

THE TURKISH-ARMENIAN CONFLICT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE MURDER OF HARRY THE TURK

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Abstract:

In this paper, the murder of Halil, known among his acquaintances as 'Harry the Turk', is to be examined. Harry the Turk, an Ottoman citizen of Turkish origin, is reported to have emigrated from Istanbul in the beginning of 1890's to the county of Maine in the Massachusetts state of the USA. There he found a job as worker along with many other Armenians of Ottoman origin, with whom he had good friendship because of his lack of communication in English. In his early days he had also shared the same boarding house with the Armenians. Nevertheless, when the Armenian-Turkish conflicts of 1895 started in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, his relations with the Armenians deteriorated since the Armenians began to approach him with enmity. When Harry the Turk had left his boarding house on one Sunday afternoon in February to meet his Armenian friends at the foot of the Wilmot Street, no news was heard of him. In May 16, 1896, his death body was discovered at the Back Bay not far from the boarding house of the Armenians. Although investigation into the incident by the Deputy Marshall as well as the testimonies of some witnesses had firmly established that it the death of Harry the Turk was a perfect murder, no concrete evidence could have been brought in by the police to bring the perpetrators of the crime before the justice. Thus the incident of Harry the Turk remained perhaps the first murder of a Turk by Armenians in America. Yet he was not the last and the struggle and rivalry between the Diaspora Armenians and Turks in America goes on without interruption.

Key Words: Incident of Harry the Turk, Armenians, Turks, Ottoman Empire.

Öz:

Bu makalede, Harry the Turk lakabıyla çağrılan Halil adlı bir Türk kökenli Osmanlı vatandaşının Ermeniler tarafından öldürülmesi incelenmektedir. Harry the Turk 1890 başlarında İstanbul'dan Amerika'ya göç etmiş ve Massachusetts eyaletine bağlı Maine kasabasında işçi olarak işe başlamıştır. Başlangıçta dil bilmemesi nedeniyle kendisi gibi Türkiyeli olan Ermeniler ile dostluk kurmuş, hatta onlarla aynı yerde kalmıştır. Ancak 1895 yılından itibaren Anadolu'da başlayan Türk-Ermeni

olayları, diaspora Ermenilerinin buradaki Türklere karşı düşmanca tavır almalarına sebep olmuştur. Nihayet 1896 yılının Şubat ayında bir Pazar günü Ermeni arkadaşlarıyla görüşmeye giden Harry the Turk'ten bir daha haber alınamamış, aynı yılın Mayıs ayında cesedi bulunmuştur. Yapılan soruşturmalar ve Ermenilerin ifadeleri, olayın bir cinayet olduğunu göstermekle beraber, Maine savcılığı olayı aydınlatamamıştır. Böylece Harry the Turk'ün ölümü bir faili meçhul cinayet olarak kalmıştır. O belki de Amerika'da Ermeniler tarafından Türk olduğu için öldürülen ilk kişidir. Ne yazık ki son olmamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Harry the Turk, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Ermeniler, Amerika'da Ermeniler/Türkler.*

INTRODUCTION

This article addresses early skirmishes between the Turks and Armenians living in the United States of America in parallel with the conflicts in the Ottoman territories in the beginning of the Armenian political activities, and the incident of the “Harry the Turk” whom probably the first victim of unsolved murders perpetrated by the Armenian terrorism. According to our survey, an Ottoman citizen named Halil, yet called Harry the Turk, was victimized due to a terrible murder in Maine County of the Massachusetts state in February 1896. It is certain that this murder was carried out by Armenians, however, acting murderer or murderers could not be detained. In other words, homicide of Halil recorded as an unsolved murder in American judicial documents.

The then Ottoman ambassador in the United States, Mavroyeni Bey¹ who closely observed the Armenian political activities strongly, reacted to this incident. Mavroyeni Bey had collected data about the Armenian political activities in various American cities and warned his collocutors in the US Department of State on probability of such kind of affairs. Murder of Halil in spite of Ottoman ambassador's warnings is remarkable in terms of understanding potential of the Armenian political activities. Moreover, it could be argued that killing of Harry the Turk has a symbolic place in the struggle between the Turks and Armenians

1 Alexandre Mavroyeni Bey was Ottoman ambassador to the United States between 1887-1896. For his biography see Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani [Ottoman Records]*; Sinan Kuneralp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali [Statesmen of Late Ottoman Period]*, ISIS, Istanbul, 1999, p.90. For an account of Mavroyeni's correspondences with regard to Armenian activities see Bilal N. Şimşir, “Washington'da Osmanlı Elçisi Alexandre Mavroyeni Bey ve Ermeni Galesi (1887-1896)[Ottoman Ambassador to Washington, Alexandre Mavroyeni Bey and Armenian Issue], *Ermeni Araştırmaları* No.4 (December-January- February,2002), pp.32-54.

living in the United States.² However it is surprising why this murder virtually has not been subjected to studies dealing with the Turkish-Armenian relations living in the United States. This article aimed at addressing this issue, and thereby contributing to the literature.

The murder of Harry the Turk is also remarkable in order to understand evolution of the Turkish-Armenian relations in the United States. As previously mentioned, Maine County is one of the leading places where the immigrant Armenians and Turks settled down. It is not surprising that Turks and Armenians preferred the same places to settle down because they speak the same language, and they share the similar culture and customs. What is surprising is that how they confronted in the United States where they had emigrated in order to deal with life stress. That is why before detailing the murder of Harry the Turk, environmental conditions of the Main County where the incident occurred will be dealt with.

a) Beginning of Neighborhood between the Turks and Armenians living in the United States

With the exception of several Turks and Armenians who had immigrated to the United States for the sake of trading or adventure in early times, immigration of Ottoman subjects to the United States reached remarkable levels at the end of the 19th century. Although ethnic origins of immigrants were not recorded in American immigration documents until 1899, there is little doubt that majority of them were Armenians. However, immigrant Ottoman subjects, almost all of whom were recorded as ethnically “Turk” by the US custom officials in early immigrations, have settled down in the same cities. The Turks and Armenians have particularly preferred to live together in their new homelands, as well. The Turks and Armenians – naturally – have settled down in the northern areas of the United States that resembles the Eastern Anatolia in terms of climate. Furthermore, some of the immigrant Turks got help from Armenians – even sometimes utilized their identity cards³ – on their immigration, which is underlined in many sources.⁴

2 See Bilal Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, pp.32-54; Çağrı Erhan, *Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinin Tarihsel Kökenleri [Historical Roots of Turkish-American Relations]*, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara, 2001, pp.222-225. Çağrı Erhan mentions the murder of Harry the Turk (Halil bin Mehmed) briefly; yet information provided by him is incorrect.

3 Bilal Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, p.35. According to a correspondence of Mavroyeni to Said Paşa, some Turks emigrated to the United States with Armenian identities. In accordance with this document, Şimşir points out the numbers of Turks as following: “30 people in Worcester, 30 people in Providence, 20 people in Michigan, 10 people in Saint Louis. Additionally 40 people in Massachusetts State. 130 people in total.”

4 Kemal Karpat, “The Turks in America”, *Les Annales de l’Autre Islam*, 3, Paris: Inalco-Erism, 1995. For

It is also a fact that a great majority of the immigrant Armenians were not capable of speaking any language fluently other than the Turkish.⁵ Therefore, since both the Armenians and the Turks had similar qualities and capabilities they could found jobs in the same sectors. Another reason for these two ethnic groups came together in the same neighborhood was probably that the Armenians and the Turks, whose education level was relatively lower than those had come previously, headed towards industrial regions like Massachusetts State that desperately need cheap labor.⁶ Because early immigrants found jobs easily, they invited their relatives, which led to increase in the level of immigration from Turkey to the United States due to economic concerns in the mid 1890s.⁷ Thus, according to official data 9.952 Ottoman citizens (majority of them were Armenians) entered into the country between the years of 1895-1900. Since then immigrations were intensified as a result of both the missionary activities and the outbreak of tension between the Turks and the Armenians in the East Anatolia.⁸ Number of the Armenians that immigrated to the United States increased to 40.608 between 1900 and 1914.⁹ Many of them settled down in New England, New York, Michigan, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and California.¹⁰ These states were also the places where 20.189 Turkish people emigrated to the United States via official channels between 1900 and 1915, have settled down. Therefore, accounts covering the Armenian diaspora mention many Turkish immigrants living in the Armenian neighborhoods or adjacent places in New York, Michigan, and Rhode Island.¹¹

a reprint of the article see Kemal H. Karpat *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society*, Brill, 2004, pp. 612-638.

- 5 According to the US migration statistics, a great majority of the Armenians could neither read, nor write. There were those capable of reading, yet could not writing who had probably memorized some passages from the praying books. Those Turks capable of reading *the Quran* could not write as well. Such a classification for the Armenians, as well, is interesting. Number of those “could read, yet could not write” was only 32 between 1905 and 1920. See *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration*, US Department of Labour., Vols: 1900-1930.
- 6 I reached into this conclusion based on the fact that first groups were including clerics and merchants that came to the United States with the aim of training and trading. See Robert Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in America 1890 to World War I*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983, pp.36-40.
- 7 Ahmet Akgündüz, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Dış Göçler, 1783-1922 [The Ottoman Empire and Immigrations], *Toplum ve Bilim* 80 (Bahar 1999), p.144-170.
- 8 Kemal Karpat, “The Ottoman Emigration to America, 1860-1914,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 17/2 (1985), pp.175-209; reprint, Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, Köln, 2002, p.90-132.
- 9 *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration to the Sec of Labor*, Government Printing Office, beginning 1895-1932. Compare with Karpat, *Turks in America*, p.614
- 10 James H. Tashjian, *The Armenians of the United States and Canada*, Hairenik Press, Boston, Mass., 1947. Additionally, Şenol Kantarcı, *Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nde Ermeniler ve Ermeni Lobisi [the Armenians and the Armenian Lobby in the United States]*, Aktüel Yay, İstanbul, 2004, p.97.
- 11 The utmost remarkable and academic study on the Armenians in the United States is: M. Vartan Malcom,

It falsifies the proposition that desperate neighborhood relations between the two communities was among the basic reasons for the Armenian immigration to the United States, which is covered in recent studies.¹² Unfortunately, the Turks and Armenians carried out the problems in their fatherland to the United States where both of them come to survive, due to economic hardships.¹³ Good neighborhood between the Armenians and the Turks that brought to America from Anatolia started to deteriorate as it was in Anatolia since the early 1890s. The Armenian and Turkish immigrants, impressed by the developments in Anatolia, started to fight each other. Since the Armenian nationalist movement was very popular among the Armenians immigrated to the United States, there is no doubt that the Armenians were leading to the fighting.¹⁴

The Ottoman Armenians, whose independence tendency was encouraged by the St. Stephano and Berlin Treaties that had been signed after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78, carried their political organizations to the United States, as well. The Armenian revolutionary committees like Hinchak and Tashnak that were found in Tbilisi and Geneva, established their branches in New York and Boston in a short period. Role of the protestant missionaries could not be ignored in this process. As a matter of fact, the protestant missionaries, who were engaged in building an ethnic and political identity for the Armenians after the 1820s, voluntarily participated to the Armenian cause, as well, without complete consent of their headquarters. The Armenian youth, who was brought to the missionary headquarters in the United States to train the Armenian political and religious leaders, become natural members of the revolutionary committees. Due to the public sympathy to Armenians that supported by the protestant missionaries, the revolutionary committees and parties reached into remarkable financial opportunities.¹⁵ The collected funds were spent for bringing more Armenian youth

The Armenians in America, The Pilgrim Press, Boston, Chicago, 1919.

12 Robert Mirak classifies the Armenian emigrations between 1890 and 1899 as compulsory flight from Turkey. See. Mirak, *Torn Between Two Lands*, p.44.

13 Kantarcı, *Ermeni Lobisi*, p. 97-99.

14 Those studies cover this subject basically. See Şenol Kantarcı, "Ermeni Lobisi: ABD'de Ermeni Diasporasının oluşması ve Lobi Faaliyetleri" [The Armenian Lobby: Emergence of the Armenian Diaspora in the United States and Lobbying Activities], *Ermeni Araştırmaları* No:1 (Mart-Nisan-Mayıs, 2001), p.139-169 and the same author, "ABD ve Kanada'da Ermeni Diasporası: Kuruluşlar ve Faaliyetleri" [the Armenian Diaspora in the United States and Canada: Institutions and Activities], *Ermeni Araştırmaları* No:3 (Eylül-Ekim-Kasım, 2001), p.67-118. This article gives references to statistics provided by the US Migration Commission. Since other studies are based on second-hand information, a comparison is inapplicable between this article and other studies.

15 Kemal Çiçek, "Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinde Ermeni Diasporasının Rolü" [Role of the Armenian Diaspora in the Turkish-American Relations], *IV. Türkiye'nin Güvenliği Sempozyumu, Tarihden Günümüze Dış Tehditler, Bildiriler*, 16-17 Ekim 2003, Elazığ, 2004, p.253-258.

to America in order to train.

These young Armenians under the impression of propaganda heralding them that their relatives in Turkey were massacred, engaged in terrorist activities against the Ottoman targets. Moreover, they organized efficient demonstrations in order to support the Armenian activities in the Ottoman territories thanks to the protection that they enabled through the US citizenship, and financial and spiritual contributions of the American churches. Particularly the Hinchaks greatly influenced the American perception of the Armenians and the US policies. Therefore, the first Armenian terrorist activities against the Turks living in the United States were carried out in the places where the two communities live together. The murder of Harry the Turk, the subject of this article, was also realized in a neighborhood where the Turks and Armenians live together.¹⁶

Armenian activities against the Turks were not limited with the murder of Harry the Turk. Press reports and correspondences of the Ottoman embassy upon the occurrence of this incident demonstrate that disagreements and conflicts between the Turks and the Armenians in the Ottoman territories started to be echoed in the same way in the United States. Surveying the documents in the Ottoman Embassy in Washington D.C. proves that Mavroyeni Bey warned his counterparts in the US Department of State about the Armenians' violent activities and harassment of the Turks. However, this murder indicates that warnings of the embassy were not taken into account. Armed rallies that carried out in New York and Boston in 1893 was remarkable to point out that how the Armenian political activities had reached into a dangerous level. Indeed, murder of many Turks succeeding the incident of Harry the Turk is an indicator of the fact that threats against the Turks had become a permanent phenomenon.¹⁷ Therefore, a review of the Armenian political organizations and activities in the United States will provide us with a chance to assess offstage of the murder.

b) The Armenian Political Organizations and Activities in the United States

Mavroyeni Bey, the Turkish ambassador to Washington D.C.¹⁸, closely observed the Armenians' organizational activities, and their publications in the

16 This subject that has not been addressed in the literature on Ottoman-American relations is in need of further research and study since this article is dealt with – briefly -- only murder of Harry the Turk.

17 According to correspondences perpetrators of many murders could not be detected. For some instances see Erhan, *Türk-Amerikan*, p.224-225.

18 Because the ambassador, himself, wrote as "Turkey" it is not mistaken to use Turkey/Turkish instead of the Ottoman State in this context.

United States, throughout his tenure at the embassy, and called officials in the US Department of State to take measures against the activities that were hostile to his country. For instance, he corresponded on preparations of a demonstration organized by the Armenians in the early 1893: “the newspapers¹⁹ published in New York in the Armenian language, by Armenians and for Armenians, most of whom were naturalized citizens of the United States, were always containing articles inciting the Armenians who live in Turkey to insurrection.”²⁰ According to Mavroyeni Bey’s investigations, particularly *Haik*, published by the Hinchak organization was famous with its inciting the Ottoman Armenians to rise against the Ottoman state, and publishing articles provoking the Armenians against the Turks in the United States. Following is an excerpt from news that published in this magazine:

“It is impossible to keep up military spirit by means of words and articles. We must begin by disciplining. The best way to arouse a military spirit among young Armenians in foreign countries is to give them the military training which is the only means of preparing men for the field of battle. (...) We must lose, if necessary, one half of the nation for the sake of saving the other half.”²¹

The methods and political tactics were told in the 288th page of the same magazine in order to save Armenian independence:

“Experiences have shown that the political reconstruction of the nation through diplomatic action is impossible. Positive and energetic means are needed in order to bring diplomatic intervention. These means are fire and sword, which call for soldiers and money. It must establish its centre of activity in Russia or the United States. Just as there is an Armeno-Russian corps in the east, ready and organized, so must an Armeno-American corps, equally strong, be raised in the west.”²²

Following excerpt was published in the 19th volume of the same magazine in October 15, 1893:

“A people is not aroused in a moment, as an electric lamp is lighted, it is true. Yet the eastern question, if it should again come upon the carpet, would be

19 The *Haik* magazine that was publishing in New York in 15-days periods was among the leading of them.

20 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, October 26th, 1893.

21 *Haik*, October 1st, 1893, No: 18, p.280 et seq.

22 *Haik*, October 1st, 1893, No: 18, p.288 et seq.

agitated for two years at least. At first there will be insurrectionary movements followed by repression; next, war, followed by a Congress of the great powers. If the Armenians get ready and make a beginning before the expiration of these two years, they may revolt, in good time. I approve of the system of Hentchaguïen, viz. To organize bands at once. When the eastern question is revived, these bands may unite. It would be well for them to organize as guerrillas, and to carry on operations in the mountains of Turkey in Asia. That would protect the population of the cities and of the rural districts.”²³

Number of the Armenian associations that was realizing remarkable activities in order to gain supporter and sympathy was increasing day by day in those days. The association of The United Friends of Armenia was very active in propaganda. This association, like other ones, was easily ensuring sympathizers and supporters from churches, and making declarations provoking the Armenians to rise against the Ottoman State. According to a report published in Boston Daily Advertiser in March 22, 1894, a missionary called Dr. Blackwell was arguing in an address that struggle by word was not enough to ensure independence of Armenia; independence should be ensured through armed activities.²⁴ Although it was reported that many in that meeting was not in favor of armed struggle, this report was interesting to demonstrate extents of the Armenian activities.

In those years, the Armenians, exploiting religious feelings, was calling Christians for help for those Armenians living in the Eastern regions of Turkey, and thereby they were trying to raise moral and material support for their organizations. Thanks to religious solidarity, number of the American Armenians' associations and their activities against Turkey was increasing day by day. In every day, a new association was founding against Turkey. One of these associations was Phil-Armenic Association that was established in Washington D.C. One of the leading features of this association was that all of its founders were leaders of churches. According to Mavroyani Bey's citation from Daily Star newspaper, founders of the association were including Rev. S.M. Newman, Rev. J.S.Hamlin, Rev. J. C. Easton, Rev. J.S. Childs, Rev. A.J. Graham, Justice Strong, Dr. Sheldon Jackson. Although it is declared that objective of the association is “to try to ensure security of life and property, and human dignity in Armenia,” it is a matter of fact that these associations played an important role to encourage sympathizers for

23 *Haik*, October 15th, 1893, No: 19, p.303.

24 *Boston Daily Advertiser*, March 22, 1894. For the Embassy's diplomatic note to the US State Department in protest of this meeting see NARA T-815 Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, the Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. March 25, 1894.

anti-Turkish Armenian activities.²⁵ Additionally, there were declarations supporting Armenians, released by the American churches in various times.²⁶ Mavroyeni Bey recorded these declarations one by one; informed the officials in the US Department of State with these declarations and asked the US opinion.²⁷ Activities of associations and organizations – together with leaders of churches – that were sympathizers of the Armenians were not limited with releasing declarations, they campaigned to collect fund for the Armenians as well.²⁸

It should be highlighted that there was not any serious action against the Armenians living in the Ottoman territories in the period in which aforementioned activities were carried out. In spite of this fact, for instance, the American Armenians released a manifesto condemning Turkey in a meeting of St. Savior Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania, on October 3, 1893. The Ottoman government was accused of consciously being inactive against the systematic oppression of the Christian subjects by the Muslim fanatics. Furthermore, it was noted that “resolved that by willfully and systematically abandoning her Christian subjects to the unbridled lust and unparallel atrocities of Moslem fanatics, the Turkish government demonstrated her own incapacity to govern without foreign interferences.” Mavroyeni Bey told his regrets with the manifestation; reminded that there was no agreement granted the Armenians with the right of autonomy and independence; and condemned that manifestation and the US officials’ permission to the Armenian revolutionary activities in his correspondence to the US State Department.²⁹

Additionally, Cyrus Hamlin, director of Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, after a meeting with Nishan Garabedian (known as Rupen Hanazad) who was among the founders of the Hinchak Committee and living in Worcester, released a document warning Protestant missionaries and Armenians that the Hinchak members were propagating to raise supporter and sympathizer among

25 NARA T-815 Roll 7. General No: 7531. Special No: 5: From Mavroyeni, the Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. February 1, 1895. The same newspaper reported that aim of the Armenian members of this association was overthrow the government in Turkey; and Mavroyeni informed the US Department of State with this report in February 14, 1895.

26 For a review of Mavroyeni’s responses to these declarations see Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, p.49-54.

27 NARA T-815 Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, the Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. October 15, 1895.

28 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to R. Olney, the Secretary of State. Washington, November 30, 1895; The New York Times, p.14.

29 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, November 12th, 1893.

the American Armenians and endangering survival of missionaries.³⁰ Editor of Boston Daily Advertiser newspaper reacted to the Hinchak Party's charging Dr. Cyrus Hamlian and missionaries of being indifferent to the Armenian cause, and warned the Armenians on dangers of armed struggle in one of his editorials.³¹ However, his statement of "the American missionaries are the most sincere friends of the Armenians" drew attention of Mavroyeni Bey, who complained on this issue to the US State Department.³²

Members of the Hinchak Committee in the United States increased their activities in early 1894; moreover, they clearly realized riot practices. Some 30 American Armenians, who were defined as revolutionaries by the Ottoman ambassador in diplomatic correspondences, dared to practice a military exercise in New York in early January 1894. Mavroyeni Bey appealed to the US Department of State to prevent the exercise, yet he could not have got a positive response.³³

The Hinchak activities provoking the Armenians in the United States were not limited with aforementioned actions. According to a report of The New York Herald, Dr. N. M. Boyajian, who was among the Armenians living in New York, established a society called "The Armenian Young Men's Christian Association" in that city. Secretary-General of the association was Mr. M. M. Chamalian. Range of age among some 200 Armenian members of the association was 18-30. Considering about 500 Armenians living in New York at that time, it could be said that this Armenian diaspora association was the second to The Armenian Revolutionary Society (ARS) in terms of its importance. It was convening at least once in a month. Its aim was to increase solidarity among the Armenians and to provide support to the revolutionary Armenians. Additionally, many members of the association including Dr. Boyajian were also members of the ARS.

In the same line, the Huntchagist Revolutionary Party that represented by Nis-han Garabedian in the United States was training the Armenian youths with arms with its own resources, and then, sending them to Turkey to carry out armed activities and assassinations. Atan Aizavan was among those Armenians who were

30 *The Congregationalist*, December 23, 1894. He stood up for similar views in his article titled "A Dangerous Movement Among the Armenians" which was published in the same magazine dated December 28, 1893. For text see Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, p. 50.

31 *Boston Daily Advertiser*, April 13, 1894.

32 Şimşir, *Documents Diplomatiques Ottomans II* p.96-97. No :37 : Diplomatic note that signed as from Mavroyeni Bey to Gresham, August 18, 1894, No. 7072/23.

33 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. W. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, January 16, 1894.

dispatched to Turkey. He was detained with charge of being member to a gang killed Simon Kahia -- his crime was proved -- and he was imprisoned for 10 years. This kind of people was also leading problems in Turco-American relations, since they had obtained the US citizenship just before their departing for Turkey, and they claimed to be US citizen, thereby ensuring the American protectorate.³⁴ However, they were trying to hide their US citizenship acting like an Ottoman subject, even paying the military service exemption taxes (*jizya*) and capital (*te-mettü*).³⁵ Additionally, we learnt from the Haik magazine on May 1, 1894 in which an Armenian spokesperson called Chitzian³⁶ clearly assumed murders of some leading Armenians in Turkey, that Aizavan incident was not an exception. As Mavroyeni Bey reported, the Hinchak militias had killed lawyer Yazidjian from Arapkir. The same person, Chitzian denied responsibility for other murders, attributing them to Armeno-Russian Revolutionary organization.³⁷

Additionally, B. Chitjian, secretary of the Hinchaks in Boston, said; “more than 1000 Armenian youngsters will go to Turkey to take revenge for their massacred wives, children, and relatives and to initiate an armed uprising” in his interview in newspapers.³⁸ The report titled as “revenge” in Boston Advertiser daily demonstrates how the Hinchaks in Boston were powerful and clearly shows how they impressed their relatives with hostile feeling against the Turks. According to the report, some 3,000 of 10,000 Armenians in America were living in Massachusetts state. Almost all of them capable of bearing arm and many of them were close to the Hinchak party. Chitjian had detailed their activities in that interview and claimed that they were introducing arms to Turkey through bribery. These reports indicates that there were an intensive propaganda –starting from church- - against the Turks where the Armenians were crowded which provided a fertile ground to procure pro-Hinchak proponents.³⁹

The Haik magazine, published in Armenian, reported some incidents before they occurred. For example, Haik announced the Istanbul uprising one month before.⁴⁰ According to a correspondence of Mavroyeni Bey to the State Depart-

34 For citizenship matters see Çağrı Erhan, *Türk-Amerikan...*, p. 226 and succeeding pages.

35 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. W. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, August 15th, 1894.

36 Şimşir argues that the ambassador had well-information on these people. Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, p. 40

37 NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, June 18, 1894.

38 *The Boston Advertiser*, December 6, 1895.

39 For the warning of the embassy with related to this report see: NARA, T-815/Roll 7: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. R. Olney, the Secretary of State. Washington, December 9, 1895.

40 *Haik*, September 1st, 1895. For the ambassador's complaint see NARA T-815 Roll 7: From Mavroyeni,

ment⁴¹, a group consisting of the Hinchak (Huntchagui) party members organized a rally in New York in the fourth anniversary of the Sasun uprising dated July 28, 1890. Against all complaints of Mavroyeni Bey, they got permission for rallying.⁴²

One of the utmost important actions that Hinchaks perpetrated through dispatching their relatives in America to Turkey was the assassination attempt on Sultan Abdülhamid II. A report on this action published in New York Herald was titled "To Kill the Sultan." Subtitle of that report included; "the Armenian residents of the United States are preparing to strike a sound blow against the Sultan." It was stated in subheadings "aim of the action is to liberate Armenia." Another subheading in the report remarked, "the revolutionary legionnaires that dispatched from New York were mercilessly slaughtered in Turkey." Subsequently, activities of the Armenian organizations were praised in the report with following expression: "The Hinchak Associations are on charge. Armenian organizations in big cities of America believe in resorting power." Details of the report under these headlines were including: Various Armenian revolutionary groups were shaken by report of a groups of assassinator dispatched from New York were detained in Beirut when they landed and brought to Adana where several of them executed.⁴³ It is reported in the same paper that almost 400 of 1000 Armenians living in New York were members of the Hinchak. It is remarkable because it indicated that number of those dreaming to establish an Armenia through leaning on violent and armed activities was increased among the American Armenians.

Thus, the Armenians started to take a negative stance towards the Turkish community in the United States, as well; moreover, they started to press on the Armenians did not participated in them.⁴⁴ When rallies against the Ottoman State and Turks living in America increased, the Ottoman Embassy asked to the State Department to take necessary measures. A secret inquiry of the US Department of Treasury upon request of the Ottoman Embassy dramatically revealed the extent of Armenian organizations and threats. A copy of the inquiry was, also,

the Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. October 12, 1895.

41 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. General No : 7192 ; Special No : 31. From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. W. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, July 29, 1894.

42 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. General No : 7192 ; Special No : 31. From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. W. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, July 29, 1894.

43 Mavroyeni Bey sent a note to the State Department stating that he had no information on executions. See NARA, T-815/Roll 7: General No: 7365; special No: 43: From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to Mr. W. Gresham, the Secretary of State. Washington, November 17, 1894.

44 Şimşir points out that Bogigian who were spying for the Ottoman state and other impartial Armenians were targeted. See Şimşir, *Mavroyeni Bey*, p.37.

sent to Mavroyeni Bey, the Ottoman ambassador, that included:

“The Secretary of the Treasury has sent to the Secretary of State, a letter, adted the 26th ultimo, transmitting a report of an investigation made by an agent of the Secret Service Division of the Treasury Department of doings of persons in the United States. The investigation was requested by the Turkish Minister in his memorandum dated September 29th last.

There are three Armenian revolutionary organizations in this country, namely, the Hentchakist, the New Hentchakist, and the Dashnaktrakan, or Droshakian. Each society holds a public or a secret meeting every Sunday, that day being selected because the majority of the members are working people, who cannot attend on meetings on week days. Each local Hentchakist branch or faction elects its officers every three months; each local New Hentchakist branch, once a year; and each local Dashnaktrakan branch, every six months.

The regular duty or work of these officers is to keep the local records and accounts of expenses and to communicate with and report to the central headquarters, in New York City, everything in detail. The principal part of their work is to prepare speeches and make what they call “propaganda”. In the work of the propaganda, fiery speeches are made, full of patriotic sentiments and strong and encouraging words, which appeal to the hearts and feelings of the listeners. The purpose of keeping up this kind of work is to raise money, which is the only object. The majority of the members of these societies are ignorant men, who cannot discuss any subject or speak two sentences intelligently thereon, and therefore, are very easily fooled.

Once in a while some well-known speaker or some eloquent orator is sent to a place from headquarters or from some other city, in order to arouse enthusiasm, and thus get more money. Lately, Bedros H. Varjabedian was sent from New York City to Chicago, Waukegan, St. Louis, and Detroit. According to his statement, he raised \$ 782 in Waukegan alone at two meetings, within three months, previously \$290 at that place to which he had raised in St. Louis he raised \$172, and in Chicago, \$250 and \$75, at two meetings.

According to the newspapers “Hairenik” and “Tzain Hairenitz”, generous contributions to the cause have been made in the United States and Canada: for instance, according to the issue of “Hairenik” of February 3rd, \$1,700 was raised at a public meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, on January 28, 1906. In Ham-

ilton, Canada, \$400 was collected at a meeting held December 31, 1905, the people handing in \$10 and \$20 notes with great enthusiasm ("Hairenik", January 13, 1906). In New York City, Troy, New York, and Concord, New Hampshire, \$450, \$225, and \$80,32, were collected, respectively, on December 24-25th last, and \$800 at Lynn, Massachusetts, on December 14th.

Each contributor gives a fictitious name, when handing in his contribution, so that it may not be known who the contributors are when acknowledgement is made in the newspapers of the money contributed, after the money is sent to the central headquarters in New York City.

Mr. B. H. Varjabedian informed the Secret Service agent that arms and explosives are smuggled into Turkey, not through the large cities, but through the small towns on the coast of the Black Sea, near Trebizond and Samsoun, which lead, through the long mountain ranges, to the very heart of Armenia, to wherever the societies have their confederates or agents. By concealing the real nature of the contents, and pretending that the owner is merely trying to evade the payment of duty, boatmen are persuaded to carry the cases containing the prohibited articles.

Turkish customs officials are also bribed, who, Mr. Varjabedian says, are very corrupt and easy to bribe; and he adds that all the explosives are manufactured in Turkey, because all the necessary materials can be found there, except one kind of acid or gun-cotton, which have to be bought in the United States or in Europe.

The Secret Service Agent, in concluding his report, says: "In the course of conversation I have learned some of the names of their leaders in this country and abroad. They are known in the community by the same name, though some of them are fictitious."⁴⁵

c) The Turkish-Armenian Clashes and the Murder of Harry the Turk

It did not take long time for activities of the Hinchak party in the United States to lead tension between the Turks and Armenians living in the same areas. An application of six Turks on March 27, 1896 that was sent to the embassy clearly portrayed extension of the tension.⁴⁶ According to this application, 15 Turkish

⁴⁵ NARA M99: Roll 97; From Acting Secretary, Robert Bacon to the Chekib Bey, the Minister, March 9, 1906.

⁴⁶ NARA, T-815/Roll 7: March 27th, 1896.

residents of Providence for the purpose of trading were insulted, threatened, and harassed whether in street or home, day or night. Moreover, the Turks were forced to pay tribute for the Armenian organizations. The Armenians were complaining against those who rejected to pay tribute, to sheriff of the county with perjured charge of “attacking Armenians, threatening them with a knife etc.” Security officials could not have properly assessed the situation and prevented unjust treatment of the Turks. Each of those jailed could only be released on bail of 150 dollars. Because the Turks were ignorant of the language, they could not claim on their rights, and life become unbearable for them in every day.

Nevertheless, oppression and threats against the Turks were extended to murder. Mavroyeni Bey pointed out in a correspondence to the State Department: “Your Excellency is certainly not ignorant of the murder of Galeb Abdullah, an Ottoman subject, which was committed near Susanville, Lassen County, California.” According to his correspondence, inability of the US security officials to seize the perpetrators of the murder of Galeb Abdullah within four years after the incident that took on June 15, 1891 in Susanville, Lassen County, California culminated with other murders.⁴⁷ Because it was not detected that whether that murder was political or ordinary, this article does not dwell on it. Yet, as we learned thanks to Mavroyeni Bey, murder of Halil called as Harry the Turk by his friends, a Turkish subject of the Ottoman state was certainly political. That is why this article deals with developments prior to the murder and in its aftermath, in detail.

The murder, which was reported to the State Department via a correspondence of Mavroyeni Bay on June 24, 1896, was covered in the press as following.⁴⁸ According to press reports, corpse of Halil, who was called as Harry the Turk by his friends, and who was lost since February 16, 1896, was found in a rivulet in a place, called Back Cave. News was reported with following headings:

“Identified: Body of the Dead Man at Forest City Cemetry.”

“Patrick Connell Described it Accurately as Harry’s.”

“Autopsy Fails to Reveal Signs of Violence.”

“Small Possibility That Cause of Death Will be Known”.

47 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. Washington, December 21, 1895.

48 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State. Washington, July 24, 1896.

The text of the news included:

“The body of the man found in back Cove Monday was disposed of yesterday afternoon. As it was thought that the body was that of the man known among his acquaintances as “Harry the Turk”, who disappeared last February, an Argus reporter called upon Mr. Daniel T. Kelley, for whom this Turk worked during his stay of three years in this city. Mr. Kelley said Harry could not speak sentence of the English language. He was a man who never uttered a profane word about the shop and when he heard a fellow workman swear. He would turn away, with a look of disgust, and exclaim “He no good, he swear”. According to the expression of praise from his employer, Harry was a good fellow, faithful, prudent and worked every day. He was not known to indulge in liquor of any kind. At one time previous to his disappearance, Harry lost \$80 from his position. He was led to believe after a time that he sum had been stolen from him, and, as he associated somewhat with the Armenians in this city, he directed his suspicions toward them. Mr. Kelley wished to assist Harry in recovering the eighty dollars if possible, so he went over to investigate at the Armenian colony. When there he found considerable trouble to make the aliens understand English. Finally one of them spoke out brokenly, “Harry lie, he no lose money, he a Turk, he no good, he kill our people”. Without obtaining any satisfaction he was obliged to give up the search.

While employed at the foundry Harry lost the end of the middle finger of his right hand. Yesterday afternoon the body of the man found Monday was removed from the tomb at Forest City cemetery and buried. Before the interment an inspection was held in the tomb for the double purpose of giving Mr. Patrick Connell an opportunity to identify the body if possible and the police authorities a chance to ascertain if the remains bore any marks of violence. The half hour passed in the tomb by Mr. Connell, Deputy Marshal Hartnett Undertaker Rich, Dr. John F. Thomson and a circle of interested newspaper men resulted in success as far as the identification of body went, but the police authorities were not rewarded with any clue of violence exercised upon the body.

The group gathered about the wooden box, which held the remains in the tomb and Undertaker Rich removed lid.

Mr. Connell was not long in proving to those present beyond a possible doubt that the body was that of his room mate, Harry the Turk. As soon as Connell so the body he exclaimed, “Same man, same man.” He was shown the coat and after

carefully examining it said. "That's his coat, I am sure." When the clothing was removed he identified the drawers by the striking red lining at the top of them.

To an Argus reporter he said that the heel of the left shoe was worn tip on the back edge while that of the right shoe was even. He also described a peculiar cap, which covered the toes of the shoes, which were laced. The reporter with Connell then examined the shoes and proved that that means of identification was perfect for there was the worm him and peculiar cap just as were described.

It was then quite evident to all that the body was that of "Harry the Turk". Dr Thomson's examinations did not reveal any signs of violence on the body. The skull was not fractured, thus the man was not struck by a blow on the head. There was not a wound on the body. The clothing was carefully examined and found to be uncut, while the breast, which was bared, bore not the list sign of a knife found, neither was it bruised. The body had laid in water for months Dr. Thomson said, and the lungs as well as all the internal organs were so saturated with water that to examine the interior of the body would be useless. If it had been in water for a short time only he would have been able to have told whether it was dead or alive when thrown in, but now it was impossibility.

Death might have occurred in a hundred ways, but the exterior of the body showed none of them. If the man met his death as a result of foul play there were only two or three ways in which it could have occurred. He might have been struck and stunned, then thrown into the water.

Another theory as regards the death of Harry is been discussed by those most interested in the case. When Harry left his boarding house on that eventful Sunday afternoon which he disappeared, he told his room mate, Mr. Connell, that he was going down to call on the Armenians at foot of Wilmot street and asked Connell to pass the afternoon with him. Connell declined as he wished to rest in his room so Harry proceeded alone. He also told Mrs. O'Day where he was going.

The theory is that he went to this boarding house where the Armenians lived and where he boarded until he had the \$80 stolen, intending to pass a pleasant afternoon. The newspapers at that time contained much on the Armenian troubles and it is thought he became engaged in a lively discussion, or he might have accused some one at the house of stealing his money and a row ensued.

Perhaps some one grabbed for his throat without any serious intentions and

choked a little harder than he intended, strangling the poor man. When the man discovered what he had done he decided on the best plan to cover his crime. He might have thought it worth the time to take any money, which was to be found in the clothing, and then it was an easy matter to throw the body into Back Bay, which is only about 100 feet from the house. This is only a theory, but all the evidence seems to connect well with it.

In the examination of the body it was found that several teeth were missing from the front of the mouth and in the places were holes in the gums. Those who knew him well said that none of his front teeth were missing before he disappeared.

Harry is supposed to have had a wife and three children living somewhere near Constantinople. He was endeavoring to raise money enough to get them across the water to live with him."

Although it was reported that there were no sign of torture according to examination of doctor, the Argus reporter revealed many evidences to prove the claim of murder, and many reasons may cause murder. Testimonies of those, who knew Harry until the eventful morning, indicate that Harry was murdered. The Argus reporter clearly shares the same conviction, as well. However, because the corpse was found almost three months after the event, evidences were disappeared and there was no possibility for a precise autopsy.

When Mavroyeni Bey was heralded on the murder of Harry the Turk, he asked the State Department for information about the event and demanded detention of perpetrators with his correspondence on May 26, 1896. The State Department replied as:

"This case was brought to the Department's attention in a note from Mavroyeni Bey, dated May 26, 1896. From the enclosures thereto, it appears that the body of "Harry the Turk" was found in Back Bay, May 6th 1896, that he had been missing since February 16th, that the deceased had been in the employ of Daniel J. Kelly and Sons. 167. Kennebec Street, Portland; and that the cause of the death was unknown. On May 28th, the Department laid the matter before the Governor of Maine, who replied on June 6th following, that he had directed a careful investigation to be made and that he would forward at an early date the result. On July 17th, he reported the progress of the investigation giving a similar account to that already mentioned above of the disappearance and finding of the

body, and concluded by expressing doubt that the guilty party could be discovered. The last letter from the Governor of Maine was dated October 12, 1896. In it, he reiterates his impression that the murderer would not be found, but assures the Department that the authorities of Portland are exercising the greatest diligence possible in seeking to discover him.

As the Department has received no further advices from the Governor of Maine, it is led to believe that the result of the investigation into the mysterious death of Halil Mehemmed- even if it mere murder, as it appears to be, has confirmed his opinion that no satisfactory evidence as to the actual cause could be obtained.

In view of these facts you will perceive that This Government has neglected no means within its constitutional authority to detect and bring the guilty parties to trial and eventual punishment. If its efforts have failed to accomplish this end, it has certainly not been due to indifference to the just request of a friendly power, nor to a lack of appreciation of the gravity of the facts, but to the mystery surrounding them and the inability to adduce evidence sufficiently conclusive to discover and punish the perpetrators of these crimes.”

Upon this reply, Mavroyeni Bey wrote a note to the State Department on July 24, 1896: “I was greatly pained and a little bit surprised to learn by your note that the Authorities of the State of Maine almost despair of learning the cause of the death of that Ottoman subject.” Then, he stated that he would be insistent on discovery of perpetrators of the murder of Harry the Turk, Halil Mehemmed⁴⁹ as his name on passport: “The circumstances preceding the death of Halil Mehemmed, however, prove superabundantly that e was murdered. I expect, consequently, that, in spite of everything, the Authorities of the State of Maine will discover the perpetrators of this murder, who according to the clipping which I have already sent to the Department of State, appear to be Armenians.”⁵⁰

Despite all evidences that Mavroyeni Bey indicated, the Governor of Maine could not proceed on the event, and reported on October 12, 1896 that they could not found out perpetrators yet authorities in Portland were exercising great

49 Name of the killed man was reported as Mehemmed bin Hadji Halil firstly on an ambassadorial note on April 20, 1899. See NARA T-815/Roll 7. From Ali Ferrouh to John Hay, Sec of State, Dept. of Foreign Affairs.

50 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. From Mavroyeni, Imperial Legation of Turkey to the Secretary of State, Mr. W.W.Rockhill. Washington, July 24, 1896.

diligence to discover perpetrators. The note of the State Department to Mavroyeni Bey, highlighting that there were no new report with regard to the event, included:

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This note of the State Department is remarkable, since it indicated that death of the Harry the Turk had started to be seen as a murder. Against this background, Mustafa Bey, who replaced Mavroyeni Bey, thanked the State Department and asked continuation of inquiry by the related governor.⁵² Thus, the case of Harry the Turk was not closed. Nevertheless, all inquiries remained inconclusive. As far as years went on, inconsistencies around the event increased further; and because the new investigators could not have properly understand the incident, they even started to questioning the first autopsy report that indicating the corpse was belong to an Ottoman Turkish subject, called Harry the Turk. For instance, a note with regard to the continuation of the investigation dated March 6, 1897, displayed that the Governor of Maine changed his conviction, whatever the reason, to view the incident as a murder. Yet, there was no new evidence to cause change of conviction. Against the embassy was very insistent on the case, the US authorities revealed their tendency to close the case. That note included:

“The Department regrets to say that this latest communication from the Governor of Maine, throws no additional light upon the matter. It reveals, however, sincere desire on the part of the Executive of that State to solve the mystery that surrounds the case, as the following citation from the Governor’s letter plainly

51 NARA, M99; Roll 97: Document No:7.

52 NARA M99; Roll 97, Document No:8.

shows. “There is some question, and always has been, as to whether the body found, was the body of Harry the Turk certainly nothing has been discovered indicating that the man found had been murdered. I have urged upon the Mayor the importance of contributing earnest efforts of the police officers that further developments may be reached and I beg to assure you that the proper authorities will leave nothing undone in their attempt to ascertain if a crime was committed, and if so to apprehend the offender and bring him to justice.”⁵³

I spire of all these promises; the incident could not be enlightened. However, the Ottoman ambassadors succeeding Mavroyeni Bey insistently followed this case. Thus, in the third year of the murder, and after the third Ottoman ambassador was changed, a note to Ali Ferruh Bey from John Hay on March 27, 1899 stated that the incident of Harry the Turk could not be solved and asked the embassy:

“If you can furnish any clue or evidence of the murder of the person in question, the Department will forward the same to the Governor of Maine, with a view to the apprehension and punishment of the guilty parties.”⁵⁴

So, in a note of the Ottoman embassy to the State Department in 1899, it is sadly stated that the Maine police could not enlightened the murder and shared new information with the State Department. According to this information, the police did not precisely investigate the incident, moreover, put it off. The embassy detected names of the perpetrators of the murder as “Keshich Oghlou Eschhan, Moussih Oghlou Agop, Tcholak Caspar, Tizik Oglou Zafar” as a result of its own investigations. It is remarkable that the embassy reported names of perpetrators for the first time, three years after the murder. Although the American authorities put the investigation off, the Ottoman ambassadors succeeding Mavroyeni Bey did not stop following. It is interesting that the Ottoman embassy did not have an answer to this very important note. The embassy asked the Sate Department in a note on June 14, 1900, why it was unanswered, despite it reported names of the perpetrators. The insistent questions of the embassy did not remain inconclusive; the State Department stated that it asked the authorities in Maine to investigate suspects, whose names were provided by the Ottoman embassy, on April 25, 1899.⁵⁵ Unfortunately, the embassy did not have answer since then; and the incident remained in dusty shelves of archives, probably as the first unsolved

53 NARA M99; Roll 97, Document No: 11.

54 NARA M99; Roll 97, Document: 30.

55 NARA M99; Roll 97, Document No: 32.

murder of the Armenian terror in the United States.

Moreover, Mavroyeni Bey, in one of his correspondences to the State Department drove attention to the fact that murder of Halil was not the first incident:

“The present case is the second in recent years in which the murderers of an Ottoman subject in the United States were not discovered. You are aware that the murders of Galip Abdullah, who was murdered in California in June, 1891, have not yet been arrested.”

Additionally, unsolved incident of Harry the Turk, and improper investigation of the incident by the Maine authorities should have encouraged Armenians. Thus, hostile stance of Armenians against the Turks remained after the incident of Harry the Turk. Thereby, the Ottoman embassy asked the State Department in a note on November 19, 1897, why Harputlu Mahmut, an Ottoman subject, was imprisoned for two months due to charge of a revengeful Armenian, in Worcester. That note follows:

“An Ottoman subject, Mahmoud, a native of Harpoot, Asia Minor, and a resident of Worcester, was arrested and imprisoned more than two months ago at Lawrence (Massachusetts) on a charge made by Paul Kirkonan, who sought revenge. The Imperial Legation, consequently, has the honor to request the Department of State to be pleased to call the attention of the District Attorney at Lawrence to this arrest which was due to animosity and considerations of a political nature, as it appears from the statements of the complainant’s brother and from the testimony of the Ottoman subjects residing at Worcester.”⁵⁶

Since this incident was also a political slander, in view of Mavroyeni Bey, attention of the District Attorney at Lawrence should be attracted. Additionally, according to sources of the embassy, testimonies of the Turks, resident in Worcester reveals those political pressures on the Turks were increased. Surveying these records lead to the conviction that, Armenian activities in Turkey after 1895, intensified inter-communal clashes where the Turks and Armenians live together, in America. In other words, the clashes in Anatolia were carried into the United States, as well.⁵⁷ Unfortunately there are various samples to prove this conviction.

56 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. November 19, 1897. Because this question was not answered, the new note of the embassy asking the question again on Nov 10, 1900.

57 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. November 19, 1897. Because this question was not answered, the new note of the embassy asking the question again on Nov 10, 1900.

Correspondences between the embassy and the State Department indicate that similar incidents were often recurred in other areas where the Turks and Armenians were living together. For instance, a note on November 10, 1900 to the State Department stated: “Halil Mehemed an Ottoman subject, and an operative in a factory near Nhitins, (Massachusetts) has been attacked and beaten by some Armenians likewise employed in the said factory. The Armenians of that establishment very frequently indulge in violent assaults of their Turkish fellow workmen” and asked the Department to take necessary measures to prevent violent assaults.⁵⁸

By the way, it should be pointed out that the Turkish embassy in Washington was always claiming rights of the Turks with the greatest care. Against this, we cannot say the American authorities proceeded to prosecute and detain culprits. With related to these events, the State Department stated incidents like death of Galib Abdullah (Ghaleb Abdullah), Joseph Nadir and Halil Muhammed (Harry the Turk) in the last five years remained mysterious in its answer to ambassador Mustafa Bey in early 1897. It was also admitted that perpetrators of above-mentioned incidents could not be detected and put in trial despite the endeavors of the embassy and the consulate. Against insistent follow of the Turkish diplomatic mission, the US State Department repeatedly expressed its desire to solve these incidents and to keep abreast of developments relevant to these incidents.

CONCLUSION

This article, dealing with the murder of Harry the Turk and clashes between the Turks and the Armenians living in the United States, revealed that clashes between the Turks and Armenians living in Anatolia transmitted to America by the Armenians. Survey of the American press and archives of the State Department proves that the Turkish originated Ottoman subjects were aggrieved of the activities, not the initiator. Armenians, backed by the missionaries and the churches they supported, were organized in America as in Anatolia and carried out political activities against the Ottoman state. Nevertheless, swore of Armenians an oath on independence in an armed rally in New York, in an early date like 1893, is interesting.

It is also remarkable that the Armenian political parties raised supporters among the Armenians immigrated to the United states – particularly among the

58 NARA, T-815/Roll 7. November 10, 1900.

youth – even by threatening or blackmail. Unfortunately, the supporter masses extended level of the Turkish hostility to murder. It is remarkable that the Turks and Armenians, who had previously chosen common places to live together voluntarily and helping each other as in Anatolia, were pushed into the clashes. Putting investigation of the murder of Harry the Turk in Maine off is also very significant; although that incident was openly a murder and the Turkish embassy reported names of the perpetrators name by name as a result of insistent following, perpetrators were not put in trial. Inaction of the American authorities facilitated the Armenian threats to other Turks, as well. This article is important because it handled the first period of the Turkish-Armenian clashes, which has been still going on, in the United States; and it is hoped that it will enlightened new studies. As far as analysis of the local press is increased, it is most probably that some other disagreements between the Turks and Armenians will be revealed.

