

PLACE OF THE ARMENIAN QUESTION IN INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND ITS IMPACTS ON TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN*

Ermeni Sorunu'nun Uluslararası Politikada Yeri ve Türkiye-Azerbaycan Üzerinde Etkileri

*Emin SHIKHALIYEV***

Abstract

This article analyzes the place of the Armenian question in international policy, Armenians' genocide claims against Turkey, the clash of Western and Turkish civilizations and those reasons coming from the old times up to day. It is possible also to come to such conclusion that, the Armenian question is the result and continuation of this clash. The author characterized the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict not only as a part of the clash of Western and Turkish civilizations, but also as a part of the clash of geopolitical interests.

Keywords: *The Armenian Question, International Policy, Clash of Western and Turkish Civilizations, Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.*

Öz

Makalede Ermeni meselesinin uluslararası politikada yeri, Ermenilerin Türkiye'ye yönelik soykırım iddiaları, Batı medeniyeti ile Türk medeniyeti arasında geçmişten günümüze yaşanan çatışmalar ve onların sebepleri analiz edilmiş; Ermeni meselesinin de bu çatışmanın bir sonucu ve devamı olduğu görüşüne varılmıştır. Yazar Ermenistan-Azerbaycan, Dağlık Karabağ sorununu da Batı-Türk medeniyetleri arasındaki çatışmanın bir halkası olarak değerlendirmekle birlikte jeopolitik çıkarlar çatışması bağlamında da ele almıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ermeni Sorunu, Uluslararası Politika, Batı ve Türk Medeniyetlerinin Çatışması, Ermenistan-Azerbaycan, Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu.*

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** Doç. Dr., Azerbaycan Millî İlimler Akademisi, e-posta: emin.amea@yahoo.com

Introduction

In recent years a much debated question is that most conflicts result from a clash of civilizations. Although there are those who think otherwise. In light of the historical realities and analytical findings, it seems possible to prove that there is an ongoing conflict between the Western Civilization and the Turkish Civilization, that the Armenian issue is a byproduct of the conflict, and that the problem between Armenia and Azerbaijan results from the aforementioned Western-Turkish. Western countries position on the Armenian question and their double standards policy is completely a result of the conflict between the Western and Turkish civilizations.

The Clash of Western-Turkish Civilizations and Great Powers' Armenian Policy

After Turks adopted Islam, Western-Turkish civilizational relations developed on a Christianity-Islam basis. Today, Western civilization signifies the Christian world. Likewise, after their adoption of Islam, Turks became the guardian of Islam and they played a significant role in its spread. Thus, Western-Turkish civilizational relations always have been tense and that continues until today. The prominent Turkish researcher Metin Aydoğan shows that there is a widespread anti-Turkey and Turcophobic ideology and that is like a historical tradition. Turks' relations with the West are one of 1600-years of conflict and continuous wars. Northern Hun warriors caused the destruction of the Western Roman Empire as they ended the antiquity which was based on a sovereignty of the masses system while they started the Middle Ages. Sultan Fatih Mehmet the Conqueror had put an end to the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium) as he laid the ground for the already dissolving serfdom-based Middle Ages. Turks dominated the world for over 1300 years against the West since the collapse of the Western Roman Empire until the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699. Turks also resisted 8 separate Crusades by the Europeans and defeated them.¹

¹ Metin Aydoğan, *Bitmeyen Oyun: Türkiye'yi Bekleyen Tehlikeler*, Kumsaati Yayınları, İstanbul 2003, p. 181-182.

Question comes to mind as to which civilization stands as the carrier for these Crusades: did the Turks resisted these Crusades, or were the Arabs? Turkish researchers Ali Chimen's and Goknur Gogebakan's views are very clear on that particular question: Crusaders were Westerners who came from far away, but those who fought these Crusaders were Turks from the beginning. It was also Turks who ended the 200-years of Crusaders rule. This long struggle occurred on Anatolian lands located in between the East and the West, as Turks and German-Latin Westerners fought to fill the void of power in the region.²

The first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru gives invaluable information on the struggle between the Turks and the Crusaders in his book entitled "Glimpses of World History".³

In fact, based on analytical findings from the historical processes, it is possible to say that the Crusades were a clash between the Muslim Turks and the Christian German-Latins, although they are categorized as the West's campaigns against non-Christian peoples. Firstly, it was the Turks who stood in the way of the Christian west in all the crusades. Also, why wasn't there a crusader unity when Arabs conquered Spain and attacked Europe? That's because when the crusades began Arabs were in a passive period of their history. If we approach the matter from a realistic point of view, wasn't it the holy purpose of the crusaders to save Jerusalem? And wasn't this city in the Arab lands? Why they didn't feel it necessary to save the holy land during when the Arabs lived their passive period in their history? To put it bluntly, crusades were a fight by the Western civilization against the Turkish civilization. Anti-Turkey and Turcophobic crusader mentality is never a coincidence. Turks were seen not as a community of people, but rather the devil barbarian capable of doing everything evil in Western subconscious mind, as they were already known as the "Scourge of God" in the eyes of the European rulers during the Middle Ages, and in general whole of Europe.⁴

2 Ali Çimen-Göknur Göğebakan, *Tarihi Değiştiren Savaşlar*, Timaş Yayınları, İstanbul 2009, p. 111.

3 Cevahirlel Nehru, *Ümumdünya Tarihine Nezer*, Gençlik Yayınları, Bakü 1986, p. 267-272.

4 Emin A. Şihaliyev, *Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Münağışesi Sivilizasiyalararası Münasebetler Kontekstinde*, Elm ve Tehsil, Bakü 2011, p. 93.

These kinds of mystic ideas and mentality rooted in memories as well as past events helped emerge a fear and a hate psychology against the Turks in the West, while the Muslim Turkish state became the utmost rival and the enemy since the Siege of Vienna and their victorious march, and as a result brought the “Armenian Issue” on the agenda together with other factors as a tool for revenge, thus using it to bring Turkey under pressure. Thus, the Armenian issue is rooted in the inherited Crusader mentality against the Turks. Today, attitude towards Turkey and Azerbaijan by the Western states is essentially the embodiment of that mentality. Armenian issue is an important part of that hate towards the Turks.

British Prime Minister Gladstone made such remarks the end of the nineteenth century about the Turks: “What was the Turkish race and what is it now? This is not only a problem about Islam, but the fact that Islam integrated with a race’s own character. Since that dark day that Turks stepped on Europe, they have been the major non-human species of the humanity. Wherever they went, they left a huge bloodbath behind them. Wherever their sovereignty reached, civilization was destroyed there”.⁵

In 1919, British Lloyd George made these remarks: “As a looter community, Turks are a cancer of humanity and a scar that penetrated in the flesh of lands that they mismanage.”⁶

While explaining Europeans’ view of Turks and Turkish history during a lecture at the end of the 1940s in Turkey, renowned German scientist Ord. Prof. Fritz Neumark said: *“I should sincerely admit that Europeans do not like Turks and it is not possible for them to like Turks. Hostility towards Turks and Islam has pervaded into the cells of Christians and the church. Europeans despise Turks because they are Muslims, however, let alone secularism, even if the Turks convert into Christianity they would still consider them as enemies.”*⁷

5 Aydoğan, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

6 *Ibid.*

7 Aydoğan, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

These are confessions that have been verbalized very sincerely. Such general expressions not only reflect personal opinions, but the opinions of the states as well. If the shadow of the Crusades is still flying over the West, it is because of the collective subconscious that comes from the past against the Turks and Islam. The Crusades continue today and they continue their struggle against Turks and Islam under different names. One of the applicers of the Crusaders in the region is Armenia, who put forward the territory and genocide claims to Turkey, occupies the 20% of the Azerbaijani land and commits a genocide there. The duty that Armenians have carried out as “Crusaders” against the Turks is nothing new. The fact that Armenians had contacts with the Crusaders coming from Europe and formed alliances against the Muslim communities they lived in created sympathy towards them among the Crusaders. Armenians did everything they could for the continuation of the Crusades. They were together with the Crusaders from Istanbul to Jerusalem. For Armenians, Crusaders were saviors. They believed that God sent the Crusaders to save them from the Turks.⁸

British scientist Carol Hillenbrand writes in her book “The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives” that during the period when the Crusades were going on, Armenians betrayed the Turks and capitulated some castles by themselves in order to gain the sympathy of the Crusaders.⁹

Prof. Dr. Mehlika Aktok Kasgarli, a retired lecturer from the Sorbonne University also provides valuable information concerning the Armenian-Crusader relations:

“... In the sixteenth century, Pope Gregory XIII said during a sermon on “Privilege” in Vatican in the honour of the foundation of the Delegation of Catholic Armenian Priests: “...Among the services and the sacrifices that the Armenian nation provided to the church and Christian

8 Güray Kırpık, “Birinci Haçlı Seferinde ve Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda Türk-Ermeni-Fransız Münasebetlerinin Benzer Yönleri”, *Turkish Studies, International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, Vol: 3, No: 4, 2008, p. 537.

9 Кэрл Хилленбранд, *Крестовые Походы. Взгляд с Востока: Мусульманская Перспектива*, Москва, СПб., изд-во ДИЛЯ, 2008, p. 74.

authorities, there is one thing that should always be kept alive in our memories. When the Christian princes and the Christian armies went back to reclaim the mausoleum of the Jesus Christ, no nation or no community were as willing as Armenians about helping Christians. They gave their most talented persons to the Crusaders and provided them with animals (horses), food, drinks, accommodation as well as very valuable suggestions and weapons. With all their strength they helped Christians in these holy wars in a heroic and loyal way... Then the Armenians had to undergo the Turkish rule and they became their slaves. With a very deep sorrow, we are saying this. No ruling, no pressure has hurt them (the Armenians) so much and insulted the Christian church, religion and prayer manners so much. Although they suffered too much under pressure, many of them could continue to be loyal to our apostolic authority. They resisted every type of disaster and evil.”¹⁰

We see the same type of expressions and approaches in the report that the US President Woodrow Wilson presented to the congress on 24 May 1920: *“The American public feels a deep pain for the atrocities that the Armenian public underwent and the hunger, poverty, insecurity and helplessness they are currently suffering... The reason why there is a sympathy towards Armenians among our public stems from naive consciences and the will to see all Christians being saved from insignificance, pain and tyranny and to see them among the free nations in the world.”¹¹*

The same expressions are seen also in the Treaty of Sevres, the speeches by other US presidents and all the resolutions of the European Parliament. What can the West’s policies towards Turks be, if not the Crusades? Armenians once stood by the Crusaders and today they are willing to carry on with the Crusade methods.

10 Mehlika Kaşgarlı, “Haçlı Seferleri ve Ermeniler: Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri 21. Yüzyıla Giderken Tarihe Dostça Bakış”, *AKDYYK Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları*, Ankara 2000, p. 33-34.

11 Ersal Yavi, *1856-1923 Emperyalizm Kısacında Türkler, Ermeniler, Kürtler*, Yazıcı Yayınevi, İzmir 2001, p. 349-350.

By relying on them today, they propose the genocide and territory claims and they occupy 20% of the Azerbaijani soil, another Turkic state.

In this context, if this issue is to be evaluated from the perspective of the clash of civilizations, the policies of the West towards Turkey and even Azerbaijan and the attitude and the double standards that the Minsk Group of OSCE adopts are the result of a Crusaders Union.

The Real Essence of “Armenian Genocide” Claims Towards Turkey

The method which that, developed over genocide is the political strategy of Armenians. It is the prior element that achieves superiority to Armenian side. At the same time it matters in a different way for Great Powers and some western Christianity countries. Because in the political literature, it demonstrated that the genocide was carried out Jewish people. Christian world is in guilt feelings because Jewish people do not hold only Nazi Germany responsible for genocide. They also put the blame on church. For this reason, the propagandas as “Hitler learned genocide from Turks” are done in order to get rid of this psychology. That’s why; it frequently comes to agenda that the first genocides carried out not to Jewish people, but to Christian Armenians who are murdered by Muslim Turks. Another point draws attention is the crusade mentality inherited from past. It is essential to look at this issue from the point of racism and religion. As a matter of fact, in west, an anti-Turk idea is prevalent. This idea is like an historical tradition. What is the true and what happened in 1915 events?

Armenians constantly claim that they had been subjected to genocide and raise this issue with the parliaments of all countries, especially of the great powers, on 24 April every year, whereas this event was not genocide as the Armenians claim. It was a defensive measure prepared by the Ottoman state to ensure its security and prevent Armenian revolts and massacres carried out against Turks. Thus, the activities of Armenian committees and parties were terminated on 24 April 1915, and 2.345 Armenian terrorists were

arrested in Istanbul.¹² According to some researcher this numeral 2345,¹³ for others 235.¹⁴ Therefore, there can be no talk of any murder or criminal offense here. The Armenians have declared 24 April, the date when Armenian committee members were arrested, as genocide day. If we are talking about the resettlement of Armenians by Ottomans, and the Resettlement Law on their relocation was adopted on 27 May 1915.¹⁵ Therefore, “24 April” is not the date of the resettlement that led to genocide, as the Armenians claim, it is the date when members of committees such as Dashnaktsutyun, Hinchak and Ramkavar were arrested. The fact that the arrested Armenians were not rank-and-file citizens and were members of committees and terrorist organizations was confirmed by the British intelligence service. A dispatch sent to the British military command in Egypt shows: on 24 April 1915, three Armenian clerics, including the owner of the Armenian newspaper Puzantion, and a great number of Armenians were apprehended, and they will soon be sent to Ankara. Among those arrested, 500 are members of the Dashnak organization, 500 Hinchak and others Ramkavar.¹⁶

One of the important issues that need to be highlighted is that the real origin of the resettlement and the events presented as “Armenian genocide” in this connection came from the desire of the Ottoman state to protect its legal rights of defense ahead of war like any independent state. It is also true that the Resettlement Law adopted in 1915 applied not just to the Armenians, but to all those who raised a revolt against the Ottoman state and cooperated with enemies. When the text of the law is studied, there is no word “Armenian” there.¹⁷

12 Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, Ankara 1985, p. 213; Ali Balkan Metel, *Ermeni Mezalimi ve Gerçekler*, İstanbul, 4th edition, No: 6, p. 40; Zafer Özkan, *Tarihsel Akış İçerisinde Terörden Politikaya Ermeni Meselesi*, İstanbul 2001, p. 146.

13 Gürün, *op. cit.*, p. 213; Özkan, *op. cit.*, p. 146; Metel, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

14 Эрих Файгл, *Армянская Мифомания*, Москва, 2007, p. 88; Yusuf Sarınoy, “What Happened on April 24, 1915?, A Case Study on the Circular of 24 April 1915 and Arrest of the Armenian Committee Members in İstanbul”, *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol: 14, No: 1-2, 2008, p. 78.

15 Erdal İtler, *Ermeni Kilisesi ve Terör*, Ankara 1996, p. 61; Özkan, *op. cit.*, p. 259; Süslü, *op. cit.*, Van 1990, p. 131.

16 Tolga Başak, *İngiltere'nin Ermeni Politikası (1830-1923)*, İstanbul 2008, p. 182.

17 A. Yücel Aktar, “Ermeni Mezalimi ve Soykırım İddialarına İlişkin Kavram Karmaşası”, Hasan Celal Güzel, ed., *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Ermeni Sorunu*, Ankara 2000, p. 124; Özkan, *op. cit.*, p. 149; Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, İstanbul 1987, p. 605.

Here we consider it extremely important to clarify the word genocide both in terms of vocabulary and norms of international law. The extermination of unarmed and defenseless people for racial, national and religious reasons is an act of genocide.¹⁸ Were the unarmed and defenseless Armenian people, who were Ottoman citizens, really subjected to genocide by Turks for national and religious reasons?

It is extremely erroneous to believe that the Ottoman state, which had established its relations with ethnic minorities at a better level than modern states throughout history, would have resorted to such a crime in the 20th century. First of all, the reason is that if the Armenians had been the only target from a national point of view, would some of them have become pashas, ministers and members of parliament in the Ottoman era?

According to facts put forward by scientific-research works, the Armenians had a special place among the non-Muslim peoples of the Ottoman state and had lived in peace with Turks in Anatolia for centuries. Apart from religious beliefs, there was no difference between Armenians and Turks in terms of all social and cultural particularities. If the state of minorities in the Ottoman Empire is assessed impartially, we can see that Armenians and even Greeks had linguistic and religious freedoms, were not called up for military service, had the right to engage in trade and occupied high positions in the state. Historical sources show that among the Armenians who were referred to as loyal nation there were 29 pashas, 22 ministers, 33 members of parliament, 7 ambassadors, 11 consuls general, 11 university teachers and 41 high-ranking officials.¹⁹ Even religious tolerance was shown toward the Armenians in the Ottoman state within the framework of the “people of the book” status, and all conditions were right for opening churches.²⁰

18 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Sözlüğü*, İstanbul 2000, p. 630-631.

19 For detailed information, see: Anahit Astoyan, “Osmanlı İdari Sisteminde Ermeniler Mühütdi Ermeni Görevlileri”, <http://akunq.net/tr/?p=14355>, (Date Of Accession: 20.04.2018); Aktar, *op. cit.*, p. 121; Abdülhamit Kırmızı, “Son Dönem Osmanlı Bürokrasisinde Akraba Ermeniler”, *Ermeni Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol: 2, No: 8, Ankara, 2003, p. 137-152; Özkan, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

20 Yavuz Ercan, “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Müslüman Olmayan Topuluklar (Millet Sistemi)”, Hasan Celal Güzel, ed., *Osmanlı’dan Günümüze Ermeni Sorunu*, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara 2000, p. 156-158.

As can be seen, contrary to numerous false reports and lies, the Armenians achieved financial welfare, well-to-do life and economic and cultural progress. Taking many leading factors as a basis, they collected a lot of wealth and strengthened their economic positions to a significant extent.²¹

Documents in the Ottoman archives and the results of many scientific studies show that in the 18th and 19th centuries, Armenians had a very good position in the Ottoman economy.²²

In this situation, it becomes clear that the allegations about Ottomans carrying out genocide against Armenians are groundless. Contrary to the Armenian allegations, it was Turks, not Armenians, who were subjected to genocide. According to information in documents of the Archives of the Military History and Strategic Studies Department of the Turkish General Staff (AMHSSDTGS), genocide was carried out against Anatolian Turks with the direct support of the Armenian Church and organizations.²³

According to the same documents, Hinchak, Dashnaktsutyun and other organizations who had committed large-scale crimes against the Turks were supported by deputies of the Ottoman Majlis.²⁴

Since documents prove that the Armenians organized themselves and created armed detachments, instead of calling the events that occurred “genocide”, it would be more correct to call these events “a rebellion” unleashed by the Armenians and measures taken by the Ottoman state against this rebellion using its legal authorities.

21 İsmayıl Musayev, *Ermeni Genosidi Yoksa Türk-Müselman Soykırımı*, Bakü 2001, p. 56.

22 The Ottoman Archives Division of the Prime Minister’s Office (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi – T.C. BOA), Yıldız Sadaret Hususi, Dosya №20, Karton №1311, İç № 1355/1853, 283/31; T.C. BOA, Yıldız Evrak, Zarf № 156, İç Sayısı: 24.

23 The Archives of the Military History and Strategic Studies Department of the Turkish General Staff (AMHSSDTGS), The Military History Documents Magazine (MHDM) (Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüd Dairesi Başkanlığı Arşivi (ATASE) Başkanlığı, Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi): March 1983, Vol. 83, Doc. No: 1901, p. 1; MHDM: March 1983, Vol: 83, Doc. No: 1903, p. 33; MHDM: March 1983, Vol: 83, Doc. No: 1906, p. 83; MHDM: March 1983, Vol. 83, Doc. No: 1923, p. 159.

24 MHDM: March 1983, Vol: 83, Doc. No: 1903, p. 41.

The fact that the Armenians incurred no losses within the framework of the Resettlement Law and the measures taken by the state to count the full cost of the property they left behind and give it to its owners are evidence that ruin allegations of genocide with historical facts.²⁵ The Armenians, who present the issue of resettlement to world countries as genocide, also exaggerate the number of people who died during the resettlement. They indicate a number of 1.5 million, whereas there were not so many Armenians living within the limits of the Ottoman Empire. Based on Ottoman and Western sources, American historian and Professor Dr. Stanford Shaw provides very interesting information saying that in 1890, 1,139,053 Armenians and 12,585,950 Muslims lived in the Ottoman state, in 1897 – 1,162,853 Armenians and 14,111,945 Muslims, in 1906 – 1,140,563 Armenians and 15,518,478 Muslims and in 1914 – 1,229,007 Armenians and 15,044,846 Muslims.²⁶

As can be seen, the number of Armenians living in the Ottoman state in the late 19th and early 20th century ranges from 1 million to 1.3 million. On the other hand, historical sources show that 700,000 Armenians were resettled according to the resettlement decision.²⁷

The prominent Turkish historian Kamuran Gurun says that the number of those killed indicated by the Armenians started from 300,000 in 1915 and reached 2 million in 1980. It is normal that the population of a nation increases as years pass, but it is very strange that the number of people who died at a certain time gradually increases.²⁸ The point that came up as result of comparative analyses is that the allegations about 1.5 million Armenians being subjected to genocide do not reflect the reality. People may die of various diseases during resettlement. This is an undeniable truth, but is it possible to call this events genocide? If

25 See more: MHD: October 1985, Doc. No: 202, p. 129.

26 Stanford Shaw, "The Ottoman Census System and Population (1831-1914)", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume: 9, No: 3, 1978, p. 330.

27 Salahi R. Sonyel, *The Ottoman Armenians, Victims of Great Power Diplomacy*, London 1987, p. 300; Salahi R. Sonyel, *Falsification and Disinformation, Negative Factors in Turco-Armenian Relations*, Ankara 2000, p. 34.

28 Gürün, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

so many people were exterminated en masse, then how did the Armenian population whose number exceeded 1 million people at the end of World War I survive? Second, what was the government supposed to do about the activities of the Armenians who raised a revolt against the Ottoman state and collaborated with the enemy?

There is a main interesting thing that attracts our attention: If it as claimed 1.5 million of Armenians are massacred in 1915, where are cemeteries? Genocide is a very serious claim and Armenians, who accuse Turks with genocide, have to show the mass grave in order to prove their claims.

American historians Justin and Carolyn McCarthy write that the intention of the Ottoman government to move the Armenians out of some regions was to prevent the rebellious activities of the Armenians who collaborated with foreign forces from reaching a dangerous level. This intention totally originated from reasons of military security. Evaluating the presence of Armenians in strategic regions as a threat to the state, they decided to keep them away from these regions.²⁹

Let's evaluate the events through a prism of impartiality: people died and were killed on both sides, and both sides faced dire consequences. But it was not genocide, it was a war. At the same time, when you go into detail, it can be clearly seen that the resettlement was encouraged not by the Ottoman state, but directly by Armenian committees and organizations. Had it not been for the rebellions they started and their collaboration with foreign forces aimed at partitioning the Ottoman state, there is no doubt that there would have been no need for the resettlement.

The measures taken by the Ottoman state in connection with the rebellion and massacres carried out by the Armenians as part of collaboration with the enemy and the casualties that came up for various reasons during the implementation of these measures were used by the Armenians as a propaganda weapon in order

²⁹ Justin McCarty-Carolyn McCarty, *Turks and Armenians A Manual on The Armenian Question*, Washington 1989, p. 52.

to draw the attention of world powers. Today's policy is being conducted in the same direction.

The main purpose is to put up the so-called Armenian genocide for debate by the whole world and international organizations and get it recognized (in some way, they have achieved this) and then to force Turkey to accept it in subsequent stages and legalize their demands for reparations and land.

Claims related to genocide are of great political importance. Both sides understand the political essence of the issue and are trying to silence the opposite side and prove that they are right. The range of disputes between the sides is so wide that states have even turned the issue into a political tool in their hands. As a result of this, some states use the allegations of genocide constantly raised in many countries every year as a tool of pressure on Turkey. We should also note that Armenian factor of Great Powers does not just include Turkey, it also took Azerbaijan to its grip.

International Political View to Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

Samuel P. Huntington asserts that relations between different civilizations will never be friendly and they will generally be cold and hostile to one another. He divides the clash between civilizations in two categories, namely 1) local or micro level; 2) global or macro level and indicates that the first one refers to the clash between groups belonging to different civilizations and asserts that this is common especially between Muslims and non-Muslims; while in global and macro level refers to the clash between large states of different civilizations.³⁰

The role that clashes between large states of different civilizations on a global and macro level have on micro level clashes between neighboring states belonging to different civilizations is an undisputable truth. It is possible to observe this role on Armenia-

30 Samuel P. Huntington, *Medeniyetler Çatışması ve Dünya Düzeninin Yeniden Kurulması*, Okuyan Us Yayınları, İstanbul 2005, p. 306.

Azerbaijan clash as well. Samuel Huntington also indicated that “As long as Islam remains as Islam (which is what is going to be) and the West remains as West (Christian) the basic clash between these two civilizations will continue in the future just like it did for the last fourteen centuries.”³¹

By that he also sent signals that meant the problem between Armenia and Azerbaijan, who belong to different civilizations, will continue.

In fact, the clash between Armenia and Azerbaijan has been going on for the last 20 years and the uncertainty as to when the conflict will resolve is still prevailing. First of all, both countries consider each other as enemies who they will never be able to come together. More than anything this is because of the fact that each side claims that the other side came to Nagorno-Karabakh region after them and they are the legitimate residents.³²

However documents prove that the Armenians were forced to move to the area by the Russians with the 15th article of the Turkmenchay Treaty signed between Russia and Iran, which later resulted in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Scientist Nikolay Shavrov who was the Russian envoy in Iran at that period provides very valuable information about this issue: *“We started the colonization by placing the others, not the Russians in the Southern Caucasus region. After the 1826-1828 wars, between 1828 and 1830, we placed more than 40.000 Iranian Armenians and 84.000 Turkish Armenians in the territories that had the best public areas... More than 1 million out of 1.3 million Armenians in Southern Caucasia as of the beginning of this century are not the native inhabitants of the region, but rather were placed by us...”*³³

Armenian historian M.G.Nersisyan also verifies the mobilization of Armenians from Turkey and Iran to Karabakh and Yerevan

31 Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 312-313.

32 Takayuki Yoshimura, “Some Arguments on The Nagorno-Karabakh History”, p. 58, http://srch.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no18/3_yoshimura.pdf, (Date of Accession: 16.10.2017).

33 Н.Н.Шавров, *Новая Угроза Русскому Делу в Закавказье: Предстоящая Распродажа Мугани Инородцамъ*, Баку, Элм, 1990, p. 63.

region after the Turkmenchay Treaty: "At the end of 1820s more than 40.000 Armenians from Iran and around 90.000 Armenians from Turkey were made to move to the region..."³⁴

Russian scientist A.P.Liprandi mentioned that Armenians came to Karabakh later and he indicated that the issue with them moving to Southern Caucasia is a result of the imperialist policies that Russia applied in the region.³⁵

The information about the immigration policies can also be found in the studies of other Russian scientists such as I.K.Yenikolopov³⁶, S.V.Shostakovich³⁷, Armenian historian C.P.Agayan³⁸, V.A.Parsamyan³⁹ and so on.

If the issue is looked upon from the perspective of historical truth, it is seen that Armenians came to Karabakh after the Azerbaijani Turks and there is no base in asserting that their existence on those territories is legitimate. However it would be unreal to assume that the issue will be solved through the historical truth. Just like the presidents before himself, Serzh Sargsyan already expressed bluntly that "their aim is to never leave the Karabakh region to Azerbaijani authorities".⁴⁰

In such an atmosphere, there has been a belief that there will not be reconciliation and peace between the parties. Although a truce was declared in 1994, 20% of the Azerbaijani territories are

34 М.Г.Нерсисян, *Из Истории Русско-Армянских Отношений*, Книга I, Ереван, изд-во "Академия Наук Армянской ССР", 1956, р. 227.

35 А.П.Липранди, *Кавказ и России*, Харьков, 1911, р. 46.

36 И.К.Ениколопов, *Грибоедов и Восток*, Ереван, Айпетрат, 1954, р. 137.

37 С.В.Шостакович, *Дипломатическая Деятельность А.С.Грибоедова*, Москва, изд-во "Социально-экономической литературы", 1960, р. 154.

38 Ц.П.Агаян, *Роль России в Исторических Судьбах Армянского Народа: К 150 летию Присоединения Восточной Армении к России*, Наука, Москва 1978, р. 220.

39 В.А.Парсамян, *Западная Армения во Время Первой Мировой Войны*, Ереван, Айастан, 1977, р. 411.

40 "Azerbaijan and Armenia: Peace Prospects, Military Realities & The Role of the Armenian Diaspora", *Caspian Information Center*, No: 16, October 2011, p. 1-2, <http://www.caspianinfo.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/OP-No-16-Armenia-and-Azerbaijan-Peace-Prospects-Military-Realities-and-the-Role-of-the-Armenian-Diaspora.pdf>, (Date of Accession: 03.12.2017).

under occupation. Although the efforts to reach peace has been accelerated with the incentive of the Minsk Group of OSCE, the peace negotiations that have been going on for more than 15 years do not meet the expectations or yield any results. To be able to determine the right way to end the conflict, its underlying reasons and consequences should be evaluated objectively. According to the Armenian side of the story, the conflict has risen up thanks to blockade by Azerbaijan to the self determination of Armenians that live in the Karabakh region.⁴¹ To defend the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians, Armenia went into combat and the status-quo began.

Azerbaijan, however, believes that the conflict is as a result of “Hai-Tahd” doctrine, “the Great Armenia” ideology and its occupational policies.⁴²

Although the Minsk Group co-chairmen have attempted to create reconciliation with the peace negotiations that have gone on since 1994, they have not been able to make any progress. Because either their suggestions are not accepted by the conflicting parties or if one side accepts the suggestions, the other one thinks of them as completely negative. The incentives that the Western nations take for the resolution of the conflict yield no results. As a matter of fact, the real reason why these incentives yield no results is that the policies of these states are vague. Although the USA, France, the UK, Germany and other Western countries recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, they do not accept the fact that Armenia is an occupying country, they do not demand it to withdraw from the territories it occupied. On the contrary they find it more realistic for the conflicting parties to reconcile between themselves and they view the issue from the perspective of the Minsk Group of OSCE. If the parties themselves are going to resolve this issue, it is not possible to understand which duty the Minsk Group of OSCE is carrying out. Despite the fact that the Western states declared they

41 Роберт Кочарян, Искать Выгоду в Сглаживании Противоречий // журнал “Международная жизнь”, Москва 2003, No: 2, p. 31-32; Казимиров Владимир, *Мир Карабаху. Посредничество России в Урегулировании Нагорно-Карабахского Конфликта*, Москва, издательство “Международные Отношения”, 2009, p. 271.

42 Emin A. Şihaliyev, *Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Münağışesi Sivilizasiyalararası Münasebetler Kontekstinde*, p. 106-124; Haleddin İbrahimli, *Değişen Avrasya’da Kafkasya*, ASAM Yayınları, Ankara 2001, p. 43-53.

recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, their approach towards the occupational policies of Armenia and Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is evaluated within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE. The indecisiveness of co-chairmen of European states and especially other western states of the Minsk Group – the USA and France – their reactions towards the UN Security Council’s decisions (March 2008), prove the double-standard policies of the West and behind this approach there are deep-rooted reasons. It is the truth that “the Armenian factor” is a pressure tool that Russia can use both politically and economically against the states in the region and states concerned. Russia uses Armenia as a balance factor against Turkey’s, the USA’s, NATO’s and the European Union’s policies on Caucasia and thanks to Armenia it keeps its political and militaristic existence in Caucasia. With the military bases it has in the region, it keeps Azerbaijan and Georgia under control and it takes the necessary measures against a possible intervention that might be carried out from the South. On the other hand, Russia considers the Caucasian states as its previous provinces and therefore cannot tolerate the independence of Azerbaijan or its taking part in the energy projects. Moreover, Russia is protecting and arming Armenia to teach a lesson to Azerbaijan. Therefore it may be understood that Russia supports Armenia against Azerbaijan. However, the indecisiveness of the West about the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and its reaction against the UN Security Council resolution demanding Armenia to withdraw from the occupied Azerbaijani lands prove the incomprehensible policies of the West. If the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is considered as a local conflict, the double standard policy of the West might not be understood, but if the issue is evaluated from a global point of view, the real reasons will appear. First, let us evaluate the conflict in a local framework. The conflict of Armenia-Azerbaijan is frozen for one reason: the opposite attitudes of the conflicting sides. Both sides are in “a game with a result of zeros”. If the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is recognized, Nagorno Karabakh will have to give up its “de-facto” independence and Armenia will have to give up the idea of “Great Armenia”. If the “de facto” independence of Nagorno Karabakh transforms into “de jure” independence, then Azerbaijan will have lost a great part of its territories and its territorial integrity will be destroyed. For this reason, the attitudes of the co-

chairmen of OSCE other than Russia are unclear. In other words, the Western states always have to balance the steps they take towards one side with another step towards the other side. The states that are not the co-chairmen of OSCE always evaluate the problem from the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE and they want to have mutual sincere relation with both states. However, while other Western cochairmen - the USA and France - demand that the conflict be resolved in a peaceful manner, they blatantly react to the decisions of the UN Security Council. For them, the priority is reconciliation between the conflicting parties. American specialist in Southern Caucasus conflicts Tomas Ambrosio has expressed the attitude of the USA about the conflict clearly: "If an agreement cannot be reached between the parties, the attitude of the USA will not change. When other international and local problems are taken into consideration, the Nagorno Karabakh conflict does not have a lot of importance."⁴³

Ambrosini also made remarks about the future of the peace negotiations: "Even though some meetings materialize behind the close doors, from the outside they look different. During these meetings, the parties make their own suggestions, and in case there is no reconciliation, they look as if they will fire the war again. Then the parties return to their own countries and accuse the other party and express sorrow over the fact that they could not reach the consequent phase on the resolution of the conflict. There is no doubt that the current heads of states of the Minsk Group countries and their successors will face the same issues and problems. The successors of their successors will be in the same situation. To be more specific, the current situation, or at least the peace negotiations that are going on, is better than the parties to open fire to one another. In my opinion, the parties and mediators will continue with this diplomatic tradition."⁴⁴

The approach of the European states including France as one of the co-chairmen of the Minsk Group to the situation Azerbaijan is in has taken the shape of a clash between Western- Turkish

43 "Amerikalı Analitik Dağlıq Qarabağ Münakaşasının Halli İle Bağlı Bedbin Prognoz Verib", <http://az.apa.az/news.php?id=228962>, (Date of Accession: 28.03.2014).

44 *Ibid.*

civilizations rather than only an Armenia-Azerbaijan clash. For this reason, it would be more correct to review the issue from a clash of Western-Turkish civilizations in the framework of the global “Armenian issue” rather than a local framework. Although the prolongation of the conflict between Armenia-Azerbaijan stems from the Caucasian policy of Russia, it is in a complete accordance with the interests of the West. The Western states evaluate the Armenian issue from a national, religious and psychological point of view and indirectly support the Christian Armenia.

Overview

We define the problem as a “labyrinth”. Because as a matter of fact, while the labyrinth has an entrance, it is very difficult to find the exit and the paths within it are very complex. The statuses of the entrance and the exit become equal as long as the right path is not found. Therefore, there is no other way than wandering within the labyrinth until the exit is found. The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is just like a labyrinth.

If the development process of the peace negotiations since the 1990s and the 20th century is looked through, it will be seen that whenever Azerbaijan begins to seek alternative resolutions for the conflict as a result of the uncertainty of the resolution process, either Armenia or the co-chairmen of the Minsk Group of OSCE try to gain back Azerbaijan’s trust by offering new suggestions. At the consequent phase of the negotiations, when the Armenian side pulls away, all of the process goes back to the same uncertainty. Since 1994, the year a truce was reached, the same uncertainty has continued. It is highly possible that the problem will continue in line with this scenario. The fact that the Minsk Group of OSCE was not able to make any progress, the resolution process has had a never ending uncertainty and turned into a “Palestine Syndrome” or “Kashmir Syndrome” causes anxieties such as the problem might continue for a long time or a sudden war may break out. How would a possible war affect Azerbaijan’s future? It is not possible to guess the result of the war before it even started. Armenia’s alliance with Russia hence the balance of power against

Turkey and Azerbaijan in the region drives Azerbaijan to be more careful about a possible military move.⁴⁵

According to some analysts, for Azerbaijan to be able to start a military move, the country should first ensure Russia's impartiality. For this purpose, Russia should be given political, military or economic compromises, it should be recognized as a party in energy transport and production, it should be provided a military base within the Azerbaijani territories and Azerbaijan should be a member to the Collective Security Treaty Organization.⁴⁶

If it is taken into consideration that Armenia, occupying 20% of the Azerbaijani territories is a member of this organization, it is not possible for Azerbaijan to be a member of it under any circumstances. By joining this organization, Armenia intended to protect itself from Turkey and Azerbaijan. So, by joining the same organization, from whom will Azerbaijan protect itself? From Armenia or Russia? Moreover, Russia's stance on the Karabakh matter did not change even though Azerbaijan joined the CIS, rented the Gebele Radar Base to Russia and cooperated with Russia in the field of energy. In other words, No compromise that Azerbaijan will give to Russia will make Russia change its attitude towards the problem.

Some analysts believe that Azerbaijan does not have the ability to materialize an extensive military operation against the occupation of its territories.⁴⁷ As a matter of fact, with its developing economy and military power, Azerbaijan has an incomparable superiority against Armenia. Azerbaijani army has the power to

45 Gayane Novikova, "Implications of The Russian-Georgian War in The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: Limited Maneuverability", Caucasus Edition, <http://caucasusedition.net/analysis/implications-of-the-russian-georgian-war-in-the-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-limited-maneuverability>, (Date of Accession: 21.12.2017).

46 Aleksandra Jarosiewicz-Krzysztof Strachota, "Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Unfreezing", *Center for Eastern Studies*, p. 6, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2011-10-26/nagornokarabakh-conflict-unfreezing>, (Date of Accession: 18.09.2017).

47 C.W.Blandy, *Azerbaijan: Is War Over Nagorny Karabakh a Realistic Option? Advanced Research and Assessment Group*, Caucasus Series 8/17, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, May 2008, United Kingdom, p. 7.

dismiss the Armenian forces from its occupied territories. If this conflict was only an Azerbaijani-Armenian one, then Azerbaijan could have materialized it. Here, it is enough to remind that Russia provided Armenia weaponry worth 1 billion dollars illegally and Armenia extended the period of Russian military deployment on its territories until 2044 with an agreement signed in 2010. The most important article of the new agreement is that the military bases of Russia would protect the security of Armenia. If Azerbaijan attempts to retrieve its occupied lands from Armenia by using its legal rights, it will confront Russia's military intervention.

It is not realistic to assume that Azerbaijan would receive military and political assistance from foreign states. Azerbaijan's trust in the West has already been weakened with the indecisiveness of the Minsk Group of OSCE and the double-standard approach of some states. Azerbaijan saw Russia's power and the best example to the West's untrustworthy friendship in the Russia-Georgia war the last time. The real purpose of the attack was for Russia to be able to demonstrate that it could still play hard. The Russian military had collapsed in 1990s and Russia had to renew the image of its army. It also intended to prove to former Soviet states that the alliance with America and the guarantees it would provide had no value. It was a small attack against a small state, but it was an attack against a state that was highly close to the USA. The unresponsiveness of the USA in the operation and the disregard of Europe surprised both the region and the Eastern Europe. The message that the USA sent was limited to diplomatic notes and it proved that the USA was too far and Russia was too close and as long as the USA kept its soldiers in the Middle East, its attitude would be the same.⁴⁸ Russia took this decision assuming that the real interests of the USA were in the Middle East rather the Caucasus region.

Under such conditions, Azerbaijan will not have the tendency to challenge a reanimated Russia.⁴⁹ Azerbaijan already lost its confidence in the West, which made promises to Georgia that it could not keep. Azerbaijan knows that it does not have any support,

48 George Friedman, *Gelecek 10 Yıl*, Pegasus Yayınları, İstanbul 2011, p. 169-170.

49 Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

and in the event that it enters into a war with Russia would influence its future with serious conditions. On the other hand, in the event that Azerbaijan starts military operations to protect its territorial integrity, it might have serious problems with integration with Western states and international institutions working for the democratization of the world. This is because the resolution of the conflict with war is not accepted by any international institutions of which Azerbaijan is a member. Otherwise, it might result in freezing or cancellation of Azerbaijan's membership in these institutions. However, if Armenia and other states leave no choice to Azerbaijan, a war can be preferred despite everything. The resolution of the conflict in the legal framework is limited. In such a situation, the power factor gains momentum. However, this requires a long time. To retrieve its occupied territories, Azerbaijan should wait for the appropriate strategic conditions. Otherwise, to start a war without preparations can cause a serious chaos in the country. If Azerbaijan could not declare an absolute victory over Armenia, if the war lasts longer than planned and the casualties increase, there would be disapproval in the country. Foreign interventions would increase the disapproval and in the end, there would be an atmosphere of confusion and chaos. In this case, Azerbaijan could face ethnic problems as in the beginning of 1990s and the independence of the country could be under serious threat. For this reason, Azerbaijan should first complete its military education, be completely ready for a long-lasting war, be able to resist long-lasting economic and political sanctions and wait for the appropriate strategic conditions. When would such strategic conditions come along? Answering this question is pretty difficult.

In our opinion, the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will continue as a truce for a long period. There will always be uncertainty as to when the problem would be solved and Azerbaijan will start seeking alternative solutions again. Armenia and the Minsk Group of OSCE co-chairmen will make new propositions and in the consequent phase, Armenia will pull away again. Then the situation will turn into uncertainty once again. Armenian and Azerbaijani heads of states or foreign ministers will have talks on different dimensions, and before every talk, new

remarks will be made as to how hopeful they are and how high their expectations are, but in the end no results will have been reached again. Therefore, the truce will continue. Under these conditions, it might be concluded that the time is on Armenia's side. A new generation in Azerbaijan is growing that never experienced the Karabakh war. Forgetfulness is threatening Azerbaijan greatly. Armenia foresees that the occupation will be permanent within this process. There is no doubt that time gave the Armenians the opportunity to gain more power on territories they occupied. Armenia increased its military power with weaponry it received from Russia and other states and it turned into a militaristic state. However, no matter how much Armenia developed its military power, it is in an economically- backwards state. Even though Armenia keeps Azerbaijani territories under occupation, it has not had the chance to own the territories it occupied for reasons such as economic recession, demographic decrease and recognizing of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by other states even though they do not pronounce that Armenia is an occupying force. Armenia turned into the slave of the territories that it kept under the occupation. More precisely, Armenia got weaker, economically backwards and dependent while it intended to enlarge, grow and gain strength.

In conclusion, it is seen that the time is not on Armenia's side. Even though this state is keeping the Armenian territories under occupation, it cannot be considered as a winner as the occupation drove the country into economic and demographic recession and the double standards policy also influenced it. The most obvious proof of this is the fact that Armenia still has not been able to internalize the territories it is occupying and over time it turned into the slave of those. As a result of this, Armenia left itself outside of the integration process and the energy projects. Azerbaijan, however, developed economically despite the occupation and became the economic leader of the region. It is possible to assume that the conflict will continue in line with the "long term truce" scenario. It cannot be said that Azerbaijan is completely comes out of this problem as a winner, but at least when compared to Armenia, time is on Azerbaijan's side and it is increasing its means of economic pressure.

While Azerbaijan supports the peaceful resolution of the conflict, it indicated that it would not make any compromises on its territorial integrity and it would consort to the military means as the last option if necessary. Especially the fact that the Military Doctrine of Azerbaijan canalizes the defense spending to the use of the army's tactical and strategic capacity and the Nagorno Karabakh conflict was deemed as the primal national subject created reactions among the international community. Although Armenia considered the increase in Azerbaijan's military spending as a political maneuver, when Azerbaijan adopted the Military Doctrine on 8 June 2010 proved that Azerbaijan is not bluffing. In the Military Doctrine, it is stated that if military intervention is inevitable in line with geopolitical realities for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, such an intervention will be carried out. It is also stated in the Doctrine that international problems are not supported in ways that are against the international law and in line with the rights that the international law provides Azerbaijan, military force will be resorted to save Nagorno-Karabakh and 7 regions around it from Armenian occupation and this issue has been repeated continuously in the document.⁵⁰ As a result we can say that, it is a reality that a deep conflict between the Western civilization and Turkic civilization has been continuing for centuries. Just like in the past, today, the shadow of the crusades is wandering over the West and the war against the Turkic civilization is continuing under different names. The Armenian issue that is always on the agenda of the Western states, the genocide claims, the West's pressure on Armenia-Turkey relations as well as the indecisiveness of the international institutions and the Minsk Group of OSCE and some double standards approach to the conflict are all proof of this. Even though the hostility towards Turks that is inherited from the past looks as if it is more towards Turkey rather than Azerbaijan, in reality both countries are in the same situation. The Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict should be reviewed from the perspective of the global Armenian problem rather than as a local problem. On the other hand, while Armenia carries out the duties given to it without questioning as

50 More see: "Azerbaycan Respublikasının Herbi Doktrinası", *Azerbaycan Respublikasının Milli Meclisi*, 8 June 2010, <http://meclis.gov.az/?/az/law/183#comment>, (Date of Accession: 25.09.2010).

the puppet of the West, Azerbaijan constitutes a hindrance against the materialization of the West's interests. In this perspective, no progress has been made by the OSCE Minsk Group for the resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. One of the co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, Russia, approaches the problem completely within the framework of its own interests. Russia is both undertaking the mediator role between the conflicting parties and arming Armenia. This figure proves the role Russia played from the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict until today. Russia's move is unacceptable considering its mediating role. However, Russia clearly declared that the key to the conflict is in its hands by intervening in the conflict. It is not right to evaluate the situation only as an "Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict". If this was really an "Armenian-Azerbaijani" conflict, the Azerbaijani side would have resolved the issue itself either peacefully or with a war. Judging from these evaluations, it can be concluded that it is not completely up to the states of Armenia and Azerbaijan to determine the "War and Peace" issue. Various pressures and the "Armenian issue" inflicted upon Turkey and Armenia stem from the traditional strategies of Russia, the USA and European states and the clash of the Western-Turkish civilizations.

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