

Review of **ARMENIAN STUDIES**

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY,
POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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ARTICLES

Facts and Comments

Ömer E. LÜTEM

The Armenian Uprising and The Ottomans

Prof. Dr. Justin McCARTHY

The Armenian Image Created in The Armenian Mass Media

Assist. Prof. Dr. Birsen KARACA

BOOK REVIEWS

The Death from Epidemic Disease in 1914-1918 by Prof. Dr. Hikmet Özdemir

Assist. Prof. Dr. Kamer KASIM

Armenian Incidents in French Diplomatic Documents 1914-1918

Musa GÜRBÜZ

Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918 - Turkish General Staff

Oya EREN

RECENT BOOKS

Yıldız DEVECİ

DOCUMENTS



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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is indeed a pleasure for us to publish another issue of the “Review of Armenian Studies”.

It has become a tradition that the first article of each issue is “**Facts and Comments**”. This article covers a period of about a year and relates the developments in Turkey concerning the Armenian question, Turkey-Armenia relations and Armenian genocide allegations.

Renowned American historian Prof. Justin McCarthy has authorized us to publish the text of the lecture he gave in Ankara on March 24, 2005 under the title “**Armenian Uprisings and The Ottomans**”. We are very grateful to him.

Assistant Prof Dr. Birsen Karaca, in her article “**The Armenian Image Created in the Armenian Mass Media**”, explains how Armenian extremists try to create an unfavorable image of Turkey and Turks by using the mass media.

Recent developments concerning the Armenian question caused publication of many books on this subject in Turkey. This issue contains three **book reviews**. The books in question are: **The Deaths from Epidemic Disease in 1914-1918** by Prof. Hikmet Özdemir, **Armenian incidents In French Diplomatic Documents 1914-1918** edited by Hasan Dilan and **Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents, 1914-1918** published by the Turkish General Staff. The names of many other works concerning Armenians and the Armenian question can be found in the section titled **Recent Books**.

In order to facilitate researches into the Armenian question the Review of Armenian Studies is beginning with this issue to publish in full text a series of important relevant documents either in original form or translated into English.

With best regards,

The Publisher

man Parliament resolution on the commemoration of Armenian's exile and "massacres", Turkish reaction to this resolution)

Key Words

All the words of the Abstract and particularly Armenia, Armenian diaspora, Turkish-Armenian relations, genocide allegations.

In this section titled *Facts and Comments* which is, as usual, the first article of the *Review of Armenian Studies*, we examine the major developments involving the Armenian question in Turkey and Turkey's relations with Armenia over a year, that is, from the summer of 2004 to summer of 2005. Also, we provide information about those countries, organizations and officials that have recognized the Armenian genocide allegations during that period. Furthermore, we address in detail the developments on the genocide allegations in four countries, namely, the US, France, Belgium and Germany.

I - DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY

Turkey's bid for EU membership has become the main issue for the Turkish public opinion especially since the EU countries decided at their Dec. 16-17, 2004 summit to start membership talks with Turkey on Oct. 3, 2005. The Armenian genocide allegations and their potential effects on Turkey's EU accession process have been widely discussed in Turkey. The news of the grandiose commemoration activities held in Armenia and in the Diaspora to mark the 90th anniversary of the relocation of the Armenians in 1915 reverberated through Turkey.

We give below a brief summary of the "Armenian issue-related" events that took place in Turkey in the first half of 2005.

Orhan Pamuk incident: Renowned Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk said, in an interview with a Swiss daily, *Tages-Anzeiger*, "We killed 30,000 Kurds and one million Armenians. No one dares to acknowledge that. I do." Pamuk's statement was not based on any credible evidence and it triggered widespread reactions in Turkey, drawing strong criticism from most of the people. Charges have been filed against him in an effort to make him pay compensation for defaming the state. Some argued that Pamuk had uttered these words merely to boost the sales

FACTS AND COMMENTS

Ömer E. Lütem

Ambassador (Rtd)

Abstract

This article relates and comments the main developments on Armenian Question and Turkish-Armenians relations over a year, from summer 2004 to summer 2005.

This article is divided to four chapters.

Chapter I: Developments in Turkey (Reactions to Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk, initiatives taken by People's Republican Party, Agreement of Mr. Erdoğan and Baykal on Armenian policy, Failure of Vienna Turkish-Armenian Platform, Justin McCarthy's conference in National Assembly, Commemoration of Foreign Ministry's Martyrs, Declaration of the Retired Ambassadors Group, Meeting of the National Assembly's Foreign Affairs and European Union Commissions, Speech of the President of the Republic, National Assembly's General Debate on Armenian Question, Postponement of the Boğaziçi University Conference)

Chapter II: Developments Concerning Turkish-Armenians Relations: Declaration of Armenian President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister concerning Turkey, Meeting in New York of the Turkish and Armenian Foreign Ministers, September 2004, Mr. Erdoğan visit to Moscow, January 2005, Letter of the Turkish Prime Minister to the President of Armenia, April 2005, Speeches of Armenians high officials in the Conference on genocide in Yerevan, April 2005, Letter of Armenian President to the Turkish Prime Minister, April 2005)

Chapter III: Countries that Recognized Armenian Genocide Claim (Slovakia, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Argentina, Uruguay recognitions and Turkish reactions), some officials and organizations that recognized the Armenian genocide claims

Chapter IV: Developments in Some Countries Concerning Armenian Genocide Claims (USA: President Bush message, Draft Resolution on Armenian "Genocide"; France: French Government attitude on Turkey's EU membership and the Armenian Question, Referendum on EU Constitution and Turkey's EU membership; Belgium: Belgian Senate refusal to amend the law concerning genocide denial; Germany: Ger-

of his new book in Europe.¹ Some columnists accused him of angling for the Nobel Prize.² Some others defended him on the grounds of freedom of speech. Naturally, Armenians hailed Pamuk as a hero.³ Pamuk said he was trying to explain that intolerance had caused so much pain in the past.⁴ His words hardly proved effective and he has greatly lost prestige in Turkey.

Republican People's Party (CHP) took some initiatives on the Armenian question.⁵ Party Chairman Deniz Baykal, in a speech delivered on March 1, 2005, suggested a three-stage new policy with regard to the Armenian question. At the first stage, a commission consisting of an equal number of Turkish and Armenian historians would be set up. At the second stage, not only Turkish and Armenian archives but also the archives of the other countries concerned (the US, Britain, Russia, Germany, France etc.) would be opened for research; and, finally, at the third stage, an international organization (UNESCO, for example) would keep the minutes of the researches and discussions undertaken by the commission and report them to the international community.

Another proposal advanced by the CHP concerned the "Blue Book". The Armenian genocide allegations had been put forth via three books published during and at the end of the First World War: The first one, that is, the "Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire", came to be known as the Blue Book. It was published in Britain by Viscount Bryce in 1916 at the instigation of the Foreign Office, compiled by British historian Arnold Toynbee, a rising young historian at that time. Although the claims put forth in the two subsequent books have been successfully refuted by now, nothing has been done in the case of the Blue Book which all these years has been presented as "the proof" attesting to the Armenian "genocide".

Another book, which was also published at the instigation of the British Government during the First World War on the alleged atrocities committed by German troops in Belgium, was defined as a piece of war propaganda in 1925 by the then British Foreign Secretary Sir Austin Chamberlain at the House of Lords

1 Tercüman, February 18, 2005.

2 Hürriyet, February 11, 2005, Fatih Altaylı, "Kara Yazar" [Black (Bad or Shameful) Author].

3 Hürriyet, February 27, 2005, "Ermeniler Kahraman İlan Etti", [Armenian Declare Him To Be A Hero].

4 Milliyet, February 19, 2005.

5 Radikal, March 1, 2005, Murat Yetkin: "Soykırım İçin Atak" [Offensive on the Genocide Issue].

at the request of the German government. The CHP, accepting the proposal of Istanbul Deputy Şükrü Elekdağ, a retired ambassador, decided to try to persuade the British government to acknowledge that the Blue Book too was written with the aim of disseminating wartime propaganda.

The two other books in question that have been used as reference sources for the Armenian genocide allegations are the “Ambassador Morgenthau Story” published in 1918 by Henry Morgenthau, US ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1913 and 1916, and “The Memoirs of Naim Bey, Turkish Official Documents Relating to the Deportations and Massacres of Armenians” published by Aram Andonian in 1920.

Professor Heat Lowry, in his book, “The Story Behind Ambassador Morgenthau Story”, revealed the falsification, mistakes and exaggerations in Morgenthau’s book. On the other hand, Şinasi Orel and Süreyya Yuca’s book published in 1983 under the title, “The Talat Pasha Telegrams: Historical Fact or Armenian Fiction?” proved that telegrams that had been attributed to Talat Pasha were in fact forgeries.

The CHP’s third initiative was to invite a prominent American scholar, Justin McCarthy, to Turkey to give a lecture on the Armenian question.

Prime Minister Erdoğan and CHP Chairman Deniz Baykal after their meeting on March 8, 2005, announced their agreement on the strategy to be followed against the Armenian allegations.⁶: a commission of Turkish and Armenian historians and other specialists would be set up, archives would be opened without restrictions and a letter on the “Blue Book” would be drafted and sent to the British Parliament after being signed by all members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM). Together, the CHP and Justice and Development Party (AKP) command an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly. The agreement these two political parties have reached on the Armenian question is of great significance because it reflects a national consensus in Turkey on this particular subject.

Armenia reacted promptly to this development. Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian said on the following day, “There is nothing that historians can

⁶ CNN.com March 8, 2005.

do here, Turkey should determine its own stance on this.⁷ The issue of the international acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian-Turkish relations lie in two different planes and do not intersect. For Armenia the issue of the Genocide is not a precondition for normalization of relations with Turkey. We are always ready to dialogue with the Turkey however we will be consistent in the Genocide issue.”⁸

For years the Armenian Diaspora –recently with the participation of Armenia as well-- has tried to prove that relocation of the Armenians in 1915 was, in reality, a genocide. To this end, the Diaspora has spent a considerable amount of money. The foreign scholars that counter the Armenian thesis have been intimidated. Some of them have taken refuge in Turkey. Under the influence of the Armenian propaganda activities and, also, due to Turkey’s failure to demonstrate the real nature of the relocation of 1915, the public opinion in the Western countries believes that Armenians had been subjected to a genocide. As a result, Armenian activists think that they have “won the genocide war”. For this reason they now argue that there is no need for research on Armenian relocation and that there is nothing historians can do anymore. They expect Turkey to ultimately yield to the pressure exerted by other countries, especially by the EU, and acknowledge the Armenian genocide allegations. However, Armenians overlook one point: It is true that lately there has been an increase in the number of countries recognizing the Armenian “genocide” but these developments have only sharpened Turkey’s resolve to resist the Armenian claims as the Baykal-Erdoğan agreement has shown.

Another case that indicates that Armenians do not want any historical research done regarding their genocide allegations is their attitude to the Vienna Turkish-Armenian Platform (VAT), that platform was launched as a private initiative in March 2004. Using that platform as an intermediary Turkish and Armenian historians presented to one another 100 documents each in July 2004. It was planned that, at the second stage, further exchanges of documents would be carried out; later the two sides would state their views on that matter; and finally, both the documents and the views expressed would be published in book form. However, Armenians refused to take part in the second stage and the initiative was abandoned. It is not clear why Armenian historians, led by Lavrenti Barseghian, director of the Genocide Institute in Yerevan, acted in this manner. The

7 Medimax News Agency, March 9, 2005.

8 PanArmenian News, March 24, 2005

first possibility that comes to mind is that Armenian historians, upon studying the 100 documents delivered to them by Prof. Dr. Halaçoğlu, President of the Turkish Historical Society, realized that they did not have enough knowledge to counter them and decided to withdraw from the VAT.

Visiting Turkey at the invitation of the CHP, Prof. McCarthy gave a lecture at the TBMM on March 24, 2005 and replied to questions. With his authorisation, we publish the text of his lecture in this issue.⁹

The Turkish media highly praised McCarthy for his efforts, calling him a “One-Man Army”.¹⁰ Indeed, McCarthy is the only prominent scholar in the US to oppose the Armenian allegations. His academic courage and integrity are commendable indeed.

McCarthy’s lecture fuelled the arguments in the Turkish press on the Armenian issue. These debates became more and more intense especially because of the Armenian activities marking the 90th anniversary of the Armenian “genocide” in various parts of the world. During this period conferences and panels were held in Turkey on the Armenian question. TV channels and radio stations aired programs in which the participants expressed clashing views. In Turkey, the Armenian issue had never been discussed so intensely and over such an extended period.

In such a climate the ceremony held on March 18, 2005 to remember the Foreign Ministry Martyrs (the Turkish diplomats slain by Armenian terrorists) with the participation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, gained a special significance. (The speech delivered on that occasion is attached as Document No: 1). As it is known, Armenians had resorted to violence and terror as a means of propaganda between 1973 and 1985, killing 31 Turkish diplomats and other officials. Among them were four ambassadors and four consuls general. Almost twenty years have passed since then and the impact of those events on the Turkish public is beginning to fade. Yet, Armenian terrorist activities have a very long history. For example, Armenian terrorists had attempted to assassinate Sultan Abdulhamid in 1905 and, following the First World War, they had murdered two Ottoman Grand Viziers and many other Ottoman political leaders on

9 See the article “Armenian uprising and the Ottomans” in this issue

10 Hürriyet, March 28, 2005, Tufan Türeñç “Tek Kişilik Ordu: Justin McCarthy” [One-Man Army: Justin McCarthy].

the grounds that they had organized the relocation of the Armenians to Northern Syria although some of the victims had nothing to do with the relocation of the Armenians. On the other hand, Armenian politics has a “terrorism tradition” that targets not only Turks but also fellow Armenians. It may be remembered that during a raid on the Armenian Parliament in May 1999 gunmen killed the prime minister, the speaker of the parliament and six other deputies.

The Ankara-based Retired Ambassadors’ Group has become involved in the debates on the Armenian issue by publishing on March 25, 2005 a declaration the full text of which can be found in the Documents Section of our review.¹¹ (Document No: 2) In our opinion, this declaration is important especially because it clearly defines who is to decide whether the crime of genocide was committed. The declaration states that genocide is a crime under the International Law, that it could only be committed by real persons and not by states, that only a competent tribunal can determine whether this crime has been committed or not, and that no parliament, senate, local or municipal council, no association or any other non-competent organization can have the power to decide whether the crime of genocide has been committed or not. Thus, the declaration underlines the fact that the resolutions passed by the parliaments of a number of countries to formally recognize the Armenian genocide are baseless from the legal point of view.

The TBMM’s EU Harmonization Committee invited to its meeting at April 4, 2005 session retired ambassadors Gündüz Aktan, Ömer Lütem and Pulat Tacar, and also writer Levon Debagian and journalists Hrant Dink and Etyen Mahcupian, Turkish citizens of Armenian origin, to discuss Armenian issue related matters. As Turkish Armenians were invited to the TBMM for the first time the event has drawn a favorable reaction from the public. The publisher of an Armenian-Turkish weekly, Hrant Dink, said on that occasion, “We presented our views freely, the views that we have harbored for years and communicated to the public either in writing or verbally.” Mahcupyan, on his part, said, “I find it very positive that such a meeting has been held. I took part in the meeting and I saw that it was not organized merely for the sake of making a handsome gesture or as a show. It took place in a highly participatory atmosphere full of excitement. People gathered around the same table to discuss the question, ‘What should Turkey do in a future-oriented way?’”¹²

¹¹ Milliyet, March 26, 2005

¹² Agos, April 9, 2005.

Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer participated also in the debate on Armenian issue and, in a speech delivered at the War Academies on April 7, 2005, said, “We are witnessing efforts to bring before Turkey as covert conditions many issues not directly related to our (EU) membership process. It is wrong and unjust for our European friends to press Turkey on these issues. It should be known that for us it is not possible to accept demands imposed on us, demands that lack just foundations. The claims of genocide upset and hurt the feelings of the Turkish nation. What needs to be done is to research, investigate and discuss history on the basis of documents and without prejudice. The basis of such discussions should be scientific and not political.”

The TBMM held a general debate on the Armenian allegations on April 13, 2005.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül delivered the first speech, summarizing the Armenian question from the past to the present. He touched on the Armenian terrorist attacks, the provisions of the UN Genocide Convention of 1948, and the activities and financial means of the Armenian Diaspora. He stated that regarding the Armenian question Turkey has, for years, followed a defensive policy, failing to do in time the archival work needed to explain the real facts to the international community. He pointed out that the funds needed for that purpose had not been allocated, and that, as a result, Turkey proves hopelessly inadequate in its efforts on this subject compared to what the Armenians have done so far. Gül said that government efforts alone would not be enough to counter successfully the Armenian allegations. All segments of the society, every individual, should take part in a joint drive to this effect.

Gül stated also that Prime Minister Erdoğan was sending an official letter to President Kocharian to suggest creation of a commission consisting of Turkish and Armenian historians and other specialists. The commission would look into the 1915 events, scanning all the relevant archives and, at the end, would report its findings to the international community. Gül said, referring to those countries that have adopted resolutions recognizing the Armenian genocide claims, “We now expect them –especially-- to encourage Armenia to accept the Turkish proposal.”

Later, Foreign Minister Gül gave information about the current state of the Turkish-Armenian relations. Explaining why “normal” relations have not been

established with Armenia, the foreign minister said, “Which country could possibly normalize its relations with a country that does not recognize its national borders?” The foreign minister pointed out also that Armenia has not complied with the UN Security Council decisions on Karabakh. He stressed that Armenia was making it impossible for Turkey to establish diplomatic relations with it -- by failing to respect the basic principles of the international law and the relevant UN Security Council decisions and by acting in ways incompatible with the spirit of goodneighborliness.

The foreign minister said that Turkey would follow a proactive policy aiming to bring light to the historical facts regarding the Armenian allegations. Turkey would go all the way in that direction, and, during that process, many countries might have to face up to their own past -- even more extensively than Turkey might have to, said the foreign minister.

The full text of the foreign minister’s speech is attached as (Document No: 3).

Şükrü Elekdağ, speaking for the main opposition CHP, said that Armenians had failed, in spite of all their efforts, to present a single valid document to prove their case over the past 90 years. He said that Armenians based their allegations mostly on a number of unauthenticated (or subjective as in the case of memoirs) documents as well as on three books that had been published with the aim of disseminating propaganda during the war. He noted that, though it has been proven that two of these (the books by Aram Andonian and Henry Morgenthau) are not “valid”, there were still those who see the third one, that is, the Blue Book, as a reliable historical document and use it in their academic studies. He underlined the need to persuade the British Parliament to admit that the Blue Book was propaganda material and, therefore, unreliable as a source. He urged all members of the TBMM to undersign a letter to be addressed to the British Parliament. At the end of the debates TBMM members signed one by one the identical letters to be sent to the House of Lords and to the House of Commons. A copy of this letter is attached (Document No: 4).

At the end of the general debate TBMM members adopted unanimously a declaration in which they expressed full support for the proposal for creation of a commission consisting of Turkish and Armenian historians, for opening of the national archives without restrictions, for carrying out similar work in the archives of the countries concerned, and finally, for reporting their findings to the

international community. The declaration further stated that, for this initiative to be successful, the support of the Armenian Government would be essential. It stressed that Turkey and Armenia should be ready to face up to their past; and that if Armenia wanted good relations and cooperation with Turkey it should accept the Turkish proposal for a joint assessment of the past. It expressed the TBMM's expectation that those countries that sincerely want the Turkish-Armenian relations to improve (especially those countries whose parliaments have passed resolutions in favor of the Armenian genocide allegations) would support this initiative. Referring to those resolutions the declaration said that the TBMM found these unseemly, meaningless, arbitrary and unfair, and therefore condemned them. It stressed that Turkey would not allow its history to be reconstructed on the basis of one-sided and misleading assessments. A copy of this letter is attached as (Document No:5).

The most important outcome of the TBMM's April 13 session is that all of the political parties represented at the Parliament embraced the new policy designed vis-à-vis Armenia and the Armenian allegations.

In the mid May the Turkish media reported that a large-scale academic conference would be held at Istanbul's Bogazici University on May 25-27, 2005 with the participation of more than fifty people. The conference was titled "Ottoman Armenians during the Fall of the Empire: Scientific Responsibility and Democracy Problems".¹³ The large majority of the participants were Turkish scholars that had already adopted the Armenian allegations of genocide. None of the Turkish scholars that maintain that the relocation of 1915 was not a genocide was invited. The organizers were obviously trying to leave out those that oppose the Armenian theses. Besides, although genocide is a concept defined by the international law, it was seen that the conference was not going to discuss the relocation of Armenians according to the international law. Thirdly, only a group of pre-determined guests would be allowed to enter the conference hall. Those who had not been invited would not be able to participate.

The news that such a conference was going to be held caused an outcry at the TBMM. Istanbul deputy Şükrü Elekdağ during his speech in this subject said that all of the scholars invited to speak at the conference had, in the past, either defended the Armenian genocide allegations or questioned the validity of the Turkish official theses. Elekdağ said that not even a single historian or specialist

13 Hye-Tert, May 18, 2005.

was invited to the conference to defend or explain Turkey's views. He expressed his conviction that the conference was singularly intended to promote the Armenian propaganda drive. Minister of Justice Cemil Çiçek, speaking in the name of the government, said, with reference to the TBMM's April 13 session, that the government and the opposition had joined hands, taking the decision to work together to counter the "genocide slander" being committed against the Turkish nation. The attempt to stage the aforementioned conference at a time the necessary steps were being taken to translate into action the government-opposition agreement, amounted to "stabbing these efforts in the back", he said. He stressed on the other hand that universities being autonomous bodies did not mean that universities would act irresponsibly. A day later Bogazici University issued a statement, announcing that the conference was postponed.

The point which needs to be emphasize on that subject is that, in accordance with freedom of expression, it was legally not possible to prevent such a conference. The minister of justice himself had openly stated that the government did not have the power to prevent the conference.

The postponement of the conference triggered massive negative comments in the Turkish media. The minister of justice, especially, was heavily criticized for using the expression "stabbing in the back". The media criticism focused on the scope of the freedom of expression in Turkey while the Armenian issue was pushed into the background.

The organizers and would-be participants of the conference issued a statement¹⁴ on May 27, telling the public that they had to postpone the event because they were faced with pressure, threats and slandering. The conference would be held in near future, they added. However, it has still not taken place and no explanation has been given about this delay.

II - TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS

Some negative developments in Turkey-Armenia relations were observed during the nearly one-year period that we are studying.

Although the foreign ministers of Turkey and Armenia have had talks for some time, they have not agreed on any of the issues at stake. Russian opposition to

¹⁴ Hürriyet, May 27, 2005.

the Turkish efforts to help resolve the Karabakh problem, especially, has made a negative impact on Turkish-Armenian relations. These relations have been adversely affected also by the pressure put on Turkey --especially by the Armenian Diaspora—to force Turkey to acknowledge the “genocide” prior to the EU accession talks and to open its border with Armenia. Another negative factor was the commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the alleged Armenian genocide which turned into an anti-Turkey campaign. Turkish and Armenian foreign ministers met twice over the past year but they have not met since September 2004. Prime Minister Erdoğan’s April 2005 proposal for a joint commission of historians that would look into the genocide allegations has not yielded any tangible result – for the time being.

In what constituted the first negative development in bilateral relations during the period in question, Armenian President Robert Kocharian refrained from taking part in the NATO summit held in Istanbul on June 29, 2004. Since the NATO Summit had nothing to do with Turkish-Armenian relations, it is a strong possibility that President Kocharian was acting in response to a request he may have received from President Putin of the Russian Federation who was also not attending the conference.

Russia does not want Turkey to contribute to efforts aimed at solving the Karabakh problem obviously because it fears that his own role in the region would be diminished. As a matter of fact, right after NATO’s Istanbul Summit, during Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanian’s visit to Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused Turkey of trying to “bypass” Russia by taking a primary role towards resolution of the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict. He said that Russia was in a position to guarantee a peace formula that would be acceptable to both parties and he reminded that Russia was Armenia’s main military ally in the Caucasus region.¹⁵

Addressing the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe¹⁶ on June 24, 2004, Armenian President Kocharian touched on his country’s relations with Turkey. He said that memories of the past –in the context of which he referred to “the genocide”, its “consequences” and “no show of repentance”—were casting a shadow on bilateral relations. He said that Turkey worsened the situation further by imposing an embargo on Armenia. He said that basically two things should

15 Armenpress, June 14, 2004

16 Armenpress, June 24, 2004

be done to break the deadlock: Firstly, the meetings on the issues inherited from the past should be held at various levels and should not interact; secondly, the Turkey-Armenia relations should not be linked to relations with a third country (Azerbaijan). Kocharian also stated that if preconditions were to be put forth, that would kill the positive expectations.

These rather ambiguous expressions can be “deciphered” in the following manner: Obviously, the Armenian president continues to accuse Turkey of committing genocide. He wants that the consequences (territorial demands and compensation payments) of the “genocide” should be tackled. He believes that Turkey should apologize to the Armenians for the “genocide” and that Turkey should end the economic embargo on Armenia. He would not object to the Armenian Diaspora and Armenian NGOs holding direct talks with Turkey but he warns that these talks should not affect the official contacts and meetings between the two countries. Furthermore, he wants Turkey to stop supporting Azerbaijan. He also wants Turkey to normalize its relations with Armenia without setting any preconditions for that. In other words he wants Turkey to stop demanding that Armenia end its occupation of Karabakh and other Azerbaijani territories, and that Armenia drop its genocide allegations and recognize Turkey’s territorial integrity and the inviolability of Turkey’s national borders.

Armenian Prime Minister Andranik Markarian, during a meeting with the members of the press in the late May 2004¹⁷, said that [Armenian] territorial claims on Turkey was not an item on Armenia’s foreign policy agenda. He said that Armenia was striving to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey without any preconditions, and that the problematic issues could be taken up later. He said that ensuring international acknowledgement of the Armenian “genocide” and obtaining territory from Turkey as compensation would become possible only after building a powerful state in Armenia. He pointed out that if Armenia wanted territorial compensation, there would be no need to articulate that everywhere in a loud voice. These words clearly indicate that Armenia is indeed making territorial claims on Turkey. To fulfill this aspiration the Armenian prime minister pins his hopes on his country getting stronger one day.

According to the Armenian prime minister, establishment of relations with Turkey without any preconditions should definitely be the top priority issue. In other words, the Armenian prime minister wants to establish diplomatic relations

¹⁷ Arminfo, May 26 2004

with Turkey -- without renouncing the genocide allegations and territorial claims, and without withdrawing the Armenian forces from Karabakh and other Azerbaijani territories. Naturally, once diplomatic relations are established, border gates would be opened and Armenia would be able to conduct its foreign trade via Turkey. Resolution of its problems with Turkey would create a certain climate of confidence in which Armenia would attract larger amounts of foreign capital and receive more financial aid from the United States and the European Union. Having gained the necessary strength, Armenia would then put on the agenda such issues as the Armenian territorial and compensation claims on Turkey and the demand that Turkey recognize the so-called Armenian genocide.

One could easily conclude that Armenia's policy vis-à-vis Turkey will follow such a path in the long run. The first step of that policy as stated many times by Foreign Minister Oskanian is the establishment of normal relations with Turkey without any preconditions. The following steps of the Armenian policy were unveiled by Prime Minister Markarian's above mentioned speech.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) presidency rotates annually. Each year a member country is elected to that position unanimously and the country to hold office is determined some time in advance. It seems that Turkey has been approached for OSCE presidency for 2007 and accepted it.

Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanian, during a lecture delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington on June 14, 2004, said, in response to a question, that Turkey was the sole candidate for OSCE presidency for 2007. He went on to say, however, that Turkey has followed an unbalanced policy in the region (the Caucasus) in the last 12 years, giving Azerbaijan unequivocal support. He argued that Armenia would not allow a country that has not yet established diplomatic relations with Armenia to assume the presidency of an organization that is carrying out negotiations on the Karabakh conflict. He pointed out that Armenia has veto powers over the election of the OSCE president -- which it would use. Oskanian hinted that if they were to receive something in return for their cooperation, they might agree not to veto Turkey's OSCE presidency for the year in question. Obviously what he implies is the establishment of diplomatic relations with Armenia and the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border gate.

In reply to a question on this subject, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül said

that Armenian “veto” was not an issue. OSCE presidency is a task that involves a heavy agenda and, since a general election would be held in Turkey in 2007, the Turkish authorities felt they would not be able to devote to the OSCE affairs the time required, he said.¹⁸ Thus, Turkey refused to accept the Armenian blackmail. It demonstrated clearly that, for the time being, it is not in favor of opening its borders with Armenia and/or establishing diplomatic relations with it. However, by doing this, it had to give up an important international position: such as the OSCE presidency.

Turkey had submitted its application for OSCE presidency in 1999 as well. At that time, Armenia’s newly elected President Kocharian, who was conducting an aggressive policy against Turkey, announced that he would veto Turkey’s candidacy. Then Turkey hinted that it might veto any proposal to stage the OSCE meeting in a city other than Istanbul. Armenia came under pressure from Western countries, the US especially, and it altered its stance. As a result, Turkey was elected OSCE president and Kocharian attended the OSCE meeting in Istanbul. We notice that this time Turkey has decided not to adopt the same approach.

As we mentioned above, just as President Putin, Armenian President Kocharian did not attend the NATO Summit in Istanbul. In reply to a question on this issue, Prime Minister Erdoğan said that Turkey was striving to solve its problems with its neighbors and that Turkey always acted with a “win-win” mentality. He stated that Turkey did not want to break its ties with Armenia but “if Armenia is running away we would run after it only up to a certain point.” He said that tackling the “genocide issue” would not yield any results. That was a task for historians. The important thing was to build the world of future, he stressed.¹⁹

Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanian represented his country at NATO’s Istanbul Summit on June 29, 2004. In his speech he said that Turkey was a natural bridge between the Caucasus and Europe and the only NATO member country that had a common border with the Caucasian countries. He pointed out that the Caucasus was included in Europe’s “New Neighborhood Initiative” and that Armenia’s access to Europe would be via Turkey. For development of “genuine relations of neighborhood” in the Caucasus Turkey should normalize its relations with Armenia. He stressed that that would make an immeasurably positive im-

¹⁸ Anatolia News Agency, July 17, 2004.

¹⁹ Milliyet, June 26, 2003.

pact on the Karabakh issue.²⁰

Oskanian, in an interview with an Armenian newspaper²¹, said that Turkey greatly desired to improve its relations with Armenia but lacked the political will needed for that. He reiterated that Armenia wanted to normalize its relations with Turkey without any preconditions. He argued that Armenia did not need Turkey, that the Armenian economy continued to develop despite the embargo, and that improvement of relations with Turkey was not a matter of life and death for Armenia. He said that they just wanted to be on good terms with the neighboring countries. He stated that there was no obstacle to the establishment of normal relations with Turkey. He did not refer however to the serious problems that exist between the two countries such as the Armenian genocide allegations, Armenia's failure to recognize the Turkish borders and Armenia's occupation of Karabagh and other Azerbaijan territories. It is worth mentioning that these problems prevented up to now establishment of normal relations between the two countries.

Referring to the Gül-Oskanian meeting, a Turkish newspaper²² wrote that Oskanian raised the border gates issue. Gül, in turn, reportedly said that Armenia should stop making "genocide" allegations that bother the Turkish public and renounce its territorial claims on Turkey – claims cited in the Armenian Constitution as well.

From the statements²³ the foreign ministers of Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia made to the press together, it can be deduce that the ministers exchanged views on NATO and EU expansion and on Karabakh during their three-way meeting.

In conclusion, we can say that the bilateral and three-way talks held during the NATO Summit of June 2004 brought about no real change in the respective stances of these countries. Yet, it was a positive development in that they decided to hold further meetings especially on a three-way basis. However, no such a meeting has been held since then.

As has become a custom that the foreign ministers of Turkey and Armenia took advantage of their stay in New York to participate in the UN General Assembly,

20 Press Statement of Armenian Foreign Ministry, June 29, 2004.

21 Haykakan Zhamanak, July 1, 2004.

22 Hürriyet, June 29, 2004.

23 Armenpress and Azertag, June 28, 2004.

to have a bilateral meeting. After that meeting the Turkish foreign minister told the press they explored bilateral issues as well as regional concerns²⁴ and that the Armenian foreign minister gave information about the talks he had held with his Azerbaijani counterpart. He said that he, in turn, told the Armenian foreign minister that Turkey would continue to serve as a catalyst between the two sides.²⁵ Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesman, on the other hand, told the press that the two ministers discussed the possibility of reopening the border gates between the two countries.²⁶

In the speeches they made at the UN General Assembly in September 2004, the foreign ministers of Turkey and Armenia both touched on Karabakh without referring to the Turkey Armenia relations.

Although nearly a year has passed since the New York meeting, the two foreign ministers have not met again. Considering the fact that they had met four times in the 14-month period preceding the last meeting, one could say the relations between the two countries are stagnant to say the least.

During Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to the Russian Federation in January 2005, issues related to Armenia were brought up. In a speech he made during the visit, President Putin said they were aware of the problem that existed between Turkey and Armenia. He said Russia would do its best to solve the problems inherited from the former Soviet Union. They were ready to act as an intermediary and a guarantor to help solve the problem. Prime Minister Erdoğan said they would display solidarity with Russia towards finding a solution to the problems existing with Armenia. He emphasized that Turkey's Armenia policy was based on solution-seeking. He criticized the Armenian position of refusing to recognize the Treaty of Kars of 1921 which established the borderline between the two countries. He said that because of Armenia's negative attitude Turkey was not opening the land transportation routes yet. Complaining about the way Armenia maintains an anti-Turkey stance, he said, "We want to overcome the problems with Armenia. We want our relations to flourish in all areas. There are opportunities especially in commercial matters. Armenia is the only neighbor we have that stays angry with us. We do not want an angry neighbor."²⁷

²⁴ Armenialiberty, September 29, 2004.

²⁵ Yeni Şafak, September 28, 2004

²⁶ armenialiberty, September 29, 2004.

²⁷ Vatan, January 12, 2005

Since Armenian recognition of the Treaty of Kars would mean that Armenia recognizes Turkey's existing borders, in other words, Turkey's territorial integrity, this has been a major issue between the two countries. In an interview with a Turkish daily (*Zaman*)²⁸, Oskanian said, commenting on Prime Minister Erdogan's words regarding the Treaty of Kars, that Armenian leaders "have made no statements saying we don't recognize it. We are the successor states of the Soviet Union. All of the agreements, which the Soviet Union signed, continue to be in force unless new agreements have been signed to replace them, or unless statements have been made about not recognizing those agreements."

Armenian Foreign Minister's words are true from the international law angle. However, it is quite possible that the Armenian Minister is not talking sincerely. *Zaman*, the daily that carried out the interview, asked a high-level Turkish Foreign Ministry official to comment on Oskanian's words regarding the Treaty of Kars. The official pointed out that Armenia's Declaration of Independence refers to Turkey's eastern provinces as "Western Armenia" and that Turkey's Mount Ararat is Armenia's national emblem. This is a situation that does not make sense. On one hand Armenia recognizes Turkey's borders. On the other hand it considers Turkey's eastern provinces Armenian territory. To officially recognize Turkey's border, Armenia needs to make a written statements to this effect and then change the relevant article of its Independence Declaration and its emblem.

Significantly, during the interview Oskanian said he did not think Turkish-Russian cooperation would contribute to the resolution of the Turkey-Armenia conflict. He said, "...I don't think that these countries' cooperation will foster conflict's settlement." So, in spite of its very close relations with Russia, Armenia is not willing to accept Russia's offer to be an intermediary or a guarantor in this conflict. Armenia, which gets support against Turkey from many Western countries, could be feeling that it does not need Russia at this stage.

Referring to the "genocide" issue, Oskanian said, "On the Armenian foreign policy agenda, there is no reference to territories or compensation. Our foreign policy goal is international recognition of the Armenian Genocide." He said that, for normalization of the relations between Turkey and Armenia, "We have never said that Turkey" should first acknowledge "the Genocide." He went on to say, "There are two important problems between Armenia and Turkey: opening the border, and Genocide... The EU, too, would like for Turkey to recognize the gen-

28 *Zaman*, January 25, 2005

ocide at some stage in the process. We hope that these matters will be included in the agenda for negotiations between Turkey and the EU to begin later this year.”

Just after the TBMM debated the Armenian problem on April 13, 2005, Turkey has undertaken a new initiative to solve its problems with Armenia. Prime Minister Erdoğan sent a letter to President Kocharian, suggesting that the two countries should be “forming a group comprised of the historians and other specialists of our two countries to investigate the developments and events related to the 1915 period by researching all relevant archives and to report their findings to the international community.” Erdoğan said in his letter, “I believe that an initiative will serve as a step towards the normalization of relations between two countries.” Erdoğan’s letter to Kocharian is attached as (Document No: 6).

President Kocharian, in an interview with RTR Russia TV, “confirmed he had recently received a letter from the Turkish Prime Minister, but added that the letter did not contain much that would help tackle the problems between the two countries. According to the TV channel Kocharian said, “We’re not talking about material compensation, it is a moral issue, the issue of the material consequences is not discussed at state level.”²⁹

From the Armenian president’s words, it is possible to conclude that Armenia would not demand compensation if Turkey recognized the so-called genocide, that only the people concerned (those who were subjected to relocation) might have that right. Since there had been no “State of Armenia” in 1915-1916, even theoretically Armenia would not have the right to demand compensation from Turkey. Legaly, the Treaty of Lausanne has already determined how individuals’ claims regarding both movable assets and real estate would be resolved. Here, it must be pointed out that for almost all of these claims the statute of limitations expired long time ago anyway.

Armenian Parliament Speaker Artur Bagdasarian has said that on the “genocide” issue, “all the discussions are completed and there is no need for additional consideration.”³⁰

Speaking at a press conference, Prime Minister Andranik Markarian, referring to the commission suggested by Turkey, said, “If the commission is to decide whether or not there was a genocide, then I am against it. I myself is a descendant of a genocide victim... If we manage to ensure that Turkey establishes diplomatic

²⁹ Agence France Presse, April 23, 2005.

³⁰ Pan Armenian News, April 15, 2005.

relations and opens its border with Armenia and creates an environment in which they could discuss all problems, that would constitute progress and a victory.”³¹

Foreign Minister Oskanian, in an interview on that subject with a Turkish channel (NTV), said, referring to the Turkish Prime Minister’s letter, that in reality that proposal had “existed” for years. He also stated that their answer to it has always been the same. They would not discuss the reality of genocide with anybody, at least not at the government level. However, they were open to dialogue.³²

A spokesman for the Dashnak party said, “acceptance of the Turkish proposal would amount to questioning the genocide.”

Shavarsh Kocharian, an opposition member, said that the Turkish proposal “...is aimed at easing the European Union’s growing pressure on Turkey” to face its “troubled past.”³³

The Turkish proposal has drawn negative reactions from the Armenian Diaspora as well. Harout Mardirossian, President of the Committee of Defense of the Armenian Cause, an organization with Dashnak tendencies, said that the Turkish proposal was a ridiculous effort to deny the “genocide”. He maintained that the “Armenian Genocide” was an incontestable fact and that its “reality” was non-negotiable.³⁴

On April 25, that is, immediately after the events commemorating the 90th anniversary of the alleged Armenian genocide, President Kocharian sent his reply letter to Prime Minister Erdoğan. (The full text of the Kocharian letter is attached as (Document: 7).

In short, Prime Minister Erdoğan had suggested that a group of Turkish and Armenian historians should investigate the events of the 1915 period by scanning the entire body of relevant archival material and report their findings to the international community. In his reply letter, Kocharian did not deal with this proposition directly. However, the expressions he used in the letter indicate

31 RFE/RL, April 18, 2005.

32 NTV, April 21, 2005

33 Asbarez, April 15, 2005

34 Agence France Presse, April 14, 2005

that he does not favor that proposal. He says, for example, “Governments are responsible for development of bilateral relations and we do not have the right to delegate historians” and that the Turkish Prime Minister’s proposal “does not refer to the present and the future.” Furthermore, Kocharian repeats the well-known Armenian position for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries without preconditions. Clearly, there is no accord on this issue between the views of the two sides. However, Kocharian has preferred not to close the door altogether. He has suggested that “...an intergovernmental commission may be formed to discuss any issue or issues available between our countries aiming at solving them and coming to mutual understanding.”

Armenians believe that “genocide” has been adequately proven, and that Turkey too will have to acknowledge the “genocide” at a not-too-distant future due to the pressure exerted by other countries. They are convinced that once that happens the time will come for them to discuss the consequences of that acknowledgement (compensation and territorial claims). Erdoğan’s proposal which amounted to saying, “Let us investigate together whether the 1915 events were a genocide,” goes against the Armenians’ convictions. Therefore, although they wanted to reject it, they did not dare to refuse a proposal supported by that a number of great powers such as the US and Germany and the majority of the members of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. That is why in the last sentence of his letter Kocharian suggests an “intergovernmental commission” in what seems to be an attempt to soften the negative attitude he showed in the beginning of this letter.

Erdoğan and Kocharian had been expected to have a talk during the Council of Europe summit in Warsaw – though, later, it became clear that no such meeting had actually been planned. In a speech he made at the summit meeting, Kocharian made an unwarranted reference to the “genocide” issue. He said, “...the efforts to internationally recognize the Armenian Genocide are conditioned by the faith in European values. We are grateful to the states that supported...”³⁵

Prime Minister Erdoğan had an adverse reaction to this speech. He held a press conference to warn those countries that supported Yerevan. He pointed out that the TBMM too could pass genocide resolutions against certain countries. On the other hand, in his speech at the summit meeting he drew attention to the fact that Turkey has opened its archives, and urged Armenia and other states to fol-

35 AZG Armenian Daily, May 18, 2005

low suit.³⁶ He stated that historians, legal experts and politicians needed to look into the archives and that one could reach a conclusion only on the basis of the outcome of such research.³⁷ He went on to say: “I do not find it right, either in terms of human rights or in terms of the supremacy of the law, that interested or disinterested parliaments adopt such resolutions through some simple lobbying activities without basing themselves on documents or information.”

Addressing the AKP parliamentary group meeting on his return home, the prime minister said, “...in some countries’ parliaments decisions to accept the Armenian genocide were made after they were lobbied. Such decisions without using any documents or information are not supported by any solid evidence; such decisions have been made in the parliaments of 15 countries so far. Among them are countries that have committed genocide themselves. We will make similar decisions regarding their past after studying the documents. We will take this step.”³⁸

In conclusion, the scholarly study that Prime Minister Erdoğan tried to initiate by sending a letter to President Kocharian has not taken place so far.

III - COUNTRIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND OFFICIALS THAT RECOGNIZE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE ALLEGATIONS

During the period we have studied, the parliaments of Slovakia, the Netherlands and Poland adopted resolutions that confirm the Armenian genocide allegations. The resolution of the German Parliament which will be delt separately amounts to a formal recognition of the Armenian Genocide allegations. Furthermore, the resolutions adopted formerly on that subject by Belgium, the Russian Federation, Argentina and Lebanon, have been reiterated. Also, regional parliaments in some countries took similar resolution and the statesmen of certain countries declared that they recognized the past seven months (November 2005-June 2005) Armenian genocide claims. In short, saw a more extensive recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations than any other previous period.

This phenomenon was caused mainly by two factors: Firstly, on the occasion of the commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the “Armenian genocide”, both

³⁶ Zaman, April 18, 2005.

³⁷ NTV Channel, May 18, 2005.

³⁸ TNA Parliament Bureau, May 19, 2005.

Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora pushed their efforts to the maximum to gain recognition from some countries. Secondly, due to the EU decision to start accession talks with Turkey in October 2005 a number of countries began to use the Armenian genocide allegations for a variety of purposes: some of them are having a reckoning with their own past, some are trying to prevent Turkey's EU membership and some others are trying to exact concessions from Turkey during the EU accession process. The fact that the approval of each and every EU member is needed during the negotiation process Turkey has adopted a cautious approach vis-à-vis those EU countries that have recognized the genocide allegations.

The resolution of the parliaments that have recognized the Armenian genocide allegations will be examined in chronological order:

Slovakia

The Slovak Parliament took the following decision regarding the so-called Armenian genocide on November 30, 2004: "The Slovak Parliament recognizes the genocide of Armenians in 1915 during which hundreds of thousands of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were killed and considers this act a crime against humanity."³⁹

At first sight the reasons for the decision of the Slovak Parliament were not clear. Slovakia does not have a sizeable Armenian community or a close relationship with Armenia. Only in the light of certain historical events that the reasons for the Slovakia Parliament's resolution can be understood.

When the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939, they annexed to Germany under the name "Protectorate of Bohemia" the region where the Czechs lived. On the same day, a so-called "independent" state of Slovakia was founded. Slovakia pursued the same policies as the Nazis. In this framework, the over 80,000 Jews in the country were deprived of their civic rights and most of them were ultimately sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland on the other side of the border where they were exterminated. The Russian Army occupied Slovakia towards the end of 1944 and the "Czech" and "Slovak" regions were reunited and the state of Czechoslovakia re-established. The Soviets urged Czechoslovakia, their new ally, to expel from the country the German population

³⁹ Agence France Presse, December 2, 2004.

that had lived there for centuries. Accordingly, millions of ethnic Germans living in the Sudetenland and Carpathian regions were expelled to Germany under extremely difficult conditions.

During the Soviet Union's disintegration process, Slovakia became an independent state once again with the support it received from Germany. Well aware of the fact that due to the maltreatment of the Jews and Germans in the past Slovakia would not be accepted as a respectable country by the fellow Europeans, the Slovak Parliament adopted two resolutions in a row, presenting a formal apology to the Jews in December 1990 and to the Carpathian Germans two months later.

Since then Slovakia has been (or tries to give the impression that it is) very sensitive to on human rights issues. Therefore, the Slovak Parliament adopted with relative ease a resolution that recognizes the Armenian genocide claims. Obviously, they were convinced that Turkey, an aspiring member of the EU, would not have a strong reaction to that.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a statement⁴⁰ on December 2, 2005, condemning the decision taken by the Slovak Parliament. The Ministry stressed that it was not among the duties and responsibilities of national parliaments to pass judgment on the controversial periods in the history of other nations. It pointed out that taking such a decision by distorting the events for self-interest would not be compatible with responsible behavior - at a time there is a need to leave to the future generations a legacy of friendship and tolerance rather than hatred.

The Netherlands

On December 21, 2004, the Dutch Parliament adopted a resolution in which it asked the Dutch Government "to bring up the recognition of the Armenian Genocide continuously and expressly in the dialogue with Turkey."⁴¹

The Dutch decision was met with astonishment in Turkey since, two days ear-

40 www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon <http://www.devletim.com/git.asp?id=390/Aciklamalar/2004/Aralik/> December 2, 2004.

41 Press Release, Federation of Armenian Organizations in the Netherlands (FAON), 24 April Committee, December 21, 2004.

lier, the Netherlands, the term president of the EU, had played an important role at the European Summit in bringing about the EU decision to start the accession talks with Turkey.

The reasons for the Dutch decision are not so obvious. Before everything else, it must not be forgotten that the Netherlands has a very active and well-organized Armenian community that has ample financial resources. However, since the Dutch Armenian community is small they could hardly wield the kind of power needed to elicit a decision from the Dutch Parliament. It would have been impossible for them to exert a financial influence on all members of the Dutch Parliament anyway. We could assume that the Dutch deputies acted in that manner because, due to intense Armenian propaganda, they sincerely believed that Armenians had been subjected to genocide. However, in that case it would be difficult to explain why do the Dutch parliamentarians fail to display a similar interest in the massacres their neighbors the Belgians had committed in Congo and the French in Algeria. Why do they fail to ponder on their own colonial past from this particular perspective? Why do they insist on portraying as genocide the relocation of a group of people due to security concerns -- in a country far away from the Netherlands nearly a century ago?

The only plausible explanation seems to be the one that concerns the presence in the Netherlands of a large community of migrant workers and their families. Their integration problem has not been solved. The average Dutch citizen is upset by the presence of these workers and their families. If Turkey became a member of the EU that would increase the number of Turks in the Netherlands. It seems that, the conservatives in the country are trying to prevent such a development. The Dutch government, as EU term president, is well aware that without Turkey's contribution the EU would not be able to carry out its Middle East and the Caucasus policies in the future. Therefore, on one hand the Dutch government made efforts to ensure that accession talks with Turkey would be started. On the other hand, it did not do anything to prevent the Dutch Parliament from taking a resolution regarding the Armenian "genocide", a decision that will render all the more difficult the Turkey-EU talks. Thus, the Dutch government has devised a temporary solution by adopting a double-standard approach to a difficult subject.

Poland

The Polish Parliament unanimously passed the following resolution on April 19, 2005: "The Parliament of the Polish Republic pays tribute to the victims of

the genocide of the Armenian population in Turkey during World War One. The remembrance and the condemnation of this crime remains a moral duty of the whole mankind, of all the States as well as all the willingly people”⁴²

The resolution adopted by the Polish Parliament drew a very strong reaction from Turkey. The Foreign Ministry, in a statement published on the following day⁴³, “condemned and rejected this resolution stating that it is an irresponsible behavior to portray those events as genocide, and that the soundest decisions about historical events could only be made by historians. The statement said that it was with this consideration that Turkey had suggested to *Armenia* creation of a group of historians and other specialists of the two countries to look into the developments and events related to the 1915 period. The group would research all relevant archival material and report its findings to the international community. The statement said, “It hurt the Turkish people’s feelings deeply when the Polish Parliament, instead of advising the Armenian government to accept our historic proposal, passed a resolution based on falsified information regarding the events of 1915. The Polish Parliament’s behavior is not compatible with the spirit of friendship that evolved between the peoples of Turkey and Poland over a period of eight hundred years.”

The Foreign Ministry statement was strong-worded indeed. The Turkish Press as well severely criticized the Polish resolution and a number of NGOs denounced Poland. Turkish Parliament Speaker Bülent Arınç sent a letter to his Polish counterpart condemning the resolution. The planned visit to Turkey of the Polish-Turkish Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group and the visit of the Polish Parliament’s Foreign Relations Committee Chairman were cancelled. The Turkish Parliament decided not to send a representative to the “parliamentary marathon and semi-marathon” to be held in Poland.⁴⁴

The strong Turkish reaction is due to the fact that the Turkish public always had a highly positive image of Poland. Throughout their history Turkey and Poland had faced a common enemy: Russia. The Ottoman Empire had refused to agree to the partition of Poland between Russia and Prussia. Therefore, when the Polish Parliament passed –on an issue on which Turkey has been highly sensitized– a resolution that reflects the Armenian views, the Turkish people saw that as sort of

42 European Armenian Federation For Justice and Democracy, Press Release, April 21, 2005.

43 http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2005/Nisan/NO6520Nisan2005.htm

44 *cnntürk*, 27 Nisan 2005

betrayal. Here, it must be noted that the Turks' warm feelings towards the Polish people are obviously not reciprocated. For Poland, Turkey is not "special". The memory of the Russo-Ottoman wars and the Ottoman refusal to agree to the partition of Poland has faded. Even if, at that time, the Polish people harbored warm feelings towards the Turks, these must have evaporated during the Soviet era.

Why did the Polish Parliament adopt that resolution? As all the other formerly communist countries that are EU members, Poland is an over-zealous advocate of human rights probably to compensate for its own shortcomings. Also, Germany, Poland's old-enemy that is now a friend and protector, may have played a role in this development by making certain suggestions. Finally, Polish Parliamentarians may have thought that since Poland has the right to veto Turkey's EU accession process, Turkey would not be in a position to display a strong reaction. However, the Turkish reaction has been quite severe and bilateral relations have suffered from the Polish Parliament's move.

Russia

The Russian Federation has the world's largest concentration of Diaspora Armenians. Furthermore, Armenia is Russia's only ally in the Caucasus. Russia has military bases in Armenia and Russian military units guard Armenia's borders. Armenia has gained extra significance for Russia following the regime change in Georgia.

On April 14, 1995 the Russian State Duma had passed a resolution recognizing the so-called Armenian genocide due to the pressure exerted by the Armenians living in Russia and, also, because of Russia's special relationship with Armenia. The operative part of it is as follows⁴⁵: "The State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation condemns the perpetrators of the extermination of Armenians from 1915 to 1922; expresses its deep sympathy to the Armenian people and recognizes April 24 as a day of remembrance for the victims of the Genocide."

The Duma passed a new resolution⁴⁶ on April 22, 2005 with 310 votes. No one abstained or voted against the draft. The Duma was most probably encouraged by the adoption of a series of similar resolutions in other countries. The

⁴⁵ www.armenian-genocide.org/Affirmation.151/current_ca.../affirmation_detail.htm

⁴⁶ ITAR-TASS News Agency, April 22, 2005.

resolution is as follows: “The State Duma of the Russian Federation pays tribute to the sister Armenian people on the occasion of 90th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide, which is one of the most cruel and tragic events of the 20th century. The deputies of the State Duma fully denounce the act of genocide committed against the Armenian people. The Duma believes that the entire international community should commemorate the 90th anniversary.”

The Turkish Foreign Ministry responded by delivering a diplomatic note to Russia in protest, stressing how unfortunate it was that, instead of supporting Turkey’s well-intentioned initiatives on this issue, Russia had taken a decision of that kind.⁴⁷ The Ministry issued a statement⁴⁸ as well in which it denounced and rejected the resolution passed by the Duma. Noting that relations between Turkey and Russia had made significant progress in all fields, the Ministry pointed out that the step taken by the Duma was not compatible with the level bilateral relations had reached. The Ministry expressed Turkey’s conviction that historians could take the soundest decision on this subject. It was for that purpose that Turkey had taken the initiative to have Turkish and Armenian historians shed light on the facts -- by studying the material in the archives of the third countries concerned as well. The Ministry went on to say that the Duma’s decision was unfortunate also from the standpoint of peace and stability in the region and development of good neighborly relations.

While the Duma takes such decisions regarding the history of other countries, it somehow refrains from making any reference at all to Russia’s own bloody history. Yet, the memory of so many incidents is still fresh in minds: The Russian Army during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1878 helped the Bulgarians to become the predominant ethnic group in the Ottoman provinces which correspond roughly to today’s Bulgaria by carrying out an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Turks and other Muslims living in those provinces. At around the same time the Russians organized pogroms against the Russian Jews and thus forced a sizeable part of them into exile. The Russians quelled the 1905 revolts with a bloodbath. The Communist regime in the thirties deliberately abandoned peasants to death by starvation because they were resisting the forcible collectivization of agriculture, thus causing millions of them to perish. Under the Gulag system,

47 Zaman, April 28, 2004

48 http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2005/Nisan/NO67_26Nisan2005.htm

opposition members were exiled to the remotest parts of the country where they were forced to live under primitive conditions. Incalculable numbers of people were exiled and/or died during the 1936-1939 period that came to be called the Great Terror. Many peoples –Crimean Tartars and Meshketian Turks among them-- were exiled from their lands to other regions. Prior to and during the Second World War large-scale massacres were committed in the Baltic countries and in Poland, especially. In the post-war period, freedom movements were ruthlessly suppressed in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. It is almost a case of black humor that a country with so much blood and human tragedy in its own past comes up and accuses others of committing genocide.

Argentina

While there is no sizeable Turkish community in Argentina, the country has an Armenian Diaspora consisting mostly of people that had migrated from the Ottoman Empire. Over the years, the Armenian Diaspora has become affluent and influential to a certain extent. In fact, in 1993 it managed to elicit from the Argentinean Senate a resolution in favor of the commemoration of the “Armenian Genocide”. Since the war in Karabakh was still continuing at that time, the resolution expressed concern over the human rights violations allegedly being committed against the Armenian people there.

New resolutions basically similar to the 1993 decision were adopted in 2003 and 2004.

The resolution --passed on April 20, 2005-- pays tribute to the Armenian “genocide” victims, expresses solidarity with their families, and condemns the Turkish Government for systematically denying “the events that were incontestably documented by various offices of the Turkish Government.”

The Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a statement on May 5, 2005 denouncing and rejecting the Argentinean Senate’s accusation that Turkey had committed genocide against the Armenian people. It said, “It is obvious that the attitude of the Argentinean Senate is politically motivated.” Adopting a text “which lacks historical truth” and is “full of mistakes”, was an “irresponsible act,” it added. The Ministry noted that Turkey had offered to create, together with Armenia, a mixed group that would investigate the events of the 1915 period by scanning all relevant archives and report its findings to the international community. Those countries that sincerely wanted normalization of the Turkey-Armenia relations

should support the Turkish initiative. Those that acted otherwise, passing such resolutions, were serving no useful purpose, merely letting themselves to be an instrument for bad-intentioned efforts.

Uruguay

Uruguay too has a small but influential Armenian community.

Uruguay was the first country to adopt a parliamentary resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide claims. The Chamber of Representatives and the Senate of Uruguay made April 24 the “Day of Remembrance for the Armenian Martyrs” by passing a bill to this effect on April 20, 1965. That decision was reiterated in 2004, that is, four decades later.⁴⁹

In the latest instance, the Chamber of Representatives adopted on May 3, 2005 a resolution in which they asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to “carry through the United Nations the initiatives” needed to have April 24 declared as the “Denunciation and Repudiation of all Forms of Genocide Day”.⁵⁰

We can say that Uruguay’s initiative hardly stands a chance, and if one day the United Nations decides to determine a specific date for condemnation of the acts of genocide, it would base that decision on the Holocaust.

During the period we have studied, senior officials of a number of countries have announced they recognize the “Armenian genocide”. Since the parliaments or governments of the countries concerned have not confirmed these statements so far, the views expressed have to be of a “personal” nature. Nevertheless, the fact that no objections have been raised against these statements may be a clue indicating that these countries too may be inclined to recognize the so-called Armenian genocide if conditions become ripe for it in the future.

During that period, the first official that recognized Armenian genocide claims was President Mohammed Khatami of Iran. During an official visit to Armenia in September 2004, Khatami paid tribute to the “victims of the 1915 genocide” and laid a wreath at the Genocide Memorial in Yerevan.⁵¹

49 http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Affirmation.282.current_ca.../affirmation_detail.htm

50 Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Parliament – Chamber of Representatives, Press Release, No.2854, May 3, 2005.

51 Asbarez, September 9, 2004.

Lately, Iran has been following a policy of rapprochement towards Armenia especially since the Greater Middle East project was put forth and the US established good relations with Georgia and Azerbaijan. Khatami's trip to Armenia and his visit to the Genocide Memorial should be assessed in this framework. On the other hand, Khatami obviously has not taken into consideration the fact that his visit to the Genocide Memorial would make Turkey uncomfortable.

Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov, during a visit to Armenia, went to the Genocide Memorial on October 6, 2004. Accompanied by his wife, he laid wreaths at the memorial and planted a spruce tree in memory of the "genocide" victims. It would be impossible to think that the Bulgarian President is not aware of Turkey's sensitivities regarding the genocide allegations. Having secured NATO membership, Bulgarian officials are not attaching as much importance to Turkey as they did in the past. Bulgaria may recognize the so-called Armenian genocide after becoming a full member of the EU.

Arnold Ruutel, President of Estonia, during an official visit to Armenia in November 2004, gave a lecture at the university of Yerevan. Asked to comment on the "Armenian genocide committed in Turkey in 1915", Ruutel said, "It is right that the injustice done to the people of Armenia should be recognized and condemned."

When asked by a journalist why he or other Estonian leaders had not said so before, Ruutel said that before Estonia joined the EU the situation in the country had been tense and Estonia did not want to become involved in other crises at that time. He went on to say, (having become a full member of the EU), "Now Estonia is on solid ground, it has the strength to issue clear statements on its positions."

Although the Estonian president clearly accepted the Armenian allegations, the Estonian Parliament and Foreign Ministry remain silent on this issue for the time being. This stance may be related to the fact that Turkey spent a great deal of effort to ensure that Estonia would gain NATO membership. Since Estonia has become a NATO member, it does not need Turkey's help anymore. On the contrary, now Turkey is seeking Estonia's (and, for that matter, all the other member countries') support in the course of its EU membership process.

Why does Estonia display such interest in the Armenian genocide allegations?

According to one source,⁵² “Having suffered from Soviet violence, Estonia is feeling it has under a moral obligation to fight for human rights and against crimes against humanity.” On the other hand, Estonia is expecting that Russia should apologize for the atrocities of Soviet period.

Lithuania’s Minister of National Defense Gediminas Kirkilas, on a visit to Armenia in April 2005, also went to the Genocide Memorial in Yerevan. Stating that acts of genocide should be denounced and measures should be taken to prevent further acts of his kind, the minister said that although no official proposal was being made for the recognition of the so-called Armenian genocide in Lithuania at present, “he believes that the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Lithuania would be right.”⁵³

On the other hand, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and former president of the European Commission Romano Prodi refrained, during their visit to Armenia, from commenting on the genocide allegations. In reply to a question on this issue, the NATO secretary-general said, “NATO is not going to exert any pressure on Turkey. In the whole, NATO stands aside of any question filled with hatred and bearing racial context. Between NATO and Turkey, there are close relations of cooperation.”⁵⁴

A number of international and regional organizations and regional parliaments too have recognized the Armenian allegations. At the top of the list is the World Council of Churches. This religious organization in which the Protestant and Orthodox Churches are members but not the Catholic Church, had, in a resolution it had taken in 1983, complained about the “silence of the world community and the deliberate efforts to deny historical facts” in the face of the “tragic massacre of one-and-half million Armenians in Turkey and the deportation of another half million from this historic homeland at the beginning of this century.” In the following years, the World Council of Churches continued to issue similar resolution. To mark the 90th anniversary of the so-called Armenian genocide, the World Council of Churches issued a statement, saying, “The World Council of Churches has on different occasions addressed the need for public recognition of the Armenian Genocide and the necessity of Turkey to deal with this dark part of its history,” and “... propose to all member churches to make Sunday April 24 a

52 Same source.

53 Yerkir, April 6, 2005.

54 Grassroot News, November 16, 2004.

day of memorial of the Armenian Genocide.”⁵⁵

The US-based Jewish Defense League too has recognized the so-called Armenian genocide allegations. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, another Jewish organization, had recognized the Armenian genocide allegations⁵⁶ in 1989. Although both of them are important Jewish organizations, they do not represent the entire Jewish community in the US. There are other Jewish organizations that subscribe to the opposite view and make efforts to ensure that the US Congress would not acknowledge the genocide allegations. Meanwhile, the Israeli Government rejects the Armenian genocide allegations – on the grounds that the Holocaust was a unique kind of phenomenon.

This year, a bill recognizing the Armenian Genocide allegations was passed in Kansas⁵⁷, bringing up the number of the American states that accept the genocide allegations to 37. These states are listed in the footnote.⁵⁸ The American States can take a decision of this kind without engaging in extensive research -- as long as part of the voters seek it and they are not outnumbered by another group of voters who oppose it. The resolution taken by the individual states in the US are not legally binding on the US Administration or the US Congress.

IV – THE STANCE TAKEN BY CERTAIN COUNTRIES REGARDING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE CLAIMS

During the period we have studied, certain developments involving the Armenian genocide allegations were observed in a number of countries.

In the US, though President Bush did not use the word “genocide” in his April 24 speech, he did use certain expressions that almost meant the same thing. Meanwhile, a bill envisaging recognition of the “genocide” was presented to the US House of Representatives.

⁵⁵ Press Release Catholicosate of Cilicia, February 21, 2005.

⁵⁶ California Courier Online, March 8, 2005.

⁵⁷ Armenian Assembly of America Press Release, April 29, 2005.

⁵⁸ Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.

In France, the political parties which are against Turkish membership to EU, added the Armenian question to their arguments against Turkish membership. The French government has announced that it would raise the Armenian issue during the accession talks with Turkey. Furthermore, a bill has been presented to Parliament with the aim of making it a crime in France to negate the Armenian genocide ever happened.

The Belgian Senate killed an attempt to expand the scope of a law enacted in 1995 which makes it a crime to deny in the Armenian Genocide”.

The German Parliament adopted a resolution accepting the Armenian genocide allegations though the text did not include the word “genocide”.

Detailed information is given below on the developments that took place in four countries.

United States of America

This year, President Bush’s April 24 message gained an extra importance since it was the 90th anniversary of the so-called Armenian genocide. The Armenian lobby had hoped that the President would use the word “genocide” this time because of Washington’s discontent over the anti-American stance and statements of certain Turkish figures. Some 220 Congressmen sent a letter to President Bush, urging him to act in that way. That figure had been 191 last year. There are 550 representatives and 100 senators in the US Congress. Although a record number of representatives and senators have taken the initiative in favor of the Armenians this year, they still accounted for no more than one-third of the total number of representatives and senators. In other words, the Armenian lobby could not rally an adequate number of members of Congress to influence the President this year either.

The President did not use the word “genocide” in his April 24 message this year. Furthermore, unlike last year, the President did not use the word “annihilation”⁵⁹ in his speech. However, he used expressions such as “the most horrible tragedy”, “mass killings”, and “terrible events” to describe the 1915 incidents. The President used the word “great calamity” in place of “Metz yegern”, in the Armenian language an expression which describes the “genocide”. In short, the

59 Review of Armenian Studies, Vol.2 No:6 2004, P.16

President did not use the word “genocide” so as not to offend the Turks and he tried to please the Armenians by using expressions that connote the word “genocide”. His speech did not draw any comments from the Turkish and Armenian governments.

The Turkish media saw as a favorable development the fact that the President did not use the word “genocide”. The Armenian media was moderately disappointed. However, Aram Hamparian, the Executive Director of the biggest Armenian organization in the US, that is, the Dashnak Armenian National Committee of America, claimed, “This statement is a fresh attempt to help the government of Turkey continue its shameful policy of denying the crime against humanity.”⁶⁰ Bryan Ardouny, the Executive Director of Armenian Assembly of America, an organization that represents those Armenians that have more moderate views, said that he was “extremely dissatisfied with the President’s characterization of the attempted annihilation of our people” and that the President had used “evasive terminology which only serves to support Turkey’s state-sponsored denial campaign.”⁶¹

As in previous years, President Bush praised Armenia in his message, saying, “The US is grateful to Armenia’s contributions to the war on terror and to efforts to build a democratic and peaceful Iraq.” It was not clear how Armenia contributed to the war on terror. Armenia dispatched a team of 46 of doctors and engineers.⁶² It is not easy to understand how such a small group would contribute to the building of a democratic and peaceful Iraq.

President Bush touched on the scholarly studies regarding Turkish-Armenian problems as well. He said, “I applaud those individuals in Armenia and Turkey who have sought to examine the historical events of the early 20th century with honesty and sensitivity.” It is not clear who these individuals are. The only meeting between Turks and Armenian scholars regarding historical research was the Turkish-Armenian Vienna Platform in which ceased its activities when the Armenian historians refused to take part in it any longer. The praise coming from President Bush may be a sign indicating that he favors continuation of such researches.

Secondly, President Bush said, “the analysis by the International Center for

60 RFE/RL, April 25, 2005.

61 Armenian Assembly of America Press Release, April 25, 2005

62 Caucaz.com, Georgia, January 18, 2005

Transitional Justice (ICTJ) did not provide the final word, yet marked a significant step toward reconciliation.” The ICTJ is a US-based private organization for legal studies. Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC) had asked the ICTJ whether the UN Genocide Convention of 1948 could be applied to the events of 1915. The ICTJ, in a report drafted on the subject, said that the 1948 Convention could not be applied retroactively and, therefore, there was no legal ground for territorial demands on or compensation from Turkey. However, the ICTJ also volunteered an answer to a question that had not been posed to it. It said that if it had been possible to implement the 1948 Convention retroactively, the relocation of 1915 would have been classified as genocide. At the end, neither the Turkish nor the Armenian members of the TARC were satisfied with the ICTJ report. The report has almost come to be forgotten by now since a report of a private organization such as the ICTJ would not be binding and, also, because the Reconciliation Commission ceased to exist.

Why did the US President refer to a report prepared by this little-known organization? The first thing that comes to mind is that the US administration may be thinking that the formula mentioned in that report would enable Turkey and Armenia to eliminate their differences. The formula in question was that the 1915 events would be recognized as genocide but no territory or cash compensation would be demanded from Turkey. Although Armenia might accept such a solution, the Armenian Diaspora, dominated by the Dashnaks, would insist on getting compensation and territory. Since Turkey rejects the genocide allegations altogether, this formula does not stand a chance.

Here is another significant aspect of President Bush’s message. The president said, “Prime Minister Erdoğan’s proposal for a joint Turkish-Armenian commission can help advance these processes” of reconciliation between the two countries. Prime Minister Erdoğan had called for a commission that would conduct historical research – whereas President Bush did not mention any specific task for the commission, leaving the door open for discussions on all issues. That is more in line with the Armenian position.

On June 14, 2005 a draft Armenian genocide resolution was presented to the House of Representatives by Congressmen Frank Pallone and Joe Knollenberg, co-chairmen of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues⁶³ and some fifty other members of Congress including George Radanovich and Adam Schiff who

63 Caucus means a group formed by a number of US Congressmen to promote the interests of a group or a country.

have always defended Armenian interests. The resolution was titled, “The Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide”. The authors of the resolution said that the text was quite similar to the draft that had been presented to the Congress in 1999⁶⁴. The 1999 draft had been debated at congressional committees but was dropped from the agenda in October 2000 upon the written request of President Bill Clinton.

The new draft resolution, in the section titled “Findings”, lists 30 articles that summarize what the US has done up to now regarding the Armenian “genocide”. That document is too long to be quoted here in detail. It would be enough to mention the contents of the first article to give an idea about the overall draft. Article One states that the “Armenian Genocide” was “committed by the Ottoman Empire” from 1915 to 1923, resulting in the “deportation” of some 2,000,000 Armenians of whom 1,500,000 died and the 500,000 survivors were sent into exile “bringing to an end the over 2,500-year Armenian presence in their historic homeland”. Needless to say that those figures are gross exaggerations.

The operative part of the Resolution is as follows:
“The House of Representatives

1) Calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide and the consequences of the failure to realize a just resolution;

2) Calls upon the President in the President's annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide issued on or about April 24 to accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of United States intervention in opposition to the Armenian Genocide.”

Does this resolution stand a chance of getting accepted? If President Bush, a Republican himself, did not want it, the Congress, dominated by Republicans, would hardly be prepared to adopt the draft. We think that the stance President

⁶⁴ For the full text of the draft resolution please refer to: Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) Press Release, June 14, 2005.

Bush will take on this issue will depend on the nature of the Turkish-American relations. In other words, the President would most probably take into consideration the extent to which the US demands from Turkey would be met.

France

During the local elections and, especially, the European Parliament elections held in France in 2004, it became evident that rightwing and center French political parties were against Turkish membership in the EU. However, President Chirac stated that if the EU Commission report turned out to be favorable for Turkey, accession talks with Turkey should begin. He added that the talks would continue for a very long time and that Turkish membership was not a current issue.

Some 5 million Muslims live in France, most of them Arabs of North African origin. Generally speaking, the Muslim community in France is poorly educated, has a high crime rate and has not been integrated into the French society, causing a certain uneasiness among the French. The Turkish bid for EU membership had drawn no sizeable adverse reaction from the French until the 2004 elections when the French began to put the Turks into the same category as the North African Muslims. In the end, the rightwing and center parties opposed Turkey's EU membership. Meanwhile, the Socialist Party, in principle, continued to support Turkey's membership bid but linked it to improvements regarding human rights, democratic practices and the issue of Armenian "genocide" Since Turkey rejects the "genocide" allegations, the Socialist Party too should in reality be seen as a party that opposes Turkey's EU membership.

The French government has supported Turkey's EU membership in spite of the opposition coming from those political parties which participate in the government. This must be due partly to the stance taken by President Chirac. The President obviously believes that it would be impossible to back off from the decisions taken about Turkey at EU Summit Meetings. However, in France opposition to Turkey's EU membership has grown to such an extent that on Dec. 13, that is, a few days prior to the European Summit, Foreign Minister Michel Barnier announced that during the accession talks with Turkey, France will ask Turkey to recognize "the tragedy that took place in Turkey at the beginning of the 20th century and affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of Armenians." He pointed out that for more than 50 years the European integration project has been based on the idea of reconciliation. He cited as an example the French-German reconciliation. He said, "I believe that when the time comes Turkey should come to terms with its past, be reconciled with its own history and recognize

this tragedy.”⁶⁵ At the EU’s Dec. 17 summit, the French Government first tried to promote the idea that Turkey should be given privileged partner status rather than full membership. When that effort failed, it agreed that the EU should begin membership talks with Turkey – on the condition that these talks should be open-ended. In other words, the talks would not necessarily result in full membership and the EU giving Turkey special status (as opposed to full membership) would continue to be an alternative.

To explain this attitude, the French Government arranged for a general debate at the National Assembly on December 21. Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin said Turkey should consolidate its democracy, respect human rights and minority rights “especially with regard to the tragic Armenian and Kurdish questions”, confirm the reconciliation process with Greece and solve the Cyprus issue.⁶⁶ Later on, when criticized for not having used the word “genocide”, Raffarin said that speaking about the “Armenian genocide of 1915” was not a problem for him; and that actually France had a law regarding the -Armenian “genocide”.⁶⁷

President Chirac claimed that the French might say “No” to Turkish full membership in the EU in the referendum to be held on this issue if Turkey failed to review its history.⁶⁸

On the other hand, the French Government in order not jeopardize the referendum on the European Constitution had the French Constitution amended so that referendums can be held on the EU membership bids of newcomers beyond the year 2007 which means that in the future there will be a referendum in France on Turkey’s accession to the EU treaty.

In April the Louis Harris Institute conducted a survey⁶⁹ commissioned by the French Dashnak Party to find out to what extent Turkey’s EU accession process would be affected by the Armenian genocide allegations. According to the survey results, 39 percent of the people were in favor of Turkish accession to the EU while 53 percent were against it. Asked whether a potential Turkish recognition of the “Armenian Genocide” would facilitate the Turkish accession to the EU, 49 percent of those polled said no while 45 percent said yes. Obviously, Turkey’s recognizing or not recognizing the “Armenian Genocide” would have little effect

65 CDCA, December 13, 2004.

66 Le Figaro, December 22, 2004.

67 Agence France Presse, December 21, 2004.

68 Sansursuz, December 18, 2004.

69 CDCA, May 13, 2004.

on the French public's opinion regarding Turkey's EU membership.

On the other hand, it must be noted that the great majority of the French people believe that Armenians had been subjected to genocide. This belief led the French Parliament to recognize the so-called Armenian Genocide by passing a law to this effect in 2001.⁷⁰ However, this law did not introduce any sanctions against those who refuse to accept the Armenian genocide allegations. The French Armenians have been trying to elicit from the French National Assembly a new law envisaging punishments for those who say or write in France that the "Armenian genocide" never happened. To this effect, a draft has been presented to the French National Assembly.

Belgium

Belgium passed a law on March 23, 1995, introducing prison sentences in the 8 days to 12 months range and fines ranging from 26 Euro to 5000 Euro for those who deny the genocide or belittle it or try to justify it or praise acts of genocide or crimes against humanity. In its present form the bill could only be applied to the Jewish Holocaust. The Belgium National Assembly, the lower house of the parliament, amended this law on April 21, 2005, expanding its scope; and sent the new version to the Senate for approval.⁷¹

According to this proposed new version, events specified as genocide in a decision by the UN Security Council or the UN General Assembly or a court in Belgium or any other EU country would be deemed a case of genocide.⁷² However, it has been realized that even with this amendment the bill would not apply to the Armenian genocide allegations. This is because neither the UN Security Council nor the UN General Assembly nor a court either in Belgium or any other EU member country has ever ruled that the Armenian relocation of 1915 was genocide. This time the Armenian lobby has been mobilized to amend the draft already relayed to the Senate by the lower house of the parliament. According to their proposal for a given event to be deemed genocide it would suffice for the European Parliament to adopt a resolution to this effect or for the parliament of an EU member country to pass a bill on this subject.⁷³ It is public knowledge

70 Armenian Studies No: 1. pp.10-20.

71 Zaman, May 2005

72 Belgian Assembly Document No: 51 1284/009

73 Fédération Euro-Arménienne, Communiqué de Presse, May 5, 2005

that in 1987 the European Parliament passed a bill recognizing the so-called Armenian genocide. The French National Assembly did the same thing by passing a bill on January 30, 2001.

However, the Belgian Senate's Justice Commission, after long deliberations, refused to uphold the amendments to the law on the negation of genocide. During the Senate debates, those who opposed the amendments argued that "determining whether a given act constitutes genocide or not" is not a task for political organizations such as parliaments. This is a task for the judicial authorities, they stressed. This approach is in line with the UN Genocide Convention of 1948.

Germany

The political formation that consists of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) and is called Christian Democrats in short form, played a major role in the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in the aftermath of the Second World War. Christian Democrats are also the architect of the friendly and close relations built between Turkey and Germany in many areas in the post-war period. Christian Democrat governments provided Turkey with financial and military assistance at that time. It was a succession of Christian Democrat governments that decided to bring in from Turkey the majority of the foreign workers the German economy needed in the sixties.

This favorable picture started to change when the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany diminished Turkey's strategic importance. Christian Democrats began to raise the integration problems of the Turkish migrant workers— an issue they had attached little importance until then. Christian Democrats opposed also Turkish membership in the EU but, since they believed weakening the Turkey-EU relations would be hazardous, they put forth the idea that Turkey should be given privileged partner status. The "Privileged Partnership" formula was promoted by rightwing political parties not only in Germany but in some other EU countries as well, in France especially, but in the end it could not get widespread approval and finally, at the European Summit of December 17, 2004, the EU decided to start full membership talks with Turkey.

Seeing that the privileged partnership formula would not materialize, Christian Democrats started looking for other options that would render Turkish membership in the EU more difficult. Armenian genocide allegations were chosen as the main tool to that end. They assumed that this would cause Social Democrats

who supported Turkish adhesion to EU, a significant loss of votes in the next parliamentary election.

It is no secret that the German people, especially those with rightwing tendencies, have been highly upset by the accusations against Germany and the Germans regarding the Holocaust, that is, the Jewish genocide. Their perception of this issue is as follows: If it could be proven that the Germans were not the first nation to commit the crime of genocide that would somehow lessen the Germans' moral culpability. Therefore, rightwing German parties tend to accuse others of committing genocide. When Christian Democrats decided to blame Turkey, they calculated that they would get popular support especially from these circles.

In line with this strategy, Christian Democrats presented a draft resolution to the German Bundestag on February 23, 2004 on the Armenian question. The draft was debated extensively among the political parties and, after certain alterations were made in it, the text was adopted by the Bundestag on June 16, 2005 without holding a vote. The title of the resolution is, "Commemoration of the Deportation and Massacring of the Armenians in 1915: Germany has to Participate in Reconciliation of Armenians and Turks."

The text adopted by the Bundestag is long and it touches on many issues. Some of them, which we deem important, are given below, accompanied by comments:

The resolution passed by the Bundestag does not contain the term "genocide". However, it uses expressions associated with genocide such as "the annihilation of almost all Armenians" and "extermination of Armenians through forceful expulsion". These expressions indicate that, as a matter of fact, Bundestag has accepted the genocide allegations of the Armenians. It is probable that the Bundestag refrained from using the word "genocide" because of the harsh reactions that might draw from the Turks living in Germany.

The resolution states that many Muslims from Turkey live in Germany; therefore it is an important duty for them, through remembrance of history, to contribute toward reconciliation. Such statements have come to mean indirectly that the Turks living in Germany are dutibound to admit that the Armenians had been subjected to genocide. But, the Turks in Germany legally have no such duty.

Statements of this kind are a clear sign of the growing wave of xenophobia in Germany.

The resolution says that the German federal states that make up the federal republic should, by way of education, contribute to the tackling in Germany of the issue of “extermination of Armenians through forced exile”. This means that the Armenian genocide allegations will be included in the curriculum of German schools. When this subject is taught in schools, German students will most probably develop anti-Turkish sentiments while the students of Turkish origin will be burdened with feelings of guilt. Such a sense of guilt might cause some of the Turkish students to be alienated from their own national identity. That would create a climate conducive to the “integration” or, to put it more clearly, Germanization of the students of Turkish origin, an issue to which Germans attach great importance.

The resolution recommends a number of measures, arguing that Turkey should open its border with Armenia. It says that Germany would help normalize the relations between Armenia and Turkey and thus contribute to stability in the Caucasus region. The resolution does not say, on the other hand, why and by whom exactly stability has been disrupted in Southern Caucasus. It is Armenia who undermines stability in the Caucasus by occupying Karabakh and other Azerbaijani territories, by not recognizing Turkey’s current borders, and by seeking political gains via the genocide allegations it directs against Turkey. The fact that the Bundestag did not mention at all these Armenian actions proves that the resolution is not an impartial one.

With this resolution the Bundestag has asked the Federal Government to make a number of moves some of which are as follows:

The Federal Government must strive to bring about Turkish-Armenian reconciliation. To that end one side would apologize for “the historic crime” and the other side would forgive it. As Turks do not accept the argument that they had committed a crime against the Armenians, it is out of the question for them to extend an apology. The Armenian question is not a psychological but a political issue based on calculations done for the sake of gaining advantages. Therefore, it could not be resolved merely with one side extending an “apology” and winning “forgiveness”.

The resolution urges the Federal Government to make an effort to ensure that the Turkish Parliament, Turkish Government and Turkish people would ponder without reservations “the role they have played” vis-à-vis the Armenian people in the past and at present. This ambiguous statement implies that Turkey’s Parliament, Government and people have to acknowledge the so-called Armenian genocide.

The Bundestag resolution reflects mainly Armenian views. This resolution is neither impartial nor fair. Therefore the Federal Government cannot be expected to make a positive contribution to the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia.

The Bundestag resolution backs the idea that a historians’ commission should be set up. Thus, in a way, it accepts the proposal made by Prime Minister Erdoğan. However, it argues that international experts too should take part in the commission.

On June 16, 2005 the Turkish Foreign Ministry vigorously condemned the Bundestag move.⁷⁴ The Ministry said that the resolution resulted from certain considerations involving German domestic politics. It pointed out that the Bundestag has put forth totally groundless arguments. Noting that the resolution made the kind of suggestions that could arouse anti-Turkish sentiments in the German youth, the Ministry said that it had duly contacted its German interlocutors, informing them in advance that such a resolution would adversely affect bilateral relations.

The Bundestag resolution will have no legal consequences for Turkey. This is because, according to the principle of national sovereignty, the parliament of a country cannot make a legally binding demand on another country. However, this decision may have political consequences and will probably cause problems in the relations between the two countries.

As mentioned above, the Bundestag passed this resolution unanimously. Not a single voice was heard in the Bundestag in favor of the Turkish views. This is totally unacceptable considering the very close relations between Turkey and Germany, the presence in Germany of more than three million Turks, and the fact that each year

⁷⁴ <http://www.devletim.com/git.asp?id=390>

millions of German tourists visit Turkey. Taking into account this resolution which is against Turkish interests and the fact that, the Christian Democrats are expected to come to power in the autumn, there will most probably be a serious crisis between the two countries in the near future.

We believe that, considering the fact that the traditional friendship and special ties with Germany do not exist anymore, Turkey should review its relations with that country and place these on new and more realistic foundations.

THE ARMENIAN UPRISING AND THE OTTOMANS

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Abstract

When World War I began, the Armenians and Turks had been living together for 800 years in peace. Regions where Muslims and Christians had been living torn asunder when the Russians invaded the Caucasian Muslim lands. Against this invasion, most of the Armenians were neutral but a significant part of them were on the side of Russia, they served as advance guards and spies. The Russian Armenian revolutionaries began to infiltrate the Ottoman Empire. They smuggled rifles, explosives and across ill-defended Ottoman borders. The other side the Ottoman Army mobilized, Armenians living in the Ottoman Eastern regions rebelled those areas were strategically very important for Russia.

Keywords

Armenian Question, Genocide, Ottoman Empire, Historical Process, Russian Influence, Uprising, Ottoman Records

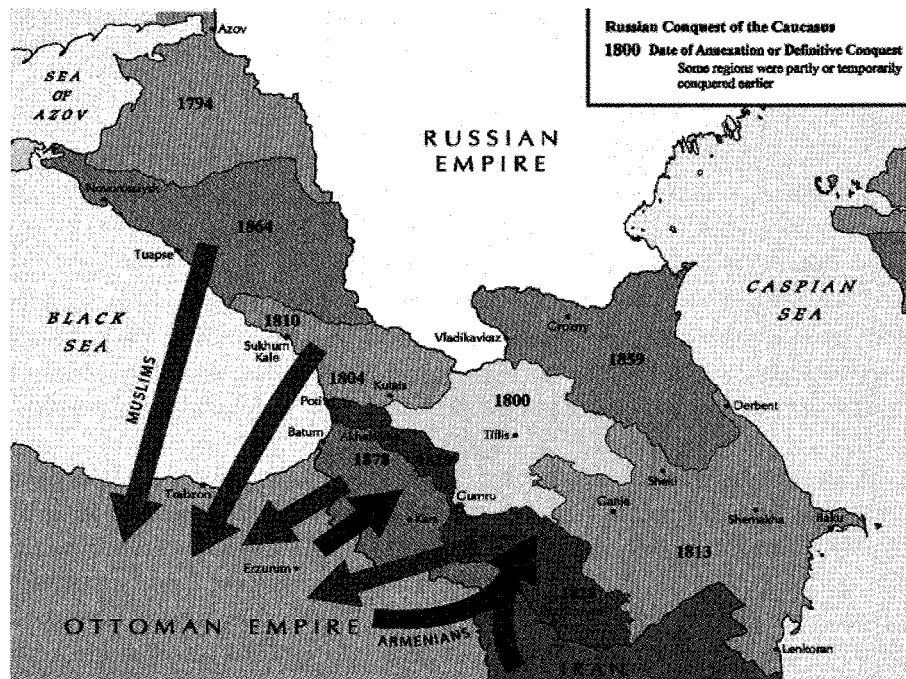
THE HISTORY

Ottoman Provinces

Conflict between the Turks and the Armenians was not inevitable. The two peoples should have been friends. When World War I began, the Armenians and Turks had been living together for 800 years. The Armenians of Anatolia and Europe had been Ottoman subjects for nearly 400 years. There were problems during those centuries—problems caused especially by those who attacked and ultimately destroyed the Ottoman Empire. Everyone in the Empire suffered, but it was the Turks and other Muslims who suffered most. Judged by all economic and social standards, the Armenians did well under Ottoman rule. By the late nineteenth century, in every Ottoman province the Armenians were better educated and richer than the Muslims.

Armenians worked hard, it is true, but their comparative riches were largely due to European and American influence and Ottoman tolerance. European merchants made Ottoman Christians their agents. European merchants gave them their business. European consuls intervened in their behalf. The Armenians benefited from the education given to them, and not to the Turks, by American missionaries.

While the lives of the Armenians as a group were improving, Muslims were living through some of the worst suffering experienced in modern history: In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Bosnians were massacred by Serbs, Russians killed and exiled the Circassians, Abkhazians, and Laz, and Turks were killed and expelled from their homelands by Russians, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Serbs. Yet, in the midst of all this Muslim suffering, the political situation of the Ottoman Armenians constantly improved. First, equal rights for Christians and Jews were guaranteed in law. Equal rights increasingly became a reality, as well. Christians took high places in the government. They became ambassadors, treasury officials, even foreign ministers. In many ways, in fact, the rights of Christians became greater than those of the Muslims, because powerful European states intervened in their behalf. The Europeans demanded and received special treatment for Christians. Muslims had no such advantages.



That was the environment in which Armenians revolted against the Ottoman Empire--hundreds of years of peace, economic superiority, constantly improving political conditions. This would not seem to be a cause for revolution. Yet the nineteenth century saw the beginning of an Armenian revolution that was to culminate in disaster for both. What drove the Armenians and the Turks apart?

RUSSIAN EXPANSION

The Russians

First and foremost, there were the Russians. Regions where Christians and Muslims had been living together in relative peace were torn asunder when the Russians invaded the Caucasian Muslim lands. Most Armenians were probably neutral, but a significant number took the side of the Russians. Armenians served as spies and even provided armed units of soldiers for the Russians. There were significant benefits for the Armenians: The Russians took Erivan Province, today's Armenian Republic, in 1828.

They expelled Turks and gave the Turkish land, tax-free, to Armenians. The Russians knew that if the Turks remained they would always be the enemies of their conquerors, so they replaced them with a friendly population—the Armenians.

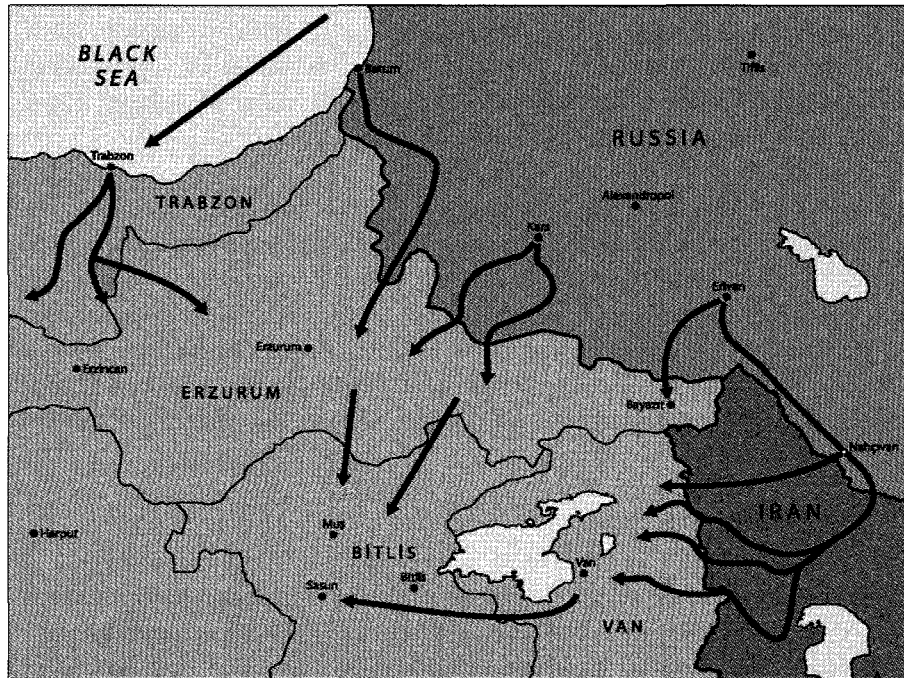
The forced exile of the Muslims continued until the first days of World War I: 300,000 Crimean Tatars, 1.2 million Circassians and Abkhazians, 40,000 Laz, 70,000 Turks. The Russians invaded Anatolia in the war of 1877-78, and once again many Armenians joined the Russian side. They served as scouts and spies. Armenians became the “police” in occupied territories, persecuting the Turkish population. The peace treaty of 1878 gave much of Northeastern Anatolia back to the Ottomans. The Armenians who had helped the Russians feared revenge and fled, although the Turks did not, in fact, take any revenge.

Both the Muslims and the Armenians remembered the events of the Russian invasions. Armenians could see that they would be more likely to prosper if the Russians won. Free land, even if stolen from Muslims, was a powerful incentive for Armenian farmers. Rebellious Ottoman Armenians had found a powerful protector in Russia. Rebels also had a base in Russia from which they could organize uprising and smuggle men and guns into the Ottoman Empire.

The Muslims knew that if the Russians were guardian angels for the Armenians, they were devils for the Muslims. They could see that when the Russians triumphed Muslims lost their lands and their lives. They knew what would happen if the Russians came again. And they could see that Armenians had been on the side of the Russians. Thus did 800 years of peaceful coexistence disintegrate.

The Armenian Revolutionaries

It was not until Russian Armenians brought their nationalist ideology to Eastern Anatolia that Armenian uprising became a real threat to the Ottoman State.



Map II- Smuggling Routes

Although there were others, two parties of nationalists were to lead the Armenian uprising. The first, the Hunchakian Revolutionary Party, called the Hunchaks, was founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1887 by Armenians from Russia.

The second, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, called the Dashnaks, was founded in the Russian Empire, in Tiflis, in 1890. Both were Marxist. Their methods were violent. The Hunchak and Dashnak Party Manifestos called for armed revolution in the Ottoman Empire. Terrorism, including the murder of both Ottoman officials and Armenians who opposed them, was part of the party platforms. Although they were Marxists, both groups made nationalism the most important part of their philosophy of revolution. In this they were much like the nationalist revolutionaries of Bulgaria, Macedonia, or Greece.

POPULATION

Unlike the Greek or Bulgarian revolutionaries, the Armenians had a demographic problem. In Greece, the majority of the population was Greek. In Bulgaria, the majority was Bulgarian. In the lands claimed by the Armenians, however, Armenians were a fairly small minority. The region that was called “Ottoman Armenia,” the “Six Vilâyets” of Sivas, Mamüretülaziz, Diyarbakır, Bitlis, Van, and Erzurum, was only 17% Armenian. It was 78% Muslim. (İmaj 2 / Plan I- Population of “Anatolia” and “Six Vilâyets”)

This was to have important consequences for the Armenian revolution, because the only way to create the “Armenia” the revolutionaries wanted was to expel the Muslims who lived there. Anyone who doubts the intentions of the revolutionaries need only look at their record—actions such as the murder of one governor of Van Province and attempted murder of another, murders of police chiefs and other officials, the attempted assassination of sultan Abdülhamid II. These were radical nationalists who were at war with the Ottoman State.

SMUGGLING ROUTES

Beginning in earnest in the 1890s, the Russian Armenian revolutionaries began to infiltrate the Ottoman Empire. They smuggled rifles, cartridges, dynamite, and fighters across ill-defended borders into Van, Erzurum, and Bitlis provinces along the routes shown on the map.

The Ottomans were poorly equipped to fight them. The problem was financial. The Ottomans still suffered from their terrible losses in the 1877-78 War with Russia. They suffered from the Capitulations, from debts, and from predatory European bankers. It must also be admitted that the Ottomans were

poor economists. The result was a lack of money to support the new police and military units that were needed to fight the revolutionaries and restrain Kurdish tribes. The number of soldiers and gendarmes in the East was never sufficient, and they were often not paid for months at a time. It was impossible to defeat the rebels with so few resources.

By far the most successful of the revolutionaries were the Dashnaks. Dashnaks from Russia were the leaders of uprising. They were the organizers and the “enforcers” who turned the Armenians of Anatolia into rebel soldiers. This was not an easy task, because at first most of the Ottoman Armenians had no wish to rebel. They preferred peace and security and disapproved of the atheistic, socialist revolutionaries. A feeling of separatism and even superiority among the Armenians helped the revolutionaries, but the main weapon that turned the Armenians of the East into rebels was terrorism. The prime cause that united the Armenians against their government was fear.

Before the Armenians could be turned into rebels their traditional loyalty to their Church and their Community leaders had to be destroyed. The rebels realized that Armenians felt the most love and respect for their Church, not for the revolution. The Dashnak Party therefore resolved to take effective control of the Church. Most clergymen, however, did not support the atheistic Dashnaks. The Church could only be taken over through violence.

What happened to Armenian clergymen who opposed the Dashnaks? Priests were killed in villages and cities. Their crime? They were loyal Ottoman subjects. The Armenian bishop of Van, Boghos, was murdered by the revolutionaries in his cathedral on Christmas Eve. His crime? He was a loyal Ottoman subject. The Dashnaks attempted to kill the Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul, Malachia Ormanian. His crime? He opposed the revolutionaries. Arsen, the priest in charge of the important Akhtamar Church in Van, the religious center of the Armenians in the Ottoman East, was murdered by Ishkhan, one of the leaders of Van’s Dashnaks. His crime? He opposed the Dashnaks. But there was an additional reason to kill him: The Dashnaks wanted to take over the Armenian education system that was based in Akhtamar. After Father Arsen was killed, the Dashnak Aram Manukian, a man without known religious belief, became head of the Armenian schools. He closed down religious education and began revolutionary education. So-called “religious teachers” spread throughout Van Province, teaching revolution, not religion.

The loyalty of the rebels was to the revolution. Not even their church was safe from their attacks.

The other group that most threatened the power of the rebels was the Armenian merchant class. As a group they favored the government. They wanted peace and order, so that they could do business. They were the traditional secular leaders of the Armenian Community; the rebels wanted to lead the Community themselves, so the merchants had to be silenced. Those who most publicly supported their government, such as Bedros Kapamacıyan, the Mayor of Van, and Armarak, the kaymakam of Gevaş, were assassinated, as were numerous Armenian policemen, at least one Armenian Chief of Police, and Armenian advisors to the Government. Only a very brave Armenian would take the side of the Government.

The Dashnaks looked on the merchants as a source of money. The merchants would never donate to the revolution willingly. They had to be forced to do so. The first reported case of extortion from merchants came in Erzurum in 1895, soon after the Dashnak Party became active in the Ottoman domains. The campaign began in earnest in 1901. In that year the extortion of funds through threats and assassination became the official policy of the Dashnak Party. The campaign was carried out in Russia and the Balkans, as well as in the Ottoman Empire. One prominent Armenian merchant, Isahag Zhamharian, refused to pay and reported the Dashnaks to the police. He was assassinated in the courtyard of an Armenian church. Others who did not pay were also killed. The rest of the merchants then paid.

From 1902 to 1904 the main extortion campaign brought in the equivalent, in today's money, of more than eight million dollars. And this was only the amount collected by the central Dashnak committee in a short period, almost all from outside the Ottoman Empire. It does not include the amounts extorted from 1895 to 1914 in many areas of the Ottoman Empire. Soon the merchants were paying their taxes to the revolutionaries, not to the government. When the government in Van demanded that the merchants pay their taxes, the merchants pleaded that they had indeed paid taxes, but to the revolutionaries. They said they could only pay the government if the government protected them from the rebels. The same condition prevailed all over Eastern Anatolia, in İzmir, in Cilicia, and elsewhere.

The Armenian common people did not escape the extortions of the rebels.

They were forced to feed and house the revolutionaries. British Consul Elliot reported, "They [the Dashnaks] quarter themselves on Christian villages, live on the best to be had, exact contributions to their funds, and make the younger women and girls submit to their will. Those who incur their displeasure are murdered in cold blood." [1]

The greatest cost to villagers was the forced purchase of guns. The villagers were turned into rebel "soldiers," whether they wished to be or not. If they were to fight the Turks, they needed weapons. The revolutionaries smuggled weapons from Russia and forced the Armenian villagers to buy. The methods used to force the villagers to buy were very effective, as British consul Seele reported:

An agent arrived in a certain village and informed a villager that he must buy a Mauser pistol. The villager replied that he had no money, whereupon the agent retorted, "You must sell your oxen." The wretched villager then proceeded to explain that the sowing season would soon arrive and asked how a Mauser pistol would enable him to plough his fields. For reply the agent proceeded to destroy the poor man's oxen with his pistol and then departed." [2]

The rebels had more than military organization in mind when they forced the villagers to buy weapons. The villagers were charged double the normal cost of the weapons. A rifle worth £5 was sold for £10. Both the rebel organization and the rebels themselves did very well from the sales.

It was the peasants who suffered most. The most basic policy of the revolutionaries was a callous exploitation of the lives of Armenians: Kurdish tribes and their villages were attacked by the rebels, knowing that the tribes would take their revenge on innocent Armenian villagers. The revolutionaries escaped and left their fellow Armenians to die.

Even Europeans, friends of the Armenians, could see that the revolutionaries were the cause of the curse that had descended on Eastern Anatolia. Consul Seele wrote in 1911:

From what I have seen in the parts of the country I have visited I have become more convinced than ever of the baneful influence of the Taschnak Committee on the welfare of the Armenians and generally of this part of Turkey. It is impossible to overlook the fact in that in all places where there are no Armenian political organisations or where such organisations are imperfectly developed,

The country that gains most from the rebels' actions is the country they come from—the country in which they organize, the country in which they have their home base.

What government would tolerate this? Has there ever been a country that would not jail, and probably hang such rebels? Has there ever been a country that would allow them to continue to operate openly? Yes. That country was the Ottoman Empire. In the Ottoman Empire the Armenian rebels operated openly, stored thousands of weapons, murdered Muslims and Armenians, killed governors and other officials, and rebelled again and again. The only one to truly benefit from their actions was Russia—the country in which they organized, the country their leaders came from.

How could this happen? The Ottomans were not cowards. The Ottomans were not fools. They knew what the rebels were doing. The Ottomans tolerated the Armenian revolutionaries because the Ottomans had no choice.

It must be remembered that the very existence of the Ottoman Empire was at stake. Serbia, Bosnia, Romania, Greece, and Bulgaria had already been lost because of European intervention. The Europeans had almost divided the Empire in 1878 and had planned to do so in the 1890s. Only fear that Russia would become too powerful had stopped them. Public opinion in Britain and France could easily change that. Indeed, that was exactly what the Armenian revolutionaries wanted. They wanted the Ottomans to jail and execute Armenian rebels. European newspapers would report that as government persecution of innocent Armenians. They wanted the government to prosecute Armenian revolutionary parties. The European newspapers would report that as denying political freedom to the Armenians. They wanted Muslims to react to Armenian provocations and attacks by killing Armenians. The European newspapers would report only the dead Armenians, not the dead Muslims. Public opinion would force the British and French to cooperate with the Russians and dismember the Empire.

Many politicians in Europe, men such as Gladstone, were as prejudiced against the Turks as were the press and the public. They were simply waiting for the right opportunity to destroy the Ottoman Empire.

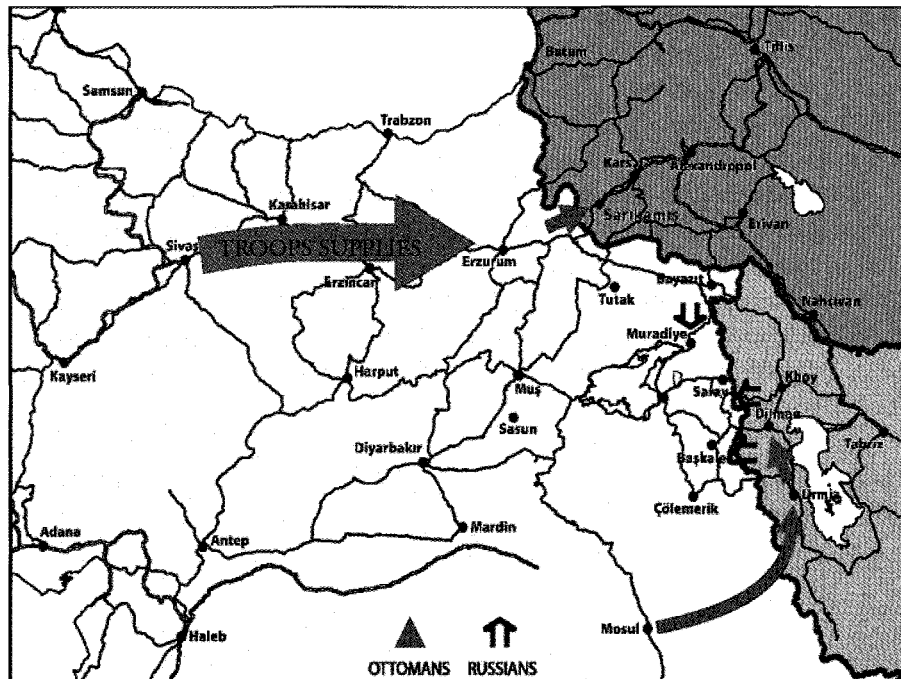
The result was that it was nearly impossible for the Ottomans to properly punish the rebels. The Europeans demanded that the Ottomans accept ac-

tions from the revolutionaries that the Europeans themselves would never tolerate in their own possessions. When the Dashnaks occupied the Ottoman Bank, Europeans arranged their release. European ambassadors forced the Ottomans to grant amnesty to rebels in Zeytun. They arranged pardons for those who attempted to kill sultan Abdülhamid II. The Russian consuls would not let Ottoman courts try Dashnak rebels, because they were Russian subjects. Many rebels who were successfully tried and convicted were released, because the Europeans demanded and received pardons for them, in essence threatening the sultan if he did not release rebels and murderers. One Russian consul in Van even publicly trained Armenian rebels, acting personally as their weapons instructor.

All the Ottomans could do was try to keep things as quiet as possible. That meant not punishing the rebels as they should have been punished. One can only pity the Ottomans. They knew that if they governed properly the result would be the death of their state.

World War I

There were two factors that caused the Ottoman loss in the East in World



Map IV- Routes of Troops Supplies

War I: The first was Enver Paşa's disastrous attack at Sarıkamış. Enver's attack on Russia in December of 1914 was in every way a disaster. Of the 95,000 Turkish troops who attacked Russia, 75,000 died. The second factor, the one that concerns us here, was Armenian Revolt.

DESERTION ZONE

As World War I threatened and the Ottoman Army mobilized, Armenians who should have served their country instead took the side of the Russians. The Ottoman Army reported: "From Armenians with conscription obligations those in towns and villages East of the Hopa-Erzurum-Hınıs-Van line did not comply with the call to enlist but have proceeded East to the border to join the organization in Russia." The effect of this is obvious: If the young Armenian males of the "zone of desertion" had served in the Army, they would have provided more than 50,000 troops. If they had served, there might never have been a Sarıkamış defeat. The Armenians from Hopa to Erzurum to Hınıs to Van were not the only Armenians who did not serve. The 10s of thousands of Armenians of Sivas who formed chette bands did not serve. The rebels in Zeytun and elsewhere in Cilicia did not serve. The Armenians who fled to the Greek islands or to Egypt or Cyprus did not serve. More precisely, many of these Armenian young men did serve, but they served in the armies of the Ottomans' enemies. They did not protect their homeland, they attacked it.

In Eastern Anatolia, Armenians formed bands to fight a guerilla war against their government. Others fled only to return with the Russian Army, serving as scouts and advance units for the Russian invaders. It was those who stayed behind who were the greatest danger to the Ottoman war effort and the greatest danger to the lives of the Muslims of Eastern Anatolia.

It has often been alleged by Armenian nationalists that the Ottoman order to deport Armenians was not caused by Armenian uprising. As evidence, they note the fact that the law of deportation was published in May of 1915, at approximately the same time that the Armenians seized the City of Van. According to this logic, the Ottomans must have planned the deportation some time before that date, so the uprising could not have been the cause of the deportations. It is true that the Ottomans began to consider the possibility of deportation a few months before May, 1915. What is not true is that May, 1915 was the start of the Armenian uprising. It had started long before.

European observers knew long before 1914 that Armenians would join the Russian side in event of war. As early as 1908, British consul Dickson had reported: The Armenian revolutionaries in Van and Salmas [in Iran] have been informed by their Committee in Tiflis that in the event of war they will side with the Russians against Turkey. Unaided by the Russians, they could mobilize about 3,500 armed sharpshooters to harass the Turks about the frontier, and their lines of communication.[4]

British diplomatic sources reported that in preparation for war, in 1913, the Armenian revolutionary groups met and agreed to coordinate their efforts against the Ottomans. The British reported that this alliance was the result of meetings with “the Russian authorities.” The Dashnak leader (and member of the Ottoman Parliament) Vramian had gone to Tiflis to confer with the Russian authorities. The British also reported that “[The Armenians] have thrown off any pretence of loyalty they may once have shown, and openly welcome the prospect of a Russian occupation of the Armenian Vilayets.” [5]

Even Dashnak leaders admitted the Dashnaks were Russian allies. The Dashnak Hovhannes Katchaznoui, prime minister of the Armenian Republic, stated that the party plan at the beginning of the war was to ally with the Russians.

Since 1910 the revolutionaries had distributed a pamphlet throughout Eastern Anatolia. It demonstrated how Armenian villages were to be organized into regional commands, how Muslim villages were to be attacked, and specifics of guerilla warfare.

Before the war began, Ottoman Army Intelligence reported on Dashnak plans: They would declare their loyalty to the Ottoman State, but increase their arming of their supporters. If war was declared, Armenian soldiers would desert to the Russian Army with their arms. The Armenians would do nothing if the Ottomans began to defeat the Russians. If the Ottomans began to retreat, the Armenians would form armed guerilla bands and attack according to plan. The Ottoman intelligence reports were correct, for that is exactly what happened.

WAR

The Russians gave 2.4 million rubles to the Dashnaks to arm the Ottoman

Armenians. They began distributing weapons to Armenians in the Caucasus and Iran in September of 1914. In that month, seven months before the Deportations were ordered, Armenian attacks on Ottoman soldiers and officials began. Deserters from the Ottoman Army at first formed into what officials called “bandit gangs.” They attacked conscription officers, tax collectors, gendarmerie outposts, and Muslims on the roads. By December a general revolt had erupted in Van Province. Roads and telegraph lines were cut, gendarmerie outposts attacked, and Muslim villages burned, their inhabitants killed. The revolt soon grew: in December, near the Kotur Pass, which the Ottomans had to hold to defend against Russian invasion from Iran, a large Armenian battle group defeated units of the Ottoman army, killing 400 Ottoman soldiers and forcing the army to retreat to Saray. The attacks were not only in Van: The governor of Erzurum, Tahsin, cabled that he could not hold off the Armenian attacks that were breaking out through the province; soldiers would have to be sent from the front.

By February, reports of attacks began to come in from all over the East—a two-hour battle near Muş, an eight-hour battle in Abaak, 1,000 Armenians attacking near Timar, Armenian chettes raiding in Sivas, Erzurum, Adana, Diyarbakır, Bitlis, and Van provinces. Telegraph lines to the front and from Ottoman cities to the West were cut, repaired, and cut again many times. Supply caravans to the army were attacked, as were columns of wounded soldiers. Units of gendarmerie and soldiers sent to reconnect telegraph lines or protect supply columns themselves came under attack. As an example of the enormity of the problem, in the middle of April an entire division of gendarmerie troops was ordered from Hakkâri to Çatak to battle a major uprising there, but the division could not fight through the Armenian defenses.

Once careful preparations had been made, Armenians revolted in the City of Van. On April 20, well-armed Armenian units, many wearing military uniforms, took the city and drove Ottoman forces into the citadel. The rebels burned down most of the city, some buildings also being destroyed by the two canons the Ottomans had in the citadel. Troops were sent from the Erzurum and Iranian Fronts, but they were unable to relieve the city. The Russians and Armenians were advancing from the north and the southwest. On May 17 the Ottomans evacuated the citadel. Soldiers and civilians fought their way southwest around Lake Van. Some took to boats on the Lake, but nearly half of these were killed by rebels firing from the shore or when their boats ran aground. Some of the Muslims of Van survived at least for a while, put in the care of

American missionaries. Most who did not escape were killed. Villagers were either killed in their homes or collected from surrounding areas and sent into the great massacre at Zeve.

The ensuing suffering of the Muslims and Armenians is well known. It was a history of bloody warfare between peoples in which all died in great numbers. When the Ottomans retook much of the East, the Armenian population fled to Russia. There they starved and died of disease. When the Russians retook Van and Bitlis Provinces, they did not allow the Armenians to return, leaving them to starve in the North. The Russians wanted the land for themselves. It is also well known that Armenians who remained, those in Erzurum Province, massacred Muslims in great numbers at the end of the war.

My purpose here is not to retell that history. I wish to demonstrate that the Ottomans were right in considering the Armenians to be their enemies, if further proof is needed. The map shows proof that the Armenian rebels in fact were agents of Russia.

The Armenians of the Ottoman East rebelled in exactly those areas that were most important to the Russians. The benefit of the uprising in Van City, the center of Ottoman Administration in the Southeast is obvious. The other sites of uprising were in reality more important: Uprising in Erzurum Province cut the Ottoman Army off from supplies and communications. The uprising was directly in the path of the Russian advance from the North. The Armenians rebelled in the Saray and Başkale regions, at the two major passes that the Russians were to use in their invasion from Iran. The Armenians rebelled in the region near Çatak, at the mountain passes needed for the Ottomans to bring up troops to the Iran frontier, the passes needed for the Ottoman retreat. The Armenians rebelled in great numbers in Sivas Province and in Şebinkarahisar. This would seem to be an odd place for a revolt, a region where the Armenians were outnumbered by the Muslims ten to one, but Sivas was tactically important. It was the railhead from which all supplies and men passed to the Front, basically along one road. It was the perfect site for guerilla action to harass Ottoman supply lines.

The Armenians also rebelled in Cilicia, the intended site for a British invasion that would have cut the rail links to the South. It was not the fault of the rebels that the British preferred to attempt the madness at Gallipoli instead of an attack in Cilicia that would surely have been more successful.

All these regions were the very spots a military planner would choose to most damage the Ottoman war effort. It cannot be an accident that they were also the spots chosen by the rebels for their revolt. Anyone can see that the revolts were a disaster for the Army. The disaster was compounded by the fact that the Ottomans were forced to withdraw whole divisions from the Front to battle the Armenian rebels. The war might have been much different if these divisions had been able to fight the Russians, not the rebels. I agree with Field-Marshal Pomiankowski, who was the only real European historian of World War I in the Ottoman Empire, that the Armenian uprising was the key to the Ottoman defeat in the East.

Only after seven months of Armenian uprising did the Ottomans order the deportation of Armenians (May 26-30, 1915).

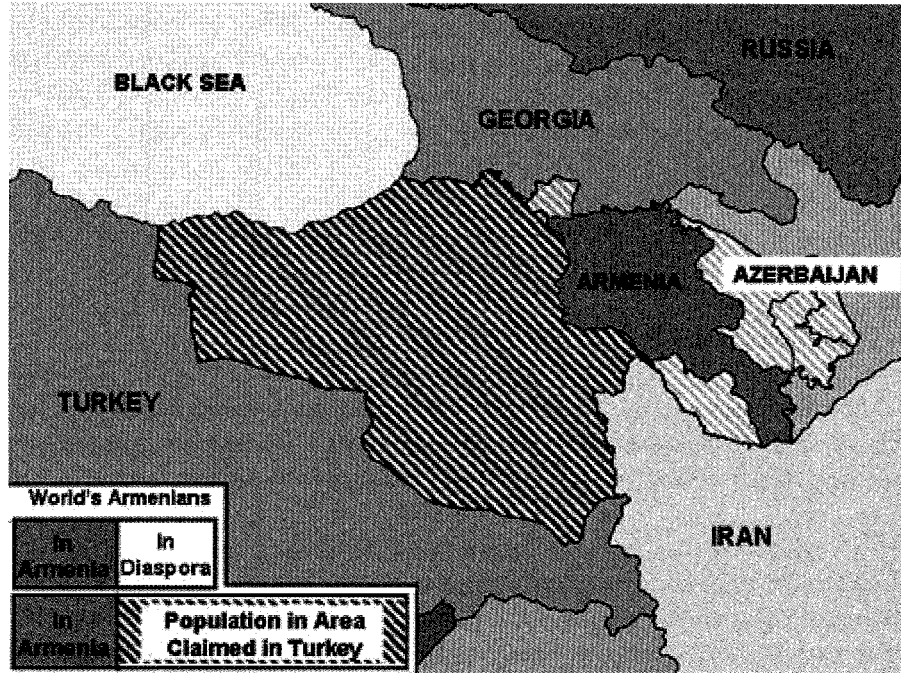
The Ottoman Record

How do we know that this analysis is true? It is, after all, very different than what is usually called the history of the Armenians. We know it is true because it is the product of reasoned historical analysis, not ideology.

To understand this, we must consider the difference between history and ideology, the difference between scientific analysis and nationalist belief, the difference between the proper historian and the ideologue. To the historian what matters is the attempt to find the objective truth. To the nationalist ideologue what matters is the triumph of his cause. A proper historian first searches for evidence, then make up his mind. An ideologue first makes up his mind, then looks for evidence.

A historian looks for historical context. In particular, he judges the reliability of witnesses. He judges if those who gave reports had reason to lie. An ideologue takes evidence wherever he can find it, and may invent the evidence he cannot find. He does not look too closely at the evidence, perhaps because he is afraid of what he will find. As an example, the ideologues contend that the trials of Ottoman leaders after World War I prove that the Turks were guilty of genocide. They do not mention that the so-called trials reached their verdicts when the British controlled Istanbul. They do not mention that the courts were in the hands of the Quisling Damad Ferid Paşa government, which had a long record of lying about its enemies, the Committee of Union and Progress. They

do not mention that Damad Ferid would do anything to please the British and keep his job. They do not mention that the British, more honest than their lackeys, admitted that they could not find evidence of any “genocide.” They do not mention that the defendants were not represented by their own lawyers. They do not mention that crimes against Armenians were only a small part of a



Map V- Armenian Claims

long list of so-called crimes, everything the judges could invent. The ideologues do not mention that the courts should best be compared to those convened by Josef Stalin. The ideologues do not mention this evidence.

A historian first discovers what actually happened, then tries to explain the reasons. An ideologue forgets the process of discovery. He assumes that what he believes is correct, then constructs a theory to explain it. The work of Dr. Taner Akçam is an example of this. He first accepts completely the beliefs of the Armenian nationalists. He then constructs an elaborate sociological theory, claiming that genocide was the result of Turkish history and the Turkish character. This sort of analysis is like a house built on a foundation of sand. The house looks good, but the first strong wind knocks it down. In this case, the strong wind that destroys the theory is the force of the truth.

A historian knows that one has to look back in history, sometimes far back in history, to find the causes of events. An ideologue does not bother. Again, he may be afraid of what he will find. Reading the Armenian Nationalists one would assume that the Armenian Question began in 1894. Very seldom does one find in their work mention of Armenian alliances with the Russians against the Turks stretching back to the eighteenth century. One never finds recognition that it was the Russians and the Armenians themselves who began to dissolve 700 years of peace between Turks and Armenians. These are important matters for the historian, but they hurt the cause of the ideologue.

The historian studies. The ideologue wages a political war. From the start the Armenian Question has been a political campaign. Materials that have been used to write the long-accepted and false history of the Armenian Question were written as political documents. They were written for political effect. Whether they were articles in the Dashnak newspaper or false documents produced by the British Propaganda Office, they were propaganda, not sources of accurate history. Historians have examined and rejected all these so-called "historical sources." Yet the same falsehoods continually appear as "proof" that there was an Armenian Genocide. The lies have existed for so long, the lies have been repeated so many times, that those who do not know the real history assume that the lies are true.

It is not only Americans and Europeans who have been fooled. Recently I read a two-volume work written by a Turkish scholar. Much of what appears on the Armenians is absolute nonsense. For example, in 1908 in the City of Van, Ottoman officials discovered an arsenal of Dashnak weapons--2,000 guns, hundreds of thousands of cartridges, 5,000 bombs--all in preparation for an Armenian revolt. Armenians rebels fought Ottoman troops briefly, then fled. This event is described in all the diplomatic literature and books on Van. The author, however, says what occurred was a revolt of 1,000 Turks (!) against the government, and mentions no rebel weapons. How could such a mistake be made? It was because of the source. The author took all information from the Dashnak Party newspaper!

We must affirm a basic principle: Those who take propaganda as their source themselves write propaganda, not history.

Too many scholars, Turks and non-Turks alike, have accepted the lies of

groups like the Dashnak Party and not even looked at the internal reports of the Ottomans. Scholars have the right to make mistakes, but scholars also have a duty to look at all sources of information before they write. It is wrong to base writings on political propaganda and to ignore the honest reports of the Ottomans. The first place to look for Ottoman history should be the records of the Ottomans.

Why rely on Ottoman archival accounts to write history? Because they are the sort of solid data that is the basis of all good history. The Ottomans did not write propaganda for today's media. The reports of Ottoman soldiers and officials were not political documents or public relations exercises. They were secret internal reports in which responsible men relayed what they believed to be true to their government. They might sometimes have been mistaken, but they were never liars. There is no record of deliberate deception in Ottoman documents. Compare this to the dismal history of Armenian Nationalist deceptions: fake statistics on population, fake statements attributed to Mustafa Kemal, fake telegrams of Talat Paşa, fake reports in a Blue Book, misuse of court records and, worst of all, no mention of Turks who were killed by Armenians.

I have been asked to make suggestions as to what Turks can do to correct false history. I hesitate to do so, because Turks already know what has to be done--opposing the lies that are told about their ancestors. You are already doing it. It is a hard fight: The prejudices about Turks stand in your way, and those who oppose you are politically strong, but the truth is on your side. I am very pleased that the Turks, and the Turkish Parliament, are uniting to oppose the lies told about the Turks. The recent agreement between Prime Minister Erdoğan, and Minority Leader Baykal, prove that the Turks are taking action. The attempt by the Tarih Kurumu to debate and discuss with Armenian scholars proves that the Turks are taking action. The many books on this issue now being printed by Turkish scholars prove that the Turks are taking action. Men like Şükrü Elekdağ are fighting for the truth. I and others who have long opposed the lies are glad we are not alone.

In the past, scholars, including myself, have proposed that Turkish and Armenian historians, along with others who study this history, should meet to research and debate the history of the Turks and Armenians. Prime Minister Erdoğan and Dr. Baykal have proposed that all archives be opened to a joint commission on the Armenian Question. This is exactly what should be done. Most important, they have declared that historians should settle this question.

They have also shown that Turks have nothing to fear from the truth.

We can only hope that scholarly integrity will triumph over politics and the Armenian Nationalists will join in debate. I am not hopeful they will do so. I recently gave two talks at the University of Minnesota, a center of so-called "Armenian Genocide Studies." Dr. Taner Akçam teaches there. Dr. Akçam was invited to my lectures, but did not come. In fact, no Armenian came. Instead all notices of the lecture were torn down, so that others would not know I was speaking.

This is not a scholarly approach. It is political. The Armenian Nationalists have decided that they will win their political fight if no one knows there is a scholarly opposition to their ideology. Therefore, Armenian Nationalists will only meet with Turks who first state that Turks committed genocide. These are described in the American and European press as "Turkish scholars." Readers are left with the impression, a carefully-cultivated impression, that Turkish scholars believe there was a genocide. Readers are left with the impression that it is only the Turkish Government that denies there was a genocide.

We know this is not true. Every year many books and articles are published in Turkey that not only deny the "Armenian Genocide" but document Armenian persecution of Turks. Conferences are held. Mass graves of innocent Turks killed by Armenian Nationalists are found. Museums and monuments are opened to commemorate the Turkish dead. Historians who have seen the Ottoman archival records or read the Turkish books on the Armenian Question do not accept the idea of a genocide. They know that in wartime many Armenians were killed by Turks, and that many Turks were killed by Armenians. They know that this was war, not genocide.

Why do so many in my country and Europe believe that the small group of Turks who accept the Armenian Nationalists beliefs represent Turkish scholarship? Why is it believed that these Turks speak for the real beliefs of Turkish professors? Part of the reason is prejudice. Prejudice against Turks has existed for so long that it easy for people to believe that Turks must have been guilty. Another reason, however, is that few in Europe and America know that real Turkish scholarship on this issue exists

Excellent work on the Armenian Question is now being written in Turkey. As you know, for too long Turks did not study the history of the Turks and

Armenians. This has now changed. Anyone who has seen modern Turkish work on the Armenian Question must be impressed. The Tarih Kurumu has taken the lead in this, as it should. I obviously do not believe that Turks should be the only ones who write Turkish history, but Turks should be the main historians of Turkey. It is your country and your history. The problem lies in bringing the excellent history now being written in Turkey and the documents of Turkish history to scholars, politicians, and the public in other countries. The problem is that Turkish historians naturally write in Turkish, and Europeans and Americans do not read Turkish.

Should those who write the history of Turkey read Turkish? Yes, of course they should read Turkish. Should they use the many books on Turkish history written in Turkish? Yes, of course they should do so. Should they understand all sides of an issue, including the Turkish side, before they write? Yes, because that is a scholar's duty. Do they always do so? No. In particular, most books on the so-called "Armenian Genocide" do not refer to modern Turkish studies. It is no use saying this is wrong. It is no use telling scholars to learn Turkish. They will not or cannot do so. To be fair, there are few places in my own country where Turkish is taught. The only answer is that the Turkish books must be translated into other languages, especially English, which is understood all over the world.

A start has been made. Today there are valuable books, originally in Turkish, that have been translated. These include Esat Uras' excellent, if now outdated, history, the recent publication on the Armenian Question by the Turkish Parliament, the history written by the Turkish Foreign Office, the late Kâmuran Gürün's Armenian File, Orel and Yuca's Talat Paşa Telegrams, and others. The series of Ottoman documents on the Armenian Question, translated and published by the General Staff, the Ottoman Archives, the Tarih Kurumu, and the Foreign Ministry, are perhaps the most valuable of all. But there are so many others that are needed. There are too many to list here, but I note that even the memoirs of Kâzım Karabekir and Ahmet Refik have not been translated. All these books should be read by the widest possible audience. They should be translated. And the translations must include books that seem to be on topics other than the Armenian Question. There are no accurate and detailed military histories of World War I in the Ottoman Empire in any European language. What exists is often wrong, and not only wrong on the Armenians. General histories of World War I, for example, name the wrong generals, move troops to the wrong places, and never seem to understand Ottoman strategy. They seldom mention the one most

significant factor in the war—the incredible strength and endurance of Turkish soldiers. Why is this important to the Armenian Question? It is important because the danger from the Armenian uprising and the reason for the Armenian deportations cannot be understood unless the military situation is understood. The Ottoman sources prove that the Armenian uprising was an essential part of the Russian military plan. The Ottoman sources prove that the Armenian uprising was an important part of the Russian victory. The Ottoman sources prove that the Armenian rebels were, in effect, soldiers in the Russian Army.

There is a series of military histories that accurately portray the events of the Ottoman wars and the Turkish War of Independence—the histories published by the Turkish General Staff—many volumes, filled with great detail, many maps, and descriptions of Ottoman plans and actions. These books are based on the reports of the Ottoman soldiers themselves, not only on the reports of the Ottoman enemies. They should be read by every historian of World War I. Yet these books are in Turkish. If they are ever to be used in America and Europe, they must be in English.

And there must be many more accurate and honest books on Turkey for teachers and students in Europe and America. Only by telling the truth to youth can the prejudices against Turks be finally ended. We have made a start. The Istanbul Chambers of Commerce have financed the first detailed book on Turkey for American teachers. Many more books are needed.

Finally, I wish to comment on current politics. Some may feel that I should not do so. I am not a Turk, and this is surely a Turkish problem. Nor am I a political scientist or a politician. I am a historian. I am speaking on this problem because it is basically a historical question. As a historian, I am infuriated when any group, or any country, is ordered to lie about its history. The political problem I am speaking of is the growing cry from Europe that Turkey must admit the “Armenian Genocide” before it can enter the European Union.

I am angry that anyone can believe that accepting a lie about Turkish history will somehow be a benefit to Europe or to Turkey. I know, and I believe you know, that it will make matters much worse.

Today the Armenian Nationalists are proclaiming in the parliaments of Europe and the Congress of the United States that they only want Turkey to admit that genocide occurred, then all will be well. I once spoke to an American official

who told me that the Turks should say, “Yes, we did it, sorry,” and then forget it. I asked him if he thought the Turks had committed genocide. He replied that he did not know and did not care. I told him the Turks would never lie like that about their fathers and grandfathers. He told me I was naïve. But he was the one who was naïve, because he believed that the Armenian Nationalists would be satisfied with an apology.

ARMENIAN CLAIMS

The plan of the Armenian Nationalists has not changed in more than 100 years. It is to create an Armenia in Eastern Anatolia and the Southern Caucasus, regardless of the wishes of the people who live there. The Armenian Nationalists have made their plan quite clear. First, the Turkish Republic is to state that there was an “Armenian Genocide” and to apologize for it. Second, the Turks are to pay reparations. Third, an Armenian state is to be created. The Nationalists are very specific on the borders of this state. The map you see is based on the program of the Dashnak Party and the Armenian Republic. It shows what the Armenian Nationalists claim. The map also shows the population of the areas claimed in Turkey and the number of Armenians in the world.

If the Armenians were to be given what they claim, and if every Armenian in the world were to come to Eastern Anatolia, their numbers would still be only half of the number of those Turkish citizens who live there now. Of course, the Armenians of California, Massachusetts, and France would never come in great numbers to Eastern Anatolia. The population of the new “Armenia” would be less than one-fourth Armenian at best. Could such a state long exist? Yes, it could exist, but only if the Turks were expelled. That was the policy of the Armenian Nationalists in 1915. It would be their policy tomorrow.

We should be very clear on Armenian claims. Their claims are not based on history, because Armenians have not ruled in Eastern Anatolia for more than 900 years. Their claims are not based on culture: Before the revolutionaries and the Russians destroyed all peace, the Armenians and Turks shared the same culture. Armenians were integrated into the Ottoman system, and most of the Armenians spoke Turkish. They ate the same food as the Turks, shared the same music, and lived in the same sorts of houses. The Armenian claims are surely not based on a belief in democracy: Armenians have not been a majority in Eastern Anatolia for centuries, and they would be a small minority there now. Their claims are based on their nationalist ideology. That ideology is unchanging. It was the same

in 1895 and 1915 as it is in 2005. They believe there should be an “Armenia” in Eastern Turkey—no matter the history, no matter the rights of the people who live there.

History teaches that the Armenian Nationalists will not stop their claims if the Turks forget the truth and say there was an Armenian Genocide. They will not cease to claim Erzurum and Van because the Turks have apologized for a crime they did not commit. No. They will increase their efforts. They will say, “The Turks have admitted they did it. Now they must pay for their crimes.” The same critics who now say the Turks should admit genocide will say the Turks should pay reparations. Then they will demand the Turks give Erzurum and Van and Elazığ and Sivas and Bitlis and Trabzon to Armenia.

I know the Turks will not give in to this pressure. The Turks will not submit, because they know that to do so would simply be wrong. How can it be right to become a member of an organization that demands you lie as the price of admission? Would any honest man join an organization that said, “You can only join us if you first falsely say that your father was a murderer?”

I hope and trust that the European Union will reject the demands of the Armenian Nationalists. I hope they will realize that the Armenian Nationalists are not concerned with what is best for Europe. But whatever the European Union demands, I have faith in the honor of the Turks. What I know of the Turks tells me that they will never falsely say there was an Armenian Genocide. I have faith in the honesty of the Turks. I know that the Turks will resist demands to confess to a crime they did not commit, no matter the price of honesty. I have faith in the integrity of the Turks. I know that the Turks will not lie about this history. I know that the Turks will never say their fathers were murderers. I have that faith in the Turks.

THE ARMENIAN IMAGE CREATED IN THE ARMENIAN MASS MEDIA

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Abstract

The basic aim of the writers who try to keep the Armenian problem on the agenda is to convince others to think and behave the way they do about the Armenian culture and history. So, their work style is to present the same texts that are suitable for their aims to the receiver as often as possible via different methods. In order to present these texts they use any kind of mass communication: statues, monuments, radio, TV, newspapers, graphics, maps, movies, photographs, textbooks on various subjects, encyclopedias, even music and the Internet.

Since these activities form the base of the psychological operations conducted against Turkey, this is an important issue from the strategic point of view.

The Armenian image analyzed in this paper has many aspects, details that cannot be discerned easily at first sight. One of these details provide a clue to the way the Armenian writers -- who present the Armenian Problem to the world from the Armenian perspective-- see the Armenian nation. This attitude on the part of the writers shows that they regard the receiver not as a producer of ideas but as a tool that can easily be conditioned to convey the presented message to others without any change and accepts everything as it is without questioning.

Keywords

Armenian, Images, Mass Media, Communication, Culture

INTRODUCTION

Imagery, by its simplest explanation, is the mental representation of a person or an object. An image becomes "visible" in mind thanks to memorization and association.

Memorization and association are activities that vary according to factors such

*The text of a conference dated Feb. 20, 2004.

as the background experiences, psychological structure and cultural origins of individuals and societies, and the geographical and climactic conditions they live in. Consequently, for individuals and societies, the same word, the same symbol, the same image may have different connotations. When text writers¹ try to form new images suitable for their aims they take into consideration this particular quality of the individual and collective memory. Advertisement texts are a good example of that approach. A writer can sometimes destroy traditional thoughts with the help of the images he constructs, imbue new meanings to old symbols or try to change the meaning of the symbol completely. Consider the new image created through cartoons for a harmful rodent: mouse. Text writers were so successful in creating that cartoon character that we started to keep some types of mice as pets in our houses.

In this article, those Armenian writers that have been writing about “The Armenian Issue” will be evaluated in the category of writers that try to give new meanings to traditional (original) symbols in an effort to “change” the realities. Their texts have been chosen as an example because these writers support the Armenian view and their behavior causes the Armenian society to forget about the fact that they share, with Turks, a common history of 600 years. They are driving the Armenian society away from the Turkish culture.

Unavoidably, the mass media becomes the issue – considering the fact that it is by the help of memory and association that we clarify images in our minds.

The descriptions made by the experts about “communication” are of a complementary nature. Emre Becer, when trying to analyze the relationship between graphic arts and communication, gives a simple description of “communication”: “*Communication can be defined as a connection of the senses, thoughts, behaviors and information between two individuals or a group of individuals/mass that are called sender and receiver.*”² John Fiske, on the other hand, draws a more panoramic picture, defining “communication” as any of the following: face-to-face talk, television, publications, literary criticism, our facial expressions, hairstyle etc.³ In that case, a sculpture, a painting, a map, a monument, a novel, the newspaper we read every day, a TV series we are addicted to or do not like, commercials, the perfume we wear, in fact every text that is directed towards our personal and social life,

¹ In this study, the term “text writers” refers to the creators of the written, oral, and visual texts.

² Emre Becer, *İletişim ve Grafik Tasarımı [Communication and Graphic Design]*, (Ankara: Dost, 2002), p.11.

³ John Fiske, *İletişim Çalışmalarına Giriş*, [An Introduction to Communication Studies], translated by Süleyman İrvan, (Ankara: Ark, 1996), p. 15.

should be described as a means of communication.

Text writers convey their messages to pre-determined addresses, using different methods for different aims. The language they use is the subject of Stylistics which can be defined as the “knowledge of the style used in a text” or the “knowledge of the art of using language”. In any study involving the mass media, language is the element that would have to be given primary consideration. The style the writer uses in a text is a very important sign indicating his aim regarding the targeted individual or mass of people. The aim can be served in various forms – that is, by inspiring sympathy or antipathy towards the issue at hand by encouraging or frightening the receiver,

From this point of view, the texts of the Armenian writers –including those that claim to be artistic-- have the same stylistic characteristics. These text writers always try to keep the “Armenian problem” alive on the agenda. Their main common aim is to convince others to think and behave like them on issues related to the Armenian culture and history. So, they try to present to the receiver those texts that are suitable for their aims as often as possible and via different channels. They use a wide variety of mass communication channels: statues, monuments, radio, TV, newspapers, graphics, maps, movies, photographs, textbooks on a variety of subjects, encyclopedias, even music and the Internet. However, we must point out that the most effective method they use is face-to-face communication with individuals.

That would have been all very well except for one thing. The point is, these activities constitute the backbone of the psychological operations Armenians conduct against Turkey. That aspect of these activities is outside my area of expertise --which is literature-- and should be discussed from a “strategy” perspective as well.

These writers’ subject matter is the “Armenian problem”. Their intention to reach their target audience with their texts to attain the aforementioned aim, naturally determines the nature of their style. As a result, in these texts Armenian characters always have the writers’ absolute approval regardless of whether they engage in positive or negative action. These writers make a special effort to portray as “defective” or “at fault” the Turkish characters and everything related to the Turks. If, as a result of their efforts, they manage to create such a “defect” they engage in “exaggeration” in the next phase.

For me the most distinctive common feature of these texts is that the writers

do not reflect the outcome of their one-to-one communication with Turkish people or Turkish culture. They reflect their own personal mental conceptions. What is even more interesting is that, after the product is released, both the writer and the target audience come to perceive and accept this kind of fiction as reality.

When these texts are analyzed from an historical perspective, it can be seen that the Armenian writers have been trying to break off the cultural ties between the Armenian people and the Turkish people -- as they had done with the Persians, Byzantines and Arabs in the past. In this process, the Ottoman Empire is portrayed as the symbol of "absolute evil" and the Armenian nation as the symbol of "absolute misery". In other words, Armenians are portrayed as a group of people that have been deprived of their personal rights to the level of slavery. In brief, we can describe in the following manner the common attitude of the text writers in situations like this where the Armenian public is chosen as the target audience: Their purpose is to create excuses to justify the way some of the Ottoman Armenians had collaborated in the past with foreign powers that had been fighting a war against the Ottoman Empire-- so that they can totally eradicate the feelings of guilt in the Armenian people. For this reason, they try to bring the Armenians closer to one another by creating an image of "common enemy" in their minds. That way the Armenian people would be protected from the cultural erosion that is intensely affecting all countries in the world.

The "canned" or "bottled" Armenian society that would result from that drive (we might see the Armenian society as "canned" even in its present form) is a subject that should be researched by other disciplines.

But why have they chosen the Turkish people as the antagonist during their efforts to create the "enemy" image? To find an answer one has to look, before everything else, at the identity of the various sources that have been providing material and moral support for this multi-purpose, multi-headed chain of efforts carried out all these years under the title, "The Armenian Issue".

Let us start by giving some concrete examples and analyze the information given to the Armenian children on page 59 of "The Armenian History", a textbook for the primary school 7th grade students edited by V. Barhudaryan:

"The Christian people, Armenians included, who were under the yoke of the Turks, were considered to be *Reaya* – that is, subjects that did not have any rights. They were deprived of all kinds of basic rights; had no security of life or property. Under the anarchic conditions that prevailed in the country, the Arme-

nian peasant could one day lose everything he had obtained by working under difficult conditions all those years.”⁴

The textbooks of the Turkish Ministry of National Education and various encyclopedias provide general information gathered through research by Turkish historians on the rights and responsibilities of the Muslim or Non-Muslim *Reaya* during the Ottoman era. At this point, let us discuss a specific book: “Osmanlı Yönetiminde Gayrimüslimler” [Non-Muslims under the Ottoman Rule]⁵ written by Prof. Dr. Yavuz Ercan. That book analyzes the social, economic and juridical status of the Non-Muslims under the Ottoman Rule starting from the foundation of the Ottoman Empire up to the Tanzimat Period (when the administrative and social reforms were made). In the light of the information given by Prof. Dr. Ercan, we can easily see that, as an institution, the Ottoman State was of a nature that would refute the claims of Barhudaryan and his colleagues not only regarding the Armenians but the other Non-Muslim communities of the realm as well. Besides, initially not only the non-Muslim farmers but Muslim farmers too were *Reaya*.

That is not the only piece of deliberately false and incomplete information Barhudaryan and his team have supplied to the Armenian students. They refer to the terrorist attacks that took place in the Ottoman Empire at that time, portraying these as a threat to the security of life and property of the Armenians – concealing the fact that it was the Armenian terrorists who perpetrated these acts. Anyone interested in this subject can find detailed information and documents about the terrorist actions of the Armenians in Anatolia in **Hüseyin Nazım Paşa**’s two-volume *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi* [History of the Armenian Incidents].⁶

The third point we must underline involves the writing style of Barhudaryan and his team. Their style indicates that Armenian historians, academics and artists have still not attained an adequate level of “argumental” and ethical maturity to discuss these issues at their own platforms.

Another piece of information that Armenian sources are trying to erase from the memory of the Armenian society is the fact that the Ottoman state had given the Armenians a prestigious position in the realm, actually calling them “*millet-i*

⁴ Prof. V.Barhudaryan, *Hayots patmutyün*, Hanrakrtakan dprotsi 7-rd dasarani dasagirk, Hmbagrutyam. (Yerevan: Luys, 1999) ec. 59.

⁵ Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Gayri Müslimler*, [Non-Muslims under the Ottoman Rule] (Ankara: Türhan Kitapevi, 2001).

⁶ Refer to Hüseyin Nazım Paşa, *Ermeni Olayları Tarihi*, [History of Armenian Incidents] (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Osmanlı Arşivleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1994).

sadika" [the loyal community]. Even by compiling a list of the Ottoman subjects of Armenian origin that had worked at various positions at the Ottoman Palace one could see how prestigious their position had been.

On this issue a curious paradox exists in the Armenian literary works. These authors underline the successes of the Armenians who had worked at the Ottoman Palace while ignoring as much as possible the material and moral support of the Ottoman government. In some cases the authors consider that support nonexistent or seek some ulterior motives behind it. Here is a very good example of that. Referring to Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror's moving the Armenian Patriarchate to İstanbul and his contribution to the development of the Patriarchate, the "Armenian-Soviet Encyclopedia" gives an account along the following lines:

"In order to protect the faithful Armenians living in places that were under Ottoman sovereignty and to cut them away from the influence of the Echmiadzin that had political ideas of Persian origin, [the Patriarchate in İstanbul] was set up in 1461 at the instigation of the Ottomans in line with the decree issued by Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror."⁷

It is interesting that, although, centuries later, the Armenian Church is still under the authority of the Echmiadzin, the author speculates that the aim behind the establishment of the İstanbul Armenian Patriarchate was to break the Armenian people's ties with the Echmiadzin Church.

In line with all these, there is yet another image, one that has always been present in the background in articles on the Armenians, an image that has always been ignored in the evaluations made so far: The Armenian image the authors have tried to create in the minds of the people all over the world. This image creates, most of the time, a grotesque picture full of contradictions in the receiver's mind.

I would like to start with a current example. This example concerns the "ancient Armenian history". Until recently, Armenian historians were trying to erase from history the names of the Haldis, the founders of the Urartu state, and put the name "Armenians" in that place. They were so insistent on imprinting this

⁷ Patriarkutyun hayots turkio. Kohstandnupolisi hayots patriarkutyun, haykakan sovetakan hanragitaran, hator 9, (Yerevan: Haykakan CCH gitutyunneri akademia, 1983).

idea on the collective memory that the international public accepted without hesitation (!) that the Armenians were the founders of the Urartu State.

Today, that page of history too seems to have been “moved” into an obscure historical period, that is, until academics shed light on it as well. A short while ago, Nikolay Harutyunyan, a member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, put forth the following thesis: *“Those who say that Armenians were the descendants of the Urartus are wrong ... They were here before the Urartus. Those who arrived later were the Urartus.”*⁸

Imagery can be studied in two categories: visual and mental. Visual images can be formed through photographs, pictures, statues and so on. Mental images can be created by way of lingual elements. Professor Gürsel Aytac, known for his valuable studies in the field of literature, discusses the terms “direct and indirect imagery”, citing Bernhard Sowinski’s views on this issue. According to Sowinski, *“There is direct imagery when the author concretizes what is visible to the eye through language without expressing what is imagined.”*⁹

In this study the term “indirect imagery” has been used to indicate the kind of imagery that would be created through the use of unusual methods of expression such as personification, similes and metaphors. Those imageries that are directly related to our study totally or partially connote or symbolize the implied meanings.¹⁰

Taking all this information into consideration, we can go back to the Armenian image created by the Armenian mass media.

According to data provided by the Armenian sources, from which I have quoted on various occasions for various purposes, Armenians had adopted the “written language” for the first time in the Vth Century when Mesrop Mashtot formulated the Armenian alphabet. Thus, Mesrop Mashtot becomes **the symbol of the first teacher**, marking the starting point of the introduction of Armenian writing. However, there are some unclear, debatable aspects of this piece of information.

First of all, the Agyan alphabet –which the Albans, one of the peoples of the Caucasus region, had used between the Vth and the IXth Centuries—consists of

8 Agos, December 5, 2003.

9 Gürsel Aytac, Genel edebiyat Bilimi, [The General Art of Literature] (İstanbul: Papirüs, 1999), p. 56.

10 Ibid, p. 56.

the same symbols as the Armenian alphabet. Yet, we cannot see Mesrop Mash-tot's name mentioned anywhere vis-à-vis the emergence of the symbols of the Agvan alphabet. Similarly, there has been no hint of any connection between the Agvan written language and the Armenian language. However, it has been on record that there are documents written in the Agvan language in the Armenian archives.¹¹ The question is whether Mesrop Mashtot knew the Agvan alphabet before he "created" the Armenian alphabet.

Second question: Mesrop Mashtot was an ordinary clergyman. At that time the Armenian people were divided into two as the eastern and western peoples, one part living under the rule of the Persians and the other under Byzantine rule. Assuming that the information the Armenian sources give about Mesrop Mash-tot is correct, how, under the conditions prevailing at that time, did he manage to have the entire (divided) Armenian people adopt the alphabet he had "created"? What kind of material and moral authority would enable him to achieve that?

The third question concerns the literary and philosophical texts in classical Greek that were reportedly translated into the Armenian language immediately after the introduction of the written form of the Armenian language. Armenians did not have any alphabet in the past other than the one they currently use. Until then they had not created an original work of philosophy or literature in written form. (In fact, even today we can hardly say that such original works are being created in the Armenian language.) How could such a language become ripe for the translation of literary and philosophical texts as soon as the written form of the language was introduced? Here is a relevant case involving the German philosophical works translated into Russian: Commenting on these contemporary translations, some Russian philosophers say that due to the peculiarities of these two languages German philosophy could not be thoroughly expressed in the Russian language. This example becomes all the more striking when we take into consideration the philosophical depth of the Russian literature and the eminent place the Russian literature has in the world literature – as well as the fact that the Russian language consists of more than 300,000 words. In the light of these facts, to what extent classical Greek could be compared with the Armenian language – especially at the stage where the latter's written form had just been introduced?

I think it would be interesting to hear the opinion of Greek philologists on this issue at a platform where this question would be discussed.

11 Yazıkozhahic, *Boşlaya russkaya entsiklopediya*, (Moskva: Boşlaya rossiyskaya antsiklopedia, 1998).

Now let us deal with another aspect of the issue at hand: the images certain circles are trying to create, targeting the Armenian population (and the rest of the world), disregarding the Turkish readers, the Turkish people.

Our example concerns the **state and country imagery**. Let us recall the particular role assigned to some of the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman state during World War I. It is enough just to read the history books published with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Science of the Republic of Armenia to find out the number of Ottoman Armenians who fought against the Ottomans while the latter was preoccupied at the Russian, French and British fronts. In such a textbook prepared for the 9th and 10th grade Armenian students (edited by G. A. Avetisian) it is said that more than 50,000 Armenians had served in the American, British and French Armies at that time. More importantly, the publishers of the book make the kind of assessment that could place all Ottoman Armenians under suspicion: *“The very thought of saving the country from Turkish rule was enough to excite all the Armenian people. To this aim, there were many Armenians eager to join the Volunteer Units not only in Russia but abroad as well (in Egypt, France, Cyprus and the USA).”*¹²

In this extract, there are two highly important points to be underlined: 1) The country in question is the Ottoman Country. And it is crystal clear who were the founders of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, that period constitutes one of the clearest pages of Turkish and world history. 2) A great many of the founders of the aforementioned Volunteer Units were the subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

In history books we come across the following information relevant to this subject: The Armenian Volunteer Units were formed by the Armenian gangs that had taken up arms against the Ottoman Empire. Russia provided the Armenian volunteers with material and moral support at the beginning to attain its aim of gaining access to the Mediterranean. Later, seeing that they had become detrimental to Russia, it disbanded these gangs in 1915 to prevent their activities inside Russia. According to documents written in the Armenian language, the activities of the Armenian Volunteers within the Ottoman borders, on the other hand, continued until 1918.

While creating this imagery a certain piece of information is being deliberately concealed from the Armenian youths: Armenians were only one of the numerous ethnic groups that made up the Ottoman Empire; and, though they were Otto-

12 Ts.P.Agayan i drugie, *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda (1900-1983)*, (Yerevan: Luys, 1985), p. 32.

man subjects, they collaborated with those countries that were fighting against the Ottoman Empire.

Here is another dimension of the issue at hand: Efforts are being made to force those people that are not a party to the “Armenian Problem” too to come up with ideas and to take action. The group that organizes these efforts pins its hopes of success on the assistance to be obtained from third-party countries. To obtain that assistance, they portray the Armenians as **a community that has sacrificed itself** for the sake of the Christian world. This group presents texts that repeat that idea to the Armenian people and to the international public via various channels over and over in quick succession. In fact, we can discern that imagery even in some texts that have nothing to do with the issue in question. Here is an example: In the foreword section of the book “Armenian On Your Own,” we all of a sudden come across this imagery in the article titled “The Importance of the Armenian Language and the Goal of Learning Armenian”¹³ where the history of the Armenian Language is given. Besides, there are also novels such as Franz Werfel’s “40 Days on Mount Moses” that directly aim to create the notion that Armenians were a people sacrificed for the sake of Christianity.

In documents prepared towards that goal, it is possible to discern the effort to keep the western public opinion under continuous psychological pressure. In those documents, Armenians are presented as **the cheated community**. The western states are blamed in this way. Here is the basic thought that supports that accusation: Just like the Roman Empire had once done, the western countries have failed to hand out to the Armenian people the reward they had promised – though the Armenian people did help them greatly to accelerate the disintegration process of the Ottoman Empire during World War I. To illustrate this point Fridtjof Nansen’s book in German, “The Cheated Folk”, must be mentioned.¹⁴

At this point, I would like to mention certain data that require further research and discussions on the issue at hand in yet another aspect. As part of the events marking the 80th Anniversary of the Turkish Republic a symposium was held on the “Studies on Eastern and Western Languages and Literature” theme at the Faculty of Language, History and Geography of Ankara University on Octo-

13 N.A. Parnasyan i Manukyan, J.K. *Samouçitel Armyanskogo yazıka*, (Yerevan: Luys, 1990), p.11..

14 Fridtjof Nansen, *Volk Betrogenes*, (Leipzig: F.A.Brockhaus, 1928).For his help about this reference I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Osman Toklu, a *staff member* of the University of Ankara, the Faculty of Language, History and Geography.

ber 22-23, 2003. Two of the papers presented during the symposium contained significant data that supported my own studies. One these papers referred to Russian poet Pushkin's journey to Erzurum during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828-29.¹⁵ The piece of information that was important for my study was that Pushkin's escort was an Armenian. The other paper was about the book a Japanese writer, Ienaga Toyokichi, had written on his ten-month visit to Anatolia during the last year of the XIXth Century and the first year of the XXth Century.¹⁶ The striking point here was that he too had an Armenian guide. These two books had an aspect in common. They both created a negative Turkish image. We derive the third fact that supports the first two from the interview titled "The Armenian Dream and Talks at the Front," which I have translated from Russian to use in my study, "Mass Media and the Paradoxes Created in Texts on the Armenian Problem".¹⁷ The Russian journalist who conducted the interview, F. Sibirski, had an Armenian guide during his travels in Anatolia in 1916. In short, we can say that the Turkish image created in the works of those foreign travelers/writers with Armenian guides is worth studying – qualitatively and quantitatively.

There is also the issue of using religion as a tool to put pressure on third persons. For this purpose, the Christian Armenian is being presented to the international public **as the first community that embraced Christianity** (officially as a state religion). However, it must not be forgotten that at that time Armenians were not independent and, obviously, there was no way they could do that unless the Roman Emperor Constantine I accepted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire -- as I pointed out in my paper, "One of the three taboos of Armenian Culture: Armenian Language"¹⁸ two years ago.

15 Prof.Dr. Altan Aykut, 'Puşkin'in "Erzurum'a yolculuk" Adlı Yapıtı, *Doğu-Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Araştırmaları Sempozyumu*, Bildiri Metni, Ankara Üniversitesi DTCE,22-23 Ekim 2003, Ankara.[Prof.Dr. Altan Aykut, Pushkin's work named "A trip to Erzurum", Paper, *Symposium on Studies on Eastern and Western Languages and Literatures*, University of Ankara, Faculty of Language, History and Geography, October 22-23, 2003, Ankara].

16 Dr. Hüseyin Can Erkin, "Çağdaşlaşma Dönemi Japon Edebiyatında Türk İmgesi", *Doğu-Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Araştırmaları Sempozyumu*, Bildiri Metni, Ankara Üniversitesi DTCE, 22-23 Ekim 2003, Ankara.[the Turkish Image in the Era of Modernization of the Japanese Literature, Paper, *Symposium on Eastern and Western Languages and Literatures*, University of Ankara, Faculty of Language, History and Geography, October 22-23, 2003, Ankara].

17 Birsen Karaca, "Kitle İletişim Araçları ve Ermeni Sorunu'nu Konu Alan Metinlerde Yaratılan Paradokslar", Bkz. Idris Bal ve Mustafa Çufalı, *Dünden Bugüne Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri*, (Ankara: Nobel, 2003), pp.425-432.(Birsen Karaca , Mass Media and Paradoxes Created in the Texts Concerning the Armenian Problem, see: Idris Bal ve Mustafa Cufalı, *Turkish-Armenian Relations: the Past and the Present*, (Ankara: Nobel, 2003), pp. 425-432.

18 Birsen Karaca, "Ermeni Kültüründe Üç tabudan Birisi: Ermeni Dili", *Ermeni Araştırmaları I. Türkiye Kongresi Bildirileri*, III. Cilt, ASAM- Ermeni Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Yayını, Ankara, 2003, pp. 137-142.

What we should say to question the validity of that image is: Why and under which conditions exactly did the Armenians embrace Christianity? Let us answer that question by quoting from an Armenian literary expert, V.S Nalbandyan:

“Armenian feudal lords made Christianity the state religion in 301, as we have mentioned before, with great expectations from Christianity. Great Tiridat, the king, was trying to use Christianity to bolster his political power. Also, he calculated that sharing the same religion with the Roman Empire would enable him to gain a strong ally in the war against Persian tyranny. However, the events of the IVth and Vth Centuries showed that his hopes were in vain.”¹⁹

The information in this paper, which indicates that the Armenians accepted Christianity as an instrument to win approval as a state, contradicts with the image of a nation that sacrificed itself for the sake of Christianity.

Before reaching a conclusion, I want to go back to the symbols that target the Armenian nation. It is interesting that the Armenian people have not objected to some parts of that data:

The rebel nation image presented with motifs of rebellion: The most common information about Armenians in history books concerns the rebellions staged by the Armenians since the Vth Century. One could even produce a book named “The history of *Armenian uprisings*” merely by compiling the titles on these. On the basis of the data available on this issue one could conclude that the Armenians played a primary role in the collapse of all of the states under whose rule they had once lived in Anatolia. Furthermore, it is one of the characteristics of these texts that the act of rebellion itself is presented as an achievement regardless of the outcome. Let us remember the way the Romans had “rewarded” the Armenian groups that had rebelled against the Persian Empire of whose subjects they were, and supported the Roman Army against the Persian Army. When the Persian-Roman War ended and these two countries signed a treaty in 387, Rome “destroyed” the “political entity” of the Armenians living within the boundaries of the Roman Empire since it saw them as a threat. Those writers that emphasize the rebellious Armenian image still cannot fathom (!) why Rome, who owed its

(Birsen Karaca, “One of the Three taboos of Armenian Culture: Armenian Language”, *Ermenian Studies 1st Turkish Congress Papers*, Volume III, ASAM- Institute for Armenian Research Publications, Ankara, 2003, pp. 137-142).

19 V.S. Nalbandyan i drugiye, *Armyanskaya literatura*, (Moskva, 1976), p.9. “In Russian”

success partly to those Armenian rebels, ended the political existence of the Armenians within its boundaries.

The **vindictive enemy image**: This image is used by the Armenian terrorists; and efforts are made to spread that image to the entire Armenian people. As the most extreme example of that stance one can cite the way ASALA, a terrorist organization, uses the Internet. From Armenians.com lots of links operating in that manner can be reached. These sites offer not only written texts but visual ones as well.²⁰ However, our paper does not focus on the texts presented by the terrorist organizations. These groups declare themselves to be terrorist organizations as it is, without feeling the need for any confirmation of that from the West. They try to gain “sympathy” on the basis of this very characteristic. What is important in reality and needs to be researched is the way Armenian intellectuals and western humanists, known for their care for human rights, have chosen not to see these activities.

I would like to give another example -- from the world of literature: The **craziness image** emphasized by William Saroyan in his works. Let us have a lengthy quotation from the writer’s published diary:

“When I observe the others, I mean the others’ children, I think of my own children and myself as being the fourth child of Armenak SAROYAN and Takuhi SAROYAN. The others’ children are wise, well behaved, skillful, efficient, and know what to do, but my nation’s children’s ability to bewilder surprises me. The other children know who they are, what are they doing in this world and are fairly comfortable in what they are doing. However, this is a great struggle for us Armenians from the very beginning.

Finally I decide that all of them are lunatics, but not as crazy as those who should be put in a lunatic asylum. We know how to suppress our anger before society or the medical authorities come on to us. Only a few of us are not crazy. I am saying this in the meaning that it is more or less always like that; I mean do

20 For ASALA’s terrorist attacks on Turkish diplomats see [retired ambassador] Bilal Şimşir, *Şehit Diplomatlarımız* [Our Martyred Diplomats] (1973-1994), *Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2000*.
<http://janfedayi.com> “In English”
www.ASALAonline.com “In English”
<http://www.armenians.com/asala/index1.html> “In English”
<http://forum.hayastan.com/index.php?showtopic=11133> “In Russian”
<http://terrorism.wallst.ru/asala.htm> “In Russian”
<http://www.vestnik.com/issues/2001/0605/win/mirzoev.htm> “In Russian”

not think that past is better than today. We can find flaws in everything. We know that we live in a corrupt world, but even after we accept this reality we do not stop complaining; moreover we sometimes get furious about it. When I think about any branch of a family I cannot find any who is mild, ordinary, serious, amenable, ardent, respectful, keen, knows what to do, in short I can't find any family which has the qualifications of a normal family.”²¹

In this quotation, Saroyan's pen draws skillfully the **discordant man image** that has been dealt with in the Armenian literature quite often. It is strange that this discordant man image, just as the craziness image, is presented as one of the distinguishing qualities of the Armenian people as if that makes them superior to other peoples.

Finally, there are two important points that should be highlighted regarding the image created in the Armenian mass media. First of all, generally speaking, the biggest success of these texts is that none of them has triggered adverse reactions especially from the Armenian readers. This non-reactive behavior seems to support the argument John Berger put forth in his book “Ways of Seeing”: “What we believe and what we think affect what we see.”²² The famous art critic explained his ideas by saying, “In the medieval times when people believed that hell really existed, fire definitely had a quite different meaning than it has today.”²³ Now let us think about the events from the opposite direction. Armenia has been a political entity since 1991. The members of the aforementioned Armenian groups (which are, in fact, similar to the Armenian Volunteer Groups of the World War I) have been living in the Diaspora and, since 1991, as citizens of the Armenian Republic. Let us try to imagine what would happen if these groups had repeated what they had done on the Ottoman soil in the 1800s and 1900s— this time targeting their attacks on these other countries. What kind of reaction would they get from these countries?

As for the second point that should be highlighted, Michel Foucault, in his book “Words and Things”²⁴ underlines important details -- that seem to be lost in

21 W. Saroyan, Paris –Frenso Güncesi 1967-68, çev: Beril Eyüboğulu, (Istanbul: Aras, 2001), p.57. (W. Saroyan, PARIS-FRENZO DIARY 1967—68, (Istanbul: Aras, 2001), p.57).

22 John Berger, Görme Biçimleri [Ways of Seeing], translated into Turkish by Yurdanur Salman, (Istanbul, Metis, 1999), p. 8.

23 İbid, p.8.

24 Michel, Foucault, Kelimeler ve Şeyler [Words and Things], translated by Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay, (Ankara: Imge, 2001)..

the texts. Foucault, whom we know as a French historian of culture and science as well as a philosopher, explains in his book some important details of Velasquez's painting "Lady-in-waiting" that escape the attention of the ordinary viewers. As a result we understand that this painting does not consist merely of the images that have been painted distinctly in the foreground.

The Armenian image we have analyzed in the "painting" that is called the "Armenian Problem" is one of the obscure details that, as in the case of the Velasquez painting, do not attract attention at first glance. This detail also shows how the Armenian writers, who present the Armenian Problem to the world from the Armenian standpoint, see the Armenian nation. This attitude on the part of the writers indicates that they would like to see the receiver not as a "producer of ideas" but as a tool that stores unquestioningly everything that is presented, and can be easily conditioned to convey the presented message to others without any change.

This list can be expanded, that is, the list consisting of the images created and presented by the Armenian mass media to keep the Armenian problem on the agenda. Yet, at the same time, these images provide the researchers with data about the individual and collective characteristics of the Armenian people.

In recent years, extensive research has been done on collective memory and cultural analysis at the universities of western countries. This should be seen as a sign attesting to the need to hand over advanced technology to capable hands in social sciences. To conclude: The experience we have gained vis-à-vis the "Armenian Problem" should cause the Turkish academic world to make an intellectual contribution that would set the direction of the arguments taking place before the international public opinion on such issues.

BOOK REVIEW

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SALGIN HASTALIKLARDAN ÖLÜMLER (THE DEATHS FROM EPIDEMIC DISEASES IN 1914-1918)

Prof. Dr. Hikmet ÖZDEMİR

Turkish Historical Society Publications, XVI. Series-No 104, Ankara, 2005. 445 pages, footnotes, bibliography, index, pictures. ISBN: 975-16-1766-9

This book, written by Prof. Dr. Hikmet Özdemir, has resulted from a study of various sources in Turkey and other countries. Supported with detailed analyses, it sheds light on the facts regarding the military and civilian losses from epidemic diseases during the First World War in a region extending from the Caucasus to Mesopotamia. Although the book mainly concentrates on the research of deaths resulting from epidemic diseases between 1914-1918, it supplies explanatory information regarding the earlier periods as well. It notes that for armies epidemic diseases can sometimes be more dangerous than the enemy itself and that, in some other cases, armies have benefited from epidemic diseases because an epidemic could weaken and cripple the enemy forces defending a beleaguered city to the point that the surrender of the city would become inevitable. It points out that in the old world not only commodities, thoughts and techniques but microbes too circulated among communities, and diseases played an important role in shaping history since they were one of the main causes of human death. The losses that armies incurred are listed in tables in the book that consists of 12 sections. When the data is analysed, it becomes evident that the struggle against diseases and the prevention of their dissemination is or should be a part of war strategy. For example, typhoid fever epidemics broke out in all armies fighting in the European Fronts during the First World War. However, as the book emphasizes, while the number of those who contracted typhoid fever was very high in Austria, France and Germany, that figure was quite low in the American Army due to regular vaccinations and the utmost care and concern given to sanitation. When one closely examines the situation in the Ottoman Army one sees that during the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877-1878, the Balkan

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Wars in 1912-1913 and the First World War, famines broke out, affecting a large part of the army; and that more Ottoman soldiers died of cholera, typhoid fever and dysentery than in combat. Successive wars played an important role in the spread of epidemic diseases at that time. Dwelling on the destruction caused by diseases during the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877-1878 the book stresses that the Muslim population was fleeing from the areas occupied by the Russian Army to those Anatolian provinces controlled by the Ottoman Army, Istanbul among them; and that masses of them perished of epidemic diseases along the route and in the cities where they took refuge.

The diseases that broke out in Istanbul among these displaced people in 1878, for example, had quickly gained epidemic proportions, seriously threatening public health in the city. Epidemic diseases caused major destruction during the Balkan Wars as well. Over 30,000 soldiers contracted cholera in 1912 and one-thirds of them died. The impressions of Leon Trotsky on the situation in the Balkans are mentioned in the book as well. Trotsky cites the following lines from the letter of a civil servant: “ A dreadful situation! To tell the truth, it breaks one’s heart to see from time to time that innocent Turkish villagers, civilians, are being killed, their property and other possessions seized and their wives and children faced with starvation. About 2,000 Turkish migrants perished from starvation between the cities of Radovish and Stip, most of them women and children, really only because of starvation...” (Page: 66).

The primary steps the Ottomans took to fight with epidemic diseases in the empire were aimed at improving preventive medicine. They founded a medical school and a quarantine organization. With the outbreak of the First World War, civilian physicians, pharmacists and dentists between the ages of 20 and 45 were drafted into the army on August 1, 1914. The most important step taken in the fight against epidemic diseases in the Ottoman Empire was the foundation of the Ministry of Health. At the beginning of the First World War, the name of the Ministry of the Interior was changed into the Ministry of the Interior and Health. The book provides information on the Assembly debates on the draft budget of the Ministry of Health and, in that section, it refers to a 1918 speech delivered by Artin Boşgezeyan, a deputy of Halep (Aleppo).

Another subject debated at the Assembly between the years of 1914-1918 was the locust invasions that were a serious cause of destruction and famine in the realm, especially in Syria. The Assembly debated plans to offer rewards varying

from 250 piasters (kurush) to 1000 piasters to encourage people to report the incoming locust hordes as soon as they spotted them.

In the section of the book titled “The White Crescent” striking information is given about deaths from epidemic diseases in the Ottoman Army. For example, Eric Jan Zürcher stated that during the First World War, the death rate from disease was around 50 percent in the Ottoman Army. That rate was no higher than 10 percent in the German Army. The death rate from epidemic diseases in the Ottoman Army was incomparably higher than in the armies of other countries. The Third Army of the Ottomans had suffered the biggest losses in this regard. The Third Army, deployed in Eastern Anatolia, lost 116,000 men due to the epidemics alone. The overall loss of the Ottoman Army due to the epidemic diseases was 388,000 men according to the hospital records. That figure does not include the deserters who died during the epidemics. It is not known where and when died those deserters that had contracted epidemic diseases. A highly interesting observation is made in the book in the following vein: These “military deaths from disease” figures and rates can be applied to the civilians (that is, to the groups of Muslims and Christians that had been on the move in the same regions at that time) for an approximate estimation of their losses from disease.

In the book the number of Ottoman Armenians who were subjected to a forced relocation in 1915 due to security reasons is given as 500,000. The book goes on to say that, meanwhile, taking advantage of the Russian occupation of Eastern Anatolia, the Russian Armenians forced, in the years 1916-1917, one million Muslims to flee from the Caucasus and from Eastern Anatolia to central parts of Anatolia that were more secure.

As the book points out, during the First World War, some 1.5 million Christians and Muslims were on the move in the central and southern regions of Anatolia and in the war zones such as the Caucasus, Çapakur (Bingöl), Iraq and Syria. During the First World War, the number of deaths –in this order-- from typhus, dysentery and malaria was very high indeed in the Ottoman Army. The highest death toll occurred in the Third Army because that army was deployed in regions with high mountains where winters were long and harsh, and the front could not be accessed except by a few macadamised roads. Furthermore, the soldiers were not dressed appropriately for that kind of climate and problems were encountered in the procurement of food supplies. Therefore, in the Third Army the number of those who died due to diseases was 28 times higher than that of those who died

in combat. The Third Army established its military build-up in Erzurum and around it. The men who travelled there from their hometowns to join the Third Army had come from far-away regions on foot and were deprived of effective lice treatment both on the road and when they finally joined their military units.

As it is emphasized in the book, the real tragedy regarding diseases occurred in the wake of the battle of Sarıkamış. Typhus, typhus exanthematic and dysentery caused the Third Army a second disaster after Sarıkamış. The typhus epidemic broke out in East Anatolian provinces months before the Ottoman government decided to relocate part of Armenian population to an area far from the Russian-controlled war zone on the grounds of protecting the Ottoman transportation lines and for security reasons since revolts had broken out in Zeytun, Van, Muş, Sivas and Şebinkarahisar. (Page 205)

The book contains excerpts from Justin McCarthy's work, "Death and Exile", by Justin McCarthy that underlines the tragedy the entire population of the empire, Muslim and Christian alike, endured during the First World War. One of these excerpts boil down to the following: "We hear that things have gone right only for a very few of those migrants, Muslims and Armenians, that had to set out from Eastern Anatolia or the Caucasus. It can be assumed that these people were in a worse situation than those that had become migrants in Western Anatolia or in Europe around the same time. Throughout the First World War there were no camps in East Anatolia to accommodate the Muslim migrants. The State Commission for Migrants made everything in its power to provide help and protection to the migrants, but to what extent a state could possibly provide relief to one million migrants when it was incapable of even dressing its own soldiers properly? (Salgin Hastalıklardan Olumler [Deaths From Epidemic Diseases], pp. 242-243)

Epidemic diseases decimated armies in wartime and caused civilians to perish en masse. The fact that 25,000-30,000 Armenians had died of diseases such as typhoid fever and dysentery during their transfer from various parts of Anatolia for the purpose of relocation between the dates of June 9, 1915 and Feb. 8, 1916, was evidenced in the course of a study conducted in the Ottoman Archives in 2001.

It has been determined that, during the war years, a significant number of Ottoman Armenians emigrated from the Imperial territories and became citizens of

other countries. In fact, French physicians named “*Maladie Armenienne*” the illness that broke out among the convoys of Armenians emigrating from the Imperial territories via Mediterranean routes. Later on, when this disease was observed in some other communities as well, communities living around the Mediterranean basin, the aforesaid name was abandoned in favour of “*Periodic Illness*”. (PP. 245-246) Epidemic diseases were observed in the convoys of the migrating groups during their passage through Anatolia. In the book, it is emphasized that in a dispatch sent to the Governorship of Konya On Nov. 2, 1915 it was stated that of 200 Armenians, all were ill, 50 of them seriously; that many of them had contracted dysentery and malaria; and that they needed to be settled in uninhabited houses immediately. In 1915 several types of epidemics –including a typhus epidemic-- broke out in the Syrian Front. Typhus exanthematic broke out in Syria and Palestine. While the German army units could protect themselves thanks to preventive measures, the Turkish units were vulnerable to this disease due to famine and war weariness; and many Turkish soldiers succumbed to the disease as a result. Epidemics spread in Aleppo as well, and, because of the outbreak of typhus in the Armenian convoys in the city, the authorities assigned a 500-strong battalion of “military laborers” (that had been building the Aleppo Barracks) to the task of completing the half-finished French Hospital in the Cemile (Jamila) district of the city. The building was completed in one week and was opened for service as a hospital with a capacity of 850 beds. (Page 247) Under the leadership of Cemal Pasha, a state of siege was declared towards the improvement of the medical conditions in the fight against the epidemics ravaging the army and the civilians in Aleppo. Thus, efforts were made to contain the epidemics by way of a quarantine and medical treatment.

The epidemic diseases that broke out during the migrations of the Muslims from the East Anatolian provinces of the Ottoman Empire – migrations that took place in two different periods— during the First World War, were responsible for a considerable number of deaths. The first wave of Muslim migration started upon the Armenian revolt in the city of Van and ended in the summer of 1915 when the Russians retreated from the area. The second period began with the Russian invasion of 1916. And the more westerly or southerly cities on which the Ottoman Army had a stronger grip, became filled with the Muslim migrants coming from the eastern parts of the realm. A series of cholera epidemics broke out among the Muslim migrants between the dates of Aug. 15, 1916 and Dec. 18, 1917. The medical records of the Ottoman Army list the shortcomings of the drive to resettle the Muslim migrants who had fled towards the inner parts

of Anatolia from the Caucasus and from the occupied Ottoman cities during the First World War. The book provides samples of these medical reports as well.

Famines caused deaths in Syria and Lebanon during the First World War. The King of Spain wanted to send wheat to the people of Lebanon as a gift. Although Cemal Pasha approved it, the British War Cabinet opposed the idea. It has been claimed that during the war Cemal Pasha deliberately abandoned the Christian population of Beirut and Lebanon to starve to death. In reality, Cemal Pasha did everything in his power to provide food aid to the Muslim and Christian peoples of Lebanon, Beirut included. However, large numbers of people perished from starvation because the wheat supply did not arrive in time. The British Armada sank the barges and sailboats that were transporting food for the people of Lebanon (and, in this context, of Beirut) and imposed a blockade. In accordance with the war propaganda, the deaths resulting from epidemic diseases in various regions were portrayed to the public as “victims of the massacres staged by the Muslims against the Christians”.

The book includes some striking quotes from Justin McCarthy’s work along the following lines: “No less than 40 percent of the Muslim population that were living in the provinces where the first clashes took place upon the onset of the war (such as Van, Bitlis and Erzurum) had perished by the time the war ended....The world has known all along how much the Armenians suffered. Now it is time for the world public opinion to consider also how much the Muslims in eastern Anatolia suffered and what kind of ordeal, what a horrible disaster they went through. As the Armenians, the Muslims too were subjected to massacres and perished from starvation and diseases in mind-boggling numbers. The Muslim deaths deserve to be commemorated as much as the Armenian deaths.” (Death From Epidemic Diseases, pp. 272-273) As of Nov. 1917 the Russian Army retreated from Anatolia and upon the request made by the newly established government in Russia a cease-fire agreement was signed on Dec.16, 1917 in Erzincan. Armenian militiamen staged massacres against the remaining Muslim population on the Eastern Front after the withdrawal of the Russian Army. To prevent further massacres the Turkish Forces re-launched an operation on Feb. 12, 1918 in the course of which a number of soldiers froze to death. When the Turkish Forces entered the city of Erzurum on March 12, 1918, the half of the city’s population had been annihilated by the Armenian militia. (PP. 325-326)

Another point emphasized in the book regarding the fight against epidemic

diseases is that following the disastrous epidemics of 1915 the duty of fighting with the epidemic diseases where the Third Army was deployed, was assigned to the Army Medical Corps; and that in 1917 the Army collected and took care of the children that were orphaned and left destitute due to migrations, saving the lives of many of them.

As it is explained in the book in general terms, the deaths from epidemic diseases during the First World War and in its immediate aftermath accounted for an important part of the civilian and military losses that occurred in the Ottoman geography. While the population of the UK and Germany increased between the years of 1911 and 1922 and that of France decreased merely by 1 percent, the population of Anatolia decreased by 30 percent. Ten Percent of the population emigrated and 20 percent perished. As the book says, people with various religious and ethnic backgrounds all suffered during the First World War and a massive number of deaths occurred due to unfavourable health conditions. Although the book titled “Deaths From Epidemic Diseases” contains too many details at some points, it constitutes a good source for those researchers that want to conduct detailed studies into a specific period of time in history.

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**FRANSIZ DİPLOMATİK BELGELERİNDE
ERMENİ OLAYLARI 1914-1918
(ARMENIAN INCIDENTS IN FRENCH DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS 1914-1918)**

Volume I; (*Les Evenements Armeniens dans les documents Diplomatiques Français 1914-1918*, volume I), Hasan DİLÂN, Turkish Historical Society (TTK): ANKARA 2005, CIV+417 p. XVI. Series-Number 106; ISBN 975-16-1768-5(tk.)

Those who claim that the Armenians were subjected to genocide base their argument on two sources: First, the propaganda materials published during the First World War; second, the documents collected from the archives of relevant countries that have undergone a strict selection process and have been falsified to a great extent. Work of this kind has gone on for a long time. At first, Turkey tried to counter those theses by publishing, albeit belatedly, its own archive documents. Not satisfied with that, Turkey is now compiling and publishing relevant foreign archival documents as well. As part of this initiative that may prove much more effective in shaping the public opinion, The Turkish Historical Society (TTK) has published a book titled “**FRANSIZ DIPLOMATİK BELGELERİNDE ERMENİ OLAYLARI 1914-1918 c. I** (*Les Evenements Armeniens dans les documents Diplomatiques Français 1914-1918, volume I*)” [ARMENIAN INCIDENTS IN FRENCH DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS 1914-1918, V. I] prepared by Hasan Dilan. This is the first book of a six-volume series.¹

Publication of the French documents will be useful in many aspects. First of all, it will be possible to move the Turkish-Armenian relations beyond the “relocation” decision taken by the Ottoman government. Secondly, the war conditions will be reflected thanks to the documents belonging to France, the country that had set up the Legion d’Orient that was made up of Armenians. It will also be

¹ Volume II and III have also been published but not reviewed by us yet.

possible to demonstrate that the relocation decision was not taken without reason or with any intention to annihilate a people. Thirdly, it will be possible to demonstrate more openly and objectively than in the past that the Armenians who, despite the fact that they were Ottoman subjects, sided up with the big powers of the time and became an instrument for these powers' policies, had a responsibility and a role in the unfolding of these tragic events. France, especially, will be reminded of its own historical responsibility in these developments – at a time it is, at various platforms, arguing that Turkish recognition of the “Armenian genocide” should be a precondition for Turkish membership in the EU.

The book consists of mainly three sections: In the first section, the author gives a critical explanation of the bibliographical research method he used at the National Library of France (Bibliothèque Nationale de France), trying, in a way, to demonstrate how the Armenian Question should be taken up. In the second section, he gives a brief summary of the contents of the documents included in the book, specifying the dates and sources of the documents, so that even those people who do not know French would be able to use it.

The third and main section consists of the facsimile copies of the documents. The facsimile edition is to prove that the documents are published without any falsification. The book includes a bibliography and an index and consists of a total of 417 pages.

In the introductory chapter, the author gives a critical assessment of those publications that had been drawn up in the years 1914-1918 for propaganda purposes or for diplomatic reasons and came to be used as a reference source in some works to claim that the Armenians were subjected to genocide, as well as a number of booklets written by Turks during the same period. He compares them with other reference sources and gives clues as to his opinions about the “Armenian question”. With this way of thinking, the author tries, on the basis of the French documents included in the same volume, to refute the informational mistakes committed in those booklets. Such an effort will contribute positively to the objectivity of the studies on this issue even though this is an effort limited to the introductory level. The publications describe the basic framework of the Armenian question: the political struggle of the Armenians, their revolts and their stance during the First World War.

The relocation decision was taken under highly special conditions. As can be seen from the arguments made by the Armenian delegation that had tried to

become a party to the Paris Peace Conference, the Armenians had played a role towards --and contributed to the developments that led to-- the Ottoman government's relocation decision. The figures given by the same Armenian delegation regarding the human losses that occurred during the relocation were quite different than the figures being put forth today. Most importantly, it becomes evident that, contrary to the Armenian allegations, the Turkish side had no intention of committing genocide against the Armenians when it took the relocation decision.

It is a very appropriate choice that the author sets out by publishing the documents of the French Foreign Ministry first. This way, although priority is given to diplomatic documents, it is possible to gain access simultaneously to the documents of many other ministries as well. This is because, as I determined during my archival research in France, copies of the documents of other departments exist in the archives of the French Foreign Ministry (**Ministère des Affaires Étrangères au Quai d'Orsay**). However, it is very important that the archives of other departments too be scanned and the relevant documents be published separately. The archives of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ground Forces (**Le Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre à Vincennes**) (**SHAT**), especially, contain very important documents on this subject. These archives contain an abundance of documents on the Armenian activities in the Cukurova (Cilicia) region that should be published and thus made easily available to researchers.

Among the documents published by the author are diplomatic correspondences, informational notes, special reports, weekly information bulletins etc. The author, by deciding to publish one of the information bulletins titled, "Massacre in Armenia", has demonstrated that he acts without any hesitation or restriction. This can be seen as another sign of the soundness of the Turkish thesis.

One of the most important classifications of the French Foreign Ministry's archives regarding Turkey and, therefore, Armenia, is titled "The War" (*Guerre 1914-1918 Turquie*). The fact that the author begins the first volume under this title and places the section called "Syria-Palestine" under it, will help cast light on the First World War years when the relocation decision was taken by the Ottoman government, that is, the most problematic period in Turkish-Armenian relations. Other classifications by subject that would shed light on the Armenian question when they would be published are *N.S Turquie, Levant 1918-1929 Turquie, Syrie, Caucase-Kurdistan* and *Arménie*.

I hope that the documents classified under these headings would also be published as soon as possible as well as the relevant documents that exist in other French archives. Thus, a trouble that has been made to plague Turkey constantly will be removed with the help of the foreign and domestic reference sources. With the publication of this work, the author contributes greatly to the efforts already spent in this direction. Naturally, publication of documents could only be the beginning of a process. The important thing is to conduct further research on the basis of these documents and to produce analytical works in the subject area through objective and scientific methods.

BOOK REVIEW

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ARŞİV BELGELERİYLE ERMENİ FAALİYETLERİ 1914-1918 (ARMENIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS 1914-1918)

(Ankara: Turkish General Staff Military History Archives and Strategic Studies Institute (ATASE) and
General Staff Supervision Directorate Publications, 2005, 2 Volumes)

Publication No: 2005/29, 2005/30, First Edition, Volume I: Table of Contents, Introduction, Facts through Documents; Part 1: Modern Turkish and English Translations of the Documents; Part 2: Facsimiles of the Documents and Transcripts; Part 3: 1914 Census Statistics; Volume II: Table of Contents, Introduction, Part 1: Modern Turkish and English Translations of the Documents; Part 2: Facsimiles of the Documents and Transcripts; Volume I: 717 pages; Volume II: 653 pages. ISBN: 975-409-312-1 / 975-409-317-2

BOOK REVIEW

The Turkish General Staff has brought the realities of the Armenian relocation to public attention by publishing in book form the documents in its archives regarding the Armenian activities in the years 1914-1918. The first two volumes of these series have been published under the title “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents 1914-1918” through the efforts of The Military History Archives and Strategic Studies Institute (ATASE) and the Supervision Directorate of the Turkish General Staff.

The aforementioned books consist of the copies of the original documents written in Ottoman Turkish, the modern Turkish and English translations of these, and the relevant pictures that have been put together without any commentary. They reveal expressly the Armenian activities and organizations and demonstrate through official records and correspondence who were the real perpetrators of part of the events that took place in the territories of the Ottoman Empire in 1914-1918, that is, the part that is deemed inhuman.

Contrary to the “genocide” allegations made by the Armenian community, these documents and pictures reveal the sufferings of human beings that were subjected to torture and cruelty and were even massacred by the Armenian gangs.

The First Volume of the “Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents” demonstrates how and under what conditions the relocation decision, which the Armenian community has described as “genocide” all these years, was taken -- by referring to the Ottoman Government and Ottoman Army records and correspondence. It states the activities of the Armenian gangs, giving especially exact copies of correspondence that show the decisions taken at the Dashnak committee meetings regarding the action plans. The Dashnak documents indicate the changes that were to be made in the plans according to the way the Ottoman Army would perform in the war. They also give an appraisal of the arms supplies that were to come from Russia and the Dashnak plans for enlisting in the Russian Army in accordance with the decisions taken at the meetings organized by the Dashnak committee. Furthermore, this volume includes the pictures of those who were massacred, some of them tortured to death, by the Armenian gangs before the Ottoman Government took the relocation decision.

Another point that calls for attention in the First Volume is the nature of the regulations issued for the relocation of the Armenians. This is a list of the guidelines to be observed to protect the material rights of the Armenians to be relocated, to ensure the safety of their lives and to provide them with shelter during their journey

Also, on the basis of documents, the First Volume shows how, while the war went on, the Armenian gangs continued to block the roads, massacre civilians and loot the arms and food depots in the name of the enemy, that is, the Russian forces, even after the relocation decision was taken.

The Second Volume consists mostly of documents, including pictures, attesting to the massacres staged by the Armenian gangs.

This scientific research objectively displays the facts in their entirety. It indicates the reasons for the relocation, showing how exactly the Ottoman state was forced to struggle against the Armenians who had become the “internal enemy” during a war being waged against foreign forces.

The documents follow a chronological order and are classified according to subject matter. Furthermore, they have been translated into modern Turkish and into English and that will facilitate greatly the researchers’ job in the course of their scientific studies.

RECENT BOOKS

Yıldız Deveci

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Unsilencing the Past: Track-Two Diplomacy and Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation

David L. PHILLIPS

In English

160 pp.

Berghahn Books, Inc., New York, 2005

ISBN: 1-84545-007-8

Başlangıcından 1071'e Ermenilerin Tarihi (Histoire de l'Arménie des origines a 1071)

Rene GROUSSET

Translated from French by

Sosi Dolanoğlu

756 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2005

In Turkish

ISBN 975-7265-68-3

Balkan Savaşı (Balkan War)

Aram ANDONIAN

Translated from Armenian by

Zaven Biberyan

527 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2005

In Turkish

ISBN 975-7265-21-7

Geçmiş Zaman Olur ki (Le temps des avants)

Charles AZNAVOUR

Translated from French by

Emre Aral Altuntaş

280 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2005

ISBN 975-7265-73-X

Yetmiş Bin Süryani (Seventy Thousand Assyrians)

William SAROYAN

Translated from English into Turkish by

Ohannes Kılıçdağı, Aziz Gökdemir

192 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2004

ISBN 975-7265-69-1

Bestekâr Karnik Garmiryan Hayatı ve Eserleri (The Life and Works of Composer)

Karnik Garmiryan)

Karnik GARMIRYAN

In Turkish

360 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2004

ISBN 975-7265-67-5

Uluslararası Üne Sahip Sivaslı Aziz Vlas

(Internationally Renowned St. Vlas of Sebaste)

Arman ÇUHACIYAN

In Turkish

Prepared by

Osman Köker

120 pp.

İstanbul, Aras, 2004

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Sefa KAPLAN

In Turkish

165 pp.

İstanbul, Hürriyet, 2005

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(The 1915 Relocation Memories of the child named M. K. and Aftermath)

Baskın ORAN

In Turkish

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İstanbul, İletişim, 2005

ISBN 975-0503376

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(Armenian Question 1919-1921)

Nurşen MAZICI

In Turkish

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İstanbul, Pozitif, 2005

ISBN 975-646111X

Uluslararası Rekabette Ermeni

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Yargılanması

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Ahmet HALAÇOĞLU

In Turkish

231 pp.

İstanbul, Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2005

ISBN 975-6316519

Salgın Hastalıklardan Ölümler 1914-1918

(Deaths from Epidemic Diseases in 1914-1918)

Hikmet ÖZDEMİR

In Turkish

444 pp.

Ankara, TTK, 2005

ISBN 975-16-1766-9

Fransız Diplomatik Belgelerinde Ermeni Olayları 1914-1918

(Armenian Incidents in French Diplomatic Documents 1914-1918)

Hasan DİLAN

In Turkish

Vol. I 411 pp.

Vol. II 477 pp.

Vol. III 247 pp.

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ISBN 975-16-1789-8

ISBN 975-16-1790-1

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Ankara:Yağmur Yayınları, 2005
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2005
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ISBN 9789759855420

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(Armenian Barbarism)**

Nurer UGURLU
In Turkish
665 pp.
İstanbul: Örgün Yayınevi, 2005
ISBN 9789757651390

DOCUMENTS 1

THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY FOREIGN MINISTER, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ABDULLAH GUL AT THE COMMEMORATION CEREMONY FOR THE MARTYRS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

18 March 2005

Esteemed relatives of our revered martyrs,
My valuable colleagues,

We are here today to commemorate yet another time those members of our Ministry and other public employees that were martyred –together with some of their relatives-- by terrorists while representing our country abroad. We have gathered in the spiritual presence of our martyrs each of whom was an asset.

As a result of the heinous attacks staged in 19 countries by Armenian terrorist organizations during the 1973-1994 period we lost 34 people -- diplomats and family members. Terrorists targeted not only our public employees but their spouses and small children as well.

For us, each of our martyrs laid to rest here is special. We feel in the deepest part of our hearts the pain caused by the loss of all our martyrs. This is an indescribable pain and these experiences cannot be erased from our memories.

We condemn the planners and executors of these organized attacks that were directed against those that had served our country honorably, attacks that pushed humanity back into the dark ages, ended innocent lives. Those that have knowingly refrained from bringing them before justice are left alone with their responsibility before the history.

The Republic of Turkey that has always embraced the principle of building peace and friendship, has made all kinds of efforts to contribute to regional and world peace and it will continue to do so in the future. These attacks have not been and will never be able to make our country deviate from this basic policy.

We are a nation whose tradition is based on tolerance. Today, peace, tranquility, friendship among people, and tolerance are needed more than ever. To be able to meet this need it is high time the international community made a joint effort to eliminate the kind of mentality that conveys vengefulness and hatred to the future generations.

We see the relations with the Armenians too in this context. This is why, all these years we have urged those --that set out with certain allegations—to come and let us examine these together and shed light on the facts together. In the latest instance we proposed establishment of a commission on this subject. We said, our archives are open, let you and the other countries concerned too open the archives. It is only that way that the souls of those who experienced the tragedy of the past --Turks and non-Turks— can have peace as well as the souls of our martyrs whom we lost due to terrorism (and not by way of using these as political propaganda material). While historians would do that, let us, as countries, ponder how to build friendship between our peoples, how to cooperate. Rather than turning our youngsters, the future generations, into hostages for the sake of certain aspirations, let us create a climate of friendship and fraternity for them.

Esteemed families of our revered martyrs,

My valuable colleagues,

Our martyrs have shown the world so many times that those who represent Turkey hold their love for the homeland and their sense of duty more precious than even their lives when required. Their great courage has reinforced even further our conviction that those who are still chasing certain desperate aspirations will fail and that the Republic of Turkey will live forever, bolstering the confidence of our future generations that will have a bright future.

Words are not enough to express our gratitude to our martyrs that have sacrificed their lives for our country. We continue to work rapidly towards building a monument in the Ministry garden as a symbolic expression of our feelings of gratitude and, also, as a reminder of the need for us to protect the past and the future of our nation.

We will also carry in our hearts forever the pain caused by the loss of our security officials that were martyred as a result of a terrorist attack on their way to work at our Baghdad Embassy on Dec. 17, 2004.

God bless our revered martyrs. Most sincerely I wish that their bereaved families and friends would find in them the power of endurance to bear their pain.

On the martyrs' day we commemorate with respect and gratitude yet another group their lives for the homeland and the thousands of martyrs victimized by terror. Let their souls be at peace.

DECLARATION OF "THE GROUP OF RETIRED AMBASSADORS"

25 March 2005

According to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948, genocide is a crime under International Law. This crime can only be committed by real persons. Only a competent tribunal can determine whether this crime is committed or not. The tribunal in charge, is either the tribunal of the State in the territories of which the act was committed or an international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which have accepted its jurisdiction. The tribunal in charge should recognize the defendant's right to defend himself or herself and examine the case whether the crime has

been committed or not, and thereby decides accordingly as it sees fit. Without the existence of such a decision of the tribunal in charge, the crime of genocide cannot be established 'de jure' and a genocide claim cannot be put forward or defended on legal grounds.

No national parliament, no national senate, local or municipal council, no individual or association, none of the organs of an international or regional organisations or an undesignated court, 'in lieu' of a competent court, can have the power to decide on a genocide claim, on whether the crime has been committed or not. The above mentioned the UN Genocide Convention is the indivisible part and parcel of the Turkish legal system. No party or persons should expect the Turkish Government to disregard this international convention and without resort to a competent court decision, to label certain persons with the crime of genocide, many of whom may not be alive any longer. Today not only the Turkish Government but also the Government of the UK has already declared publicly through their government spokesman that the events of 1915 cannot be described as 'genocide'.

Those people who realize that their genocide claims about the 1915 tragedy are devoid of any legal base, are now trying to substantiate their claims from a political point and as a 'political genocide'. Political views of political organs or politicians and their political reasons are of interest only to them. But it is categorically

unacceptable to allow political prejudices to purport such a crime.

The purpose of such a behavior is explicit. The leaders of the Republic of Armenia, in addition to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, openly designate Eastern Anatolia of Turkey as 'Western Armenia' and make no secret of their national goal 'that one day when conditions are more propitious these lands will become part of the dream of greater Armenia'.

Much has been written about the tragic events of 1915, before and after the decision to relocate Ottoman Armenians to the South East of the State. The historic documents denote that Armenian militant units lead by the Armenian members of the Ottoman Parliament rushed to the province of Van, slaughtering the local Muslim population, provoking a large scale rebellion in the Eastern part of the Ottoman State.

In the peace negotiations at the Sevres Conference which took place in 1920, participating Armenians demanded that they should be accorded officially 'a belligerent party status' during the First World War. While these realities stand, those who support the Armenian demands cannot be allowed to read and interpret certain pages of history partially at their own discretion, and at the expense of other pages of history cannot be claimed against neither the Turkish nationals nor against the Turkish government.

The best proof on this subject is the fact that the Allies of the First World War, which occupied the capital of the defeated Ottoman Empire, exiled to the Island of Malta, a group of purported Ottoman offenders against the Armenians. In spite of their access to all the sources they had in their hands, they could not find any clue to condemn but declared them innocent of any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, the Ottoman State punished some of the Ottoman officials as perpetrators against the Armenians and found them guilty of crimes because of improper execution of the rules, during the forced relocations.

There are thousands and thousands of historic documents, full of contradictions about these tragic events, eye witness accounts, analysis and interpretations. To analyse the question in an objective manner is unfortunately obstructed or prevented by Armenian politicians, historians and their supporters. They are not even ready to talk over the existing historic documents. What they demand is the undisputed recognition of their own claims and dogma by others.

It is not realistic to expect from the surviving relatives of the tragedy of 1915 or what has taken place in the beginning of the XXth century, to accept that nothing has happened. These events can in no way be defended. However it would be impious to forego some while mourning others. We believe that these deep wounds created by these sad events should not be rubbed in and deepen the wounds by acts of terror and be provoked by feelings of revenge.

What has to be done now is to take lesson from these sad events in history and not to provoke again the feelings of hate which prevent peace between the Turks and the Armenians, but to start with steps forward, to strengthen the friendship between the Armenian and Turkish nations, which have so many common cultural traits that they share. There is no doubt that Turkish Armenians can play a part in the building and strengthening of this bridge of friendship. In a period when serious efforts are being made to keep the cultural ties alive between the Turks and the Armenians, certain parliamentarians and other personalities abroad, who are alien to the issue and burdened with political bias or act with racial instincts, devoid of any in dept analysis or legal base of the crime of genocide, to purport one sided claims of crime, is in no way conducive to the desired rapprochement between the Turks and the Armenians.

We, sincerely invite international public opinion, to think and rethink, with all the aspects of the issue, and not to be partial, on the assumption of responsibility of this tragedy, bearing also in mind the beloved memory of the innocent victims, including 34 Turkish diplomats and the members of their families, so mercilessly assassinated.

DOCUMENTS 3

THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY FOREIGN MINISTER, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ABDULLAH GUL AT THE TURKISH GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE ON THE ARMENIAN CLAIMS

13 April 2005

Mr. Speaker, esteemed deputies,

I think it is highly useful that this august Assembly is having a general debate on the Armenian claims that constitute an issue on which we are highly sensitive as a nation.

This year anti-Turkey activities have been intensified on the grounds that this is the 90th year of the so-called genocide.

I believe that this general debate, coming at such a time, will be a significant contribution to the struggle our country is waging against these claims.

Esteemed deputies,

There is a point I want to underline before everything else.

With the description “Armenian” I will be using in my speech I do not mean in any way at all our citizens of Armenian origin. They are our fellow citizens who are loyal to our state from the heart, citizens who fulfill all their civic duties and do not refrain from making a social contribution to ensure that their country will be carried into better days.

On this occasion I commemorate respectfully the Armenians that have contributed in many areas such as arts, science and trade to our over 800-years-old shared life extending from the Seljuki and Ottoman periods into the time of the Republic.

Also, among the Armenians who live outside Turkey, there are so many brave and wise Armenian friends of ours who care about their friendship with the Turkish people and make efforts to this effect, striving to maintain their cultural and

humanitarian ties with Turkey. From here I would like to express our feelings of appreciation and friendship for them.

Mr. President, Esteemed Deputies, for a long time Turkey has been faced with a well-organized campaign regarding the genocide claims; and those who carry out this campaign have not refrained from exploiting any opportunity that has presented itself. This organized campaign is based on the anti-Turkish and anti-Turkey prejudices, slanders, lies, exaggerations and distortions the fabrication of which began about a century ago.

For example, you all know about the renowned Blue Book issued by the propaganda office of the British War Ministry during the First World War --disseminating the propaganda that Armenians were being massacred— in an effort to ensure that the United States of America would take part in the war.

Similarly, on the basis of the information he had received from a number of Armenian extremists working for him, the US ambassador in Istanbul of the time published his memoirs that were full of lies in order to create for himself a bright political career. Thus he contributed to the sprouting of prejudices against our people and country.

It is grave that these claims are still being considered valid though their inconsistencies, their being fabrications, and the aims for which they were written, are quite obvious. It is graver that these publications have formed the source or basis of a number of so-called scholarly books.

On the other hand, certain foreign academics have, as a result of their objective and honest investigation, determined the exaggerations and errors in these claims. And they have presented to the world the balanced assessments they have made accordingly.

Esteemed deputies,

I think that to be able to make a sound analysis of the incidents that took place in 1915 one has to examine well what had transpired prior to the year 1915.

Turkish-Armenian relations developed on the basis of peace and mutual trust for over 800 years, that is, since the 11th Century when Turks stepped into Anatolia until late 19th Century.

After Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror took Istanbul the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire were organized under the name “nation”. They began to live under the administration of their religious leaders, enjoying the peace and freedom provided by the state. The Armenians, whom the Ottomans saw as “the loyal nation”, were brought to high positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy, serving as Cabinet ministers, pashas, ambassadors, governors and judges. They were not discriminated against at all.

However, as of the 1820s Tsarist Russia and the British and French governments of the time saw the Armenians as a major element to be used against the Ottomans as they vied with one another for influence and interest. These powers promised the Armenians an imaginary Armenia in East Anatolia. The developments experienced in the Balkans towards independence too boosted the efforts in the same direction. As a result of the provocations of these states various Armenian committees began to be formed as of the 1880s. The Hinchak Committee made its appearance in Geneva in 1887 and the Dashnak Committee in Tbilisi in 1890. The common goal of these two committees was to set up an Armenian state that would include those Ottoman lands where the Armenians lived.

Later, these committees came to be organized inside the Ottoman Empire too and, at the incitement of these committees the Armenian rebellions against the Ottomans began.

With the methods of assassination and bank robbery they employed they became the forerunners of the terrorism that has become a plague for the world and for the humanity by now.

Some Armenian groups rebelled in various parts of Anatolia, mainly in Erzurum, Kayseri, Yozgat, Corum, Merzifon, Van and Adana. The rebellions were initiated by the Armenian committees and the main aim was to encourage the big western powers to intervene in favor of the Armenians by portraying as massacres any move the Ottoman Empire would make to suppress the rebellions. When the First World War began and the Ottoman State joined the war, confronting the Allied Powers, the Armenian extremists saw that as a big opportunity. The regiments of Armenian volunteers created in this framework attacked the Turkish cities, towns and villages that had been left without defenses since the Russians entered East Anatolia and started massacring the civilian population, women and children included. They stabbed the Ottoman forces in the back. They obstructed

the operations of the Ottoman military units. They blocked their supply routes. They ambushed the convoys of wounded Ottoman soldiers. They destroyed bridges and roads. By rebelling in cities they facilitated the Russian invasion.

Under the circumstances, the Ottoman Government summoned the Armenian Patriarch together with Armenian deputies and other Armenian dignitaries and informed them that the government would take due measures if the Armenians continued to massacre the Muslims. When that warning did not lead to any result the government dissolved the Armenian committees on 24 April 1915 and arrested 235 people for anti-state activities. The date (April 24) Armenians mark every year as the anniversary of the so-called “Armenian genocide” is in fact the anniversary of the arrest of the Armenian committee members.

Due to this big internal and external threat it was faced with the Ottoman Government took on 27 May 1915 the kind of defense measure that no other country hesitates to take in a similar situation. It decided to send to the southern parts of the empire those Armenians who were living in the war zone. The Armenian population was informed of the forcible relocation decision duly in advance. The transfer began after due preparations were made. Also, the Armenians living in Istanbul and in those parts of Anatolia that were far from the war zone were left outside the scope of the forcible relocation decision.

The Ottoman Government gave instructions to the effect that security measures should be taken to ensure that the Armenians to be resettled away from the war zone would not come to harm during the transfer. The orders issued to this effect are in the Ottoman archives. These are the tangible proof of the situation. On one hand the First World War was continuing and there was a certain climate arising from the war and, on the other hand, there was a domestic uprising, a rebellion; and the resulting local feelings of hate and revenge caused the convoys to come under attack during the transfer. The government tried to prevent that situation. In fact, the Armenian convoys came under very few attacks in those areas where the state authority was strong. Some 1,390 people were put on trial for maltreating the Armenian travelers or for failing to comply with the government orders. Most of them received sentences including the death penalty.

Here, I want to ask the following question: Would a state that wanted to destroy the Armenians put on trial and punish its own officials and citizens for treating the Armenian travelers badly? Besides, the death toll rose also because of the wartime shortage of vehicles, fuel, food and other facilities and due to the harsh

climate and epidemic-causing diseases such as typhus. That was an era during which the entire Anatolian people shared the same fate.

Throughout the First World War and the Turkish War of Liberation the imperialist powers kept up their efforts to incite the Armenians. The French forces that occupied Cilicia and part of Southeast Anatolia reached an agreement with the Armenians, promising them that an Armenian state would be founded in the region. First the Armenian battalions of volunteers were formed and then an Armenian Legion affiliated with the French Foreign Legion. Under French command, these Armenian troops staged bloody massacres in the region until 1921. That aspect has been put on record in the French documents.

Esteemed deputies,

Distorting all these historical facts, efforts being made to portray the 1915 incidents as a genocide to the world public opinion; however, these claims do not have a legal basis. The Article 2 of the "Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime Genocide" describes the term: "genocide". According to that, "genocide" means:

"any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to the members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Only those acts that fit this description can be called genocide. The part of this description on which one should focus carefully is the part concerning the "intent to destroy", in whole or in part, people who make up a certain a group "because they are members of that group". It is all too obvious that no such intent was present. Destruction of a group of people only because they are members of that specific group can be made possible only with the accumulated effect of centuries old prejudices. Anatolia has been a piece of land where widely different identities have lived together in peace. Unlike what we see elsewhere people do not harbor prejudice against one another. Despite all the efforts they have made over the past 90 years the circles that put forth the genocide claims have failed to

find even a single piece of document that would demonstrate that the Ottomans had any intention of destroying the Armenians. And the papers they call documents have been found out to be fakes.

In reality, the Armenian claims were judicially investigated immediately after the First World War. The British, who occupied Istanbul at the end of the war, exiled to Malta and put on trial there 144 Ottoman administrators—including Cabinet ministers and other high level civilian and military officials—whom they held responsible (on the basis of the reports they received from the Armenian Patriarchate) for massacring and for a number of other crimes. However, despite the fact that they had the Ottoman archives in their hands, the British could not, despite all their efforts, find even a single piece of evidence that would support the charges against the people in question. As a result, they released all of the “exiles of Malta”. Thus, the invalidity of the Armenian genocide claims was determined even at that time.

Esteemed deputies,

After the Republic was founded the Armenian claims were not put on the agenda for roughly half a century. These claims have been seen to have gained momentum and turned into a campaign as of the year 1965. Views and speculations on the motives behind that campaign vary.

Some Armenian groups have opted for terrorism as a method of promoting in the world their genocide allegations. Those who have been, since the beginning of the last century, raised their new generations with prejudices, instilling in them feelings of hate against our people and our country, initiated in 1973 terrorist attacks on Turkish diplomats and other Turkish targets via a number of terrorist organizations such as ASALA. Over 200 attacks were staged on Turkish targets. The attacks took place in 21 countries on four continents. In these terrorist attacks more than 30 of our diplomats, public officials and their family members were martyred by the beginning of the year 1985.

On this occasion I commemorate our martyrs yet another time respectfully. Let them rest in peace.

You will remember that when reporting on these murders foreign press and broadcasting establishments would refer only briefly to the murder itself, merely saying that a Turkish diplomat was killed. Then they would proceed to dwell on

the 1915 incidents at length, relaying to their readers or listeners the story from a one-sided, almost racist perspective. Although some members of these terrorist organizations were captured they were not punished. Those who knew about the activities of the terrorist organizations became inclined to prevent these activities only when their own citizens too came to harm.

Now we would like to ask a question: If these terrorists had been apprehended and brought before justice in time would the plague called terrorism constitute such a big threat today?

However, having realized that they would not be able to get results by way of terrorism, the militant Armenian circles changed the tactics they had been using in the anti-Turkey campaign. This time they tried to put pressure on Turkey by having the national or regional parliaments of various countries recognize the so-called genocide. After Armenia gained independence efforts in that direction expanded to a great extent. To date, groundless communiqués or resolutions regarding the so-called genocide have been adopted by the parliaments of Argentina, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, Lebanon, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Uruguay, Greece, Greek Cypriot Administration as well as by the European Parliament. Furthermore, decisions of this kind have been passed by a number of regional parliaments in the USA, Canada, Argentina, Australia and Switzerland. History itself is bound to condemn these decisions that totally ignore the historical realities, decisions that do great injustice and disrespect to the Turkish nation.

In the latest instance, a draft resolution on the Armenian claims was presented to Germany's Federal Parliament by the main opposition Christian Democratic Parties Union (CDU/CSU) parliamentary group in the Federal Parliament on 22 February 2005. Lately in France three different drafts of this kind were presented to Parliament. Furthermore, the Diaspora has waged for a long time a campaign to elicit from the US Congress a decision recognizing the so-called genocide. Also, efforts are reportedly underway to present to the US Congress a draft resolution concerning the alleged genocide prior to April 24. Efforts made to this effect by certain Armenian circles have failed to attain the desired goal until now thanks to the determined stance taken by a succession of US administrations. Similar attempts are being made in other countries as well. We are waging an active diplomatic struggle at various levels to counter all these attempts.

From this platform I want to address the authors of these attempts yet an-

other time: Parliaments are not institutions that can possibly take decisions and deliver judgment on historical events. History can be assessed only by historians. Regardless of their motives all drafts presented to foreign parliaments in support of the Armenian genocide allegations hurt our feelings and raise question marks in the minds of the Turkish people as to the intentions of certain countries that the public sees and knows as allies, making no positive contribution at all to the future of our relations with Armenia. I am inviting our colleagues, fellow parliamentarians, to abandon attempts of this kind. What they do does not serve any useful purpose.

Another major aim of the Armenian extremist circles is to ensure that the recognition by our country of the so-called genocide would be turned into a precondition for the Turkish entry into the European Union. As you know, prior to the Dec. 17 summit Armenian President Kocharyan sent a letter to the heads of state/government of the EU countries, asking them not to start negotiations with Turkey. We welcome the fact that the EU heads of state/government did not take that letter into consideration with some of them even displaying a negative reaction to it.

Well, how could the parliaments of certain countries describe as genocide the 1915 incidents in sharp contrast to the historical facts? The main reason is the extensive efforts made all these years by the Diaspora that has been so well organized and has great financial resources. The activities of the Diaspora are supported by the Armenian state sometimes overtly and sometimes in a covert fashion. Armenian ambassadors have made overt efforts aimed at making the parliaments of various countries recognize the so-called genocide. The Diaspora ensures that numerous books on the genocide issue get published every year and that articles written by writers that stand close to the Armenian views appear in major newspapers and magazines. So many conferences and symposiums are being organized and lectures given on the alleged genocide. Efforts are being made to keep the issue always alive on the agenda by ensuring that those researchers and academics that stand close to the Armenian views take part in these events. Similarly, the Diaspora ensures the production of films, mostly documentaries, on the alleged genocide theme. It encourages the airing of these in numerous cinemas and on TV channels. In the latest instance, "Ararat", the film made by Atom Egoyan, a Canadian of Armenian origin, was shown in many countries. The film reportedly brought in some three million dollars while the production costs amounted to 15.5 million dollars. With propaganda purposes, the Diaspora manages to spend so much on a single film. I think this figure gives us all an idea about the

propaganda power of the circles we are faced with. The public opinion in many countries, western countries especially, is being influenced by the new books, articles and films appearing every year. As a result the parliaments of these countries come under serious pressure to recognize the alleged genocide.

Esteemed deputies,

At this point I think I must engage in self-criticism. Unfortunately, all these years Turkey has pursued a mainly defensive policy in the face of the Armenian claims. The archival work needed to explain the facts to the public opinion in the world, was not done in time. Services rendered in that area have not been at the desired level because the infrastructural work and the classification of the documents have not been completed. This has created abroad the impression that Turkey might be hiding something. The financial resources needed for that purpose have not been made available. This struggle has been kept up with a small budget provided mostly by the state. While we have failed to teach our youth the historical facts on this issue at our schools, in our universities for example, the Armenian Diaspora has ensured the inclusion in the textbooks of many countries issues related to the alleged genocide. It has thus covered a lot of ground in creating prejudices in the minds of the new generations.

I am not saying that nothing has been done to date to counter these. If I said that I would be doing an injustice to our valuable individuals and institutions that have put up a valiant struggle against the groundless allegations. However, today what we need to base this struggle on is a well-prepared, consistent and active new strategy.

Esteemed deputies,

Due to all these reasons, I attach great importance to the general debate we are holding today. Including the Turkish Grand National Assembly all of our establishments and institutions concerned have started displaying towards this issue the sensitivity required. The efforts of the government alone would not suffice to ensure success in the face of the Armenian claims. We can be successful in this field only through a joint effort of all segments and individuals of our society. The joint announcement made by our prime minister and the chairman of the main opposition party on 8 March 2005 was an important turning point in that it manifested our resolve to wage a struggle against the Armenian claims. Turkey has shown the entire world that it will initiate a joint struggle – with its govern-

ment and its opposition. The prime minister and the main opposition leader have issued an historic call for creation of a group consisting of Turkish and Armenian historians and other experts to look into the archives—our own and the archives of all of the other countries concerned—to study the 1915 period and bring the facts to light.

I would like to announce that Turkey has taken a step even farther in order to display its seriousness and honesty on this issue. Our prime minister is relaying our proposal on this issue to Armenian President Kocharyan as well in an official letter. In his letter our prime minister not only relays our proposal for creation of a joint commission but also says that if our proposal got accepted we would be prepared to discuss with Armenia the creation and the operational methods of such a commission and that such an initiative would be a step that would serve the cause of normalization of the relations between the two countries. From here, I want to stress that we expect—especially those countries whose parliaments have adopted resolutions saying that they recognize the alleged genocide—to encourage Armenia to respond favorably to this call. I think this is a responsibility the countries in question should fulfill.

Esteemed deputies,

At this point I want to refer briefly to our relations with Armenia. Western countries especially are suggesting that we establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and open up the border. As you know, Turkey recognized Armenia as an independent state along with all the other former Soviet republics. It has provided humanitarian aid to Armenia when, upon gaining independence, it met with economic difficulties. Turkey made another significant gesture as well to Armenia: When initiating the Black Sea Economic Cooperation process it invited Armenia into that organization as an exception though the latter does not have a coastline on the Black Sea. In fact, Armenia is still represented at the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization based in Istanbul. However, due to the policies of distorting the facts that Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora have persisted in pursuing, it has not been possible for Turkey to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia. Is this normal behavior for a state that desires to form normal, neighborly relations? Which state can be expected to normalize its relations with a state that fails to clarify that it officially recognizes the aforementioned country's national borders? Furthermore, failing to comply with the relevant UN Security Council decisions, Armenia continues not to recognize the territorial integrity of our sibling, Azerbaijan. It continues to keep 20 percent of

the Azerbaijani soil under occupation. Hundreds of thousands of Azeri refugees are still living in destitute in camps.

Turkey is actively striving to bring this conflict to an end. We have met and had talks with our Azeri and Armenian colleagues many times over the past two years. Our efforts will continue.

Turkey wants normalization of its relations with Armenia. However, that country's stance that goes against the basic principles of international law and UN Security Council resolutions and its failure to act in ways compatible with goodneighborly relations, make it impossible for Turkey to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia.

Despite all these, Turkey has allowed charter plane services between Turkey and Armenia. Thousands of Armenian citizens have been able to come to Turkey and work here. Contacts at the nongovernmental organizations level exist.

If Armenia responds favorably to our call—which would ensure that historical facts would be brought to light—that will undoubtedly make a positive contribution also to the process of normalization of the relations between the two countries. From here, I reiterate yet another time our call to Armenia.

Esteemed deputies,

There is a certain issue put forth by those who, due to a variety of reasons, put before us the Armenian claims: They claim that Turkey should be reconciled with its past. Turkey is at peace with its past. Turkey does not have any problem with its history. No one should doubt that. It is true that we may have deliberately left certain pages of our history dim. For example, we have not cried out to the world loudly enough about the way masses of our co-ethnics in the Balkans were forced to migrate from these lands—where they had lived for centuries—during the final century of the Ottoman Empire, about the massacres they were subjected to in the Balkans or about the other tragedies, about the ratio of those who had been exiled from the Caucasus into the Ottoman lands or about the ratio of the hundreds of thousands of Turks and other Muslims that lost their lives in the First weakness. This has been done for a noble cause, that is, to enable the young generation to grow not with the sorrows of the past but with the hope of a World War. We have not dwelt in detail on the massacres and cruelty our people were subjected to during our War of Independence in those Turkish towns that had

remained under [foreign] occupation. There are some other aspects as well of our history that we choose not to focus on adequately: the way the missionaries sent to the Ottoman Empire –which was a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religion empire-- by the mighty powers of the time had divided the non-Muslim population in order to accelerate the decline and disintegration of the empire, and how, once these peoples divided among themselves, each segment was used as a tool to further each [foreign] country's own political interests. This has not resulted from a bright future where peace and friendship would reign. This has been done with the assumption that with the founding of our Republic and the signing of the Lausanne Peace Treaty a new page was turned. The knowledge of all these sufferings does exist in memories and on documents. I repeat that we are at peace with all pages of our history.

We believe that a certain point must be carefully stressed. What stands in the heart of the issues we are discussing here is human beings and their sufferings regardless of the reasons --the loss of lives. We would respect the commemoration in dignity of the pain suffered mutually by the Muslims and the non-Muslims who lived on these lands during that era, sufferings that have given us all sorrow. However, we would never accept the exploitation of that pain for political purposes by those that are not directly involved, by those that have nothing to do with it at all. We would never accept any attempt to fan feelings of revenge through an exploitation of these sufferings as a tool to spread lies and slander and to foster prejudices and hate against our people and our country.

Esteemed deputies,

Regarding the Armenian claims, Turkey will pursue a policy of taking the initiative and making all kinds of efforts to bring the historical facts to life. Turkey is always ready to face up to its past and there has never been a shameful era in our history. In this struggle we are determined to go all the way. How, under which conditions did the country arrive at the 1915 incidents? What exactly happened in 1915? What were the consequences of the forcible relocation? All these issues will be researched by historians in greater depth. Our work will be carried out through extensive and effective coordination and coordination among our institutions. The infrastructure for that is being created. Our people will be informed about the facts and their awareness will be raised. In parallel with the work to be done on the domestic plane, we will actively strive abroad to promote the truth and to fight against injustice. During that process some other countries will have to face up their own pasts as much as Turkey will – maybe even more. They will

find it hard to explain to today's generation some of the policies they had conducted during that era. This process will require an all-out struggle. We will wage this struggle as a nation as the august Assembly, the government, bureaucrats, scholars, press and broadcasting establishments and businessmen. In unity and togetherness the Turkish nation will prove successful in this struggle as well. I have full faith in that.

I salute the august Assembly with deepest respect.

DOCUMENTS 4

DECLARATION BY THE TURKISH GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

13 April 2005

The Turkish Grand National Assembly (TNGA) believes that both Turkey's and Armenia's interest lies in reconciling Turkish and Armenian nations who lived for centuries on the same territory with reciprocal tolerance and peace, to save them from being hostage to deep prejudices stemming from war years and to create an environment which will enable them to share a common future based on tolerance, friendship and cooperation.

Government and opposition parties have made a proposal, in this direction, which aims to shed light on historical facts through scientific research so as to prevent history to continue as a burden for these two nations. This proposal foresees the establishment of a joint commission composed of the historians of Turkey and Armenia, to open their national archives without any restrictions to research and to disclose the findings of this research, that will continue in the archives of other related countries, to the world public opinion and to determine the establishment and working methods of the said commission between two countries.

TGNA fully supports and approves this historical proposal.

The cooperation of the Government of Armenia is a must for the implementation of this initiative. In this connection, given that a mutual ground for Turkey and Armenia to view history from a common perspective fails to be provided, the inheritance that both sides would leave to their children and future generations will be nothing more than the feeling of prejudice, animosity and revenge.

Wisdom and logic command Turkey and Armenia not to be afraid of destroying the taboos and to face their history by discovering all the aspects of the human tragedy they experienced together. This is the way to prevent the past to shadow our present and future.

TGNA underlines the fact that the proposal of the Turkish Republic should be considered as an initiative for peace in its essence. If Armenia wants to establish good neighborly relations with Turkey and develop a basis for cooperation, it should not hesitate to accept Turkey's proposal for a joint historical evaluation.

TGNA would also like to emphasize with importance that, all states and statesmen who wish to contribute to world peace and stability in good will, leaving aside domestic political considerations, should look positively to Turkey's proposal based on reconciliation and commonsense. In this respect, those states who sincerely want the normalization of Turkish–Armenian relations and desire the establishment of peace and stability in the Caucasus region, are expected to support this initiative and especially to refrain from activities that can impair it.

On this matter, the responsibility primarily belongs to the states which took decisions on the Armenian allegations in their Parliaments. If these countries attach importance to the improvement of the relations between Turkey and Armenia, as they claim, they should demonstrate their good will and support our proposal on the establishment of a commission of common history between the two countries.

TGNA condemns the decisions adopted by foreign parliaments for political considerations, on some periods of the history of Ottoman Armenians which is a subject of discussion among world historians and legislating on which side of the historical question is right, and perceives these efforts as unsuitable, meaningless, arbitrary and unjust.

TGNA denotes that those who believe in and calculate on imposing Turkey through an intensive international pressure campaign to establish its history over one-sided and misleading assessments based on propaganda material are deeply mistaken and declares that such will never be the case under any circumstances.

DOCUMENTS 5

LETTER BY THE TURKISH PARIAMENTARIANS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND HOUSE OF LORDS

13 April 2005

Honorable Members of the British House of Commons and House of Lords:

We, the Members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, express our highest compliments and submit for your consideration a matter of great concern to the people of Turkey and people of Turkish heritage worldwide, regarding the Ottoman-Armenian Tragedy of 1915.

The undersigned members of the Turkish Parliament request that the British Parliament as well as the British Government inform the public that the British Parliament Blue Book Series, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915-1916*, was a propaganda tool of the British War Propaganda Bureau (1914) at “Wellington House” and is an unreliable account of the Ottoman Armenians revolt and the Ottoman Government’s subsequent response.

As you are probably aware, during World War I (hereinafter, “WWI”) the British War Propaganda Bureau (1914), later the Department of Information (1916) and later the Ministry of Information (1918), all referred to as the “Wellington House”¹, planned and executed a public disinformation campaign aimed against Germany and the Ottoman Empire to ensure support for the war among the citizens of the Allied states, particularly America, and to bring about the participation of America in the war. “Wellington House” produced two significant reports, one regarding “German Atrocities” and the other “Turkish Atrocities” (the latter entitled, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916*, hereinafter, the “Blue Book”), both of which were drafted by Bureau Resident Expert, Arnold Toynbee², and published under the name of the famed British Ambassador to the United States, Viscount Bryce. On December 2, 1925, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Sir Austen Chamberlain appearing before the House of Lords, declared the Bryce “German Atrocities” report to be factually baseless war

1 M.L.Sanders & Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda During the First World War, 1914-18*, London, 1982

2 Arnold Joseph Toynbee, ed., *The Treatment of the Armenians by the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon Secretary for Foreign Affairs, by Viscount Bryce*, London : H. M. Stationery Office, 1916.

3 Sanders & Taylor, pp. 40-41.

propaganda⁴. However, no retraction followed with respect to Bryce's Blue Book, although it suffered from the same defects. Arnold Toynbee himself admitted that the Blue Book was indeed a "war propaganda".⁵

While all of the Bureau's records on the Blue Book were destroyed in a fire, many important records had survived in the archives of other divisions of the British bureaucracy. Recently, independent researchers in the British Archives discovered these records. The records in question prove that⁶ :

1. The War Propaganda Bureau determined to portray the destruction of the Ottoman Empire as a major purpose of WWI. The project was dubbed, "The Turk Must Go." (Meaning that the Turks as a nation must be driven out of Europe and Anatolia and sent away to Central Asia). The campaign mainly targeted the American public and aimed to render British colonialism in Anatolia and Mesopotamia palatable, provide cover for Russian anti-Semitic violence, as Russia was an important ally, and ultimately cause sufficient public outrage in the United States to induce Washington to enter the war.

2. Prime Minister Lloyd George ordered the Director of Information Services, Colonel John Buchan, to design and execute "The Turk Must Go" program⁷. Buchan appointed Stephen Gaselee, a Foreign Office official, to facilitate the production, publication and dissemination of material aimed to create and reinforce⁸ : (1) popular affinity between the West and the pre-Turkish ancient heritage of Anatolia and Mesopotamia; (2) a belief that Turks prevented progress, commerce and social development in the region; (3) a conviction that Turkish society is incapable of integrating the Ottoman States' constituent peoples, particularly Armenians, in an equitable manner; (4) a belief that Turkish people, by their nature, are incapable of reform and civil self-government; (5) an understanding that a reactionary and incompetent nation, as Prime Minister Lloyd George had determined the Turkish nation to be, could not be permitted to control the land bridge between Europe and Asia, or be permitted to be a satellite of Germany; and, (6) a consensus that toleration in the Ottoman system of permitting each religious community to govern themselves ("a museum of religions," according to Buchan) did not harmonize with Western systems of majority rule and minority rights.

4 Hansard, 5th Session, Vol. 188, October 24, 1925

5 Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, First Publication 1972, p. 50.

6 F.O. 394/40/179902, "Documents relating to the treatment of Armenians and Assyrian Christians in the Ottoman Empire: Key to names of places and persons withheld from publication, September 11, 1916.

7 F.O.395/139/42320, February 24, 1917.

8 F.O.395/139/64927, "Anti-Turk Propaganda".

3. Stephen Gaselee invited War Propaganda Bureau Resident Expert and historian, Arnold Toynbee, to designate names of possible authors for the anti-Turkish campaign. Toynbee provided a detailed list, including himself, writers like Mark Sykes⁹ who had worked on the Middle East, American missionary leaders and other persons who enthusiastically espouse the Armenian cause. The clandestine campaign portrayed selected individuals as private citizens engaging in personal activities to report on the situation of the Armenians, using information devised by the War Propaganda Bureau. While a team of 54 authors wrote information pieces, Sir Gilbert Parker and Geoffrey Butler, who enjoyed excellent access to President Woodrow Wilson and major American newspapers, served as transatlantic operations liaisons and information conduits.

4. The War Propaganda Bureau was the sole source for all information regarding the situation in the Ottoman Empire. The Gaselee-Toynbee team produced over seven million copies of 37 publications, including the Blue Book. Given that Great Britain destroyed the German transatlantic communication cables, the War Propaganda Bureau was able to censor and control reports that were submitted by independent correspondents on the only alternative – the British cables. In 1915, the Associated Press estimated that Britain destroyed 75% of the dispatches of American correspondents in Europe.

5. Ambassador Viscount Bryce's Blue Book purported to be based on 150 eyewitness accounts of massacres and other violence committed by Ottoman soldiers and private citizens against Ottoman Armenians. The Blue Book referred to the "eyewitnesses" by codes, apparently to "protect the persons from reprisals". A War Propaganda Bureau document recently discovered from the British archives containing the code keys made possible the identification of the 150 eyewitnesses, of whom 59 were missionaries, 52 were Armenian activists, 7 were Armenian Dashnak rebel leaders, and the remaining 32 either fictitious or duplicate listings of individuals under different categories.¹⁰ Arnold Toynbee himself was unhappy to work with the statements of unknown authors. Once he wrote to Viscount

9 An article of Mark Sykes that was placed by Wellington House in *The Times* of February 20, 1917 is mentioned here as it is an exemplar of propaganda. In the article "The Turk" was described as a "merciless oppressor", "a remorseless bully", "pure barbarians", "degenerate", "one who has strewn the earth with ruins". In this article just for the sake of humiliating the Turks, the Mongols who have destroyed what is today Iraq were falsely described as Turks. This article was published later as brochure and widely distributed with a letter of Lloyd George. Out of 100,000 copies printed, 32,000 was distributed in the United States. F.O.395/139/51086 and F.O.395/139/47048.

10 F.O.394/40/179902, "Documents relating to the treatment of Armenian and Assyrian Christians in the Ottoman Empire and N. W. Persia: Key to names of places and persons withheld from publication", September 11, 1916. See also the following documents: 10, 13, 23, 77, 79, 85, 91, 102, 103, 104, 108, 110, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 120, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 137.

Bryce “I do not know the real authorship of the thirty-four, twenty-three percent of the documents. But these unknown writers appeared in the book, in exactly the same way as the known.”¹¹

As it will be seen Bryce’s Blue Book suffers from the same defects that had caused the official British retraction of Bryce’s report regarding “German Atrocities.” As a matter of fact: (1) the Blue Book is the product of the “Turks Must Go” program of the War Propaganda Bureau, consequently it is a propaganda material; (2) the War Propaganda Bureau’s resident experts relied on “eyewitnesses” who did not have personal knowledge of the incidents to which they attested; (3) the authors of the Blue Book did not attempt to corroborate the “eyewitness” accounts by accounts reported by other foreign missions and military officials; (4) other accounts that impeached the “eyewitness” accounts were excluded; (5) the “eyewitnesses” were interested parties and biased by the particular religious and political mandates they were executing; (6) “eyewitness” accounts were cleansed of any mention of the Armenian revolts and massacres of hundred of thousands of Muslims, in Eastern Anatolia; (7) while the Blue Book contains all the condemnations and criticisms heaped on the policies of the Ottoman State by the “eyewitnesses”, it says nothing of the impact of these policies on thousands of Armenians living outside of the war zones, who continued to live in peace and stability, and; (8) Buchan’s work must be seen, at least in part, as a product of his racism and anti-Semitism, which are widely evident in his novels and other writings.

As it will be seen, although the Blue Book represents a masterly propaganda activity of Great Britain during WWI, it is not a reliable historical account of the Ottoman Armenian’s revolt and the Ottoman government’s subsequent response. It is a fraud based on fabrications, half truths and biased reports and perceptions. Indeed there was no mention of Armenian bands joining Russian forces against the Ottoman army, of murders of Ottoman officials, of cutting of Ottoman supply and communication lines, of attempts to capture Ottoman cities, of mass murder of Turks in Van, of the forced migration of more than a million Muslims forced to flee by the Russian and Armenians.¹² Later Toynbee was described as having come to feel that this lopsidedness was a betrayal of historical truth.¹³ However, the Blue Book’s destructive and wicked influence is still effective and continues to be used by Armenian activists for deceiving international media,

11 Article by Justin Mc Carthy. “Wellington House and the Turks”

12 Article by Justin Mc Carthy. “Wellington House and the Turks”

13 William H. Mc Neill. *Arnold Toynbee a life.* (Oxford University Press) p.74.

politicians, opinion leaders and academicians and thus propagate feelings of hate and eversion against Turkey.

The British government, though never directly retracting the Blue Book, indirectly impeached the Blue Book through the verdict of the British tribunal set up to prosecute the “Malta prisoners”. As it will be recalled in 1920, 144 Ottoman statesmen and officials accused of charges and atrocities and massacres against Armenians were arrested by the British occupation forces and were exiled to Malta for prosecution. After an exhaustive two-year investigation in the Ottoman, British and American records by an Ottoman Armenian investigator appointed by the tribunal, the Royal Attorney General determined on July 29, 1921, that insufficient evidence existed to proceed with the prosecutions and ordered the release of the “Malta prisoners”.¹⁴

At this point the following critical questions have to be answered: Why the evidence contained in the Blue Book published in 1916 wasn't used to convict the Turkish deportees to Malta? Though the sources upon which Toynbee had relied in drafting the Blue Book were readily available why were they not taken into consideration by the tribunal?

The answer to these questions is brief and clear: The Blue Book was not used because the assertions and the documents it contained were baseless and unfounded... Although all the sources that Toynbee had relied upon in writing the Blue Book were readily available, they were not used, because these evidences, documents and “eyewitnesses” were deemed unworthy of even attempting to pass admissibility in a British court of law.¹⁵

British governments continued to discard the Blue Book. In the British House of Lords on 14 April 1999 Foreign Office Minister Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale, on behalf of the British Government, stated that “... but in the absence of unequivocal evidence to show that the Ottoman administration took a specific decision to eliminate the Armenians under their control at the time, British governments have not recognized the events of 1915 and 1916 as “genocide”.

As no corrective action had been taken by the British government similar to

14 F.O. 371/6102/E-5845: L. Olipant (F.O.) to Mr. Woods (Procurator-General's Department) 5445/132/44 of May 31, 1921.

15 F.O. 371/6504/E.8745: Woods (Procurator-General's Department) to the Under Secretary of State for F.O., of July 29, 1921.

the retraction of Bryce' "German Atrocities" report, the Blue Book continues to harm scholarship and research on the Ottoman Armenian case and mobilize hatred against people of Turkish heritage in line with the six "The Turk Must Go" objectives outlined by Colonel Buchan and the War Propaganda Bureau almost one hundred years ago.

The Blue Book continues to serve as a primary source for scholars and policy makers, having been cited thousands of times in works as diverse as textbooks and governmental proclamations in support of the allegation that the Ottoman Armenian experience constitutes the crime of genocide. It portrays the existence of the key element that renders a killing genocide, that is to say the specific intent to kill with express malice. In other words, the Blue Book paints the Ottoman policy, particularly the decision to separate the Ottoman Armenian civilians from the Armenian rebels and Russian army by relocating them out of the war zones, as a facade for racist killing.

The Blue Book continues to reinforce misunderstanding of and hatred against people of Turkish heritage. Colonel Buchan, who created the six objectives of the "The Turk Must Go" campaign was proudly racist. In the novel, *Greenmantle*¹⁶, he wrote, "The truth is that we (English) are the only race on earth that can produce men capable of getting inside the skin of remote peoples." Buchan referred to the Young Turks as "a collection of Jews and Gypsies." In the novel, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*¹⁷, Buchan wrote, "Away behind all the governments and armies there was a big subterranean movement going on, engineered by a very dangerous people...The Jew was behind it... The Jew is everywhere...with an eye like a rattlesnake..."

The six Buchan objectives that serve as the foundation of the Blue Book continue to legitimate a racist attitude that the people of Turkey are unworthy of respect and dignity, of equality and sovereignty, and of the right to exist in Anatolia at peace as they have been doing for nearly one thousand years. In extreme cases, the Blue Book has been utilized to provide moral justification for terrorism by the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (JCAG) and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA).¹⁸ These terrorists killed more than 75 innocent people, wounded over 700 people, took more than 100 hostages, and caused tens of millions of dollars in property damage in the United

16 John Buchan, *The Greenmantle*, New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1916.

17 John Buchan, *The Thirty Nine Steps*, Edinburg, London, William Blackwood & Sons, 1915.

18 Gunther M. Michael, *Pursuing the Just Cause of Their People*, Greenwood Press. Inc, New York 1986.

States, Europe, Middle East and Australia.

As a masterpiece of propaganda and tool of deception that to date has not been retracted, the Blue Book continues to influence peoples' mind and soul. Today the Books of Wellington House are still recommended to American school children and university students. As historian Arthur Ponsonby who has also dealt with the wicked and lasting effects of the war propaganda that continues for generations in his book *Falsehood in Wartime*¹⁹ has observed:

“The injection of the poison of hatred into men’s minds by means of falsehood is a greater evil in wartime than the actual loss of life. The defilement of the human soul is worse than the destruction of the human body.”

The validity of his cogent conception of Lord Ponsonby cannot be disputed either today or in the future. In fact, what we need today, more than ever, is an international environment that we can hand over to our children and to the future generations to build a world where tolerance, friendship and good will shall reign, instead of prejudices, hatred and sense of revenge.

The onus is upon all participants in WWI to support an ethical and objective approach to understanding this ambiguous part of our mutual history relating to the Ottoman State - Armenian conflict, and to facilitate the healing of the human soul.

It is with this belief and understanding as well as with the greatest respect and appreciation for the longstanding alliance and relationship Turkey shares with Great Britain and since Your Parliament asked in 1916 that the work of Toynbee be published as a “command book” we submit for your consideration this opportunity to bring clarity to this important part of our mutual history by retracting the Blue Book as a historical document.

19 Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in Wartime*, London, Kimble and Bradford, 1928.

DOCUMENTS 6

LETTER OF PRIME MINISTER RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN TO ROBERT KOCHARIAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA,

13 April 2005

"Dear Mr. President,"

"The Turkish and Armenian peoples have not only shared a common history and geography in a sensitive part of the world but they have also lived together for many years. However it is no secret that we have differences of interpretation and evaluation over a certain period of our common history.

"These differences have left memories that have distressed our peoples in past years and today they play a role that does not make the development of friendly relations between our countries easier.

"I believe that, as leaders of our countries, our principal duty is to leave to our future generations a climate of friendship marked by peace and harmony and characterized by tolerance and mutual respect. Mr Deniz Baykal, the leader of our country's main opposition Republican People's Party, also shares these views. In this framework we invite your country [to join us] in forming a group comprised of the historians and other specialists of our two countries to investigate the developments and events related to the 1915 period by researching all the archives of not only Turkey and Armenia but also all relevant third countries and to report their findings to the international community.

"I believe that an initiative in this direction will shed light on a controversial period of history and will serve as a step towards the normalization of relations between our countries.

"I hope that this proposal aimed at passing on a friendly and more peaceful climate to future generations will be accepted.

If you are positively disposed towards our proposal to form a group of historians and specialists to conduct joint work on archives we are prepared to discuss the details of our proposal with your country.

"Sincerely,

DOCUMENTS 7

LETTER OF ROBERT KOCHAIAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN, PRIME MINISTER OF TURKEY

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I have received your letter.

Actually, as neighbors, we should try to find ways to leave peacefully today and in the future. Just due to that reason we proposed establishment of normal relations, opening the borders and starting a dialogue between the countries and the peoples.

There are neighbor states - specifically in the European continent - whose past was hard and opinions over it do not coincide. However, it does not prevent them from opening borders, having diplomatic relations, representatives in the capitals, simultaneously discussing disputable issues.

Your proposal to address the past cannot be efficient if it does not refer to the present and the future. To get involved in an efficient dialogue we need to form a favorable political atmosphere. Governments are responsible for development of bilateral relations and we do not have the right to delegate historians. Thus, we have proposed and we again proposed establishment of normal relations between our countries without preconditions.

Just within that context an intergovernmental commission may be formed to discuss any issue or issues available between our countries aiming at solving them and coming to mutual understanding.»

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