

# DELUSIONS RESULTING FROM NATIONALIST VIEWPOINTS AND ARMENIAN ALLEGATIONS

(MİLLİYETÇİ BAKIŞ AÇILARININ NEDEN OLDUĞU YANILSAMALAR VE ERMENİ İDDİALARI)

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**Abstract:** *In the studies made so far, neither Armenian nationalism, nor ethnic nationalism nourished within this nationalism has ever fallen in the area of interest of researchers. In this article Armenian nationalism is raised within the context of nationalist delusions. Questions to which answers are sought are as follows: “What kind of an image does the Armenian nationalism project within the picture that portrays the world history of nationalism? Will the qualities of materials that enable us to follow the evolutionary process of Armenian nationalism be able to give a different viewpoint to the interpretations regarding nationalism?” Within this framework, without forcing the article’s limits of volume, attention has been drawn to the typological features of Armenian nationalism, its differences that can be qualified as original and the mechanism that operates the reproduction tools of that nationalism. For the assessments regarding the Armenian nationalism, formation of nationalism in world scale and its stages of development have been used as historical background. The subject that has been opened to debate in this article is that the tools of struggle against ethnic nationalism, rather than becoming measures, operates the mechanism that gives birth to and reproduces the ethnic discriminations, ethnic nationalisms and even racism.*

**Keywords:** *Armenia, Karekin Njdeh, nationalism, racism, nation-state model, French Revolution, Enlightenment, modernism.*

**Öz:** *Şu ana kadar yapılan çalışmalarda ne Ermeni milliyetçiliği ne de bu milliyetçilik içerisinde filizlenen etnik milliyetçilik araştırmacıların ilgi alanına girmiştir. Bu makalede milliyetçi yanılısamalar çerçevesinde Ermeni milliyetçiliği incelenmektedir. Cevap aranan sorular şöyle sıralanabilir: “Dünya milliyetçilik tarihini temsil eden bir resimde Ermeni milliyetçi projesi nasıl bir görünüm sergilemektedir? Ermeni milliyetçiliğinin evrimleşme sürecini izlememize imkân tanıyan materyallerin kalitesi, milliyetçiliğe dair yorumlara farklı bir bakış açısı*

*sunmakta mıdır?” Bu bağlamda, makalenin sınırları zorlanmadan, Ermeni milliyetçiliği, onu orijinal kılan farklılıkları ve yeniden üretilme araçlarını kontrol eden mekanizmaların tipolojik özelliklerine dikkat çekilecektir. Ermeni milliyetçiliğine dair değerlendirmeler için, dünya çapında milliyetçiliğin oluşumu ve gelişim evreleri tarihsel arka plan olan kullanılmıştır. Bu makalede tartışmaya açılan konu etnik milliyetçiliğe karşı mücadele araçları, önlem olmaktan çıkarak, etnik ayrımcılıkları, etnik milliyetçiliği ve hatta ırkçılığı ortaya çıkan ve yeniden üreten mekanizmaları kontrol etmekte olduğudur.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermenistan, Karekin Njdeh, milliyetçilik, ırkçılık, ulus-devlet modeli, Fransız Devrimi, Aydınlanma, modernizm.*

The aim of this study is to draw attention to the Armenian allegations which obtain the possibility of living in the background of the delusions resulting from nationalist viewpoints and its thesis is the rhetoric through which those allegations are voiced and the behaviors displayed when presenting those allegations have a problematic character that can be qualified as ethnic discrimination, ethnic nationalism and ever increasing racism. The following question has been at the first stage of the study: “Is it possible to talk about a phenomenon that can be qualified as Armenian nationalism based on the existing data?” For instance, B. Gaibov, in the foreword of his book, stated that “*in 1919 attention was drawn by a British journalist who visited Caucasus, that the nationalists who sowed the ideology of ‘Greater Armenia’ were inclined to stage their bloody plays and to perform those plays,*”<sup>1</sup> and he was not alone in his thought. At the second stage, Armenian documents in which the Armenian nationalism is presented have been categorized and subsequently the questions to which the answers must be sought have been formulated: What kind of an image depicts the Armenian nationalism project within the picture that shapes the history of world nationalism? Will the qualities of materials that enable us to follow the evolutionary process of Armenian nationalism be able to give a different viewpoint to the interpretations regarding nationalism? Thus, as far as this article’s limits of volume allow, the typological features of Armenian nationalism, its differences that can be qualified as original and the mechanism that operates the reproduction tools of that nationalism will be within our area of interest. The data obtained will be presented by the method of deduction and for the assessments; the formation of nationalism on world scale and its revolutionary stages will be used as background. With this method, it is designed to maintain the integrity of pattern of subject-time-place.

1 Б.Гаибов, *Даишаки* (Из материалов департамента полиции), Баку, 1990, с. 3.  
(Текст печатается из архивов департамента полиции – ЦГАОР СССР, ф. 102, оп. ед. хр. 280, лл. 1-№- об.)

The diversity and variability of definitions made regarding nation and nationalism resulting from the fact that as a living existence, the nation and as an ideology, as a subject, as a concept the nationalism are suitable for reproducing and producing repeatedly. Thus, in order to facilitate the researcher's job, it is impossible to make nation and nationalism static by cramming them into a mould of which dimensions have been previously determined. This is due to the fact that, existing data document that nationalism has an ever-changing character which is on a time, place and nation basis. Therefore, the fact that Western experience and knowledge become the only reference for the definitions made is one of the very basic problems of the perceptions in the modern period that must be discussed. The fact that the tools (which are radically declining criticism) used in struggling with ethnic nationalism operate the mechanism leading to birth and reproduction of ethnic discrimination, ethnic nationalism and even racism successfully, rather than being used as a measure, is another issue that needs to be evaluated. The view which reflects "For this reason nations and nationalism are unlikely to disappear, at least until all areas of the globe have made the painful transition to an affluent and stable modernity, on the West model"<sup>2</sup> has, unfortunately, been refuted especially through the Western model proposed in the citation. For example, on the state basis, what happened in Germany during World War II was a very painful experience for humanity. On the individual basis (at least apparently), the most shocking incident that should be dwelled on due to both its impact and its consequences is the attack which was perpetrated on July 22, 2011 in the Norwegian capital of Oslo by Anders Behring Breivik and led to death of more than seventy innocent people.<sup>3</sup> Following the attack, Breivik's list including hatred as fundamentalist Christian, ethnic nationalist, etc. was of great importance for that context. In addition to being a catastrophe, the rhetoric full of hatred against Turkey<sup>4</sup> and the expressions decorated with Armenian claims, which

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2 Anthony D.Smith, *Küreselleşme Çağında Milliyetçilik*, translation by Derya Kömürçü, Everest, İstanbul, 2002, p.xix.

3 "Dünya Böyle Katliam Görmedi" *Milliyet*, April 7, 2012 <http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/dunya-boyle-katliam-gormedi/dunya/dunyadetay/24.07.2011/1418028/default.htm>

4 Andrew Breivik, 2083 A European Declaration of Independence, London, 2011, p. 40, 60, 85, 86, 92, 93, 95, 98, 113, 124, 126, 127, 129, 142, 143, 144, 145, 148, 149, 150, 152, 154, 155, 156, 157, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 187, 236, 237, 238, 239, 254, 255, 256, 258, 259, 260, 261, 264, 271, 275, 332, 412, 418, 430, 536, 550, 553, 566, 567, 582, 597, 645, 665, 699, 712, 714, 728, 757, 758, 1229, 1249, 1314, <http://mehmettekn.wordpress.com/2011/07/27/anders-behring-breivikin-manifestosu/> (07.04.2012); Manifesto of the terrorist Oslo Anders Breivik in Behring, video [http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=89a\\_1311444384](http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=89a_1311444384) (07.04.2012).

were included in a manifesto issued by Breivik, are so significant that cannot be neglected.

*The Armenian Genocide, the first genocide of the 20th Century, occurred when two million Armenians living in Turkey were eliminated from their historic homeland through forced deportations and massacres (Berwick, 159)*

The above expression, which was cited from Breivik's manifesto without making a particular elimination, is widely used by the Armenians in their accusations and ethnic discrimination against Turkey as a consolidating element. Even a simple search in Google by writing the first sentence of this expression as «Հայոց ցեղասպանությունը XX դարի առաջին ցեղասպանությունն էր» or «Այն XX դարի առաջին ցեղասպանությունն էր» will be satisfactory to indicate the widespread use of the said expression in the Armenian language.<sup>5</sup> Our question is: whether the sources of the thought which motivated Breivik for that frightful act are analyzed from this perspective, as well?

If we accept the claim of Peter Alter, who said that Herder was the first to use the term of “nationalism” in 1977, (and if we take only the West as reference), this would not mean that there were previously no nations and nationalist movements in the field of application, but would help us to find the starting point of the process of systematic thinking in this regard. As a matter of fact, Anthony D. Smith makes an assessment suggesting that this is a modernist deception<sup>6</sup> and that “*it is almost certain that pre-modern ethnic identities form the main line in the statements regarding at least why and how the nations in Europe were born*”.<sup>7</sup> The ethnic identity underlined by Smith has been important throughout the history. This thinking stems from the fact that we still emphasize that mother of Plato, who lived between B.C 427-347, was a noble woman and Platon's uncles were governors.<sup>8</sup> This thinking is based on the French Revolution. In fact, if the ideology of the French Revolution (1789-1799), which opened the door to the nation-state model, lacked infrastructure, then the red cap (“Phrygian cap”) worn by the Phrygians as an expression of freedom during the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C. would not remain as the

5 Only for three of these web sites, see <http://www.newsarmenia.am/arm1/20100323/42220627.html> (10.04.2012); “About the Genocide” *Genocide.am* [http://genocide.am/article/about\\_the\\_genocide.html?armenian](http://genocide.am/article/about_the_genocide.html?armenian) (09.04.2012); “Հայաստանի տեսարժան վայրեր” <http://www.marina.am/Hcex.html> (09.04.2012)

6 Anthony D. Smith, *ibid.*, p. 27.

7 Anthony D. Smith, *Milli Kimlik*, translation by Bahadır Sina Sener, İletisim, İstanbul, 2010, p.118.

8 Karl Popper, “Açık Toplum ve Düşmanları”, translation by Mete Tuncay, Vol.1, Plato, [www.altuncizdiklerim.com](http://www.altuncizdiklerim.com), p. 4 (05.04.2012); Sibel Akgün, “Karl Popper’ın Tarih, Toplum ve Siyaset Felsefesi Üzerine Görüşleri (Views of Karl Popper regarding History, Society and Political Philosophy)”, <http://www.flsfdergisi.com/sayi7/59-76.pdf> (05.04.2012).

symbol of the French revolutionists.<sup>9</sup> This thinking is based on the references to the basic elements constituting the Armenian national identity. Let's give an example. The first teacher of the Armenian religion is Grigor Lusavoric.<sup>10</sup> This is a reference to the 2<sup>nd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> century. However, the first teacher in the Armenian culture is not only the religious leader Grigor Lusavoric; the Armenian language also has its first teacher: Mesrop Mashtots. Primary school textbooks in the Armenian language contain the following expression: *"The Armenian language was created by Mesrop Mashtots. And he became the first teacher of the Armenian language."*<sup>11</sup> The process chosen for the Armenian history is older compared to the examples mentioned above. The Armenian historian G.H.Sarkisyan states the birth of the Armenian ethnicity dates back to B.C. 2000-1000's<sup>12</sup> The citation given below is also interesting as it presents the general character of the legend on the birth of the Armenian nation:

*... It was the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The situation was heavy for the Armenian people. Armenia was shared between the two world leaders of the time, Persia and Byzantine and the state of Armenia was broken down. The two parts of the people of Armenia became foreigner to each other and national purity and national existence were at risk.*

*At those deadly times, forward looking and Armenophile children of the Armenian people directed their efforts towards preserving the basic elements – language, culture, legends- that established the national existence.<sup>13</sup>*

If what is told in the Armenian history were to be used as data, the Vardan Mamikonyan revolt (388 or 391-451) can cast a pioneer for nationalism and nation-state model. Where is the delusion? In what the Armenian nationalists tell? In the data that the Western science world use?

After the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, first practices emerged in the art texts,

9 The cap worn by the woman symbolizing liberty with a flag in her one hand and a rifle in her other hand in the painting *Liberty Leading the People* (Eugène Delacroix 1830) is the "Phrygian cap". See, [http://www.eugenedelacroix.org/Liberty-Leading-the-People-\(28th-July-1830\)-1830.html](http://www.eugenedelacroix.org/Liberty-Leading-the-People-(28th-July-1830)-1830.html) (10.04.2012)

10 Елена Чудинова, *Рассказ о крещении Армении*, Легенды Армении, изд. «КРОН-Пресс», Москва, 1996, с. 14-20. Also see. <http://www.chudinova.info/prosaedpartedfr.php?KProizvName=24&KProseFragmantName=84> (10.04.2012).

Note: For historical information lying beneath the legend told by Ye.Cudinova, see, Մ.Գ. Ներսիսյան, *Հայ Ժողովրդի Պատմություն*, Երևանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչություն, Երևան, 1985, էջ. 105.

11 Մ.Բ.Ղաթախյան և ուրիշներ, *Այբբենարան Ընթերցարան*, «Լույս», Երևան, 1989, էջ.81. For more information, see also by the history books.Մ.Գ. Ներսիսյան, a.g.c., s.117-120.

12 Գ.Հ.Սարգսյան, Հին Հայկական Պետության Առաջացումը և Ծաղկումը, (Մ.Գ. Ներսիսյան, *Հայ Ժողովրդի Պատմություն*), Երևանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչություն, Երևան, 1985, էջ.33-52.

13 Կոնստանդին Խոլովալերդիյան և ուրիշներ, «Վարդան Մամիկոնյան, 388 կամ 391-451», *Ոսկեպորիկ*, (Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն), Երևան, 1999, էջ. 154.

which modern thought and modernist comprehension had difficulty to comprehend. After that without exception, scientists representing all disciplines started to make assessments that the data they collected at the practice cites were not a product of modern thought, modern perception, modern phenomenon or modernist movements. This was the first sign indicating that humanity tends to abandon the values of modernism which it had assumed and adopted and used in its daily practices with great energy.

Following are some of the values and phenomenon preferred by humanity for two hundred years during which modernism was dominantly effective: Modernism; sanctified the mind, will, reformism, revolt, and liberty, which it inherited as a thought from the philosophy of Enlightenment, and asserted that humans were equal. At that time the French Revolution was regarded as a call for national freedoms all over the world. According to the data, ideology of nationalism that held the freedom flag<sup>14</sup> attracted attention as a movement that charmed not only the politicians, but also the thinkers, artists/litterateurs. At this point representatives of romanticism are worth remembering, because it is partially correct to search for the roots of nationalism in romanticism. It is partially correct because the French Revolution did not create nations and nationalism, but reproduced. Putting aside the discussion on the historical past of nationalism, let's indicate a special feature we determined in the character of the Romantic nationalism and give a concrete example: the British Poet Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) is a classic in literature. He is the pioneer of the Romantic Movement. Therefore he has numerous fans in the literature world that would accept his manners and words without any judgment. Byron came down to the battlefield to support –using arms- Greece that revolted against the Ottoman Empire between 1823-1832 and died for this sake –but due to illness-. The question in this context is: what was the connection that made a British noble Byron to feel himself close to the Greek nationalists? Was it the ancient Greek literature? His ethnic origin? An attempt to regain his lost reputation? Bonds of faith? Or his delusions caused by the nationalist viewpoint?<sup>15</sup>

Demonstrating the character and size of assistance supplied by global public opinion for the revolting ethnic groups against the current order with the contributions of nationalism, Byron is a substantial case. The further reflection of this support on the Armenian history a lot later, in late 19<sup>th</sup>

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14 The indication of this perception in art is the painting *Liberty Leading the People* (Eugene Delacroix; 1830), a masterpiece of the French painting and art that was made in the memory of the public revolt in 1830. The content of this painting is frequently used in the placards and posters of the revolts that claimed liberty.

15 Another classic in literature, the Russian poet A.S.Pushkin (1799-1837) wrote his story "The Shot" (1891) in which he prototyped the British poet Byron as Silvio, first cleared him off his character as a poet. In the said work Silvio is a "worthless person" that wastes his skills, energy and time." Note: the "useless person" type in the Russian literature is an important means of criticism used especially in the 19th century. See. Александр Пушкин, Выстрел, <http://ilibrary.ru/text/89/p.2/index.html> (08.04.2012)

Century, was as follows: with the influence of nationalism, also the Armenians living under the authority of Ottoman Empire finally rebelled. The material and spiritual support that the Armenians received from the Western countries, Russia and the USA was high enough to inebriate them. As a result of this revolt, an independent state called the People's Republic of Armenia was established in Caucasia on May 28, 1918.<sup>16</sup> As it is today, the ruling party was the ARF<sup>17</sup> (The Armenian Revolutionary Federation) in that period.<sup>18</sup> Right at this point, that's at a point where success was achieved, we face a different phenomenon in the character of nationalism through Armenian nationalism. As known, the Ottoman Empire was one of the first states to recognize the People's Republic of Armenia officially. In other words, this was a success craved by Armenians. One of the concrete documents of this issue is the Batumi Agreement signed between the Ottoman Empire and the People's Republic of Armenia on June 3, 1918. But the People's Republic of Armenia terminated its presence with the will of the Armenian people and accepted to be under the sway of the USSR. In the textbook for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades of the secondary school composed by G. A. Avetsiyan illustrates the feelings of Armenians about those days as follows:

*Armenian laborers welcomed the October Revolution with a great pleasure. <...>. In Alexandrapolis meeting dated November 10, with five thousand participants, following decision was arrived: 'We do solemnly swear we will support and defend the recently established Worker – Peasant Alliance and we are ready to stand up for this governance and to fight off any anti-Soviet settlements! We salute Comrade Lenin who has proved to be the leader of the world proletariat and the defender of the poor in cities and villages!'<sup>19</sup>*

We should state that Armenians are not the unique example in this regard and similarly, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and other nations gave up their demands for independence. Our question is that: Should we interpret this, namely the extinction of the underlying fire of nationalism which was very high then, as the withdrawal of “fire producers”<sup>20</sup>? While the answer to this

16 Armenian historians provide varied information regarding the official name of their first independent state: such as Republic of Armenia, Democratic Republic of Armenia. In this article, the history book that the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia issued in 2001 was benefited from. (See, Վ.Բ. Բարխուդարյան, *Պատմություն 10*, Երևան, 2001, էջ. 192).

17 Հայ Յեղափոխական Դաշնակցություն (ՀԾԴ)..

18 The first Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Armenia is Hovhannes Katchaznouni; the first Minister of Interior, Alexander Khatisyan; the first Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aram Manukian; the first Minister of Defense, Hovhannes Hakhverdyan; the first Minister of Economy, Khachatur Karchikyan. (See, Վ.Բ. Բարխուդարյան, *ibid.*, էջ. 192).

19 Г.А. Аветисян (Под его редакцией), *История армянского народа*, «Луйс», Ереван, 1985, с.52-53.

20 For the remark of Dankward Rustow, see, Umüt Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar*, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005, p.15.

question is being searched, what took place in the Caucasian region before and after the Bresk-Litovsk Agreement (March 3, 1918-19), primarily the reflections of the German Revolution in Caucasia, should be necessarily assessed.

Another factor to be noted here is the sympathy to the military power of Russia. The following quotation can give an idea about the level of this sympathy:

*The Yerevan Castle was lost in the fog. The mountains and valleys boomed five days and nights.*

*After the fifth day of the siege, realizing that there was no hope for escape, Persians chose a few people among them: They left the castle at the last moment and declared their surrender with the key of the city in their hands.*

*Yerevan had never experienced such a scene. As long as the Armenian spirit and language exist, that happy moment when the Russian troops entered the castle to celebrate the liberation of the Armenian land will never be forgotten. (adapted from H. Abovyan)<sup>21</sup>*

This is the unique characteristics of nationalism in Caucasia in the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> Century and in Armenia –special focus of this paper – in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Triggered by the French revolution, the feudal system declined all over the world and it was replaced with a two-polar-system (capitalist and socialist). The form of political organization, which was an extension of all these and accepted at the universal level was the nation-state model. As an important detail, state structures of the USA and the USSR that led the above-mentioned poles (capitalism and socialism) are out of this generalization.

A book entitled “*The Limits to Growth*” was published by The Club of Rome in 1972.<sup>22</sup> The book featured the results of an analysis which is very closely related with our subject and prepared by Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jorgen Randers et al. These researchers generated various scenarios based on world population growth, use of natural resources and

21 (For the Armenian and Russian versions of the article) А.С.Гарибян, Дж. А. Гарибян. *Краткий курс армянского языка*, «Луйс», Ереван, 1980, С. 82-83. Also, for the Russian version of the novel titled *Wounds of Armenia (Раны Армения)* by Hacatur Abovyan, a reference to the text above, see, <http://armenianhouse.org/abovyan/wounds-of-armenia/wounds.html> (10.04.2012).

22 Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, *The Limits to Growth*, the new versions of the book is available in 37 languages at <http://www.clubofrome.at/about/limitstogrowth.html> (02.04.2012).

industrial production rate as from the year 1900. As J. Rangers notes, “*The book states that the environmental harm done by the people cannot continue limitlessly as the World has physical boundaries.*”<sup>23</sup> It seems like the “fixed” everywhere in the world will start to move from their place. Actually we can say that as of December 26, 1991 when the dissolution of USSR was officially announced, they have “officially” started moving. Köksal Şahin draws the following picture that depicts the nature of the new designs about the future of humanity in his article “Nationalism as an Ideology”:

*It is observed that nationalism and the nation-based world order has become a matter of debate in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This phase has been a period which has frequently raised approaches suggesting that the nation-state model has become functionally and philosophically insufficient, and nationalism will be marginalized both as a sense and ideology. According to its proponents, the humanity has reached a new phase of civilization where the nation-state and nationalism are not present, demonstrated by the transformation of the industrial society to an information society as well as minimization of national borders. Concepts and practices such as nation, nationalism, nation-state, national identity, national economy and even national interest that address the conditions of modernity (industrial society) lost their validity and each became a threat to world peace and stability.*<sup>24</sup>

No clear statements have been made yet as to what kind of a mass organization is suggested by the architects of globalization. The assessment of information and utopian foresights on globalization brings to mind the following question: “could it be assessed that the states that united together as a nation-state after the fall of the bipolar system and Armenian Republic (Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն) which regained its independence in 1991 have fallen behind the time? Let us review the independence process through the example of Armenia rather than formulating the answer to the question.

This is how the process developed according to the interview given in Russian to BBC on April 18, 2011 by Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the Armenian High Council Chairman at the time of declaration of Armenian independence and later first President of the Armenian Republic: Ter-Petrosyan calls G.E. Burbulis, the then State Secretary of the Russian Federation and informs him of their intention to join the Slavic club (meaning the Commonwealth of

23 Reyhan Oksay, “Küresel çöküşü engellemenin tek yolu büyümei durdurmak...(The only way to prevent global downfall is to stop growth” Cumhuriyet/Bilim-Teknoloji, issue:1300, February 15, 2012 p.8.

24 Köksal Şahin, “Bir İdeoloji Olarak Milliyetçilik”, Akademik Bakış, sayı:12, Celalabad-Kırgısistan, Mayıs 2007, s.2.

Independent States). Burbulis responds by stating that the idea is interesting and that he will convey it to Yeltsin. Boris Yeltsin calls the next day and wants to confirm the validity of the news. Ter-Petrosyan maintains that they are ready to join the CIS on one condition. When Yeltsin inquires what this condition is, Ter-Petrosyan points out that CIS countries have mutual recognition of each others' independence. Then the following conversation takes place:

*Yeltsin: don't even mention it, I will recognize Armenia's independence today if you want.*

*Ter-Petrosyan: Of course I want it.*

*acclaimed nationalism in the process of establishment of the nation-states has been trapped inside the national borders after the completion of the establishment process in order to be tamed – at least there has been such an expectation.*

*Ter-Petrosyan: But I thought this was a joke. We are sitting home and we turn on the TV and the first news is 'According to Boris Nikolayevich's statement Russia recognized the independence of Armenia and Kazakhstan.'<sup>25</sup>*

The following assessment by Umut Özkırmılı can create basis to debate the information presented by Armenian nationalism.

*The 'crisis' of the nation-state is one of the most frequently resorted clichés, and the future of nations and nationalism that are under the double pressure of globalization and identity politics seem more vague than ever to many people. According to Hall, growing interdependence of the planet encircles the nation-state from the top. The enormous changes brought by globalization increasingly undermine the stability of all sorts of national formation. On the other hand, however, there is a movement coming from below. The restrained groups and people within the nation-states begin to rediscover their identities which they have forgotten for a long time.<sup>26</sup>*

The idea that we will underline in this quotation will be about “the restrained groups within the nation-states”. Based on this idea, we can make that comment: acclaimed nationalism in the process of establishment of the nation-states has been trapped inside the national borders after the completion of the establishment process in order to be tamed – at least there has been such an expectation. However the ideal of national integration of the nation-states

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/multimedia/2011/04/110415\\_v\\_terpetrosyan\\_int.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/multimedia/2011/04/110415_v_terpetrosyan_int.shtml) (08.04. 2012)

<sup>26</sup> Umut Özkırmılı, *Milliyetçilik Üzerine Güncel Tartışmalar*, s.115.

led to the emergence of a problematic organizational structure in the examples of Italy and Germany. This problem in Europe is the transformation of nationalism into racism. Afterwards, the extremist tendencies that are considered to have been controlled by the experiences of the Second World War and appeared partially to be “restrained” are transformed at this time into “xenophobia”<sup>27</sup> (outside the subject of this article). Briefly the information presented above creates impression that racism emerges when there is an intense tendency to form a homogeneous society.

The Armenian nationalism and the ethnic nationalism that is reinforced by such nationalism have not been a topic of interest for researchers in their studies conducted to date. However hatred and disgust observed in the Armenian ethnic nationalism have a patrimonial character. Let’s detail our opinion with some typical examples of Armenia’s current life:

- 1) An epigraph that demonstrates a heritage of thought which a historian received from an Armenian ruler of the past and handed over to the youth:

*Always be brave! Don't be afraid of being killed and enter the battlefield without any fear! Cross yourself and wave your sword! Never bow to a foreigner! Don't believe in false promises! Glorify the nation that you are the ishkan (prince) and mentor of by shedding blood for blood! .... Praise the honor of the nation of your ancestry! ... Your grandfather's names are as great as Armenian king's!... (The advice of Sason ishkan (prince) to his son)*<sup>28</sup>

- 2) The biography of the Armenian leader Karekin Njdeh (1886-1955). Especially information related to Njdeh’s last activity described in Armenian encyclopedia is remarkable:

*He collaborated with the German fascists during the Second World War, became a member of the “Armenian National Board” that was established in Berlin (1942), was arrested in Bulgaria in 1944 and delivered to the Soviet court.*<sup>29</sup>

Njdeh was exiled to Siberia after being tried by the Soviet court as he was in cooperation with the Nazis. The postcard and postage stamp below were

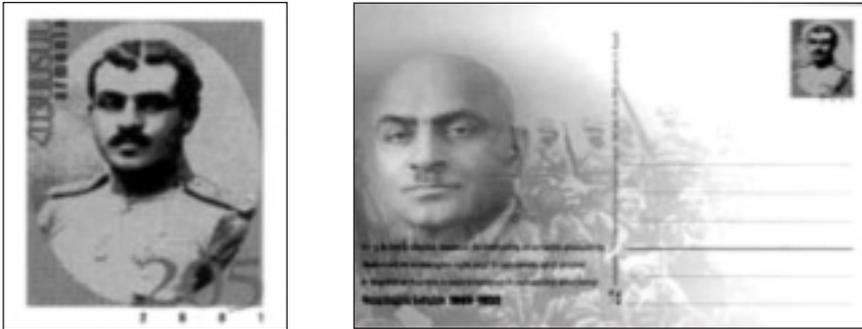
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27 Aysun Gezen, Alman Siyasi Tarihinde Kronik Irkçılık: Geçmişten Günümüze “Öteki” Oluşumları ve Siyasal Yaşama Yansımaları” (Master’s Thesis). Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Hilal Onur Ince, Hacettepe University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Discipline of Politics and Social Sciences, Ankara, 2010, p.78.

28 Մհեր Հակոբյան, Հայ ժողովրդի Ռազմական Տարեգիրք (1803-1813), Երևան, 2009.

29 Հայկական Սովետական Հանրագիտարան, Հատոր 8, Երևան, 1982, էջ. 269.

published in Armenia for Njdeh’s honor. These are the only two of the visual documents which show the attitude of the Republic of Armenia (declared its independence in 1991) that it finds Njdeh as affirmative and takes what up he does seriously.



**Picture 1:** A postage stamp and a postcard published in Armenia for the honor of Njdeh.

- 3) The actual information issued on the official site of the Republic of Armenia shows that the Republic of Armenia is very close to the ethnic homogeneity:

Demographic Structure of the Republic of Armenia <sup>30</sup>	
Population	3.274,3 (initial data from 2012)
Ethnic structure	Armenian %96 Minorities: Russian, Yezidi, Kurdish, Assyrian, Greek, Ukrainian, Jewish and others
Official Language	Armenian
Religion	Majority of the population are Christians
Church	Armenian Apostolic Church
Religious Center	St Etchmiadzin–Armenian Apostolic Church Cathedral and residence of the Catholicos of all Armenians

Mankind’s social life has been shaped by Western dominated conceptions for such a long time. O.Ewald (1881-1940) says “*at the end of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, a thought which does not acknowledge any authority other than reason in getting to know the world <...> emerges. This thought reaches its peak at the border line between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, <...> its impacts lasts up to day. Various institutions, critical systematic*

30 <http://www.gov.am/am/demographics/> (11.04.2012)

*suspicion, and even mysticism are partners in this achievement.*"<sup>31</sup>. Then he emphasizes concerning the Enlightenment philosophy, which provided intellectual root of this period, that it owed its basis to the UK, its deepening to Germany, its rhetoric and driving force to France. Another philosopher Teodor W. Adorno (1903-1969) helps us to see a different face of modernism, "*Today, culture infects everything with similarity. It creates a system such as films, radio and magazines. Concerning rhetoric, each of these are in agreement within themselves and altogether.*"<sup>32</sup> From his point of view, the products of culture now constitute industrial products that can be exported and imported, which represents a right observation. This is a critical attitude against modernism. Of course, this criticism has rightful bases. However, it would be very unfair to derogate modernism for all of its values and outcomes. On the other hand, this does not mean disregarding the problems of modernism. One of the biggest defects of modernism was that it did not perceive the possibility that the ethnic nationalism it praised could lean towards racism. It is a fact that the life of modernism has come to an end. Another reality arising from the available data is that, the new era can be a much more fruitful ground for nationalism to thrive. In the frame of this concept, the patrimonial tradition, which feeds the aggressive and irredentist vein (identified as a subject for another study) that is rife with grudge and hatred and is able to flourish within Armenian nationalism, should be pursued primarily by Armenian nationalists and this pursuit should be seen as an obligation.

***In the frame of this concept, the patrimonial tradition, which feeds the aggressive and irredentist vein (identified as a subject for another study) that is rife with grudge and hatred and is able to flourish within Armenian nationalism, should be pursued primarily by Armenian nationalists and this pursuit should be seen as an obligation.***

31 Oskar Ewald, *Fransız Aydınlanma Felsefesi (French Philosophy of Enlightenment)*, translation by Gürsel Aytaç, DOĞUBATLI, 2010, p.9.

32 Teodor W.Adorno, *Kültür Endüstrisi*, translation by Nihat Ünler-Mustafa Tüzel-Elçin Gen, İletişim, İstanbul, 2008, p.47.

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