



# REVIEW OF ARMENIAN STUDIES

A Quarterly Journal of History, Politics and International Relations

## ARTICLES

Facts and Comments

**Ömer Engin LÜTEM**

Turkey's Bid for the EU Membership, The Turkish - Armenian Relations during the World War I, in the Confidential British Documents

**Prof. Dr. Salahi SONYEL**

Turks, Armenians and Erzurum, 1916-1918

**Prof. Dr. Enver KONUKÇU**

The Turkish-Armenian Conflict in the United States and the Murder of Harry the Turk

**Prof. Dr. Kemal ÇİÇEK**

Deepening the Opposition

**Dr. O. Firat BAŞ**

A Literature Between Scientificity and Subjectivity: A Comparative Analysis of the Books Recently Written on the Armenian Issue

**M. Serdar PALABIYIK**

The Armenian Demands at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919

**Ömer Engin LÜTEM**

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

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In this issue, different aspects of Armenian question has once more examined with reference to historical occurrences and contemporary ramifications. Accordingly, in the first article, entitled 'Facts and Comments', developments on Armenian question and the Turkey-Armenia relations in the second half of 2006 are focused, and issues regarding Turkey-Armenia bilateral relations, the genocide allegations, the European Parliament's 27 September 2006 decision on Turkey, the French President's visit to Armenia and the adoption by the French National Assembly of a bill that would make negation of the "genocide" a crime punishable by law are covered.

In his article entitled 'Turkey's Bid for the EU Membership, the Turkish – Armenian Relations during the World War I in the British Confidential Documents' Prof. Dr. Salahi Sonyel examines the reasons of deterioration of Turkish-Armenian relations with a particular emphasis on Armenian revolts and Armenian collaboration with the Russian army during the World War I. His reliance on British archival documents provides the reader with an original argumentation regarding the matter.

Prof. Dr. Enver Konukçu examines Turkish-Armenian relations in Erzurum in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in his article entitled "Turks, Armenians and Erzurum, 1916-1918". He particularly emphasizes the inter-communal relations during the Russian invasion of Erzurum and its aftermath

In his article entitled "The Turkish-Armenian Conflict in the United States and the Murder of Harry the Turk", Prof. Dr. Kemal Çiçek comments on the relations between Armenian and Turkish communities of United States and emerging strife between them, by referencing the murder of an Ottoman subject by the Armenians as a case study.

Dr. Osman Fırat Baş examines the background of the resolution adopted in the Polish Parliament recognizing the Armenian genocide allegations in his article entitled "Deepening the Opposition". He mentions about the Polish political atmosphere and tries to uncover why such a resolution had adopted in Poland.

Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık analyzes comparatively the recent Western literature on Armenian question by categorizing it in accordance with scientificity and objectivity in his article entitled "A Literature between Scientificity and Subjectivity: A Comparative Analysis of the Western Literature on the Armenian Question".

In the article entitled "The Armenian Demands at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919", the Armenian territorial demands at the Paris Peace Conference which had been claimed by the Armenian delegation presided by Boghos Nubar Pasha in 1919 is analyzed. The article also includes an addendum in which documents regarding the matter can be found.

In this issue, the speeches delivered on the Armenian question in Fifteenth Turkish

History Congress organized by the Turkish Historical Society are reviewed as well. What is more, another significant conference organized by Armenian International Policy Research Group (AIPRG) in Yerevan on the political and economic implications of a possible border opening between Turkey and Armenia is evaluated critically.

There are also two reviews of the books written by Berna Türkdoğan entitled *Relocation Since 1915: Turkish-Armenian Relations (1915'ten Günümüze Tehcir: Türk Ermeni İlişkileri)*, and edited by Yavuz Ercan entitled *Collected Publications: I Researches on Armenians (Toplu Eserler: I Ermenilerle İlgili Araştırmalar)*.

With best wishes...

*The Editor*

# FACTS AND COMMENTS

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## **Abstract:**

*This work focuses on the Armenian issue and the Turkey-Armenia relations in the second half of 2006. It covers topics such as the Turkey-Armenia bilateral relations, the genocide allegations, the European Parliament's 27 September 2006 decision on Turkey, the French President's visit to Armenia and the adoption by the French National Assembly of a bill that would make negation of the "genocide" a crime punishable by law.*

**Key Words:** *Armenia, France, Robert Kocharyan, Vartan Oskanyan, Benedictus XVI*

## **Öz:**

*Bu yazı 2006 yılının ikinci yarısında Ermeni sorunuyla Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerini ele almaktadır. Yazı Türkiye-Ermenistan ikili ilişkileri, soykırım iddiaları, Avrupa Parlamentosunun Türkiye hakkındaki 27 Eylül 2006 tarihli kararı, Fransız Cumhurbaşkanı'nın Ermenistan'ı ziyareti ve Fransız Ulusal Meclisinin Ermeni "soykırımını" inkar edenlerin cezalandırılmasını öngören bir kanun teklifini kabul etmesi konularını içermektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermenistan, Fransa, Robert Koçaryan, Vartan Oskanyan, Benediktus XVI*

## **I- TURKEY-ARMENIA BILATERAL RELATIONS**

**D**uring the six-month period we are examining the foreign ministers of the two countries did not meet. In other words the two ministers did not have discussions over the past two-and-a-half years. Considering the fact that there are serious problems between the two countries that can be overcome only through negotiations and mutual understanding, this lull has been quite long indeed. Despite the lack of contact between the two ministers there have been press reports to the effect that talks have taken place between cer-

tain high-level officials of the two countries<sup>1</sup>. Apparently these have not yielded any results.

During the second half of 2006 Turkish politicians made relatively fewer remarks on the country's relations with Armenia while their Armenian counterparts referred to these relations quite often. This is because bilateral relations are of primary importance to Armenia while bearing only relative importance for Turkey. Since it is not possible to give here the details of the statements the politicians of the two countries have made on this issue, we will dwell on the main issues they spoke about.

The Turkish side's stance regarding the genocide allegations and relations with Armenia can be summed up in the following manner<sup>2</sup>:

1. Turkey wants to normalize its relations with Armenia on the basis of the principles of good-neighborliness, mutual benefits and respect for one another's territorial integrity.
2. Turkey favors creation of a Joint Historical Commission that would look into the genocide allegations by researching the archives of the two countries as well as those of the third countries, a commission consisting of Turkish, Armenian and other experts. Also, regarding the genocide allegations Turkey would take this issue to an international court or seek international arbitration should these be necessary.
3. Regarding resolution of the Nagorno Karabagh problem Turkey strongly supports Azerbaijan. The Karabagh problem arises from Armenia's violation of the principles of international law according to which "borders must not be changed by resorting to force" and countries must respect one another's "territorial integrity".

The Armenian views are as follows:<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Noyan Tapan News Agency, March 7, 2006.
- 2 The Turkish views are summed up on the basis of the speech Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül made at the Turkish Grand National Assembly's (TBMM) Plan and Budget Committee on 14 November 2006, the booklet titled "Our Foreign Policy As We Step into 2007" that was been distributed to the members of that committee as a source of information, and the speech the Foreign Minister made at the TMBB General Assembly on 21 December 2006.
- 3 The Armenian views are summed up on the basis of the (a) President Kocharyan's remarks during an interview with the Al-Jazeera TV channel on 17 September and an interview with a German newspaper,

1. Armenia wants Turkey to form diplomatic relations with Armenia and reopen its borders without any preconditions. It keeps saying that Armenia is not demanding Turkish recognition of the “genocide” as a precondition. However, it is all too obvious that it wants to be able to reiterate its genocide allegations even after a potential establishment of diplomatic relations with Turkey.
2. Armenia wants Turkey to take a neutral stance on the Karabagh issue.
3. Despite the demands being made by the Armenian Diaspora, Armenia has not officially made any territorial demands on Turkey or sought compensation from Turkey. However, Armenia has never announced that it has no demands of this kind regarding Turkey.

These are the main lines of the Armenian stance but there are some other aspects that must be taken into consideration as well.

Since Armenia sees “the genocide” as an “indisputable fact” Armenia does not want this issue to be discussed. For this reason it rejects Turkey’s proposal for creation of a Commission of Historians and it opposes the idea that the genocide allegations should be brought before the international courts and that there should be arbitration on this issue. However, since the genocide allegations are the main problem between Turkey and Armenia, rejecting discussions on these allegations is tantamount to perpetuating the dispute. And this runs against Armenia’s policy of trying to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey and having the common border reopened.

Although Armenia has not actually demanded any territories or compensation from Turkey to date, it has made a point of not issuing an official statement to clarify this issue, thus giving the impression that it wants to retain the right to make such demands in the future. The Armenian Declaration of Independence of 1990, which forms part of the Armenian Constitution, refers to Turkey’s Eastern Anatolian provinces as “Western Armenia”. Also, Armenia refrains from officially acknowledging that the Kars Treaty (1921) that delineates the Turkish-Armenian border and is still in effect. Furthermore, Armenia has been turning down since 1991 Turkey’s standing offer for the two countries to sign a document with which they would pledge to respect one another’s territorial integrity.

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Die Welt, on 17 November 2006 and his speech in Berlin at the Bertelsman Foundation on 18 November 2006, (b) Foreign Minister Oskanyan’s remarks during an interview with Financial Mirror, a Southern Cyprus-based newspaper, on 27 November 2006 and the interview he gave to Nursun Erel in Yerevan which appeared in The New Anatolian’s 4 December 2006 issue, (c) Armenian Defense Minister Sarkisyan’s article titled “In Spite of the Genocide...” which appeared in the 22 December 2006 issue of The Wall Street Journal.

Although it is true that on the Karabagh issue Turkey supports Azerbaijan, Turkey is not a party to this conflict. In fact, Turkey wants the negotiations being carried out via the Minsk Group to prove successful.

It is obvious that the Turkish and Armenian positions continue to be widely different from one another. Armenia is not making any meaningful effort to solve the existing disputes. Furthermore, it is rejecting the proposals put forth by Turkey, refusing, for example, to set up a joint commission of historians. It has ruled out—although Turkey had not officially made a proposal this effect—any attempt to bring the genocide allegations before an international court or to seek international arbitration on this issue.

Meanwhile, there is the European Parliament resolution that upholds the genocide allegations and urges Turkey to open its border with Armenia. The European Commission too is supporting this last item. This has given the Armenian politicians the impression that their problems with Turkey will be resolved by the European Union in their favor. This is the main factor that makes them reluctant to negotiate these issues with Turkey.

To sum up, Armenia is reluctant to discuss its problems with Turkey obviously because it is convinced that “others” are going to solve these problems or that more favorable conditions will arise in the future. Thus the existing problems are being perpetuated. Seen from a wider perspective, Armenia’s attitude is preventing the attainment of the much-desired climate for peace and cooperation in the South Caucasus.

## **II- DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE GENOCIDE ALLEGATIONS**

In 2006 no new country joined the ranks of those acknowledging the “Armenian genocide”. Although the Argentinean Parliament did pass a resolution—which will be examined below—on this issue the total number of parliaments acknowledging the genocide allegations has remained unchanged at 18 since the Argentinean Parliament had adopted similar drafts in the past as well.

Regarding the genocide allegations the most significant aspect of 2006 was that the French National Assembly passed a bill envisaging punishments for those rejecting the genocide allegations. We will look into this issue in detail.

Here are the highlights of the genocide allegations:

### **1. Karekin II Visits Bartholemeos, the Greek Patriarch of İstanbul**

Karekin II who is one of the two patriarchs of the Armenians arrived in İstanbul last June as the guest of the Greek Patriarch of İstanbul Bartholemeos.

At a June 25 press conference Patriarch Karekin II said, in reply to a question posed by a Turkish journalist, that “the Armenian genocide is a fact and it can never be a matter for debate.” In reply to another question on how Turkish-Armenian relations could be improved, he said Turkey should face up to its past and acknowledge the “Armenian genocide”.<sup>4</sup>

These words have drawn strong reactions from the Turkish press. Let us point out that the purpose of the Patriarch’s visit was religious, and that it would have been better if he had chosen not to speak up on such a political issue on which the Turkish people have become highly sensitized, or, at least, not used such strong words. The Patriarch expressed his views in an intransigent and provocative manner. His remarks (the Armenian genocide is a fact and it can never be a matter for debate) sound quite dogmatic. These words would hardly have any meaning other than being demagogical as long as there exists a 70 million-strong people who reject this allegation and who could be joined, if needed, by hundreds of millions of Muslims in other countries.

Furthermore, the Patriarch’s contention that for the improvement of Turkey-Armenia relations Turkey has to acknowledge the “genocide” runs against the stance a succession of Armenian governments have taken on this issue. Armenian Foreign Minister Oskanyan has been saying, insistently, that Turkey does not have to acknowledge the “genocide” for the normalization of the relations between the two countries. There is no way the Patriarch would not know about the stance taken by the Armenian government on this issue; so his words must be aimed at influencing the public opinion. Meanwhile, the Patriarch’s harsh words may also have resulted from the ongoing rivalry between Karekin II and Aram I, the other Armenian Patriarch who is in Lebanon.

Coming to the Turkish authorities’ reaction to Karekin II’s behavior, Armenian press reports quoted an unidentified Turkish Foreign Ministry official as saying that Karekin II’s remarks were unfortunate and that the Armenians should take Turkey’s proposal into consideration and display the courage needed to sit at the

<sup>4</sup> Mother See of Etchmiadzin, Press Release, 27 June 2006.



table to see what actually did and did not happen in the past – rather than brain-washing their own people with a distorted version of history.<sup>5</sup>

The Patriarch of the Turkish Armenians Mesrob II found himself in a difficult position due to Karekin II's remarks. Asked to comment on this issue he said he thought differently than Karekin II, expressing his conviction that for the sake of creating mutual empathy and understanding it would be useful to have the tragedy of 1915 discussed at separate platforms by politicians, diplomats, historians and sociologists.<sup>6</sup> After Patriarch Mesrob II, the Holy Synod of the Turkish Armenians too criticized Karekin II's genocide remarks.<sup>7</sup>

In the final analysis Patriarch Karekin II's visit to Turkey has not made a favorable contribution to relations between the two countries; on the contrary, it has added yet another item to the already too long list of disagreements.

## 2. Pope Benedictus XVI Visits Turkey

During his stay in Turkey, Pope Benedictus XVI visited on 30 November 2006 İstanbul's Surp Asdvadzadzin (Virgin Mary) Armenian Church where he attended a religious service.<sup>8</sup>

Since the Vatican had recognized the alleged genocide in 2000 the news of the papal visit triggered some speculation as to whether he would refer to this issue or not in İstanbul. However, there was no strong expectation that the Pope would underline the genocide allegations –which would be bound to trigger great indignation in Turkey-- since his visit was aimed mainly at easing as much as possible the negative effects his Regensburg speech had created in the Muslim world. In a speech he made during his visit to the Armenian Church the Pope contented himself with saying that he prayed to God for the “Christian faith of the Armenian people, transmitted from one generation to the next often in very tragic circumstances such as those experienced in the last century”.<sup>9</sup>

The way the Pope used the term “tragic circumstances” when referring to the genocide allegations, did not elicit an adverse reaction from Turkey. However,

5 Hürriyet, 26 June 2006; Asbarez, 27 June 2006.

6 Hürriyet, 28 June 2006.

7 Hürriyet, 14 July 2006.

8 TNN, 2 December 2006

9 Catholic World News, 30 November 2006.

the Armenian press carried reports with somewhat untruthful headlines that said that the Pope had “mentioned”<sup>10</sup> or “called to mind”<sup>11</sup> the “Armenian Genocide”. Meanwhile, in the US, a well-known lawyer of Armenian origin, Mac Gregos, denounced the Pope, saying that the Pope’s silence on the “Armenian genocide” was “shameful”.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. Argentina Enacts law Upholding Armenian Genocide Allegations

During the period in question significant developments took place in Argentina regarding the genocide allegations. The Buenos Aires and Cordoba provincial assemblies formally recognized the “genocide” and the Argentinean Senate passed to this effect a bill that had already been adopted by the lower house of the Argentinean Parliament. By now the bill has been presented to the President for approval.

Argentina had embraced the Armenian allegations a long time ago. For the first time in 1993 the Argentinean Senate passed a resolution to declare “solidarity with the Armenian community which was the victim of the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”<sup>13</sup>.

A decade later, on 20 August 2003, the Argentinean Senate adopted another resolution “to commemorate the 88th anniversary of the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians, perpetrated by the Turkish state between the years 1915 and 1923”.

On 18 May 2004 the Argentinean Senate enacted a law that said that in schools, including the universities, students should be taught about the “Armenian genocide”, and that April 24 should be marked in schools every year as the Armenian “genocide” commemoration day. On 31 May 2004 it issued a declaration similar to the 1993 one.

On 20 April 2005 the Argentinean Senate adopted a resolution to remember the “victims of the Armenian genocide perpetrated by the Turkish state between the years 1915 and 1923 on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide” and expressed solidarity with the families of the victims.<sup>14</sup>

10 AZG Daily 7 December 2006.

11 Armenews, 1 December 2006.

12 ABC News, 1 December 2006.

13 For the full texts of the decisions the Argentinean national and local parliaments have taken on this subject see <http://www.armenian-genocide.org/affirmation.html> (resolutions, laws and declarations of the state and the provinces).

14 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Facts and Comments” *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 3, No.9, 2005, p.24.

In 2006 the Senate issued a special statement dated April 19 to mark the 91st anniversary of the “Armenian genocide” and to express regret over the “systematic denial of the genocide”.<sup>15</sup>

Adopting a resolution with the power of law on 17 May 2006 the Buenos Aires Provincial Assembly “designated” April 24<sup>th</sup> to be “the official day of the province of Buenos Aires as the ‘Day of Commemoration for the first Genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’, as which the victims were the Armenian people.”

The Cordoba Provincial Assembly followed suit on 6 September 2006. By passing a law it “instituted in the province of Cordoba, that 24<sup>th</sup> day of April of every year as the ‘Day of Commemoration of Genocide against the Armenian people’ executed during the reign of the Ottoman Empire on that date...teaching in special classes the genocide suffered by the Armenian population.”

Issuing a statement<sup>16</sup> on this issue the Turkish Foreign Ministry pointed out that objective research conducted by prestigious historians had shown that the genocide allegations were groundless. It stressed that the law passed by the Cordoba Provincial Assembly would adversely affect the development of the relations between the two countries. It denounced the law in question as unacceptable.

The texts cited above do not merely reflect the Armenians’ genocide allegations. They go beyond that, constituting an effort to blame the Republic of Turkey. This is why, in some of these texts, the term “Turks” has been used in place of the word “Ottoman”; and one discerns a special effort to create the impression that the relocation of the Armenians (which in reality took place during the 1915-1916 period) had lasted until 1923.

On 26 November 2006 Argentina’s House of Representatives passed, with 175 votes in favor and two abstentions, the bill titled “Declaration of 24 of April as Action Day for Tolerance and Respect among Peoples, in Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide”<sup>17</sup>. The bill had been submitted by a group of deputies led by former Foreign Minister Rafael Bielsa. The bill said that “all employees and public servants of Armenian origin” will be authorized to take time off on April 24 in order to participate in the “commemorative activities regarding this tragedy that has affected their community” as well as “all primary and secondary level students of Armenian origin that are currently attending classes at public schools”, and it

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15 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Facts and Comments”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 4, No.10, 2006, p.15.

16 [www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA\\_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Eylul/No143\\_15Eylul2006.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Eylul/No143_15Eylul2006.htm)

17 Armenews, 1 December 2006.

urged all provincial governments in Argentina to comply with the provisions of this new law.

In a statement<sup>18</sup> issued on 1 December 2006 the Turkish Foreign ministry denounced the bill for “accepting groundless Armenian allegations as historical truths” and for “not supporting the Turkish government’s offer to set up a joint commission of Turkish and Armenian historians to examine the events of 1915“. It stressed that it found the bill unacceptable. It pointed out that “...the relocation decision made by the Ottoman government was a legitimate precaution taken on security motives against certain Armenian Groups who were in collaboration with invading forces”. And, finally, it stressed that the bill “fails to comply with the spirit of improving bilateral relations between Argentina and Turkey.”

The Argentinean Senate unanimously upheld the bill in question on 13 December 2006 and the bill has been presented to President Nestor Kirchner for approval.<sup>19</sup>

The way the Argentinean Senate passed the bill with unusual speed drew fresh criticism from the Turkish Foreign Ministry. In a statement issued on 15 December 2006 the Ministry said, in addition to the issues raised in its 1 December 2006 statement, that from the moment the bill was put on the agenda the Turkish side had warned the Argentinean authorities repeatedly, explaining to them that the bill was not compatible with the historical truths and that it would harm bilateral relations, and that in the latest instance Prime Minister Erdoğan had sent a letter to the President of Argentina, urging him to prevent the bill from becoming law, telling him that if it were to be put into effect the bill would foster negative prejudices against Turkey in the Argentinean society.<sup>20</sup>

Considering the fact that there are no problems at all between Turkey and Argentina, it is surprising that over a period of less than a year the legislative bodies of Argentina –two of them provincial assemblies— announced on five different occasions that they were accepting the Armenian allegations. Argentina has thus become the country that has acknowledged the Armenian allegations on more occasions than any other country in the world.

It is no secret that the Armenian Cause Committee in South America (which is an organization founded by the Dashnaks and which operates in some of the

18 [www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA\\_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Eylul/No143\\_15Eylul2006.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Eylul/No143_15Eylul2006.htm)

19 Noyan Tapan News Agency, 15 December 2006.

20 [www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA\\_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Aralik/No189\\_15Aralik2006.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/BasinEnformasyon/Aciklamalar/2006/Aralik/No189_15Aralik2006.htm)

Latin American countries) had been intensely striving for years to muster support for the genocide allegations. However, since these demands were being made only by a small minority and compliance with them could adversely affect Argentina's relations with Turkey, under normal conditions Argentina would not be expected to take them into consideration. Interestingly, Argentina has preferred to support the Armenian allegations about what happened a century ago despite the fact that the Armenians have failed to prove that these allegations reflect the truth. Petro Muradian, the former leader of the Armenian Cause Committee, was presented with an award<sup>21</sup> during a ceremony held on 12 December 2006 to mark the 58<sup>th</sup> year of the Declaration of Human Rights and, on the next day, the aforementioned bill was passed. These two developments speak for themselves, giving a good idea about the mood prevailing in Argentina.

Obviously the Argentinean political circles do not attach to their country's relations with Turkey the importance required. This may be due to a lack of interest arising from the big geographical distance between the two countries and the fact that these two countries have not formed an intense relationship in any field. On the other hand one has to take into consideration the effects of the anti-Turkey campaign the Armenians and some Christian Arabs that migrated to Argentina during the Ottoman era have been waging all these years in an intensely Catholic environment.

Since the developments in Argentina could set an example for other South American countries Turkey should do more on this issue than protesting Argentina. Although Turkey does not have many opportunities when it comes to "imposing sanctions" on Argentina it may be useful to work towards a more balanced bilateral trade<sup>22</sup>. For the time being Turkey is suffering from a serious deficit in its trade with Argentina.

#### **4. Poland Offers to Act as a Mediator**

During a visit to Armenia in early November, Speaker of the Polish Parliament Bogdan Borusewicz said that his country might "become a mediator in improving the Armenian-Turkish relations, however, agreement of the parties is necessary to this end."<sup>23</sup> He added that the Polish Foreign Ministry was offering to

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21 Azat Hye, 14 December 2006.

22 According to the Foreign Trade Undersecretariat figures our imports to Argentina amounted to \$ 19.7 million and our imports from Argentina to \$ 263 million during the year 2004, with a trade deficit of \$ 243 million.

23 PanArmenian.Net, 7 November 2006.

represent the Armenian interests in Turkey and vice versa<sup>24</sup>. In reply to a question on this issue Foreign Minister Oskanyan said that Poland had made that offer nearly two months ago and that, while Armenia gave a positive reply, Turkey did not respond to the offer.<sup>25</sup>

The point that must be taken into consideration with priority on this issue is that on 19 April 2005 the Polish Assembly had unanimously passed a resolution acknowledging the “Armenian genocide”<sup>26</sup>. Thus Poland has embraced the Armenian views on the crux of the conflict between Turkey and Armenia. Since Poland is no longer impartial on this issue it would not be in Turkey’s favor to have that country act as a mediator and represent Turkish interests in Armenia.

### 5. The Netherlands and Belgium

Prior to the parliamentary elections held in the Netherlands in November some of the political parties dropped from their candidate lists the names of certain Turks that did not uphold the Armenian genocide allegations. Their stance drew adverse reactions from the Turks in the Netherlands. As a result, those parties received from the Turks less votes than they would normally have, while Fatma Koşar, who ran on a Democracy 66 Party ticket and would not be expected to win under normal conditions, was elected thanks to the preferential votes she received from the Turks.

Only a small number of Armenians live in the Netherlands. Furthermore -- unlike countries such as France, Britain, Austria and Germany-- the Netherlands had no connection with the Armenian problem in the past. Yet, the Netherlands now attaches great significance to the Armenian allegations. This may have resulted from the Dutch public opinion’s increasingly negative feelings and ideas about the Turks rather than the sympathy felt for the Armenians. However, these feelings and ideas could not prevent four Turks from being elected to the Parliament from various parties.

Armenian militants tried --and failed-- to turn the genocide allegations into a problem in the Belgian local elections. Meanwhile, they keep up their efforts to wear out Emir Kır, the State Secretary (Minister) for the Brussels area; however, a non-confidence motion targeting Kır was not put on the agenda.<sup>27</sup>

24 Arminfo News Agency, 6 November 2006.

25 Noyan Tapan News Agency, 8 November 2006.

26 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Facts and Comments”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 3, No7-8, 2005, pp. 29-31.

27 Armenews, 21 December 2006.

## 6. Romanian President

During his September 2006 visit to Armenia, Romanian President Traian Basescu met with a group of students from the University of Yerevan and a student asked him whether he was ready to follow French President Jacques Chirac's example and urge Ankara to recognize the "genocide". He said, "We will not do anything affecting...our relations with all the countries of the Black Sea region. Keep history on the history books and in the memory of the peoples, and rebuild the future. If history constantly stands in the way of the future as a bone of contention, you won't achieve success in European integration. Romania laid to rest its historical disputes with neighbors for the sake of membership in NATO and the EU<sup>28</sup>." He added that Romania would "assist" Armenia to "approach" the European Union<sup>29</sup>.

Although the Romanian President may have made these remarks with purely friendly intentions, these words still amount to a criticism of Armenia's stance against Turkey. Armenian statesmen did not react to Basescu's words. However, a well-known on-line broadcasting service of the Diaspora criticized the fact that Basescu was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Yerevan despite these remarks<sup>30</sup>.

## 7. Lithuania

The Lithuanian Parliament had passed in 2004 a resolution supporting the Armenian genocide allegations. That move adversely affected Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus's June 2006 visit to Turkey. Prime Minister Erdoğan was reluctant to meet with Adamkus but due to the insistence of the Lithuanian side he received him in İstanbul<sup>31</sup>. According to the rules of protocol Erdoğan should have visited Adamkus and not vice versa.

In a statement he made in Ankara the Lithuanian President said that the resolution adopted by the Lithuanian Parliament would not cause a change in his country's foreign policy.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, a Turkish newspaper quoted Adamkus as saying that the arguments on the alleged Armenian genocide should be left to historians, that when the Lithuanian Parliament passed the resolution acknowledging the "genocide" he heard about that from the press, that the motion a

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28 RFE/RL, 5 October 2006.

29 Regnum, 5 October 2006.

30 California Courier Online, 12 October 2006.

31 Tercüman, 22 June 2006

32 PanArmenian, 21 June 2006.

deputy had presented to this effect was adopted at a session attended by only a few deputies, and that the decision in question did not reflect the Lithuanian government's or people's stance<sup>33</sup>.

## 8. Other Developments

In the course of an official visit to Southern Cyprus, President Kocharyan laid on 24 November 2006 the first stone for an "Armenian genocide" monument to be built in Larnaca. The monument, financed by the Southern Cyprus Administration, is being erected "because Larnaca is the place where the Armenians fleeing from the Turks had landed first when they arrived in Cyprus." On that occasion Larnaca Mayor Moiseos said that they were joining hands against the common enemy, that is, the Turks<sup>34</sup>.

The "Armenian Genocide" monument built in Rome was inaugurated on 22 November 2006 with a ceremony attended by the Armenian Ambassador to Italy and a representative of the Mayor of Rome.<sup>35</sup> The Italian Parliament had passed a resolution acknowledging the Armenian genocide allegations in 2000.

In Jihlava, a city in the Czech Republic, an Armenian cross with inscriptions about the alleged genocide (khachkar)<sup>36</sup> has been erected, courtesy of an Armenian association founded in the city in 1992<sup>37</sup>.

According to an Armenian news agency the Turkish Embassy in Bratislava, once the capital city of Slovakia, has asked the mayor of the city to remove a khachkar that had been erected by the Danube river<sup>38</sup>. In 2004 Slovakia's Parliament had passed a resolution upholding the Armenians' genocide allegations<sup>39</sup>.

Meanwhile, Anatolia News Agency reported that a motion presented to the Spanish Parliament by two deputies of the Catalonia Party to have the "genocide" recognized, was later withdrawn thanks to Turkish Ambassador Volkan Vural's efforts<sup>40</sup>.

33 Akşam, 22 June 2006.

34 Hürriyet, 26 November 2006.

35 Public Radio Armenia, 27 November 2006.

36 Azg, 23 November 2006.

37 Czech News Agency, 17 November 2006.

38 Noyan Tapan News Agency, 17 November 2006.

39 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments", *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 2, No 7-6, 2004, pp. 27-28.

40 Anatolia News Agency, 19 September 2006.



## IV-EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REPORT ON TURKEY

Every year the European Union Commission prepares a recommendatory report on the countries that have applied to join the union, a report that contains the Commission's views on the progress these countries have made towards accession.

There are differences of view among the members of the European Parliament regarding Turkish accession. A conservative group consisting mostly of Christian Democrats oppose Turkish accession for a variety of reasons ranging from "Turkey not being Christian and not having a European culture" to downright racism. They are joined by Greece and Cyprus who consistently oppose Turkey everywhere due to historical reasons and by Armenia who acts through the Armenian Diaspora in many countries. Meanwhile, the Greens and the Socialists argue that Turkey should be able to join the EU provided that it fulfills the relevant criteria, starting with the Copenhagen criteria. In size these two groups are not much different from one another. So, when issues are put to a vote sometimes one side and sometimes the other side can prevail. For this reason this time too heated debates took place. To amend the 11-page<sup>41</sup> report prepared by Camiel Eurlings, motions for change amounting to a total 115 pages<sup>42</sup> were presented. This gives a good idea about the scope of these debates. Here, we will discuss only those parts of the report that concern the Armenian problem.

### 1. Committee on Foreign Affairs Approves the Report

On 4 September 2006 the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs approved the Camiel Eurlings report after amending various parts of it. The most significant one of the amendments concerning the Armenian problem involves the article that says that Turkish recognition of the alleged genocide is a precondition for Turkish accession to the EU. Here is the full text of the article in question: "49. Reiterates its call on Turkey to acknowledge the Armenian genocide, as called for in previous European Parliament resolutions of 15 December 2004 and 28 September 2005; considers such acknowledgement to be a precondition for European Union accession."

Quite justifiably the Turkish press highlighted certain parts of the Committee report. However, as they did that, they created the impression that Turkish

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41 European Parliament Foreign Affairs Commission document 2006/ 2118(INI) dated 6 June 2006.

42 European Parliament Foreign Affairs Commission document PE(376.373v02.00 dated 7 July 2006.

recognition of the “Armenian genocide” was being stipulated for the first time as a precondition for Turkey’s EU accession. In reality that stipulation is not new at all. In fact, when Turkey applied for EU membership for the first time in 1987 the European Parliament passed a resolution titled “Resolution on a Political Solution to the Armenian Question”, arguing, among other things, that Turkey should recognize the “Armenian genocide” before joining the EU. Since, at that time Turkey’s application for membership was not accepted, the EP decision in question did not lead to any consequences. When Turkey renewed its application 12 years later, that is, in 1999, the Armenian problem and, in this context, the EP decision, quickly reappeared on the agenda. Since then all the resolutions the EU has adopted on Turkey (with the exception of one) mentioned the need for Turkey to recognize the “Armenian genocide” either directly or by referring to the 1987 decision. The latest one of these resolutions was passed on 28 September 2005. We provided information to our readers about that resolution at that time<sup>43</sup>. So the latest EP resolution has, in reality, reiterated the EP’s former decisions on this subject. However, EP decisions of this kind are of a recommendatory nature and they can always change.

On 27 September 2006 the EP approved the Committee on Foreign Affairs report on Turkey after lengthy debates and many amendments<sup>44</sup>. Regarding the Armenian issue the main change made in the draft was that the paragraph --the full text of which is given above-- was omitted from the text during the debates with 320 votes against 282 votes. Thus the EP has decided against seeking “recognition of the Armenian genocide” by Turkey as a precondition -- at least for the time being. This is mainly because when it became quite obvious that the conservative group at the EU was going to use the Armenian genocide allegations to create difficulties in Turkey’s full membership process and thus discourage Turkey, the Socialists, the Liberals and the Greens intervened, prevailed in the voting, and had that paragraph omitted from the text. On the other hand, they did not object to those parts of the text that urge Turkey to recognize the Armenian “genocide” in a way that is not linked to the EU accession issue.

## 2. Those Articles of the Report that Concern the “Genocide” Issue

The Article I of the Introduction section of the Report contains the following provisions:

43 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Facts and Comments”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 3, No 3, pp. 29-33.

44 European Parliament resolution on Turkey’s progress towards accession 2006/2118(INI), 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2006).

Here is an excerpt from Article I of the Introduction section of the Report: "...whereas Turkey has still not acknowledged the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians, despite numerous calls from the European Parliament and several Member States." This amounts to a reiteration of the call issued to Turkey to recognize the "genocide".

There is a reference to the "genocide" issue also in Article 56 of the Report: "...stresses that, although recognition of the Armenian genocide as such is formally not one of the Copenhagen criteria, it is indispensable for a country on the road to membership to come to terms with and recognize its past."

The aforementioned article of the resolution contains remarks such as: "...takes note of the proposal by Turkey to establish a committee of experts which should be under the auspices of the United Nations in order to overcome the tragic experiences of the past, and the position of Armenia regarding that proposal". This is a reference to the letter<sup>45</sup> Prime Minister Erdoğan had sent to President Kocharyan on 13 April 2005. Prime Minister Erdoğan had told President Kocharyan, "We invite your country [to join us] in forming a group comprised of the historians and other specialists of our two countries to investigate the developments and events related to the 1915 period by researching all the archives of not only Turkey and Armenia but also all relevant third countries and to report their findings to the international community." That letter had referred to the "developments and events of the 1915 period" rather than the "tragic experiences of the past". The EP resolution defined the aim of the group of experts by using phrases such as "to overcome" the "tragic experiences of the past", while Prime Minister Erdoğan's letter had said that such a group would "shed light on a controversial period of history and serve as a step towards normalization of relations between our countries". Prime Minister Erdoğan's letter had not referred to "the auspices of the United Nations" but the EP resolution did. We think that these were not accidental. These phrases were inserted in the EP resolution deliberately to please the pro-Armenian members of the EP and to give them the false impression that Turkey is on its way to recognize the "genocide".

Furthermore, the resolution contains the phrase "the position of Armenia regarding that proposal". This is a reference to Kocharyan's 25 April 2005 reply to Prime Minister Erdoğan's letter<sup>46</sup>. In his reply Kocharyan had turned down Prime Minister Erdoğan's proposal by saying, "Governments are responsible for devel-

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45 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments", *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 2, No 7-8, p.133.

46 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments" ...,p.33.

opment of bilateral relations and we do not have the right to delegate historians.” Although Kocharyan went on to say, “...intergovernmental commission may be formed to discuss any issue or issues available between our countries aiming at solving them and coming to mutual understanding”, this counter-proposal obviously does not cover historical events -- considering the fact that an historical event would have to be examined by historians and other experts and not by an intergovernmental commission.

Meanwhile, at all Armenian platforms there has been an effort to conceal or at least push into the background as much as possible the fact that Kocharyan has rejected examination of the historical events. The EP resolution too, obviously influenced by that tendency, tried to pass over this issue lightly, making only a passing reference to “the position of Armenia regarding that proposal”. Also, the resolution merely “takes note” of the Turkish proposal and the Armenian position regarding it. In other words the EP resolution refrains from taking a stance regarding the Turkish proposal.

The resolution “urges both the Turkish Government and the Armenian Government to continue their process of reconciliation leading to a mutually acceptable proposal.” This is undoubtedly a positive approach. However, due to Armenia’s stance there has been no such “process of reconciliation” in reality.

The resolution contained the following remarks: “...welcomes the fact that, with the recent debates in Turkey, a start at least has been made in the discussion on the painful history with Armenia.” Here, the word “debates” refers to the conference (held by a number academics and writers that embrace the Armenian views) at Turkey’s Bilgi University in September 2005. EU circles have seen that conference as the start of free debates in Turkey on the Armenian issue. Meanwhile, some of the Turkish participants argued that thanks to that conference the Armenian issue stopped being a taboo subject in Turkey. However, facts do not support this viewpoint. Debates on the genocide allegations had started in Turkey with Taner Akçam’s 1992 book, “Turkish National Identity and the Armenian Genocide”.

Also in reference to the genocide issue the resolution urges the Turkish authorities “to facilitate the work of researchers, ensuring them access to the historical archives and providing them with all relevant documents”. That part of the resolution, in harmony with the Armenian propaganda, creates the impression that Turkey has been obstructing research on the Armenian issue. Yet, especially since

completion of the classification of the relevant documents in the Ottoman archives, researchers have been able to see and obtain the photocopies of the documents they seek. This state of the archives was affirmed by Ara Sarafian, an Armenian writer, at a conference held at the University of Istanbul last March. There is no obstacle preventing examination of the Ottoman archives. The problem is that there are few Armenian or other researchers equipped with enough knowledge to examine those documents, and some researchers actually prefer not to make use of Ottoman archives because these contain so many documents indicating that the relocation of the Armenians was not genocide. In fact, currently there is no Armenian actually doing research at Turkey's archives.

The resolution made no reference at all to the state of the Armenian archives in this respect. Although the Armenian archives are open in principle the Yektan Turkyilmaz incident<sup>47</sup> has shown that attentive researchers are being discouraged from continuing with their research and that sometimes these deterrent moves cause the researcher to find himself in jail. By the way, let us point out that the Dashnak archives in Boston can be examined only with special permission and that, to date, no Turk has been granted permission to do that.

The resolution contains also a remark the meaning of which is obscure: "A similar position should be adopted for the cases of other minorities e.g. the Greeks of Pontos and the Assyrians." While the Turkish and some of the Armenian newspapers claimed that with these remarks the resolution confirmed that "genocide" had been perpetrated, the rapporteur, Camiel Eurlings, said that was not so. He pointed out that the aim was to ensure that Turkey would debate its past vis-à-vis those minorities as well<sup>48</sup>. The fact that during the EP debates the Greek and Greek Cypriot representatives presented a motion for amendment to ensure that the final text would say that Turks had committed genocide against the Pontos Greeks, indicated that they were not satisfied with the aforementioned phrases in the text. The motion was defeated by a wide majority<sup>49</sup>; and that showed that the EP did not embrace the Pontos Greek and Assyrian genocide allegations. When one takes a close look at the resolution one sees that the only part that can be applied to this issue is the aforementioned part that says that researchers should be able to look into the historical archives and obtain copies of the documents they seek, and that Turkey should facilitate that. Turkey is already doing all these.

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47 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments" *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 3, No 9, pp.20-22.

48 Zaman, 28 September 2006.

49 Hürriyet, 28 September 2006.

### 3. Those Articles of the Report that Concern Turkey-Armenia Relations

The report said that Turkey “continues to exert an unjustifiable blockade against Armenia”, and that “this blockade threatens the stability of the region” and “hampers good-neighbourly regional development”. It urged Turkey “without any preconditions, to establish diplomatic and good-neighbourly relations with Armenia” and “to withdraw the economic blockade and to open the land border at an early date.”

The ideas expressed and some of the phrases used in that part of the report bring to mind the certain Armenian officials’ statements on Turkey. It is as if a text drafted in Yerevan was incorporated into the report without thinking. This is a one-sided report that does not reflect Turkey’s views at all. In fact, this is its biggest shortcoming. It does not refer at all to the reasons for Turkey’s not having diplomatic relations with Armenia or to the reasons that have made Turkey keep the land border closed. Turkey has not established diplomatic relations with Armenia mainly because Armenia is not recognizing Turkey’s territorial integrity. And the border has been closed because Armenia has occupied not only Karabagh but also the seven Azerbaijani provinces around that region. The EP has tried to protect Armenia by pointing at the outcome of the developments rather than to the causes of these developments.

### 4. Other Aspects of the Report

The report should have examined the Turkey-EU relations and the Turkish process of accession and adjustment. Instead of that, it refers to a number of issues not directly related with these. For example it refers to a decision taken by the Turkish Court of Cassation in the case of an ethnic Armenian journalist, saying that it “deplores the condemnation of Hrant Dink by the Court of Cassation on the basis of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code,” and “notes that courts have not succeeded in interpreting the provisions of the Penal Code in line with relevant EU standards.”

The report stresses that in Turkey “freedom of expression is still far from satisfactory” while noting down as “certain positive developments” the acquittals of İbrahim Kabaoğlu, Baskın Oran, Murat Belge, Elif Şafak, Perihan Mağden and Orhan Pamuk in the cases opened against them.

Freedom of expression in Turkey is not our subject matter here. However, it

must be pointed out that in this regard Turkey is not at a lower level than many EU countries, especially the new members. It has been observed that almost all of the persons whose names were cited in the context of freedom of expression are supporters of the Armenian theses. This is another indication of the influence the Armenian Diaspora manages to exert on the EU circles.

The report refers to the Talat Paşa Committee in the following manner: "... strongly condemns the xenophobic and racist Talaat Pacha Committee, run by extreme right-wing organizations" and the demonstrations staged by that committee "gravely infringing European principles, and the denialist demonstrations in Lyon and Berlin" and "[c]alls on Turkey to abolish this committee and to end its activities."

The demonstrations held in Lyon and Berlin in 2006 by the Turks in Europe had been staged after obtaining the permission required from the local authorities. Therefore, they were completely legal. During those demonstrations the Armenian genocide allegations were denounced. On various occasions the Turkish opposition parties have denounced the genocide allegations just as the Turkish government has done, reflecting the stance taken by the Turkish public opinion almost as a whole. Under the circumstances, denouncing in such strong language (using words such as xenophobic and racist) the demonstrations held abroad by a number of Turks against the genocide allegations, amounts to taking a stance against Turkey. Furthermore, it is undoubtedly illegal behavior to demand from the Turkish government abolition of an organization in the absence of a court decision to this effect.

The EP report directs severe criticism at Turkey not only on the Armenian issue and the Turkey-Armenia relations but on some other issues as well. One gets the impression that all EP members had been asked to criticize Turkey and then these critical remarks were compiled into a report without further examination to see if these reflected the truth. On the other hand, obviously because too many critical remarks would dampen Turkey's enthusiasm to proceed on the EU path, the most prominent one of such remarks has been omitted from the text. That is the part that would make recognition of the alleged genocide a precondition for Turkish membership in the EU.

To be able to understand this highly complicated situation one has to stop seeing the EP as a bloc with a single "will". Just as the national assemblies, the EP is a place where various political tendencies clash. The decisions taken at

the EP reflect the common ground reached as a result of these clashes. In other words, in most cases decisions result from the bargaining process that takes place among various groups. For that reason sometimes inconsistent or meaningless or unimplementable decisions get taken. The fact that these decisions are of a recommendatory nature lessens these hazardous aspects.

### III-PRESIDENT CHIRAC'S VISIT TO ARMENIA

French President Jacques Chirac's official 29 September – 1 October 2006 visit to Armenia had special significance since that was the first visit ever to Armenia by a French head of state.

We will examine that visit from the standpoint of his remarks on the “genocide” issue.

During a press conference<sup>50</sup> he held with President Kocharyan on 30 September 2006, a journalist asked Chirac whether he supported the bill proposed by the Socialist Party to criminalize “denial of the Armenian genocide” in France. In reply he recalled that in France a bill recognizing the “Armenian genocide” had already been passed. Then he proceeded to say that France had rule of law, and that the French laws did not condone discrimination or racial hatred. The rest entailed, in our day, polemics rather than the legal framework, he noted. Although ambiguous, Chirac's words indicated that he was against the bill in question.

Chirac was asked whether Turkey should acknowledge the “Armenian genocide” to become an EU member. He replied by saying, “Frankly, yes. Every country grows by acknowledging its dramas and errors of the past.” He cited Germany as an example. He said that, considering Turkey's history, long-standing traditions and humanist culture, he expected Turkey to draw the necessary conclusions. In other words he advised Turkey to acknowledge the alleged genocide.

It was wrong for Chirac to cite Germany as an example for Turkey. This is because the Holocaust was quite different from the relocation of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, whether Germany has really acknowledged its errors is debatable. In reality Germany had to do everything the Allies told it to do because it remained under occupation for a long time and, afterwards, until the 1990s, it needed the military might of the US and other countries due to the

<sup>50</sup> News Press, 2 October 2006.



Soviet threat. In other words, it is doubtful whether Germany would have regretted the Holocaust so much if Germany had not been occupied and if it had not needed protection from other countries in the face of the Soviet threat.

Due to Turkey's sensitivity on this issue Chirac had refrained from using the word "genocide" for a long time. He had made a point of not using that word even after France enacted the 2001 bill with which it acknowledged the "genocide". He had altered his stance on this issue after it became evident in the course of the 2005 referendum on the draft EU Constitution that the majority of the French people opposed Turkish accession to the EU. However, he had never dwelt on the "genocide" issue with such emphasis as he did during his visit to Armenia. He had never stressed in such a manner that France was acknowledging "this genocide". The change in the French President's behavior can be explained with the domestic political developments taking place in France.

Contrary to expectations the potential reopening of the land border by Turkey did not occupy a primary place on the agenda during the Chirac visit. In the course of the aforementioned interview Chirac said that on many occasions he had advocated –in dealing with the Turkish authorities-- the reopening of the border. Noting that a strong link had evolved between that issue and the Karabagh dispute, he said that if progress were to be made towards resolution of the Karabagh dispute that would make a decisive effect towards the reopening of the border. It is common knowledge that Armenia has been demanding reopening of the border independently of the Karabagh problem.

Chirac's remarks caused displeasure in Turkey both among the authorities and in the press circles.

In a 3 October 2006 statement the Turkish Foreign Ministry expressed regret about the remarks the French President had made in support of the groundless Armenian allegations. It stressed that it is unacceptable that the 1915 incidents would be defined as genocide. It pointed out that Turkish acknowledgement of the Armenian "genocide" was not one of the Copenhagen criteria. It recalled that the French President had refrained from using the word genocide about certain practices of his own country during the colonial period, preferring to leave these issues to historians. That was a reference to the French practices in Algeria.

Chirac's remarks on the "Armenian genocide" drew reactions from outside Turkey as well.

EU commissioner for enlargement Olli Rehn<sup>51</sup>, commissioner from Belgium Louis Michel<sup>52</sup>, EU Term President Finland's Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja and European Council Parliamentary Assembly Speaker René van der Linden<sup>53</sup> made statements critical of Chirac. Belgian Justice Minister Laurette Onkelinx<sup>54</sup> said that the Jewish and the Armenian "genocides" could not possibly be put into the same category. She stressed that in genocide cases one could not deliver judgments in the absence of international court decisions; politics should not deal with history; and it would be absurd to punish individuals for not believing that a genocide had occurred in a certain case.

The French Government felt the need to shed light on this matter. Minister Delegate for EU Affairs Cathérine Colonna said that the President did not put forth a new condition for Turkish accession to the EU, adding, however, that it would be wise for Ankara to engage in a memory exercise regarding that period of its history. Other European countries had done that vis-à-vis their own past, she stressed<sup>55</sup>.

It can be seen that the words Chirac uttered in Yerevan at an emotional moment have become a problem, drawing adverse reactions. This incident had a favorable aspect as well for Turkey in that it triggered statements stressing that acknowledgment of the Armenian genocide allegations is not a precondition for Turkish accession to the EU.

## V-THE FRENCH BILL

In the last issue of the *Review of Armenian Studies*<sup>56</sup> we reported that in May the French National Assembly had debated a bill envisaging prison sentences and fines for those who would "deny the Armenian genocide" but that the bill could not be put to a vote due to time constraints. At the instigation of the Socialist Party the bill was put on the agenda once again when the National Assembly convened at the end of the summer recess.

51 Agence France Presse, 3 October 2006.

52 Hürriyet, 7 October 2006.

53 Bugün, 3 October 2006.

54 Radikal, 4 October 2006.

55 Armenews, 10 October 2006.

56 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments", *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 4, No 10, pp.24-29 26-43.

## 1. Turkey's Attempts to Block the Bill

In an effort to prevent the enactment of the bill in question Turkey warned France both at the level of the state authorities and at the level of businessmen.

### a. Warnings issued by the authorities

First among the Turkish initiatives to this effect was the letter President Ahmet Necdet Sezer sent to President Chirac on 11 October 2006. According to press reports Sezer recalled that the two countries had good relations throughout their history and stressed that the passage of the bill would deliver a heavy blow to bilateral relations and France would risk losing Turkey and the Turkish people<sup>57</sup>.

Prime Minister Erdoğan called Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy who is chairman of the UMP Party to ask him to block the bill<sup>58</sup>. One of the opponents of Turkish accession to the EU, Sarkozy maintains that Europe has a problem with integrating the Muslims in Europe, demanding to know what would happen if 100 million (?) Turks were to be admitted into the EU. He claims that with Turkish accession Europe's borders would begin from Iraq and Syria, and that the Kurdish issue, Hamas and Hezbollah would become Europe's problems. He believes that if, in order to stabilize Turkey, the EU admitted Turkey into its ranks, that would entail a very high a price since that move would destabilize Europe itself<sup>59</sup>. Sarkozy says that if Turkey and Armenia formed a joint commission, politicians too should be able to take part in it, that Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code should be abolished, and that the Turkish-Armenian border should be opened. If he becomes France's new president obviously fresh problems will crop up both in Turkey's relations and in Turkey's EU accession process.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül phoned his French counterpart Douste-Blazy to say that the reappearance on the agenda of the controversial bill marred bilateral relations, that this attitude was undermining the freedom of expression in France, and that those French academics that might want to take part in the commission of historians Turkey has offered to form with Armenia to look into the genocide claims, would not be able to give their opinion if that bill were to be enacted<sup>60</sup>.

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57 Hürriyet, 7 October 2006.

58 Zaman, 5 October 2006.

59 Armenews, 6 October 2006.

60 Hürriyet, 7 October 2006.

Two days before the French National Assembly started to debate the bill in question Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Gül warned France once again. Addressing the weekly meeting of his Justice and Development Party (AKP) group at the TMBB on 10 October 2006, the Prime Minister criticized France, using strong language. He said that France sought to maintain a lie, a slander, by passing a law. He stressed that it was illogical to use absurd allegations as an instrument in domestic politics. France should definitely take a stance against this lapse of good judgment, he said, adding that it would be useful if France looked into what happened in Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia and Algeria. Punishing those who say, “No such thing happened in the past,” would bring back the Medieval Age, he said, urging the French authorities to withdraw the bill<sup>61</sup>.

On 11 October 2006 Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül made a speech in which he referred to France as the homeland of freedoms and he expressed the hope that France would not turn into a country where people would be imprisoned for expressing their thoughts<sup>62</sup>.

#### b. Businessmen’s warnings

Delegations representing leading organizations of the Turkish business world, namely, the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TÜSIAD) and the Turkish Union of Chambers and Exchanges (TOBB), went to Paris where they met with the French business circles and explained to them the hazards of passing the bill in question. The French businessmen said they agreed with the Turkish businessmen on this issue but they pointed out that the bill did stand a strong chance of being adopted by the National Assembly<sup>63</sup>.

Meanwhile, MEDEF, a major employers’ association based in France, warned the French political circles that enactment of the bill would endanger the bilateral relations between Turkey and France<sup>64</sup>.

#### c. Punishment of deniers of the Algerian genocide

On 11 October 2006 the Justice Committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) debated Mahmut Koçak’s motion which urged the TBMM to declare May 8 the Algerian Genocide Day and to make negation of that geno-

61 Radikal, 11 October 2006.

62 Agence France Presse, 11 October 2006.

63 Hürriyet, 12 October 2006.

64 Hürriyet, 11 October 2006.

cide a crime entailing a one to five year prison sentence and a TL 100,000 fine. Also debated on that day was İbrahim Özdoğan's motion seeking three-year prison sentences in the same context and Reyhan Balandi's motion envisaging a one to three year prison sentences.

Chairman of the TBMM's Foreign Affairs Committee Mehmet Dülger too took part in the debates, saying that if these motions were to be upheld by the TBMM, Turkey would find itself in the same position as France. Indeed, Turkey was criticizing France for attempting to determine the nature of an event in history by way of passing a law. In other words, Turkey was criticizing the attempt to have the French Parliament write history. If these motions were to be adopted by the TBMM Turkey would have acted like France, the very country it was criticizing.

Referring to these motions in the course of his 10 October 2006 speech at the AKP group, Prime Minister Erdoğan drew the bottom line, saying, "It would not do to say, those in France did that, so let us do the same thing. We will not do the same thing,"; and the Committee decided against enactment of the<sup>65</sup> motions.

d. Reactions from certain Turkish academics and writers who embrace the Armenian theses

We had reported earlier that, during the debates on the bill at the French National Assembly in May, certain Turkish academics and writers had issued a communiqué to express their opposition to the bill despite the fact that they support the Armenian theses<sup>66</sup>. When they heard the news that the bill would be re-debated at the French National Assembly and that this time it was likely to be passed, these academics and writers preferred to express their views to the press individually rather than issuing a second communiqué<sup>67</sup>.

The most prominent figure in that group, Halil Berktaş, a historian, told a French magazine<sup>68</sup>, "I do think that an Armenian genocide took place but I reject the European Union's stance and the Gayssot Act. It is not the politicians' job to tell the historians what to think."

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65 Radikal, 12 October 2006.

66 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments", *Olaylar ve Yorumlar*, Ermeni Araştırmaları, No 20-21, p.19.

67 For the views expressed by Hrant Dink, Elif Şafak, İbrahim Kabaoğlu, Baskın Oran and Murat Belge see: Radikal, 9 October 2006.

68 Le Nouvel Observateur, 12 October 2006.

In an article she wrote for a French newspaper<sup>69</sup>, Novelist Elif Şafak criticized the bill, stressing that it would not contribute to the relations between Turks and Armenians. On the grounds that it was strengthening the hand of those who oppose Turkey's EU membership, she said states should not intervene in historical matters.

Orhan Pamuk, who was to receive the Nobel prize shortly afterwards, said, during a TV<sup>70</sup> program, that the French did wrong and that behavior was not worthy of the French culture and tradition.

## 2. French National Assembly Debates and Upholds The Bill

The bill criminalizing negation of the Armenian “genocide” was debated at the French National Assembly for the second time on 12 October 2006 and it was passed.

It is a hard-to-explain contradiction that, at a time the EU Commission is urging Turkey to abolish the Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code on the grounds that it obstructs the freedom of thought, efforts are under way in France to enact a law to punish people with prison sentences and fines for expressing their thoughts on a certain issue. However, the French Socialist Party, who sponsored the bill, is obviously not upset by this contradiction and it does not seem to be genuinely interested in the Armenian issue and “negation of the genocide”. Its primary aim seems to be pushing the ruling party into a difficult situation in the forthcoming elections. In the ruling UMP one faction supports the bill in question while another faction opposes it. In other words, the bill is causing a rift in the UMP, sapping its strength on the eve of the elections.

The most prominent one of the UMP figures that support the bill is Nicolas Sarkozy's adviser Patrick Devedjian, a lawyer of Armenian origin who served as a member of Cabinet, albeit briefly. He had been one of the lawyers of the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA. Devedjian has defended the bill, drawing attention to the “danger posed by the demonstrations that have brought racist and denialist ideas to the French lands, demonstrations orchestrated by third countries”<sup>71</sup>. The “third country” Devedjian was referring to was Turkey. That was a reference to the demonstration Turks had staged in Lyon on 18 March 2006<sup>72</sup>.

69 Le Monde, 15 October 2006.

70 NTV, 15 October 2006.

71 Armenews, 6 October 2006.

72 Ömer Engin Lütem, “Facts and Comments” ..., p.19.

Although all kinds of demonstrations take place in various parts of France almost every day he singled out that event, describing it as “racist”. And certain politicians, mostly Socialists, too have used that word when referring to the demonstration staged in Lyon by Turks.

Of the 21 deputies that took the floor during the debates 18 spoke in favor of the bill while three opposed it.

The arguments put forth by the proponents of the bill can be summed up in the following manner: The law enacted in 2001 merely acknowledged the “genocide”. It did not contain any provisions about what should be done to those who deny it. The new bill would fill that vacuum. Those who negate the Armenian “genocide” should meet with the same punishment as those who negate the Holocaust.

Few references have been made to the Bosnian and Rwandan genocide cases. Yet, these are quite recent and certain allegations have been made against the French military authorities in those two cases.

The main point underlined by the three deputies that spoke against the bill was that historical facts should be determined by historians rather than by parliaments. In this context, only one deputy referred to the proposed joint commission of Turkish and Armenian historians. The same person (Pierre Laquiller) referred to an issue no one else had brought up during the debates. He said that the law enacted in France in 2001 was unconstitutional. One issue underlined during the debates was that demonstrations during which hatred is expressed against a certain group and the use of violence is encouraged, are criminal anyway and there is no need to pass a new law to this effect.

Speaking on behalf of the government, Minister Delegate for European Affairs Cathérine Colonna said that due to three reasons the government was not in favor of the bill. Firstly, France already had a law (the 2001 Law) that acknowledges the Armenian “genocide” and there was no need for another one. Secondly, the bill in question could backfire. According to the French minister, thanks to some of its intellectuals, Turkey had recently started engaging in a memory exercise regarding its past. These intellectuals had issued a communiqué to prevent the enactment of the bill, stressing that adoption of the bill would hamper their struggle. Thirdly, as a principle, shedding light on history was a task for historians and not for legislative bodies. Passing the bill in question would not be compatible with that principle.

In short, the French minister took a stance against the bill, noting that France already had a law acknowledging the Armenian “genocide”, that the Turkish intellectuals that embraced the Armenian views were against that bill, and that shedding light on history was a task for historians.

A total 129 deputies took part when the bill was put to a vote at the French National Assembly. Of these, 106 voted in favor of the bill while 19 voted against it and four abstained. The number of votes cast in favor of the bill amount to 18.4 percent of the French National Assembly. A total 445 deputies (77.6 percent of the Assembly) chose not to attend. Here, it must be recalled that the same scenario had been acted out in 2001 when the bill acknowledging the Armenian allegations had been passed by the Assembly with only 52 votes cast in favor, that is, by 9 percent of the total number of deputies.

Although it cleared the French National Assembly with the support of only 18.4 percent of the deputies, the new bill is legally valid. On the other hand, it is obvious that this validity does not reflect the Assembly’s will. This is because, if the aforementioned 445 deputies had showed up and cast their votes, the bill might be rejected because it would violate the freedom of expression.

As we mentioned above, this bill envisages prison sentences in the one to three year range as well as fines of up to 45,000 Euros for those denying the Armenian “genocide”. Furthermore, this bill would authorize those Armenian associations --that have been functioning for a minimum five years— to take part in the “negotiation of the Armenian genocide” cases. In other words, these associations would serve as a co-prosecutor in such court cases.

In the great majority of the articles that appeared in both the French and the foreign media, the French stance was criticized. It is interesting that the articles published in France were full of criticism and those writers that defend the bill, most of them Armenian or pro-Armenian, have almost become isolated. None of the moves inspired by the Armenians since the 1970s --when the Armenian issue had gained significance-- had triggered so much criticism. On the other hand, this wave of criticism is not about the Armenian allegations. It focuses on the freedom of expression issue. In France, criticism focuses on the premise that legislative bodies should not write history; and this too amounts to upholding the freedom of expression, albeit indirectly.



### 3. Reactions in Turkey

The passage of the bill triggered reactions in Turkey at all levels.

- a. The statements of the President, the PM and the FM and the Foreign Ministry communiqué

The President's Foreign Affairs Adviser Ambassador Sermet Atacanlı said the President regretted that the bill was passed, that in the two letters he had sent to Jacques Chirac the President had stressed that such attempts would amount to a distortion of history and violation of the freedom of expression and other human rights, causing lasting repercussions in bilateral relations. Underlining the President's conviction that political decision-makers should work for peace and welfare for the humanity, he said that the President considered it a cause for worry regarding the future when, instead of doing that, the decision-makers adopted a position of fanning historical feelings of hatred and revenge. He stressed that the President attached importance to the prevention of the enactment of the bill in question and protection of Turkey-France relations from further damage<sup>73</sup>.

The Prime Ministry Press Center issued a statement, regretting and denouncing the passage of the bill. It said that that was a greatly shameful decision on the part of the short-sighted politicians of France from the standpoint of both respect for scientific facts and respect for the freedom of thought and expression. It pointed out that with that bill an historic error was being made; it was out of the question for Turkey to accept such an injustice; and the Turkish public opinion was highly indignant, the citizens of Armenian origin included<sup>74</sup>. Furthermore, in a speech he made on 13 October 2006, Prime Minister Erdoğan criticized the bill, saying that it amounted to a violation of the freedom of expression<sup>75</sup>.

Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül said that France would no longer be the land of freedoms, that it would no longer be able to boast about being a place where ideas were freely talked about. He said that the latest development was greatly shameful for the French, and that the Turkish reaction to France would evolve in the course of a process<sup>76</sup>.

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73 Radikal, 14 October 2006.

74 Radikal, 13 October 2006.

75 Radikal, 14 October 2006.

76 Radikal, 14 October 2006.

After the French National Assembly passed the bill in question the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a statement to say, in short, that it deeply regretted that move, that all members of the Turkish nation including the citizens of Armenian origin were highly indignant, that Turkish-French relations had received a heavy blow, that the serious criticism directed at the bill in France indicated lack of a consensus on this issue and that the bill lacked serious support, that Turkey would continue to make every effort, make every initiative, to abort the relevant legal process in France, that the bill amounted to a violation of the European Human Rights Convention, that the French should have a reckoning with their own past, and that France was passing judgment on other countries' history and meting out punishment although parliaments did not have a duty to rewrite history and that this is the historians' responsibility.

b. The views of the opposition parties

The leading opposition parties in Turkey criticized France due to the passage of the controversial bill. Members of some of these parties staged demonstrations in front of the French diplomatic missions in the country<sup>77 78 79 80</sup>.

c. Turkish press comments

The controversial bill and the French stance towards Turkey were the main topics for the Turkish press during the two days that preceded the passing of the bill and the two weeks that followed it. Every day newspapers carried headlines about the bill and almost all of the columnists wrote about this topic, some of them several times. They criticized France, sometimes in an excessive style, and called for measures against France.

d. Economic measures

Although, as mentioned above, both Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Gül made it clear beyond any doubt that they were against the bill, they used moderate language about the measures to be adopted against France. While a significant part of the Turkish press favored adoption of hard economic measures against France, the Prime Minister said, "We will be patient... We will

77 Sabah, 17 October 2006.

78 TNN, 15 October 2006.

79 Turkish Daily News, 19 October 2006.

80 Hürriyet, 14 October 2006.

calculate well...For the time being Turkey's trade volume with France is nearly \$ 10 billion. This amounts to 1.5 percent of France's foreign trade volume. For that reason the calculations must be done properly. We will take steps accordingly.<sup>81</sup> With these words he implied that the economic measures to be adopted against France would be of a limited nature.

Some establishments called for more extensive economic measures against France. The Turkish Union of Chambers and Exchanges (TOBB), for example, urged its members to stop selling French goods. The Consumers' Union advocated a boycott of selected French goods, for example perfumes. The Young Businessmen's Association (TÜGİYAD) announced that they would no longer sell French goods. The Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD) announced that they would take part in the boycott drive and urged those businessmen decorated by France to return their medals<sup>82</sup>. The Free Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (HÜRSİAD) decided that its members should not go to France for business meetings while the Aegean Apparel Manufacturers' Association decided to boycott the fairs to be staged in France.

The Consumers' Union, which was the most active organization regarding the measures to be taken, decided to boycott one French company's products each week. Total Petrol<sup>83</sup> turned out to be the first company to be boycotted and a reportedly 30 percent drop took place in that company's sales<sup>84</sup>. L'Oreal<sup>85</sup> too was targeted by this drive. In some places French goods were boycotted spontaneously by the people. The stores around İstanbul's Taksim Square that sold French products remained closed for some time. Boycotts were staged also in some other cities such as İzmit, Konya, Nevşehir, Erzurum and Niğde. In some places stickers saying "French product" were placed on goods in an attempt to prevent the sales<sup>86</sup>.

Some of the French companies operating in Turkey were adversely affected by that climate. To prevent the enactment of the bill Danone announced it would start a campaign, gathering signatures for a petition to be presented to the French Senate<sup>87</sup>. The signatures were mainly to be obtained from the Danone workers.

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81 Hürriyet, 14 October 2006.

82 Hürriyet, 13 October 2006.

83 Anadolu Ajansı, 13 October 2006.

84 The New Anatolian, 17 October 2006.

85 PanArmenian, 20 October 2006.

86 Zaman, 15 October 2006.

87 Radikal, 22 October 2006.

To what extent have these moves been effective? A well-known French newspaper says that the overall effect has not been great and that although Carrefour's sales declined to some extent during the first two days this decline did not last for long<sup>88</sup>.

While it is not known whether a decision has been taken not to allow French companies to bid for Turkish government contracts, it was meaningful that Türksat announced that it would not cooperate with France's Alcatel once its satellite is launched into space in 2008<sup>89</sup>.

Not allowing French companies to bid for government contracts in Turkey could make a deterrent effect. The proposed restrictions of various kinds on the sale of French products, on the other hand, could hurt the French companies to a certain extent. However, it would be hard for these moves to reach such a scope that they would cause the French National Assembly and the French Senate to alter their stance. If these moves turned out to be excessive the French Government could take counter-measures. Furthermore, since a significant part of the French goods sold in Turkey are actually produced in Turkey, diminishing or halting the sale of these goods would deliver a blow to the some 40,000 Turkish workers that take part in the production of these goods. In every transaction there are two sides and if one side upset that balance it too would inevitably suffer from that move.

On this occasion let us point out that although the measures that have been taken (and will be taken) against France would make only a limited economic effect, their political effect has been quite significant, making it clear that the Turkish public has taken a negative stance against France.

#### e. Cultural boycott attempt

Another issue that should be underlined is that an attempt has been made to carry the "boycotting France" drive into the cultural field as well. The Supreme Radio-TV Board (RTÜK) issued a statement on 21 October 2006, announcing board members' unanimous decision to recommend to the radio and TV channels in Turkey that they refrain from airing media products originating from France until the French bill criminalizing negation of the Armenian "genocide" is dropped from the agenda for good<sup>90</sup>. However, it is not easy to say that the Turk-

88 Libération, 18 October 2006.

89 Tercüman.

90 Hürriyet, 22 October 2006.

ish TV channels have complied with this recommendation.

f. Demonstrations in Turkey and the efforts of the Turks in France

Numerous demonstrations were held in front of the French Embassy in Ankara and the French Consulate in Istanbul during the process of the controversial bill clearing the French National Assembly. Furthermore, in Paris, some 100 Turks carrying Turkish flags demonstrated against the bill in front of and on the steps of the Bastille Opera House<sup>91</sup>. Although they acted in a positive manner, making their reaction known, it would have been better if they had staged that demonstration before the French National Assembly passed the bill. In France there are indeed Turks that want to block the attacks being directed at Turkey and they do strive to do good things for Turkey. However, there are few of them. The bulk of the Turks living in France spend their lives between their homes and their jobs, sometimes visiting the mosque as well, hardly displaying an interest for issues that exist outside these parameters. For that reason, while the 450,000-strong Armenian community in France exerts a significant political influence the equally large Turkish community seems almost nonexistent in this respect.

g. TBMM (Turkish Grand National Assembly) debates and the communiqué

During its 17 October 2006 session the TBMM debated the bill passed by the French National Assembly. Foreign Minister Gül and the representatives of those political parties that have a parliamentary group, each made a speech on this issue.

Foreign Minister Gül said, in short, that if the bill became a full-fledged law it would no longer be possible to oppose the genocide allegations in France. Groundless allegations would be perceived as facts. The freedom of thought and expression would be curtailed. He pointed out that unlike the Ottomans, some nations had an intense history of racism, suppression and exploitation of the non-white peoples, and intolerance towards the “others”. If the Ottomans had pursued a policy of assimilation many races, religious factions and languages would have disappeared by now, he stressed. He said that the Armenian Diaspora was using the genocide allegations as an instrument for bonding its members, that is, as an instrument that would enable it to preserve its identity.

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91 Agence France Presse, 21 October 2006.

Gül said that France had incited the Armenians prior to and in the wake of the World War I for the sake of France's own interests. Now it was doing the same thing for the sake of gaining political advantages, he said, adding that in the end the Armenians get presented with the bill. Turkey's mistake was that it failed to explain adequately the nature of these massacres to its own people and to the world public opinion, he noted. The founders of the Turkish Republic did not want to build this new state on a foundation of hatred and revenge; they did not want to raise the new generation in enmity. However, the good intentions of that time now cause a weakness for Turkey, he stressed.

Stressing that only a competent court would be authorized to decide on whether a given event constitutes genocide or not, the Foreign Minister pointed out that in the absence of such a court decision the crime of genocide would be legally nonexistent and the genocide allegations could not be defended on legal grounds. Abdullah Gül went on to say that the French authorities said certain disputed events in French history should be left to the historians for assessment. And yet, when it comes to the Armenian allegations, the French authorities were trying to introduce the kind of arrangement that would turn into a crime even the questioning of the validity of the Armenian allegations. This is a contradiction, he stressed.

Stressing that enactment of the bill would inevitably harm the Turkish-French relations which have already been deeply wounded, he said that these wounds would become visible in the political, security and economic matters, that big problems had cropped up between the two countries after the enactment of the 2001 Law in France, that this time it would not be the same thing and that if the controversial bill were to be enacted this time the wounds that would open up would definitely not be dressed. He said that he was openly saying that before the Turkish, French and the world public opinion. He stressed that every path would be tried, including the judicial path, to prevent enactment of the bill, expressing the hope that France would abandon this mistake.

At the end of the debates the TBMM adopted a communiqué in which it vigorously condemned the bill in question, pointed out that France tried to pass judgment on Turkey's history while leaving to historians the allegations about its own past, that many historians, some of them French, had made it clear that according to the UN Genocide Convention of 1948 the incidents that took place during the World War I could not possibly be classified as acts of genocide, that the Armenian Government failed to give a positive reply to the Turkish offer to

create a joint commission of historians to look into the controversial periods of history, that enactment of the bill would open up irreparable wounds in Turkish-French relations, and that the TBMM would persistently keep up its warnings and efforts to prevent the enactment of that bill.

The most significant aspect of the TBMM debates was that all TBMM members shared the same views and that it was proven that no change had taken place in the TBMM stance of categorically rejecting the genocide allegations.

#### h. Armenian Patriarch's reaction

In a written statement Mesrob II, the Patriarch of the Turkish Armenians, said that the French who had placed various obstacles on Turkey's EU accession path, were now delivering a heavy blow to the already limited dialogue between Turkey and Armenia. He stated that the bill was undemocratic and would serve the interests of the ultranationalist groups both in the Turkish society and in the Armenian society<sup>92</sup>.

The bill drew individual reactions too from Turks in many cases. Let us cite two highly meaningful examples. Retired Ambassador Kamran İnan<sup>93</sup> who is a former minister, and Higher Education Board (YÖK) Chairman Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Teziç<sup>94</sup> returned their Légion d'honneur medals.

#### 4. French Government's stance and reactions to France

During last May's debates on the bill at the French National Assembly French Foreign Minister Douste-Blazy, probably taking into consideration also the adverse reactions in Turkey, phoned his Turkish counterpart Abdullah Gül a few days prior to the voting, and he reiterated that the French Government was not supporting the bill. He expressed his faith in the long-term future of the bilateral relations and recalled that France was providing support for Turkey's European perspective<sup>95</sup>. The French Foreign Ministry made its stance known to the public, saying that the French Government was not committed to and did not deem necessary the bill in question<sup>96</sup> Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin pointed out

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92 Zaman, 13 October 2006.

93 Milliyet, 18 October 2006.

94 Cumhuriyet, 17 October 2006.

95 Agence France Presse, 9 October 2006.

96 Agence France Presse, 10 October 2006.

that experiences of the past had shown that enacting laws on history and memory was not a good thing<sup>97</sup>.

Obviously to ease the strong adverse reactions the passage of the bill had triggered in Turkey, this time President Jacques Chirac joined the loop. According to press reports, he called Prime Minister Erdoğan on 14 October 2006 to express his regret about the French National Assembly decision. He promised to do all he can to prevent the bill from becoming a full-fledged law. Stressing that no change had taken place in his country's relations with Turkey, he said that the French National Assembly's decision would not affect the Turkey-EU accession talks.

After the TBMM issued the aforementioned communiqué, the French Government felt the need to reiterate its policy towards Turkey. The French Foreign Ministry Spokesman said that they attached great importance to maintaining a dialogue with Turkey and to the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries<sup>98</sup>.

It can be seen that the French Government attaches great importance to relations with Turkey. In fact, that could not have been any other way. Wary of the possibility that bilateral relations would be disrupted, the French Government opposed the bill and tried to prevent it from being passed. However, due to the political turmoil in France, the Government, although it seemed to have a large majority such as 63 percent in the National Assembly on paper, failed to obstruct the bill because in reality it could not command that majority. In short, the French Government could not conduct towards Turkey the kind of policy it wanted to conduct.

The bill in question drew widescale reactions in France. In almost all of the relevant reports and articles appearing in leading newspapers such as *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, and *Libération* the bill in question was criticized. These reports and articles did not focus on the crux of the matter, that is, on whether the Armenians had been subjected to a genocide or not. This is because the French public opinion does not doubt that “the genocide” had occurred. Newspapers focused mostly on freedom of expression when they criticized the bill, saying that legislative bodies should not write history or deliver judgment on historical events.

Some French organizations, especially the association named “Liberte pour

97 Armenews, 11 October 2006.

98 Agence France Presse, 18 October 2006.



l'histoire", too opposed the bill. This association was founded in December 2005, bringing together renowned French historians. It opposes those French laws that deliver judgment on historical events. It demands abolishment of such laws. This association issued a statement on 13 October 2006, that is, one day after the French National Assembly passed the controversial bill, pointing out that France had stepped into a speedy process of determining the "state truth" about the "nature of the events of the past". It stressed that it was a real provocation to put to vote a bill on the Armenian genocide issue at a time the President was saying that it was not the Parliament's job to write history. Although having a deep sense of solidarity with the victims of the past [meaning the Ottoman Armenians] it protested such decline in democratic rights. It warned that if the French Senate upheld the bill it would apply to President Chirac to have it abolished<sup>99</sup>.

Meanwhile, 20 French celebrities from different walks of life sent a letter to the speaker of the French National Assembly, asking him to take this issue to the Constitutional Court if the bill became a full-fledged law. They said that the speaker should do that in order to preserve the French Parliament's duty to legislate laws for the good of the entire population rather than a certain part of it [meaning the Armenians]<sup>100</sup>.

The "Journalists sans Frontiers" too issued a statement, criticizing the bill for attempting to create an "official history reality", saying that was a practice typical of totalitarian regimes. It urged the French Senate to reject the bill<sup>101</sup>.

## 5. Reactions at the EU

In a statement he made before the French National Assembly passed the controversial bill, EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn said he was afraid that if the Assembly passed the bill that would have a negative effect, blocking the debates that should take place in Turkey on this issue [meaning the Armenian genocide claims] and slowing down and bottlenecking the debates taking place in Turkey on the freedom of expression issue. He urged the French parliamentarians to act with a sense of responsibility<sup>102</sup>. He said there should be a climate of dialogue between Turkey and Armenia, and between Turkey and the Armenian Diaspora. It would be wise to create a joint commission of Turkish and Armenian

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99 Agence France Presse, 18 October 2006.

100 Armenews, 14 October 2006.

101 Armenews, 24 October 2006.

102 Radikal, 10 October 2006.

historians<sup>103</sup>, he added.

Chairman of the EU Commission Jose Manuel Durao Barroso<sup>104</sup> too warned France, saying that no new criteria should be placed on Turkey's path.

Chairman of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee Joost Lagendijk<sup>105</sup> of the Netherlands, Deputy Chairman of the Greens Group in the EP Daniel Cohn-Bendit<sup>106</sup>, and Anne Marie Isler<sup>107</sup> of the Greens Party who is the chairwoman of an EP delegation that concern relations with Armenia, opposed the bill. The Greens Party group in the EP sent a letter to the French deputies, telling them that the bill should be forgotten<sup>108</sup>.

Since Finland is the current holder of the EU term presidency, Finnish politicians too displayed an interest in the French Socialists' bill. Finnish Parliament Speaker Paavo Lipponen said he would discuss the bill with Chairman of the French Socialist Party François Hollande. After the French National Assembly passed the bill Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja said that was madness<sup>109</sup>.

Critical remarks were made after the passage of the bill as well. Commission Chairman Barroso<sup>110</sup>, commissioner for enlargement Olli Rehn<sup>111</sup> and commissioner for foreign affairs Benita Ferrero Waldner<sup>112</sup> made such remarks. Lagendijk and Eurlings too joined them. Andrew Duff, a British member of the EP, meanwhile, said that if the bill became a full-fledged law the European Court of Human Rights should be ready to debate this issue<sup>113</sup>.

In other words all of the EU officials took a stance against the bill. This is mainly because if the bill became law Turkey might respond in the same manner, curtailing the freedom of expression in the country especially on the Armenian issue.

103 Radikal, 11 October 2006.

104 Hürriyet, 10 October 2006.

105 Hürriyet, 9 October 2006.

106 Armenews, 12 October 2006.

107 Armenews, 12 October 2006.

108 Armenews, 12 October 2006.

109 Zaman, 19 October 2006.

110 AP, Reuters, 13 October 2006.

111 AP, Reuters, 13 October 2006.

112 Agence France Presse, 13 October 2006.

113 Zaman, 13 October 2006.

Another cause for concern is the possibility of such a law adversely affecting Turkey-Armenia relations.

## 6. Reactions of Other Countries and International Organizations

Individual countries mostly remained silent on the French bill. Those making their reaction known officially were EU term president Finland, the US, Greece and Sweden.

US Assistant State Secretary Daniel Fried said, in reply to a question posed to him in Brussels, that he supported President Chirac's opposition to the bill, that he shared the view that legislation criminalizing discussions on the Armenian "genocide" would be meaningless, that what President Bush had spoken about was the mass killings of the Armenians, and that the US Administration had never used the word "genocide" in this context. Fried said that the US Administration would like to see Turkey and Armenia address this issue in an honest manner, and that some Turks [meaning those Turks that support the Armenian views] were urging their government to act in that manner. He expressed his conviction that the French bill would not serve that purpose<sup>114</sup>.

Yuri Charandine, the chairman of the Constitutional Law Committee of the Russian Duma, said the bill in question could be explained as a sign of France's desire to determine the historical facts. However, that would tense up the situation rather than easing it, he stressed<sup>115</sup>.

Recalling that in 1996 the Greek Parliament had adopted a resolution acknowledging the Armenian "genocide", Greek Foreign Ministry Spokesman George Koumoutsakos expressed the belief that in the modern world the past should not obstruct the future. Thus he implied that they did not approve of the French bill<sup>116</sup>.

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt expressed concern about the bill passed by the French National Assembly. He pointed out that the bill in question could cause problems in the negotiations with Turkey towards opening of the Turkish ports to (Greek) Cypriot ships. However, he also noted that since President Chirac's approval would be required the bill might not become law<sup>117</sup>.

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114 Reuters, 20 October 2006.

115 Le Monde, 14 October 2006.

116 NTV-MSNBC, 12 October 2006.

117 SR International, 17 October 2006.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media Miklos Haraszti sent a letter to the French Senate President to say that the passage of the bill was causing serious worries from the standpoint of the international standards for freedom of expression. Adoption of such a bill by a country with an age-old tradition of upholding the freedom of expression such as France would constitute a dangerous precedent for other OSCE countries, he stressed<sup>118</sup>.

The Amnesty International issued a statement to express great concern about the way the French National Assembly passed a bill that posed a highly serious threat to the freedom of expression. It urged the French Senate to reject the bill, pointing out that if the bill were to be finalized the resulting law would be contrary to a number of international agreements. The statement specified these agreements and warned that if people were to be sentenced under that law they would be considered prisoners of conscience<sup>119</sup>.

### **7. Reactions from Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora**

While almost everybody took a stance against the bill as recounted above, reactions from Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora were in the opposite direction. On the day the French National Assembly was going to vote on the bill, the Comité de la Defense de la Cause Arménienne (CDCA), a France-based organization with Dashnak tendencies striving to muster support for the Armenian genocide allegations, issued a statement, declaring that the bill aimed to protect the common memory and honor of all French citizens and their values of reality and justice. It called on the deputies to vote in favor of the bill<sup>120</sup>.

Let us come to the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy (FEAJD), an organization with Dashnak tendencies founded with the aim of protecting the Armenian interests at the EU. The FEAJD operates mainly as a lobbying group trying to ensure that the European Parliament would take anti-Turkey, pro-Armenian decisions. The FEAJD maintained that the threats Turkey was making to prevent enactment of the bill should not be heeded. Trade between France and Turkey had not been affected in any way by the measures Turkey had reportedly taken after the passage of the 2001 law in France, it said<sup>121</sup>.

118 Arminfo, 17 October 2006.

119 Amnesty International US, 19 October 2006.

120 CDCA, 12 October 2006.

121 Agence France Presse, 11 October 2006.

In separate statements they issued after the bill was passed by the French National Assembly the CDCA and the FEAJD congratulated the deputies and urged the French Senate to uphold the bill.

Armenia, meanwhile, reacted to the news with demonstrations of joy in Yerevan<sup>122</sup> Referring to the genocide allegations Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanyan said that Turkey was involved in a “planned assault on truth. While Turkey itself has a law that punishes those who use the term genocide the Turkish Government’s instigation of extreme public reactions is not understandable.”<sup>123</sup>

As can be seen the Armenian Foreign Minister’s statement is different from other statements made on similar issues in that it sounds more like a political pamphlet. It portrays Turkey’s rejection of the genocide allegations as “an assault on the truth” and it accuses the Turkish government of inciting extreme public reactions to the bill. This must be a reference to the protest demonstrations held in front of the French diplomatic missions. Yet the names of the organizations that staged those demonstrations were public knowledge, obvious from the placards carried by the demonstrators. The political tendencies of these organizations are different from the Turkish Government’s in general. Furthermore, not even a single person has been punished in Turkey for using the term Armenian issue or for discussing the events related to the relocation. This accusation is quite meaningless at a time display windows of certain bookstores in Turkey feature Turkish language versions of books --written by foreign writers, some of them Armenian- claiming that the Armenians had been subjected to genocide.

It would be hard to say that the Armenian Foreign Minister’s statement contributes to the improvement of Turkey-Armenia relations where there are various problems as it is.

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry issued a statement on this issue, saying that the developments regarding the bill were being followed with concern. It took note of the fact that the French Government was not supporting the bill and it expressed the hope that the French Senate would block that effort. It stressed that Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora were playing a destructive role rather than contributing to peace and stability in the region (South Caucasus)<sup>124</sup>

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122 Radikal, 13 October 2006.

123 <http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/news/index.html> 12 October 2006.

124 Azer Press Agency, 13 October 2006.

## 8. Potential Developments

The bill passed by the French National Assembly would have to be debated and passed by the French Senate as well to become law. However, the bill has been severely criticized not only in France but also in other EU and some non-EU countries and the Senate is not expected to put it on its agenda soon. Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held in France in 2007 and the outcome of these elections will obviously determine the fate of the bill.

The current French Government that opposes the bill will be replaced after the elections. A Socialist or UMP-dominated new government may support this bill.

Meanwhile, taking into consideration Turkey's sensitivity, the French may choose to spread to time the problem caused by the bill. In case the Senate upheld the bill after making even a slight change in it, the bill would have to be returned to the National Assembly where it would be re-debated and put to a fresh vote. If the National Assembly insisted on passing the original text once again, the process of sending the bill back and forth between the two chambers of the French Parliament could go on for as long as three years as was the case regarding the 2001 law. In the course of that lengthy process the Turkish public and the Turkish Government may start losing interest in the bill as was the case in 2001. And, in the end, the National Assembly and the Senate might reach an agreement on the text at an unexpected moment and the bill could become a full-ledged law all of a sudden.

In France a bill has to be approved and published by the President of the Republic to be finalized after clearing both chambers of the Parliament. If the President refused to sign the bill that would start a lengthy process leading all the way to the Constitutional Court. Wary of potential criticism, Jacques Chirac had signed into law the 2001 bill although he had not been in favor of it. It is a strong possibility that by the time the current bill clears the Senate and gets presented to the President for approval, Jacques Chirac will not be the person occupying the presidential position. If Nicolas Sarkozy or Socialist Segolene Royal, both mentioned as strong candidates, managed to become president, he or she would not hesitate to sign the bill.

Even in that case deputies and senators –a minimum 60 of them acting together-- would be authorized to ask the Constitutional Court to invalidate the new law. If they took that path the Constitutional Court would be quite likely

to invalidate the law for violating the freedom of expression. However, in today's France it would not be easy to find a minimum 60 parliamentarians prepared to take part in such a pro-Turkey initiative.

To sum up, the bill is not expected to become law in a short time. That is bound to be a lengthy process and it is not easy to predict the outcome. It would be easier for the Senate to reject the bill if the French public opinion definitely decided that it was not compatible with freedom of expression. Potential positive developments in Turkey's EU accession process too would facilitate that. If, on the other hand, a crisis broke out between Turkey and the EU for example on the Cyprus issue that could prompt the Senate to pass the controversial bill.

Meanwhile, one may think that it would be better for Turkey to encourage finalization of the bill rather than trying to prevent that. This is because, as we explained in detail in the last issue of our magazine<sup>125</sup>, if the bill became law Turkey would gain the opportunity to bring this issue before the European Court of Human Rights and have that law invalidated. If Turkey prepared its case properly Turkey would stand a strong chance of winning. If Turkey won that case the possibility of having the 2001 law abolished as well would arise after some time thanks partly to the already existing momentum against that law in France. And abolition of that law would deliver a major blow to the genocide allegations. As a result, the Armenian Diaspora would be frustrated while Turkey and Armenia would find, for the first time, a serious platform for reconciliation.

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125 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Facts and Comments"..., p.29.

# TURKEY'S BID FOR THE EU MEMBERSHIP, THE TURKISH – ARMENIAN RELATIONS DURING THE WORLD WAR I, IN THE CONFIDENTIAL BRITISH DOCUMENTS

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## **Abstract:**

*In this article, it is intended to analyze Turkish-Armenian relations during the World War I in the light of British confidential archival documents. It can be understood from these documents that the British agents and diplomats in the Ottoman Empire were aware that the Armenians had a significant responsibility in the formulation of the decision of relocation because of their rebellious activities. The documents also reveal that the Armenians were not trusted by the British as an ally. The article concludes with a general evaluation of Western hypocritical position on the Armenian question*

**Key Words:** *World War I, British archival documents, Armenian question, Ottoman Empire, Armenian revolts.*

## **Öz:**

*Bu makalede İngiliz gizli arşiv belgeleri ışığında Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Türk-Ermeni ilişkileri analiz edilmektedir. Bu belgelerden anlaşıldığı üzere Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda görev yapan İngiliz diplomatlar ve ajanlar Ermenilerin tehcir kararının alınmasında son derece önemli bir sorumlulukları olduğunun farkındadırlar. Belgeler ayrıca Ermenilerin İngilizler tarafından güvenilir müttefikler olarak algılanmadığını da göstermektedir. Makale Batının Ermeni meselesi konusundaki ikiyüzlü tutumunu eleştiren bir bölümle sona ermektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Birinci Dünya Savaşı, İngiliz arşiv belgeleri, Ermeni Sorunu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Ermeni isyanları*

**T**here was no issue called 'the Armenian Question' within the borders of Turkey, until recently. However, developments related to the Turkish-Armenian incidents that recorded in the Ottoman period, and the so-called 'Armenian genocide' that Armenian militants, activists, and supporters



have been trying to reinvigorate, had been busying the Turkish administration and some academics.

Recently, upon Turkey's bid for the membership in the European Union (EU), French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said in the mid of December 2004: "Turkey should officially recognize the Armenian Genocide of 1915 before being a member in the EU." Such an irresponsible statement that is baseless of any document, legal, and judicial evidence indicates that Turkey will face gradually increasing difficulties for its membership in the EU, and the so-called Armenian question was tried to be transformed into an internal issue.

It seems that successors of the former imperialist and expansionist states which exploited Armenians for their interests and passions and which had Turks and Armenians fight with each other, has been trying to revive the Treaty of Sevres that was forcefully had Turks signed on August 10, 1920 but never approved, and shelved upon the Turkish victory. As Monsieur Barnier and other supporters of the Armenian cause demanded, Turkey will not only be compelled to admit the so-called Armenian genocide, but also be compelled to pay compensation and to give territory to Armenians without charge; moreover, demands of other aspirants will succeed this process.

I believe in that it is crucially important, particularly in recent times, for the existence and future of Turkey that the current Turkish government should re-evaluate and reanalyze importance of its membership in the EU and outcomes of it, considering rejection of the EU constitution by referendums took place in France and Netherlands which was commented by the European press as an indicator of people's protest to the EU's recent enlargement and particularly accession of Turkey to the Union.

After this introduction, we will analyze Turkish-Armenian relations throughout the First World War through the confidential British documents. There are many British documents on those relations, yet some of them are contradictory and unreliable. The subject of the Turkish-Armenian relations has been exploited by biased, unscrupulous, and partisan authors. For this reason, while analyzing various documents the author should be careful whether those documents were sound and trustworthy or not, since those prepared these documents may not be perfect and may have prejudices and various flaws.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Salahi R. Sonyel, *The Great War and the Tragedy of Anatolia* [Yüce Savaş ve Anadolu Felaketi], Ankara, 2000, p. 137 ff.

It is useful to emphasize another point: Because the missionaries, diplomats, representatives, and travelers that came to Turkey had know a little Turkish – or completely not know it – they were depended on the Greek and Armenian translators, many of whom was unscrupulous, found of money and unreliable, to prepare their reports and conduct daily activities. Furthermore, some leaders of the Ottoman Christian minorities and some of the Ottoman politicians were providing the British administration with spurious and exaggerated information about the situation in Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

Now on, I will try to explain some British documents, which are very interesting with related to developments that recorded about the Turkish-Armenian relations in the period of World War I, the most critical period of the Ottoman history. However, for a better understanding of the developments, it is necessary to go back to some extent.

Although Turks and Armenians reached into a partial agreement and peace after the Young Turk revolution of 1908, it was not long-lasting. According to what newly-elected Armenian Patriarch Izmirlian told F.H. Fitzmaurice, one of the translators of the British Embassy, in a secret meeting; he called the Armenian community to make business faithfully, and to behave moderately with regard to Turks, and to avoid extremities; he tried to told that the Turkish administration and people was intended to treat Armenians heartedly, honestly, and fairly; however particularly some extremists remained deaf to his warnings.<sup>3</sup>

As Sir Gerard Lowther, the British ambassador to Istanbul, reported to Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, Armenians initiated to take an 'insolent and provocative' stance following the reintroduction of the constitution. The Deputy British Consul in Van, Captain Bertram Dickson defined Armenians as fitted to typology of the worst politician, fussy, noisy, insolent, and shameless people. Ambassador Lowther stated in a correspondence on September 29, 1908; "The Armenian policy was permanently selfish, is still selfish, and probably will be selfish. Armenians do not support a united Ottoman Empire, and consider only their nations and interests."

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2 S. R. Sonyel: 'İngiliz Kaynaklarına Göre Ermenilerce Sahtelenen ve Osmanlı Arşivlerinden Aşırılan Gizli Belgeler [Confidential Documents Plagiarized from the Ottoman Archives and Fabricated by Armenians, according to the British Sources]', XIII. Türk Tarih Kongresi, Ankara, September 1999; Additionally see, Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.140 ff.

3 The British Record Office (BRO), the British Foreign Office documents, class FO 371/file 533/document no. 33230: Büyükelçi Sir Gerard Lowther'den Dışişleri Bakanı Sir Edvvard Grey'e yazı, [Note from ambassador Sir Gerard Lowther to Sir Edvvard Grey, Foreign Office Secretary], İstanbul, 20.9.1908.

Dickson reported that Armenians were still introducing arms and bullets to the country in spite of the reestablishment of the constitutional monarchy, and commented: "If Armenians were granted with more freedom than necessary, Russia would create conflicts with various deceits and may provoke the Ottoman Armenians against Turks."

According to a report from British ambassador Lowther to Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary on January 18, 1909 Dashnaks were cooperated with the Young Turks hoping to ensure establishment of one or two Armenian provinces. However, since the Young Turks' administration pursued to establish the –united – Ottoman citizenship without ethnic or religious discrimination, Armenians were greatly disappointed.

Deputy British Consul Captain Dickson acquainted that Dashnaksutiun party had "incredibly ambitious" aims; to establish an Armenian Republic including the Ottoman, Russian, and Iranian provinces that would assimilate all peoples different from Armenians; and the Armenian priests encouraged the Armenian community to get marry in early ages, and to have children, thereby, to outstrip other peoples in the region.<sup>4</sup>

The terrible events erupted in Adana on April 13, 1909 that is known as the event of 31<sup>st</sup> March, were derived from Armenian dreams to establish a great Armenia. As a result of the events in Adana and Istanbul, Sultan Abdulhamid was dethroned. The British Deputy Consul in Mersin Major Doughty-Wylie reported to ambassador Lowther that the Armenian Hinchak Party heavily incited Armenians, which concerned Turks. According to a correspondence from Lowther to British Foreign Secretary Grey on May 4, Armenian bishop Musheg did all his best to stimulate the ambitions of his community and concerns of Turks; Armenians started to armament utilizing the new regime. The great ambitions of Armenians and the objectives of Hinchak and Dashnak parties led concerns and anxiety among the Muslim people who perceived that Armenians indented to revenge from Turks.<sup>5</sup>

According to Pastor Dr. Christie, one of the most experienced missionaries in Anatolia, malevolence advices of the Armenian priest whom Christie defined as an

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4 IDA, FO 371.560/37689: Correspondence from Dickson to Lowther, 29- 30.9.1908; Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, Istanbul: 24.10.1908.

5 IDA, FO 371/762/3123: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 18.1.19090.

'extremely evil man' greatly contributed to Adana events.<sup>6</sup> The British ambassador Lowther reported to London that bishop Musheg profited from arms sale.<sup>7</sup> The British deputy consul Doughty-Wylie was so offended with behavior of Musheg that, later, he prevented Musheg's return to Mersin due to public security.

After the Adana events in which many Turks and Armenians lost their life and that naturally reflected in the West, again, as the 'Armenian genocide,' the Turkish-Armenian relations became tensed again.

Newly appointed British Consul to Van, Captain Molyneux-Seel who traveled many places in the eastern provinces of Turkey pointed out that the Armenian revolutionary committees severely harmed welfare of Armenians in his report of October 9, 1911, and stated: "that fact should not be overlooked; in every places where the Armenian political organizations are inactive, Armenians, Turks and Kurds live in peace ... in places where the Armenian revolutionary committees are active, Armenian people was embarrassed by representatives of that committees. Those representatives became rich through collecting money, and forcefully selling arms – although they bought them in a low price -- to Armenian peasants with a high price. In order to continue this evil trade they consistently propagate that Armenians are in danger."<sup>8</sup>

The British deputy consul told the following event: "An Armenian agent went a village and advised an Armenian peasant to buy Mouser type of pistol. When the peasant answered that he had no money, agent told him "sell your ox." The poor peasant reminded him that planting season neared and asked him what pistol does to cultivate field. Upon this debate, the agent shot cows of the poor peasants to death."<sup>9</sup>

Wide range of events was recorded in every corner of Anatolia throughout the Balkan Wars. International and political situation and reports of maltreatments towards Muslims, murders, and Armenians in the Balkans established committees to fight Turks, increased the sense of animosity towards Armenians in the far

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6 IDA, FO 37 1/772/17612: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 4.5.1909; copies of notes of Deputy Consul Major Doughty-Wylie were added.

7 IDA, FO 37 1/772/17612, Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 11.5.1909; copies of notes of Deputy Consul Major Doughty-Wylie were attached.

8 IDA, FO 371/1002/4235: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 31.1.1910; Turkey Report of 1909 was attached. Additionally see, Sir Telford Waugh, *Turkey: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, London: 1930, p.129.

9 IDA, FO 371/772/17612: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 4.5.1909.

provinces of the Ottoman state.<sup>10</sup> The Russian diplomacy that exploited these wars was inciting the Ottoman Armenians to strike the last blow to Ottoman State marked as “the ill man of Europe,” in November 1912 when Turks were in a heavy crisis.<sup>11</sup>

The British Deputy Consul in Halep, R. A. Fontana, had informed the British ambassador Lowther with a secret Armenian plan in March 1913. Accordingly that plan, Armenians would occupy the mountainous areas in Zeytun, Elbistan, and Hacin (Saimbeyli); would probably capture Adana, and would establish an Armenian principedom in that region that has connection to sea.

He believed in that the Armenian soldiers that participated in the Bulgarian army in the Balkan Wars would handle and lead that projected Armenian principedom. In view of Fontana, Armenians had modern weapons. Every Armenian adult had at least one arm. The Greeks were smuggling weapons into Turkey to sell Kurds and Armenians. There were many weapons in every corner to be used in case of emergency.<sup>12</sup> In view of the Deputy British Consul in Van, Ian Smith, the Armenian Dashnak committee had smuggled many weapons in 1913 and delivered them to its supporters. The Armenians in Van was armed more than the Muslims, and the Dashnak organization had profited from arms sales greatly.<sup>13</sup>

Due to the Greek/Armenian provocations and their intrigues together with the Russians and Britons, situation in Anatolia was so tensed that there was a prophesy in the British Foreign Secretariat that the Turkish state was at the edge of collapse both in Asia, and in Europe.<sup>14</sup> The Ottoman government was concerned with that situation and asked Tevfik Pasha, its ambassador to London, to request assistance of the British government to prepare a reform program for the Turkish Asia, under the supervision of the British officials. Since Russia opposed to that request, it led long-enduring debates among the powerful states.

In the summer and autumn of 1913, negotiations were materialized between the ambassadors of the leading countries in Istanbul to discuss projected reforms

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10 IDA, FO 371/1263/43717- Correspondence from Molyneux-Seel to Lowther, 9.10.1911; Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 29. 10.1911.

11 IDA, FO 371/1800/12195: Correspondence from Molyneux-Seel to Lowther, 17.2.1913; Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 13.3.1913.

12 IDA, FO 371/1484/42899: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 9.10.1912.

13 S. R. Sonyel, *The Ottoman Armenians - Victims of Great Power Policy*, London, 1987, p.283.

14 IDA, FO 37 1/1773/16941 and 52128: Correspondence from Fontana to Lowther, 25.3.1913; Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 10.4.1913; Note from Malet to Grey, 12.11.1913.

to be carried out in Anatolia. Throughout the negotiations, whereas Russia, supported by Britain and France of the Allies, was advocating Armenians, German and Austria of the Central Powers were supporting the Ottoman Empire. As a result of the negotiations, Turkey accepted a modified Russian plan on February 8, 1914. The Ittihat ve Terakki (Union and Progress) government was compelled by Germany to consent that plan, however it was not intended to implement it, because it was aware that implementation of the plan would cause disintegration of Turkey.<sup>15</sup>

According to the plan, the six eastern province of Turkey would be granted with an extensive autonomy. Those provinces would be separated into two administrative sectors that would be administered by foreign general supervisors. The Padishah would appoint those foreign supervisors, yet they could only be dismissed by foreign states. The Turks perceived that plan imposed on them as the first step to separate Turkey; and as soon as the World War I broke out, it gave up implementation of the plan. Indeed, the so-called 'revolution project' was a pretext<sup>16</sup> to separate Turkey into the regions of influence and exploitation, and the Armenian militants helped them in their evil plans.

While the world was dragging into the war throughout May and July of 1914, the Ottoman government suggested Russia via the Interior Minister Mehmet Talat, and France via Ahmet Cemal Pasha, the Minister of Navy, to establish closer relations, however the both states rejected that suggestion.<sup>17</sup> Britain was, also, not intended to please the Unionist government, because these states realizing secret meetings to share the Ottoman territories among themselves. For this reason, they did not favor to make alliance with the Ottoman state.<sup>18</sup> For this reason, the Ottoman government could not find any solution not to be isolated other than allying itself with German and Austria of the Central Powers.<sup>19</sup>

The British documents in the period of war and reports of the Intelligence Service clearly prove that many Armenian activists and militants supported war objectives of the Allies including Britain and France against the Ottoman Empire, which was their own state. Hovannes Kachaznuni, one of the leaders of

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15 IDA, FO 371/2130/5748: Note from Mallet to Grey, 30.1.1914.

16 IDA, FO 371/1783/19793: Correspondence from Lowther to Grey, 26.4.1913; Comments of the British Foreign Secretariat.

17 Sonyel, *The Great War...*, pp.74-75.

18 Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914-18*, New Jersey, 1968, p.12.

19 Additionally see, Smith, *The Coming of the War, 1914*, Vol.1, New York, 1930, p.91; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire...*, p.20.

the Dashnaksutiun, the Armenian terror organization stated in his manifestation that released in Vienna in 1923: “In the autumn of 1914, before Turkey entered into the war, the Armenian revolutionary mobs were founded in the inner Caucasus. Contrary to decision taken in Erzurum (by the Armenians) in a couple of weeks ago, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutiun) played an active role in establishment of those mobs and their military operations against Turkey...”

Kachaznuni told how Armenians were deceived by the Russians, as well, and stated his regrets because they could not avoid from entering the war against the Turks.<sup>20</sup>

There are many evidences in the British archives indicating that some Armenians spied during the World War I, even before outbreak of the war, for the Allies.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, some Armenians were involved in sabotage activities,<sup>22</sup> and initiated many riots in every corner of the country.<sup>23</sup> They also established voluntary brigades and mobs to fight against the Turks in Anatolia, together with the Russian soldiers.<sup>24</sup>

As Aneurin Williams, an Armenian supporter British Deputy, informed the Foreign Secretary Edward Grey on September 18, 1914, fighting took place between the Armenian mobs, consists of Armenian deserters that rejected to participate in the Ottoman army and escaped to the mountains, and Turkish gendarmerie in Van.<sup>25</sup>

The British ambassador Sir Louis Mallet reported to Foreign Secretary Grey that local people and particularly Armenians were unpleasant with the announcement of mobilization; and Armenians were organized and armed, not only in the northeastern provinces but even in Adana. He also added:

“The authorities are worried because the Armenians are making preparations in such a way. When the appropriate time comes, the Armenians may rebel upon

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20 The British Royal Order, Command 671 (LI), 1920; additionally see J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, Vol.II, New Jersey, 1956, pp.7-25.

21 Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire...*, p.16.

22 Hovhannes Katchaznoui, *Dashnaksutiune amelik chuni ailevs*, Vienna, 1923, pp.1-5.

23 IDA, FO 37 1/3410/129455.

24 IDA, FO 371/2483/15633.

25 Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile - the Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922* [Ölüm ve Sürgün - Osmanlı Müslümanlarının Etnik İmhası, 1821-1922], New Jersey, 1995, p.189.

a sign from the Dashnaks. Relying on the method of terrorizing, the Dashnaks gained the majority in proportion with their members. The trees of those who resisted joining the Dashnaks were cut down and their folds were taken away. Generally, the Armenians were faced with huge depression of the militants and they made a good deal of complaints to the British officials.”<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, the head of the National Armenian Bureau in Tbilisi, Alexander Hatisian, send the following statement to the Tzar: “Armenians in all countries are hurrying to join the honorable Russian army with the aim of serving for the victory of Russia with their own blood. May the Russian flag sway over the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. May the Armenians of Turkey suffering in the name of Christianity revive for a new life under the protection of Russia”. Therefore, the National Armenian Bureau began to make preparations for the war and established the armed bands named as ‘kumba’ that would help the Russian armies pretty much.”<sup>27</sup>

The leader of the Russian Armenians, Avedis Aharonian, and the leader of the Ottoman Armenians, Boghos Nubar, clearly stated their obedience and assistance to the Allied States in their speeches that they made in Paris Peace Conference on February 26, 1919.<sup>28</sup> In this context, Aharonian made the following statement: ‘Our nation has not only left aside its complaints against the Tzarist regime in the beginning of the war, but also it supported the thesis of the Allies by being united under the Russian flag; our relatives in Turkey and all over the world proposed to the Tzarist government to establish Armenian legions with their spending who will fight side by side the Russian soldiers under the command of the Russian generals’. Boghos Nubar admitted this: “In the beginning of the war the Turkish government offered Armenians a kind of autonomy in exchange for voluntary troops who will fight against the Russians in the Caucasus. Armenians refused this offer and without any hesitation they assigned them to the service of the Allies from whom they expect freedom”.

The British consul in Batum, P. Stevenson, informed the British Foreign Secretariat with a text he sent on October 29, 1914 that the Armenian organizations had established volunteer troops composed of 45,000 people who would

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26 IDA, FO 371/2147/74733: Correspondence from Stevens to British Foreign Secretariat, 29.10.1974; for other activities of the Armenian militants see. IDA, FO 371/2483/15633: Correspondence from British Naval Secretariat to the Foreign Secretariat, London, 9.2.1915; FO 371/2770/1 80941: War Trade Intelligence Unit, confidential report no.21/ 454, Bucharest, 4.8.1916.

27 IDA, FO 371/2116/51007: Letter from Williams to Grey, London, 18.9.1914.

28 IDA, FO 371/2137/59383: Correspondence from Mallet to Grey, 25.9.1914.



fight together with the Russian soldiers in Anatolia against the Turks. Those who would join these troops received military training in Gyumri. Armenian newspapers gave the following advice to their coreligionists: “When the time comes, be ready to help the Russians by taking up the arms to completely save the Christian people in Anatolia and Armenia (the Western provinces) from subservience to the Turks”.<sup>29</sup>

The head of the London Joint Armenian Association Lieutenant Colonel George M. Gregory mentioned in a text that he sent to British Ministry of Internal Affairs on November 10, 1914 that the Armenians were loyal to Allies, who were against Germany, Austria and Turkey; majority of them had been fighting under the Russian flag; a less number of Armenians were fighting the war by joining the French and British military forces.<sup>30</sup> The Canterbury Archbishop of Britain and many well-known Armenian-sympathizer British subjects, among whom Lord Bryce and Lord Robert Cecil were, admitted afterwards that during the war the Allies encouraged the Armenians before they voluntarily joined the war in their side and they provided arms to them.<sup>31</sup>

The British parliamentarian Aubrey Herbert put into words the disaster that the Ottoman minorities, who would support the thesis of the Allies, would face as such: ‘When the First World War has begun, the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire were greeted by the French and Lloyd George (British Prime Minister) as minor allies of the powerful states who are fighting against Turkey. The Armenians praised by this hurried to help the Russian army which had started to invade Turkey and following this behavior they became subjected to a terrible danger that had been approaching. Lloyd George, who changed his ideas in everything, made the tragedy of the Armenians inevitable with his persistence to call the minorities in Anatolia to fight together with the Allies.’<sup>32</sup>

As the documents of war period protected in the Turkish and foreign resources have proved, the Armenian militants and insurgents began to inflict incidents in almost all over the Ottoman territories from November 1914 until May 1915. In the first year of the war, the Armenian uprising in many places of the Eastern Anatolia put the Ottomans in a lot of trouble. Only the Armenian uprising in

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29 Horizon Newspaper, Tbilisi, 30.11.1914; IDA, FO 371/2484 and 2485/46941.

30 IDA, FO 371/4376/PLD., Paris Peace Conference, 26.2.1919; the statements of Aharonian and Nubar.

31 IDA, FO 371/2147/74733: Correspondence from Stevens to British Foreign Secretariat, 29.10.1914.

32 IDA, FO 371/776/727725: Correspondence from Gregory to British Interior Ministry, London, 10.11.1914.

Van became successful; but in other uprisings many people lost their lives and the Ottoman war capacity became vulnerable.

While these events were going on in Anatolia, the British and French forces attacked on February 19, 1915 in order to capture the straits. A few weeks later, Dashnaks light the fire of a rebellion in Van with the help of their members in the Caucasus and they attempted to drive out the Muslims from that city. At that time, the Russian army, which the Cossacks were also participated in, started to move towards Van with the help of the numerous volunteer Armenians composed of the migrants from Anatolia and the Armenians from Caucasus.<sup>33</sup>

On April 20, 1915, Armenian insurgents attacked to the Turkish district in Van; again on May 8, they set many Turkish houses on fire. Upon this, the Turks began to walk out of Van; on May 19, the Armenians attacked the Muslim-Turkish families who were trying to draw back to the southern coasts of the Lake Van and killed many of them. Armenian people with crazy demonstrations welcomed Russian soldiers who came to Van on May 14. Turks emptied Van on May 17; four days later the Armenians set the Muslim district on fire entirely.<sup>34</sup>

Even the British High Commissionaire in Cairo Sir Henry McMohan stated in a confidential telegram he sent to British Foreign Secretariat on May 12, 1915 that the Turks had to deal with the Armenians who had rebelled in many places. The Ministry that replied him two days later accepted that an Armenian uprising had begun.<sup>35</sup> However, when the Armenian sympathizer Lord Bryce asked a question in the House of Lords on October 6, 1915 by referring to the so-called Armenian genocide, the Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey denied the Armenian uprising.<sup>36</sup> Even today, the sympathizers of Armenian militants, who are not informed of these British confidential documents, deny the uprisings of the Armenians in Turkey.

After these events, an Armenian state established in Van under the protection of Russia and an Armenian legion was created to remove the Turks from the entire southern coast of the Lake Van through cooperating with the Russian soldiers

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33 IDA, FO 371 /5209/E 2245: Correspondence from Spender to Lloyd George, London, the souvenir on 'Peace in the Near East' taken on 27.3.1920.

34 Aubrey Herbert, *Me Myself - a Record of Eastern Travel* [Ben Kendim - Doğu gezisi ile ilgili bir tutanak], Londra, 1924, p.275.

35 McCarthy, *Death and Exile...*, pp. 189-190.

36 IDA, FO 37 1/2488/58350: A. Nicholson souvenir, London, 16.5.1915.

in order to facilitate the Russian occupation of Bitlis.<sup>37</sup> Many Muslims, who had been able to escape from the Van disaster, were raided by the Armenians on the roads, and many of them died tragically. Armenians also killed many Jews who were trying to escape towards Hakkari.<sup>38</sup> Thus, Armenians encouraged by the Russians provoked many incidents that damaged the Ottoman logistical system especially among the Turkish military routes in the Eastern Anatolia. While the Russian armies were moving on the interior of the Ottoman territories in the Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian volunteer deserters from the Ottoman army as well as the Ottoman and the Russian Armenians accompanied them.

Armenians also organized many mobs and were armed by the guns that they had hidden for many years in the houses of the Armenians and the missionaries, in churches and schools. They organized sudden attacks to the Ottoman arms depots in order to deprive the Ottoman army, who had been preparing to confront a huge Russian incursion, from their arms. After a few months from the beginning of the war, through cooperating with the Russians, the Armenian mobs attacked the Turkish cities, towns and villages in the East; subjected the people to decimation; at the same time attacked the military convoys by blowing up the roads and bridges; made whatever they could do in order to facilitate the Russian occupation.<sup>39</sup>

In this situation, the Ottoman government had to take measures against this 'Armenian betrayal' since the Russians were moving ahead in the East over a large front, Armenians were attacking the Ottoman armies from behind by spreading death and destruction, and other Allies were occupying the Ottoman state over a large segment of war. The government was no more trusting to the Armenians; because their predecessors had helped the Russians in 1828, 1854 and 1877 Turkish-Russian wars.<sup>40</sup>

The Ottoman administration, who was worried about the break out of a wide ranging uprising behind the Ottoman lines, the possibility that the Ottoman armies were obliged to fight in various segments of war and the transportation lines were attacked, took the decision on April 24, 1915 to lift up the Armenians from the important military zones where that could help the enemies and send

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37 IDA, FO 371/4288/59060.

38 IDA, FO 371/4288/59060, The question that Lord Bryce posed in the House of Lords, 6.10.1915 and the response of Grey.

39 Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918* [Ermenistan Bağımsızlık Yolunda], Los Angeles 1971, p.56; also see, EDA, FO 371/ 2488/127223 and 58550.

40 McCarthy, *Death and Exile...*, pp. 189-190

them to more safe places. This decision was taken not before the Armenian uprisings and the mob activities but after these events. These Armenian activities were threatening the existence of the Ottoman state by completely defeating it in the hands of its enemies. Moreover, the Armenian mobs and the militants cruelly destroy the Turkish/Muslim people of women, children and elders, who were left behind while the young Turkish men were fighting in the fronts.<sup>41</sup>

Major Edward Noel, a member of British Intelligence Service, makes the following statement in a report he wrote in May 1919: “During the three-month trip I made in the spring and summer of 1916 to the region which had been occupied and plundered by the Russian army and the accompanying Christian revenge army, I can say that without any doubt the Turks had a cause against their enemies just like the cause put forward against them. According to the statements of the local inhabitants and the eye-witnesses, the Russians together with the Nestorians and the Armenians who had accompanied them had cut the Muslim populace without exception.”

A passenger who travels the Revanduz and Neri towns sees the far-reaching proofs of violence by Christians over the Muslims there.<sup>42</sup> The Soviet writer of Armenian origin B. A. Borian verifies these Armenian barbarities and states: “The Armenian politicians used the authority of the state not to govern the country but to wresting the property Muslim populace by annihilating them.”<sup>43</sup>

After these horrible events, the Ottoman Cabinet issued strict instructions and published regulations about the relocation of the Armenians in other places. According to the Ottoman confidential documents, which were captured by the members of the British army in Palestine in autumn of 1918, the Ottoman administration had proposed to shut down the Armenian militants and organizations, and to arrest the leading responsible individuals. In none of these documents an Armenian genocide is mentioned. The officials of the British Foreign Secretariat have also proved this.

W.S. Edmonds, an official of the Secretariat and the responsible of the Eastern Desk, has made the following comment after monitoring the Ottoman documents: “There is not enough evidence in these documents that will verify the accusations of genocide.” Another official called Francis Osborne added these:

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41 Sonyel, *The Great War...*, p. 111.

42 McCarthy, *Death and Exile...*, p. 189.

43 S. R. Sonyel, *Impact International*, London, 28.10.1983; also see Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire...* p.202.

“On the contrary, the (Ottoman) Interior Minister warned in the last paragraph of his order to avoid any behaviors which will lead to slaughters”.<sup>44</sup> In the secret regulations prepared by the Ottoman Interior Ministry regarding the methods with which the Armenians would be moved to safer places, there is no mention of Armenian annihilation. These confidential Ottoman documents were stolen from the Ottoman archives by the British Secret Intelligence Service agents after the formal occupation of Istanbul in 1920 by the Allies, and they were sent to London afterwards. In these secret Ottoman documents we come across, there is not any order regarding the slaughter of the Armenians.

During these transportations, the Armenians had some casualties; however, many Turks and Muslims also wiped out by the Armenian terrorists and the militants. The Turkish-Armenian incidents occurred during the period of the First World War are characterized as a civil war. This war is resulted from alliance of many Armenians with the enemies of their country and the Armenian uprisings. The Armenians and the Turks were set at odds by the imperialist and the exploiter states that used Armenians in their plans to separate the Ottoman state; they killed each other and the British documents that I have explained to you today have also verified these.

I have been searching in the Western and especially the British archives for a time longer than forty years. Besides, I have examined many Ottoman, French, German, American, Italian, Russian and Greek documents regarding the Turkish-Armenian relations. Until today, I have not come across any documents, which prove the genocide claims that are generally put forward by the Armenian militants and their sympathizers. Therefore, there are not any documents, which are reliable and acceptable by the judicial authorities, verifying the claims that the Armenians were subjected to genocide within the framework of 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention.

According to the estimations, between the years 1914 and 1918, nearly 400,000 individuals from the Armenian population of 1.3 million lost their lives mostly due to war conditions, mob struggles, and seasonal conditions. However, the Turks and other Muslims were also had over two million casualties because of these same reasons, and due to Armenian terrorism and slaughters. How come the death of nearly 400,000 Armenians is described as ‘genocide’ in the history books that the West, who frequently does mastership to Turkey, teach their children, and the Turks and other Muslims over two millions are not even mentioned? Is this the justice?

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44 IDA,FO 371.

# “TURKS, ARMENIANS AND ERZURUM, 1916-1918”

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## Abstract:

*This article aims to examine the inter-communal relations between Turks and Armenians in the province of Erzurum. After a brief historical background of these relations the article mainly focuses on the relations between two communities at the period of Russian invasion of Erzurum. In doing that it analyzes how the modes of inter-communal conduct had been deteriorated and how Russian administration of the city contributed to this process of deterioration.*

**Key Words:** *Erzurum, Russian invasion, Erzurum Armenians, Kazım Karabekir, Armenian atrocities.*

## Öz:

*Bu makale Erzurum'da yaşayan Türk ve Ermeni toplumları arasındaki ilişkileri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu ilişkilerin tarihsel arkaplanını özetledikten sonra, yazar özellikle Rus işgali sırasında Erzurum'da yaşayan bu iki toplum arasındaki ilişkilere odaklanmaktadır. Bu çerçevede toplumlararası ilişki tarzlarının nasıl dönüştüğü, iki toplum arasındaki ilişkilerin nasıl bozulduğu ve kentteki Rus yönetiminin bu süreci nasıl etkilediği üzerinde durulmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Erzurum, Rus işgali, Erzurum Ermenileri, Kazım karabekir, Ermeni mezalimi.*

Karasu river basin is located in upper Euphrates –as the Westerners called it– river. Erzurum has first established near to the source of the river. In the course of history, it was also named as Karin, Carinitis, and Karinitis. Later on, in the first quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Anatolius had built a city, where contemporary Erzurum has survived on, to counter attacks from the east or north east.

The castle had been called as Theodosiopolis – as the name of the emperor – until Arabs conquered it. So, the Muslim geographers and historians mentioned

Kalikala. The Byzantium re-dominated here and named it again as Theodosiopolis until 1071. It appears that after Saltuklus, it started to be called as Erzen er-Rüm, Arz-ı Rum, Erzen-i Rum throughout Seljuqis, Ilkhanids, Karakoyunlus, Akkoyunlus and Safavids. It is officially documented as Erzurum under the Ottomans and the Republican period.<sup>1</sup>

There is few what known about settlements around and ethnic composition of the region before the Medians. With the appearance of Karin under the Persians, Parths, and Sasanids the people of Armenians and the region of Armenia were mentioned. Byzantine sources talked about Theodosiopolis Thema,<sup>2</sup> which means a military zone, rather than Armenia. The dominant power at that time was the Romans / Byzantines. The subjects were composed of various ethnic groups including Armenians. Relationship between Armen/Armenia and Hay/Hayasdan has not been covered academically until today. The “Hay” word is somehow usually translated as Armen in the translations. It seems that Hays who converted to Christianity and some other groups were considered under the framework of Armen.

Erzurum fell under the domination of the Ottomans in 1514. It became the most important center in the east under Suleyman the Magnificent. In spite of the Ottoman-Safavid wars, since it is located on trade ways, Erzurum was enriched as in the Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup>

Georgians, Armenians, Persians and Turks, with a great majority, were living in Erzurum in the Ottoman period. Armenians were trading freely, and appeared in other arts as well as Turks. Whereas, they were living separately in other cities, Armenians and Turks were intermingled in Erzurum. They were praying freely in church, and their pastors were conducting their activities in temples called Yank. Erzurum Law mentioned on them and determined their positions.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout Celali riots in Anatolia, Armenians continued to concentrate in cities. After the Ani earthquake, many Armenians came around Erzurum. That is why Armenian population in the village of Kan increased.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Enver Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete Erzurum* [Erzurum from Seljuqis to Republic], Ankara, 1992.

2 Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete...*, pp. 4-8.

3 Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete...*, pp.137-150, 152-184.

4 Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete...*, pp.158-166.

5 Hakov Kamesti, 'Erzeroum of Topographie de la Haute Armenie', translated by F. Macler, *Journal de l'Asiatique*, Vol. 13, No. 2, March-April 1919, p.204.

Armenian concentration on Iran was also seen even in the Nader Shah events in the line of Iran, Azerbaijan, and Caucasus. After the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the region was like paradise for missionaries.

Until 19<sup>th</sup> century the Turkish-Armenian friendship was very sincere. Evliya Çelebi, Jean Babtiste Tavemier, and 18<sup>th</sup> century travelers stated optimistic expressions about the Turkish-Armenian relations.<sup>6</sup>

After the end of Ottoman-Iranian wars, the Tsarist Russia emerged as a new threat in the eastern borders of Ottomans in 1806. Gyumri, in the east of Arpaçay that joins Aras from the north, was fallen in the hands of Russians by an agreement. It was succeeded by the fell of Revan, where is an important base for Erzurum. After the contraction of Gulistan and Turkmençay agreements [with Iran], Russians turned toward the West and they focused on Erzurum in accordance with the testament of the Tsar Petro the Great. Following his achievements in 1828, General Paskevich moved on Erzurum. He captured Erzurum that had a key position as the Eastern gate.

Russians went beyond it by seizing Aşkale, Tercan, and Bayburt triangle as a connection point to Trabzon. Mahmud II was compelled to a strained agreement. By signing the Edirne agreement in 1829, he could have prevented a severe threat.<sup>7</sup>

One of the remarkable developments in 1829 was that Armenians were deceived and have migrated from their homelands. Armenians appeared to welcome General Paskevich, who was accompanied by the eminent Russian poet and author Alexander Pushkin in his entrance to the city in summer. Children, who formed a line from Tebriz Kapı to the city center, initially displayed cross, thereby they emphasized that they were Christians, and then presented their gratitude in the name of Armenian community.<sup>8</sup> Paskevich met with Christian leaders and Armenians in Erzurum. His reputation as the count of Yerevan, and his adoption of a manner favoring Armenians led the Turkish-Armenian difference, for the first time in Erzurum.

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6 Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete...*, pp.421-470.

7 A.K. Ushakov, *Geshichte der Feldzuge in der Asiatischen Turkei wahrend der Jahre 1828 und 1829*, translated by A.C. Laemmlein, Leipzig, 1838.

8 A. Puşkin, *Erzurum Yolculuğu* [Travel to Erzurum], translated by Ataol Behramoğlu, İstanbul, 1990, p.427.



Paskevich reported Tiflis and Moscow that he was planning to move Armenians in the region to other side of Arpaçay. It was because he saw that population density was very low in the region surrounded by Georgia, Elizavetpol, Nakhichevan, and Gyumri, he opened this region to newcomers. He found people in Erzurum, Bayburt, Tercan, Pasinler and Kars to transfer there. He gave certain orders to General Pankratiev on this issue, when he left Erzurum. He also ordered Pankratiev to secretly meet with the Armenian leaders in and around Erzurum.

General Pankratiev met with the Armenian clergy in Erzurum in spite of the opposition of Mahmud II and the Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul. The Armenian clergy started initiatives to realize migration in Erzurum. They tried to convince Armenians who were occupied with bakery, jeweler, blacksmith, driver, locksmith, made of swords, butchery etc. in the neighborhood of Lala Mustafa Paşa, Cami-i Kebir, Kara Kilise, Bakırcı, Ayaspaşa, Cennetzade Camii Şerifi, Yoncalık, Hasanbasri, Sultan Melik, Kabe Mescidi, Hanım Hamamı Caferzade, Dar Ağaç, Kadana, Dervişağa, Kasım Paşa ve Tebriz Kapı with pressure and brilliant promises for the Russian part.

The clergymen called as Karabaş by Turks frightened Armenians. They wrote the name of many Armenians on the Karabaş notebook by pressure. Many people fled Erzurum and its villages in 1829. They settled in Gyumri, Ahıska, and Ahalkelek passing the Kars plain. However, the Russian interest in those migrants gradually decreased in time. Thus, the phenomenon of an imagined Armenia started to be abolishing in time.<sup>9</sup>

When the Armenians left Erzurum, silence prevailed in the city and villages. William J. Hamilton, J.Brant, Eli Smith, H.G.O Dwith, M.Wagner, W.F.Ainsworth, H.Southgate who came to Erzurum after the Russians withdrew drew attention to decrease in population of the city after Armenians' fled.<sup>10</sup> Migrant Armenians could not have adapted to life in Russia and disappeared in big cities like Tbilisi.

When the Crimean war had erupted under the reign of Abdülmecid, the Ot-

9 Kemal Beydilli, *1828-1829 Osmanlı Rus Savaşında Doğu Anadolu'dan Rusya'ya Göçürülen Ermeniler* [The Armenians Deported to Russia from the Eastern Anatolia during the Ottoman-Russian War], Ankara, 1988, pp.386-390.

10 W. I. Hamilton, *Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus and Armenia*, London, 1842, pp.178-184; E. Smith and H.G.O. Dwith, *Missionary Researches in Armenia*, London, 1834, pp.62-74; M. Wagner, *Reise nach Persien und der Lande der Kurden*, Leipzig, 1852; W. F. Ainsworth, *Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea and Armenia*, London, 1842, pp.391-394.

toman-Russian wars came into agenda again. Russians fought the Ottomans near to Kars in 1855, and surrounded Kars. They came into Pasin plain and moved till the mounts of Deve Boyun and Kargapazan.

Due to the safety provided by the Tanzimat, Islahat and constitutional monarchy movements in the Ottoman territories [for the minorities], Armenians returned to Erzurum. Many of the migrants resettled their previous places. They started to live together with Turks again in the plain villages like Hmsk, Umudum, Arzutu, Tivnik, Kan, and Sitavuk. Everything was fraternal as the before. However, missionaries, clergy, and spies took action in a short time. Armenians could not have kept their previous social and commercial positions. The Pastirmacian family was leading of them.<sup>11</sup>

Armenians had the same rights with all people in the east as the subjects of the Ottoman state until the reign of Abdulhamid II. A group of states led by the United Kingdom, including Germany, Italy, France, and the United States started to send political and commercial representatives. Those consuls preferred to live with the Armenians in Gavur mahallesi (neighborhood) in Erzurum. They managed to get respect and amity of the Armenians in Erzurum through health care agencies, colleges and religious institutions.

Missionaries started to separate Armenians through Catholic and Protestant priests. Armenians appeared as three distinct groups in villages like Umudum and Arzutu. Catholic, Protestant, and Gregorian Armenians were representing social life of any country.

Additionally, the Armenian clergy incited the Turkish-Armenian difference under the influence of the Russian propaganda since the Crimean war. Deyrolle heard such kind of statements from an Armenian priest who hosted him at night. Russians and French supposedly would provide every kind of assistance to them. Of course, it was based on ill-founded reports would never be materialized.<sup>12</sup>

After the Crimean War, militarily crucial structures were designed in Erzurum. Defense lines of Batum, Ardahan, Kars, and particularly Erzurum were solidified. It was remarkable that Turks and Armenians cooperated in construction of military bastions, called as Toprak Tabya by people. One of the bastions in Kars had

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11 For Pastirmacians see, Dr. G.Pastermadjian, *Why Armenia Should Be Free; Armenian's Role in the Present War*, Boston, 1918, p.5

12 T. Deyrolle, *Voyages dans Le Lazistan et L'Armenie, Tour du Monde*, Paris, 1896, p.369 ff.

name of the British consul in Erzurum, Zohrab. He was an intellectual Armenian and Britain authorized him with representative power in the 1870s. Many Armenians in Erzurum worked as labor in these bastions. In view of Westerners, those people were originally Armenian, yet they were wholeheartedly loyal to the Sultan.

In early times, Eastern Anatolia was known as 'Armenia', as indicated above. In the mid-ages Islamic sources appealed 'Ermeniye,' a transformed version of 'Armenia.' Even the Turkish political establishments were called as Ermenşahs due to their geographical locations. It should immediately be remarked that these establishment had no relevance with Armenians.

Erzurum and its around, that is Vilayat-i Şarkiyye (the Eastern Provinces), called as 'Turetskoy Armeni' by Russians, and the 'Turkish Armenia' by the Westerners.<sup>13</sup> Henry Fanshawe Tozer and others, who were impressed by that wave, called Erzurum and its around as "Türk Ermenistanı."<sup>14</sup> In the Western literature, it was not only used the Turkish Armenia, it was also used 'Russian Armenia' for Russia, and 'Persian Armenia' for Iran. There was no use of the 'Türk Ermenistanı' in the Ottoman documents, as well as no use of "Russian Armenia" in the Tsarist Russia, and they did not allowed such a usage. The strict Russian nationalism was literally implemented by the authorities in Tbilisi and Yerevan.

— When Sultan Abdulhamid enthroned after Murad V, Armenians were also among those pledged allegiance to him. Greetings for birthdays or day of enthronement were visible in the news reports published in Istanbul newspapers at that time. Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, who was appointed as governor to Erzurum, after taking office reported to Bab-ı Ali (the Ottoman government) that some (Armenian) extremists were active in Erzurum and necessary measures were taken, in 1876.<sup>15</sup> In spite of these activities, he cautiously approached towards Armenians in Erzurum, and advised them to be loyal. Apart from the official documents, Captain Fred Burnaby<sup>16</sup> gave interesting information about the situation of Armenians at that time. Burnaby found Armenians in a clash of ideas in his travel to Kemah, Erzincan, Tercan and Erzurum in 1876.

13 Bilal Şimşir, *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, Ankara, 1982, 4 Vols.

14 H. F. Tozer, *Turkish Armenia and Eastern Asia Minor*, London, 1881. The Traveler considers "Turkish Armenia" and Eastern Anatolia as the same place.

15 Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar: Sergüzeşt-i Hayatımın Cild-i Evvelî*, İstanbul, 1996, pp.101-107.

16 F.Burnaby, *Küçük Asya Seyahatnamesi; Anadolu'da Bir İngiliz Subay*, İstanbul, 1998, pp.197-215.

Clergy started to raise consciousness of people with political speeches in churches rather than talking about Christianity and the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Naturally, before every storm Russian secret agencies whereas sometimes appealing their own fellows, sometimes exploited clergy in Tbilisi, Gyumri, and Yerevan. They assigned many of them with influencing Armenians in the Ottoman territories, particularly in Erzurum.

The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78 broke peace in the region one more time. The Armenian originated generals were commissioned to occupy the Eastern Anatolia. Lazarev, Muraviyev, Ter Gukasov, Loris Melikov were among the Armenian originated soldiers. They were welcomed by the Armenian fanatics in every place they seized, as the Armenian conquerors, not as Russian heroes. After the fighting in Zivin, Kars, and in Kızıltepe, Başgedikler in Şüregel, Russians started counter-attacks and came near to Erzurum, following the way of General Paskevich.

They faced with a very strong Turkish resistance in the wars in Deveboynu and Aziziye. The Armenians, who pursued a policy of "wait and see" until that time, raid Aziziye under the leadership of clergy in Tasmator and Müdürge, when they saw Russians came to the fronts of the city. Norman, who witnessed the events as the war correspondent of Daily News, drew attention to the role of Tamayev.

Russians could not have entered in Erzurum by fighting. After the sign of the cease-fire, Bab-ı Ali ordered to the command/governor of Erzurum by a telegram to open the gates of city. Ahmed Muhtar Pasha who had come into prominence thanks to his glorious defense and fighting was absent because he was called by Abdulhamid II. Kurd İsmail Pasha left Erzurum for Erzincan within the framework of the order. General Heimann and other commanders accompanying him, who entered in the city through the Kars Kapı, handled the administration of city. Armenians were now more powerful in comparison to Turks, and now they had found backers.

In the period of cease-fire, whereas Turks were keeping their silence, Armenians were pleased to be subjects of a state, like Russia in religious rituals in Armenian churches. Therefore first steps were taken to treason the "right of salt-bread." The crisis period of Erzurum in view of the Turks, clearly exhibited in memoirs of Austrian Dr. Ryan. Monument of Unknown Soldier that was built by Lazarev and Melikov on behalf of the Tsar was as if the symbol of "saving from the Ottomans." The deceived Armenian school children with various pretexts

were brought to the front of the monument, which led another unfavorable event against the Ottomans.<sup>17</sup>

The Ottoman-Russian reconciliation was provided through the Edirne, St. Stephanos, and finally Berlin Treaties. After the Berlin Treaty of July 13, 1878, Russians withdrew to the newly establish border; Erzurum, thereby returned to the Ottoman sovereignty. However, Kars, Artvin, Ardahan provinces who have historical bounds, was left to the Russians as war compensation. The new border were tracing line of Narman-Oltu, Horasan-Zivin.<sup>18</sup>

Russians went on their deceits on the Armenians after they had withdrawn. They warned the frightened Armenians on a possible wide range of slaughter to be carried out by Turks who would not forget the actions of people of Erzurum throughout the cease-fire and occupation. A group of Armenians prepared to leave Erzurum. Nevertheless, superiority of the Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmani and its responsibility to its citizens was appeared one more time. It was announced to the subjects by the agency of Musa Pasha that such an initiative would never be realized. Erzurum people had no idea to attempt such an action, as well. They knew that living brotherly with Armenians as previously would be accurate in spite of improper Armenian actions. Military and political consuls taking office in Erzurum were trying to protect Armenians rather recovery of Erzurum materially and spiritually. Paris, London, and other centers were often informed by their embassies in Istanbul.

The first movement to internationalize the Armenian question in Erzurum is the 61<sup>st</sup> article of the Berlin Treaty.<sup>19</sup> Lord Salisbury had his views “Immediately some reforms should be taken in Armenia. Armenians should be assured and promised with welfare and peace in the future. Safety of Armenians should be assured against the Circassians and Kurds. Measures taken on this issue should be overseen.”

Additionally, Lord Salisbury had “the expression of Armenia” emplaced to the text, thereby he stressed that question of Armenia and Armenians was an issue, which should be dealt with the public. Yet, it should be pointed out that there

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17 C.B. Norman, *Armenia and The Campaign of 1887*, Paris, 1878; C.B. Norman, *The War Correspondence of Daily News 1877*, London, 1878, p.303.

18 M.Celaeddin Paşa, *Mir'at-ı Hakikat; Tarihi Hakikatlerin Aynası*, prepared by İ. Miroğlu, Istanbul, 1983, pp.575-581.

19 M.Celaeddin Paşa, *Mir'at-ı Hakikat...*, p. 697.

were Armenians, not Armenia, within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Britain, who had good relations with the Ottomans for years, changed its policy and assumed championship of Armenians in the Eastern Anatolia, as well as its privileges in Cyprus.

The Ottomans, contrary to other countries, had already provided welfare and peace of Armenians. Negligence of rights of the migrant Circassians and Terkememes deported from the Caucasus by the Britain tainted the British objectivity. Some of the Kurds deceived by Russian funds and promises were active behind the border. Problems were not relevant to Armenians; instead they were related with Russians. It had been reported by consuls in the region to Layard in Istanbul that they were scathing with a tribal mood to some Armenians and Turks in the Ottoman territories, both in Iran and Russia for long time.

The Ottomans were experiencing heavy financial difficulties because of the war. Notwithstanding these problems, it had cordially started to reforms particularly in Erzurum as envisaged in the Berlin Treaty. Delegations that were sent to eastern provinces from Istanbul, including Şakir Pasha, embarked on reforms. By the way, the expression of Vilayat-ı Sitte (six provinces) was recorded in official documents for the first time.<sup>20</sup> The Tanzimat and Islahat movements had provided the Armenians and Greeks with some rights. The Armenian representatives had started to take office in administration of the provinces, and counties. It is possible to see reflections of it in the Yearbooks (Salname) of the Province of Erzurum.<sup>21</sup>

Scarcities and loss of animals due to epidemic diseases upset economic life of the people of the region. Russian merchants and their Armenian representatives in the region were cheaply buying grains and animal products and selling them more expensively in Russia. As a result of this process many newly enriched people, many of whom were Armenians, were emerged in Erzurum and Kars. After the treaties, the Ottoman-Russian wars seemed to be ceased. Peace in the region continued until 1914. Yet, the Westerners and Russians did not give up to exploit Armenians for their interests. In conclusion, no more than two years after the war and treaty, secret activities were initiated. Armenians involved in illegal activities for an independent country.

The Armenian activity in Erzurum suddenly increased under the auspices of

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20 A. Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)*, Istanbul, 1933, pp. 83-91.

21 Konukçu, *Selçuklulardan Cumhuriyete...*, pp. 281-296.

Britain and Russia. In his report to the embassy in Istanbul, the British consul Eyres stated that the governor embarked on the Armenian uprising, arrested forty of insurgents one day before and the government knew names of 700 people involved in uprisings.<sup>22</sup>

Those were the members of an illegal organization called “Society of Defenders of Motherland.” Founders of that organization were Haçatur Kerekciyan, Karabet Nişkiyan, Agop İsgalatsiyan, Aleksan Yetelikyan, Hovannes Asturyan, and Yeğişe Tursunyan. That society started its activities in May 1881 and raised more than a hundred sworn members within three months. Erzurum bishop, Ormanian were aware of that activity of his community and secretly reported to the Patriarch, rather than government. Security authorities in Erzurum ascertained papers of oath issued by the society. That is why, many were arrested without stimulating Armenian row. Bishop Ormanian was also dispatched to Istanbul because of necessity. Trial of the Armenian secret activity ended in 1883. Forty person were convicted. Kerekciyan was imprisoned for fifteen years, and others were imprisoned for three, five or ten years. The Patriarchate in Istanbul took action upon these convictions. The Patriarchs, Nerses and Ormanian, saved Armenians from imprisonment through “mediation and favoritism.” Kerekciyan and other founding members were granted with imperial mercy by the Sultan.<sup>23</sup>

Soon after, Armenians had a demand to open a school near the Great Church of Erzurum. The governor reported this demand to the Bab-ı Ali. That demand of Armenians was evaluated as accurate, and a modern education institution was established. According to H. Pastirmacian, that school was built in the Nazik Bazaar, neighborhood of the Church, by a wealthy Armenian. It is recorded in Erzurum Yearbook that the school was opened in 1865, and licensed in 1897. As to Lynch, the school started to education in 1883, and man whom built the school died in 1890. The school called as Sansaryan by the people, although its original name was Sanasarian, educated many students. Two children of Governor Tahsin (Uzer) and a son of Mehmed Ali Pasha, Hüsrev Efendi were also trained in the same school.<sup>24</sup>

Armenians took a position against the government in Erzurum, in June 20,

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22 Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, Ankara, 1983, p. 128.

23 Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, pp.137-138; L. Nalbandyan, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, Los Angeles, 1963, p.87.

24 H. Pasdermadjian, *Histoire de L'Arménie*, Paris 1971, p.272; Lynch, *Armenia; Travels and Studies*, London 1901, pp.213-217; H. Tarbassian, *Erzurum(Garin) Its Armenian History and Traditions* New York, 1975, pp.102-112.

1890 due to a prosecution against them. The Governor took action upon a notice informing manufacture of arms in the church and school. Throughout legal procedure, a search warrant obtained from the court. The search was realized with a delegation involving clergy and manager of the school. The komitadjis immediately found a fertile ground and provoked Armenians with various deceits, and slanders. An uprising occurred in June 21. Upon the occurrence of an uprising and when some soldiers were killed and wounded, the Erzurum people took action as well.

Foreign representatives disseminated rumors that Armenians were being killed despite they lively witnessed to the facts. The Armenian clergy in various countries, also, disseminated baseless claims in a dramatic way – which Jesus never confirm – to provoke Christians there.<sup>25</sup>

Armenians were separated into different groups in terms of view and faith as of late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Whereas those Artze and Garin originated were conserving their traditional beliefs, the missionaries (like Cole, Stapleton and Chambers from the USA), who were prioritizing material and health care, were already making distinction of Catholic and Protestant.<sup>26</sup> The statements of “Armenian Catholics of Erzurum”, and “Catholic Village of Khodoutchor” were dramatic samples of such a distinction.

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The British Consuls in Erzurum, R. W. Graves and Charles S. Hamson permanently informed their embassy in Istanbul about the Armenians in Erzurum who were undergoing a very active term. H.A. Cumberbatch also reported some activities of the Armenian revolutionaries to his government. The then Armenian bishop in Erzurum was Ghevant Shismanian. The groups that were pointed out as the Armenian Revolutionary Committees were the Hinchak committee. They were realizing illegal activities among within their community in Erzurum. They killed Lawyer Artin Efendi Serkisyan and Simon Aga Bosoyan (merchant) to intimidate. H. A. Cumberbatch immediately reported the event to ambassador Sir P. Currie on October 11, 1895.<sup>27</sup>

A great disturbance was the case among the Armenians in Erzurum in 1895.

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25 *Müevvet*, 4 Kanun-ı Evvel 1890, p.2; C. Küçük, *Osmanlı Diplomasisinde Ermeni Meselesinin Ortaya Çıkışı (1878-1897)* [Emergence of the Armenian Question in the Ottoman Diplomacy] Istanbul, 1986, pp.106-107.

26 Willame Nesbit Chambers, *Yolculuk; Ramdan Thought on a Life in Imperial Turkey*, London, 1928.

27 B. Şimşir, *British Document on Ottoman Armenians*, Ankara, 1990, p.385.



Hinchak Committee, which founded in 1887, and Dashnaks which increased its influence in the 1890s were threatening those who did not support them. Just a year after its establishment, they killed Kerekciyan from the “Defenders of Motherland” in 1891 with the perception that “who is not with us, is our enemy.” Kerekciyan was a respected man among Armenians.<sup>28</sup>

In time, that murder was condemned and damned; that is why Dashnaks retreated. Although it declared its excuse for the murder, murderer Aram Aramyan was not convicted whatever the reason. Armenians of Erzurum were also involved in the Ottoman Bank incidence in Istanbul in 1895.

Uprising of the Armenian treachery in Erzurum broke out in October 1895. An armed group raid on the office of the governor to kill governor and bureaucrats there. They were encountered by the commander of gendarmerie. Some soldiers were killed in clashes; however, Armenians were forced to retreat. Developments after the incidence and its consequences were reported to Bab-ı Ali. Notwithstanding, an interesting assessment via Western eyes was made by S. Withmann. He wrote:

“The rumor that Marshall Şakir Pasha, who were in charge of reforms in Anatolia, with his watch on his hands as a bloodthirsty man, ordered those waiting for his orders to continue fighting Armenians for one and half an hour further in Erzurum, in October 1895 was disseminated all over the world.

Considering the objective of our travel, I met British Consul Mr. Graves, governor Mehmed Şerif Rauf Pasha, French Consul M. Roquefairreier, and Russian Consul General M. Maximov, respectively. I asked all of them whether they believe in the rumors about Şakir Pasha. M. Roquefairreier told they were ridiculous stories cited for funny, and added several words praising Şakir Pasha. M. Maximov said; “It is not my duty to denounce such stories. What I can say, Şakir Pasha is a brave and a very warm-hearted man. I recognize him for years. He is my friend.” I asked British Consul Mr. Graves “Would you anticipate any massacre if the Armenian revolutionaries did not come and did not encourage Armenians for uprising?” He answered “No” without hesitation. Even no one Armenian would be killed.”<sup>29</sup>

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28 K.S.Papazian, *Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Dashmaghtzoutine*, Paris 1932, p.36; Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, p.134.

29 Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, p.156; S. Withmann, *Turkish Memories*, London, 1914, pp. 29,70-94.

Tahsin Pasha, known as his closeness to the court, mentioned on the events in Erzurum, and other events in the east:<sup>30</sup> “Upon the second Armenian event, two people from the US Senate and orientalist came to Istanbul. Representatives of one of leading American newspapers was accompanying them. Their aim was to search the Armenian incidents and inform American people – both politically and via press – with the realities. Since Sultan Abdulhamid attached importance to influence of foreigners, particularly press, he received the delegation came from the USA; and had Şefik Bey, head of the Court of Appeal, accompanied them to go to the Eastern Anatolia. The American public, under incitement and inspiration of leaders of the Armenian sedition, were desperately against Turks.

They were almost convinced that the Armenian people were completely oppressed and faultless whereas Turks were oppressor and murderer. It should be proven that realities were different from that conviction. Members of the delegation that came from the USA were earnest, objective, and just people. They, together with the Turkish delegation accompanied them, toured everywhere. They saw everything; and heard everyman. Eventually, they convinced with the facts and released a report that rumors in America were baseless.”

Initially the committees were responsible for the events of 1890 and 1905.<sup>31</sup> They dragged the excited Armenians into an interminable adventure through secret propaganda. Despite these facts, Bab-ı Ali ordered just courts and convicted perpetrators to various penalties.

With the exception of several judicial incidents, Armenians remained loyal to the state. It went on till the dethronement of Abdulhamid II, who had a just and unbiased position. Travelers visited Erzurum, glanced at the position of Armenians and noted that they were in harmony with the government. The usual Armenian public opinion at that time was; “We are Armenians, we are loyal to our Sultan”

As K. Krikorian indicated, many Armenians including L. Ayıcıyan, Andranik Bilorian, Derenik Darpasian, Haçatur Der Nersesian, M. Hekimyan, Dariel Karacıyan, Mıgırdıç Efendi, Dr K. Melikyan, Dr E. Papazyan, Kirkor Şabanyan, Dr M. Yarmayan had marked on social and political life of Erzurum. Pastirmacians was also among the leading families in social life of Erzurum.<sup>32</sup>

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30 Tahsin Paşa, *Tahsin Paşanın Yıldız Hatıraları* [Memoirs of Tahsin Pasha in Yıldız], Istanbul, 1990, p.236.

31 M.Varandian, *Histoire de la Dashnagzoutune*, 2 Volumes, Paris, 1932.

32 Mesrob K.Krikorian, *Armenians in the Service of the Ottoman Empire (1860-1908)*, Boston ,1977, pp.44-

Foreign elements, committees, and those dreaming an Armenian state appeared one more time in the First World War. However, they dragged Armenians into an untermiated adventure. Erzurum experienced occupation between 1916-18, which was called as black days by people. Forces of General Yudenich appeared before the city gates on February 16, 1916. Leading figures in Erzurum and Mr. Stapleton welcomed the Russian commander at the Kars gate according to customs. General Yudenich realized a declaration urging people to go on daily business and to obey this order and later ones. There was not much intemperance in early days of occupation. The city was already evacuated by soldiers and people. Those, whose conditions are not appropriate for fleeing, remained in the city and withdrew to their houses.

Russian army was including soldiers from Kazan, Azerbaijan, Nakhcivan etc.. Due to their tolerant behaviors, people felt relieved to some extent. Settlement of officers and soldiers, who later involved in the occupation, in Muslim neighborhoods was seen as good development. However, Dashnaks and the Russian forces opposing the government due to deportation, initially remained silent. They gathered in Nazik Bazaar called as the Church Neighborhood by indigenuous people. Then, they secretly scattered into other neighborhoods.<sup>33</sup>

General Yudenich directed the western operation flank in Erzurum. Russian forces advanced towards Erzincan and Bayburt targets; partial resistances remained inconclusive. Mahmud Kamil Pasha, commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> army moved to Tercan through Yeniköy, and then to Erzincan plain. Ottoman forces were directed from the quarter at Peteriç. Another branch of the Russian army attempted to secure access to Trabzon, yet faced with an unexpected resistance in the Kop mountains and a second Çanakkale (Dardanelles) legend was experienced there, in view of Fevzi Çakmak. The 3<sup>rd</sup> army could not have withstand in Erzincan, and rapidly withdrew to Refahiye and planned the crucial defense in Suşehri/Endires. Since the rear guards commanded by Abdülkerim accurately realized its mission, there was not much loss in the army. General Yudenich who acted according to plans of Moscow, Tbilisi, Gyumri, and Erzurum, after seizing eastern ridges of Refahiye, announced there as border and order settlement accordingly. Seizure of Erzurum made Tsar Nikolai happy. Initially, he did not believe in reports to Moscow and asked confirmation by a telegram.<sup>34</sup>

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33 B. Aslan, *Erzurum'da Ermeni Olayları 1918-1920 ( Hatıralar-Belgeler-Kazılar)*[The Armenian Incidents in Erzurum, 1918-1920 – Memoirs-Documents-Excavations ], Erzurum, 2004, p.120-121.

34 For the army sec: *I.Dünya Harbinde Türk Kafkas Cephesi II. Ordu Harekatı* [Operation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army in

General Yudenich leaved administration to the Ottomans. Russian originated Governor and Mayor was appointed. By the way, charity foundations that emerged in Azerbaijan, were reflected in Erzurum and its around. Armenians did not welcome activities of Cemiyet-i Hayriye (Society of Charity) that acted only in a humanitarian line, and secretly overseen it.<sup>35</sup> Thus, earlier good days were suddenly ended. Execution of some individuals in charge of being the Unionist, firstly, consternated Turks. Armenians started to pursue their imagined rights. Nevertheless, command headquarter did not provide them with an official opportunity.<sup>36</sup>

Mobility in Erzurum in 1915-16 was adversely concluded for the army and people. As indicated above, a period of Russian occupation that lasted for two years, started. The Bolshevik revolution that embraced whole Russia, took place in 1917.<sup>37</sup> Slogan of “End to War” that disseminated by propagandists of the new regime were reflected even in Erzurum and Erzincan. Since the number of deserters increased, the remaining also followed their path. Officers could not secure order and discipline even in the least brigades. Considering this fact, the government had to concede a cease-fire in the Caucasus front. The Ottomans and Russians with the confirmation of high level military authorities in Moscow and Tiflis, agreed on a cease-fire in Erzincan. After the cease-fire agreement came into effect in December 1917, tranquility in the front was established.<sup>38</sup>

Russians in Erzincan and Erzurum started to withdraw to the back of 1878 border. The vacuum would be filled by the 1<sup>st</sup> Caucasus Corps attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. That is why the Ottoman Commander Mehmed Vehbi Pasha assigned Colonel Kazım Karabekir, who was just appointed to his corps, with the operation of Erzincan and Erzurum. Meanwhile, it was informed that the Armenians took action. They started to slaughter many Turks to establish long-dreamed greater Armenia, in cities, counties, and villages. Later on, Dr. Azaryevand and Antranik, who came to Erzurum from Tbilisi, initiated a massacre in the region with their forces.<sup>39</sup>

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the Turkish-Caucasus Front in WW I], Ankara, 1993.

35 Y.Aslan, *Erzurum'da Ermeni Mezalimi Hakkında Kantarcızade Hacı Mustafa'nın Hatıraları* [Memoirs of Kantarcızade Hacı Mustafa on the Armenian Atrocities], Atatürk Üniversitesi, Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Dergisi, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1993, p.97.

36 B. Aslan, *Erzurum'da Ermeni Olayları...*, p.123.

37 E.Şahin, *Diplomasi ve Sınır* [Diplomacy and Border], İstanbul, 2005, p.25.

38 *Dokumenti Vneşney Politiki SSSR*, Moskova 1959, p.53-56. For perception of the operation in other side sec., G.Gorganov, *La Participation de L'Armenians a La Guerre Mondial sur le caucasie (1914-1918)*, Paris, 1927, pp.100-108.

39 Twerdo-Khlebov, *War Journal of the Second Russian Fortress Artillery Regiment*, İstanbul, 1919, p.29.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Caucasus Corps immediately accelerated its operation. It managed to save Erzincan and Erzurum from the Armenian bullying and sanguinary in February and March. Almost 20.000 innocent people were slaughtered by the Armenians in the center and plain villages of Erzurum. The 1<sup>st</sup> Caucasus Corps could operated in Erzurum only on March 3, 1918. Following an operation realized through the gates of Kayak, Istanbul, and Harput on March 12, 1918, Antranik and his supporters could only survived by escaping through the Kars gate in a despicable way. Thus, Rüşdi, Halit and Fazıl Beys become the saviors of Erzurum.<sup>40</sup>

Erzurum was like an absolute ruin on March 12, 1918. Due to fires, many buildings were beyond any sign of life. Because of the slaughters on March 8-11, 1918, one or two people from almost every family, was martyred. Kazım Karabekir reported the save of Erzurum from the Armenian insurgents to headquarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army by a telegram. He also informed that he would march towards Hasan Kale through Horasan in a short time.<sup>41</sup>

Kazım Karabekir came to Erzurum with his headquarter on March 12, 1918, and immediately took some measures to refresh social life. First of all, fires were extinguished. The Armenian and Russian captives were secured. Recep (Peker) was appointed as the military governor. The municipality affairs were also assigned to Zakir Efendi. Kantarcızade Mustafa Efendi was commissioned to take security measures.<sup>42</sup>

Erzurum was still far from its previous life in the mid of March 1918. A few days later Vehib Pasha, Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army came to Erzurum and took information from Kazım Karabekir about the operation. In a short period, documents and photos of the Armenian atrocities ascertained by military were sent to Ministry of War, Istanbul.<sup>43</sup>

Erzurum was exposed to probably the most comprehensive and dramatic massacre of its history in February and March 1918. Armenians, without making any distinction of child, women or old, killed many people and put them in mass graves to clean signs of the massacre. Armenians caught many people in station,

40 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden Doğunun Kurtuluşu*, prepared by E. Konukçu, Ankara, 1990, p.137 ff.

41 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden ...*, p.214 ff.

42 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden ...*, pp.147,150.

43 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden ...*, p.225.

various neighborhoods as well as mansions of Mürsel and Ezirmikli Osman Efendi in Tahtacılar in Erzurum and killed them. Corpses were gradually searched out until late May by police and municipality – because it posed a danger for Erzurum – and those discovered were immediately buried.<sup>44</sup>

Homicides in Erzurum instantly recorded by Kazım Karabekir as previously mentioned. Photographs were also sent to Istanbul. Kantarcızade Mustafa and F. Tellioglu marked the extent of atrocities on history through their notes, as well.

Russian officers also noted objectively what they had seen, and submitted their notes to Kazım Karabekir, Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Caucasus Corps. Two treatises among them written by Lt. Colonel Andrey Tverdo-Khlebov have a paramount importance. Extent of the Armenian atrocities could be learnt through the treatises noted by that Russian officer.<sup>45</sup>

Captian Ahmed Refik Bey, also, displayed how oppressive the Armenian atrocities were, through documents, photos etc.<sup>46</sup> European journalists accompanying him documented the Armenian atrocities, as well.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, a delegation assigned in Istanbul, touring Erzurum and its villages, documented the most detailed information about the murdered Turks. Particularly the photos and cinema films by Necati Efendi carried those horrific scenes to today.<sup>48</sup>

The report submitted by Kazım Karabekir, Commander of the 15<sup>th</sup> Corps, to the US General J.G.Harbord who was in Erzurum, in September 25, 1919 was also very interesting.<sup>49</sup> Armenians carried on guilty-powerful game until today. Patronage of the Western states, unfortunately, inverted the facts. According to the Western circles, those exposed to the genocide was Armenians, not Turks.

Armenians continued their murders in the 20<sup>th</sup> century through remainders of Antranik, an organization like ASALA. However, the West brazenly ignores the facts like an ostrich. Sangunaries like Canpolatyan from Sivas, Vahan, Arşak,

44 Y.Aslan, *Erzurum'da Ermeni ...*, p.93-94.

45 *Tarihçe: II. Erzurum Kale Topçu Alayının Teşkilinden İtibaren Osmanlı Ordusunun İstirdadı Olan 12 Mart 1918'e Kadar Ahvali Hakkında Yazılış*, 29 Nisan 1918. Hatıra: 16 Nisan 1918 see, M. Demirel, *Rus Subaylarından Yarbay Tverdo-Khlebov ve Yzb.Pilya'ya Göre Ermenilerin Erzurum'da Türklere Yönelik Katliam Hareketleri*. (Ayrı Basım) pp .1-11.

46 For instance, *İki Komite İki Katil* [Two Committees, Two Murders], Istanbul, 1935.

47 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden ...*,p.97-252.

48 My copy.

49 Kazım Karabekir, *Kazım Karabekir'in Kaleminden ...*, note 48.

Murad from Sivas, Serop of Çapars, Setrak, Torkom, and above all Sepuh were primary actors of the massacres. Participation of Colonel Morel, who was recorded as a French originated Russian officer and great Armenophil, to them displayed how the massacre was realized.<sup>50</sup>

Until today, the issue of Turks murdered BY Armenians was unknown. Material evidences to the Armenian atrocities were revealed through excavations carried out by myself and members of Atatürk University. These excavations that created wide repercussions, materially introduced the Armenian atrocities to the Western world.<sup>51</sup> As to Armenia, it has been ignoring excavations and resorting lies and slanders like a juvenile offender.

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50 Twerdo-Khelebov, *War Journal of the...* p.22.

51 Bkz. B. Aslan, *Erzurum'da Ermeni Olayları...*, pp.677-750. It includes excavations in Alaca, Yeşilyayla, and Tanar.

# 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 Bey<sup>1</sup> 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 Kunalalp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricâli [Statesmen of Late Ottoman Period]*, ISIS, İstanbul, 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.<sup>2</sup> 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 cards<sup>3</sup> – on their immigration, which is underlined in many sources.<sup>4</sup>

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 Mehemmed) 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> Number of the Armenians that immigrated to the United States increased to 40.608 between 1900 and 1914.<sup>9</sup> Many of them settled down in New England, New York, Michigan, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and California.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup>

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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, Ledien, 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, Istanbul, 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.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup>

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.<sup>15</sup> The collected funds were spent for bringing more Armenian youth

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*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, Tarihten 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.<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup>, closely observed the Armenians' organizational activities, and their publications in the

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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 newspapers<sup>19</sup> 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.”<sup>20</sup> 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:

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“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.”<sup>21</sup>

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.”<sup>22</sup>

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

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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 26<sup>th</sup>, 1893.

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

22 *Haik*, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 Hentchaguien, 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.”<sup>23</sup>

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.<sup>24</sup> 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

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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.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, there were declarations supporting Armenians, released by the American churches in various times.<sup>26</sup> 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.<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup>

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.<sup>29</sup>

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

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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 12<sup>th</sup>, 1893.



the American Armenians and endangering survival of missionaries.<sup>30</sup> 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.<sup>31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup>

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.<sup>33</sup>

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 Nishan 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

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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.<sup>34</sup> 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*).<sup>35</sup> Additionally, we learnt from the Haik magazine on May 1, 1894 in which an Armenian spokesperson called Chitzian<sup>36</sup> 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.<sup>37</sup>

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.<sup>38</sup> 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.<sup>39</sup>

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

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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,

ment<sup>41</sup>, a group consisting of the Hinchak (Huntchaguist) 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.<sup>42</sup>

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.<sup>43</sup> 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.<sup>44</sup> 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,

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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 Dashnaktakan 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.”<sup>45</sup>

### **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.<sup>46</sup> According to this application, 15 Turkish

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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.<sup>47</sup> 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.<sup>48</sup> 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”.

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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 help, 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 made, 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 Mehemmed<sup>49</sup> 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.”<sup>50</sup>

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

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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:

“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.

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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.<sup>52</sup> 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

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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.”<sup>53</sup>

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.”<sup>54</sup>

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.<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, the embassy did not have answer since then; and the incident remained in dusty shelves of archives, probably as the first unsolved

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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, Mahmud, 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.”<sup>56</sup>

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.<sup>57</sup> 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.<sup>58</sup>

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

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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.



# DEEPENING THE OPPOSITION

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## **Abstract:**

*This article discusses probable political reasons behind the Polish Parliament's resolution recognizing the events of 1915-23 as the Armenian genocide (2005, April 18). Additionally, claim of the Armenian genocide is presenting a tactical conception, that is, "deepening in opposition." Opposition can not be formulated by counter-claims, saying "You also killed my people" against those accusing you by the same way. To the contrary, it means to be similar in behavior. An actual opposition would be created by putting humanism against fanaticism – rationalism against sentimentalism – high standing language of science against an insulting manner.*

**Key Words:** *Turkey, Poland, Polish Parliament Resolution, Stefan Meller, Aleksander Kwasniewski*

## **Öz:**

*Bu çalışmada, Polonya Parlamentosu'nun, 1915-23 olaylarını Ermeni soykırımı olarak tanıyan kararının (18 Nisan 2005) olası siyasi nedenleri tartışılmaktadır. Diğer yandan, Ermeni soykırımı tezi "karşıtlığında derinleşmek" gibi bir taktik anlayış ortaya konuyor. Karşıtlık, seni aynı şekilde suçlayan birisine, "Sen de benim insanlarımı öldürmüştün" diyerek oluşturulamaz. Aksine, bu davranışta aynılışmaktır. Gerçek bir karşıtlık bağnazlığın karşısına insancılık, duygunun karşısına akıl, hakaretâmez bir üslubun karşısına bilimin üstün dili çıkartılarak yaratılabilir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türkiye, Polonya, Polonya Parlamentosu Kararı, Stefan Meller, Aleksander Kwasniewski*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**T**he Polish Parliament legislated an act recognizing the Armenian genocide, on April 18, 2005. It was exactly one year before that a monument of genocide of the Armenian Cross was opened in Krakow, on April 17, 2004 with a great uproar, although it was not heard in Turkey. This decision of the Polish Parliament was naturally faced with reaction in Turkey and



led a great disappointment. Additionally, historical amity between Poland and Turkey further deepened feelings of reaction and disappointment.

Friendly attitude of Turkey towards Poland in uneasy periods in its history was not certainly to the interest of Turkey – as some may argue. Considering the following instance is beneficial in this regard. On the eve of the World War II, German ambassador to Turkey Franz von Papen demanded the residence of Polish Embassy from the then President İsmet İnönü, who rejected this offer despite his cautious foreign policy designed to keep Turkey out of World War II. This rejection of von Papen's demand for the Polish Embassy building by İnönü reflects a personal amity and friendly concerns. Yet the question remained unanswered considering why this warning came with regard to the Polish embassy rather than Czechoslovak embassy. Moreover, if we consider the fact that von Papen was ambassador of a powerful state capable of shaking the world in 1939, we can assess the greatness of risk. In conclusion, the Polish embassy in Ankara one of the few legations remained open in Europe throughout the WW II and performed utmost important activities.<sup>1</sup>

### **CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN POLAND AND THE RESOLUTION OF RECOGNITION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

Some of the comments in Turkey on the resolution of the Polish Parliament were about to view it as a means for internal politics in Poland. While some shared this comment at least because of high probability of this assessment, certainly some of them were aware of the fact that rate of conservative right has been increasing in Poland. This assessment was confirmed during visits of former politicians or the opposition (like former Prime Minister Marek Belka)<sup>2</sup>. The resolution was sponsored by a few rightist deputies through a coalition, representing conservative right. That is, the resolution was decision of the right and it seriously damaged bilateral relations between Poland and Turkey. However, high level visits of the Polish officials to Turkey succeeded the resolution which clearly displayed how Poland attaches an important place to Turkey in its foreign policy (and, as expected, to restore bilateral relations). Although these leading politi-

- 1 Piotr Nykiel, Katarzyna Biernat and Osman Fırat Baş, (eds.), *Lehistan'dan Bugünkü Polonya'ya* [From Lehistan to Poland Today], Ankara: Embassy of Poland, 2003, p.18.
- 2 Marek Belka, professor of economics, paid a one-day visit to Turkey throughout his efforts to raise support for his candidacy for the general secretariat of OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), at the end of his premiership on October 25, 2005.

cians and statesmen were representatives of the idea that sponsored the resolution in power<sup>3</sup>, they were reluctant to assume responsibility for a resolution accepted in the previous parliament. All of them, without exception, underlined the great importance of bilateral relations, and expressed their hope that the resolution would not damage the bilateral relations. They reiterated complete support for Turkey in his endeavors to be member of the EU, yet they have not went beyond a framework could be viewed in expressions of Marek Jurek, Speaker of the Parliament of the Polish Republic who is the recent Polish statesman visited Turkey.

“Poland does not view historical events as a condition for Turkey’s accession to the EU. It is not favored affiliating this issue with the EU, as well. Yet, compliance of all countries to be members of the EU with the Copenhagen criteria is crucially important for us. The condition, which is asked all countries, of course including Turkey, within the framework of these criteria is to provide freedom of expression on history.”<sup>4</sup>

Yet, even these measurable statements were not free from critics by a faction in Poland. For instance, the former Polish Foreign Minister, who assumed many duties in foreign affairs<sup>5</sup> and a respected professor of history, Stefan Meller’s approach<sup>6</sup> during his visit to Turkey was criticized by a Polish citizen in his comment for an article titled “91st Anniversary Activities of the Armenian massacre”<sup>7</sup>

3 In a news report after the pass of the resolution recognizing the Armenian genocide in the Polish Parliament, the Armenian Committee “presents its gratitude and thanks to those including Kazimierz Ujazdowski, Speaker of the Parliament, and deputies Marek Jurek and Zbigniew Ziobro who contributed to pass of the Parliament resolution.” Ujazdowski is among the leading figures of Kaczynski twins’ party (Law and Justice) heading the rightist coalition in power today, and is Minister of Culture and National Heritage. (He paid his first official visit to Turkey after he become minister, for a cultural activity, on December 25, 2005.) Marek Jurek is, now, Speaker of the Parliament and Zbigniew Ziobro is Minister of Justice, in the cabinet.

4 Quoted in Erhan Akdemir’s interview with him, [http://www.abhaber.com/haber\\_sayfasi.asp?id=12523](http://www.abhaber.com/haber_sayfasi.asp?id=12523). The Parliament Speaker visited Turkey on July 5-8, 2006.

5 Professor managed a key legation for Poland as ambassador to Moscow. He had so distinguished place as an experienced person coming from the bureaucracy of the foreign ministry and with a good reputation that he was appointed to Marczynekiewicz cabinet in spite of he was outside politics. When A. Lepper (Head of Self-Defense Party), who has an extreme nationalist and populist discourse, involved in the cabinet as minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Meller resigned from his position in the cabinet declaring that he could not be in the same cabinet with a person like him, on April 28, 2005.

6 Meller stated: “It is aimed at commemorating the misery of thousands of people in the last century by the resolution. It is the resolution of parliament, not the official position of our government.” Ferai Tınç, “Polonyalı bakandan, Ermeni sorunu girişimi” [the Armenian question initiative of the Polish Minister], *Hürriyet*, 14.04.2006. In this essay, Tınç published excerpts from her interview with the minister.

7 This comment was published in a Polish news site in April 24, 2004, in <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl>. It is also published in internet “Gazeta” of the Polish diaspora in Toronto, Canada, [www.gazetazeta.com](http://www.gazetazeta.com). It is written by Michal Tyrpa, president of the foundation of *Paradis Judaeroum* (Paradise of Jews).

and published on internet, as following: “Foreign Minister of the Polish Republic Stefan Meller, when he was asked..., said that the resolution of the parliament does not bound the government. Turkey has no place in Europe unless it admitted the genocide. (...) One more thing – when authorities in the capital city will decide to build a khachkar (the Armenian cross erected in memorial to the ‘genocide’). Wroclaw, Krakow, Rzeszow, Elblag have already khackars for along time; when Warsaw will have it?”

It is possible to see many comments in the same line with the comment mentioned above, in short surf in internet. Of course, such a simple search does neither provide digital data as certain as public opinion poll, nor represent common view of all Polish citizens. Yet it provides some clues to understand existence of a practical ground to appeal to the Parliament resolution on the Armenian genocide in internal politics, and a practical ground, which brought the Catholic rightist movement of Kaczynskis<sup>8</sup> in Poland. A more certain digital data could be attained through polling rates of political parties that are members of the nationalist-conservative coalition. The coalition of parties<sup>9</sup> including Law and Justice Party, Self Defense of the Republic of Poland, League of Polish Families represents 46,2 percent of total Polish people, and one may observe gradually increasing discontent with the government among the greater parts of the Polish society. Unwillingness of Polish society towards non-western societies, the east, and particularly towards the Islamic east could be understand through some political (i.e. loss of credibility of the left; participation to a supranational organization like the EU), economic (the EU policies and occupation of labor market by cheap labor coming from the east, particularly from Ukraine which narrows the market for Polish labor), geopolitical (eternal rival, Russia), historical and socio-psychological (some complexes of superiority or inferiority that solidified in the Polish mind, deriving from certain historical experiences), and conjectural – that is valid for almost all western world – (September 11 attacks) reasons.

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8 President Lech Kaczynski and his twin Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the Prime Minister.

9 Voting rates of these parties are as following: Law and Justice Party 26,9 per cent, Self-Defense 11,4 percent, League of Polish Families 7,9 percent.

**TRANSITION TO A NEW INTELLECTUAL GROUND:  
“TO DEBATE TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER RATHER  
THAN FIGHTING”<sup>10</sup>**

By the way, we should make particular emphasis on former Polish Foreign Minister Stefan Meller. In his visit to Turkey in the last year, Meller suggested research of claims in the Armenian issue by a working committee consisting Polish and Turkish academics. As it is reported in the Turkish press, Turkey welcomed this suggestion. Abdullah Gül, the Turkish Foreign Minister said “we considered positively,” and reproached Armenia; “(...) of course, it is important what will Armenia say. We made some suggestions to them. Unfortunately they did not take a constructive stance, even they did not reply.”<sup>11</sup>

It seems through the statements of Meller that Poland will continue to support Turkey’s bid for the EU membership; nevertheless, this time it extended support with a new suggestion of opening to be conclusive. What he meant to say could be considered as endeavoring to improve Turkey’s image, as well. Although it is unpleasant to hear, considering the fact that claims for the Armenian ‘genocide’ though it is baseless, blemishes Turkey and the Turkish people – with a reason deriving not from its own faults – and causes a misperception in the world public and particularly in the West, his suggestion should be viewed as a ascertaining an objective case and as a good-will sign. When Meller told Poland was ready to share its experiences, he meant to share Polish experiences throughout the process of normalizing its relations with its once bloody neighbors (like Germany and Ukraine). Thus, it could be viewed as Meller called Turkish intellectuals, academics and opinion leaders for a transition of intellectual thinking to assess history and people. This indicates a new ground in which, above all, Polish intellectuals started to devise ideas, saving from the bears of history as far as possible in order to create today and tomorrows that is free of problems; and thereby led to arise of similar reactions in their counterparts (or otherwise).

10 An excerption from statements of Meller. F. Tınç, “Polonyalı bakandan (...)” [The Polish Minister ...], “Hürriyet”, 14.04.2006. “*My dream, as an historian, is to debate this issue with The Armenian and Turkish historians drinking raki and wine. To debate to understand each other rather than fighting. I believe in our bitter and difficult experiences with Germans after the WW II would be beneficial. We also experienced meetings in which we discussed our hardy issues with the German and Ukrainian historians. In every meeting, initially blood was mentioned, and then sufferings; yet as far as we debated we approached to realities.*”

11 Değer Akal, “Özel-Polonya’dan Türkiye ve Ermenistan arasında arabuluculuk önerisi” [Exclusive: Polish suggestion for intermediation between Turkey and Armenia], AB Haber, 02.05.2006: [http://www.abhaber.com/haber\\_sayfasi.asp?id=11343](http://www.abhaber.com/haber_sayfasi.asp?id=11343).

Philosophical bases of this call – it may be estimated that Meller, as an historian, know it well – could be summarized as following: It is possible to appeal two approaches in understanding relations between human and history. Some argue that human is an outcome of history (with a more rough word; human is a product of history). (That is, when one claims that the Turks killed my ancestors; today, they should pay spiritual and material compensation to me for that crime, he is constructing today according to history, and, it means that because he identified himself with this construction he started to perceive himself as an outcome –product – of a far history in which he was not exist, and thereby he had no influence to affect developments.) The other approach argues that human creates history, as well, as much as history created human. Human being has a superiority to history within this conception, since solely human has an invisible power to determine the course of history, today and tomorrow, in a way or in another way (more comfortable or more problematic, more peaceful or more bloody etc.). If someone criticizes the second approach to interactions between history and human to be individualistic (and if someone argues that history could not be read by this way), it would be appropriate remind them the fact that the Turkish Republic was projected individually by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk with its all concepts and institutions.

Nevertheless, Turkey's suggestion to Armenia to set up a joint research commission composed of historians and to open the Ottoman archives to this commission in 2005 – which was rejected by Armenia – proved that the Turkish intellectuals has already directed towards an intellectual ground that may lead conciliation, without the suggestion of Meller. It is key to this article, since on that point an actual opposition started to be constructed and be deepened that would be in favor of Turkey. Opposition cannot be formulated by counter-claims, saying "You also killed my people" against those accusing you by the same way. Opposition does not mean responding the claim that "1,5 million people killed" – an amount that objective historians also acknowledged as exaggerated – in an way measuring human as a digital data with a counter claim suggesting that number of victims is about "300.000" – undoubtedly which is based on actual numbers – in a way that is not more humanitarian than the former. To the contrary, it means to be similar in behavior. An actual opposition would be created by putting a completely opposite approach against a propaganda, which is far from science and rationalism, insulting, obsessive and reactionary (some instances of which will be dealt with below). Opposition means putting reconciliation against intransigence; reason against sentiment; high standing language of science against an insulting manner; humanism against hatred etc.. By that suggestion Turkey,

unlike Armenia, captured the first hand to deepen opposition for solution of the issue, and to affect it in favor of its interests. Any progress in this way would marginalize those advocating the Armenian causes with a strict and intransigent approach, have them deepened, which would increase credibility of the Turkish part in view of international public.

We should also note that, by the way, Turkey is the only party capable of maneuvering in such a way. It seems that there is an ossified and obsessed hatred impeding reason among many proponents of the Armenian arguments – of course not all of the Armenian people and intellectuals. Indeed, only an idea without obsession may maneuver according to circumstances. However, there is no such a deep-rooted hatred in the Turkish community<sup>12</sup> - at least among the great majority - (in spite of ASALA terror in the 1970s and 1980s), which is an evidence weakening the genocide claims. Otherwise, there must be a deep and pervasive hatred in the communal subconscious of a nation that attempted genocide, against the other people.

### THE RUSSIAN FACTOR

In this section of the article, it is attempted to explore whether the resolution of the Polish Parliament recognizing the genocide has a mean in terms of foreign policy strategy, independent of internal politics in Poland. We will appeal to an interview of the Polish TV with the former Polish President, Alexander Kwasniewski, in order to analyze this aspect of the matter. That interview has a such background: Debates on whether the Polish President should participate in the 60th anniversary celebrations of the end of World War II, to be held in Moscow, just prior to the celebrations, was prevailed in the Polish public last year, because in case of his participation there might be some problems with regard to protocol (if Poland took a back seat in the protocol). It was realized as expected and even more than it. Throughout the parade, the Polish President had sit on a back seat; and then Putin, even did not pronounced the name of Poland while he was counting states that struggled against Hitler one by one and parried Poland among the “anti-fascist forces.” Whereas Kwasniewski experiencing difficult times, Putin honored General Jaruzelski, the last president of the People’s Republic of Poland

12 Murat Belge mentioned on conclusions of a polling conducted in Armenia by Kevork Bogosyan, and in Turkey by Ferhat Kentel for TESEV, in his column titled “Turkish-Armenian polling,” in Radikal, 29.03.2005. So, “(...) one may conclude that gravity of prejudice is intensified among the Armenians. For instance, when they asked what kind of idea did the have about the “other,” rate of the Turks who said “negative” was about 30.8 percent, “very negative” was 6.6 percent. The rate for answers to the same question were 47. 2 percent, and 27.8 percent respectively.

(that is the communist Poland known as the second Republic) with the medal of 60th anniversary of the victory. Kwasniewski came to TV screen to advocate his reasons to participate in celebrations in Moscow as well as some other criticized activities. It is worthy to praise the Polish democracy tradition on this issue, since two journalists' asked questions to the president in harsh tone that it was unusual to ask a president. Kwasniewski's self-reliance and intellectual readiness should be praised. He was not irritated with the toughest questions. He posed an impression that he had contributed intellectually to foreign policy strategy of Poland, at least he was completely masterful of that strategy which was drawn by, of course, high level officials of the foreign ministry (that may be took several years to draw, and which should be above party politics and ideologies). For instance, he advocated a principle that reason, rather than sentiments should be decisive in foreign policy making (thereby he explains why he went to Moscow), when he said; "It is necessary to be inside a reality, in order to change it." Yet, how this reality perceived in Poland with regard to Russia? Former Polish President talked about the existence of a group of anti-Poland intellectuals in Russia. It was difficult to estimate its capability to influence public opinion and how it prevalent was. It had some publication organs and Kwasniewski had read Polish translation of a long article published in a newspaper with the same line with this group. The article was full of critics to Poland (somewhere insulting Poland) and concluded as: "we prefer those in Istanbul to make business rather than these ones (Polishes), at least they are as men!" It was the sentence that Kwasniewski attached particular importance and viewed as dangerous. He commented as: "we should prevent Russia to make business directly with Istanbul or Germany. If it will make business, it should make it with the EU as a whole. Europe should have a common policy towards Russia. We demand it, and we are working for it."

He meant by that statement, Poland demands from the EU a common foreign policy structure. One of the leading reasons why Poland supports Turkey's bid to the EU is the expected role of Turkey to be assumed if the EU manages to establish a common foreign policy structure, as Poland demand. Contrary to this explanation, the same strategy is also explaining the resolution of the Polish Parliament recognizing the Armenian genocide. Poland joined the EU Parliament, France, Italy, Greece, and Switzerland etc. to have a joint approach to the issue, by accepting that resolution. So, while demanding common policy towards an issue, it should also join a common policy towards another issue or situation.

Yet, there is another contradiction here, because the resolution enjoining Po-

land to the genocide choir of Europe<sup>13</sup> and world (similarizing its position particularly with the EU) was taken by a nationalist-conservative movement distressing the EU members<sup>14</sup> through its discordant discourse and activities with the EU. For instance, appointment of Anna Fotyga to replace Meller as foreign minister was evaluated by the “International Herald Tribune”<sup>15</sup> as a victory of President Lech Kaczynski, who is more nationalist and less European oriented in comparison to Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz.<sup>16</sup> “Poland’s conservative president, Lech Kaczynski, opened a battle to wrest control of foreign policy from his prime minister on Wednesday by appointing one of his closest advisers as foreign minister.” The report, fed up by comments of many Polish and German foreign policy analysts, projected that “increasingly nationalist policies” of President that is different from Marcinkiewicz’s European oriented foreign policy and his initiatives to improve Poland’s relations with particularly Germany, would cause troubles in Poland’s relations with Germany and the EU. Some German politicians argue that “If these nationalist trends continued, Poland would have little chance of winning support inside the EU for its Eastern policy (that is EU’s enlargement to include Ukraine and Belarus).”

To sum up, the Russian factor remains to be decisive not only in Poland’s relations with Turkey, but also in many instances (i.e. the EU’s enlargement policy). Since Poland cannot change its geographical location (or unless Russia does not adopt confidence building policy towards Poland), it seems that, it will continue to be so.

### TEXT ANALYSIS

Armenians had a position and role in history Poland that has a multi-ethnic society, until the late 18th century, resembling their position and role in the Ottoman history. They were successful in trade, diplomacy, and occupations necessitating intellectual competence and they were reliable people for the state. We can give an example to this analysis indicating Gregor, one of the first Polish ambas-

13 It should be bear in mind that the Russian Duma has also recognized the genocide. It will be more appropriate to understand reasons behind the resolution should be viewed in special alliance relationship between Armenia and Russia.

14 About the time this article written, Kaczynski brothers “*Shakened Brussels initiating a campaign to reinvigorate death penalty in whole Europe.*” The EU Commission reacted as “*It is reactive. Do not mind it!*” “Hürriyet”, 5 August 2006.

15 Judy Dempsey, “International Herald Tribune”, 11.05.2006.

16 Marcinkiewicz, resigned his post in on July 8, 2006. Jaroslaw Kaczynski, twin of President, succeeded him. J. Kaczynski was appointed as Prime Minister on July 10, 2006. Marcinkiewicz is, now, mayor of Warsaw, the capital city, since July 20, 2006.



sadors delegated to the Ottoman state in 15th century was an Armenian. Poland have many Armenian originated citizen some of whom came to Poland centuries before and considered there as country keeping their cultural and national distinctions, and some of whom (about 40.000) came through a second wave of immigration after 1989. It is not mistaken to say Armenian society in Poland initiated lobbying activities against Turkey, as in the United States and Europe, in the 1990s (after the end of the Cold War)<sup>17</sup>, since the communist government in Poland before 1989, affiliated with the Soviet policies, tried to build a supra-national identity (belonging to labor) above the national identity, did not permitted such nationalist establishments with the exception of special Party politics. Armenian community in Poland, today, has got around the Armenian church cultural associations that have websites, publishing houses publishing books, articles etc. about the 'genocide', and is organizing exhibitions, conferences, and commemorative ceremonies for the 'genocide' in every April 24.

Acceptance of the resolution in the Polish Parliament recognizing the 'genocide' proves how these organizations influence the Polish people. They are transformed into pressure group affecting politics. It is the phenomenon, what Meller meant to say when he said "the Armenian origined politicians were influential in Parliament's decision on this issue,"<sup>18</sup> or when former Speaker of the Senate praised himself stating "the Polish Parliament could have not bore on pressure of the Armenian lobby, yet he did not complied with that pressure."<sup>19</sup> However, it would me a more appropriate approach to evaluate source of the power of the Armenian community in Poland as it is not derived from itself, rather from its' being part of the Armenian Diaspora that have political and economic power, probably even beyond Armenia, in all over the world.

Statements of the Armenian arguments in Polish is based on certain texts; an analysis of the discourse of that statements independent of its meaning (so, it is the business of historians what they mean) indicates that these statements have a style to disadvantage of Turkey, moreover there is a stylistic entrapment for Turkey. These texts are heavily involves Christian ideology and consciously aims at building an emotional subtext raising supporter. However, it is not necessary

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17 Actually, efforts of the Armenian lobby started to be conclusive after the end of the Cold War in the Western bloc, as well. Initially, the European Parliament decided to recognize the genocide in 1987, and then it was succeed by many parliaments of the member states. It could be explained by decreasing strategic importance of Turkey in the NATO after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

18 F. Tınç, "Polonyalı bakandan (...)", "Hürriyet", 14.04.2006.

19 Speaker of the 5<sup>th</sup> Polish Senate Prof. Dr. Longin Hieronim Pastusiak visited Istanbul during the Polonezköy "Cherry Festival" on May 20, 2005 and met with İsmail Alptekin, Deputy Speaker of the TGNA.

to appeal an emotional address to tell a fact like shining of the sun from the east in every morning. Then, what is the mean of that subtext numerously referring “Christian suffering”? Whether are the claims of Armenian massacre not real as objectively as the shining of sun, or has it some obscure points to be overcome by faith?

“Call on Poles and Armenians”<sup>20</sup> of the Armenian Organization Committee to arrange various commemoration activities in 2005 announces that “Armenians will celebrate anniversaries of two important events” in the 1455th year of born of Armenians, and in the 2005th year of born of Jesus. The former is the date, St. Mesrops Mashtots invented the Armenian alphabet; after then “the Bible and the writings of Church Fathers were translated into “Grabar”, the old Armenian language.” That is, with the exception of holy books, everything realized with that alphabet is less important, which deepens meaning of succeeding paragraph. “The latter of them is the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide by the Turkish government. At the end of that crimes against humanity which was started in April 24, 1915, 1.5 million defenseless Armenians, 4.000 of whom was bishops and pastors of the Armenian traditional Catholic Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church, were killed.” Author of these statements absolutely knows how the crime against humanity is significant whoever the victim, yet he was also aware how the front will widen when he started his statement as “Christians were massacred, bishops were killed” (thereby putting the case in the context of clashes of civilizations, and wars of religion). He also knows such kind of statements would provoke an emotional reaction surpassing the reason in a heavily Catholic community as in Poland (who is also increasingly becoming conservative as mentioned above).

He knows more. He tries to appeal psychological repression as an effective instrument through presenting the case as if it is a problem of faith, a problem of all Christian communities to which every Christian should unconditionally oppose by writing the Armenian Genocide Monument in Krakow was opened “despite an attacking campaign against the Armenian community (...) initiated by Jan Truszczynski, Undersecretary of the Polish Foreign Ministry, and despite hesitant stances of Jacek Majchrowski, Mayor of Krakow, Governor Jerzy Adamik, and Janusz Sepiol, Speaker of the Assembly of Malopolskie Province.” The final blow came through praising the Polish Pope who has a very remarkable place in Polish view as well as his being spiritual leader of all catholic world. Pope Jean Paul II

<sup>20</sup> Taken from the URL: <http://www.albert.krakow.pl/otmianie/apel.htm>

(that is, he is the Pope that Turks tried to assassinate) was presented by gratitude of the Polish Armenian community, because he had visited the Armenian Genocide Monument in Yerevan, and signed a declaration with Katolikos Garegin II, proclaiming that the Armenian Deportation of 1915 was the first genocide of the 20th century in 2001.

Another text written against “the Turkish barbarity”<sup>21</sup> made references to deeps of the religious and national subconscious of the Polish people. It highlighted that Armenia “is the first country to officially recognize Christianity and carried out the first fighting to defend it” and stated that Armenia “remained loyal to its faith for centuries” standing against the pressure of barbarian Islamic communities throughout history as “an island in the ocean of Islam.” It also quoted from writings of Anatol France, French author, in 1915: “Reason behind the murder of Armenia is its being sister of Europe in Asia; however Europe denies that sisterhood and washing its dirty hands.” All of them could be attributed a subtext to be tied with the myth of “Jesus of Peoples” that was adapted by national poet of Poland, Adam Mickiewicz (when Poland was under captivity) from suffering of Jesus on the cross for the forgiveness of sins of humanity, which could be summarized as: the Armenian people was, also, on the cross for the continuance of Christianity, as the Polish people on the cross for the forgiveness of imperialist European states.

Another argument that is appealed by such kind of texts that demand ensuring justice, reveal of the facts, and bear sufferings of Armenia people on mind, is Hitler’s statement prior to his attack on Poland: “kill women, and olds mercilessly – Hitler ordered – who remember the Armenian massacre today?” However, Hitler is not a good reference point. It should be remembered that, as history clearly proved, he was mistaken in his thoughts. That is why, those exercising history today, would remark surpassing Hitler being aware of the fact that his remarks would be remembered at least for 67 years. That text was certainly written with that concern.

The texts that were analyzed above indicate that Turkey has disadvantages to advocate her causes, since the Turks would not talk to the Polish people with a language appealing common symbols as close as Armenians. However, there are some advantages, as well, for Turkey, because they necessitate creating stylistic opposition. So, these texts mainly aimed at construction of new texts outside,

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21 Taken from the URL: <http://www.przk.pl/archiwum.php>

complementary to their arguments to support their cause (as well as aimed at molding public opinion inside). In a simple way, an accusation like “you killed our bishops” needs a response like “you had already killed our people.” Such a complementary is not beneficial neither for solution of the issue, nor for Turkey and Armenia, even for the entire world. It indicates that Hitler’s world could not be passed over.

## CONCLUSION

This article is written to address reasons behind the resolution of the Polish Parliament recognizing the Armenian genocide. However, probably it has modestly passed its limits, and focused on a tactical conception could be summed up as deepening in opposition to the Armenian claims, or creating an opposite approach. Such a new approach would increase credibility of the Turkish arguments. In order to draw attention of everyone to that new approach, it welcomed suggestion of former Polish Foreign Minister to establish a joint commission, and the idea of conducting joint research with voluntary researchers from all over the world.

A well-known philosophical argument turn towards elements that is complementary and similar to each other. So, a claim like “you killed our bishops” needs to be complemented with another accusation like “you had already killed our imams.” It is uneasy to estimate, to what extend a change in approach would attract similar elements in other side, Armenia and even in the Armenian diaspora, that is, intellectuals who does not indulge in propaganda approach and aimed at revealing only the facts. Only such kind of complementary and joint research would provide the level in which those texts are saved from ideology. Thus, for instance, such an approach may provide us with an opportunity to reach many data and document in Russian archives, which were assumed very important for the arguments of Turkey. Additionally, stepping together to a new goal means experiencing a new history. Nevertheless, history is made by human as far as human is an outcome of history; and secret power to materialize a better history (at least better than Hitler realized) lies here.



# A LITERATURE BETWEEN SCIENTIFICITY AND SUBJECTIVITY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE BOOKS RECENTLY WRITTEN ON THE ARMENIAN ISSUE

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## **Abstract:**

*This article is written to explore how the Armenian question is being projected towards Western public opinion through several trends which has recently emerged in the Western literature on the Armenian genocide allegations. Within this framework, three trends are identified: non-scientific subjective discourse, partially-scientific subjective discourse and scientific objective discourse. In the article, the works of main representatives of these trends are exposed to a comparative and critical analysis in order to comment on the perception of the Armenian question in the West.*

**Key Words:** *Armenian question, Armenian genocide allegations, Robert Fisk, G. J. Meyer, Donald Bloxham, Simon Payaslian, Merrill Peterson, Guenter Lewy, Edward Erickson*

## **Öz:**

*Bu makale Ermeni meselesi konusunda son dönemde Batı literatüründe göze çarpan bazı eserleri inceleyerek Batı akademik toplumunda ortaya çıkan bazı eğilimleri tespit etmek ve bunun sonucunda Batı kamuoyuna Ermeni meselesinin nasıl yansıtıldığını gözler önüne sermek amacıyla kaleme alınmıştır. Bu çerçevede bilimsel olmayan taraflı yazın, kısmen bilimsel taraflı yazın ve bilimsel tarafsız yazın olmak üzere üç temel eğilim tespit edilmiş ve bu eğilimleri temsil eden yazarların eserleri karşılaştırmalı ve eleştirel bir analize tabi tutularak Ermeni meselesinin Batı'daki algılanışı yorumlanmıştır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ermeni meselesi, Ermeni soykırımı iddiaları, Robert Fisk, G. J. Meyer, Donald Bloxham, Simon Payaslyan, Merrill Peterson, Guenter Lewy, Edward Erickson*

## INTRODUCTION

The Armenian question, which has recently come to the agenda again with the passing of a bill by the French Parliament that punishes the denial of the so-called Armenian genocide, has been one of the grass-root problems of the Turkish foreign policy for many years. New publications on this subject have been produced in increasing numbers every day not only in Turkey but also in the West. Some of these publications are completely composed of heroism, lacking scientific qualifications, and aimed at influencing a particular segment of the public opinion. However, besides these prejudiced publications, which are lacking knowledge, academic publications have increasingly begun to appear recently. In other words, not only the number of the publications but also their academic value is increasing; therefore, the quantitative development in the literature has been followed up by a qualitative growth.

Within this framework, three main tendencies among the books that have recently been published on the Armenian question in the Western literature draw the attention. The first one is consisted of the books that are comprised of a non-scientific and subjective style. The emotional and subjective discourse that lacks scientific values, which has generally been seen in the majority of the books published in the past, continues to shape this literature. In the first part of this article, two important representatives of this tendency, Robert Fisk and G. J. Meyer, will be examined.

Especially in the last five years there has appeared a new tendency in the books written in the West according to which their scientificity has increased but their subjectivity has persisted. Increasingly more academicians have made scientific analysis on the subject, made use of the archival documents and the primary sources within this framework, and referred to these sources in their works; therefore they have increased the academic reliability of their works. But still, especially with the extensive use of one-sided achieve documents and by picking the documents that are advocating the discourse of one specific side and ignoring the others, an extremely prejudiced manner has predominated this literature. In the second part of the article the works of Merill Peterson, Simon Payaslian and Donald Bloxham, who are among the representatives of this new tendency, will be examined with a comparative analysis.

It is possible to argue that the works that are influenced by a new and significant tendency in the Western literature draws the attention more. This tendency

aims at explaining what had really happened in Eastern Anatolia between the years 1915-16 instead of a fruitless discussion with regard to the Armenian question that is “the genocide exists or not”. While doing this, it reflects a style that adheres to both scientificity and objectivity. In the last part of the article, the works of the two important representatives of this last tendency, Lewy and Erickson, will be examined.

In conclusion, a comparative literature analysis will provide the reader important clues on how the Western academic society has perceived the Armenian question. Within this framework, how this question has been projected to the Western public opinion will be better understood. The answers to the questions why the Armenian issue has been kept in the agenda of the Western public opinion and why increasingly more Western parliaments issued verdicts that recognize the so-called Armenian genocide in fact lie in the literature that is written on the Armenian question.

#### **A. THE FIRST TENDENCY: NON-SCIENTIFIC SUBJECTIVE DISCOURSE**

The first one of the tendencies regarding the Armenian question that is observed in the Western literature recently is in fact a continuation of the common point of the works that constitute the body of this literature. Accordingly, the genocide claims are presented with a completely demagogic approach, which addresses to the feelings of the reader. The important thing is not revealing the truth but to create a new rhetoric by an almost novelistic approach, which has no relation to the reality. Among the major characteristics of this tendency, the harshness of the style, exclusion of the scientific methods by all means, and prejudiced and subjective style of writing can be considered.

Two of the most important examples of this type of literature, where scientificity is ignored and subjectivity is given priority, will be analyzed in a comparative way below. The first one is the chapter titled as ‘Genocide’, which is written as an annex to the seventeenth chapter, ‘The Ground Shifts’, of the G. J. Meyer’s book, *A World Undone: The Story of the Great War, 1914 to 1918*.<sup>1</sup> The second one is the tenth chapter of Robert Fisk’s book, *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest*

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1 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone: The Story of the Great War, 1914 to 1918*, New York, Delacorte Press, 2006.



of the Middle East, which is titled as ‘The First Holocaust’.<sup>2</sup>

Before going on the analysis of these chapters, it will be useful to have some idea about their writers. American writer G. J. Meyer is neither a historian nor an academician. Meyer, who identifies himself as a “professional writer”, worked as a columnist in the prominent press organizations of the USA such as *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Globe* and *Harper’s Magazine*. In his book, which is about an event that has changed the world history, the First World War, he used only the secondary sources and there is no academic background. These made Meyer’s scientificity seriously questionable. Besides, the style that he used in his book and especially the historical mistakes, which are conspicuous in the annex that we analyze, are the indicators that these suspicions are not groundless.

As for the British journalist born in 1946, Robert Fisk, he had worked as the Middle East representative of prominent British newspapers *Times* and *Independent* for thirty years. Contrary to Meyer, he earned his doctorate on political science from the Dublin Trinity College and he was one of the very few Western journalists who served in the Middle East during the 1979 Iranian Revolution, 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War and 1991 Gulf War.<sup>3</sup> This ensured Fisk to be mentioned as one of the most experienced names regarding the Middle East. Fisk, who displayed his knowledge and experience in his various books,<sup>4</sup> recently draws the attention as one of the defenders of the Armenian genocide claims at the same time. Especially the polemic on this subject a few months ago between him and the Turkish Ambassador to London, Akın Alptuna, is striking.<sup>5</sup> While criticizing Akın Alptuna’s statements about the so-called genocide claims in his column in the *Independent* newspaper, he used an extremely mocking and pricking style and he changed the course of the debate from an academic dimension to a journalistic one.

### 1. The Style Used in the Books

Above all, it is possible to say that the aforementioned chapters are not reflecting the main theme of the books that they are involved in; therefore, they are regarded as chapters that are independent from the book and they even damage

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2 Robert Fisk, *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East*, London, Knopf, 2005.

3 For detailed information about Robert Fisk see his personal website, URL: <http://www.robert-fisk.com/>

4 *Pity the Nation: The Abduction of Lebanon*, New York, Nation Books, 2002 and *In Time of War: Ireland, Ulster and the Price of Neutrality, 1939-45*, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan, 1996 can be mentioned among the books of Robert Fisk that are about the Middle East.

5 Robert Fisk, ‘You Are Talking Nonsense Mr. Ambassador’, *Independent*, 20 May 2006.

the integrity of the book. Meyer's book is basically about the First World War. Certainly the Armenian incident happened in this period; but the part that reflects the genocide claims is put as an annex to the chapter that is about the condition of the fronts in Europe. The writer put the part that includes the genocide claims in this chapter just because he protects the chronological order, and this damages the integrity of the book. The same situation is also valid for Fisk's book. In a book that is basically about the conflicts in the Middle East, the Armenian genocide claims that has suddenly appeared is not only surprising but also has led to divergence from the main theme of the book. In short, both of these writers have placed these chapters in their books not because of the historical framework of their books but because of their personal choices.

As for the style that is used in these books, it can be said that the style is very simple and in a way that ordinary people can understand. Here, the aim is to facilitate the book to appeal to as many readers as possible, and especially to convince the readers, who do not have much knowledge on the subject, about the reality of the things that have been told. For this reason, an extremely striking and even, from time to time, a bloody and brutal language has been used, and some bloody scenes have tried to be portrayed in the eyes of the readers. This style, according to which among the two major sides of the Armenian question, namely the Armenian and the Turkish people, the first one is tried to be shown as completely aggrieved and the second one is completely the evil-doer, is toughened in a way that it obstructs reading the book from time to time.

Since to give examples that reflect this style from the books here will mean to repeat this grave mistake of these books, we will limit ourselves with just a number of words. For instance, Meyer defined the government of the Turks over the non-Muslim population with the word 'brutish'.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Meyer defined the suppression of the 1909 Armenian uprising in Adana by using the words 'savagery' and 'slaughter'. In this manner, he did not mention the uprising at all and he reflected the suppression of the uprising as a unilateral genocide.<sup>7</sup> The style of Fisk is also not different. He described the so-called the mass graves in Deyr-i Zor, the situation of the corpses that were found there, and the bones in detail, and he used the phrase 'killing fields', which had previously been used for the massacres of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, for the Armenians.<sup>8</sup>

As stated above, the main aim in using this style is to tie down the ordinary

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6 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone*..., p. 290.

7 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone*..., p.290.

8 Robert Fisk, *The Great War*..., pp. 316, 318.

reader to the reality of the things written in the book with an unwavering faith through influencing them quickly, and to draw the attention of those who have some knowledge about the subject to the 'gravity' of it. Presumably, both writers have thought that their books would be that much influential to the degree that they use a bloody and brutal expression. However, the harshness of this manner of telling from time to time reaches to such an extent that leads to the distraction of the interest and the attention of the reader completely and that makes the book harder to follow up.

## 2. Questioning the Scientificity of the Books

The 'assertive' wording of the books unfortunately has not been reflected in the scientificity of the chapters of the books that are concerned with the genocide claims. It is not possible to see the footprints of scientific methodology in both of the books. Not only the sources of the information that are used in the first chapters of the books are unspecified, but also it is conspicuous even in the first reading that majority of the information is false. Besides, both of the books are full of contradictory expressions. Not only Meyer but also Fisk have not used footnotes by no means. Their extremely harsh and sharp style is remained unsupported because of this reason, and there are no factors other than the style that can convince the reader. While in the voluminous book of Meyer that is nearly seven hundred pages there falls to one footnote almost every page, there is not any single footnote in the chapter where the Armenian claims have been expressed. For this reason, the chapters of these books that reflect the Armenian claims are away from all manner of scientificity.

It is possible to illustrate this claim by quoting from Meyer's annex. Meyer says these in the 289<sup>th</sup> page of his book<sup>9</sup>:

"For more than a generation before the war, nationalist Turks and Islamic extremists had been saying that the Ottoman Empire, in order to be saved, must be purified – must above all be purged of non-Muslim elements."

Again, in the following page he puts forward this claim<sup>10</sup>:

"When the Balkan Wars sent a flood of displaced Muslims into Turkey, many were sent to Armenia (where Christians had no legal rights and were under the

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9 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone*..., p. 289.

10 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone*..., p. 290.

heel of Kurdish tribal chieftains) with license to take what they wanted and kill anyone who tried to interfere.”

Certainly, such as in every book that gives voice to the Armenian genocide claims, this book also utters ‘the claim that half a million Armenians were subjected to genocide’, which lacks any scientific ground.

Meyer’s claims that are quoted above cannot be supported by any sources. Therefore, these claims were either written with hearsays or, what is more serious, produced by the writer himself.

In Fisk’s book, more grave scientific mistakes have been made and footnotes are not used even for some quotations. It is not clear from which archive document or book that these quotations are taken. To give an example, the writer mentions a telegram that was sent by the Interior Minister of the Ottoman Empire, Talat Pasha, to the Governor of Aleppo. In this telegram, Talat Pasha gives the following order<sup>11</sup>:

“You have already been informed that the Government...has decided to destroy completely all the indicated persons living in Turkey... Their existence must be terminated, however tragic the measures taken may be, and no regard must be paid to either age or sex, or to any scruples of conscience.”

Albeit it is not specified, Fisk has made this quotation most probably from the book of Aram Andonian, which is said to include the telegrams of Talat Pasha.<sup>12</sup> Yet, it is identified by the Turkish scientists that these telegrams are untrue<sup>13</sup>; thus, now many Western scientists have also agreed that these telegrams are totally fake.

The chapters of Meyer’s and Fisk’s books where they reflected the Armenian genocide claims are extremely far from scientificity not only because they did not refer to any written source but also because they include so many incorrect information. It is not the purpose of this article to mention all the mistakes in these chapters; however, it will be useful to see what kind of faults has been made.

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11 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 318.

12 Aram Andonian, *The Memoirs of Naim Bey*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1920.

13 Şinasi Orel ve Süreyya Yuca, *Ermenilerce Talat Paşaya Atfedilen Telgrafların Gerçek Yüzü*, Ankara, Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1983.

Meyer claims that Armenia was the most powerful independent kingdom in the eastern frontier of the Byzantine Empire in the ancient times<sup>14</sup>; however, in reality Armenia did not exist as an independent state apart from the rule of Tigran the Great in B.C. 95 – 55. After the rule of Tigran the Great, Armenia became an independent state for the first time with the Armenian Republic of 1919 – 1920. Another claim of Meyer that is historically wrong is that the Armenians were a community downtrodden by the heavy taxes in the Ottoman Empire and that the Turks and the Kurds grew rich at the expense of the Armenians.<sup>15</sup> The British archival documents prove us that the truth is exactly the opposite of this idea.<sup>16</sup> According to this, Armenians grew rich at the expense of the Turks and they possessed the economical power in the regions where they were living. A last example is the claim that no Turkish official was punished after the Armenian deportation<sup>17</sup>; but to assert this claim means not to know or to ignore the Military Tribunals (Divan-ı Harp), which were established after the First World War, the trials of these courts and the sentences that they imposed.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, there are incorrect statements also in Robert Fisk's book. Fisk states in his article that the 'powerful Turkish lobby' in the USA 'attacks' every academician and journalist who says that the genocide is a 'reality'.<sup>19</sup> This claim is ridiculous more if not false; for it is impossible to say that the Turkish lobby in the USA is a powerful one. Yet, the influence of the Turkish lobby remains very weak against the power and aggression of the Armenian lobby. Moreover, during the visits of two of our retired ambassadors to the USA, Gündüz Aktan and Ömer Engin Lütem, it became apparent that exactly opposite of Fisk's claim is valid.<sup>20</sup> The conference that our ambassadors would hold in the University of South California in Los Angeles City was cancelled by the university administration upon the pressures of the Armenian lobby. In short, while uttering the Armenian genocide claims is a very easy and expected behavior in the USA, to say the opposite results in assimilation through repression.

14 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone...*, p. 289.

15 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone...*, p. 290.

16 Concerning the reports that were written by the British Consuls in İzmir and Aleppo about the non-Muslim population in the Ottoman Empire in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century see M. Serdar Palabıyık, 'Threatened or Threatening?: Two British Consular Reports Regarding the Condition of Non-Muslim Communities in Izmir and Aleppo' *Review of Armenian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 9, 2005.

17 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone...*, p. 291.

18 Thus, at the end of the trials in the Military Tribunals (Divan-ı Harp), 1397 individuals were punished with various penalties including the death penalty. For detailed information see Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, Ankara, *Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları*, 1985, p. 221.

19 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 340.

20 For detailed information see Ömer Engin Lütem, 'Ermeni Sorunu ve İfade Özgürlüğü', <http://www.iksaren.org/index.php?Page=Makaleler&MakaleNo=233>; for an example to the projections of this subject in the Armenian press see <http://www.panarmenian.net/news/eng/?nid=17061>

Fisk's mistakes are not confined to these. In his article, he refers to Iskenderun as an Armenian city and this claim is totally wrong.<sup>21</sup> Certainly there was an Armenian population living in Iskenderun at that time; however, while Armenians could not constitute the majority of the population at any period in the nineteenth century even in the six provinces of the Eastern Anatolia where they were the most populous, it is unfair to claim that Iskenderun is an Armenian city.

Still, in his article Fisk states that the President of the USA, George W. Bush, 'did not use the word genocide any more' in April 24, 2001 and instead he used the word 'tragedy'.<sup>22</sup> This statement implies that before 2001 Bush was using the word 'genocide' in his speeches. This is also totally wrong.

In conclusion, both of these books are extremely far from being scientific since they have not referred to the original sources and they included false and discordant information. It is striking that these chapters, which will certainly lead to be charged with plagiarism if they were written by an ordinary postgraduate, have been presented to the attention of the world public opinion.

### 3. The Prejudiced Manner in the Books

Another point that draws attention in the writings of Meyer and Fisk is the prejudiced and subjective manner of the writers. In fact, this prejudice is perceivable both from the style of the writers and from their re-construction of the historical reality by distorting the historical information. According to this, while the 'Turks are presented as if they are 'brutal and bloodthirsty' nation, Armenians are the 'absolute oppressed' and 'innocent victims'. This paralyzed mentality is so emphasized that even the murders of the Turks by the Armenians is presented as excusable. For instance, Meyer has written that in December 1914 an Armenian troop under the command of the Russians passed the border and killed 120,000 Turkish people.<sup>23</sup> But he does not make any single explanation about this massacre. However, he does not hesitate to present the arrests of the prominent leaders of the revolutionary Armenian Committees in Istanbul in April 24, 1915 as 'the murders of the Armenians by the death-teams established in Istanbul'.<sup>24</sup>

Robert Fisk denotes his prejudgment by identifying the Armenian deporta-

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21 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 335.

22 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 349.

23 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone...*, pp. 290-291.

24 G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone...*, p. 291.

tion with the Jewish Holocaust during the Second World War. This deception is frequently resorted to in almost every book written about the Armenian genocide claims in the Western literature. Likewise, by resorting to this deception, Fisk's book has also preferred to provoke the Western public opinion against Turkey. Since the reality and brutality of the Jewish Holocaust has deeply affected the Western society, the existence of a similar Holocaust will result in immediate exclusion of the society that organized that holocaust by the international community. Fisk, who is aware of this, insistently associates the Armenian deportation with the Jewish holocaust. It will be appropriate to illustrate his claim by doing some quotations from the related part of his book.

Fisk claims that the Turks put a group of Armenians into a cave in Syria and led to their death through suffocation by lighting a fire at the entrance of the cave. As it is the case in the whole article, there is no single archive document with which he supports this claim. Fisk does not hesitate to present this fictive story as the 'first gas chamber of the twentieth century'.<sup>25</sup> According to Fisk, the similarities between the two 'holocausts' are not confined only to this: Armenians, like the Jews, were forced to settle in certain districts (*pogrom*), Armenian churches were set fire like the Jewish synagogues, Armenians were sent to death by the freight trains like the Jews. The Special Organization (*Teşkilat-i Mahsusa*) had already been the antecedent of Hitler's Special Forces, *Einsatzgruppen*.<sup>26</sup> Like the others, all these pretensions also could not go further from just being put forward since they cannot be supported by any single archival document. Fisk, in his article, lets why he made all these comparisons was such<sup>27</sup>:

"Is Turkey so fearful, so frightened of its own past that it cannot do what Germany has done for the Jews – purged itself with remorse, admission, acknowledgment, reparations, good will?"

In short, the reason why Fisk makes this erroneous construction is to make Turkey somehow accept the so-called Armenian genocide claims and accept to pay compensation to the Armenians. While doing this, he makes a great blunder and states that Germany 'purged itself' by paying compensation and accepting what they had done. However, Holocaust crime is such a severe crime that by no means it can be purged. It is impossible to compensate this crime with money. Therefore, Fisk does not hesitate to admit that he completely ignores the moral

25 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 324.

26 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 324.

27 Robert Fisk, *The Great War...*, p. 339.

dimension and concentrates on the material dimension.

In conclusion, the style of Meyer and Fisk is similar with the style of the leading advocates of Armenian genocide before who had Armenian origin, especially like Richard Hovannissian and Vahakn Dadrian. The fact that renders these two writers more reliable in the eyes of the international community is that they are not of Armenian origin. The two Western writers are more ardent advocates of the Armenian genocide claims than the aforementioned Armenian writers and this is perceived in the Western public opinion as a proof of the validity of the genocide claims. Nonetheless, as it will be pointed out in the third part of this article, another tendency that criticizes the Armenian claims from a scientific point of view, has recently began to develop in the Western public opinion.

### **B. THE SECOND TENDENCY: PARTIALLY-SCIENTIFIC SUBJECTIVE DISCOURSE**

In recent years, the most salient but may be the least noticed fact with regard to the Armenian question is that the Armenian claims are accepted more extensively by the part of the Western academic society. In this regard, to legitimize the Armenian claims and to re-construct them as a historical 'fact', more and more academicians and researchers are publishing more and more academic studies. This new trend in the West is especially drawing the attention. As indicated above, while the literature on the Armenian question is consisted of the texts generally written in a romantic style and far from being scientific, the publications of late years can be seen as the results of careful and meticulous studies. Now, more Western academicians pay attention to the archives, classify the documents in these achieves meticulously and refer to them in their studies. This is a factor that enhances the reliability of their works.

Another feature of the last studies on the Armenian issue published in the West is that these publications are no more being printed by the publishers financed by the Armenians. Instead, when taking account the academic publications that they have printed until today, very important and big publishers such as Palgrave, Macmillan and Oxford, began to print these publications.

This situation has two important impacts: Firstly, in these publishing houses, the academic studies are being printed and sold in higher numbers than the other publishing houses. This is resulted in spread of the studies that support the Armenian claims and present them as the 'historical fact' in a wider academic society.



At the end of this process, which resembles to a chain reaction, many more academicians reach these publications and use them in their studies. This, in turn, ensures that the Armenian claims can be more easily defended.

The second impact of publications that support the Armenian claims, which are published by the big and best-seller publishers, is more intangible and related the academic reliability. Generally these types of publishers have very strict requirements to publish. It is almost impossible that they publish studies, which do not fit academic criteria. The drafts that sent to these publishers are examined by various editors; therefore, they have become eligible to gain reliability in the academic society when they are published. This results in references to these publications in more studies and the rapid spread of the Armenian claims among the international academic and intellectual networks.

After this general assessment, in this part of the article basically three books will be examined and how this tendency is internalized in these three books will be analyzed. One of these books written by an Armenian writer, and the other two are written by American academicians. Before going through the detailed analysis of the books, it will be useful to give brief information about the writers and their studies.

The first one of the books that we are going to analyze is *United States Policy Toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide* by Simon Payaslian.<sup>28</sup> The book is published by the famous British publisher Palgrave-Macmillan in 2005. This publishing house, which has a very deep-rooted past, was established in the middle of the nineteenth century. One of the founders of the publishing house, Francis Turner Palgrave, served as the deputy private secretary of William Gladstone, who once served as British President and was known by his anti-Ottoman policies. Initially, it was working on linguistics and dictionaries. Especially after its merger with St. Martin's Press, a USA-based publishing house, in 2000, it has started to publish in the fields of social sciences such as political science, history, international relations, and it achieves a very prestigious position among the academic society in a very short time.

As for Payaslian, he is an academician with the title of assistant professor and he is working as the chair of the Armenian Genocide Studies and Modern Armenian

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28 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy Toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

History at Clark University in the USA.<sup>29</sup> After he earned his doctorate degree from Wayne State University in 1992, he published many items regarding the so-called Armenian genocide. The most striking one among these publications is *The Armenian Genocide, 1915-1923: A Handbook for Students and Teachers*, which can be evaluated as a product of the efforts to incorporate the Armenian genocide claims in the American education curriculum.<sup>30</sup>

The other two writers whose books we are going to analyze are Donald Bloxham and Merrill Peterson. The British academician Donald Bloxham earned his post-graduate degree from the Keele University and his doctorate degree from Southampton University. Then he began to work at the University of Edinburgh and at present he has been working as an instructor in the department of History in this university. Bloxham's field of expertise is holocaust studies and he has been the director in charge of the academic studies of a civil society organization, *Holocaust Educational Trust*. Among his publications, *The Holocaust: Critical Historical Approaches*,<sup>31</sup> which he wrote together with Tony Kushner and *Remembering Belsen: Eye-Witnesses Record the Liberation*,<sup>32</sup> which he wrote together with Ben Flanagan, are important. Both of these books are about the Second World War and the Jewish Holocaust.

The recent book of the writer that is going to be analyzed in this article is *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*.<sup>33</sup> The book is published by the Oxford University Press, which is accepted as one of the most prestigious publishers of the academic society, in 2005. The first publication of The Oxford University, which had been founded in 1096 and had been accepted as one of the oldest and well-known universities of Europe, was in 1478. However, as a publishing house that regularly prints books it was set up for the first time in 1668.<sup>34</sup> Today it is the biggest publisher of the world with the capacity of publishing 4500 academic books a year. Certainly such a big and well-known publisher has a huge distribution network. Its

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29 For detailed information see <http://www.clarku.edu/departments/government/facultybio/cfm?id=449&progid=16&>

30 Simon Payasian, *The Armenian Genocide, 1915-1923: A Handbook for Students and Teachers*, Glendale, Armenian Cultural Foundation, 2001.

31 Donald Bloxham and Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust: Critical Historical Approaches*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005.

32 Donald Bloxham and Ben Flanagan, *Remembering Belsen: Eye-Witnesses Record the Liberation*, London, Vallentine Mitchell and Co., 2005.

33 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

34 For detailed information see <http://www.oup.com/about/>

publications rapidly spread across the academic community. Therefore, it is so unfortunate that this publishing house has published a book that supports the Armenian genocide claims.

The last book that we are going to analyze is *Starving Armenians: America and the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1930 and After* by Merrill Peterson.<sup>35</sup> In fact, Merrill Peterson is not an academician who has studied topics such as holocaust and crimes against humanity. His field of expertise is American history and he made the editorship of a magnificent corpus of the writings of Thomas Jefferson.

The writer has begun to be interested in the Armenian issue when he went to Armenia in 1997 by a trip that was organized by a civil society organization, Peace Corps. Being influenced by this trip, he has written this book. At present Peterson is working as a professor at the University of Virginia in the Department of History and his book is published by the publishing house of this university, the Virginia University Press. This publishing house was established in 1963 and besides the academic books, it also publishes prestigious journals including *the Papers of George Washington*, *the Papers of James Madison*, *Studies in Early Modern German History*, and *Studies in Religion and Culture*.

Having briefly introduced these three writers, their studies and the publishers, in this part of the article the similarities and differences between their studies will be compared through a detailed analysis, and therefore the main points in this new trend in the Western literature will be stated. While doing this, such as we have done in the first part, we will make a critical analysis of these works by emphasizing the styles of the writers, the topics that they have dealt with, and how they have dealt with them.

### 1. Comparing the Styles of the Works

The four books that we are going to analyze have some commonalities in terms of style. Firstly, leaving aside the subjectivity and one-sidedness of the information given in these books, there is scientificity, which we have not observed in Fisk and Meyer. For all information that is given in the book, there is a meticulously given footnote system and all the sources are specified. Therefore, these books seem to be 'reliable' scientific sources for those readers who do not have a deeper knowledge on the subject.

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35 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians: America and the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1930 and After*, Charlottesville, Virginia University Press, 2004.

A second feature that augments the ‘reliability’ of these books is that the writers have used some archive documents. Especially Payaslian and Peterson have largely made use of the American archives. Similarly, Bloxham has made use of the German and British archives. Just like the use of footnotes, to examine the archive documents is also a feature that augments the scientificity of the books.

Although these books can be formally regarded as academic works, they lack an objective style. They either do not pay attention to the sources that include the Turkish claims, or they slide over them by inadequate references to one or two books. While they frequently refer to the works of Armenian and Western writers who advocates for the Armenian claims such as Peter Balakian, Richard Hovanissian, Vahakn Dadrian, Yves Ternon and Turkish writers that supports the Armenian claims such as Taner Akçam, they ignore the works written on the Turkish claims.

Similarly, the Ottoman archives have also been ignored in the works of these writers. That these writers cannot read in Ottoman can be a reason; but especially after the Turkish History Foundation (*Türk Tarih Kurumu*) has translated the documents about the subject to English, not to make use of these documents is an indicator of a subjective approach. While the entire Western archives have been examined and the documents that support their claims have been carefully selected, it is inexcusable not the pay attention to the Ottoman archives.

A second indicator of this biased approach is that they intentionally used the Armenian names of some cities in Anatolia, which have been the Turkish cities for centuries. For instance, they used Harpert instead of Harput, Marzopan instead of Merzifon, and therefore they tried to emphasize that these regions are Armenian soil and the Turks are the invaders.

Thirdly, while the propaganda tools such as the Blue Book<sup>36</sup>, Memoirs of Ambassador Morgenthau<sup>37</sup>, and the telegrams that are attributed to Talat Pasha<sup>38</sup> are creditable books although the academicians have proved that they have no scientific validity, the reports that were prepared by General Harbord and Admiral Bristol in the First World War, which reject genocide, have been ignored and

36 The original idenfication of this book that is known as Blue Book is as such: James Bryce ve Arnold Toynbee, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermenilere Yönelik Muamele, 1915-1916*, Çev. Ahmet Güner, İstanbul, Pencere Yayınları, 2005.

37 Henry Morgenthau, *Büyükelçi Morgenthau'nun Öyküsü*, çev. Atilla Tuygan, İstanbul, Belge Yayınları, 2005.

38 Aram Andonian, *The Memoirs of Naim Bey*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1920.

criticized as being one-sided. This contradictory attitude undermines the reliability of these books in large.

As for the style that used in writing the books, they are written with a less romantic style. Instead of the bloody and brutal language that is used in the books of Fisk and Meyer, a more realistic, simple and fluent language predominates. This style, which makes following the books very much easier, is a style that is expected from the academic works.

## 2. The Subjective and Incorrect Parts in the Books

Albeit the books that are analyzed here are accepted as books that are in accordance with scientific criteria, so many mistakes and a subjective approach draw the attention. This is because of the fact that one-sided archive documents are used in the books and the secondary sources that are used in the books are far from objectivity. In this part of the article, these mistakes and one-sided writings will be examined through examples.

To begin with Payaslian's book, it gives the information that nearly 20,000 Armenians were killed in Adana region just after Abdulhamid II had been toppled down in 1909.<sup>39</sup> No archive documents but two secondary sources were indicated as the source of this information. However, in the pages that this information was given, it is also written that in 1909 the relations between Armenians and the Turks were the best and that Dashnaktsutiun, one of the Armenian organizations, engaged in a political alliance with the new administration.<sup>40</sup> This is quite contradictory. In March 1909, the relations between the Armenians and the Turks were in its highest level. If such a large-scale Armenian massacre happened, then how can the relations be in its highest level and how can Dashnaktsutiun be in alliance with an administration that is responsible from the 'massacre'? The book cannot explain this huge contradiction; therefore, this claim remains, to put it mildly, as a ridiculous claim.

Another contradictory expression in the book is about the order given in 1915 for the Armenians living in Zeytun and around to hand over their arms to the state. According to the writer the Armenians did not obey this order and they had a 'legitimate' reason for not to obey. Payaslian states that if the order for disarmament had been issued for the Muslims, then the Armenians would have left their

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39 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 20.

40 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, pp. 19-21.

arms.<sup>41</sup> This expression extremely contradictory; because the Zeytun Armenians rebelled and the security forces of the state asked the Zeytun Armenians for handing over their arms to the state in order to suppress the revolt without bloodshed. The question why an order for disarmament had not been issued for the Muslims appears in the book as an extremely meaningless question.

Another historical mistake that is made in almost every book that advocates for the Armenian discourse is the claim that the six provinces in the Eastern Anatolia (*Vilayet-i Sitte*) were promised to the Armenians by the Major Powers through various means since majority of the population of these provinces were composed of the Armenians. Payaslian also repeats this mistake.<sup>42</sup> However, in no period of Ottoman history Armenians were constituted the majority of the population in this region.<sup>43</sup>

Again another mistake that is intentionally made in these kinds of books is the claim that 1.5 million Armenians were subjected to genocide. It is disputable how this number has been come up with and from which scientific source it is taken. But when this number was pronounced, it suddenly accepted and it has become a symbol of Armenian genocide. However, the demographic statistical studies show that this number of 1.5 million is extremely exaggerated. This issue will be examined in detail in the third part of this article.

At this point, Payaslian gives an interesting detail. A report prepared in the USA about the situation of Armenian refugees mentions the existence of 'hundred of thousands of Armenians' in the Middle East.<sup>44</sup> If this report is a reliable one and the Armenians are living in the Middle East in such huge numbers, then the claims of massacres and mass murders that were allegedly happen in Deyr-i Zor are no longer valid. At the same time, the claim that 1.5 million Armenians were subjected to genocide becomes extremely controversial.

Bloxham's book is entirely built on contradictions. In explaining the aim of his book, Bloxham states importance of the international relations dimension, which has been neglected for a long time in analyzing the Armenian question, in order

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41 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 71.

42 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 68.

43 Justin McCarthy, 'The Population of the Ottoman Armenians', in *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, Ankara, The Turkish Historical Society for the Council Of Culture, Arts and Publications of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, 2001.

44 Justin McCarthy, 'The Population of...', p. 187.

to fully comprehend this issue<sup>45</sup>:

“The project from which the book evolved originally intended to focus upon Turkish denial of the Armenian genocide, and Western acceptance of that denial. But it soon became clear that denial and its accommodation could not be properly understood without knowledge of how the outside world related to the deeds of the Ottoman Empire during and immediately after the First World War itself. I then realized that, in turn, it was impossible properly to explain this pattern of interaction without reference to the vital earlier interaction between the Ottoman state and the ‘Great Powers in the ‘Armenian question’ up to and during the genocide.”

The writer, who attributes such an importance to the international dimension, states in the beginning of his book that dealing with this issue in international level causes to ignore the ‘fact’ that this crime is committed by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>46</sup> Although he states in the preamble of his book that the Armenian question cannot be understood without understanding the international dimension, he then points out the ‘drawbacks’ of these methods. This is the most important indicator that this book is full of contradictions.

This is not the only contradiction in Bloxham’s book. There is a great dilemma in the image of an Armenian that is presented in the book. Bloxham could not decide on to present the Armenians whether as the ‘oppressed victims’ wailing under the ‘oppression’ of the Ottoman state or as the ‘revolutionary heroes’ who ‘successfully’ struggles against the state; and he used both of them in his book. Therefore, he has come up with contradictory expressions in the book. Meanwhile he lets the sentences slip out that the Armenians rebelled against the Ottoman Empire, cooperated with the Russians and other Western states; that the Allied Forces used the Armenian issue as a propaganda tool; and even that the Armenians killed the Turks. The following quotations are extremely striking:

“...[T]he first flier of the ARF declared its intention to ‘fight until its last drop of blood for the liberation of the fatherland’. The third flier claimed the ARF would set for itself ‘the exact hour of the common uprising in Turkish Armenia’”<sup>47</sup>

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45 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 7.

46 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, pp. 18-19.

47 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 50.

“Many of the demonstrators [who had participated in the 1895 Kumkapı incidents] were armed and were obviously expecting trouble...”<sup>48</sup>

“[After the Balkan Wars]...Armenians inside and outside the empire felt free to appeal again to the Great Powers, and Russia was only too happy to avail itself of an opportunity to reestablish its imperial influence in the Ottoman dominions”<sup>49</sup>

“International factors, the interaction between Russia and Armenian nationalists particularly, continued to be important until well into the First World War in influencing a developing CUP [Committee of Union and Progress] policy”<sup>50</sup>

“Vorontsov-Dashkov’s [Russian governor-general of Caucasus and military commander] opportunistic ‘plan for revolt among Turkish Armenians’ foresaw the creation of Armenian bands under military command in the Caucasus...under the authority of the Russian military and the Choi consulate...Five volunteer battalions were consequently formed – two were added later – with the support of the ARF-dominated Armenian National Bureau in Tiflis to fight alongside the Russian Army”<sup>51</sup>

“During the Russian advance into eastern Anatolia at the beginning of 1916, vengeful Armenian forces...murdered many Muslims, as testified to in the British sources.”<sup>52</sup>

“In Allied rhetoric the murder of Armenians gave them grounds for special consideration in the redrawing of the Near Eastern map. In reality, however, it merely served during the war as a useful propaganda tool for the Entente”<sup>53</sup>

All these quotations prove that the Armenians are not ‘innocent victims’ such as accentuated in the book at all. In short, the Armenians rebelled in order to establish a state independent from the Ottoman state; they turned this rebellion into supporting Russia during the First World War; and the Ottoman state subjected the Armenian population to deportation in order to prevent this betrayal and to ensure order. This simple truth is so bare and correct that it leaks to even the most subjective books.

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48 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 52.

49 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 64.

50 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 67.

51 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 73.

52 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 100.

53 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 134.



Bloxham's discourse of the 'oppressed victim' becomes so exaggerated that the murders committed by the Armenians are either ignored or claimed that they are exaggerated.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the massacres committed by the French East Legion in Çukurova region<sup>55</sup> and even the assassination of Turkish diplomats by ASALA in 1970s are tried to be legitimated.<sup>56</sup>

Another incorrect claim of Bloxham is that after the Ottoman-Russian War in 1877-78 the migrants from Caucasus and the Balkans were intentionally settled in the Eastern Anatolia as a measure that would threaten the security of life and property of the Armenians.<sup>57</sup> He based this claim on the Armenian writer As-tourian's book. Here, the aim is to show that 'genocide' is not an arrangement of 1915 but in fact an Armenian 'genocide' had been planned since the end of the nineteenth century. Since the writer cannot support this claim with an authentic document, he could not go beyond having mentioned it and he then passed over it slightly.

As for the Peterson's book, the fact that Peterson is not a specialist on the Armenian issue and he began to examine this issue after his trip to Armenia causes him to make extremely amateurish mistakes in his book. The major one is Peterson's definition of 'historical Armenia'. According to this definition, almost half of the present Turkish territory is regarded as the historical soil of Armenia.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, there are some claims in the book that makes it necessary to question the scientificity of the book such as the mother of Abdulhamid II was an Armenian and when the sultan had learned this he became an enemy of the Armenians since he did not deemed it suitable for himself to be a 'half-Armenian'.<sup>59</sup>

Another contradictory expression in the book is about the suppression of the 1909 Zeytun revolt. Since there is no mention of any revolt in the book, the Armenian rebels, who were killed during the suppression of these revolts, are presented as the innocents who became subjected to a massacre without rhyme or reason. However, probably because he also could not explain the death of Armenians, he exhibits this contradictory manner by saying that 'No body can exactly explain who or what had given a start to this massacre'.<sup>60</sup>

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54 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 117.

55 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 141.

56 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 219.

57 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 47.

58 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 17.

59 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, pp. 22-23.

60 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 28.

In short, albeit they are accepted as scientific works, the three books that are analyzed here have to be questioned since they do not abide by one of the most important requirements of scientificity, the principle of subjectivity.

### 3. The Activities of American Missionaries

One of the most important tendencies that are seen in the books written on the Armenian issue in the Western literature is re-assessment of the activities of American missionaries. As it is known, the American missionaries engaged in missionary activities especially in the Eastern Anatolia from the beginning of the nineteenth century and they carried out intensive work to convert the Armenians to Protestantism. In the Turkish literature on the Armenian issue, these missionary activities are generally interpreted as the activities that encouraged the Armenian revolts. Those who support the Armenian genocide claims have frequently used these extremely biased reports of the missionaries as the evidences of the so-called genocide. One of the most important examples of this is the memoirs of Henry Morgenthau, who had served as the US Ambassador to Istanbul in 1913-1916. The mistakes and the subjective style in this book, which is said to comprise of the eye-witness accounts of those who had survived from the so-called genocide, has later been criticized by the works of Heath Lowry.<sup>61</sup> At the end, the missionary activities have been used to the utmost in order to support the Armenian genocide claims by both the Armenian writers and by the Western writers who advocates for the Armenian claims.

However, when we examine the literature in recent years, there appear serious criticisms directed towards the American missionaries. The role of the American missionary activities in the Armenian question that has become chronic has been mentioned even in the books that support the genocide claims. For instance, by referring to the memoirs of Sir Edwin Pears,<sup>62</sup> who was a jurist and journalist that had lived in Turkey for long years, Peterson clearly states in his book that the missionaries carried out activities that ‘instigated political agitation’ in the places which were intensely populated by the Armenians in the Eastern Anatolia.<sup>63</sup>

Payaslian has written that these Protestant missionaries were used by the USA

61 Heath Lowry, *The Story Behind Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, İstanbul, The Isis Press, 1990.

62 Sir Edwin Pears, *Forty Years in Constantinople: The Recollections of Sir Edwin Pears, 1873-1915*, London, H. Jenkins, 1916.

63 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 20.

as ‘economic agents’ rather than their religious duties<sup>64</sup>:

“The American Protestant missionary community became instrumental in the expansion of American commercial interests as well. Active in evangelical work in the Ottoman Empire since the early nineteenth century, missionary workers traveled with American merchants and the Navy and engaged in explorations throughout the region collecting ‘commercial intelligence’ and serving as the eyes and ears of the United States”

In short, it is clearly indicated in these lines that the real purpose of the Protestant missionaries was not to spread Protestantism in the region and that they used their religious identities as a screen to disguise their political and economical intelligence activities.

Moreover, Payaslian states that the missionary activities were not local and minor and that the American Protestant missionary activities only in the Ottoman Empire were equivalent to the 25 percent of the missionary activities all over the world. This complex missionary network was composed of 12 stations, 270 liaison offices, 145 missionaries, 811 local workers, 114 churches with the community of nearly 48,000 people, and the most important of all 1266 schools that educated nearly 60,000 students.<sup>65</sup> How such a complex network was permitted to be formed in the Ottoman Empire constitutes another research topic.

Another criticism directed to the Protestant missionaries was the fact that they approached to the Armenians completely with a colonial mentality. In other words, the missionaries, who regarded themselves as civilized people and the representatives of the Western civilization, did not hesitate to describe Armenians as uncivilized and barbaric peoples. Payaslian indicates this colonial mentality with the following word<sup>66</sup>:

“During the larger part of the nineteenth century, the American missionaries showed little respect toward the Armenians and believed them to be ‘nominal Christians’ in ‘a state of deplorable ignorance and degradation’...”

Again according to Payaslian, a Protestant missionary, who was going from Kars to Yerevan, defined Armenians as dishonest, lecherous, ignorant peoples

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64 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 10.

65 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 11.

66 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 13.

who were managed by drunkard priests, had a low-profile character, and desired money greedily.<sup>67</sup>

Majority of Armenians certainly reacted against these missionaries who approached them as such and they perceived the missionaries as a threat to their existence. According to these Armenians, who interpreted the main aim of these missionaries to seize the authority of the Armenian Church, the real target of these missionaries was to carry out the 'divide and rule' policy.<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile, Peterson gives a very significant detail about the missionary schools. According to Peterson, the missionary schools were in fact the schools where the religious compulsion and fanaticism were exercised at the highest level. The religious pressure that was exerted to the Muslim students who were accepted to the American missionary schools is an example of this. For instance in 1917 the director of Izmir International College Alexander MacLachan ordered the Muslim students either to attend the chapel of the college regularly or leave the school. There occurred serious conflicts between the school administration and the students who did not obey this order.<sup>69</sup> The existence of such a detail in a book on the Armenian issue gives an idea about how the Protestant missionaries are criticized.

In short, in recent books written on the Armenian issue in the Western literature it is observed that the missionary activities have been harshly criticized. While initially the missionaries were presented as the heroes, who saved the Armenian society from the repression of the Ottoman Empire, it is seriously criticized in this new literature influenced by the archive documents and post-colonial approach that these missionaries had regarded themselves as the representatives of civilization and defined Armenians as an uncivilized society.

#### **4. Criticizing the Role of America in the Armenian Issue**

In relation with criticizing the activities of the missionaries, another general tendency is criticizing the USA and the activities of its Ambassador to Istanbul, Henry Morgenthau. The writers that we examine argue that USA remained indifferent to the massacres of Armenians during the First World War and that the efforts of Ambassador Morgenthau were insincere.

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<sup>67</sup> Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 13.

<sup>68</sup> Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 13. pp. 13-14.

<sup>69</sup> Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 56.

Payaslian harshly criticizes especially that the USA did not intervene while the Armenians were being deported in 1915. According to the writer, in the middle of 1915 there occurred a pro-Armenian environment in the USA with the impact of the missionary reports and this generated an influential pressure of the public opinion that the USA should play an effective role to stop the deportation. However, the Secretary of State Robert Lansing opposed to an attempt for the Armenian issue on the level of the Ottoman government. Payaslian mentions two reasons for this attitude. Firstly, Lansing opposed to an intervention unless the American citizens living in the Ottoman Empire and their assets were in danger. Secondly, such an intervention would bring costs more than the benefits for the national interests and the security of the USA.<sup>70</sup> According to Payaslian, this attitude of the USA signifies nothing more than endangering the lives of the Armenians for the sake of its own political and economical interests.

The criticisms of the USA necessarily continue with criticisms of the US Ambassador to Istanbul, Henry Morgenthau. Both Peterson and Payaslian uttered in the beginning of their books that the activities of Morgenthau were not sincere. According to both of the writers, since he was a close colleague of President Woodrow Wilson, Morgenthau in fact was expecting to have important posts in the future cabinets by standing by his side in the presidential elections. It is for this reason that he at first refused a post that would keep him at distance from the USA such as ambassadorship in Istanbul, but then he accepted it through the agency of respectable people.<sup>71</sup>

According to Peterson, the most important duty of the American Embassy in the Ottoman Empire was to support and protect the missionaries, who were US citizens. However, especially during the First World War the Embassy put the emphasis on the protection and development of the concessions for the railroads and oil in parallel with the development of economic relations between the USA and the Ottoman Empire; consequently, whenever it is necessary, it could give the secondary importance to supporting the missionary activities, which constituted a problem between its relations with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>72</sup>

Peterson states that Ambassador Morgenthau pursued such a hypocritical policy. Likewise, when the presidential elections were coming in 1916, Morgenthau resigned hurriedly and returned to the USA from Istanbul. Peterson explains

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70 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 77.

71 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 36; Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 1.

72 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 2.

this development with the following words: “[Morgenthau] wanted to work for the re-election of the President Wilson. He had believed that nothing would be more important than this in the international politics.”<sup>73</sup> In short, a rank that he would receive following the re-election of Wilson had been more important for Morgenthau than the fate and the future of the Armenians.

Payaslian states that Morgenthau’s priority was not the Armenians but the economic interests of the United States. He presents the meeting of Morgenthau with Talat Pasha in December 22, 1913 as the evidence of this. According to this, Talat Pasha invited Morgenthau to give some advices on how he could attract the US investors by traveling the Ottoman Empire, and the next day of this appetizing offer he sent a telegram to the Secretary of State, Bryan, stating that the Standard Oil Company should be encouraged to give a credit of 500,000 Ottoman liras to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>74</sup> It is obvious that the Interior Minister of the Ottoman Empire, who was blamed for the Armenian massacres, could be appreciated by the Ambassador Morgenthau in the presence of an attractive offer, even when there was not any decision for deportation.

Payaslian mentions about a great dilemma that on the one hand Morgenthau became closer to the Ottoman government for the sake of the economic interests of the United States while on the other hand he collided with the Ottoman government for the continuation of the ‘civilizing’ activities of the missionaries.<sup>75</sup> Likewise, even Morgenthau was aware of his contradictory attitude and he states in his memoirs that this was hypocrisy: “I am a successful hypocrite that has been playing a role in this society. I do not know how long I can keep up this.”<sup>76</sup>

After all it is necessary to open parenthesis here and state that Payaslian and Peterson has differentiated between the politicians and the civil society organizations. Both writers have appreciated especially the activities of American Near East Relief for the Armenians while they are criticizing the hypocritical attitudes of the American politicians.

In conclusion, in the literature on the Armenian issue an anti-American attitude becomes increasingly apparent besides the criticisms of the missionary activities. Especially the fact that the USA has not recognized the so-called genocide

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73 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p 11.

74 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 38.

75 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 42.

76 Simon Payaslian, *United States Policy...*, p. 45.

can be pointed out as the factor, which augments these criticisms. The writers who advocates for the Armenian issue more and more emphasize the allusion that the USA also has a responsibility in the Armenian genocide.

### **5. Comparing the Jewish Holocaust with Armenian Genocide**

Just like in Fisk and Meyer but in a more outstanding style the Armenian deportation is compared with the Jewish Holocaust by the Nazi's in these books and an effort has been made that this crime will not be delimited to the Germans and will be applicable to the Turks. Especially Bloxham's book is full of an effort to search for these types of similarities.

In page 79 of his book, Bloxham compares Bahaeddin Shakir with Heinrich Himmler. He compares Bahaeddin Shakir's gathering volunteers to fight against the Armenians with Himmler's activities in 1941-42 near the Russian borders; therefore, he tries to match the Armenian genocide with the Jewish holocaust by claiming in between the lines that the Ottoman administrators engaged in activities similar to the Nazi rulers.<sup>77</sup> As a matter of fact he clearly states in the further parts of his book that this comparison is a correct one:

“As to the popular comparison of the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide, this is perfectly acceptable on historical grounds. The episodes have important similarities and equally significant differences, and highlighting both is the aim of comparative study.”<sup>78</sup>

In short, Bloxham has also fallen into this error that has commonly been made and he has regarded the Armenian deportation and the Jewish holocaust as equal. Yet, these two issues are so dissimilar both from the point of their positions in the international system and from the point of their methods and processes that it is impossible to make any comparisons.

### **6. The Nasturian, Assyrian, Caldean Genocide Claims and the Claim that Atatürk Carried on with the Armenian Genocide**

Beside the Armenian genocide claims, another common point in the books that we examine in this part of the article is that they frequently utter the claim that the Turks put genocide into practice for other Christian peoples living in the

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<sup>77</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 79.

<sup>78</sup> Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 230.

Ottoman Empire. The most important reason of this is to indicate the allegation that the Turks have a 'genocide culture'; therefore, to emphasize that the so-called Armenian genocide is not the only example of this issue. Another point emphasized by these writers is to accuse Mustafa Kemal and the newly-established Republic of Turkey with 'genocide' by claiming that the 'genocide' of these peoples was carried on by the Kemalist regime itself.

For instance, Peterson mentions in his book about Pontus genocide ordered by Mustafa Kemal and he states that nearly 360,000 Greeks were killed. Besides, he has written that two-thirds of the Assyrian and Nestorian population was subjected to genocide.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, by stating that Mustafa Kemal was an officer who had ascended within the Society of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*), Peterson gives the impression that the mentality of the Society, in other words the 'genocide culture', endured.<sup>80</sup>

Another method used by Peterson to accuse Mustafa Kemal with committing genocide crime is to assert the claim that the fire in Izmir, which started after the Turkish armies had entered Izmir, was a genocide planned by the Turks themselves. According to Peterson, as a result of this fire, which had set by the Turkish army itself, nearly 100,000 Greeks were either dead or killed.<sup>81</sup>

Similarly, Bloxham also mentions that the Greeks and the Kurds were subjected to genocide by the new regime.<sup>82</sup> Such as Peterson, Bloxham claims that the Turkish armies carried out a huge Greek slaughter after they had arrived at Izmir.<sup>83</sup>

Surely, these claims are so mistaken, one-sided and ridiculous that they cannot be taken as serious. Nevertheless, it will be useful to mention with a few sentences how meaningless they are. First of all, the Pontus genocide claim is nothing more than the suppression of the uprising of the Pontus Greeks who rebelled during the First World War and began to slaughter the Turkish population living in the coast of the Black Sea. The claim that the Turks performed Greek genocide in Western Anatolia exhibits the ignorance of the writers besides being unreasonable. Even an ordinary student of history knows that the Greeks had invaded

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79 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 124.

80 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 121.

81 Merrill Peterson, *Starving Armenians...*, p. 130.

82 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 97.

83 Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game...*, p. 165.



Western Anatolia, the retreating Greek army at the end of the subsequent wars subjugated the Turkish population in the Western Anatolia to a huge decimation, and the Izmir fire was set by the Greeks themselves to ensure the intervention of the Allied Forces.

The claim that the Greek population was expelled from the Turkish territory is similarly mistaken. The Greek population living in Turkey and the Turkish population living in Greece moved through a population exchange between Turkey and Greece in accordance with the Lausanne Treaty. This event is most probably the most systematic population exchange throughout the history. In short, there is neither an expulsion of the Greeks nor a Greek genocide.

In conclusion, it should be reiterated that although these tree books can be regarded as scientific to some extent, they create serious gaps and questions marks in the minds of the reader and fall into contradictions and historical errors as a result of the intensive biased manner.

### **C. THIRD TENDENCY: SCIENTIFIC AND OBJECTIVE DISCOURSE**

The last tendency that is observed among the works written on the Armenian issue in the Western literature in recent years is the type of literature, which is both compatible with the scientific criteria and possesses quite an objective style. This type of literature is trying to search reality of the Armenian genocide claims and to discover the truth by means of a scientific analysis. For this reason, the historical reality is reformulated by examining the claims through a critical eye and evaluating them in the light of the historical documents. The works of Prof. Dr. Guenter Lewy and Edward Erickson, who have been the representatives of this new tendency, will be the examined in this part.

Again, to begin with the writers first, Prof. Dr. Guenter Lewy was born in 1923 in Germany, and when he was just ten the Nazi government came to power. Then a period of enormous repression and violence prevailed Germany. In 1939, just before the First World War, Prof. Lewy migrated first to Palestine and then to the USA; however, he lost some of his relatives in the holocaust carried out by the Nazi government. The painful experiences of Prof. Lewy's childhood and early adulthood are very important since they constitute the milestone in his academic life.

He commenced his undergraduate education in the USA at the City Col-

lege of New York, and later he obtained his masters' and doctorate degree from the University of Colombia. He started his academic career at the University of Colombia in 1953 and he has been pursuing his career at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst since 1964. He is an expert on genocide and other crimes against humanity.

As for the works of Prof. Lewy, in his book *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*<sup>84</sup>, which is one of the most important of his book about the crimes against humanity, he talks about the atrocities against the Gypsies by the Nazi regime. Why and how the gypsies transformed to a hated minority by the Nazi regime despite they did not have any economic and intellectual power in Germany when compared with the Jewish society is examined in this work. In another book, which is titled as *Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*<sup>85</sup> and has excited great interest in Europe and America, Prof. Lewy has analyzed the role of the Catholic Church in holocaust by the Nazis. In this context, how Christianity, which defines itself as the religion of compassion or at least supposed to be so, supported the ideology of 'otherizing'. In the book, how the German Catholic priests supported Hitler's ideology and the notion of 'Aryan race' is explained through striking quotations and illustrations.

The book of Guenter Lewy that will be examined in this article is titled as *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*<sup>86</sup>. In this book, Lewy questions many various Armenian genocide claims and the tries to discover the truths.

Another writer that we will examine in this part of the article is Edward J. Erickson. He is a retired officer of American Army and a member of an American think-tank called *International Research Associates*. Among the works of Erickson, who has been specialized on Ottoman History, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912-1913*<sup>87</sup>, where he analyses the defeat of the Ottoman army in Balkan Wars, and *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War*<sup>88</sup>, where he analyses the Ottoman warfare during the First World

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84 Guenter Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000.

85 Guenter Lewy, *Catholic Church and Nazi Germany*, Cambridge, De Capo Press, 2000.

86 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press, 2005.

87 Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912-1913*, Westport, Greenwood Publishers, 2003.

88 Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War*, London, Praeger Publishers, 2000.

War, can be mentioned. The work of Erickson that we will examine in this article is his article titled as 'Armenian Massacres: New Records Undercut Old Blame, Reexamining History'<sup>89</sup> which is published in *Middle East Quarterly*.

Such as the books analyzed in the previous part, both of the works that we are going to analyze in this part can be regarded as scientific in terms of their methodologies and their references to the archive documents. However, the scientificity of these books stems not only from their methodologies but also from their objectivity. While the books that have been analyzed in the previous part refer almost only to the books and archive documents, which support the Armenian genocide claims, Lewy and Erickson have used simultaneously the Western archives and the Ottoman archives, the sources that support the Armenian claims and the sources that support the Turkish counter-claims. Therefore, they have created quite objective publications. When evaluated with regard to the style this objectivity draws the attention immediately. In short, in these two works both the Turkish and the Armenian claims are analyzed from a critical point of view. Moreover, instead of an unfruitful debate such as 'the genocide exists or not', what had really happened in the years 1915 – 1916 has tried to be clarified.

Lewy has analyzed basically the Turkish and Armenian claims separately in his book; then in the light of the archive documents he has criticized the parts that he found mistaken or subjective. The main argument of Lewy is that the Armenian issue has become a political issue by being rapidly departed from the historical perspective, and this has radicalized the claims of the two sides of the issue, the Turks and the Armenians.

Lewy has been criticizing the Turkish thesis by states that the Armenian massacres are underestimated and different dimensions of this great tragedy are ignored. He also has been criticizing the Armenian thesis by emphasizing that the Armenians exaggerate what had happened, that they try to present themselves as innocent victims, and that a great many of the Armenian claims are not historically true. Within this framework, some claims that he has made a comparative analysis are as follows:

1. The claim that the Armenians constitute the majority of the population in Eastern Anatolia, especially in the Six Provinces: Lewy has proved in the light of the archive documents that this claim is not true, and that the Armenians

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89 Edward J. Erickson, 'Armenian Massacres: New Records Undercut Old Blame, Reexamining History', *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Summer 2006.

did not constitute majority of the population in any region of Anatolia even in the period that they had the most dense population. In this regard, he emphasized the inconsistency of the 'historical Armenian' claims.<sup>90</sup>

2. The claim that Abdulhamid II had been hostile to the Armenians from the beginning and he gave the order of the 1895-96 Armenian 'massacres': by making quotations from James Bryce, one of the writers of the Blue Book on which the Armenian claims are depended in large, Lewy demonstrates that Abdulhamid II had no hostility towards the Armenians before the Treaty of Berlin.<sup>91</sup> However, he had to take some measures in order to suppress the secessionist activities that gained momentum after the Treaty of Berlin. Nevertheless, any document concerning the order of Abdulhamid II for Armenian decimation has not been able to found until today.<sup>92</sup>
3. The claim that the Turkish nationalism that had been developed since the beginning of the twentieth century was effective in the Armenian genocide: Many writers, who support the Armenian claims, think that the Turkish nationalism, which was developed by the writers such as Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura etc., caused ethnic cleansing. Lewy asserts that this idea is an exaggerated one, which was produced as a result of a strained interpretation that lacks any scientific ground.<sup>93</sup>
4. The claim of 'Ten Orders' issued by the Society of Union and Progress: Lewy demonstrates in the light of the British archives that this document which appears in the publications of a leading supporter of the Armenian claims, Vahakn Dadrian, and is claimed to have ordered the decimation of the Armenian nation to the provincial offices of the Society of Union and Progress, is not an authentic document.<sup>94</sup>
5. The claim in the book of Mevlanzade Rifat'ın titled as The Insight of the Turkish Revolution (*Türk İnkılabının İç Yüzü*) that Union and Progress had planned an Armenian genocide: Another source frequently referred again by those writers who advocate for the Armenian view is the book of Mevlanzade Rifat in which he put forward that the Armenian genocide had been planed before-

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90 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 3-4.

91 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 9.

92 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 33.

93 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 46.

94 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 50.

hand in a secret meeting of Union and Progress to which he had attended. By evaluated various scientific studies, Lewy emphasizes that Mevlanzade Rifat had never been in the central committees of the Union and Progress, therefore he could not attend to the secret meetings; besides, he had been adopted a manner against the Union and Progress, therefore his writings are not valid.<sup>95</sup>

6. The claim that the Documents of Naim-Andonyan and the Blue Book are reliable sources: It is demonstrated in the light of the archive documents that the Naim-Andonyan documents which are included the telegrams attributed to the Interior Minister of the deportation period, Talat Pasha, where it is claimed that Pasha had ordered the killing of Armenians, and the Blue Book which is claimed to discuss the statements of the genocide witnesses are not reliable sources.<sup>96</sup>
7. The claim that the members of the Union and Progress admitted the genocide in the Courts of War formed after the First World War: By relying on the statements of Aram Andonyan himself, who prepared the Naim-Andonyan documents, Lewy expresses that these courts behave with political considerations, not with the judicial ones; therefore the judgments were not reliable.<sup>97</sup>
8. The claims on the role of the Special Organization (Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa) in the Armenian genocide: According to Lewy, the existing information about this organization, which had assumed some secret missions during the First World War, shows that is had not been established with the purpose of suppressing the Armenians.<sup>98</sup> Lewy refers that the claims opposite to this are simplistic rumors, which are not based on archive documents.<sup>99</sup>
9. The claim that 1.5 million Armenians were subjected to genocide: Lewy proves with scientific methods that this claim is not in line with the historical realities and the archive documents. Even Toynbee, who is one of the writers of the Blue Book, gives the number of 600,000. This number has intentionally been increased over the years. The number of losses given by Lewy on the base of the archive documents remains at 642,000. The Armenians who were dead because of natural reasons such as illness and starvation is also included in this

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95 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 52-53.

96 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 67, 137-139.

97 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 77.

98 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 82-89.

99 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, p. 88.

number.<sup>100</sup>

Lewy not only refutes these claims in his book, but he also argues that the documents on the Armenian issue have to be analyzed with a critical point of view. In this regard, he emphasized that the careful evaluation of especially the reports of the missionaries and the statements of those who escaped from the so-called genocide is a proper approach. He demonstrates through the examples how these reports and statements were written up in an exaggerated style and full of prejudices, and even the events, which had never taken place, were written as if they had happened.<sup>101</sup>

In the light of all these data, he puts forward that the things happened in the years 1915-16 cannot be regarded as genocide unless there is a document in the archives which presents indisputable evidences that genocide was realized, that the decision for deportation taken by the Ottoman State during the war is not a previously-planned genocide on its own, but only the implementation of deportation was not performed properly due to the war conditions and the poor and incompetent diplomacy of the Ottoman administration; for this reason the tragic Armenians losses were experienced.

As for Edward Erickson, in his article that we examine he lays the stress upon the role of the Special Organization in the Armenian issue, which has been one of the most frequently-mentioned points by those who claim the 1915 events was genocide.

The prominent historians and writers of the Armenian Diaspora are trying to link the Ottoman government with the Armenians deaths by claiming that Special Organization was a paramilitary organization which played a key role in the so-called Armenian genocide. For example, the Armenian historian Vahakn Dadrian implies that the Ottoman State is directly responsible from the Armenian massacres by claiming that Lieutenant Stange himself, who had been a German artillery officer serving in the Ottoman army, organized the Armenian massacres. The article by Erickson utters that this claim is not complying with the historical reality and in fact the archive documents has disproved it.

Following the introductory part where he evaluates the Ottoman military organization in Anatolia during the First World War, Erickson's article continues with a lengthy part where he mentions the role of the Lieutenant Stange's troop

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100 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 240-241.

101 Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 142-149.

in the Ottoman-Russian battles. According to the writer, the aim of Special Organization was not to kill the Armenians but to arrange activities, which would prevent the Russian armies to move ahead. In this regard, any authentic record that will demonstrate the direct relation between the Armenian deaths and this organization, which performed the duties such as to create disorder in the backlines of the Russian army, to organize uprisings by giving the Muslims in Russia an organizational structure, to deactivate the routes for logistics, has not been able to be determined. The article ends with a conclusion, which indicates that the details are important in discussing the historical issues, and that the details can become clear only by searching into the archive documents.

In conclusion, the article by Edward Erickson is extremely important since it shines a light on a controversial aspect of the Armenian issue. Since he utters these claims by basing them on the archive documents contrary to many Armenian writers, his article is highly consistent and convincing. The tables in the article provide sources for the historians by displaying the structure of the Ottoman military organization in the Eastern Anatolia. Shortly, Erickson's article can be regarded as a serious contribution to the literature since it not only corrects a mistake frequently made in the literature, but it also fills an important gap.

## CONCLUSION

This article is written to examine the recent tendencies in the Western academic society through a comparative analysis of the recent works on the Armenian issue that draw attention in the Western literature, and to display how the Armenian issue has been reflected in the Western public opinion. In this regard, some interesting elements draw the attention in this literature, which can be summarized in three tendencies that are the unscientific subjective discourse, partially scientific subjective discourse, and scientific objective discourse.

Above all, the Western academic society and the Armenian Diaspora have now been aware that analyzing Armenian issue through an outdated, romantic style that lacks scientific qualifications can no longer raise supporters for the Armenian views. For this reason, Diaspora has been trying hard for the formation of a literature on this issue where a particular scientific style is used but the Armenian views will not be compromised. In this regard, archives have begun to be used more but the documents have been subjected to an unequal treatment while this has been done. While there has been many attributions made to the documents

that are supporting the Armenian views, those who are advocating for the opposite of these views are ignored. This has led to emergence of extremely subjective works, which consequently even falls into historical mistakes from time to time or includes a contradictory expression.

Another method of making the Armenian views academically reliable is printing the works on this issue in the most prestigious publishing houses of the Western academic society. Therefore, these works not only reach more people thanks to the wide distribution networks of these publishing houses but also perceived as more trustworthy works by the Western public opinion.

Contrary to this quantitative and qualitative development in the literature that supports the Armenian views, there is a setback in the works written in Turkey. Although the number of publications that supports the Turkish views have increased, it is possible to say that their quality has been diminished. The overlooked aspects of the Armenian issue have not been searched; instead the points that have been repeated for many years are expressed. Unfortunately, significant works cannot be produced apart from insufficient number of academic works on this subject.

However, more serious than this, the academic works published in Turkey and advocate Turkish claims are hardly known in the West. These academic works, which are using the Ottoman archive that has been neglected by the Western literature, have either never been translated into English, or cannot able to reach the Western public opinion even if they are translated. The solution for this to ensure these works to be published by the prestigious publications houses of the West, just like the writers who advocate for the Armenian claims do. Thus, a greater portion of the Western public opinion can reach these works and a more balanced literature development on the subject of the Armenian issue can be achieved.





# THE ARMENIAN DEMANDS AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1919\*

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## **Abstract:**

*During the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the representative of the Ottoman Armenians, Boghos Nubar Pasha and the representative of the Armenian Republic, Avetis Aharonian put forward territorial claims against the Ottoman Empire and provided information regarding the Armenian population. Alongside shedding light on the Armenian population, this article analyzes, by way of providing maps, the territorial claims advanced by the Armenians, the territories the English and French contemplated on granting Armenia and the territorial claims set forth by the French delegation.*

**Key Words:** *Paris Peace Conference of 1919, Armenian territorial claims, the Armenian population, Boghos Nubar Pasha, Avetis Aharonian.*

## **Öz:**

*1919 Paris Barış Konferansı'na Osmanlı Ermenilerini temsilen katılan Boghos Nubar Paşa ile Ermenistan Cumhuriyetini temsilen katılan Avetis Ahoranyan yaptıkları konuşmalarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan toprak talebinde bulunmuşlar ve ayrıca Ermeni Nüfusu hakkında bilgi vermişlerdir. Yazıda Ermenilerin toprak talepleri, İngiliz ve Fransızların Ermenistan'a verilmesini düşündükleri topraklar ve Fransızların toprak talepleri, haritalarda gösterilmek suretiyle incelemekte ayrıca Doğu Anadolu'daki Ermeni nüfusu hakkında bazı bilgiler verilmektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *1919 Paris Barış Konferansı, Ermenilerin toprak talepleri, Ermeni nüfusu, Boghos Nubar Paşa, Avetis Ahoranyan.*

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**A**t the Paris Peace Conference which convened in Paris to establish a new world order in the aftermath of World War I, the demands of several states' representatives were set forth.

Both Boghos Nubar Pasha, the representative of the Ottoman Armenians and Avetis Aharonian, the representative of the Armenian Republic situated in the Caucasus, delivered speeches at the Council of Ten of the Paris Peace Conference on February 26, 1919. These speeches are to be found in the Documents section of this journal.

Boghos Nubar Pasha (1825-1899) was an Egyptian statesman, son of the first Prime Minister of modern Egypt Nubar Nubarian, and one-time director of the Egyptian Railways. In the wake of the Balkan Wars in 1912, Boghos Nubar Pasha, a wealthy and cosmopolitan individual, was appointed by the Catholicos of Echmiadzin, Kevork V as special representative to Europe to discuss the issues of instituting reforms in the "Armenian Provinces"<sup>1</sup> of the Ottoman Empire. From this point onwards, Boghos Nubar Pasha began to conduct himself as the permanent representative of the Ottoman Armenians. Furthermore, he was instrumental in the establishment of the French "Legion d'Orient". As is well known, this military unit took part in the hostilities in Palestine and Syria, and following the war occupied a part of Eastern Anatolia under the flag of France.

On the other hand, Avetis Aharonian was a writer and a member of the Dashnak Party. In 1918 he assumed the chairmanship of the Armenian National Council for some time and conducted the ceasefire negotiations in Istanbul under this title. Designated as the representative to the Paris Peace Conference by the Armenian Government, Aharonian, traveling from Yerevan arrived at Paris in approximately two months. The main reason behind this was that the English officials hesitated to issue a visa for Aharonian as the representative of the Armenian Government. For a while the English were reluctant to recognize the independence of Armenia and engage in diplomatic contacts as this may have entailed the disintegration of Russia at a time when Tsarist forces were rebelling against Communist rule.

At the Council of Ten the first speech was delivered by Aharonian. After elabo-

1 Employed frequently during this period in the US and European press, the expression "Armenian Provinces" refers to the Six Provinces in which the Armenians allegedly constituted a majority. In reality, however, they constituted a minority in these provinces comprised of Erzurum, Van, Sivas, Mamuret-ul Aziz (Malatya) and Diyarbakır.

rating on how the Armenians sided with the Allied Powers during the war and emphasizing that the Republic of Armenia was established in accordance with regular procedure, he made two demands. The first was the recognition of the Armenian State. Aharonian expressed this demand by requesting that they be accepted as a delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. The second demand was the union of the Armenian Republic and the so-called “Armenian Provinces”.

Bogos Nubar Pasha’s speech was much longer than that made by Aharonian. By way of referring to the *Légion d’Orient* he also expressed how the Armenians joined forces with the Allied Powers and he mentioned how the Armenians fought within the French *Légion Etrangère*. Furthermore, he alleged that one of the motives behind “the massacre and deportation” of the Armenians was their attachment to the cause of the Entente Powers, emphasized that the Armenians were the “belligerent side” and set forth how the “the tribute of life paid by Armenia is heavier than that of any other belligerent nation”. Moreover, Boghos Nubar Pasha dwelled on the borders of the to-be established Armenian State and touched upon the territories he wanted to be granted to Armenia by making references to relevant population distributions.

On the issue of what Boghos Nubar Pasha demanded, this can be summarized as him having requested that certain territories belonging to the Ottoman Empire be annexed to and placed under the mandate of the Armenian State.

Of the topics raised by both Armenian representatives, beyond doubt the most important was that concerning the territories of the Ottoman Empire they wanted to be handed over to Armenia. They sought support for these demands by way of providing for information on the population of the Armenians. These two issues shall be the subject matter of the following analysis.

### **The Territories Demanded From The Ottoman Empire**

It should be stipulated that there exists differences between the Armenian Republic and Boghos Nubar Pasha regarding the territories demanded from the Ottoman Empire.

Before Aharonian parted from Yerevan he received orders from the Armenian “Horhunt” (which at the time assumed the role of Parliament), to demand the Six Provinces and an outlet to the Black Sea. However, at Paris he espoused Bog-

hos Nubar Pasha's views as to which territories would be requested<sup>2</sup> and in this manner it became possible for both Armenian delegates present at the Conference to make the same demands.

By expressing how "the Caucasian Armenians ardently desire reunion of the [Armenian] Republic with the Armenian provinces of Turkey", Aharonian made it clear that the territories particularly longed for were the Six Provinces. However, there remained a degree of uncertainty regarding Cilicia which Boghos Nubar Pasha adamantly demanded during his speech. In conjunction with this issue he mentioned that "both sections of Armenia represent a single geographic and economic whole, extending from Lori and Borchalu in the north down to the Mediterranean and, in the south, to the Armenian Taurus". These words seem to imply that certain territories apart from the Six Provinces were desired, and that these lands correspond to the area stretching all the way to the Mediterranean and the Taurus Mountains. However, practically speaking, this is not possible as the Mediterranean is situated to the south of the Tauruses.

Aharonian was split between his desire to abide by the orders from Yerevan, and his desire to appear before the Allies as a single Armenian delegation whereby he supported Boghos Nubar Pasha. This dilemma caused Aharonian to be ambiguous in his references. He uses the term Mediterranean in order to please Boghos Nubar Pasha and refers to the Taurus (and not the Mediterranean lying beyond the Taurus) as the limit of the territorial claims in order to remain faithful to the instructions issued by Yerevan. The fact that Aharonian did not use the term Cilicia further strengthens this argument.

Boghos Nubar Pasha begins his territorial claims with Cilicia. Cilicia is a geographic term that was used by the Romans. It lies between the Taurus and the Mediterranean and extends almost to Anamur in the west and Iskenderun to the east. The Ottoman Empire did not have an administrative unit designated as Cilicia.

Boghos Nubar Pasha, in addition to Cilicia, also demanded the Marash Sandjak. As such he aimed to join Cilicia with the Six "Armenian" Provinces ultimately creating a unitary Armenian body.

2 Anahide Ter Minassian, *La République d'Arménie*, Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1989, pp.158-159; Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic Of Armenia*, Volume1, Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1974, pp. 259-260; Claire Mouradian, *L'Arménie*, Paris: Que saia-je, 1995, p.71.

Boghos Nubar Pasha's other claims included the Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Harput (Mamuret-ul Aziz) and Sivas provinces; i.e. the six "Armenian" provinces.

His final demand was a strip of the Trabzon province in order to access the Black Sea<sup>3</sup>.

Later in his speech, Boghos Nubar Pasha would relinquish some of these claims; by announcing that he conceded that the south of Hakkari and Diyarbakir were Kurdish lands and that the west of Sivas was Turkish. This 'generous' act was most probably designed to further convince other delegations present that only Armenian lands were claimed.

A map denoting Boghos Nubar Pasha's claims is provided following the text (see Map I)<sup>4</sup>. These lands as calculated by our Institute corresponds to 387.424 km squared<sup>5</sup>.

During World War I agreements<sup>6</sup> concerning the partition of the Ottoman Empire among the Allies there exists no reference to the allocation of some Ottoman lands to Armenia. When Tsarist Russia was ousted the possibility of transferring the land deigned to be handed to Russia to Armenia became possible. On this issue both the United States and the United Kingdom started to make arrangements before the I World Wars end.

3 Boghos Nubar Pasha in speech whilst pretending that most of the residents of Trabzon were of Greek origin, maintained that this was the only outlet to the Black Sea available to Armenia. He also mentioned that Greek President Venizelos had already shown an exceptional sentiment of fairness by conceding this territory to Armenia. President Venizelos had spoken at the Council of Ten of the Peace Conference on the 3rd and 4th of February 1919. Upon a question posed by US President W. Wilson he stated that although there was a proposal to create a Republic in the Trabzon province he did not endorse it. He believed that the formation of many small republics in the area was unnecessary and thus coupled with the fact that Trabzon was surrounded by Turks he endorsed the inclusion of Trabzon into Armenia. (Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. Paris Peace Conference 1919, Volume IV, United States Government Printing Office, 1948, pp. 872,873.

4 All maps provided in supplement to this text were drafted and all surface areas have been calculated by Pınar Güven.

5 Boghos Nubar Pasha's first claim did not include Kayseri and its surroundings thus the total was 369,955 km squared. One year later however, in 1920, the map presented by the Armenian delegation at the conference included Kayseri to the territorial claims made. Thus, the total requested land reached 387.424 km squared. The claims of 1920 can be found in Anita L.P. Burdett, *Der., Armenia Political and Ethnic Boundaries 1817-1940*, Chipnham, Wilts: Archive Editions, 1998. Map depicting proposed limits of Armenia c. 1920. Delegation Nationale Armeninne.

6 The agreements in question: Agreements on Istanbul and the Straits 18 March 1915, Treaty of London 26 April 1915, Sykes - Picot Agreement 16 May 1916 and the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement 17 April 1917.

At this point US public opinion and the US government had been convinced that the Ottoman Empire was subjecting the Armenians to cruelty and were massacring them. This opinion was greatly influenced by the efforts of American missionaries in Anatolia. During this time The United States Inquiry, an organization of specialists working acting on a directive issued by the President, worked to offer suggestions vis-a-vis post-war territorial arrangements and other relevant issues. The specialists involved were also influenced by the above mentioned sentiment, thus they wanted to at least grant Armenia autonomy after the end of the war and had begun work on deciding which territories would be taken from the Ottoman Empire and given to Armenia. By the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 1919 the suggestion of creating a nation carrying the name Armenia and having it function under the mandate of a larger state working on behalf of the League of Nations was among the propositions presented to President Wilson at the time. These propositions also stipulated the amount of land to be given to Armenia. These lands are greatly proportional to the claims made by Boghos Nubar Pasha. However, by including Kayseri and the Ahaltsih region located in the Caucuses to the land to be allotted to Armenia, these proposals had even surpassed the claims of Boghos Nubar Pasha<sup>7</sup>. Our Institute has calculated the total amount of land conceded under the US plan as 390.318 km<sup>2</sup>.

In the United Kingdom the general sentiment was also pro-Armenian and anti-Ottoman. The fact that the Ottomans had sided with the Germans during WW I has compounded this sentiment. British Prime Minister David Lloyd George mentioned in his memoirs that if the inhumane empire (referring to the Ottomans) is defeated one of the requirements of victory would be to save the Armenian valleys from the heinous stains inflicted upon them by the Turks and their bloody and evil rule<sup>8</sup>.

An extensive British plan to hand over Ottoman lands to Armenia which had been deemed to function under the mandate of a larger state was included in a diplomatic note on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1919. The borders of this Armenian state were denoted as such: the border in the south running along the Iskenderun-Diyarbakir line continuing along the Euphrates and joining with the Iranian border and another line running on the north from a point between Trabzon and Surmene taking in the coastline of the Black Sea on the west and the Mersin-Sivas line.

7 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, pp.263-265.

8 David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, Volume 2, London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1983, p. 496.

This plan however, although creating an Armenia that reached from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea was actually comprised of less land than the claim of Boghos Nubar Pasha and the American proposition. According to calculations made by our institute the amount of land proposed by the British to be given to Armenia was 226.644 km<sup>2</sup>. According to the British plan Karabagh was not granted to Armenia but a proposition to exchange the Muslim populations of the Russian Yerevan Guberniia province and Karabagh was presented<sup>9</sup>.

The lands to be conceded to Armenia by the US, the British and those claimed by Boghos Nubar Pasha are presented in Map II<sup>10</sup>.

During this time in France there existed no objection to the creation of an independent Armenian state. However, in the 1916 Sykes – Picot Agreement Ottoman lands conceded to France and the land claimed by Boghos Nubar Pasha overlap in the Adana, Sivas, Mamuret-ul Aziz, and Diyarbekir provinces. At these points of convergence the French and Armenian claims conflicted. Map III depicts the claims of the French and Boghos Nubar Pasha.

The French-Armenian disagreement revolves around Cilicia. France tried to incorporate Cilicia to the territory of Syria the mandate of which it was to assume. Shukri Ganem the head representative of The Syrian Commission, formed to protect the interests of Syria, at the Council of Ten on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 1919 had relayed that Syria had well defined borders within the Taurus, the Sinai Desert, and the Mediterranean<sup>11</sup>. When the Taurus is defined as a border Cilicia is included within the territory of Syria. Based on this Boghos Nubar Pasha stated that by including a large portion of Cilicia within their geographic borders the Syrians were advancing baseless territorial claims and further went on to state that Syria's borders are not defined by the Tauruses but the Amanos mountain range.

### **The Armenian Population**

Both Aharonian and Boghos Nubar Pasha included information in their speeches about the Armenian population. Boghos Nubar Pasha further elaborated on the losses incurred by the Armenians during the war.

Aharonian maintained that there were 2 million Armenians in the Caucasus.

9 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, pp.265-272.

10 Based on map found in Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, p.274.

11 Paper Relating to Foreign Relations..., p.1025.



The 400 to 500 thousand refugees from the Ottoman Empire are included in this number.

Boghos Nubar Pasha however, claims that there were 4.5 million Armenians in the world before the war and that 2 million of these Armenians resided within the Ottoman Empire. He states that more than 1 million Armenians were killed during the war. While he later refrained from presenting further figures on the matter, he did present, as a justification for the extensive lands he was requesting, some claims. A summarization of the rather complicated claims is as follows:

- The Turkish (Ottoman) Government tampered with the census records to make the Armenian population appear to be less than what it was.
- The Armenian population was greater than that of the Turks before the war.
- The belief that after the massacre during the war and after the deportation there were few to no Armenians left residing in the Ottoman Empire was false.
- Those killed in war must be counted along with the living.
- 2.5 million Turks were lost during the war and that half of these losses were incurred in the Armenian provinces thus proving that the Armenians are still in majority.
- After the war the Armenians will outnumber not only the Turks, but the Kurds and Turks together.
- If the Armenians of the Caucasus unite the Armenian majority will increase even further.

Ottoman statistics encompass all of the peoples that comprise the State. With this in mind it is meaningless to assume that these statistics were distorted for the Armenian population. Also the three examples presented in support of this claim by Boghos Nubar Pasha are inconsistent<sup>12</sup>.

There is no existing source that verifies the claim that there were more Armenians than Turks in the mentioned territories after the war. Of the existing sources only the Armenian Patriarchate's statistics, which are known to be the highest estimate of the Armenian population of that time, denote the total Arme-

12 Boghos Nubar Pasha claimed that the Turkish Government declared 80,000 Armenians in the Van province. The number presented by McCarthy is 130,500; See: *The Population of Ottoman Armenians, The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, Ankara, TTK, p.70. The Marash Sandjak and the village of Zeytun are small areas in which the resident Armenian population could not possibly be a serious addition to the overall population.

nian population in the Six Provinces to be 39% of the total population of those six provinces<sup>13</sup>. In other words the claim made by Boghos Nubar Pasha is not authenticated by the statistics recorded by the Armenian Patriarchate.

In the territories demanded by Boghos Nubar Pasha the Armenian population is stipulated as such in 1912 before the war<sup>14</sup>:

| Province                              | Armenian Population | % of Total Population |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Erzurum                               | 163,218             | 16.8                  |
| Bitlis                                | 191,156             | 31.3                  |
| Mamuret-ul Aziz                       | 111,043             | 16.3                  |
| Diyarbakir                            | 89,131              | 11.8                  |
| Van                                   | 130,500             | 15.6                  |
| Sivas                                 | 182,912             | 12.4                  |
| Total Population of the Six Provinces | 867,960             | 17.3                  |
| Adana                                 | 74,930              | 11.2                  |
| Trabzon                               | 63,326              | 4.5                   |
| Total                                 | 1,006,216           | 14.02                 |

As can be seen during this period the Armenian population in the Six Provinces comprised 17.3% of the total population. With the addition of Adana and Trabzon to these provinces, the total territory approximately equals the land claimed by Boghos Nubar Pasha. The Armenian population here is even lower totaling 14.02%.

It should be noted that serious Armenian contributors to this field concur that the Armenians did not constitute a majority in the Six Provinces or in any other province of the Ottoman Empire<sup>15</sup>.

It seems that the sole aim of Boghos Nubar Pasha was to convince the Council of Ten that there was or that there would be an Armenian majority in Anatolia after the war. He goes about his argument by stating that while many Turks died

13 Justin McCarthy, *The Population of...*, p.67.

14 Based on table found in Justin McCarthy, *The Population of...*, p.70.

15 Ronalds Grigor Suny, *Looking Towards Ararat, Armenia in Modern History*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993, pp. 128,129, Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, pp.265, Anahide Ter Minassian, *La Republique d'Armenie...*, p.160.

in the war, in contrast, despite the deportation and massacres a fairly large population of Armenians (he does not reveal an exact number) remained in Anatolia. He further suggests that the deceased Armenians be counted along side the living; according to this logic the deceased would be counted as if they had never died. Thus the Armenians, in keeping with the belief that they comprised a majority in comparison to the Turks before the war, would also constitute a majority after the war. The warped logic behind requesting the dead be counted along side the living requires little explanation. It should be added that, as mentioned above, the Armenians residing in the lands requested by Boghos Nubar Pasha before the war having constituted 14.02% of the population would still not create a majority in any sense by counting the dead after the war.

There happens to be information relayed by the Armenian delegations in reference to Armenian losses in their speeches at the Peace Conference.

Before analyzing this issue a moment must be taken to define the concept of 'losses'. The Armenian Diaspora regards those killed during the Armenian relocation as 'losses'. However, this definition of the term 'losses' disregards deaths that can be attributed to natural causes as experienced during the relocation. These deaths can be attributed to old age, malnutrition, epidemics, lack of sufficient health care, and accidents. These deaths cannot be placed in the same category as those that were caused by acts of violence, thus, defining all of these deaths as 'losses' is misleading.

While Aharonian speaks of the sacrifices of the Armenians during the war he refrains from presenting direct evidence on Armenian losses. However, it is possible to calculate the losses incurred by the Armenians residing in the Caucasus from the numbers he does present. According to Aharonian the population of the Armenians residing in the Caucasus was 2 million prior to and after WW I. The Armenian refugees from the Ottoman Empire which numbered in the 400 to 500 thousands are also included in this final sum. The fact that the population of the region remained the same in spite of the influx of the refugees in Armenia points to an apparent loss of 400 to 500 thousand people in the region in question.

Boghos Nubar Pasha on the other hand, along side his conflicting comments, presents grossly rounded estimates in the millions and half millions concerning the losses incurred by a relatively small 4.5 million person Armenian population. While this reveals that he was in fact uninformed about the actual figures associ-

ated with the Armenian population it also points to the reason behind this move. Boghos Nubar Pasha aimed to gain as much territory as possible by stating these exaggerated numbers.

On another front, the Allies also invented unconventional formulas to further support their aim of granting the Armenians lands and thus diverged from the Wilsonian Principals. The concept of “counting the deceased along side the living” in relation to the Armenians is one of the extensions of these unconventional formulas. This concept is, in actuality, a British and not as it would seem an Armenian idea. In a report concerning the fate of the Ottoman Empire prepared by the English Foreign Ministry at the end of 1918, it was stipulated that when establishing the demands of the concerned parties vis-à-vis the pertinent territory, with respect to Armenia, the deceased alongside those relocated should be taken into consideration. Also the rights granted to Jewish emigrants to facilitate the formation of a nation in Palestine were to be extended to the Armenians in order to facilitate their emigration to the newly formed Armenia<sup>16</sup>. The reason for the existence of this arrangement is based on the fact that under the Wilsonian principle of self-determination the formation of an Armenian state on Ottoman soil (or a Jewish state in Palestine) is virtually impossible. As a matter of fact it states in the above mentioned British diplomatic note of 7 February 1919 that “to be able to achieve the historical claims of the Jews and Armenians the principal of self-determination should not be applied proportionately to their population figures”<sup>17</sup>. This statement indirectly states that the principal of self-determination would not be applied to these regions.

It is beyond doubt that this reasoning is not fair; while granting land to a certain nation, injustice is being inflicted upon the local population residing therein. In turn, this engenders reactions from these local inhabitants sparking (as in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict) the onset of a bloody struggle with no end in sight.

In light of the foregoing, it can be surmised that the Allies chose to disregard the principal of self-determination due to the fact that if applied, the principal would allot governance over the region to the apparent majority presented by the Turks and other Muslims in the region. The underlying reason for this choice was the desire to punish the vanquished enemy. This was existent to such an extent that while a Turkish state was not even an option at the beginning of the Peace

16 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, p.267.

17 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, p.270.

ated with the Armenian population it also points to the reason behind this move. Boghos Nubar Pasha aimed to gain as much territory as possible by stating these exaggerated numbers.

On another front, the Allies also invented unconventional formulas to further support their aim of granting the Armenians lands and thus diverged from the Wilsonian Principals. The concept of “counting the deceased along side the living” in relation to the Armenians is one of the extensions of these unconventional formulas. This concept is, in actuality, a British and not as it would seem an Armenian idea. In a report concerning the fate of the Ottoman Empire prepared by the English Foreign Ministry at the end of 1918, it was stipulated that when establishing the demands of the concerned parties vis-à-vis the pertinent territory, with respect to Armenia, the deceased alongside those relocated should be taken into consideration. Also the rights granted to Jewish emigrants to facilitate the formation of a nation in Palestine were to be extended to the Armenians in order to facilitate their emigration to the newly formed Armenia<sup>16</sup>. The reason for the existence of this arrangement is based on the fact that under the Wilsonian principle of self-determination the formation of an Armenian state on Ottoman soil (or a Jewish state in Palestine) is virtually impossible. As a matter of fact it states in the above mentioned British diplomatic note of 7 February 1919 that “to be able to achieve the historical claims of the Jews and Armenians the principal of self-determination should not be applied proportionately to their population figures”<sup>17</sup>. This statement indirectly states that the principal of self-determination would not be applied to these regions.

It is beyond doubt that this reasoning is not fair; while granting land to a certain nation, injustice is being inflicted upon the local population residing therein. In turn, this engenders reactions from these local inhabitants sparking (as in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict) the onset of a bloody struggle with no end in sight.

In light of the foregoing, it can be surmised that the Allies chose to disregard the principal of self-determination due to the fact that if applied, the principal would allot governance over the region to the apparent majority presented by the Turks and other Muslims in the region. The underlying reason for this choice was the desire to punish the vanquished enemy. This was existent to such an extent that while a Turkish state was not even an option at the beginning of the Peace

16 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, p.267.

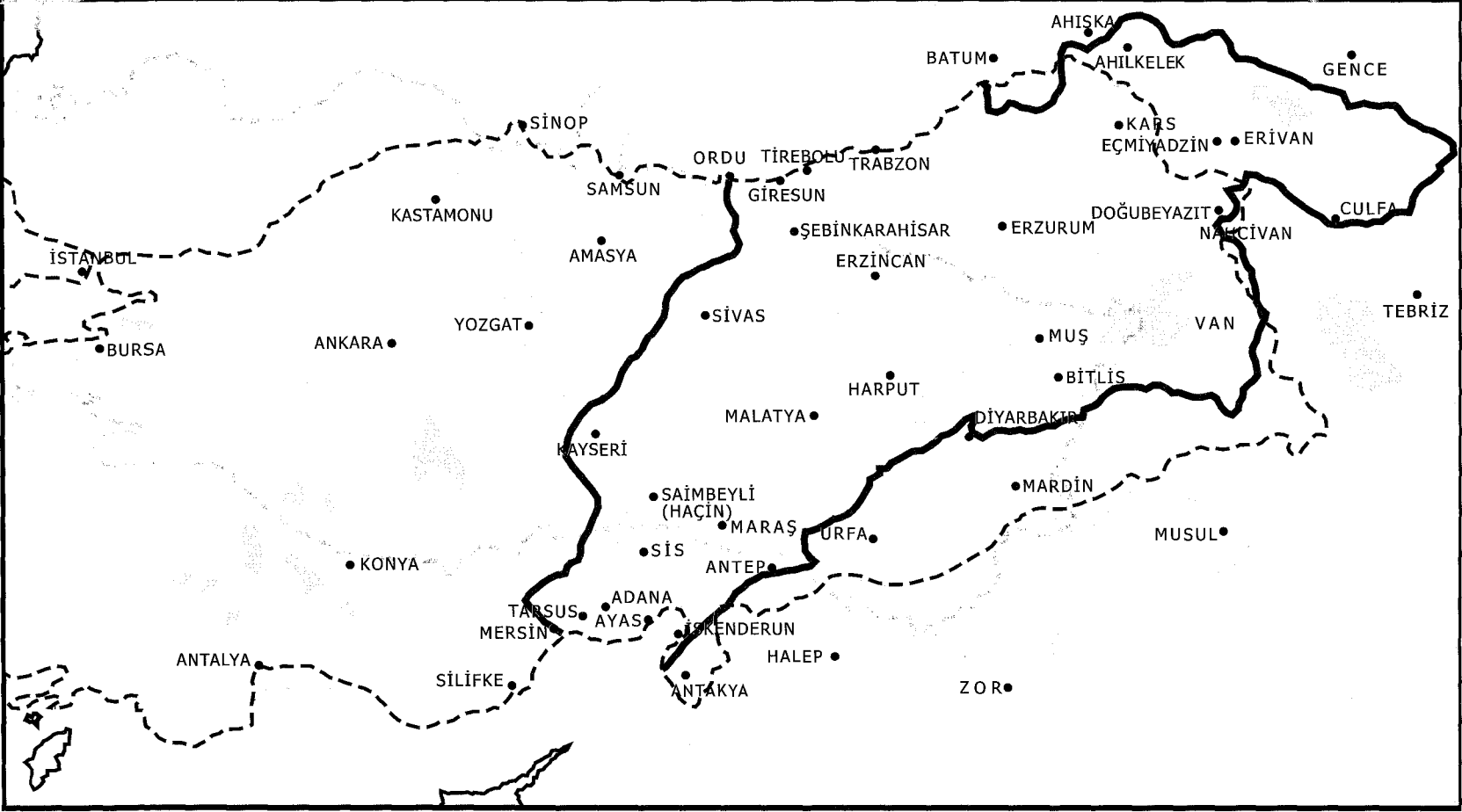
17 Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic...*, p.270.

Conference, permission for such a state; be it a small one, was provided for only after it became apparent that especially India might react to the abolition of the Caliphate of the Muslims.

Also, it is the case that the Allies did not contemplate that the Turks would resist any effort to dismantle their nation. The basis for this gross miscalculation is that both France and Britain, due to their relatively unproblematic experiences with Muslim peoples in their colonies, expected the Turks to act the same way. Noninterference in religious beliefs and customs was of prime importance to the Muslim peoples mentioned above during this period. These peoples were untroubled by the governance of a foreign power as long as they maintained their tribal social structure. However, the enlightened Ottoman generations who had matured throughout the final years of the Empire identified with their proud and glorious past and thus could not see themselves subjugated by a foreign power. It was out of the question for them to accept subjugation to the great nations of Europe or the peoples (such as the Greeks and Armenians) they had governed previously. The fact that in a relatively short time an organized resistance was formed in Anatolia on a scale the Allies could not have imagined strengthens this argument. Consecutively a Parliament, a Government and a regular army were formed laying the foundation of the new Turkish state.

The Armenian state envisioned by the Allies could have only been formed in the absence of the Turkish resistance. In fact the Armenian State provisioned by the Treaty of Sevres- which was one third the size of the claims made by Boghos Nubar Pasha and the Armenian lands approved by Britain and the United States- was not created due to Turkish opposition. Consequently the small Armenian Republic of the Caucuses disappeared from the international scene only four months after Sevres.

We will continue exploring the subject of the Armenian claims made at the Paris Peace Conference in future articles.

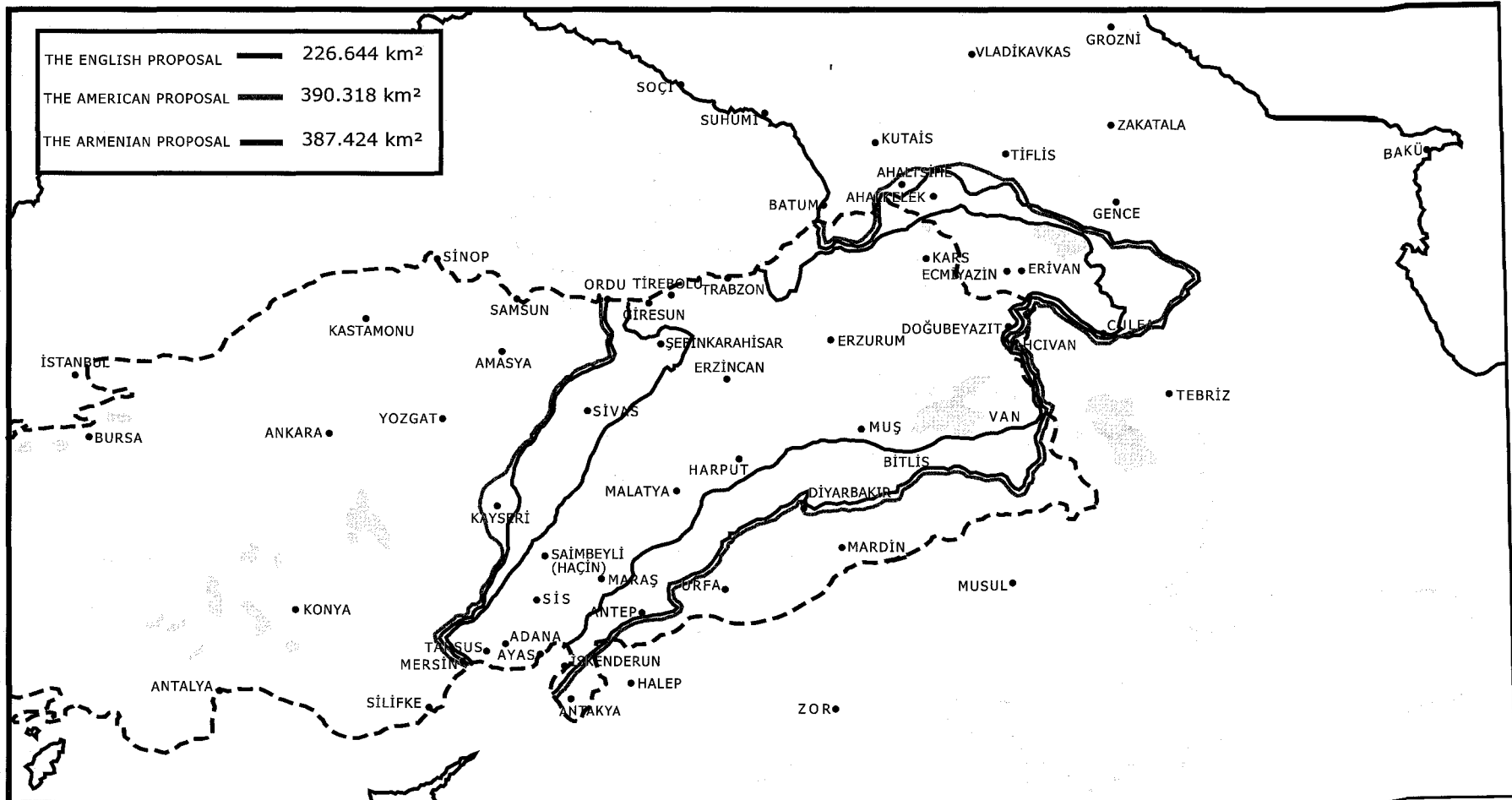


TERRITORIES CLAIMED BY BOGHOS NUBAR PASHA

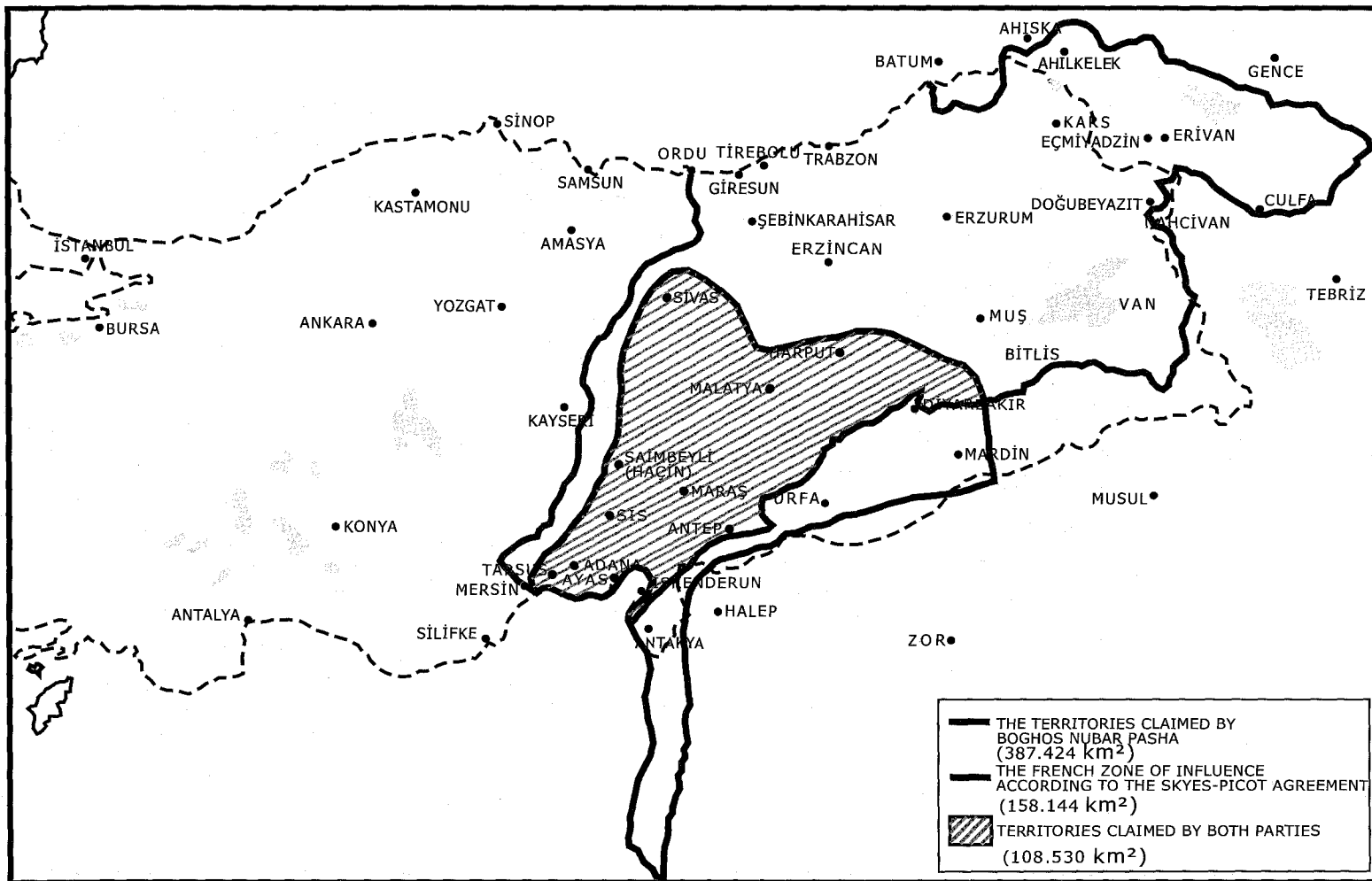
MAP I

TERRITORIES CLAIMED BY BOGHOS NUBAR PASHA AND THE TERRITORIES THE UK AND THE US PLANNED ON GRANTING TO ARMENIA

MAP II



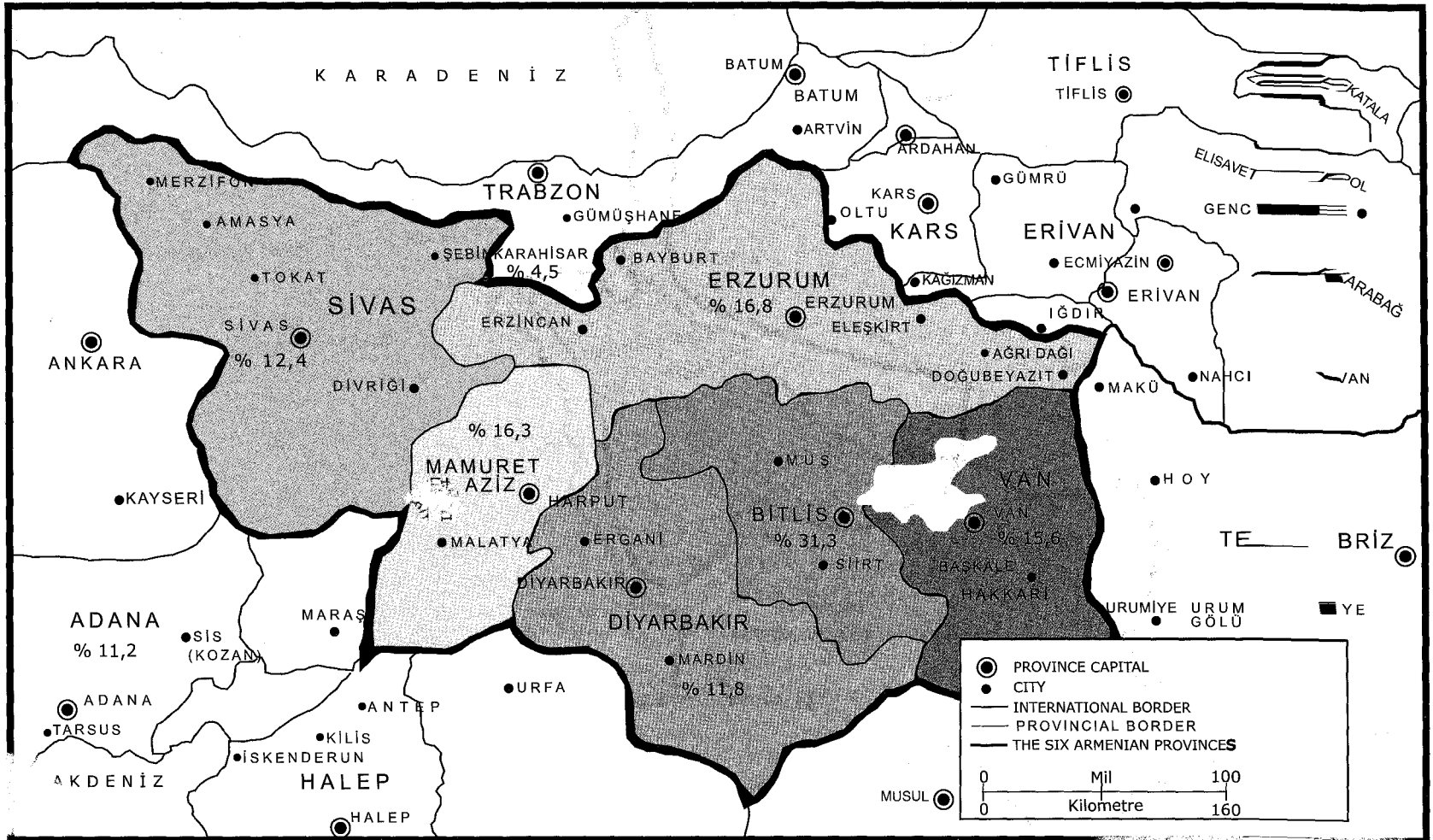




TERRITORIES CLAIMED BY BOGHOS NUBAR PASHA AND THE FRENCH ZONE OF INFLUENCE ACCORDING TO THE SYKES PICOT AGREEMENT

MAP III

THE POPULATION OF ARMENIANS IN ADANA, TRABZON, AND THE SIX PROVINCES IN PROPORTION TO THE TOTAL POPULATION MAP IV



# CONFERENCE 1

**Oya Eren**

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**Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş**

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## TURKISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY XV. TURKISH HISTORY CONGRESS 11-15 SEPTEMBER 2006

**X**V. Congress of the Turkish Historical Society was convened in Ankara on 11 September 2006 under the auspices of the President Ahmet Necdet Sezer. 310 academicians attended to the Congress.

In his inaugural speech, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that the allegations posed by irrelevant states on the Armenian question were totally unacceptable. He also reminded that he had sent a letter to President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, including to offer of establishment of a joint commission and that he had not been answered positively yet.

The speeches, which can be considered within the scope of our Institute, and the academicians that presented them are examined below briefly.

In her speech entitled “The Establishment and Activities of Eastern Legion in the Light of Archival Documents of French Foreign Ministry”, Prof. Bige SÜKAN argued that the Armenian question has been a project designed by Great Powers to disintegrate the Ottoman Empire. She mentioned how the French utilized Armenians during World War I in their occupation of the Southern Anatolia through establishment of an Armenian legion and how this legion was trained in the island of Cyprus.

Prof Dr. Aygün ATTAR examined the activities of Armenian committees in the late nineteenth century and the emergence of Armenian-Azeri inter-communal strife in 1905 as well as the establishment of Difai Committee founded by Ahmet Ağaoğlu in order to prevent further Armenian atrocities, in her speech entitled “An Organization Founded against Armenian Pressure: Difai Committee”

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In his speech entitled “The Armenian Question Policy of Willam Ewart Gladstone and the Sultan Abdulhamid II’s Initiatives for Convincing Gladstone” Assoc. Prof. Dr. Taha Niyazi KARACA introduced one of the most significant British politicians of the Victorian era and his animosity towards the Turks as well as his attempts of establishing a Christian Union against the Ottoman Empire. He also mentioned that Gladstone used Armenian question to create a pressure on the Ottomans through his attempt to create an independent Armenain state. Finally he examined the attempt of Sultan Abdülhamid II to convince Gladstone for giving up this dangerous project.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet HALAÇOĞLU, argued in his speech entitled “The General Amnesty Adopted in the Era of Abdulhamid II and Its Implementation to the Armenian Culprits” that the Armenians were influenced from the ideas disseminating after the French Revolution and the independence of Balkan states, that the Armenian question became an international problem after 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian Wars, that the Armenians resorted to rebellion and violence to resolve this question. He also mentioned about the general amnesty declared by Sultan Abdulhamid II and its implementation on the revolutionary Armenians in the light of archival documents.

In his speech entitled “The Process of Enemization of the Ottoman Armenians in Bursa and Their Rebellion (1878-1922)” Prof. Dr. Yusuf OĞUZOĞLU first informed the audiences on the Armenian community of Bursa in the aforementioned period. He mentioned that it was only in the mid-nineteenth century that there emerged a massive Armenian immigration to Bursa because of establishment of French-owned factories in the region. He stipulated that the Armenians benefited much from the modernization moves and the Armenian religious leaders had utilized the Church for political purposes together with the foreign missionary schools opened in the region. All these developments, according to Prof. Oğuzoğlu, resulted in the Armenian rebellions and massacres in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saime YÜCEER, emphasized in her speech entitled “Armenian Incidents in Bursa, Relocation of Bursa Armenians and their Return” that in the process of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, likewise other parts of the Empire, Bursa Armenians had been utilized by imperialist powers.

In his speech entitled “The Implementation of Relocation and the status of US Citizen Ottoman Armenians” Prof. Dr. Kemal ÇİÇEK examined the status of

Ottoman Armenians, who somehow obtained US citizenship in the light of the consular investigations and explained how these group of Armenians had relocated during the process of relocation.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mithat AYDIN analyzed in his speech entitled “The Activities of American Missionaries among Armenians and Its Implications on the Ottoman-American Relations” the provocative and protective role of American missionary organizations on the Armenian rebellions as well as the measures taken by the Ottoman governments especially in the form of developing diplomatic relations with the United States

In his speech entitled “The Military, Political, Economic and Social Situation of the Republic of Armenia According to the Reports of the British Representatives (1919-1920)” Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kaya Tuncer ÇAĞLAYAN argued that the British interests in Caucasia led that state to provoke Armenian rebellions against the Ottoman Empire. By relying on the reports written by Captain George Gracey, who had appointed as the British Representative to the Republic of Armenia in 1919, Prof. Çağlayan examines the relations between Armenia and its neighbors at that time.

Dr. Hilmar KAISER presented a speech entitled “The German Red Cross Mission to the Ottoman Third Army” In this speech, in the light of the memoirs of German medical officers serving in the Ottoman Third Army, he reviewed the health problems and epidemics that the Ottoman soldiers encountered during World War I and he claimed that some Ottoman military doctors had experienced lethal experiences on Armenians.

In his speech entitled “The Role and Significance of Marseilles on Armenian Events” Assist. Prof. Dr. Ahmet ALTINTAŞ, examined the establishment of Armenian committees in this city as well as their activities. He claimed that Marseilles turned out to be a center of Armenian activism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which connected other centers of Europe.

Prof. Dr. Zeki ARSLANTÜRK delivered a speech on “The Social Structure of Eastern Black Sea Region, The Ethnic Group Claims and Missionary Activities”. After touching upon the implications of globalization on micro-ethnic groups, he underlined that Turkish society has been a rich society including many micro-ethnic groups. Then he mentioned the Georgion insults on the Acara Turks, the Pontus policy of Greeks and Greater Armenia dream of Armenia and its implica-

tions on the population moves in the region.

In his speech entitled “Gregorian Kıpchaks and Töre Bitigi (The Book of Law), Prof. Dr. Reşat GENÇ examined a detailed and unexplored issue. He emphasized the religious division of Kıpchaks between Georgian and Armenian churches. He also underlined that the Kıpchaks adhered themselves to Armenian-Gregorian church left a significant contribution to the Armenian culture and literature.

Dr. Dilşen İNCE-ERDOĞAN examined the Armenian rebellions at Van in the last three years of the nineteenth century in her speech entitled “The Activities of American Missioners in Van between the Years 1897-1900”. She particularly focused on the 1896 Van rebellion and its aftermath with reference to the interventions of Russia, Iran and Western states on this rebellion.

In his speech entitled “War, Aid and Corruption: The Assyrian Brigades Formed with the Money Given by American Humanitarian Relief Organization, The Near East Relief, in the First World War”, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bülent ÖZDEMİR, underlined the Russian-Nesturian collaboration and the establishment of Assyrian brigades fighting against the Ottoman Empire with the money coming from humanitarian relief organizations.

Good organization of the Congress, chronological sequence and thematic categorization of the speeches eased systematic following of the Congress and increased its degree of contribution to the participants.

## CONFERENCE 2

**Oya Eren**

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### THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF OPENING THE ARMENIA-TURKEY BORDER

Yerevan, 13-14 January 2007

The problem of closure of Turkish-Armenian border has still been one of the most significant problems between Turkey and Armenia. Armenia is aware of the fact that it should develop its relations with Turkey in order to overcome its own economic problems and transform itself to be a regional power. Besides the efforts of Armenia, Armenian lobbies in the United States and Europe are also working for the opening of borders.

The latest of these efforts is the conference organized on 13-14 January 2007 by an American-based non-governmental organization, Armenian International Policy Research Group (AIPRG) under the auspices of United States Agency of International Development (USAID), Eurasia Foundation and the British Embassy in Yerevan. Participants from Argentina, Armenia, Belgium, Southern Cyprus, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States attended the conference entitled “The Economic and Social Consequences of Opening the Armenia-Turkey Border”. In the conference some significant articles are presented on the prospective economic and social transformations in the aftermath of the border opening and on what could be done to increase common benefit and to decrease costs of this process.

The first article presented in the conference carried the title of “Study of the Economic Impact on the Armenian Economy from Re-Opening the Turkish-Armenian Borders, Implications for External Trade” and emphasized that the most significant sector that would be influenced from the opening of the border would be the trade sector. In this article the short term, medium term and long term implications of the border opening on trade sector was examined with quantitative methods.

The second speech entitled “The Political Economy Approach to the Study of Armenia-Turkey Cross-Border Engagement” had a critical stance against the Ar-

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menian government. In this speech it was mentioned that Armenian government was not content with the opening of the border and some related ministries had a slippage between the rhetoric, which was in favor of border opening, and the practice which acts in an opposite direction. On the other hand business elites demanded liberalization of border arrangements. What is more, Armenian decision-makers were classified as absolutists, who demanded unconditional opening of the borders; relativists, who demanded opening of borders only after some economic reforms have been realized; and isolationists, who demanded preservation of the status-quo permanently.

The third article presented in the conference carried the title of “Opening Armenia’s Border: Sectoral and Distributional Consequences”. In this article it was mainly aimed to predict the performance of Armenian manufacturing sectors after the borders would be opened. The findings of the article are examined within the framework of some economic theories, particularly relying on the concept of comparative advantage. The ultimate aim was to determine the manufacturing sectors in Armenia that would benefit and the sectors that would lose when Turkey opens the borders.

The fourth speech entitled “Evaluating the Impact of the Opening of the Border on the Normalization of Turkish-Armenian Relations” emphasized the political implications of the opening of the border. It argues that this process would contribute to the confidence building between Turkey and Armenia; therefore it might incrementally result in a negotiation platform for the resolution of other problems between two states. The next speech bearing the title of “Alternative Destinations of Migration”, mainly focused on the overall social, legal and economic conditions of Armenian migrants in Turkey and the Russian Federation and it aimed to show how the migration from Armenia to Turkey could change with the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border, considering its negative and positive implications on both Armenian migrants and Armenia’s geo-political position.

The sixth article presented in the conference was entitled “The Economic and Social Consequences of Reopening the Armenian Turkish Border: The Implications for the South Caucasus, Turkey, and Europe” and mainly studied regional consequences of the opening of the borders. Accordingly, it argued that opening of the Armenian-Turkish border would significantly contribute toward the improvement of relations between Armenia and Turkey, provide the framework for economic development in the region, and aid the process of regional integration,



reconciliation and conflict resolution, which would also enhance the prospects for the integration of the South Caucasus within the Black Sea regional community, and the extended Euro-Atlantic Community.

The implications of border opening to Armenian security is the main topic of the next article bearing the title “The Impacts of Conflict Risk Reduction on the Armenian Economy”. In the article it was argued that being one of countries having the highest rank of external conflict risk, Armenia would benefit much from opening of borders; because normalization of Armenia’s relationships with its neighbors would reduce the external conflict risk that Armenia faces, and this would have several economic impacts, particularly it would result in increasing foreign direct investment.

The eighth article presented in the conference was entitled “Estimating the Change in Trade Flows Between Armenia and Turkey if the Border is Open: Case Study Based on Georgia-Turkey and Armenia-Iran Trade” and it mainly focused on the changes in trade flows between Armenia and Turkey that will take place if the border is opened. Accordingly the findings of a comparative study of Georgia-Turkey and Armenia-Iran trade patterns was extended to the Armenia-Turkey future trade relationships. The article concluded that if the border would be open, the import of agricultural products from Turkey would increase by 4.6 times, chemical products by 3.4 times, machinery and transport equipment by 2.8 times, and overall import from Turkey would increase by 2.6 times. In a similar vein the ninth speech entitled “Green Line Regulation and Its Economic Implications in Cyprus” aimed to extend the findings of trade patterns of Cyprus case to the prospective Armenian-Turkish trade.

Likewise the aforementioned articles presented on the regional implications of the border opening, the tenth article bearing the title of “A Phased Strategy for Opening Armenia’s Western Border” focused on the impact of this process on regional stability in general and Turkish-Armenian relations in particular. “Economic Potential for Regional Integration of Armenia and Northeast Turkey” was the title of the next article focusing on the sub-regional implications of the border opening on western Armenia and northeastern Turkey.

The twelfth speech delivered in the conference was on “Exploring Complementarities Between Turkey and Armenia for Regional Cooperation: Potentials and Challenges”. In this speech the main question was whether Turkish and Armenian economies happened to have sufficient level of complementarities to pre-

pare foundation for mutual trade if border closure were to be ended. The main argument of this speech, therefore, was that unless ending of the border closure would be accompanied by improved bilateral trade in particular and bilateral economic relations in general, the viability of relations would likely to be dim.

The last paper presented in the conference was entitled “Transportation and Administrative Costs: Unearned Surplus” which put forward that the transportation costs in Armenia have been more than two times higher than the average international rates and have been the highest within the region. Therefore, prospective opening of borders would contribute to the Armenian economy via reducing these costs.

Overall, it can be concluded that closure of the borders has not been beneficial for Armenia not only politically but also economically. The closure of borders has recently resulted in the exclusion of Armenia from a regional railway project connecting Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey as well as Baku and Kars. This resulted in increasing isolation of Armenia, which had also been excluded from oil transportation line projects. In order to prevent this further isolation Armenia attempted to open the Turkish-Armenian border. This conference reviewed in this essay is a part of these efforts. In the coming days it is expected that other initiatives will follow. However, the political reasons of the closure of the border are certain and without resolution of these political problems between two states, it is not possible to expect opening of borders.

# BOOK REVIEW 1

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## COLLECTED PUBLICATIONS: I RESEARCHES ON ARMENIANS (TOPLU ESERLER: I ERMENİLERLE İLGİLİ ARAŞTIRMALAR)

*Prof. Dr. Yavuz Ercan*

Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi Yayınları, 2006, 449 Pages.

**T**his book entitled Researches on Armenians (Ermenilerle İlgili Araştırmalar) and written by Prof. Dr. Yavuz Ercan is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter is a translation of a twenty-seven page report entitled 'The Armenians Unmasked' and authored by Charles Boswell Norman on the reforms demanded by Hunchaks, which were perceived as being not innocent. In order to provide the reader with this significant report Prof. Ercan put a translation of it in his collection.

These demands can be enumerated as such: (1) In all the cities and villages of the Empire Armenians would be given the right of proportional representation. (2) Their freedom of speech and press would be granted. (3) The government would donate for poor segments of Armenians from the revenues allocated from state-owned lands. (4) Forced labor would be abrogated. (5) Education would be free of charge. (6) All direct taxes paid by Armenians would be abrogated.

Prof. Ercan criticized this report as well. He argues that, although Norman stipulated that the negative image of the Turk has appeared in Europe with the emergence of Armenian question, this pejorative image can even be traced back to the Crusades.

Norman argues that the Hunchak Committee had a significant impact on the deterioration of Turkish-Armenian relations. Accordingly, he writes: "Within the last five years, the Hunchak Committee has had a direct responsibility on the bloods shed in Anatolia". Norman also rejects the perception that the clashes in

BOOK REVIEW

Anatolia were nothing but the atrocities committed by Muslims on the Christian population: “Perceiving these bloody and sorrowful events as causeless atrocities committed by Muslims on Christians is not true...The events were started by Armenians.”

Captain Norman also argues that Armenians declared exaggerated numbers on the population of Armenians in Anatolia and the Armenian losses, and added that British and other European nations believed these numbers as well.

The second chapter of the book is entitled as ‘Armenian Allegations in the Light of Archival Documents’ and includes a brief evaluation of the history of Armenian people. The third chapter on the other hand, is about the emergence of the Armenian question in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Prof. Ercan argues that this question has emerged in the process of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the responsibility of this question has rested on the policies of Great Powers of the time, namely Russia, the United States, Britain and France, as well as Armenians themselves.

The fourth chapter of the book is about the publication activities against Armenian terror, which has done so far. Prof. Ercan emphasizes that Armenian terrorist activities has been intensified after 1965, the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian ‘genocide’. He writes that at that period European states as well as the international public opinion had supported these terrorist activities. The author also tries to answer why Turkey was unable to prevent these activities and why European states had supported Armenian terrorists, and argues that Turkey was not active enough about scientific and propagandistic publications. In this chapter, the publications on Armenian question are reviewed thoroughly and the reader is informed on the literature on Armenians from the ancient times to the second half of the nineteenth century.

The next chapter entitled as “Armenian-Bulgarian Cooperation”, the efficient and continuous efforts against the Ottoman Empire in the centers like Etchmiadzin, Rome, Jerusalem, Vienna and France are examined. The author emphasizes that these efforts were carried by rooted and effective organizations and spread to the world in a short time. Within this framework, the author also focuses on the convergence of Armenian and Bulgarian interests against the Ottoman Empire.

The sixth chapter is on the Armenians living in Iran. The author examines the Armenian community living in Iran and the Iranian policy towards this commu-

nity. He accordingly reviews the book entitled “Armenians and Iran” and written by Mehmetzade Mirza Bala, who focused on those Armenians fled to Tabriz after the collapse of Armenian Republic and subsequent transformation of this city as a significant center of Armenian activity. Mirza Bala also wrote that anti-Turkish activities of Armenians had been known by the Iranian government, which installed Armenians on significant posts in the army and the parliament, and argues that these activities have continued until today.

The seventh and last chapter of the book is about the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem. The author examines the Egyptian Campaign of Yavuz Sultan Selim, his imperial edict including the concessions given to the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem and compared the views of Turkish and foreign historians on these concessions. In this chapter, the rivalry between Greek and Armenian churches is also focused. This chapter is significant for its particular emphasis on the Ottoman policy of tolerance against non-Muslim population.

All in all, it can be said that this book is a valuable source for the students of Armenian question. Armenian question is a very popular theme today and everyone has a say on that matter. However, it is a must to understand the history of this question in order to comprehend its contemporary ramifications accurately. Prof. Ercan’s book is also significant because of its strong emphasis on different historical aspects of the Armenian question.



## BOOK REVIEW 2

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### RELOCATION SINCE 1915: TURKISH-ARMENIAN RELATIONS (1915'TEN GÜNÜMÜZE TEHCİR: TÜRK ERMENİ İLİŞKİLERİ)

*Berna Türkođan*

İstanbul, IQ Kültür-Sanat Yayıncılık, 2006, 448 Pages

**D**espite intensive efforts of disturbing Turkish position in international platforms by keeping the Armenian question in the agenda of the international community, insufficiency of Turkish efforts remains a visible fact. Although Turkey currently seems to back at this academic race, with increasing studies on the Armenian question, new facts and documents have been emerging.

In the book entitled 'Relocation Since 1915: Turkish-Armenian Relations' written by Berna Türkođan, the author argues that the Armenian genocide allegations can only be falsified with a determined and consistent effort following the light of these facts and documents. Within this framework, the book starts with the necessity of examining genocide allegations through the responsibility of the historian and mainly focuses on the reasons of the Armenian relocation.

In the first chapter, the author examines the position of Armenians in the Ottoman social order, where and how they had been living under the Ottoman tolerance. What is more, she analyzes the first separatist Armenian movements and the implications of the intervention of Great Powers to Ottoman administrative and legal system on Turkish-Armenian relations. She also informs the reader on the population statistics regarding the Armenian population by relying on Russian, Armenian, Ottoman and Western sources and comments on the developments leading the Ottoman Empire to take the decision of relocation in a historical perspective.

BOOK REVIEW

In the second chapter, implementation of the law on relocation and resettlement, which had been adopted on May 27, 1915, is examined. Within this framework, the author explains the implications of Armenian rebellions and other separatist activities on this decision. At this point, she refers to the reports written at that time on Armenian atrocities, revolts and collaboration with the enemies of the Ottoman armies. By analyzing these laws and regulations thoroughly, the author concludes that they were targeting not a nation as a whole, but those who had been threatening the territorial integrity of the Empire. What is more, she also provides the reader with some archival documents on the punishment of those who had been misbehaving the Armenians during the relocation and those who had been mis-implementing the orders coming from the central government. She examines the attitude of Great Powers as well as the United States by relying on the American and Russian archival documents.

In the third chapter of the book, the reader is provided with information on the regions of relocation, the number of relocated Armenians, the domestic and foreign aids allocated for them as well the conceptualization of the term 'relocation' and its usage. What is more, this chapter includes other experiences of deportations and the conceptualization of this alternative term of 'deportation'. The situation of Armenian as well as other relocated populations of the Empire is analyzed in a holistic way in this chapter.

Fourth chapter is devoted to the discussions on the Armenian question in Lausanne Peace Conference, the attempts and targets of Armenians in the Conference as well as the negotiations in the subcommittee on minority issues. It also analyses the discussions in the Turkish Grand National Assembly at that time and comments on the articles of Lausanne Treaty on minorities. The fifth chapter on the other hand focuses on the evolution of Armenian question since World War II.

In the sixth chapter, the author mainly examines the emergence and development of Armenian terror between 1965 and 1985, its targets, the collaboration of Armenian and Greek terrorists, the establishment of Armenian terrorist organization called ASALA and its relationship with another terrorist organization, PKK. She also focuses on the current legal aspect of the issue and the reorientation of the methods used by Armenians from terror to diplomacy.

The last chapter of the book examines the developments from 1985 to April 24, 2005. Within this framework, she analyzes the implications of Armenian



question on Turkish-Armenian relations, its connection with the Karabagh question as well as the situation in Azerbaijan and Turkish-European Union relations. She also focuses on the resolutions recognizing the genocide allegations in various parliaments, their inclusion in the educational curricula in some countries and the activities of the Armenian lobby. The author tries to find a solution for the Armenian issue including development of Turkish lobbying activities as well as the works of historians. She argues that a consistent strategy is needed and such as strategy should be a constant and stable one which does not solely relies on giving concessions.

All in all, the book is about a very long period and prepared in reference to archival materials from related countries' archives. It also utilizes the archives of Turkish Grand National Assembly, Prime Ministry Ottoman and Republican Archives Department as well as military archives. Thus, it can be said that the book is based on a strong scientific and analytical framework. It also consists of a deep historical and methodological analysis. As a result, it is evident that this book by Dr. Berna Türkdoğan will have a significant place in the literature because of its holistic approach to the concept of relocation as well as its historical dimension.



# ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

## SPEECHES OF ARMENIAN DELEGATES AT 1919 PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

### THE COUNCIL OF TEN

FRANCE

M. Gout

ITALY

H. E. M. Crespi.

M. Galli.

PRESENT DURING QUESTION 5

ITALY

H. E. M. Crespi.

• ARMENIAN DELEGATION

Boghes Nubar Pasha.

A. Aharonian.

Interpreter: Prof. P. J. Mantoux.

Joint Secretariat

AMERICA, UNITED STATES OF.....Lieut. Burden.

BRITISH EMPIRE.....Captain E. Abraham.

FRANCE.....Captain A. Portier.

ITALY.....Licut. Zanchi.

JAPAN.....M. Saburi.

\* Kaynak: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States The Paris Peace Conference 1919 (United States Government Printing Office, 1948) Cilt IV, Sayfa 139-157.  
(Çeviren: Ömer Engin Lütem)

- (The Armenian Delegates then entered the Room.)

(4) M. AIIARONIAN read the following statement: “As representatives of the Armenian Republic—which has been regularly constituted for a year in Transcaucasia, with Erivan as the statement of seat of its Parliament and Government we have the

Armenian honour to lay the following facts before the Conference and to make the following request : Before the war of 1914-1918, there were about 2 million Armenians

in Transcaucasian Russia, to say nothing of Armenians in Turkey and Persia. A fifth of these were scattered in the big cities, especially Tiflis, Batum and Baku, and the remainder, i.e. more than a million and a half, lived as a compact community in the districts of Erivan, Kars, Chucha, and Alexandropol, which have been the dwelling-place of our race for two or three thousand years and where the Supreme Head of the Armenian Church, the Catholicos of all Armenians, lives in his monastery of Echmiadzin.

At the beginning of the war, our nation not only forgot all grievances against Tsarist rule and rallied whole-heartedly to the Russian flag in support of the Allied cause, but our fellow-countrymen in Turkey and all over the world offered to the Government of the Tsar (the archives of the Russian Embassy at Paris prove this) to establish and support Armenian legions at their own expense to fight side by side with Russian troops under the command of Russian generals.

The Tsar’s Government stated, through its Ambassador in Paris, that it would be preferable if individual Armenians enlisted in the Russian Army. They at once did so and during 1914, 1915, 1916 and 1917 Armenian volunteers from all parts of the world fought for the Allied cause side by side with their fellow-countrymen who were regulars in the Russian Army; more than 180,000 Armenians defended the freedom of nations, and this devotion to the common cause called down on the Armenian people the hatred of Ottomans and Young Turks, which gave rise to massacres lasting two years and laid waste aft the Armenian vilayets of the Ottoman Empire.

In 1917, when the Russian revolution summoned the Constituent Assembly, the Armenian deputies (who had been freely elected by -our nation) received a mandate to fight to a ffinish and to help loyally in the organisation of a Russian Republic based on a Parliamentary constitution and federative rule. Russia had no more faithful helpers during Kerensky’s rule than our nation, either on the

battlefields of Europe and Asia or in any administrative offices of the capital or provinces.

In the Autumn of 1917, when all Armenian territory and the Ottoman vilayets fled by the combined efforts of Russia and Armenia, as well as the provinces of Transcaucasia, were exposed to the Turkish invasion owing to Bolshevik defection, the leaders of our people, both laymen and Churchmen, begged the authorities and the Russian Command not to forsake them and renewed their offers of help to continue the struggle. But the Russian generals themselves were forsaken by their men, and the Peace of Brest-Litovsk handed over to Turkey the western half of Caucasian Armenia, including the gate of Kars which laid all Transcaucasia open to invasion.

In order to oppose this invasion and still remain faithful to the Allied cause, the Armenian people in the Caucasus summoned the National Congress on 20th October, 1917; 125 delegates duly elected by the Armenian people, appointed a Council, or rather a Government for National Defence. I became its President, and the mandate given to its 15 members was to resist the Turkish invasion by all possible means and to replace the collapsed Russian front in Asia by an Armenian front.

From October 1917 to June 1918 this Government, under my direction, reorganised and maintained an Armenian army with the help of Armenian resources alone without any help from Russia (which we considered from then onward as a foreign country) or the Allies, who were too far away from us to send more than encouragement and promises. Even Armenian soldiers serving with the Russian armies on the European front could not rejoin us, and Armenian volunteers still fought in the Allied ranks in Palestine.

Through the French Consulate at Tiflis, the French Government sent us a telegram from His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha. (head of the Delegation sent to the Allies by the Armenian Catholicos), in which our fellow-countrymen throughout the whole world urged us to hold on whatever happened and not to abandon the cause of the Entente.

On behalf of the National Council, I replied, through the French Consulate at Tiflis :

- (1) That the Armenian Nation was ready to do its supreme duty, as it had done since the beginning of the war ;
- (2) That it counted on the material, moral, and, if possible, military help of the Allies.
- (3) That it masked them to acknowledge the independence of Armenia.

In reply to this telegram, I received a second communication from His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha (still through the French Consulate) in which the promise of help and assistance was renewed to us.

As regards the independence of Armenia, we were told that the declarations made in the British House of Commons and the French Chamber of Deputies were of such a nature as to satisfy our claims.

Although we did not know what the text of those declarations was, the Armenian Nation rallied round its National Council, in order to fling itself yet again into the struggle against the Turks. A levee en masse was decreed, and an army of 50,000 men organised in the latter months of 1917, notwithstanding the endless difficulties created by the antagonism which our various Caucasian neighbours manifested against us and against the Entente.

The Tartars and the Kurds, siding openly with Turkey, organised themselves at our rear and did whatever they could to hamper us. The Georgians—with whom we had been linked in the past by the common bond of religion and of suffering—did not consider it their duty to side with us. Though far from the Allies and without their promised help, alone, abandoned and even harried by our neighbours, we nevertheless threw ourselves once more into this supreme struggle, intending, even if we could not be victorious, to stop the Turkish advance towards the interior of the Caucasus, whilst awaiting that Allied victory as to which we never cherished the least doubt.

General Nazarbekian - whose military skill had been greatly appreciated in the Russian Army - was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and the renowned Andranik, who had fought Abdul Hamid and Turkish tyranny for 30 years, was placed at the head of a division of Turkish Armenians. It was this Armenian Army which entered the front abandoned by the Russians, and held it from Erdinjan to the Persian frontier.

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This unequal struggle against a greatly superior enemy lasted 7 months. The most sanguinary battles took place at Erdinjan and at Van. There were encounters at Erzerum, Sarikamish, the fortress of Kars, Alexandropol, Sarderabad, and Karaklis, when the Turks lost very heavily. I myself went to Sarikamish, in order to re-establish moral. It was this heroic Armenian resistance which not only prevented the Turks from advancing into the interior of the Caucasus, but also, by holding back their army, prevented their descent into Mesopotamia for 7 months and helped General Allenby to victory in Palestine by deflecting a large proportion of Syrian forces.

In the meantime, German troops having reached the Caucasus, Georgia declared its independence under German military protection. Tartary, with the help and support of the Turkish army, also declared its independence under the name of Azerbaijan. Caucasian unity was thus destroyed. It was then that the Armenian National Council proclaimed the independence of Armenia.

Our Republic has been in existence for nearly a year. She has repulsed Tartar and Georgian aggression, and has maintained a regular and disciplined army approximately 40,000 strong. We have been untouched by Bolshevism and any other demoralising taint, and have kept perfect order over a territory of 60,000 square kilometres.

It is on behalf of the Armenian Republic that I now make the request set forth below :

In view of the fact that Russia abandoned the Armenians to their fate, in spite of their entreaties, allowed a war beyond their strength to devolve on them alone, and that, moreover, without even consulting them, she handed over to Turkey by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk the Armenian provinces of Kars, Ardahan and Kaghisman, and so ruined hundreds of thousands of Armenians; that by these very acts she broke all ties which bound her to the Armenian nation, the Armenian Republic asks for recognition of the independence it won on the battlefield, and which the success of its arms has forced even our enemies to acknowledge. In view of the sacrifices which Armenia made, without bargaining, for the cause of the Allies, I have the honour to demand, on behalf of the Armenian Nation, that it should be given, through its delegates, a well-merited seat at the Peace Conference.

The Caucasian Armenians ardently desire reunion of the republic with the Armenian provinces of Turkey, for the following reasons :

- (1) Because the two main sections of the nation, Turkish Armenia and Caucasian Armenia, though separated from each other in an entirely arbitrary manner are identical as regards essential characteristics, speaking the same language, and possessing the same traditions and customs, religion, church and ecclesiastical head- the Catholicos of all Armenians.
- (2) Both sections of Armenia represent a single geographic and economic whole, extending from Lori [Gori?] and Borchalu in the north down to the Mediterranean and, in the south, to the Armenian Taurus.
- (3) This national unity is imperative not merely by reason of historical rights, but also by reason of present necessity, for Caucasian Armenia, which is civilised and powerful and possesses a population of nearly 2,000,000, would be the only sufficient basis for the reorganisation and restoration of Turkish Armenia, now depopulated and ruined by the Turks.
- (4) The desire of the Caucasian Armenians to be united to their compatriots in Turkey is all the more intense and justifiable from the fact that a large portion of the population of Caucasian Armenia originated in Turkish Armenia, and was transplanted by the Russians during the last century. In fact, the districts of New Bayazet, Kaghisman, Kars, Alexandropol and Akhaltzikh are populated almost exclusively by Turkish Armenians.
- (5) The ecclesiastical centre for all Armenians is situated 'within the territory of the Republic at Ecbmiadzin, on the banks of the Arax. Within this territory are also to be found nearly all the capitals of the various dynasties of Great Armenia, i.e. Armavir, Vagharchapat, Dvin, Artachat, Yervandakert, Yervandachat and Ani.
- (6) The valley of the Arax which is the centre of Armenia, has also from time immemorial been the centre of Armenian culture and civilisation. The ruins of the capitals above mentioned bear witness thereto.
- (7) Armenian unity is necessary, for should the two sections of the people remain divided, such division would give rise to an undying desire for union, which desire 'would inevitably cause disturbance and unrest.
- (8) The union of Turkish and Caucasian Armenia is already an accomplished fact, for within the territory of the Armenian Republic there are at present from



400,000 to 500,000 Turkish Armenians who have escaped massacre by the Turks during the war, and the younger generation of which has fought for the conquest of liberty on all our battle-fields.

The Caucasian Armenians, for their part, have during the last thirty years continually sent the best of their youth, under the leadership of such glorious chiefs as Durman, Vartan, Dro, and many others, to fight against Turkish tyranny and deliver Turkish Armenia from the Ottoman yoke.

Our history has proved that unity and independence alone have served the Armenian Nation.”

BOGHOS NUBAR PASHA made the following statement :

“I shall try to be as brief as possible in order not to tax your patience. I think it is needless to recall the numerous promises of reform made by the Porte since the Congress at Berlin. These promises were never fulfilled. Nor need I recall the massacres and deportations concerning which you have full knowledge. You also know by official evidence, which has been published, the unheard of crimes surpassing in horror all that history has registered hitherto, the victims of which reach and even exceed one million.

I wish, however, to recall that at the beginning of the War the Turkish Government had offered to grant the Armenians a sort of autonomy, asking from them in exchange, volunteers to rouse the Caucasus against Russia. The Armenians rejected this proposal and placed themselves without hesitation on the side of the Entente Powers from whom they expected liberation.

The Armenians have fought at the side of the Allies since the first days of the War, until the signature of the Armistice on all fronts.

I shall not repeat what they achieved in the Caucasus. M. Ahrounian, President of the delegation of the Armenian Republic has just given you a long account far better than I shall be able to do.

I would like to mention, however, that in Syria and Palestine, in the Legion d’Orient where Armenian Volunteers, in accordance with the invitation made by the French Government to the National Delegation in 1916- when the agreement between the Allied Powers was signed- gathered to the number of five thou-

sand forming more than half the French contingent and took so brilliant a share in the great Palestine victory, which liberated Syria, that General Allenby sent them an official congratulation.

Lastly, in France, in the Foreign Legion, a crack Corps 'which has covered itself with glory, Armenian Volunteers gained a special distinction for bravery and endurance. Of 800 recruits at the beginning of the campaign, scarcely 40 have survived. All the rest fell facing the enemy.

This Military contribution has been officially and warmly appreciated by the Allied Governments and I need not press the matter further. All that I wish to indicate is that this attachment of the Armenians to the cause of the Entente was one of the motives of the massacres and deportations.

The Armenians, therefore, have been belligerents. The complete victory of the Allies has finally liberated Armenia from the Turkish yoke. That is an accomplished fact. We would add that, if to the victims of massacres and deportations, be added our losses on the field of battle, it will appear that the tribute of life paid by Armenia is heavier than that of any other belligerent nation. Her losses reach more than one million lives out of a total population of 4½ million souls. Armenia has earned her independence by the arms and the blood of her children.

I have two kinds of observations to present. I wish first to speak of the delimitation of the future Armenian State as we understand it. I shall then give you some details concerning the population.

#### Delimitation

Our claim is that independent Armenia should comprise all Armenian territory and should be formed of:-

1. Cilicia (with Sandjak of Marash) the six vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, Diarbekr, Kharput, Sivas and a portion of the vilayet of Trebizond giving access to the Black Sea.
2. The territory of the Armenian Republic of the Caucasus the population of which demands union with its brothers in Turkey under one single Armenian State.

It has sometimes been said and written that we wish to include within the

limits of this State the future Armenian State territories which are not Armenian. This is untrue. Not only do we not make any such demand, but on the contrary, we ask that the final frontiers be fixed not by us but by a mixed Commission which shall work on the basis of historical, geographical and ethnical rights. The present administrative limits of the provinces or Armenian vilayets are arbitrary and false. They were drawn by Abdul-Hamid for the purpose of his policy in such a way as to include capriciously non-Armenian regions, in order to bring about a Muslim majority. Our request is that these outlying regions, generally Kurdish or Turkish, should be detached.

Thus, the whole of Hekkiari and the South of Diarbekr which are mainly Kurdish should be excluded from Armenia; similarly the Turkish region west of Sivas and many others. As to Trebizond we recognise that the population is mainly Greek, but the Port of Trebizond is the only considerable outlet for the whole of Upper Armenia on the Black Sea. Our claim is moreover in accord with the declaration made by M. Venizelos who treated the question in

broad spirit of equity, which I am happy to recognise, in his memorandum addressed to the Peace Conference.

As to our border with Syria, our Syrian neighbours have latterly it forward very unjustifiable claims to the major part of Cilicia which they would include in Syria.

This pretension cannot be maintained. Cilicia is an essentially Armenian Province. It was for four centuries until 1375 the State the last kingdom of Armenia. Some parts of it, such as the region Zeitun maintained up to our time a semi-independence under Armenian Princes. At Sis, capital of Cilicia, the Catholicos, religious head of all the Armenians of Turkey, has, from time immemorial up to the present day, maintained his pontifical seat.

As to the population the great majority is Armenian and Turkish. The Syrian element is insignificant. Before the war, there were in Cilicia only 20,000 Syrians as against 200,000 Armenians. No atlas of the ancient or modern world includes Cilicia in Syria. Geographically, historically, ethnically, Cilicia is an integral part of Armenia and its natural outlet in the Mediterranean.

The North frontier of Syria is the chain of the Amanus, not that of the Taurus, as represented in the publications of the Syrian Committee with the object of including Cilicia in Syria.

Population.

A few words now on the subject of population. I would like to say at the outset that there have never been exact statistics in Turkey. The Turkish Government always falsified those returns intentionally with the object of proving that the Armenians were an insignificant minority. I wish to cite a few examples of these falsifications. The Turkish Government showed the Armenians of the vilayet of Van as numbering 80,000. Now there is certain evidence that the number of Armenians from this vilayet who took refuge in Russia exceeds 220,000.

At the other extremity of Armenia in the whole of Sandjak of Marash the Turkish Government reckoned about 4,200 Armenians; now in the town of Marash alone according to Elysee Reclus there were more than 20,000 Armenians, half the population of the town. Zeitun in the Sandjak of Marash with its eight vilages had, in accordance with statistics made on the spot in 1880, 27,460 Armenians and 8,344 Muslims.

It has been alleged that there are no Armenians left in Armenia since the massacres and deportations, or at aft events that those who remain form an insignificant minority. Happily this is untrue.

Firstly, according to principles no-one today disputes, the dead must count as much as the living. It would be intolerable that the unspeakable crimes committed against a whole race should benefit their authors. But the purpose of exterminating a whole people was not achieved. After this War the Armenians will be, as before it, more numerous than the Turks and even than the Turks and Kurds combined.

In fact, although the losses of the Armenians were very great, those of the Turks in the course of the war have not been less. A German report gives 21/2 millions as the total losses of the Turks by war, epidemic and famine, which have caused terrible havoc owing to improvidence and shortage of hospital personnel and medicines. At least half of these losses have been sustained by the population of the Armenian provinces, which have been practically the only recruiting grounds for the Turks, and which have been invaded both by Russian and Armenian armies. If, therefore, it is admitted that the Turkish population has at least sustained equally heavy losses, the Armenians are still in the majority after the war, as they were before it. But this majority will be still greater when the Arme-

nian Republic of the Caucasus is united to Turkish Armenia to form one State, as both the Armenians of the Caucasus and those of Turkey ardently desire.

M. Abrounian [Aharonian] has just laid the case before you and I support what he has said. I cannot overstress the point that this is a matter of the greatest importance for the Armenians, because the two groups of Armenians are interdependent. The Caucasian Armenians are more numerous than the Turkish Armenians. The latter, however, are more favourably situated as regards fertile land.

As has already been said (and it is perhaps unnecessary to repeat it) there are bonds of race, blood, religion and language between the two groups. We are, in fact, brothers. The Armenians in the Caucasus have established themselves in that country to escape from Turkey. They have now only one desire, to return to their native land. During the massacres before the war it was due to the Caucasian Armenians that the Russian and Allied Governments were asked in 1915 and 1914 to approach Turkey in favour of the Turkish Armenians.

I wish now to say a few words with regard to the position of the Armenians in the East and in the Ottoman Empire. I shall demonstrate by a few facts that they are quite capable of governing themselves when the time comes for them to set up an independent State.

Just to give some idea of the economic activity of the Armenian element in Turkish Armenia, I will quote some figures, taken from pre-war commercial and industrial statistics of the Vilayet of Sivas, which I have produced at previous negotiations in Paris in 1912 and 1913.

The Vilayet of Sivas is the least Armenian of the six Vilayets, but if you look at the figures relating to imports you will see that out of 166 wholesale merchants, 141 were Armenians and only 13 were Turks. In the export trade there were 127 Armenian merchants and 23 Turks. Out of 37 bankers and capitalists, 32 were Armenians and 5 only were Turks. It appears, furthermore, according to the book recently published by M. Leipzius, that out of a total population of 20,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 2,000,000 were Armenians, the latter held some 80 to 90 percent of the commerce in their own hands.

M. Leipzius, after his enquiry at Constantinople in regard to the Massacres, stated that the result would be very detrimental financially to Germany and Austria, because, all commerce being in the hands of the massacred Armenians, the

Germans and Austrians would be unable to recover their debts.

I will quote a passage from a book by Dr. Rohrbach, a well-known pan-Germanist, who desired to see Germany annex Armenia, and this will give you an idea of the German opinion on the Armenians before the war :

“In present-day Turkey, reduced almost entirely to its Asiatic possessions, the Armenians carry much more weight than their numbers would seem to warrant. Owing to their high intellectual and commercial standards, they are without doubt the most active people among Eastern nations. In fact it might be said that they constitute the only people in those regions who are imbued with what might be called national qualities. The Armenian has that energy and tenacity of purpose which are quite contrary to the usually accepted attributes of the Eastern character”.

That is the opinion of a German, and it is simply because the writer is a German that I have made the quotation.

It remains for me to address you on Armenian policy, claims and aspirations. I have already told you what is meant by the Armenian State from a geographical standpoint. I must now point out that, from the political point of view, our programme has not varied in any way as far as the national delegation is concerned. This programme, which I have already had the honour to explain to the Great Allied Powers, may be summed up in three points:

1. Liberation from the Turkish yoke.
2. It is not sufficient to liberate the Armenian people who have been in bondage. As they will now find themselves in an inferior position I asked for the joint protection of the Powers. I have not asked for joint rulership, to which I already knew the meeting would be opposed. There had already been unfortunate examples of condominium, and I know that the meeting would not feel disposed to make one more example. As an Egyptian, I know exactly what it means.

By joint protection of the Powers I mean that kind of protection which would prevent aggression from outside, and not an inter-meddling with internal political and administrative affairs.

3. From the first I have also asked that the Great Protecting Powers should give a

mandate to one or other of them to administer and organise Armenia.

That is the programme we adopted in 1915. We modified it when the idea of a League of Nations was formulated by President Wilson, and we adapted our programme to the new ideas.

The first point of our programme is now realised, since we are freed from the Turkish yoke. The two other points are realised also, if the newspaper reports are correct, since the Peace Conference has already decided to place the peoples oppressed by the Turks under the protection of the League of Nations with a Power as mandatory. We therefore have the firm hope of seeing our aspirations realised.

We need only entrust ourselves to the sense of justice of the Peace Conference, and we have no doubt but that the Conference will approve the programme of our national claims. The Powers now know and can trust the Armenians, whose national feelings, vitality and warlike valour have been strikingly revealed in the course of the war.

The Powers can rest assured that, with the qualifications all now recognised, the Armenians, under a regime of peace, justice and liberty, and under the tutelage of the League of Nations, will soon form a flourishing and prosperous State, and will be one of the most powerful factors of peace and civilisation in the East.”

M. PICHON thanked , the Armenian Representatives, and the Armenian Delegation withdrew.

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