if they so wish and to practice religious and ethnic freedom without restriction or fear of retaliation;
15. The Republic of Turkey shall designate April 24 of each year as a Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Armenian Genocide and shall permit and encourage unrestricted commemorative events within its current and future borders, starting with April 24, 2015, the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide.

With full and prompt implementation of these aforementioned Demands for Justice for the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Nation can finally move toward a genuine, durable and lasting reconciliation and peaceful coexistence with the Turkish, Azeri and Kurdish populations of the region.

June 22, 2014

BOOK REVIEWS

(KİTAP TAHLİLLERİ)

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“LEGISLATING REALITY AND POLITICIZING HISTORY: CONTEXTUALIZING ARMENIAN CLAIMS OF GENOCIDE”

“GERÇEĞİ YASALAŞTIRMA VE TARİHİ SİYASİLEŞTİRME:
ERMENİ SOYKIRIM İDDİALARININ ÇERÇEVELENDİRİLMESİ”

Author: Brendon J. Cannon

Title: Legislating Reality and Politicizing History: Contextualizing Armenian Claims of Genocide

Published: Offenbach am Main, Manzara Verlag, 2016

ISBN: 978-3-939-79567-4

Language: English

Number of pages: 401

The book *Legislating Reality and Politicizing History: Contextualizing Armenian Claims of Genocide*, authored by Dr. Brendon J. Cannon, aims to provide the reader with an understanding of the evolution of the Armenian campaign to have the 1915 events recognized as genocide and the accusations made towards Turkey in connection to this campaign.

The introduction of the book, written by Professor Michael Gunter, draws attention to the frequent misuse of the term “genocide” by claimed experts and laymen alike. It should be noted here that this frequent (intentional or not) misuse of this term causes confusions in the discussions regarding the already complicated and tragic set of events known as 1915 events that claimed the lives of both Turks and Armenians in great numbers and caused much suffering. As way to counter such misuse, the introduction provides the legal definition of genocide outlined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (or, more shortly, the 1948 Genocide Convention). The official, legal definition of

“genocide” is as follows, “acts committee with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.” Besides this definition, Gunter reminds the reader that there is no official document that shows that Ottoman Empire intended to exterminate the Armenians. Herewith, the Armenian campaign possesses no evidence to demonstrate the “intent to destroy” that is necessary to prove that an event constitutes “genocide” (pp. 15-16). As a way to clear the above-mentioned confusions, Gunter recommends Cannon’s book as a guide to understanding what happened in 1915 and how the Armenians conceptualize and carry out their campaign.

This is also the primary importance of the book; it informs the reader about crucial terms such as genocide, the dispute over what the 1915 events entail, and what kind of identity Armenians have constructed over time and how this effects their behavior.

Besides the introduction part, the book is broken down into 10 chapters and a conclusion part. Throughout the book, Dr. Cannon aims to highlight several concepts that come up in relation to the term genocide, such crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, trauma, memory, and time collapse (the sense of experiencing a painful past event as if it happened just yesterday). Dr. Cannon also delves into other wide-ranging but related subjects, such as the historical framework regarding the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians, the building of Armenians identity throughout time, nationalistic desires, and idea of self-determination, how Ottoman Armenians were convinced that they would win their independence with the aid of the Russian Empire, and how the Ottoman Empire was struggling against the Great Powers of Great Britain, France and Russia in a time when the Ottoman Empire was gradually disintegrating with the emergence of the nation-states.

Like in the case of other people in other multiethnic empires, the emergence and spread of nationalism effected Armenians as well, and in their case, Armenians started to form a type of identity to define themselves over stories of wrongdoings of the past perpetrated against Armenians. According to the Armenians, the Ottoman Empire was the source of all these wrongdoings and thus the target of these related of accusations. The formation of this new nationalistic and grievance-driven identity (as opposed to being considered the *millet-i sadıka*, the loyal people, of the Ottoman Empire until the transformation of their identity) was helped by the level of literacy and education amongst Ottoman Armenians, as they were amongst the most literate and educated people among the rest of the population of the Ottoman Empire. High literacy rate and education gave Armenians the chance to express themselves in written (and thus potentially permanent) sources like memoirs

(p. 151). This thus allowed them the chance to transfer their memoirs (and thus their grievance-driven identity) from generation to generation, no matter the fact that these memoirs were not necessarily congruent with what actually transpired in the past.

The main issue considered by Dr. Cannon in his book is related to the Armenians' claims of genocide and their efforts to have this recognized as such. Especially in the first two chapters, Cannon emphasizes that Armenians have developed a necessity to identify themselves as being a people subjected to genocide. This identity also serves as a useful tool for gaining political capital and as a way for especially diaspora Armenians to position themselves in the world (p. 29). Despite the religious, linguistic, political, and geographic divisions and variations amongst the diaspora Armenians, the author notes that they are nevertheless united in their belief that they as a people have been subjected to genocide. This belief also creates a profound sense of a malign "Other" (Turks) in the eyes of Armenians and a perpetual sense of victimization against Turkey and the Turkish people. In short, the idea of surviving a genocide has created a common enemy for the Armenians. Diaspora Armenians have thus become indoctrinated to identify Turks as the enemy, which helps explain the wave of terrorism starting in the 1970s perpetuated by extremist Armenian groups against Turkish diplomats and service people and their family members.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, Dr. Cannon focuses on the Armenian's campaign regarding their genocide allegations. The author combines the formation of Armenian identity and the Diaspora's political activism. The chosen trauma of 1915 is used to identify who the Armenians are today. Since 1915 until today, the indoctrination caused amongst Armenians have cause a sense of time-collapse amongst the Armenians. This means that many modern-day Armenians experience the stories regarding the alleged genocide as if it occurred yesterday, meaning such stories elicit a profound emotional response from them. Tied to this, modern-day Armenians have built their minds upon genocide allegations and are driven to promoting their sense victimization as much as possible in various countries they live in such as the United States, France, and Australia (p. 229). Dr. Cannon underlines that the propaganda activities on the recognition of the alleged genocide is helped by the financial resources under the disposal of the Armenian diaspora. These financial resources mean that diaspora Armenians are capable of funding the production of large-scale movies to influence public opinion or funding numerous research projects into the 1915 events that will highlight Armenians' point of view.

There is an important point that the author highlights that can be tied to this; the usage of the term ‘genocide’ is now popularly used to denote any massacre or conflict that resulted in the death of a large group of people. In essence, the popular usage of the term ‘genocide’ has deviated significantly from its official definition as outlined in the 1948 Genocide Convention. In line with this deviation, the 1915 events have come to be likened to the Holocaust, even though they are two very different events that occurred in different contexts. Dr. Cannon discusses the necessary elements for act to be considered and how the 1915 events can be properly assessed in light of the 1948 Genocide Convention (p. 325).

The Armenian campaign over the recognition of the alleged genocide has resulted in notable success in certain countries, especially the ones in Europe. Through intense lobbying, diaspora Armenians have succeeded having resolutions passed in various parliaments regarding their genocide allegations. Though these resolutions are non-binding, non-legal political statements made by parliaments and can be compared to someone simply expressing their opinion on a disputed subject, such parliament resolution nevertheless raise awareness about the Armenian campaign and thus potentially influence public opinion. This results in Turkey being confronted with accusations of being a genocide-perpetrating country. According to Dr. Cannon, through such resolutions, while one’s honor and dignity is seemingly protected (Armenians), the other’s (Turks) honor and dignity is damaged by the other’s accusations (pp. 350-351). As a result of the Armenian campaign, the genocide allegations have come to be considered as historical facts in the public opinion of certain countries, and causes people to overlook the fact that it distorts historical events or intensely politicizes the related dispute, or that the it attempts to circumvent the legal and official definition of “genocide”, thereby diluting its meaning and significance. Therefore, Dr. Cannon, noting the current circumstance, expresses that the reconciliation between Turks and Armenians and a resolution to this dispute seems like a weak possibility.

One saddening omission from this otherwise detailed and informative book is an index. Due to the number of concepts covered and the nature the dispute surrounding the 1915 events, an index would have been very helpful for the uninitiated readers who wish to go back to the specific aspects of the book. Hopefully, a second edition for this book will rectify this omission.

**"THE ARMENIANS IN MODERN TURKEY:
POST-GENOCIDE SOCIETY, POLITICS AND HISTORY"**

**"ÇAĞDAŞ TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ERMENİLER:
SOYKIRIM-SONRASI TOPLUM, SİYASET VE TARİH"**

Author: Talin Suciyan

Title: The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History

Published: London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016

ISBN: 1784531715

Language: English

Number of pages: 280

Talin Suciyan's book *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History*, published by I.B. Tauris in 2016, is another contribution to the ever-growing academic literature examining various facets of the Armenian issue. This book is divided into four chapters, viz. "Social Conditions of Armenians Remaining in Istanbul and in the Provinces," "The Legal Context," "State Surveillance and Anti-Armenian Campaigns" and "The Patriarchal Election Crisis: 1944-50." The book is primarily based on the periodicals and publications of the Armenian community in Turkey, in addition to interviews and limited use of archival documents.

This book primarily seeks to analyze interactions between Armenians and the Turkish state in a paradoxical "post-genocide" Turkey in which the genocide "has not come to an end; on the contrary, the catastrophe of genocide is endless and irreversible" (p. 22). To establish this method of analysis, Suciyan seeks to demonstrate that the Armenians of republican Turkey were little more than a mass of victims without agency and whose "testimonies were silenced and denied – as the perfection of the crime proves, memoirs and testimonies were inverted" (p. 1).

This argument is heavily indebted to a narrative of one-sided victimhood. Suciyan asks why the Armenians so easily "become targets for victims of various physical or verbal attacks? The answer lies in the historical context

that has constituted the ‘social’ environment for the majority in Turkey, the post-genocide habitus of denial” (p. 198). Here, not only is the agency of Armenians denied, but Suciyan overlooks the role of Armenian revolutionary committees in the deterioration of relations between Armenians and Muslims during the last years of the Ottoman Empire and how this consequently also shaped relations between the two communities in the republic. To substantiate this point, Suciyan further seeks to demonstrate that one of the most “intransigent characteristics of Kemalism,” was the “institutionalized denial of the events in 1915/16-23” (p. 89). What Suciyan refers to as “institutionalized denial” can only be fully understood when analyzed within a framework that also evaluates how and why the Kemalists also refrained from instrumentalizing the traumatic experiences of Ottoman Muslims for political purposes.

In establishing the narrative of one-sided victimhood, it is noteworthy that Suciyan’s study almost entirely disregards those Armenians who engaged in public life in republican Turkey. In the case of Armenian Member of the Turkish Parliament Berç Türker (Keresteciyan), Suciyan castigates him as merely representing a “good showcase” for the republican elite (p. 118). Yet Keresteciyan was not alone. Other Armenians were elected to parliament, and others such as Agop Dilaçar served in prominent positions in important bodies such as the Turkish Language Association. Despite this, Suciyan continues by arguing that the “anti-Armenianess of Kemalism was all-inclusive” and that not only were “Armenians living in Turkey unwanted, but also Armenian survivors all over the world were regarded as enemies of Turkey” (p. 141). Herein lies an important contradiction. Suciyan argues that genocide continued in republican Turkey, yet refrains from explaining the paradoxical nature of this argument given the prominence of some Armenians in public life.

Unfortunately, this is not the only major inconsistency in the book. Suciyan seeks to substantiate the above argument by arguing that the ruling Republican People’s Party (CHP) had an affinity with both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Suciyan opines that both state representative’s praise of fascist leaders, and the CHP’s “encouragement of racist ideas among the intellectuals and scientific circles highlighted Turkey’s position on the *wrong* side by the end of the war,” and that this process led to the İnönü government working to distance “Kemalist nationalism from the fascist and racist elements that were widespread and continuous from the Young Turk to the Republican elites” (p. 14). Here Suciyan makes a crucial mistake by not drawing a line of demarcation between intellectuals and the state. Indeed, many of the racist intellectuals on the fringes of social life in Turkey were also opposed to the

CHP such as Hüseyin Nihâl Atsız and many of those with latent fascist sympathies within the party were driven to the margins.

This lack of nuance is also apparent in Suciyan's arguments relating to the "Citizen, Speak Turkish!" movement as an example of intermittent campaigns "to prevent non-Muslims from speaking their own language in public" (p. 69). Suciyan argues that the campaign, "rather than a campaign to speak in Turkish" was a campaign "to silence, to make people invisible in the public realm" (p. 72) which when combined with other campaigns "coalesced to create, over the span of several decades, a normalized social habitus with an intrinsic history of racism and denialism" (p. 90). Suciyan disregards the support afforded to the campaign of Turkification by prominent non-Muslims such as Moiz Kohen (Tekinalp) and Avram Galanti (Bodrumlu) and this again demonstrates the paradoxical nature of her argument.

It is important to juxtapose Suciyan's argument relating to what she terms the racist nature of Kemalism with her revisionist approach to the activity of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation – Dashnaktsutyun. Suciyan's work displays a lack of critical engagement with the sources on this matter. Suciyan quotes a letter from the head of the ARF London Bureau rejecting claims of Nazi collaboration and additionally refers to the ARF's "anti-Nazi" views (pp. 154-156). What is most striking here is that Suciyan mentions the friction between the ARF and the Armenian Church in the US in 1933 – but neglects to mention the foundation of the ARF's youth wing, the Armenian Youth Federation, in Massachusetts the same year. The AYF was founded under the auspices of Karekin Nezhdeh, a senior ARF activist who along with another senior ARF member, Dro Kanayan, engaged in active military cooperation with Nazi Germany. Other senior ARF figures such as Vahan Papazian were involved in the collaborationist Armenian National Council. Similarly, ARF publications such as the *Hairenik Weekly* had been churning out anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi articles by the mid-1930s. Not only that, the ARF had even proposed sending armed units to fight alongside Fascist Italy in Abyssinia. This blatant attempt at revisionism regarding ARF collaboration with the Nazis is startling given that the author's doctoral dissertation undertaken at the University of Munich constitutes the core of this book.

Another major deficit of the book is the emphasis that the author places on normative arguments. This is a common theme in works on the Armenian issue, and serves to cloud the potential for informed scholarly debate, and instead distorts the discussion into one focused on ideology. Suciyan argues that the "denialist habitus of Turkey" has turned the "concept of 'diaspora' into a smear, thus dehumanizing and demonizing the victims, the survivors and their

offspring” (p. 31). This line of argument is further underpinned by non-scholarly terms such as the “deep evil within society,” (p. 61) and the claim that the “dehumanization of the diaspora” resulted from “Kemalist constructs” (p. 32). Turkey’s difficulty with the diaspora arises primarily because of the political activity undertaken against Turkey’s interests. This includes the efforts of the ARF to assassinate senior Turkish statesmen including Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü, and the ARF’s role in collaborating with Kurdish nationalists in an effort to ferment rebellion within Turkey in the 1930s. More recently, the present Turkish view of the Armenian diaspora was formed under the shadow of the terrorism directed against Turkey starting in 1975 – primarily by the ARF’s Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG) and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA).

On the whole, the role of Armenian revolutionary committees and their campaign of violence is absent in this work. Suciyan discusses the narrative that Armenians had “stabbed the empire in the back,” as having been established based primarily on “photographs in which Armenians appeared armed with many weapons. Correspondence and statements of prominent Armenian leaders were selectively presented, the content of the education in Armenian schools was problematized, literary pieces were ‘translated’ as evidence and theoretical background for the hostility of Armenians against the Ottoman Empire” (p. 83). Here, Suciyan again neglects to ascribe agency to Armenians, and disregards the campaign of violence pursued by Armenian revolutionaries as irrelevant to the wider questions relating to what led to the relocation of Armenians in 1915 and the situation afterwards.

Similarly, Suciyan mentions the “policies against the remaining non-Muslim communities in Turkey, with peaks like the 6-7 September 1955 pogroms, the Wealth Tax of 1942, the expulsion of Greek nationals in 1964, the mass murder and genocidal politics in Dersim in 1938 and the expulsion of Jews from Thrace in 1934, constitute areas in which Turkish academic literature has become increasingly substantial in the past two decades” (p. 11). There is no effort on the part of the author to establish the relationship between events and to demarcate whether they were organized by the state or the result of mob activity. Suciyan instead elects to present a broken chain of events in which non-Muslims are invariably the victims, and Turks the victim makers. In doing so, she once again refrains from ascribing agency to non-Muslims and refrains from attributing importance to ‘push and pull’ factors when explaining emigration. This is further demonstrated by Suciyan’s claim that the “Rum population of Asia Minor was expelled” in 1923 (p. 47), rather than addressing events in their proper context, i.e. the relocation of populations between Turkey and Greece as a result of an international agreement.

While Suciyan's work is novel in many regards, both the author's highly ideological and often paradoxical approach and the issues raised above unfortunately serve to undermine the positive aspects of the book. The book's final chapter entitled 'Patriarchal Election Crisis: 1944-50' has illuminated what was a blackspot in the academic literature. However, despite the author's claim that this book encompasses the history of Armenians in "post-genocide" Turkey until 1950, there are major gaps in the narrative, such as the role of prominent Armenians in public life and the social life of Armenians in general. Other issues such as the ARF's cooperation with the Kurdish nationalist Hoybun organization, and the activities of the ARF in general aimed at fermenting difficulties within the borders of Turkey have also been neglected.

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