

REVIEW OF
ARMENIAN STUDIES
A Biannual Journal of History, Politics, and International Relations

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Facts and Comments

Ömer E. LÜTEM

Germany's Policies on Armenians During World War I

Bariş ÖZDAL

Economic Factors of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

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Karabakh Problem in the Light of
Global and Regional Developments

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Enemies to the Death or Friends for Life?

Looking Into Prejudice Against Turks Amongst Armenians in Armenia

Armand SAĞ

After the Relocation

M. Törehan SERDAR

BOOK REVIEWS



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(Bir Vardı, Bir Yoktu)

Şakire FURTUN

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Armand SAĞ is a Ph.D.-fellow at Tilburg University in the Netherlands and is currently the chairman of Institute for Turkish Studies where he also works as a senior researcher. In addition to his work on nation building and historiography in Turkey, his research also covers the history of Central Asia and its linguistic heritage. He is the author of “History and More: Reflections of a Historian” (2011), “Learning Grammar of Turkey-Turkish” (2013), “Nation-building and historiography in modern Turkey: Anatolia, the Balkan and geographical emphasis” (2015), as well as the co-author of “Revolutions in the Middle East: Perception and Consequences” (2012), and the editor of “Turkish Mythology” (2012) among many other titles.



Mehmet Törehan SERDAR is an instructor at Bitlis Eren University in Turkey. He graduated from the Business-Accounting Department of the Ankara Higher Teacher Education College of Commerce and Tourism (now known as the Faculty of Tourism of Gazi University) in 1981. He began his teaching career in 1982 as a teacher of the accounting division of the Kahramanmaraş Commerce High School. 1985, he was appointed to the Bitlis Commerce High School. After working for many years as a teacher and administrator in this school, in 1993, he became an instructor at the Ahlat Vocational College, affiliated to the Yüzüncü Yıl University. In 1994, he was assigned to the Bitlis Vocational College, also affiliated to Yüzüncü Yıl University. He is currently serving as an instructor at the Bitlis Eren University. He has numerous works in the fields of history and culture.



We are starting the 33rd issue of our journal with “Facts and Comments”, which analyzes Turkish-Armenian relations and some countries stances regarding the genocide allegations in the first half of the 2016. While there a state of (what can be called) negative calm in Turkish-Armenian relations, there were efforts to continue some ceremonies and activities related to the centenary of the Armenian relocation in 2016 as well. Meanwhile, the German Federal Assembly’s adoption of a resolution recognizing the genocide allegations created a serious problem between Turkey and Germany, and Pope Francis’ unnecessary reference to the genocide allegations during his visit to Armenia delayed the normalization in the Vatican-Turkey relations. Unlike this, however, the French National Assembly’s adoption of the bill penalizing war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide at the least, so far, not created problems between France and Turkey, since the bill does not contain statements about the “Armenian genocide” and is yet to be approved by the French Senate. Although the downing of a Russian warplane very much negatively affected Russia and Turkey’s relations, however, this matter did not change Russia’s stance towards the Armenian genocide allegations.

The German Empire’s stance on the Armenian relocation and resettlement during World War I has been an attention-grabbing matter for a very long time. While some put forth that the relocation and resettlement was suggested to the Ottoman government by Germany, others criticize the German government of not having prevented the Armenian relocation. As a matter of fact, the resolution adopted by the German Federal Assembly mentioned above contains this matter as well. Although this matter is being brought up more and more to the agenda, it is seen that this matter is not being analyzed sufficiently. In this respect, the article titled “**German Policies on Armenians During World War I**” by Barış Özdal is being published in a timely manner.

Nika Chitadze, in his article titled “**Economic Factors of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict**”, touches upon an aspect of the Karabakh conflict that is not discussed much; the economic aspect. The author indicates that the Karabakh conflict is one of the main reasons for the instability in the Caucasus.

Another article in our journal’s current issue concerning the Karabakh issue is the one titled “**Karabakh Problem in the Light of Global and Regional Developments**” by Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş. After briefly touching upon the history of the Karabakh issue, Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş evaluates how the crisis created by current developments, especially the shooting down of the Russian

warplane, has affected the Turkish-Armenian relations and the Karabakh Conflict.

In the article titled “**Enemies to the death or friends for life? Looking into Proejudice Against Turks Amongst Armenians in Armenia**”, Armand Sağ tries to explain how Armenia sees itself in relation to Turks and Turkey, and also in this regard, addresses a possible Turkish-Armenian conciliation and Turkish-Armenian relations.

M. Törehan Serdar, in his article titled “**After the Relocation**”, addresses the mostly unknown side of the relocation process, which was the return of the relocated Armenians. In this regard, M. Törehan Serdar focuses on the legal measures that made this return possible, the trials of those responsible for the relocation, and other related developments.

100th anniversary of the relocation has resulted in many publications being made in Armenia and the Diaspora. On the other hand, publications regarding this anniversary in Turkey are low in number and it is hard to say that there is a publication that has shined out and earned the appreciation of everyone. Published in 2015, the book titled “**Turks and Armenians: Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire**” by Justin McCarthy has filled this gap. McCarthy explicitly explains his ideas on the historical development of the Armenian issue and how to interpret this development. His book is of such quality that; it would be enough for one to only read this book to scientifically learn what Armenian issue is about.

Such a book is as important for Turkish readers as it is non-Turkish readers, and for this reason, we believe that this book should be translated to Turkish as soon as possible. But due to the fact that this cannot happen immediately, the staff of AVIM, especially the director of the AVIM, (R) Ambassador Alev Kılıç, have prepared a summary of this book. We are publishing the English version of this summary on this issue of our journal. We have already published the Turkish version of this summary in the 52nd issue of our “Ermeni Araştırmaları” journal.

The second book analysis in this issue is about the book titled “**There Was and There Was Not**” by Armenian writer Meline Toumani that focuses on the attitude of Armenian Diaspora. The analysis of this book was prepared by Şakire Furtun.

Have a nice reading and best regards,

Editor

FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

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Abstract: *This article studies Turkey-Armenia relations during the first half of 2016, commemorations and other activities of the 101st anniversary of the Armenian relocations, some countries' stances concerning Armenian genocide allegations and recent developments in the Karabakh issue.*

Keywords: *Turkey, Armenia, Canada, France, Germany, Russian Federation, United States, European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Karabakh Issue, R.T. Erdoğan, A. Davutoğlu, S. Sargsyan, E. Nalbandian, F. Hollande, B. Obama*

Öz: *Bu yazı 2016 yılının ilk yarısında Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerini, Ermeni sevk ve iskânın 101. yılının anılmasını ve diğer etkinliklerini, bazı ülkelerin Ermeni soykırımı iddialarına ilişkin tutumlarını ve Karabağ sorunu konusundaki son gelişmeleri incelemektedir.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Türkiye, Ermenistan, Kanada, Fransa, Almanya, Rus Federasyonu, A.B.D., Avrupa Parlamentosu, Avrupa Konseyi Parlamenter Asamblesi, Karabağ Sorunu, R.T. Erdoğan, A. Davutoğlu, S. Sarkisyan, E. Nalbantyan, F. Hollande, B. Obama*

ARTICLES

1 - TURKEY-ARMENIA RELATIONS

During the first six months of 2016, there was no positive development in Turkey-Armenia relations; on the contrary, the tense atmosphere caused by the “centennial” commemorations, although decreasingly, continued.

The genocide allegations, which constitutes the main problem between the two countries, receded into the background due to the clashes in Karabakh. However, this is not what Armenians want. Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian stated that “centennial” commemorations will continue and that their aim was recognition, condemnation, and prevention of new genocides.¹ Thus, it is understood that, in 2016 (and probably in the coming years), the goal is continue to put pressure on Turkey through the genocide issue.

During his visit to Azerbaijan in November 2016, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu reiterated that Turkey supported Azerbaijan with regard to the liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.² In his speech at the conference titled “Crisis Management: Humanitarian Solutions” at Gaziantep University held under the auspices of the 8th Ambassadors Conference, Çavuşoğlu indicated that several countries had historical issues with Turkey and these issues were determining their approach towards Turkey. Touching upon the normalization of relations with Armenia, he reminded that 20 percent of Azerbaijan’s territories was occupied and stated the Turkey will not normalize its relations with Armenia unless the Karabakh issue is resolved.³

Çavuşoğlu’s statements once more revealed that Turkey does not accept Armenia’s policy of reflecting the Karabakh conflict as an issue that is of no concern to Turkey and addressing bilateral relations independently from the Karabakh issue. In reaction to this, Vice President of the National Assembly of Armenia, Eduard Sharmazanov, stated that Turkey did not and cannot have anything to do in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, and he further indicated that Çavuşoğlu’s statement demonstrated that Turkey, in violation of the international commitments it has assumed, continued to posit preconditions.⁴ Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian made incomprehensible claims such as that Turkey, which is the successor of the Ottoman Empire, continued to posit preconditions, that it was not possible to

¹ “Nalbantyan’dan 2015’e Bakış”, *AGOS*, 04.02.2016.

² *Nouvelles d’Arménie*, No. 225, p. 16.

³ “Çavuşoğlu: Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkileri Karabağ Sorunu Varken Düzelmeyecek”, *Trend.az*, 17.01.2016.

⁴ “Şarmazanov: Karabağ meselesinde Türkiye’nin yapacağı birşey yok ve olamaz”, *News.am*, 16.01.2016.

find logic behind Turkey's foreign policy and therefore, Turkey was unable to establish normal relations with other countries.⁵

On February 12, 2016, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, in his speech with regard to the implementation of constitutional changes, touching upon relations with Turkey, stated that he did not see any possibility for progress. He indicated that the notion that Armenia cannot live well as long as the Karabakh issue is not resolved or that the "blockade" imposed by Turkey is not lifted was unacceptable. Indicating that Turkey's and Azerbaijan's policies did not yield the result both countries yearned to see, Nalbandian stated that both countries were trying to talk to Armenia from the position of threat, coercion, and force, but that this approach did not produce any results. Nalbandian also indicated that Armenia has been living in these conditions for 25 years, and was used to and adjusted to these conditions.⁶ Furthermore, he added that a peace with Azerbaijan and Turkey should not be expected in the near future.⁷

These words, which referred to Ankara's and Baku's desire for Armenia to make concessions, reveals that Armenia's main concern was to not make any concessions with domestic policy considerations and that it was ready to even take the risk of not making peace with Turkey and Azerbaijan. This approach also explains why Armenia did not respond favorably to Turkey's recent policy of reconciliation.

With regard to the effects of the closing of Turkey's borders with Armenia in 1993 to the Armenian economy, it is seen that, indeed, the Armenian economy has adapted to this situation. Between the years 2001 and 2008, the Armenian economy grew by more than 10 percent while the border with Turkey (and Azerbaijan) was closed. This growth only decreased beginning from 2009 as a consequence of the world economic crisis.⁸ The reason why Armenia's economy was not affected by the closed border is that Armenia, during the Soviet era and in the first years of its independence, had a low amount of imports from Turkey. Therefore, the closing of the border did not affect Armenia's economy in this regard. On the other hand, since Armenia's export is quite low, the closing of the border did not affect Armenia's exports as well. Although it is clear that the closed border with Turkey does not affect Armenia's economy, both the Armenian political circles and public attach great

⁵ "Nalbantyan'dan 2015'e Bakış", *AGOS*, 04.02.2016.

⁶ "President Made a Statement on the implementation of the Constitutional Changes", *President of the Republic of Armenia*, Press Release, 12.01.2012, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2016/02/12/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-meeting-Constitution/>

⁷ *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, No. 228, p. 11.

⁸ "Peace with Azerbaijan, Turkey Not Vital for Armenia", *RFE/RL*, 16.02.2016.

importance to the opening of the border. This could be explained with the feeling of insecurity due to “siege mentality” caused by the closing of borders as well as the belief that the opening of borders with Turkey would lead to the deterioration of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations.

Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu’s visit to Azerbaijan at the end of February provided a proper basis to review Turkey-Armenia relations. In a joint press conference with Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Memmedyarov, Çavuşoğlu stated that Armenia failed the test of sincerity and that it behaved with ill intent towards its neighbors. He indicated that the 2009 Protocols was

Although it is clear that the closed border with Turkey does not affect Armenia’s economy, both the Armenian political circles and public attach great importance to the opening of the border. This could be explained with the feeling of insecurity due to “siege mentality” caused by the closing of borders as well as the belief that the opening of borders with Turkey would lead to the deterioration of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations.

emptied of its value when the Protocols were sent to the Constitutional Court of Armenia. Furthermore, Çavuşoğlu said that Armenia was being left out from regional cooperation mechanisms because of its own attitude (as it is known, regular meetings are held between Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in order to develop cooperation in different matters, such as the Kars-Akhalkalaki-Baku railway in particular). Çavuşoğlu added that Armenia could be included in regional cooperation mechanisms if it corrects its mistakes, stops occupying Azerbaijani territories, and respects Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity.

Çavuşoğlu also affirmed Turkey’s continuous support for Azerbaijan with regards to Armenia’s withdrawal from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Prime Minister Davutoğlu’s statements that certain Syrian Kurds, like the Armenian gangs in the past, was cooperating with Russia and opened a representative office in Moscow drew negative reaction from the Armenian Foreign Minister Nalbandian. Stating that Talat Pasha was also blaming Russia for arming and provoking Armenians, Nalbandian claimed that such statements was a serious signal on what can happen to the Kurds. From these statements, it is understood that Nalbandian wanted to imply that Armenians were subjected to genocide for cooperating with the Russians and the same thing may happen to Kurds. It is known by all that the aim of the 1915 Armenian relocations was to put an end to the Armenian revolts. Furthermore, this event is not even remotely close to the crime of genocide defined in the 1948 Genocide Convention.

President Sargsyan, in a speech during his visit to Cyprus in mid-March, stated that the main obstacle in bilateral relations with Turkey was Turkish-Azerbaijani relations, and added that they were ready to develop diplomatic relations with Turkey, but Ankara was associating the issue with its relations with Baku. Furthermore, he claimed that Armenia's views over the genocide issue had no relation with Turkey's obligation to reconcile with its past.⁹

With this statement, Sargsyan referred to Armenia's policy towards Turkey. Armenia wants to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey without waiting for Turkey's recognition of the genocide allegations, in order to balance Azerbaijan's influence over Turkey, to ease Russia's control over itself, to win the favor of the US and EU (since such a move will be a peaceful act), and to open the border with Turkey. Although Armenia was close to reach this goal with the signing of the 2009 Protocols, Ankara's preference to preserve its relations with Azerbaijan and to associate the ratification of the protocols with the Karabakh conflict had created great disappointment in Armenia, and ultimately, Armenia was forced to abandon the protocols in practice (but did not legally abandon them).

Armenia's desire to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey without Turkey's recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations does not mean that Armenia has abandoned its allegations or that it does not attach importance to these allegations. Turkey's recognition of the genocide allegations will very much ease at least the partial fulfilment of Armenia's demands such as restitution, return of properties, as well as territorial demands. However, Armenia, which is aware that the Turkish public opinion will not accept such claims, with the help of several circles in the US and EU, aims to change the existing opinions of the public by creating a movement within Turkey and therefore, seeks to benefit from the group known as "liberal intellectuals" in Turkey. During his visit to the US which we will further touch upon below, President Sargsyan, in his speech on March 31, 2016, at the Harvard University, stated the following: "*An intellectual generation is growing in Turkey today, and this crème de la crème of society will eventually become strong enough to make their government speak the truth. I am sure that the day will come.*"¹⁰ Considering the fact that, according to a public opinion poll conducted in Turkey, only 9.1 percent believe that the events of 1915 amount to genocide,¹¹

⁹ "Turkey Not Recognizing Cyprus Is Inconceivable, Says Armenian President", *Cyprus News Agency*, 16.03.2016.

¹⁰ "President Gave a Lecture at the Kennedy School of Governance of the Harvard University", *President of the Republic of Armenia*, Press Release, 31.03.2016, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2016/03/31/president-serzh-sargsyan-speech-at-harvard-university/>

¹¹ *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 43.

it is understood that President Sargsyan will have to wait for a long time for this to happen.

President Sargsyan, who attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington at the end of March, as mentioned above, gave a conference at Harvard University¹² and although it was not the place, he touched upon Armenia-Turkey relations with much distortions and exaggerations. Indicating that certain neighbors were pursuing a policy of economic blackmail, Sargsyan described the closed border with Turkey as the last closed border in Europe. However, as we have previously mentioned at various times, this is not true. In the South Caucasus, the Armenia-Azerbaijan border is also closed. Furthermore, it is understood that Georgia's borders with Abkhazia and Ossetia are closed as well. It is also not possible to say that Georgia's border with Russia is completely open.

Touching upon the genocide allegations in the same speech, Sargsyan said that the world now recognized and condemned this crime, but he added that what was of utmost importance to them was Turkey's recognition and Turkey facing its own history.

Stating that there was a belief that exists outside of Armenia that Armenians jubilate when bad things happen in Turkey, Sargsyan indicated that this was a non-sense and that they were strongly interested in Turkey's peaceful and democratic development. He further said that fundamental democratization was the only way in which all the peoples living in Turkey would feel as fully fledged citizens and would be able to lead a dignified life. It seems that Sargsyan, with these words, wanted to give a lesson of democracy to Turkey, but he is actually not competent to do so.

In a written statement on April 24, 2016, President Sargsyan stated that more than a century has passed since the "genocide" and Armenia was reborn as a nation and as a state during this period. He also indicated that Armenia proved to the world that Turkey failed in its genocidal plans. Sargsyan added that Turkey's denialist stance and hostile attitude towards everything Armenian did not change and this attitude meant the continuation of the crime of genocide nowadays.

What is noteworthy in this statement is that Sargsyan's statement reflected racial hatred, at the least some manner of Turcophobia or obsession, regardless of the fact that the President Erdoğan sent a very peaceful letter to the mass

¹² *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 43.

held at the Mother Mary Church, which understood and shared the sufferings of the Armenians.

In the same statement, in order to encourage the Armenian public opinion, which was badly affected by the loss of Armenian forces during the clashes in Karabakh on 2-5 April, Sargsyan said the following: *“I declare to the entire world to hear: there will be no purging or deportation of the Armenians of Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh]. We will not allow another Armenian Genocide.”*¹³ What is odd here is the fact that no one has the intention such as to deport Armenians. On the other hand, it is a known fact that Azerbaijanis in Karabakh and other territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenians were deported and some were massacred as seen in the example of Khojaly.

Sargsyan’s animosity towards Turkey manifested itself in other occasions as well.

Regarding the agreement between Turkey and the EU on refugees, although it did not concern his country, Sargsyan said: *“The EU should not blindly trust Erdoğan in addressing the refugee crisis: they need to seek their own solutions to this problem”*. He further stated that he had a feeling that *“this deal, in any case, is not stable and with a partner like Turkey, it will be difficult to achieve in long term”*.¹⁴

In an interview he gave to the German newspaper Bild a day before the German Bundestag’s adoption of the draft resolution on the genocide allegations, Sargsyan said: *“it would not be fair to not call the genocide of Armenians ‘genocide’ just because that makes the head of state of another country angry. I am sure that Bundestag politicians see it this way too and will not be intimidated.”*¹⁵

Another remarkable subject with regard to Turkey-Armenia relations is Armenia’s efforts to present Turkey as a responsible party for the clashes in Karabakh on 2-5 April. Vice President of the National Assembly of Armenia Eduard Sharmazanov, during his visit to Moscow following the clashes, taking advantage of the anti-Turkey atmosphere in Russia, said:

Azerbaijan, as an initiator of the growth of this tension bears the whole responsibility of the escalation of the situation. Here Turkey’s one-sided criminal position, which evidently defends and encourages such

¹³ “Sergh Sargsyan: We will not allow another Armenian Genocide”, *Panorama.am*, 24.04.2016.

¹⁴ “Armenian President: We don’t Trust Erdoğan”, *Medimax*, 01.06.2016.

¹⁵ “Armenia: don’t let Erdogan bully you on genocide bill”, *The Local*, 01.06.2016.

*inhuman action is extremely dangerous. All this shows that Turkey continues remaining one of the threats for regional stability.*¹⁶

There is no point in making such statements other than displaying hostility towards Turkey despite the fact that Turkey had nothing to do with the clashes in Karabakh.

Another occasion also revealed the paranoid attitude of certain circles in Armenia towards Turkey. A movement to protest against Turkish products led by one Tatul Manaseryan, who is apparently an economist, began in Yerevan. This movement calls for the boycott of Turkish products not only Armenia, but also in the entire world on the grounds that the money paid to Turkish products could finance weapons to be used against Armenians and that Turkish foods could be used as a bacteriological weapon against Armenians.¹⁷ On the other hand, this movement means that Russia's policy of restrictions on imports from Turkey following the downing of a Russian warplane by Turkey over the Syrian border last year may be pursued by Armenia as well.

Actually, this initiative, which is the product of the delusions of several extremists, should not be taken seriously and can be regarded as a support to Russia's policy toward Turkey. However, with the Armenian Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamian's order for "a study on this issue with the focus on those Turkish products that threaten Armenian economy both in terms of quality and competition",¹⁸ the issue gained an official status and gave rise to the thought that Armenia was looking for an excuse to restrict imports from Turkey.

It must be mentioned that Turkey's yearly total exports is worth around 140 billion dollars, and Turkey's yearly exports to Armenia is around 200 million dollars. Therefore, exports to Armenia constitute only a small amount such as 1.4 per thousand. If Armenia attempts to block or restrict imports from Turkey, this will cause only a small amount of revenue loss, but will lead Turkey to take measures against Armenia in other fields.

However, despite Armenia's policy towards Turkey that could be described as aggressive, it is seen Turkey remains very silent. This attitude is also observed in the program of the 65th Government that was formed in May. In the South Caucasus section of the government program states the following:

¹⁶ "Sharmazanov Calls Turkey and Azerbaijan Regional Threat", *Armenpress*, 19.04.2016.

¹⁷ "Protest Against Turkish Products in Yerevan", *Asbarez*, 22.04.2016.

¹⁸ "PM: Armenian Government Does Not Seek to Ban Imports of Turkish Food", *ARKA*, 11.05.2016.

*In accordance with the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the Caucasus, our country will continue to strive for the cessation of the occupation in Azerbaijani territories, Upper Karabakh in particular, and the ending of tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia.*¹⁹

In short, Turkey's relations with Armenia is not found in the government program. This might be a result of Armenia's negative attitude. On the other hand, Armenia-Azerbaijan relations is found in the program and it is stated that Turkey will support Azerbaijan.

2 - COMMEMORATIONS OF THE 101st ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN RELOCATION AND OTHER EVENTS

2.1 - Events In Armenia

As mentioned above, Armenian officials attach great importance that centennial commemorations and other events are not limited to the year 2015 and are spread out to coming years. As a matter of fact, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian had previously said that work over recognizing the "Armenian genocide" would not stop before or after the anniversaries.²⁰ Therefore, it was expected for events to be organized for the "101st" anniversary.

There are two major events held for the anniversaries of the genocide allegations. The first one is the torchlight procession on the night of April 23 toward the "genocide memorial" which is organized by the Dashnak Party and usually attended by the youth. Similar to previous years, Turkish flags were burned this year during this event. Furthermore, probably due to the clashes in Karabakh in April, Azerbaijani flags were also burned.²¹ There is no doubt that, whatever the reason, burning the flag of a country is an extremely inappropriate act that reflects primitive feelings and thoughts.

Secondly, the next day on April 24, the Armenian president as well as government officials and clergy, as a cortege, walk to the "genocide memorial" and stand in homage. After this, the memorial is opened to the public. Last year, this ceremony was attended by the Russian, French, Serbian Presidents and the Greek Cypriot leader as well as other foreign statesmen. However, it

¹⁹ "Government Program", Prime Ministry of the Republic of Turkey, 25.05.2016, www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/forms/_global_government/pg_GovernmentProgram.aspx.

²⁰ "Work over recognizing the Armenian genocide does not stop before and after the anniversaries: Edward Nalbandian", *Armenpress*, 02.02.2016.

²¹ "Participants of Torch Light Processing Burn Turkish and Azerbaijan Flags", *Armenpress*, 23.04.2016.

appears that this year's ceremony was not attended by foreign statesmen. This led to lesser interest to such events.

What is new this year is that, apart from the above ceremonies, two more major events were held. The first was the "International Social and Political Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide", also known as in short "Global Forum", which was established and held its first meeting last year. The second is the "Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity."

It appears that the main purpose of the Global Forum is to address the topic of genocide in accordance with the Armenian views in an international conference.

President Sargsyan, in his opening speech at the Second Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide in which he did not mention Turkey but vilified Azerbaijan,²² stated that this conference showed the determination of the Republic of Armenia to be one of the pioneering forces to lead the struggle against the crime of genocide. Thus, it appears that Armenia wants to create a platform in which it can easily bring forward its genocide allegations against Turkey by gaining a place in the world in the field of genocide studies. Sargsyan also mentioned the need to define a special legal status for survivors of genocide and other crimes against humanity through the improvement of existing legal mechanisms or introduction of new legal norms. Sargsyan also mentioned the necessity of the recognition of the rights of the victims concerning their losses and suffering. Hence, from these words, it is understood that Sargsyan aims to establish a new legal structure which will overcome the difficulties in paying restitutions to the inheritors of the those who died and also who suffered in other ways during the 1915 events.

The "Final Statement and Recommendations" of the Global Forum, which was published on April 23, 2016,²³ although there was no direct to the Armenian genocide allegations, mentioned the commitment to combat the "evil of genocide and other crimes against humanity, and the importance of teaching history of the humankind as well as causes and consequences of genocide with a view of achieving comprehensive and objective recognition of the crimes of the past. The next Global Forum, which will be convened in April 2018, is recommended to focus on the role of education, tools, methods to eliminate hatred, intolerance, and xenophobia.

²² "Second Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide Opens in Yerevan", *Armradio.am*, 22.04.2016, <http://www.armradio.am/en/2016/04/22-23/>

²³ "Final Statement and Recommendations of the Second Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, 26.04.2016, http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/GF%202016/GF_Final_Statement_eng.pdf

The second initiative with regards to the “101st anniversary” is the “Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity”. This prize was created by three wealthy Armenians – Ruben Vardanyan, Nubar Afeyan, and Vartan Gregorian. The aim of the prize is pay tribute to individuals who saved lives during wars, ethnic strife, and human made disasters. The prize bears the name of Aurora Mardiganian who was a survivor of the “genocide” and narrated her experiences with a book and a film. The winner of the one-million-dollar prize, which will be awarded annually in Yerevan, is selected by a selection committee co-chaired by actor George Clooney and Nobel Prize winner Elie Wiesel. The winner receives 100,000 dollars, and nominates individuals and organizations that will receive the one-million-dollar award.²⁴

The inaugural prize was awarded to Marguerite Barankitse who had established an orphanage in Burundi. Barankitse chose to donate the one million dollar award to three organizations that aided needy children and orphans: Fondation du Grand-Duc et de La Grande-Duchesse du Luxembourg, Fondation Jean-François Peterbroeck (JFP Foundation), and the Fondation Bridderlech Deelen Luxembourg.²⁵

What concerns Armenians and Armenia with regard to the Aurora Prize is the fact that the Prize was financed by wealthy Armenians and that the name of the prize was taken from an Armenian who was relocated. Organizations that won awards this year have nothing to do with Armenians. However, the fact that the prize is awarded in Yerevan will bring prestige to Armenia to some extent. Furthermore, the fact that the prize is awarded on April 24 will indirectly lead to connections between the prize and genocide allegations.

Although there is no doubt that people are free to use their wealth on whatever they want, it seems that it would have been a more proper move for wealthy Diaspora Armenians to help the poor in large numbers in Armenia before helping the needy in Africa or other places.

Nubar Afeyan, one of the creators of the Aurora Prize, said that their aim was to turn Armenia into a global humanitarian center. However, unfortunately, as seen in the Armenian atrocities which cost the lives of half a million Muslims in Eastern Anatolia in 1914-1921, the killings of Turkish diplomats, the Khojaly massacre in Karabakh, the attack on the Armenian National Assembly and the killings of the Armenian Prime Minister, Parliament Speaker and several parliamentarians in 1999, the deaths of 10 people at the hands of the

²⁴ “George Clooney Visits Armenia For Humanitarian Award Event”, *RFE/RL*, 22.04.2016.

²⁵ “Marguerite Barankitse Reçoit le Premier Prix Aurora”, *Armenews*, 26.04.2016.

police during demonstrations following the 2008 presidential elections, Armenians have a tradition using violence for political purposes. Therefore, it would be correct to view the initiative of turning Armenia into a humanitarian center rather as a move for propaganda purposes.

2.2 - Events In Turkey

Number and venues of ceremonies and other events in Turkey to commemorate the 101st anniversary of the 1915 events, compared to the previous year,²⁶ was less this year. Although it is not possible to know the reason for this, it appears that commemorative events, which is repeated each year with the same content, has caused weariness, and contributions and incentives from abroad has been waning.

Therefore, it would be correct to view the initiative of turning Armenia into a humanitarian center rather as a move for propaganda purposes.

The main themes of this year's ceremonies and events, which were attended by less Armenians and others from abroad when compared to previous years, were the topics such as the necessity of Turkey's recognition of the "Armenian genocide", that justice will not be served as long as Turkey refuses to recognize, and that the denial of the "genocide" means the continuation of the crime. Furthermore, the alleged Assyrian and Pontic Greek genocides were also requested to be recognized. What could be regarded as new this year are several statements claiming that what was committed against Armenians, in other words, the genocide allegations, was also intended against the Kurds today.

The most important commemorative event this year was the mass held at the Mother Mary Church. Archbishop Aram Ateşyan, General Vicar of Armenian Patriarch in Turkey, who lead the mass read the following message by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan:

I greet those who gathered for commemorating the Ottoman Armenians who died in the tragic days of World War I. Turkey is the most meaningful place for understanding the suffering of Ottoman Armenians and commemorating them; thus, I am glad that this ceremony is held in Turkey once again. In Anatolia, where humanitarian duties are not ignored and both joy and pain is shared with sincerity, conscience and sense of justice come first. In accordance with our sense of history and

²⁶ For ceremonies and events held in Turkey in 2005, see: *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 52, p. 18-28.

understanding of humanity, we will continue to protect the memory of Ottoman Armenians. We will continue to remind the thousand-years-old common life culture of Turks and Armenians. We will not give up working with the aim of friendship and peace against the ones who have been trying to alienate the two neighboring peoples with common history and similar traditions by the discourse of hatred and to make history a political issue. With this mentality, I respectfully commemorate the Ottoman Armenians who passed away and express my condolences to their families. Once again, I want to remind that we share this common pain. I would like to thank all Armenian citizens who had contributed to this country.²⁷

President Erdoğan's message is intended for the Armenians in Turkey. However, Shavarsh Kocharyan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, for an inexplicable reason, responded to this message.²⁸ Shavarsh Kocharyan stated that the message was a failed attempt of denial and an attempt to put the responsibility for the genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire on Armenians. He indicated that Turkey was assuming a parity between the victims of war²⁹ and those who became the victim of state planned and implemented genocide. Kocharyan further stated that the denialist position was enlarging the gap between the Turkish and Armenian peoples, the best way for the elimination of which is facing historical truth and repentance.³⁰

It must be stated that the content of Shavarsh Kocharyan's statements has nothing to do with the President Erdoğan's message.

In the face of the negative attitude of the Armenian side, Presidential Spokesperson İbrahim Kalın stated that a one-sided historical perspective was being imposed with regard to the 1915, and underlined the necessity of looking to the future from a perspective of friendship and perceiving the incidents in that period as shared pain.³¹

²⁷ "Cumhurbaşkanı'ndan 24 Nisan Mesajı", *Agos*, 24.04.2016.

²⁸ "L'Arménie Dénonce Erdoğan Pour son Message du 24 avril", *Armenews.com*, 26.04.2016.

²⁹ What is meant with the phrase "victims of war" are the Muslims who were killed by Armenian gangs in Eastern Anatolia during and after the First World War. According to published Ottoman documents, the number of people massacred by Armenians between 1914-1922 is 518.000 (*Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliaman Belgeleri*, Editör: Yusuf Sarımay, Başbakanlık Arşivler Genel Müdürlüğü, 2001). Armenian authors try to ignore these massacres, and when they are compelled to mention them, they try to play down these massacres by presenting them as the natural consequences of war.

³⁰ "Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Considers Turkish President's Statement Another Failed Attempt of Denial", *Armenpress*, 24.04.2016.

³¹ "Certains tentent d'imposer une histoire unilatérale concernant les incidents de 1915", *TRT.net.tr*, 25.04.2016, <http://www.trt.net.tr/francais/turquie/2016/04/25/certains-tentent-d-imposer-une-histoire-unilatérale-concernant-les-incident-de-1915-477731>,

3 - DEVELOPMENTS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES REGARDING ARMENINA GENOCIDE ALLEGATIONS

While most developments regarding the Armenian genocide allegations occurred in 2015, several events were continued also in 2016 with the efforts of both Armenians and the Armenian Diaspora. We will discuss the most important ones below.

3.1 - Germany

In 2005, the German Parliament (Bundestag) had adopted a resolution that viewed the events of 1915 as genocide without using the genocide word. There has been efforts in Germany, particularly by the Greens, for the adoption of another resolution in the German Parliament, which included the word “genocide”. The 101st anniversary of the Armenian relocations had created a suitable opportunity for this, and a motion for resolution, which included the word “genocide” and which was supported by all political parties, was submitted in the federal assembly. However, the motion was returned to the German Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee due to the opposition finding the wording inadequate.³²

After the Foreign Affairs Committee failed to reach an agreement on the motion, the Greens prepared a new motion in February 2016 that indicated that the events of 1915 amounted to genocide.³³ Although it had a text that could be approved by the Parliament, the motion was not voted due to the reservations of the Christian Democrats, especially Chancellor Merkel, since it was a period in which Turkey’s cooperation with regard to the refugee problem was needed. However, thanks to the efforts of Cem Özdemir, the co-chairman of the political party The Greens, who is closely interested in the subject, it was agreed among the political parties to vote the motion on June 2, 2016. The motion was put to vote on June 2, 2016 and was adopted with one vote against and one abstention.

Three fourths of the Parliament was not present at the voting. Chancellor Angela Merkel, Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel, and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier did not take part in the vote due to scheduling issues.³⁴ However, limited participation does not prevent the validity or “legality” of

³² *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 69-72.

³³ “Genocide Debate Puts Germany in Tough Spot with Turkey”, *Deutsche Welle*, 23.04.2016.

³⁴ “Almanya ‘Soykırım’ ı Kabul Etti, Türkiye Büyükelçisini Geri Çekti”, *Haberler.com*, 02.06.2016, <http://www.haberler.com/karslioglu-almaya-duygusal-bir-karar-aldi-8494453-haberi/>

the resolution. Those who did not participate the voting might have acted as such due to their lack of interest in the issue or their disapproval of the adoption of such a resolution, but also due to their fear to speak up about their above-mentioned opinions. By the way, let us remind that, in France, the 2001 resolution passed with regard to Armenian genocide allegations was adopted with the participation of 50 MPs, while another similar resolution was adopted in June 26, 2016, with the votes of 21 MPs.

The resolution adopted by the German Parliament, besides usual Armenian propaganda items, include the below points:

The resolution is titled “Remembrance and commemoration of the genocide of the Armenians and other Christian minorities in the years 1915-1916.”

From a legal perspective, it is clear that the German Parliament has recognized Armenian genocide allegations. However, clear expressions of recognition in resolutions of other parliaments are not found in this resolution.³⁵ This semi-uncertainty in the German Parliament’s resolution is most probably a result of negotiations on the text of the resolution. However, even if there are uncertainties, there is no doubt that the German Parliament has recognized the Armenian genocide allegations.

Another feature of the text is that it does not ask Turkey to recognize the “Armenian genocide”. In the European Parliament’s 1987 resolution, which was the first “Armenian genocide” recognition in Europe and was an inspiration for similar resolutions by several EU-member countries’ parliaments, Turkey was publicly asked to recognize the “Armenian genocide”. Some countries, taking into account the possible negative impact of such a resolution on their bilateral relations with Turkey, had only recognized the genocide allegations and did not make any demands from Turkey. The German Parliament also followed this path. However, as we will see below, other kinds of demands were made from Turkey in the resolution.

The resolution also mentions the “genocide of other Christian minorities.” These minorities are defined as Aramaic/Assyrian and Chaldean Christians. It must be mentioned that Greece’s claim that Pontic Greeks were also subjected to genocide was not included in the resolution.

An interesting aspect of the resolution are the efforts to also hold the German government during World War I responsible for the “Armenian genocide”. It

³⁵ For instance, the French resolution in 2001 very clearly recognizes Armenian genocide allegations; “France publicly recognizes the Armenian Genocide of 1915.”

is hard to explain the reason for such self-incrimination. It is possible that this is to prevent criticisms against Germany with regard to “Armenian genocide” by pleading guilty in advance, as well as to give Turkey the message that it should admit the “Armenian genocide” as Germany did for the genocide it committed (Holocaust) and seems to be readying to admit committing a genocide in colonial-era Namibia.

Actually, according to the German point of view, no crime could be attributed to Germany with regard to 1915 events; the Ottoman government is the sole responsible for the “genocide”. It must be mentioned that the resolution states that the then German government was guilty for not trying to prevent the events, but had no power to do so, and also wanted the Ottoman Empire to continue the war.

The argument that Germany's interest in the 1915 events stemmed from its failure at the time to prevent these events is not believable. Why did Germany wait for nearly 60 years since the re-recognition of its independence in 1948 to be interested in this subject? Therefore, the reason for this interest must be sought out in current developments.

There is no clarity in the resolution on why the German Federal Assembly is so interested with this subject.

The argument that Germany's interest in the 1915 events stemmed from its failure at the time to prevent these events is not believable. Why did Germany wait for nearly 60 years since the re-recognition of its independence in 1948 to be interested in this subject? Therefore, the reason for this interest must be sought out in current developments.

It could be claimed that it took so much years for such interest because human rights has gained importance in the course of time. However, the weakness of this claim is that human rights concerns the people alive and their future. Human rights cannot be implemented retroactively; the dead cannot be brought back.

The Diaspora and Armenians of Armenia have a strong desire for revenge against Turkey and the Turks. Although it could be thought that the German Parliament tried to assist Armenians in this regard, there are no indications suggesting such a motive.

In our opinion, there are two primary reasons for the German Parliament's interest in the Armenian genocide allegations.

The first reason is to prevent, or at least soften, criticisms in advance against today's Germany due to the then German government's failure (inability) to prevent the Armenian relocations in 1915.

The second reason, which is more realistic, is related to the assimilation of Turks in Germany. Around 3 million Turks live in Germany today. Since the beginning of the 1960s in which Turks began to migrate to Germany for employment, in other words, for more than half a century ago, the main concern of all German governments has been the integration of Turkish community into the German society. To put it differently, they want Turks to accept and adapt to the circumstances in Germany. Turks have completely integrated in Germany in terms of work. However, the problem is in the social field. Apart from the difference in religion, German customs, traditions, social lifestyles do not conform to those of Turks, preventing both communities to commingle. This discrepancy has led a majority of Turks to live a ghetto lifestyle, making the integration of both communities impossible. Thus, the presence of an "un-Germanized" mass in the country for years has troubled German governments. As a result, they began to implement the policy of "divide and conquer" in order to both to achieve integration and to prevent this large mass to act together. In this context, firstly, an attempt was made to separate the Kurds from the Turks with the help of the Evangelical Church, and even the PKK was unofficially supported to that end, but this decision was much regretted afterwards. Secondly, religious differentiation was used to draw out the Alevi. Alevi were separated from the Sunni majority and were encouraged to live with their own sect. Even the argument that Alevism was a separate religion from Islam was propounded. As for Sunnis, it was made possible for them to divide into several tariqas and other movements.

Ultimately, although the possibility of Turks acting together was mostly eliminated due to divisions among them, the integration of Turks into the German society, albeit with some exceptions, was not achieved. Even after half a century, Turks have continued to feel attached to Turkey. Although continuing to live in Germany, they have continued to feel as an outsider in Germany.

As for what this has to do with the Armenian genocide allegations, since genocide is considered as the gravest crime, accusing a community (Turks) of committing genocide causes them to experience a morale crisis and feel obliged to defend themselves, and the failure to do so, under the influence of the famous Stockholm Syndrome, leads them to accept the views of their accusers. It also leads, in this case, for the Turks to be engulfed in the German society, assume a low profile, and be alienated from the Turkish values and customs. Of course, this is a process that will take years, and a significant part of the Turks will resist this process.

The most significant evidence that the Armenian genocide allegation is being used with the above-mentioned purpose is the initiation of this process and the casting of Cem Özdemir, who is an integrated Turk, to play the leading role. Furthermore, other Turkish parliamentarians in the German Parliament also have embraced the Armenian genocide allegations or were forced to do so. In fact, doing the contrary could lead to obstacles in their political careers and even to the end of their political lives. It could also prevent them from being a parliamentarian again. As a matter of fact, these have occurred in several European countries. For instance, in Belgium, Emir Kır was attempted to be removed from his ministerial duty for not recognizing the “Armenian genocide”.³⁶ Again in Belgium, parliamentarian Mahinur Özdemir was expelled from her party.³⁷ Similar incidents had also occurred in the Netherlands before.

Furthermore, the attempt to include Armenian genocide allegations into the curricula and teaching materials of schools, universities, and political education is also another evidence of the forcible integration attempts. Turkish children who will, at a young age, face allegations and accusations that their ancestors committed genocide against Armenians will be overwhelmed by feelings of guilt, and in order to overcome this, they will be forced to accept what is told to them and be lost within the German society. Some will resist. Among these, there could be those who could even be caught up in radical movements.

The German Parliament’s resolution was criticized and condemned in Turkey far beyond expectations. President Erdoğan’s response was very strong. Similar reactions were shown by the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and several other ministers, as well as the leaders and officials of other political parties, except HDP. The German Parliament’s resolution, thus, consolidated the stance against Armenian genocide allegations in Turkey and became an element of unity and congruity. It was seen that Turkey’s attitude was also echoed by the Turks in Germany, and many marches and meetings were organized against the resolution in front of the German Parliament.

In order to examine Turkish government’s objections and criticisms against the resolution, it would be beneficial to look at the Turkish Foreign Ministry’s below statement issued on June 2, 2015:

No: 125, 2 June 2016, Press Release Regarding the Resolution by the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany of 2 June 2016 on the Events of 1915

³⁶ *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 51.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

The Resolution adopted by the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany on 2 June 2016 concerning the events of 1915, which is regarded as a legitimate matter of debate in the European case-law, is a disgrace to the reputation of this body.

This Resolution is an example of ignorance and disrespect for the Law as politicizing history preventing free discussion on historical issues and trying to impose the self-created taboo of Armenian narrative as an indisputable fact. We, on our part, wish once again to remind those who undersigned it, of the following:

Achieving reconciliation on the controversial events of 1915 is possible only through dialogue, empathy and a fair point of view.

With this understanding, Turkey tries to honour the memory of the Ottoman Armenians, shares their sufferings, preserves Armenian cultural heritage and takes significant steps for paving the way for reconciliation between the two neighbouring nations. In this respect, there is nothing that Turkey will learn from the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany.

If the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany wishes to learn what exactly happened during the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, it may contribute to the establishment of the Joint History Commission which will function independently on a scientific basis and open to everyone, as has been persistently proposed by Turkey since 2005.

In Germany, where freedoms can be exercised easily in many fields, there is a univocal and suppressive environment regarding the events of 1915. Instead of comprehending and explaining what had happened in 1915, numerous books, documentaries and films have been fabricated on the basis of purposeful works over so many years, to achieve the duty of forming a one-sided opinion in the German public to impose Armenian narrative on the said events.

Turcophobia and Islamophobia reaching to the level of racism, current developments in domestic politics and foreign policy, some arrogant and opportunist politicians, and the deep trauma created by Germany's record of past crimes against humanity and genocide extending from Namibia to the Holocaust may possibly be mentioned among the reasons lying behind this policy.

Even worse, this initiative of Germany constitutes an attempt to assimilate Turks and Germans of Turkish origin, who have contributed significantly to the political, economic and socio-cultural life of Germany and to alienate them from their own history and self-identity.

It is also for this reason that the initiatives for dictating the Armenian narrative to young generations by means of public education cause concern. Turkish children in Germany are expected to defend a narrative which they do not believe and know that it is untrue, so as to succeed in history classes. Such a notion of education, is not only incompatible with the ideals of a democratic country and will not help harmonization efforts either.

It goes without saying that there will be resistance against this dictum by use of all kinds of means including legal remedies.

Germany should not politicize an historical event which occurred 101 years ago, and take a fair and objective stance as a requirement of the European Law to which it is a party. In this sense we would like to remind once again the legally binding observations of the European Court of Human Rights to the effect that,

-the Armenian narrative do not reflect the absolute truth and can be discussed freely;

-the opinions questioning the Armenian narrative are under the absolute protection of the freedom of speech;

-and no parallels can be drawn between the events of 1915 and the Holocaust.

It is apprehensive that the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany interprets history arbitrarily, without taking into account the law.

It is clear that this prejudiced and illogical policy is in need of serious self-criticism.

The German public opinion should respect, as a requisite of democracy and human rights, the opinions, memories and sincere efforts of the Turks for the purpose of reconciliation,

We expect that Germany, as our ally and as a country with which we

cooperate closely for the future of Europe, will take into consideration our opinions and sensitivities to which we attach vital importance, for the sake of the future of both our bilateral relations as well as the Turkey-Europe relations.

Under these circumstances, H.E. Hüseyin Avni Karsluoğlu, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Federal Republic of Germany has been recalled for consultations.

The adoption of this resolution also had several consequences. We can summarize these as follows:

- Bilateral relations experienced a pause, even a regression. However, economic, and military relations was not affected for the benefit of both sides.
- Anti-German sentiments that has been actually present in the Turkish people intensified.
- A significant number of Turks in Germany, which, except for a small minority, had remained silent against Armenian genocide allegations, united and held demonstrations against the resolution.
- Liberal intellectuals and some human rights activists in Turkey who have embraced and defended Armenian views chose to remain silent when anti-Germany sentiments reached the highest point in the country.
- Lastly, the resolution did not have any effects on Turkey-Armenia relations.

3.2 - France

We had previously given detailed information about France's approach in the "centennial".³⁸ In the period we cover here, it is seen that the adoption of a resolution "criminalizing the denial of the genocide" is the main issue in France with regard to the Armenian genocide allegations.

Since people of Armenian origin constitute an important voter base in France, in the French Parliament, which puts a lot of effort to meet the demands of Armenians (but not all that successful), Valérie Boyer, who is a parliamentarian

³⁸ *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, Issue 51, p. 132-137.

representing the Bouches-du-Rhône and a member of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) party, presented once again a bill to the parliament, penalizing the denial of genocide. However, this time, to increase the chances of being adopted, the bill aimed at not only the “Armenian genocide”, but also all other genocides. On December 3, 2015, the bill was sent back to the Justice Commission upon the request of the representatives of the ruling Socialist Party. Expressing his opinion on the topic, Jean-Marie Le Guen, Minister of State for Relations with Parliament, stated that, although the government was against those who denied or questioned the “truth of the Armenian genocide”, the bill will to be returned by virtue of the existing jurisprudence and on the grounds that it would violate the freedom of expression.³⁹ Thus, the bill was taken off the agenda.

The French Constitutional Council’s (Court) decision on January 8, 2016, virtually eliminated the possibility of a resolution that criminalizes the rejection of the Armenian genocide allegations being adopted. A French citizen by the name of Vincent Reynouard, who is a Jewish Holocaust denier, lost the lawsuit he filed with the request of annulment of the “Gayssot Act”, which criminalizes Holocaust denial. The Constitutional Council, in its decision, ruled that only competent tribunals can decide whether an event or act amounts to genocide. Accordingly, legislative (parliamentary resolutions) and executive (government resolutions) powers should not take decisions with regard to genocide, and if they have already taken, these decisions should become void. As a consequence, no law criminalizing the denial of the “Armenian genocide” based on the law adopted in France in 2001, characterizing the events of 1915 as “genocide”, or any other law, can be introduced.

The decision of the Constitutional Council will have other consequences as well.

Firstly, the abolition of the law dated 2001 now appears to be possible. For this, however, a separate and probably a long judicial process will have to be initiated.

The second consequence is request for the removal of the reference to the Armenian genocide allegations from the curricula of schools in France. This also requires a separate judicial process.

In January 2016, the Coordination Council of Armenian organizations of France (Conseil de Coordination des organisations Arméniennes de France),

³⁹ “Une Proposition de loi LR Pour Réprimer la Négation des Génocides Repoussée à l’Assemblée”, *AFP*, 03.12.2015.

which embodies most of Armenian organization in France, organized a dinner for French politicians and intellectuals embracing Armenian views. Attending this dinner and making a long speech, French President François Hollande reminded that he participated in the “centennial” ceremonies held in Yerevan on April 24. Touching upon the limited participation on the presidential level at the ceremonies, Hollande stated that this showed that efforts for the international recognition of the Armenian “genocide” must continue.

Hollande later touched upon the criminalization of the denial of the genocide allegations, which is a matter that is highly important for French Armenians. As is known, on February 28, 2012, the French Constitutional Council had turned down a similar law on the grounds that it was a violation of the freedom of expression and communication. This ruling was as a disaster for the militant Armenians in France, and all efforts were directed to have a law passed that would ensure the criminalization of the genocide allegations.

Despite all efforts and behests, no progress was made to this end as there is no agreement on a formula that would ensure such criminalization without violating the freedom of expression and communication. Hollande, in his dinner speech, stressed that any formula on this matter must be in accordance with the law, and he stated that the rejection of a law by the Constitutional Council or the European Court of Human Rights would not only be a failure for France, but also for the “Armenian cause”, for it would mean a victory for “denialism”. He also stated that he appointed the former President of the European Court of Human Rights, Jean-Paul Costa, to find a solution to the problem, and that they will take action to introduce a new law in accordance with Costa’s findings.⁴⁰

Despite Hollande’s participation in the dinner organized in January by Armenians, the fact that the ceremony held before the statue of composer-priest Gomidas, which is the most important event for Armenians in France, was not attended by him, the Prime Minister or the Parliamentary Speaker, the fact that the government was represented by Secretary of State for European Affairs, Harlem Désir, which is a lower position than ministership, and the fact that the ceremony was not attended by Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo, who is known for her support to Armenians, but by her deputy, was most probably a surprise for Armenians.

Mourad Papazyan, Co-president of the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations of France, revealed how unrealistic were the expectations of the

⁴⁰ *Nouvelles d’Arménie*, March 2016, p. 28.

French Armenians from the “centennial” with his statement at the ceremony: “we [Armenians] wouldn’t have believed if someone told us that Turkey was still not recognizing the truth of the Armenian genocide in the year 2016.”

Harlem Désir, who spoke on behalf of the government, said that commemorating the Armenian “genocide” was an exigency of the universal truth and a duty of memory not only for the Armenian people, but also the whole of humanity. In response to a question by the participants, Désir said that President Hollande appointed one of the best jurist in the country with the preparation of a law on denial.

Mourad Papazyan, Co-president of the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations of France, revealed how unrealistic were the expectations of the French Armenians from the “centennial” with his statement at the ceremony: “we [Armenians] wouldn’t have believed if someone told us that Turkey was still not recognizing the truth of the Armenian genocide in the year 2016.”

After nearly two months, on June 27, 2016, the French government proposed a bill envisaging up to one year imprisonment and a fine of 40,000 euros for the denial, belittling, or trivialization of genocides and crimes against humanity, via an amendment to the law on Equality and Citizenship.

This bill was unanimously approved in the French National Assembly in a session attended by 21 MPs.⁴¹ This number is very low considering that the French National Assembly is made up of more than 500 hundred MPs; however, the voting is legally valid. On the other hand, the fact

that a large majority of the MPs were not present at the voting means that the amendment is not that much supported by the public.

In order for the amendment to be enacted, it must also adopted by the Senate and signed by the President (there will be no difficulty to get his signature). On the other hand, 60 MPs or senators, the National Assembly speaker or the president of the Senate can apply to the French Constitutional Council to review the constitutionality of such a law. As it can be recalled, in 2012, the Constitutional Council had found a similar law unconstitutional and cancelled it.

The bill speaks of genocides broadly and does not include the words “Armenian genocide”. Therefore, in the event of “denial”, there will be a need for proof that the 1915 events amounted to genocide, and for this, they

⁴¹ “Génocide arménienne; Les Députés votent la Pénalisation de la Négation”, *AFP*, 01.07.2016.

will refer to the law adopted in 2001 in which France recognized the “Armenian genocide”. However, according to the UN Genocide Convention, only a competent national court or the International Criminal Court can decide whether an act amounts to genocide; in other words, the French National Assembly’s decision on this matter is not sufficient.

Another point that must be considered is that, in France, although there have been occasional cases of Holocaust denial, there has not been such a case of open denial of Armenian genocide allegations; at least we are not aware of such an event. Therefore, efforts for about ten years to criminalize the denial of “Armenian genocide” are pointless.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry made the below statement with regard to the aforementioned bill:

QA-23, 6 July 2016, Statement of the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tanju Bilgiç, in Response to a Question Regarding the Adoption of the Draft Amendments to the Law on the Freedom of Press Adopted by the French National Assembly

We have closely followed the preparation and adoption processes of the draft amendments to the Law on the Freedom of Press that the French National Assembly adopted concerning criminalization of the denial of war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide under certain conditions.

In the event that the Draft is enacted in its present form, it has the potential to pose the risk of limiting the freedom of expression unlawfully, especially impinging the jurisprudences of the ECtHR and the Constitutional Council of France.

We will follow closely also the upcoming process at the French Senate in the near future, regarding the Draft which has not yet been enacted.

We expect that the French Senate will remove the elements that may have the potential to pose the risk of limiting the freedom of expression from the Draft.

As it is seen, the Turkish Foreign Ministry emphasizes that the bill poses a risk of limiting the freedom of expression according to the jurisprudences of particularly the European Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Council of France.

3.3 - Russia

The downing of a Russian warplane following its entry to the Turkish airspace despite many warnings led to a crisis between Turkey and Russia. Russia stopped or decreased its cooperation with Turkey in various fields. The plane incident also led to the emergence of an anti-Turkey movement in the Russian public opinion.

A public opinion poll conducted on February 2016 revealed that 35 percent of the respondent wanted relations with Turkey to be severed, while a majority of the rest indicated that they were not ready for the normalization of relations between the two countries.⁴²

Besides taking economic measures against Turkey, the Russian government also reinforced its military base in Gyumri, Armenia, with new helicopters and missiles. This military base, which is located 10 km away, in other words, one cannon shot away from the Turkish border, is defenseless in case of an armed conflict. While it is not known whether these reinforcements have improved the state of the base, it appears that it relatively satisfied the Armenians who were very alarmed when, in October 2015, two Turkish helicopters violated Armenian borders by mistake for a short time.

The downing of the Russian warplane lead to the strong reaction of the extreme wings of the Russian Parliament and to requests to take measures against Turkey. The introduction of a bill to the Parliament that stipulated the punishment of people who reject Armenian genocide allegations, and the request to abolish the Treaty of Moscow signed in March 1921 and the Treaty of Kars signed in October 1921, are among these measures.

The bill on the punishment of those who reject the Armenian genocide allegations stipulated a fine of up to 500,000 rubles and imprisonment up to 5 years, making it the most severe penalty with regard to “denialism”.⁴³

Abolition of the 1921 Treaty of Moscow signed with the Soviet Union, and the 1921 Treaty of Kars signed with Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, amounts to territorial demands from Turkey, since these treaties determine Turkey’s borders with these countries. Among the nationalist circles in Russia, there is a strange opinion that these treaties must be abolished as they were signed during a period when the Soviet Union was weak. Therefore, in

⁴² “One Over One-Third of Russian Favor Cessation of Relation with Turkey”, *News.am*, 17.02.2016.

⁴³ “View from Yerevan: Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister on Russian-Turkish Tension”, *Armenianow.com*, 26.11.2015.

accordance with this opinion, the Soviet Union demanded territories from Turkey in 1945. Nationalist circles in Armenia, on the other hand, claimed that the Treaty of Moscow was signed without consulting Armenia, while the Treaty of Kars was signed by a representative of Armenia that was no more independent. After Stalin's death, in 1953, the Soviet Union sent Turkey a note stating that it had no territorial demands from Turkey. On the other hand, although no official territorial demands from Turkey was made by Armenia during the Soviet era or after independence, the belief that Eastern Anatolia belonged to Armenia is still present in Armenia and the Diaspora.

What was Armenia's attitude in the face of the tension in relations between Turkey and Russia?

First of all, it must be mentioned that the downing of the Russian plane led to concerns in Armenia. While, at first, President Sargsyan, Prime Minister Abrahamian and Foreign Minister Nalbantyan was silent, Defense Minister Ohanyan chose to express his opinion as if the incident was important only from a military standpoint. After condemning the downing of the plane, Ohanyan urged the international community to prevent a further escalation of Russian-Turkish tensions. He also claimed that this incident undermined international efforts to defeat terrorist groups operating in Syria.⁴⁴

Upon the introduction of the bill to the Russian Parliament with regard to the punishment of the people who reject of Armenian genocide allegations, Eduard Sharmazanov, Vice President of the Armenian National Assembly and spokesman of the ruling Republican Party, congratulated this move and said that not only to the Armenian Genocide, but other crimes against humanity must also be condemned.⁴⁵

Armenian Minister of Agriculture Sergo Karapetyan, approaching to the issue from another aspect, stated that Russia's import sanctions on Turkey might open up new opportunities for Armenia to increase exports of agricultural goods to Russia. He also stated that Armenian agricultural products, which are of higher quality than the Turkish products, could not compete with the latter because of higher cost.⁴⁶

It must be stated that the Armenian minister's approach is not realistic, because in order for Armenia to replace Turkey in the Russian market, it has to have

⁴⁴ "Armenia Condemns Turkey Downing of Russian Jet", *RFE/RL*, 25.11.2015.

⁴⁵ "Armenian Official: Danger of Impunity Became More Evident to Russian Colleagues", *News.am*, 25.11.2015.

⁴⁶ "Russia sanctions on Turkey open new opportunities for Armenia...", *ARKA*, 27.11.2013.

the capacity to increase its production within a short time, and Armenia has no such capacity. Furthermore, it is basically unlikely to increase agricultural production within a short amount of time. The claim that Armenian agricultural products are of higher quality than the Turkish products also requires proof.

With the waning down of the sentimentality caused by the downing of the Russian plane, opinions opposing the above-mentioned bill criminalizing the rejection of the Armenian genocide allegations began to be voiced. Pavel Krasheninnikov, Head of the State Duma on Procedural Legislation, said that the bill was not relevant, adding that there was no one in Russia denying the “Armenian Genocide”.⁴⁷

The issue regarding the bill on “denial” was resolved three months after the plane incident with the bill’s removal from the agenda. This is because of the fact that the Russian government did not express a positive opinion on the bill. The government explained its decision by stating that there were already norms in the criminal code for crimes against the feelings of believers and on ethnic grounds, and there were no tangible data in the bill.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Russian Constitutional Court, which was expected to give a positive opinion with regard to the bill, declared that it found the bill inappropriate due to absence of any tangible data proving the ‘genocide’ in the bill and the lack of common opinion “denying the genocide.”⁴⁹ Thus, the already tense relations between Turkey and Russia was prevented of having an additional problem.

What is noteworthy here is the fact that the Russian government did take Armenians’ request to enact this bill into consideration.

With regard to the Treaty of Moscow determining Turkey’s borders with Russia, Russian Communist Party members Valery Rashkin and Sergei Obukhov sent a letter in early February 2016 to the Russian Foreign Ministry proposing to denounce the Treaty. Answering a question on the issue, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova stated the following: “I can tell you that at this stage the query should be studied, what exactly is proposed. All this will be done in accordance with the established procedure.”⁵⁰ In 2011,

⁴⁷ “Eduard Sharmazanov to tell Russian Lawmakers About Armenia’s positive opinion on Russian Bill Criminalizing Armenian Genocide Denial”, *Arminfo.am*, 26.11.2015.

⁴⁸ “Rusya’da Ermeni soykırımını inkâr teklifine hükümetten destek çıkmadı”, *TurkRus.com*, 12.03.2016, <http://www.turkrus.com/189224-rusyada-ermeni-soykirimini-inkar-yasasi-teklifine-hukumetten-destek-cikmadi-xh.aspx>

⁴⁹ “Rusya’da Soykırım İnkâr Yasası Rafa Kaldırıldı”, *Hürriyet*, 11.03.2016.

⁵⁰ “Russian Foreign Ministry to Study query on Annulment 1921 Treaty of Friendship with Turkey”, *Armradio.am*, 10.02.2016.

at the 90th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Moscow, Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Medvedev had come together and celebrated this occasion. On this occasion, Erdoğan had presented Medvedev a copy of the original treaty, and Medvedev had given a photograph taken during the signing of the treaty. These gestures had shown that both countries were happy that the treaty was signed. Therefore, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson should have said that the Treaty of Moscow was still valid. Instead of doing this, by saying that query from State Duma members to denounce the treaty should be studied, the spokesperson tried to put pressure on Turkey, but Ankara chose to not react.

On this occasion, it must be mentioned that, since Russia no longer has land borders with Turkey, articles of the Treaty of Moscow determining borders between the two countries has no value in practice. However, recognition or non-recognition of borders by a country such as Russia is, in principle, is always important. It must be reminded that the said border is also Turkey's borders with Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan and is determined by the still effective Treaty of Kars signed on October 13, 1921.

As we have mentioned above, although Armenian Defense Minister Ohanyan condemned the downing of the Russian plane, other Armenian statesmen, contrary to expectations, tried to not speak much of the issue or tried to use a cautious language. This is due to their concerns of not making Armenia a part of the conflict between Turkey and Russia. Four months after the incident took place and after it was clear that the issue would not grow, as expected from Russia, a condemnation came from Armenia. Vice President of the Armenian National Assembly Eduard Sharmazanov stated that they considered the downing of the Russian SU-24 jet by Turkey as a crime, in the same way they considered the downing of the Armenian helicopter by Azerbaijan on the contact line of Karabakh-Azerbaijan.⁵¹

It would be beneficial to touch upon another development that has no direct relation with the downing of the plane, but is important as it coincides with it and is about the Armenian genocide allegations.

Head of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill I, during an interview with the Russian "Rossiya TV" channel in the beginning of January, mentioning the difficulties Iraqi and Syrian Christians encounter, said: "Nothing similar to the current events had ever happened in the Islamic world. Take, for example, the Turkish, Ottoman Empire. Yes, there were Christian

⁵¹ "Armenia considers downing of Russian Jet by Turkey and Armenian helicopter by Azerbaijan as Crimes", *Armenpress*, 11.03.2016.

minorities there but they were not exterminated.”⁵² He further stated that the Ottoman Empire enacted laws that imposed order, ensured relative security and stability in the lives of religious minorities.⁵³

Patriarch Kirill’s above statements, which conflicted with the Armenian genocide allegations and tarnished the authenticity of these allegations, led to strong reactions from Armenian circles. The Dashnaktsutyun and Heritage parties in the opposition as well as various NGOs criticized the Russian church and found the statement insufficient. Vahram Melikyan, a spokesman of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, only said that they have received the Russian

Orthodox Church’s clarification.⁵⁴ While the Armenian Foreign Ministry did not comment on the issue at first,⁵⁵ Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan stated that the Russian Patriarch’s statement was irrelevant.

On the other hand, the real reason why Patriarch Kirill made such statements is not known. It is even possible that these statements have nothing to do with the Turkish-Armenian conflict. It might be a reflection of an unknown conflict between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church.

In the face of this criticisms, Russian Orthodox Church spokesman Alexander Volkov, in a statement, said that the position of Russian Orthodox Church toward the “Armenian Genocide” had been clearly mentioned several times in the numerous official statements,⁵⁶ and thus, tried to express that they had embraced these allegations. What is important here is the fact the Church spokesman did not

object to the Patriarch’s statements on television or did not make an excuse that these statements were misunderstood. Thus, the Church spokesman’s statement that they recognized the “genocide” and the Patriarch’s opposite statement seem to contradict. However, it must be remembered that the Russian Orthodox Patriarch, like the Pope of the Catholic Church, has the right to have the final word.

On the other hand, the real reason why Patriarch Kirill made such statements is not known. It is even possible that these statements have nothing to do with the Turkish-Armenian conflict. It might be a reflection of an unknown conflict

⁵² “Russian Church Reassures Armenians Over Genocide Recognition”, *RFE/RL*, 11.01.2016.

⁵³ “Russian Patriarch Glosses Over Armenian Genocide”, *Asbarez*, 11.01.2016, <http://asbarez.com/1444248/russian-patriarch-glosses-over-armenian-genocide/>

⁵⁴ “Statement of Patriarch of All Russia sparks discontent in political circles of Armenia, but Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin gives no response yet”, *Arminfo.am*, 12.01.2016.

⁵⁵ “Armenian Foreign Ministry Does Not Comment on Patriarch Kirill’s Statement”, *Arminfo.am*, 13.01.2016.

⁵⁶ “Propos Négationiste du Patriarche Cyrille 1er 4 de L’Eglise Orthodoxe”, *Armenews.com*, 12.01.2016.

between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church. In connection with this, the fact that Patriarch Kirill did not attend the ceremonies in Yerevan on the occasion of the “centennial”, while Vladimir Putin did, had drawn attention at the time and had given rise to the thought that there was a conflict between both churches.

Coming back to Turkish-Russian relations, Russia’s restricting measures against Turkey following the plane incident, especially those in terms of trade, has damaged both countries, it appears that there has been a silent diplomacy between the two countries to lift these measures and normalize relations.

Following President Erdoğan’s message expressing sorrow over the plane incident and his emphasis that there was no deliberate intention to down the Russian plane,⁵⁷ initial steps were taken to the normalization of relations with Russia’s lifting of several measures against Turkey.⁵⁸

3.4 - The Vatican

We had previously mentioned that Pope’s statements recognizing the “Armenian genocide” caused a serious crisis between Turkey and the Vatican.⁵⁹

3.4.1 - Normalization of Relations

Nearly ten months after the tension between Turkey and the Vatican, it is seen that, as a result of negotiations, an agreement was reached between the sides on the normalization of relations. Accordingly, a book about a naval battle in 1657 in Çanakkale was presented to Pope Francis, and Pope Francis, on this occasion, expressed his affection for and appreciation of the Turkish people.

The Vatican also issue a statement referring to the above-mentioned book: “The book, notwithstanding the painful memories of history, illustrates the importance of scholarly research and opening up archives to historical investigation in the service of truth and building bridges of cooperation and mutual understanding. In light of this, the repeated commitment of Turkey to make its archives available to historians and researchers of interested parties in order to arrive jointly at a better understanding of historical events and the pain and suffering endured by all parties, regardless of their religious or ethnic

⁵⁷ “Kremlin: Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Rusya lideri Putin’e üzüntülerini bildirdi”, *Hürriyet*, 27.06.2016.

⁵⁸ “Putin, Türkiye kararnameini imzaladı”, *Sabah*, 01.07.2016.

⁵⁹ *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 47-55.

identity, caught up in war and conflict, including the tragic events of 1915, is noted and appreciated. The memory of the suffering and pain of both the distant and the more recent past, as in the case of the assassination of Taha Carım, ambassador of Turkey to the Holy See, in June 1977, at the hands of a terrorist group, urges us also to acknowledge the suffering of the present and to condemn all acts of violence and terrorism, which continue to cause victims today.”⁶⁰

Noteworthy points found in Vatican’s statement are as follows:

- The phrase “tragic events of 1915” is used instead of the word “genocide.”
- It is stated that Turkey’s commitment to make its archives available to historians and researchers of interested parties is noted and appreciated. As it can be remembered, Turkey had made offer to allow historians and researchers to work in all archives and to announce their results to the public. However, this offer was not positively received by Armenia. With this statement, Vatican seems to support Turkey’s offer.
- On June 9, 1977, Taha Carım, the Turkish Ambassador to Vatican, was murdered by Armenian terrorists. As it is known, these acts targeting Turkish diplomats is seen as not terrorism by Armenians, but as justice being served. Therefore, the recognition of the Ambassador Taha Carım’s murder as a terrorist act and its condemnation is a clear expression of contrast with the Armenians.

Vatican Spokesman Federico Lombardi stated that the above-mentioned statement was a gesture of goodwill to Turkey towards rapprochement.

This attitude by the Vatican was well-received in Ankara and Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesman Tanju Bilgiç made the following statement:

QA-3, 3 February 2016, Statement of the Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Tanju Bilgiç in Response to a Question Concerning the Press Release by the Holy See Press Office

We have noted the press release issued today (3 February 2016) by the Holy See Press Office as a positive development.

⁶⁰ “Vatikan Geri Adım Attı”, AA, 03.02.2016.

It is stated in the said press release that our commitment to open the archives for historians and researchers so as to better understand the history and suffering concerning the events of 1915, thereby our offer for a Joint Historical Commission, has been appreciated. It is also noted that violence and terror are condemned with reference to the memory of late Taha Carım, the Turkish Ambassador to the Holy See, who was martyred in 1977.

Within this scope, it has been decided that our Ambassador to the Holy See Mr. Mehmet Paçacı who has been in Ankara for consultations since the Mass held at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican on 12 April 2015, is to return to his post.

Thus, the tension and state of crisis between the sides was ended and normal relation was reinitiated.

3.4.2 - The Publication of Vatican Documents on the Armenian Issue

Vatican documents on the Armenian issue during the Ottoman era and the first years of the Republic of Turkey (1894-1930) were published under the title of “La Questione Armena” (The Armenian Question) in seven volumes with a total of 4.157 pages.⁶¹

It was already known for a long time that these documents would be published, and these documents were presented by Armenians as “genocide documents”. However, such a phrase is not used in the title.

These documents were found by and prepared for publication by a Jesuit priest by the name of Georges-Henri Ruysen. The fact that he previously wrote a book titled “The Holy See and Massacre of Armenians, 1894-1896” reveals his approach towards the issue. As it is known, about 30 revolts took place in Eastern Anatolia between 1864-1896, which were organized with the aim of separating the region from the Ottoman Empire, and with the support and encouragement of Russia and partially Britain.⁶² The Ottoman Empire's suppression of these revolts was reflected as the massacre of Armenians in the European public and was named as “Hamidian Massacres”. This expression is

⁶¹ “*La Questione Armena. Documenti dell'Archivio Secreto Vaticana. A cura diğ Georges-Henri Ruysen. Editore Orientali Christina*”, Vaticano, 2013-2015.

⁶² The places these revolts were initiated in are: Sasun, Zeytun, Divriğı, Trabzon, Eğın, Develi, Akhisar, Erzincan, Gümüşhane, Bitlis, Bayburt, Maraş, Urfa, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Siverek, Malatya, Harput, Arapkir, Sivas, Merzifon, Ayıntap, Muş, Kayseri, Yozgat, and Van.

still used today without making mention of the fact that these revolts were suppressed.

These series of books were introduced on November 21, 2015, in a meeting held at Pontifical Oriental Institute (Pontificio Instituto Orientale). Ambassador of Armenia to the Holy See Mikhael Minasyan, who was present at the meeting, stated that Father Ruysen was awarded the Order of Honour by the President of Armenia.⁶³

The fact that Armenians are Christians makes it difficult for the Catholic clergymen to have an objective perspective on the Armenian issue. On the other hand, the fact that these documents were written in Italian and partially French, that these languages are not popular in Turkey and that there are a vast number of documents, will delay the study and, if need be, criticisms of these documents.

3.4.3 - The Pope's Visit to Armenia

Although much effort was put by Armenian officials for the Pope to visit Armenia on April 24, 2015, on the occasion of the "centennial", the Pope, taking into account relations with Turkey, had decided to delay his Armenia visit to a later date. It appears that this year also Armenia invited the Pope to visit Yerevan on April 24. However, the Vatican also found this date inappropriate due to relations with Turkey. Ultimately, the date of the Pope's visit to Armenia was determined as 24-26 July.⁶⁴

On the other hand, the Pope is also expected to visit Georgia and Azerbaijan in September.⁶⁵

Pope Francis's use of the "genocide" despite all warnings during a mass he led in April 2015 had led to a crisis between Turkey and the Vatican, causing Turkey to recall its ambassador to the Vatican as a protest. With Vatican's statement in early February 2016 that reflected Turkish views, relation had returned to normal, and Turkish Ambassador had reinstated its ambassador to the Vatican.

⁶³ "Armenian Genocide Documents from Vatican Archives Published in volume set", *Armradio.am*, 24.11.2015.

⁶⁴ "Papa Haziran ayında Ermenistan'a gidecek", *Haber 3*, 19.03.2016.

⁶⁵ "Pope to Visit Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan", *Catholic News Agency*, 09.04.2016.

The Pope was expected to not use the term “genocide” during visit to Armenia on July 24-26. As a matter of fact, the Pope’s prepared and already distributed text for his speech on the first day of his visit did not include the term “genocide”.

In his speech at a meeting attended by Pope Francis, top government officials, corps diplomatique, Catholicos of Etchmiadzin Karekin II and other church members, President Sargsyan stated that the Armenian genocide was an undeniable historical fact. He also said: “We don’t look for culprits. We don’t spread accusations. We simply want things to be called by their names, as it will allow two neighboring peoples to move forward towards genuine reconciliation, and a shared prosperous future by recognizing the past and embracing forgiveness and a clean conscience.”⁶⁶

In his speech in response to President Sargsyan,⁶⁷ Pope Francis, deviating from the prepared text for his speech, said:

...that tragedy, that genocide, was the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century, made possible by twisted racial, ideological or religious aims that darkened the minds of the tormentors even to the point of planning the annihilation of entire peoples.”⁶⁸

With these words, the Pope did not act in accordance with above-mentioned statement issued by the Vatican on February 3, 2016. He also made a mistake by claiming that this “genocide” was the first catastrophe of the past century. In fact, as regards mass killings, the first mass killing in the 20th century was committed by the German colonial administration in the territories of today’s Namibia. Subsequently, large numbers of Muslims were killed during the Balkan Wars with the aim of ethnic cleansing.

Thus, he used the term “genocide”.

With these words, the Pope did not act in accordance with above-mentioned statement issued by the Vatican on February 3, 2016. He also made a mistake by claiming that this “genocide” was the first catastrophe of the past century.

⁶⁶ “Pope Francis, International Powers ‘Looked the Other Way’ During the Armenian Genocide”, *American Magazine*, 24.06.2016.

⁶⁷ “Armenia, Pope Speaks of Armenian Massacres and Christian Persecution”, *Independent Catholic News*, 25.06.2016.

⁶⁸ “A Reception in Honor of His Holiness Pope Francis Took Place at the Presidential Palace”, *President of the Republic of Armenia*, Press Release, 24.06.2016, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2016/06/24/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-reception-in-honor-Rome-Pope/>

In fact, as regards mass killings, the first mass killing in the 20th century was committed by the German colonial administration in the territories of today's Namibia. Subsequently, large numbers of Muslims were killed during the Balkan Wars with the aim of ethnic cleansing.

Turkey's strong reaction came shortly after the Pope's words: Deputy Prime Minister Nurettin Canikli called Pope's Francis' statements "greatly unfortunate", and stated that it was possible to see the all hallmarks and reflections of crusader mentality in the papacy's activities. He also said: "*Whatever is the reason for Turkey's exclusion from the European Union, the Pope makes such statements for that same reason. Of course, we do not take these statements seriously.*"⁶⁹

In response to the Deputy Prime Minister's statements, Vatican Spokesman Federico Lombardi said: "*if you listen to the Pope, there is nothing that evokes a spirit of the Crusades. The Pope's real intention is to build peace and reconciliation between both peoples.*" He added that the Pope's use of the term "genocide" was only to help lay the grounds for mutual understanding, dialogue and reconciliation.⁷⁰ He also said that they did not receive an official complaint from Turkey for the Pope's statements.⁷¹

The term "genocide" was also found in the joint declaration issued by Karekin II and the Pope. Statements made by Pope John Paul II during his visit to Armenia on September 21, 2001, was reiterated in this joint declaration: "*the extermination of a million and a half Armenian Christians, in what is generally referred to as the first genocide of the twentieth century.*"

During his visit, Pope Francis also touched upon Turkey in different occasions and talked about the resumption of reconciliation between the Armenian and Turkish peoples, as well as peace in Nagorno-Karabakh.⁷² During their speeches on June 25 at the Republic Square in Yerevan, while Catholicos Karekin II vilified Turkey and Azerbaijan, and accused the latter of violating a cease-fire in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Pope urged the crowd to resist "the illusory power of vengeance" and strive for reconciliation with Turkey, and called for peace in Nagorno-Karabakh.⁷³

⁶⁹ "Canikli'den Papa'ya 'soykırım' tepkisi", *Yeni Şafak*, 25.06.2016.

⁷⁰ "Vatikan'dan yanıt: Papa Türk halkı aleyhine bir şey söylemedi", *Mynet.com*, 26.06.2016.

⁷¹ "Pope Compares Armenian Genocide to Current Plight of Christian in Middle East", *NBCnews.com*, 26.06.2016.

⁷² "Pope Francis I Wishes Normalization of Relations to Armenia, Turkey", *Tass*, 25.06.2016.

⁷³ "Pope Pays Tribute to Armenian Massacre Victims", *Wall Street Journal*, 25.06.2016.

On the last day of his visit, June 26, the Pope and Karekin II went to the Khor Virap monastery near the Turkish border, and together they released doves toward Mount Ağrı.⁷⁴ This symbolic gesture stood for an invitation to Turkey for peace. Considering the fact that it is Turkey that wants peace and reconciliation, there is not much point in making such a gesture. On this occasion, the Pope said that he would love to see the border reopened, given his longstanding call for countries to build bridges, not walls, at their frontiers.⁷⁵

During his flight from Armenia to Rome, Pope Francis gave a press conference to the assembled journalists aboard the papal plane, and put particular emphasis on the “genocide” issue.⁷⁶

Stating that he never said this word with an offensive intention, Pope Francis said, “*in Argentina, when you spoke of the Armenian extermination, they always used the word genocide.*” He said that, after he became the Pope, he was told that the term “genocide” was offensive. However, he indicated that he always spoke of three genocides in the last century: “*The first was Armenian, then that of Hitler and the last is that of Stalin.*”

Answering a question on why he used the word “genocide” in his speech in Yerevan although it was not included in the original text, Pope Francis said: “*having heard the tone of the speech of the president and also with my past with this word [in Argentina], and having said this word last year in St. Peter’s publicly, it would have sounded strange not to say at least the same thing.*” He also stated that the Great Powers did not pay attention to the genocide issue.

In short, Pope Francis indicated that, although the Vatican Secretariat of State had warned him about not using the word “genocide” and the word was not included in the prepared text of his speech, he had used the word “genocide” in his speech in Yerevan due to President Sargsyan’s reference to the subject, his past with the word in Argentina, and his use of the word during the mass in St. Peter’s Basilica in April last year. Of course, the Pope is free to use any word he wants to. However, he could have not used the word, considering the indignation felt towards the use of this word in a country such as Turkey. If he had not used the word “genocide” at the mass last year, he would have had an enough reason to not utter the word every year. However, due to religious reasons, the Pope did not pay attention to Turkey, and gave heed to and tried to satisfy Armenia.

⁷⁴ “Le Pape Termine Sa Visite En Arménie Par Un Lâcher De Colombe”, *Armenews.com*, 27.06.2016.

⁷⁵ “Pope Francis Wraps Up 3-Day Visit to Armenia”, *WGN-TV*, 26.06.2016.

⁷⁶ “Full Text: Pope Francis’ in-Flight Press Conference From Armenia”, *Catholic News Agency*, 26.06.2016.

Following Pope Francis's visit to Armenia, the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued the following statement:

No: 145, 27 June 2016, Press Release Regarding the Statements of Pope Francis and the Common Declaration Signed During his Trip to Armenia on 24-26 June 2016

During his trip to Armenia on 24-26 June 2016, Pope Francis visited the so-called genocide memorial, made unfortunate statements regarding the 1915 events, signed together with the Armenian Apostolic Church a Common Declaration which makes unacceptable references to the events of 1915 and on his way back alluded to statements proved to be fictitious and defamatory. Such acts revealed once again his unconditional commitment to the Armenian narrative on the events of 1915 which is incompatible with historical facts and law.

Indeed, the statements made before the visit, as well as the preparations of the visit had established the fact that this visit was already exploited. Pope Francis, unfortunately, just as he did last year, left Turkey and the Turkish people frustrated. Thus, discrimination on the basis of religion was once again made between sufferings and losses in the course of the First World War.

Pope Francis' partiality towards historical events, as well as his alienation of the Other, correspond neither with his efforts towards settlement of peace and friendship among different groups as he constantly emphasizes, nor with the Press Release issued on 3 February 2016 by the Press Office of the Holy See as regard to the events of 1915 which highlights our proposal of a Joint Historical Commission and condemns terrorism with reference to the memory of Taha Carım, the late Turkish Ambassador to Holy See who was martyred in 1977 by ASALA-affiliated terrorism.

Thus, we regrettably note that Pope Francis's trip to Armenia did not make any contribution to peace and stability in Southern Caucasus, especially in this critical period which has been demonstrated also by the clashes last April along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh and at some sections of the Azerbaijani-Armenian border.

In fact, it is expected from those who occupy a sublime position such as the Pontificate to leave a legacy of amity and peace, as well as to take a conciliatory attitude, respectful of law.

Foreign Ministry's statement includes several important points. First of all, it states that unacceptable references to the events of 1915 were made during the Pope's visit to Armenia. Furthermore, it indicates that the Pope's unconditional commitment to the Armenian narrative on the 1915 events was incompatible with historical facts and law. Lastly, it emphasizes that Pope Francis' trip to Armenia did not make any contribution to peace and stability in Southern Caucasus.

In short, Pope Francis, who tries to appeal to Armenia for religious reasons, caused relations with Turkey, which had entered a process of recovery after the statement by the Vatican on February 3, to regress.

3.5 - The United States

We had previously mentioned that last year, on the occasion of the centennial of the 1915 events, numerous commemoration ceremonies and other events were held in the US, especially in states in which the Armenians are densely populated, and many publications were made, although they did not include any new opinions or information.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, it was observed that, in the federal level, there was not much activity at the Congress other than those of the members of Congress who are known to support Armenian views, and except for President Obama's April 24 message, there was an effort to not touch upon the subject.

This year, "101st anniversary" commemorations took place among Armenians and those who support their views, and did not reach a level that would draw the attention of the masses. It is possible to explain this situation with the psychological fatigue caused by the rowdiness in the previous year.

Turkish associations in America, on the other hand, are seen to be more lively and active compared to the previous years. For some time, these associations have been trying to oppose the Armenian propaganda by advertising in various newspapers and billboards. Although these activities have always been met with the objections of Armenians, the full-page ad placed on the prestigious Wall Street Journal this year on April 21 led to a lot of anger in the Armenian side and as a result, adverse articles were written in most-selling journals such as Newsweek.⁷⁸ Paul Krekorian, a member of the Los Angeles City Council, introduced a motion to the Council ordering Los Angeles offices to cancel

⁷⁷ *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 67-69.

⁷⁸ "Full-Page WSJ Denying Armenian Genocide Spurs Anger", *Newsweek Magazine*, 21.04.2016.

subscriptions to the Wall Street Journal and other newspapers that published “denialist” ads.⁷⁹

What is striking is the fact that Armenians, although they have always been and still are making the most of every opportunity, including placing ads on newspapers, to present the 1915 events as genocide, heavily oppose and try to censor Turkish associations when they try to use the same opportunities.

As in previous years, the message to be issued by President Obama was also matter of curiosity this year. The President, who did not use the word “genocide” for the past seven years, was not expected to use the word “genocide” this year as it would not have been a consistent move, and sure enough, in this year’s message, he did not use the word “genocide” to describe the events of 1915. However, he continued to use a method that he has been using for the past couple of years and could be considered as being crafty: by using the term “Metz Yeghern” (Great Calamity), which is seen as the equivalent of “genocide” by Armenians, he sort of said “genocide” in Armenian, but not in English.

Although this year’s message was not so different from those in previous years, it drew the official criticism of Turkey. The full text of the Turkish Foreign Ministry’s statement is below:

No: 98, 22 April 2016, Press Release Regarding the Statement by the U.S. President Obama on the 1915 Events

U.S. President Obama’s statement on 22 April 2016 is yet another example of the assessments on the sufferings endured under the circumstances of the First World War on the basis of a one-sided narrative.

Turkey demonstrates a sincere desire to establish a common future in peace between the Turkish and Armenian people based on their centuries-long experience of co-existence. It is saddening that friendly and allied countries, rather than supporting this call, prefer to encourage those who advocate the deepening of the confrontation.

It is a fact that efforts to exploit the sufferings of the past for political manipulation have not brought any benefit to any one so far.

⁷⁹ “Krekorian Calls on L.A. to Cancel Wall Street Journal Subscriptions for Printing ads Denying Armenian Genocide”, *Asbarez*, 22.04.2016.

This being the case, those who seek to draw advantage from the political stances taken by third countries every year at certain dates, not only harm the prospects of peace and friendship but also show disrespect to the common pain of that period.

In this context, we call upon the U.S. Administration to adopt an objective, prudent and constructive approach, which takes the sufferings of all sides into consideration, by evaluating the historical realities on the basis of a just memory.

While being penned using a restrained language, the Ministry's statement reveals major mistakes in President Obama's message. These could be briefed as follows: There is a one-sided narrative of history (Armenians' version of history). Instead of supporting Turkey's call for peace, it encourages those who want to deepen the current conflict. Furthermore, sufferings of the past are exploited for political maneuverings. The US, like many other countries, does not act unbiased and fair with regard to the Armenian issue and actually acknowledges Armenians to be right. Therefore, it does not sufficiently contribute to the resolution of the problem.

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The US President's message was not appreciated by Armenian circles as well. As might be expected, the most prominent criticism was the fact that the President did not use the word "genocide". The Armenian National Committee of America, which is the most powerful Armenian association in America and is controlled by the Dashnaks, stated that President Obama's legacy was silence on the "Armenian genocide", complicity on Turkish "denials" and encouragement of Azerbaijani aggression.⁸⁰ Bryan Ardouny, the executive director of the Armenian Assembly of America, which is another powerful Armenian association in America, stating that last month the US officially recognized acts committed by the so-called Islamic State in Syria and Iraq as genocide atrocities, criticized that the same description was not done with regard to acts committed against Armenians.⁸¹

⁸⁰ "Obama Again Avoids 'G-Word'", *RFE/RL*, 22.04.2016.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

Ultimately, it is seen that President Obama, while satisfying neither Turkey nor Armenia, is trying to complete his presidency without disrupting relations with both sides.

3.6 - Canada

Canada is at the top of countries interested in the Armenian genocide allegations. In fact, Armenian genocide allegations were recognized by the Senate of Canada in 2002 and by the House of Commons in 2014. However, what distinguishes Canada from other countries is the fact that these allegations were also recognized by the Canadian government in 2006. As it is known, in order to maintain normal relations with Turkey, governments of numerous countries have declared that “Armenian genocide” resolutions adopted in their parliaments have no binding effects on them. Canada, on the other hand, did the opposite. However, it seems that bilateral relations have not been affected by this.

The champion of Armenian genocide allegations in Canada is Stephen Harper, who served as Prime Minister between 2006 and 2015. Stephen Harper, for unknown reason, has embraced Armenian views and disregarded the opinions of Canadian Turks, despite the fact that the population of both communities in Canada are very close.⁸²

Many events were held in Canada to commemorate the “centennial”. The most important among these was the adoption of a motion by the Canadian Parliament to declare April of each year as “Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month” with the aim of honoring the victims of genocides.⁸³ It is understood that what is meant by genocide is the Jewish Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, “Holodomor” (famine) in Ukraine and of course, the Armenian genocide allegations.

Canada sent Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular) Lynne Yelich to attend commemoration ceremonies for the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli Battles. On the other hand, Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Chris Alexander attended the “centennial” ceremony in Yerevan.

⁸² According to the 2011 census, the population of Armenian Canadians is 55.740 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armenian_Canadians). According to the same census, the population of Turkish Canadians is 55.430 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_Canadians)

⁸³ “Canada Designates April 24 as Armenian Genocide Memorial Day”, *Armradio.am*, 25.04.2015.

While being invited to both Turkey and Armenia, Governor General David Johnston, who fulfills the duty of head of state, perhaps with the worry of making a choice, decided to stay in Canada on April 24 and instead attended a ceremony at the Canadian War Museum held in Ottawa on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli Battles.⁸⁴

On May 13, 2015, the Canadian Senate reaffirmed its recognition of the Armenian genocide allegations by reiterating support for the motion adopted in 2002. Commenting on the issue, Senator Thanh Hai Ngo stated that the “Armenian genocide” remained unanswered due to Turkey’s refusal to recognize it.⁸⁵

As for declarations made with regard to the “centennial”, then Prime Minister Stephen Harper, touching upon the loss of life and the horrific suffering endured by the Armenians, stated that it was necessary to look to the future. He indicated that Canadians of Armenian and Turkish origin were living together, sharing the values of tolerance and openness, and in this spirit, Canada was encouraging Armenia and Turkey to normalize their relations, resume discussion of protocols, and to seek a path towards reconciliation including an open border, the establishment of diplomatic relations and the implementation of a dialogue on the events of 1915.⁸⁶

Tom Mulcair, who is the leader of the opposition New Democratic Party, in a statement he issued on the occasion of the “centennial”, seeming closer to the Armenian view, stated that his party was standing with the Armenian community to remember this dark period of history. Claiming that Hitler said “after all who remembers the annihilation of the Armenians”, he stated that it was their duty to remember.⁸⁷

Justin P.J. Trudeau, who is leader of the Liberal Party, which was then in opposition, issuing a statement that embraced Armenian genocide allegations, stated that they will never again “be indifferent to hate and genocide, or silent to those who discriminate against others based on characteristics such as race, gender, or sexual orientation.”

⁸⁴ “Canada’s Defense Minister affirms Armenian genocide on Hill lawn, as Turkish Canadians watch”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, 24.04.2015, <http://www.armradio.am/en/2015/04/24/canadas-defense-minister-affirms-armenian-genocide-on-hill-lawn-as-turkish-canadians-watch/>

⁸⁵ “Canadian Senate Reaffirms Recognition of Armenian Genocide”, *HorizonWeekly.ca*, 13.05.2015.

⁸⁶ “Canada PM issues message to Armenian community”, *News.am*, 23.04.2015, <http://news.am/eng/news/263618.html>

⁸⁷ “Statement by the Leader of the Official Opposition New Democratic Party of Canada on the Occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide”, *HorizonWeekly.ca*, 23.04.2015.

Following the elections held in November 2015, Justin P.J. Trudeau became the new Prime Minister of Canada. In a statement he issued in April 24, 2016, Trudeau reminded that both the House of Commons and the Senate have adopted resolutions referring to the 1915 events as “genocide”, and stated that they were paying respect to those who lost during the “genocide” and that it was necessary to further reinforce the resolve to prevent such acts to take place again. He expressed his wish that past injustice do not serve the division of the communities in Canada, and called on Canadians to respect pluralism and human rights.⁸⁸

What is important in this statement is that the Prime Minister (or his Government) was recognizing the genocide allegations due to recognition by the House of Commons and the Senate. Furthermore, it was indicated that these allegations should not lead to divisions in Canada. These words were probably intended for Armenian Canadians who have an aggressive attitude.

4 - DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING THE KARABAKH CONFLICT

We had previously mentioned that the Political Affairs and Democracy Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), upon the escalation of clashes in Karabakh, approved a draft resolution titled “Escalation of Violence in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Other Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan.”⁸⁹ The draft resolution included points that was contrary to the Armenian views on Karabakh. As expressed in PACE’s Resolution 1416 adopted in 2005, it stated that the large-scale ethnic expulsion and the creation of mono-ethnic areas (i.e. areas populated by only Armenians) resembled the terrible concept of ethnic cleansing.⁹⁰

In brief, the draft resolution called for: the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from Nagorno-Karabakh and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the establishment of full sovereignty of Azerbaijan in these territories, the establishment of an interim status for Nagorno-Karabakh, the establishment of an international peacekeeping force to maintain security and safe return and resettlement of displaced persons.

Since these points go against views advocated by Armenia, the adoption of this draft resolution by the Parliamentary Assembly would have meant a total defeat

⁸⁸ “La Déclaration du Premier Ministre Canadien Justin Trudeau à l’Occasion de la Commémoration du Génocide Arménien”, *Armenews*, 24.04.2016.

⁸⁹ *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 98-100.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

for Armenia in the international arena and would have laid the groundwork for Karabakh's return to Azerbaijan.

Armenia's Karabakh position had already taken a major blow not only in the Parliamentary Assembly, but also in international legal arena. ECtHR's judgment on the case originated in an application by six Azerbaijani nationals against Armenia on the grounds that they were forced to leave the district of Lachin as a result of Armenia's occupation of Karabakh indicated that Karabakh was under the control of Armenia and thus, rejected Armenia's claim that Karabakh was an independent state or political entity.⁹¹

Following this, it is seen that Armenia put a lot of effort for the rejection of the draft resolution at the Plenary Session of PACE. Prior to the Assembly meeting, OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, on January 22, 2016, issuing a statement, stated that the Minsk Group was the only accepted format for negotiations, and urged that steps not be taken by PACE members which could undermine the Minsk Group mandate.⁹² However, the draft resolution was not proposing the abolition of the Minsk Group; what was asked from the Minsk Group in the draft resolution was *"to consider reviewing its approach to the resolution of the conflict in the light of the lack of progress [...] which undermines the credibility of international institutions."* However, a small majority of the Assembly members, surmising that there would be no mechanism left to find a peaceful resolution to the Karabakh conflict due to no other organization being proposed in the draft resolution to replace Minsk Group, chose to reject the draft resolution on January 26, 2016, with a close vote of 70 to 66 and 45 abstentions,⁹³ and thus, saved Armenia from a major trouble.

On the other hand, adopting a resolution titled "Inhabitants of Frontiers Regions of Azerbaijan are Deliberately Deprived of Water", PACE criticized Armenia's efforts to deprive a region of Azerbaijan of water. Thus, it appears that the Assembly was trying to strike a balance between Azerbaijan and Armenia. However, since the Karabakh conflict and efforts to deprive a region of water are not of the same importance, this policy of "balance" did not succeed.

Azerbaijan, on the other hand, continued to criticize the Minsk Group. Azerbaijani President Aliyev, in a statement, said that the Minsk Group Co-

⁹¹ *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 32, p. 96-97.

⁹² "OSCE Minsk Group issues statement before PACE key debate of anti-Armenian resolutions", *A1plus.am*, 22.01.2016.

⁹³ "Battle at Pace: One Anti-Armenian Resolution Rejected Another Passed", *Armenianow.com*, 26.01.2016.

Chairs were seeking to cement the status quo. Indicating that the reason for the conflict to remain unresolved was Armenia being not alone, Aliyev stated that the big states, for various reasons, were effectively ensuring the Armenian occupation.⁹⁴ Aliyev also criticized PACE and stated that among PACE members were those who have an anti-Azerbaijani stance as well as those who are Islamophobes. Indicating that double standards were being applied, he stated that religious factors were playing a role in this.⁹⁵ Aliyev continued its

Azerbaijan, on the other hand, continued to criticize the Minsk Group. Azerbaijani President Aliyev, in a statement, said that the Minsk Group Co-Chairs were seeking to cement the status quo. Indicating that the reason for the conflict to remain unresolved was Armenia being not alone, Aliyev stated that the big states, for various reasons, were effectively ensuring the Armenian occupation.

criticisms against the Minsk Group afterwards.⁹⁶ Calling for a meeting of all members of the Minsk Group to be convened to ensure full use of this format in resolving the conflict,⁹⁷ Azerbaijan also attempted to influence the Co-Chairs' pro-Armenian position. However, no result was achieved from this attempt.

Although seemingly not affected by criticisms, OSCE Minsk Group's waning position actually manifested itself with several suggestions for Russia's mediation.⁹⁸

In the meantime, Armenia, through the statements of President Sargsyan himself, continued to defend its known opinions, that Karabakh did not belong to Azerbaijan, that

the region had nothing to do with Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, and that the resolution of the Karabakh conflict was possible with the right to self-determination.⁹⁹

What should be kept in mind with regard to the Karabakh conflict is that there is a ceasefire between both sides that was signed in 1993; in other words, both countries are still in war. On the other hand, what is certain is that Azerbaijan has the right to take all kinds of measures, including use of force, in order to put an end to the occupation of its territories, since Karabakh and the surrounding districts undoubtedly belong to Azerbaijan with regard to

⁹⁴ "Aliyev Blames Mediators for Karabakh Impasse", *RFE/RL*, 29.01.2016.

⁹⁵ "Aliyev Accuses OSCE Minsk Group of Religious Discrimination", *News.am*, 30.02.2016.

⁹⁶ "Aliyev Again Lambastes OSCE Minsk Group", *RFE/RL*, 21.03.2016.

⁹⁷ "Azerbaijan Calls for Meeting of All Minsk Group Members", *APA*, 11.02.2016.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ "Karabakh's Nothing To Do With Azerbaijan's Territorial Integrity: Serzh Sargsyan", *Lragir.am*, 31.03.2016.

international law. In fact, in the recent years, especially after Azerbaijan's higher armament levels compared to Armenia, many small and medium scale clashes took place in Karabakh and its surroundings, and Azerbaijan was never internationally criticized for these.

Another important point with regard to Karabakh is that the 23-year old ceasefire led to a public belief that Karabakh and the surrounding districts belonged to Armenia. In other words, the temporary state in the region that was created as a result of the ceasefire, in time, began to be perceived as a permanent state. The above-mentioned clashes reminded the public opinion that the Karabakh conflict is still current, and more importantly, these clashes lead to the increase of international initiatives for the resolution of the conflict.

The largest of these clashes began on April 2, 2016, and continued four days, until the Russia-brokered ceasefire signed on April 5 in Moscow between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

It is understood that Azerbaijan gained the upper hand in clashes and captured some small territories. Furthermore, it appears that Armenians suffered more losses than Azerbaijanis. Thus, for the first time in more than 25 years, Azerbaijan became successful in a clash with regard to Karabakh.

This incident had several consequences.

First of all, it must be mentioned that neither the US nor the EU played a significant role during this incident. This is because of their lack of presence in the region both politically and economically.

On the other hand, Russia is present in the region in nearly all areas. Russia is Armenia's primary energy supplier. Furthermore, Russian companies dominate many economic sectors in Armenia, including pipelines and railways. Armenia also obtains its arms from Russia. There is also a deep-seated belief in the Armenian public opinion that Russia provides security to Armenia.

Other than purchasing arms from Russia, Azerbaijan dependence on Russia is minor. However, when it comes to Karabakh, supply of arms becomes one of the most important issues and therefore, the importance attached to Russia increases.

Due to its close relations with both Armenia and Azerbaijan and due to it being the major weapons supplier to both countries, Russia, ultimately, became the main "arbitrator" in the Karabakh conflict.

As for Turkey's stance with regard to the clashes, as expected, Turkey is seen to have taken Azerbaijan's side. The Turkish Foreign Ministry issued the below statement on the first day of the clashes:¹⁰⁰

No: 82, 2 April 2016, Press Release Regarding the Clashes on the Line of Contact and on Azerbaijan-Armenia borderline

We condemn the artillery fire launched against Azerbaijan on the line of contact and the attacks by Armenia affecting also the civilian population on the night of April 1 to 2. We wish God's mercy on our fallen Azerbaijani brothers, patience to their relatives and a speedy recovery to the injured. We invite Armenia to observe the ceasefire and immediately put an end to the clashes.

For about a quarter century, Armenia has been occupying one-fifth of Azerbaijan's territory. Unless this occupation comes to an end and Armenia abandons its aggressive stance, unfortunately, the risk of experiencing similar clashes will continue. In this regard, we reiterate our call on Armenia to put an end the occupation in peaceful means in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

As a member of the OSCE Minsk Group, established for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Turkey will continue to support the efforts for reaching a just and lasting solution within the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan.

Moreover, in respect thereof, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and H.E. İsmet Yılmaz, Minister of the National Defence of the Republic of Turkey had phone conversations with their Azerbaijani counterparts regarding the situation and extended their condolences for our fallen Azerbaijani brothers.

President Erdoğan, making a statement on the same day, attributed the beginning of clashes to Minsk Group's underestimation of the conflict, and said that the issue would not have come to this if the Group had acted in a just and decisive manner.¹⁰¹ On April 4, stating that Turkey was and would continue to be at Azerbaijan's side, Erdoğan said:

¹⁰⁰ "Press Release Regarding the Clashes on the Line of Contact and Azerbaijan-Armenia borderline", Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, No:82, April 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-82_-2-april-2016_-press-release-regarding-the-clashes-on-the-line-of-contact-and-on-azerbaijan_armenia-borderline.en.mfa

¹⁰¹ "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Azeri televizyonuna konuştu", *NTV*, 02.04.2016.

*I believe that Karabakh will surely be returned to its rightful owner. Our brothers and sisters from Karabakh, who have been living away from their homeland for almost quarter of a century, will surely reclaim their homes one day.*¹⁰²

The fact that the Minsk Group was not able to prevent the clashes is a clear failure of the Group. Probably to hide this failure, on April 4, 2016, representatives of 11 Minsk Group countries came together and issued a statement, urging the sides to immediately cease using force and stating that there was no military solution to the conflict. The Minsk Group also affirmed their support for the Co-Chairs, and called for an immediate resolution under the auspices of the Co-Chairs.¹⁰³

As it is seen, there is nothing new in the Minsk Group's statement; the Group's known position was reiterated.

Many countries and international organizations also issued statements, calling the sides to cease fighting. We will not touch upon these statements as they do not include any opinion.

However, we have to mention the strong support for Azerbaijan in the Final Communiqué of the 13th Islamic Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation which was convened in Istanbul on April 14-15. Referring to the United Nations Charter, the Final Communiqué indicated that the acquisition of territory by use of force was inadmissible, and called for Armenia's withdrawal from the territories it occupies. The Communiqué also emphasized resolution of the conflict should be on the basis of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally-recognized borders. Furthermore, without mentioning Russia, it also called for the cessation of arms sales to Armenia.¹⁰⁴

As it is seen, the Communiqué of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation regards Armenia as the responsible for the clashes and openly supports Azerbaijan.

Another organization that must be mentioned is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), of which Armenia is a member. On the first day of the clashed, the CSTO issued a statement blaming Azerbaijan. However, Belarus,

¹⁰² "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan Güvenlik Güçlerine 'Devlet Yanınızda Çağrısı', *Milliyet*, 04.04.2016.

¹⁰³ OSCE, 05.04.2016, www.osce.org/mg/23386.

¹⁰⁴ "Final Communiqué of the 13th Islamic Summit of the Heads of States/Governments of OIC Members", OIC, http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv3/upload/conferenves/is/13/en/13_15_final-com-en.pdf

a member of the organization, adopted an attitude supporting Azerbaijan, while Kazakhstan requested moving the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) Summit meeting to be held in Yerevan on April 8 to Moscow, and despite Armenia's objection, the meeting was rescheduled to Moscow. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the other members of the organization, did not also adopt an attitude supporting Armenia. Russia, on the other hand, maintained its neutral stance. The above developments revealed that several members of the CSTO, which Armenia sees as the guarantor of its security, were not standing by Armenia's side, and some were even supporting Azerbaijan, despite CSTO member Armenia's involvement in an open armed conflict.

Ultimately, Armenia did not get any support by other countries and international organizations with regard to the clashes.

The clashes also had several consequences within Armenia. First of all, this incident led to a purge in the army, and Deputy Defense Minister Alik Mirzabekian, General Arshak Karapetian, the military intelligence chief, and General Komitas Muradian, the commander of the Armenian army's communication units, were relieved of their duties.¹⁰⁵ The sacking of these military officials might be due to their inadequacies in their assigned positions. However, there is no doubt that another aim of these sackings was to appease the public opinion.

As seen in all defeats, the tendency to put the blame on others was also seen in Armenia. A survey conducted in Armenia ten days after the clashes came up with some odd results.¹⁰⁶ According to the survey:

- 81% of the respondents said that Turkey instigated the clashes,
- 33% of the respondents said Azerbaijan started the war on its own initiative,
- 17% of the respondents said that Russia instigated the clashes,
- 86.4% of the respondents said that the purchase of new military equipment can eliminate the recurrence of hostilities.

The fact that the majority of the Armenian public opinion believe that Turkey instigated the clashes, although it is clear that Turkey has no connection

¹⁰⁵ "Senior Armenian Military Official Sacked", *RFE/RL*, 26.04.2016.

¹⁰⁶ "Poll: 17% of Armenians Think Russia Provoked 4 days war in Karabakh", *PanArmenian.net*, 14.06.2016.

whatsoever with the clashes, shows that there is an actual Turkophobia in the country. This reality is such that it could at least complicate a reconciliation between the two countries.

Another odd outcome of the survey is that the percentage of those who believe that Russia, which is commonly believed to ensure Armenia's security, instigated the clashes is 17%, which is no small amount. This is most likely a result of the critical approach against Russia by some Armenians due to its arms sales to Azerbaijan. Russia has defended its arms sales to Azerbaijan by claiming that a war would not erupt as long as there is a balance between the arms of both countries. However, recent clashes, as if proving Russia is wrong, resulted in Armenia's defeat. Meanwhile, it must be mentioned that Russia granted \$200 million dollar loan to Armenia for arms purchases, but this loan was well below the value of the Russia's arms sales to Azerbaijan.¹⁰⁷

After the defeat of the Armenian forces, most probably to appease the public opinion, several press reports came out in Armenia regarding Armenia's capability to produce nuclear weapons, leading to strong reactions from Azerbaijan. Since turning towards nuclear weapons production is still highly disapproved, Deputy Foreign Minister Ashot Hovakimyan, who attended the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul at the end of May, stated that his country joined the UN Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1991 and was fulfilling its obligations under the Treaty.¹⁰⁸

One of the most-talked about topics during and after the clashes was that the oil and gas pipelines going from Azerbaijan to Turkey were at some point passing 40 kilometers away from the Armenian border. Armenia has the potential to seriously harm these pipelines. In such a case, it is estimated that Georgia would suffer an energy loss by 90%, and Turkey by 10%.¹⁰⁹ However, this possibility does not seem likely: it is most likely that Georgia, which will lose 90% of its energy needs, would respond to such an act by closing its roads and seaports to Armenia, leading to Armenia's full isolation.

Following the ceasefire on April 5, Armenia put forward three conditions for resuming peace talks with Azerbaijan: a guarantee that Azerbaijan will not attempt to resolve the Karabakh conflict by military means, the introduction of a mechanism for investigating armed incidents on the line of contact, and

¹⁰⁷ "Russia Defense Chief Urges Close Ties with Azerbaijan", *RFE/RL*, 15.06.2016.

¹⁰⁸ "Armenia duly fulfills its obligations under UN Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", *Armradio*, 25.05.2016.

¹⁰⁹ "Nagorno-Karabakh and The Fate Of Azerbaijan's Hydrocarbon Transport Pipelines", *Eurasia Review*, 19.05.2016.

finally, international mediators to publicly hold Baku responsible for ceasefire violations in the conflict zone.¹¹⁰

In short, Armenia attempted to compensate for its losses in the battlefield with a diplomatic victory. It must be mentioned that, since the Minsk Group has long been in favor of confidence building measures, Armenia's first two conditions suits the Minsk Group.

Azerbaijan, on the other hand, has a different approach. President Aliyev has stipulated the restoration of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity for a possible reconciliation.¹¹¹ Foreign Minister Elmar

The fact that other countries, apart from their statements calling for the cessation of clashes and the resolution of the conflict through negotiations, did not take any steps, as we have mentioned above, had made Russia the "arbitrator" in the Karabakh conflict. Within this context, Russia adopted a neutral attitude, and made statements that both countries were its strategic partner.

Memmedyarov also said that Azerbaijan will not make concessions on its territorial integrity and Armenia should withdraw from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.¹¹² The Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan also warned that hostilities may resume anytime if Armenian forces did not withdraw from occupied territories of Azerbaijan.¹¹³

The fact that other countries, apart from their statements calling for the cessation of clashes and the resolution of the conflict through negotiations, did not take any steps, as we have mentioned above, had made Russia the "arbitrator" in the Karabakh

conflict. Within this context, Russia adopted a neutral attitude, and made statements that both countries were its strategic partner. It also declared that it will continue selling weapons to both sides.¹¹⁴

On the other hand, Russia tried to bring both sides together. Foreign Minister Lavrov made visits to both countries to realize such a meeting. However, Armenian President Sargsyan stated that Lavrov did not bring any new proposals and reiterated the above-mentioned three conditions for negotiations. However, Sargsyan also didn't in a manner suggesting that there will be no negotiations if these three conditions are not met.

¹¹⁰ "Armenia's Reiterates Terms for Renewed Talks on Karabakh", *RFE/RL*, 29.04.2016.

¹¹¹ "Le Président Aliiev s'engage à exercer des pressions sur l'Arménie pour prendre contrôle du Karabakh", *Armenews*, 03.05.2016.

¹¹² "Ermenistan İşgal Ettiği Bölgelerden Kayıtsız Şartsız Çekilmelidir", *TRT*, 04.05.2016.

¹¹³ "Hostilities May Resume Anytime", *APA*, 26.05.2016.

¹¹⁴ "Russia Will Continue Selling Weapons to Azerbaijan and Armenia", *The Moscow Times*, 12.04.2016.

As a result of Russia's efforts, top officials from OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries (US Foreign Minister John Kerry, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, French Secretary of State Harlem Desir) met with President Aliyev and President Sargsyan in Vienna on May 16, 2016. According to their joint statement,¹¹⁵ the Co-Chairs reiterated the importance of respecting the 1994 and 1995 ceasefire agreements, and that there can be no military solution to the conflict. The Presidents expressed their commitment to the ceasefire and the peaceful settlement of the conflict. To reduce the risk of further violence, they agreed to finalize in the shortest possible time an OSCE investigative mechanism. They also agreed to continue the exchange of data on missing persons.

President Aliyev and President Sargsyan did not comment to the press after the meetings.

The above agreement is the agreement of the Co-Chairs and it is not clear whether President Aliyev and President Sargsyan agree with the above points. Normally, Sargsyan should support this since it includes some of his demands. However, as Azerbaijan's territorial integrity is not mentioned, it is hard to say that Aliyev is content with this.

Due to high-level participation, it is seen that this meeting ensured the continuation of the Minsk Group meetings with the Co-Chairs.

It should be noted that this meeting did not bring anything new to the table and didn't provide any solution. Its only virtue was the strong support shown to the cessation of the fighting.

At the meeting, the sides also agreed on a next round of talks, to be held in June at a place to be mutually agreed, with an aim to resuming negotiations on a comprehensive settlement.¹¹⁶

Following the meeting in Vienna, it is seen that Russia has taken active steps for the resumption of negotiation on Karabakh. For this purpose, Russian officials has visited both countries, and as a matter of fact, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev visited Yerevan and Baku at the start of April. As a result of these efforts, it was announced that Putin will host talks in St. Petersburg on June 20 between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ "Joint Statement of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Secretary of State of the United States of America and State Secretary for the European Affairs of France", Vienna, 16.05.2016.

¹¹⁶ "Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree on June Talks: Lavrov, Kerry, Desir Statement", *Armradio*, 17.05.2016.

¹¹⁷ "President of Armenia, Azerbaijan to Meet in Russia on June 20", *Armradio*, 14.06.2016.

Normally, such a meeting should have been organized by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs. However, the invitation was made by Putin, and it seemed like the Minsk Group was being excluded. In fact, the OSCE spokesperson stated that OSCE was not involved in preparations for this meeting.¹¹⁸

Following the meeting on June 20, the sides issued a joint statement.¹¹⁹ According to this statement, Aliyev and Sargsyan reiterated agreements reached at the May 16 meeting in Vienna, which are aimed at the stabilization of the situation in the conflict area and creation of an atmosphere conducive for moving the peace process forward. Towards that end, the sides agreed to increase the number of international observers. They also expressed satisfaction with the recent the ceasefire (the ceasefire on April 5). Furthermore, the Presidents mentioned the importance to continue regular meetings in the same format (in other words, meetings that include Putin) in addition to the activities carried out by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group.

Ultimately, it was decided to uphold the ceasefire on April 5, to increase the number of international observers in order to monitor the ceasefire, and to organize regular meetings with the participation of Putin, Aliyev, and Sargsyan in addition to the meetings held by OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

However, in the statement, there is no mention of securing Azerbaijan's territorial integrity or the return of refugees to their homes. There is also no mention of the principle of self-determination, which is constantly put forward by Armenia. In brief, no decision was taken in the meeting on issues that form the basis of the Karabakh conflict. It was only an effort to ensure no new clashes takes place.

On this occasion, let us indicate that Russia now has the initiative with regard to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict; Russia, using its influence, stopped the clashes in April 5, and thus became the arbitrator of the peace talks.

¹¹⁸ "Spokeperson: OSCE Not Involved in Preparations for Summit on Karabakh", *TASS*, June 2016.

¹¹⁹ "In Saint Petersburg President of Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan Made a Joint Statement", *President of Republic of Armenia*, Press Release, 20.06.2016, <http://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2016/06/20/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-meeting-with-Presidents-o-Russia-Azerbaijan/>

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GERMANY'S POLICIES ON ARMENIANS DURING WORLD WAR I

(BİRİNCİ DÜNYA SAVAŞI SÜRECİNDE ALMANYA'NIN
ERMENİLERE YÖNELİK İZLEDİĞİ POLİTİKALAR)

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***Abstract:** Germany had followed a policy in support of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire due to achieving its national unity in the wake of other states; and due to only being able to partake in the international level in general and in the "Eastern Question" in particular as a powerful actor far later than other states. In the scope of this policy, Germany had changed its approach and policies in accordance with its national interests and started to intervene in and lead the Ottoman–Armenian relations. Following the changes in Germany's policy, it has been suggested by some scholars that the 1915 Relocation Law that had been put into force on the grounds of military security was allegedly applied under the direction of some German officers and executives. In accordance with the general and abstract information stated above, this paper will analyze the policies of Germany on Armenians during World War I.*

***Keywords:** Ottoman Empire, Germany, Armenian Question, World War I, Relocation Law*

***Öz:** Almanya, ulusal birliğini diğer devletlere nazaran geç sağladığı ve genelde uluslararası sistemde özelde ise Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun topraklarının paylaşım mücadelesi olan Doğu Sorunu'nda, güçlü bir aktör olarak daha sonradan yer aldığı için; Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun toprak bütünlüğünü destekleyen bir politika izlemiştir. Bu politika bağlamında; Almanya I. Dünya Savaşı süreci içerisinde kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda tutum ve politika değiştirmiş ve Osmanlı-Ermeni ilişkilerine müdahil olmaya ve bu ilişkileri yönlendirmeye başlamıştır. Bu politika değişikliğini takiben, askeri güvenlik gerekçesi ile yürürlüğe konulan 1915 Sevk ve İskânı'nın ise kimi Alman subaylarının ve yöneticilerinin yönlendirmesi ile uygulandığı ileri sürülmüştür. Yukarıda*

genel ve soyut olarak belirttiğimiz bilgiler doğrultusunda çalışmada, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sürecinde Almanya'nın Ermenilere yönelik izlediği politikalar analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Almanya, Ermeni Sorunu, Birinci Dünya Savaşı, Sevk ve İskân Kanunu*

INTRODUCTION

The Armenian Question has been one of the biggest problems for the Republic of Turkey's foreign policy and is now evaluated within the Armenian genocide allegations regarding the 1915 events. The reason for such evaluation is that the problem of conflicting interpretations of these tragic events, which occurred between the Turks and Armenians living in the same lands in the first years of the World War I, has not been solved due to various reasons. Nevertheless, these two communities had a common history for nearly a thousand years, living without having any problems all the way until the second half of the 19th century.

This problem of interpretation has not been solved; and one of the major reasons for this is, arguably, the difference between the definitions of each side about the problem. Armenians believe that the basis of the problem depends on the implementation of relocation in 1915 and argue that this implementation was the first genocide in the history. Nonetheless, did the Armenian Question really emerge in 1915, as some argue? Additionally, did the Ottoman Empire subject Armenians to relocation for the purpose of exterminating them?

Before giving answer to these questions, there is one major point that should be emphasized: those who defend Armenian allegations are far removed from the scientific thought, because they fail to analyze the 1915 events within

causal connections. In order to give a brief reminder in this context, the initial problems between Turks and Armenians emerged at the end of 18th century, when the Russians began to develop various policies for expanding in the Caucasus. Within this period, particularly between 1800 and 1836, either Russia's policies on Armenians or the occasional course of conduct of the Etchmiadzin Catholicos under Russian control were considered as the first indicators of the imminent problems. After the first quarter of the 19th century, the Armenian Question -the effects of which have extended to this day- emerged as a result of the influence of nationalist movements over the Ottoman Armenians on the one hand, and as a result of the patronage or even instigation of the great powers/states¹ over Armenians for their political and economic

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1 The Great Powers (*Düvel-i Muazzama*) were as follows: Russia (ruled by the Czar), the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Britain, France, Prussia, and the US. Germany joined among these powers after 1871. However, in the first phase of the Armenian Question, the influence of Russia, Britain, and France over the Armenians was bigger than the others.

interests, just as they had done over Serbians, Greeks, and Bulgarians. For this reason, the Armenian Question should be considered as a part of the Eastern Question that was artificially created for the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire without causing any instability in the international system. Attempting to analyze the Armenian Question without giving consideration to the Eastern Question (which shaped the Armenian Question) will result in incomplete or misleading understandings of the Armenian Question.

The main aim of this paper is to analyze Germany's policies on Armenians during World War I. In this framework, the first part of this paper will present the historical background of the Armenian Question in order to emphasize the significance of the subject matter for the major actors involved in this process. Building upon the historical basis provided in the first part, the second part of this paper specifically focuses on Germany's policies on Armenians in pre-World War I period. The third part will then examine Germany's policies during World War I and their implications on Armenian Question for the involved parties. In conclusion, this paper will present the findings of the historical policy analysis within a holistic approach and in connection with the most recent developments.

A HISTORICAL TAKE ON THE ARMENIAN PROBLEM²

Within the context of the implementation of this plan, the Armenian committees and gangs started revolts and threats of violence and instigated terror with the aim of establishing an independent Armenian state, while the Armenian Question gained an international dimension after the Treaty of Berlin (1878). The first revolt by the Armenian committees and gangs was carried out in Erzurum on 20 June 1890. More than 40 revolts and threats of violence and acts of terror took place between 1890 and 1914. In their propaganda efforts, it was emphasized that the Ottoman Armenians fought for their independence, while the revolts started by the Armenian committees and gangs were reported in distorted ways before the eyes of the representatives and peoples of the Great Powers. The revolts were portrayed as if innocent Christians were abruptly massacred by Turks.

After the Ottoman Empire entered into the World War I as an ally of Germany, Armenians continued the same course of conduct and further instigated 21 new revolts. The issue, which concerned the Ottoman Empire the most, was related

2 This article was written to upgrade the information in the following work, which was previously published: Barış Özdal, "Relocation of Armenians", *I. International Interdisciplinary Social Inquiry Conference 17-21 June 2012*, Bursa-Turkey, p. 1115-1123.

to the fact that some of the young Armenians recruited in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia deserted the army with their guns as of 30 August 1914 and joined the armed forces of the Allies, opening a new front within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman army was forced to struggle against the revolts, the threats of violence, and terror started by the Armenian committees, while it was fighting with Russia on the Eastern front. The Ottoman government tried to suppress activities in Maraş and nearby areas close to Konya, after the Zeytun Revolt affected Antep and nearby areas.³

The decision of relocation showed that the Ottoman government came to a point of losing its control in the region due to the incidents caused by the Armenian committees and decided to execute the “relocation” policy, a method which had its place in the administrative tradition of the Ottoman Empire for a long time. In fact, the aim of the relocation policy was to ease the administration and control in a certain region by making a community, which was prone to create problems (like collaborating with enemies and presenting a great danger in the military aspect), migrate to other safer regions for the security of the state. After the Van Revolt that was started on 9 February 1915, the situation in the region could be seen more clearly and the Commander-in-Chief issued a military directive, giving orders to disarm the Armenian soldiers in the army and to discharge the Armenian officials who were also committee members. At the same time, however, the directive instructed for no harm to be done to the Armenians who were loyal to the Ottoman Empire.

However, as the events of that time clearly demonstrated, it was not enough for the Ottoman Empire just to take local and special measures against the revolts instigated by Armenian committees receiving support from Russia, Britain, France and the US. For this reason, the Ottoman government was obliged to take permanent measures and delivered a sealed circular letter signed by the Minister of Interior Talat Pasha to the provinces on 25 April 1915 in order to dispatch the Armenian committees. The sealed circular letter ordered the authorities to close the Armenian committees' headquarters and branches, to confiscate their documents, and to arrest their leaders. After the Commander-in-Chief sent a circular letter having the same content with the above mentioned letter to all of its units, the Armenian committees were dispatched on 24 April 1915 and about 235 committee members were arrested in Istanbul with the charges of performing activities against the state.⁴

3 For the original of the decision, see: BOA. DH. ŞFR. Nr. 52/286.

4 For the original of the circular letter, see: BOA. DH. ŞFR. Nr., 52/96,97,98. For Turkish and English translations of the circular letter, see: *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri 1914-1918*, Volume I (Ankara: The General Staff Printing House, 2005), p. 127-129.

Thus, “24 April”, which Armenians commemorate as “the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide” and induce many national assemblies to adopt resolutions as “the anniversary day for the Armenian Genocide”, is actually the date on which some members of the Tashnaksutyun, Hunchak and Ramgavar committees were arrested. In other words, in the context of the Relocation Law dated 27 May 1915 and the events that occurred during the implementation of this law, the prosecutions of 24 April are in fact irrelevant to the genocide allegations. Despite all measures taken, the Armenian committees continued their gruesome actions more and more aggressively each day. For this reason, Deputy Commander-in-Chief appealed to the Ministry of Interior for the providing of the security of the army and the civilians, a month after the delivery date of the above mentioned circular letter, asking for temporary relocation of Armenians from Eastern Anatolia to areas away from the conflict zone.

Upon this application, a discharge certificate dated 26 May 1915 and numbered 270, which was signed by the Minister of Interior Talat Pasha, was sent to the Prime Ministry (*Sadaret*). This discharge certificate regarding to the relocation of Armenians from certain areas was discussed and adopted at the Council of Ministers (*Meclis-i Vükela*) on 27 May 1915. Also, a law was published in the Official Gazette of the time (*Takvim-i Vekayi*) and the legal procedure related to the relocation was completed. The concerning articles of this “Temporary Law on the Military Measures to be Taken for Those Who Resist Governmental Acts”⁵ are as follows:

Article 1: The commanders of the army, army corps and divisions and their deputies are authorized and obliged to take military actions immediately against those opposing government orders, country’s defense, and the protection of peace; and against those organizing armed attacks and resistance, and kill rebels during aggressions and uprising in wartime.

Article 2: The commanders of the army, army corps and divisions are authorized to transfer and resettle, on a single basis or in mass, the people living in villages and towns who are found to be engaged in espionage or treason.

Article 3: This law is valid as of its publication date. The Deputy Supreme Commander and the Minister of War are liable for the implementation of the law.

5 “Vakt-i Seferde İcraat-i Hükümete Karşı Gelenler İçün Cihet-i Askeriyece İttihaz Olunacak Tedbir Hakkında Kanun-i Muvakkat”, *The Official Gazette (Takvim-i Vekayi)*, 19 May 1331, No 2189.

The first thing to be emphasized strongly within the context of this law dated 27 May 1915 is that the Armenians subjected to relocation were not forced to leave the territory of the Ottoman Empire; but on the contrary, they were located into the safer regions within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, when other decisions related to the implementation of this law⁶ are also analyzed, it is obvious that the Ottoman Empire implemented a temporary relocation, which was limited within its borders. Moreover, Armenians living in non-conflict zones (especially in Istanbul, Edirne, Kastamonu, Aydın, Antalya and Izmir) and also Catholic and Protestant Armenians living in the conflict zones who were not involved in the harmful activities were not subjected to the relocation.

Another point to be highlighted in the analysis of the above mentioned law is that it did not aim to destroy a group of people either due to their qualities or due to any other reasons. This law was implemented in order to relocate Armenians out of the conflict zone who, 1) collaborated with the Russian army's occupation, 2) started revolts, 3) served as guides and spies for the Russians, 4) attacked the Ottoman army with their gangs, 5) interrupted the lines of logistics and communication, and 6) attacked the Turkish-Muslim settlements, massacring and perpetrating ethnic cleansing against Turks from the Eastern Front to the south of Anatolia. For these reasons, the implementation of the relocation should be considered as an act of military necessity rather than anything else.

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During the period of the implementation of the relocation, which was stopped temporarily on 25 November 1915 and permanently on 24 October 1916, there were also various decisions taken to prevent differences in the implementation of relocation by the local authorities. The first one of these decisions was the legislation approved by the Council of Ministers upon the proposition of the Ministry Interior on 15 May 1915. This legislation drew the outlines about how

6 BOA, MVM, Book No: 198, Decision Sequence No: 163, Decision Date: 15 Receb 1333-17 May 1331; BOA, DH. ŞFR, No: 53/305; 54/20, 381; 55/107. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920)*, Republic of Turkey, the Office of Prime Minister, the Department of Ottoman Achieves, Publication No: 14, p. 53, 339; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermenilerin Sevki ve İskanı (1878-1920)*, Republic of Turkey, the Office of Prime Minister, the Department of Ottoman Achieves, Publication No: 15.

this relocation law should be implemented. The articles of this legislation are as follows:⁷

- 1- *The relocated groups can carry all their mobile and portable goods and animals with them.*
- 2- *The protection of the relocated groups, their lives, their goods, and providing them with food and rest are the responsibility of the local administrations while the groups are being transferred to the places where they are going to settle. All officials will be held responsible for any kind of weakness or neglect which may arise.*
- 3- *Upon arrival at the place of settlement, the relocated groups will either be settled in separate villages and towns, if found necessary, or in houses built in existing villages and towns. The villages will be structured in places suitable for protecting health and suitable for agriculture and welfare.*
- 4- *On constructing the villages, state lands, as well as state owned farms and villages, can be used.*
- 5- *In the new villages and towns to be constructed, in order to form the basis of population registration, as per house, the name and the reputation of the family, the age, art, the place where they came from and the place where they are settled in, will be securely registered.*
- 6- *The basic needs like feeding and housing of the arriving families will be covered by the 'Immigrants Allowance'.*
- 7- *Providing food and housing speedily, protection of their health and providing comfort to the relocated will be the responsibility of the highest local public administrator.*
- 8- *Governors are responsible of employing a sufficient number of officials to take care of the food and housing.*
- 9- *For those who are relocated, a suitable amount of land will be given, taking into consideration their economic position at the places from where they have come.*
- 10- *For those who are involved in arts and crafts, a suitable amount of capital and necessary equipment and devices will be given.*

7 For the original of the decision, see: BOA, Council of Ministers' Reports Nr. 198/24.

Apart from these above mentioned measures, the Ottoman Empire made great efforts to take the as much precautions as possible for the protection of lives and properties of the Armenians, together with its efforts on consistent and safe implementation of the relocation. For example, "Investigation Commissions" were established in September 1915 for investigating misapplications during the period of the Armenian relocation. The Commissions, consisting of the members of the Appeal Courts and of the Council of State (*Şuray-ı Devlet*) and the heads of Criminal Courts, were sent to Anatolia. Since the Ottoman government attached a great importance to the protection of lives and properties of the Armenians, the commissions dispatched people who had committed crimes or who had been negligent to stand trial, and 1397 persons were found guilty and given various punishments (including capital punishment).

As it can be seen clearly in the light of the information and documents provided here, the relocation implemented in 1915 was not the starting point of the Armenian Question, as argued by the advocates of the Armenian allegations and was not genocide because the Ottoman Empire did not aim to deliberately make the living conditions worse in a way that would destroy Armenians as a group of people. This is because the Ottoman Empire tried to prevent the Armenians' separatist revolts, threats of violence, and terror through a number of administrative and military measures in the period before the World War I. Furthermore, the decision of relocation taken in 1915 was an implementation against the Armenian revolts that had been going on actually for some time and their collaboration with the enemy states. Hence, the Ottoman Empire resorted to an implementation of the relocation of the civilian communities on the grounds of security, an application which has many similar examples in the history.⁸

Moreover, the Ottoman Empire took all the legal measures necessary to protect lives and properties of the Armenian community during the implementation of relocation. In other words, the relocation, which was a temporary implementation, was not applied arbitrarily. However, despite all the legal decisions and measures taken, tragic events were experienced, since it was essential to implement the relocation swiftly before all else. But, there is a fact that should be emphasized; the Ottoman Empire made the necessary arrangements for identifying those responsible for the tragic events that occurred during Armenians' relocation and for punishing the culprits in the most severe ways. The courts punished the ones who were found to be guilty.

⁸ Some of these examples in the recent history are as follows: The practice of Russia in western Russia during World War I, the US's relocation of the American citizens of Japanese origin into the Mississippi valley during World War II, the Soviet Union's relocation of Crimean and Caucasian Turks into Asia and its banishing of Polish civilians out of their permanent residence areas during World War II.

As a result, when all the decisions taken by the Ottoman government are evaluated as a whole, it becomes apparent that it is simply not possible to characterize the Armenian relocation as a genocide. On the contrary, the implementation of relocation was a decision taken for a temporary term in order to provide the security of the Ottoman state and the said community. Then, why is the Armenian Question evaluated within the genocide allegations regarding the 1915 events?

The answer of this question is related to the Eastern Question, as we mentioned above. Until the Relocation Law dated 27 May 1915, Armenians advocated their demands in the form of an independence struggle and were motivated by the Great Powers of that time who were interested in partitioning the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, after the Relocation Law was implemented, Armenians and the Powers that supported them changed their approach, and the Armenian Question was thus transformed into allegations of extermination (which eventually turned into genocide allegations). The main reason behind this changed approach is, of course, that proclaiming that Armenians were the first nation subjected to genocide in world history elicits a powerful emotional response in people and thus influences public opinion. Amidst such emotional responses, the historical aspects of the events end up being forgotten and this makes it easier to portray as if the Relocation Law was the start of the whole ordeal. Thus, this “genocide” accusation against Turks, which is a product of international conjuncture left over from the days of Great Power machinations against the Ottoman Empire, has become embroiled in misinformation, propaganda and prejudice; all of which have hindered the real aspects of the 1915 events from being properly studied and understood.

GERMANY’S ROLE IN THE EXPANSION OF THE ARMENIAN PROBLEM IN PRE-WORLD WAR I PERIOD⁹

Turkish-Armenian relations, which started with the incursions organized by the Seljuks into Eastern Anatolia at the beginning of the 11th century, developed after the founding of the Ottoman Empire such Armenians came to be called “*Millet-i Sadiqah*,” i.e. the Loyal Nation, and these relations continued without any problems from the 14th century until the beginning of the 19th century.

9 This article was written to upgrade the information in the following work, which was previously published: Barış Özdal, “Doğu Sorunu Kapsamında Almanya’nın Ermenilere Yönelik İzlediği Politikalar - Tessa Hofmann’ın İddialarının Analizi ve Kritiği”, *Hoşgörüden Yol Ayrımına Ermeniler Cilt 1*, Erciyes Üniversitesi-Neşehir Üniversitesi, II. Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Sempozyumu (EUSAS II) 22-24 Mayıs 2008, Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayını No. 163, 2009, p. 295-234; Barış Özdal, “Almanya’nın Ermenilere Yönelik İzlediği Politikaların Doğu Sorunu Kapsamında Analizi”, *Yeni Türkiye Ermeni Meselesi Özel Sayısı*, Cilt II, Yıl 20, Sayı 61, 2014, p. 1184-1196.

The “Eastern Question,” added into the agenda for the first time at the Vienna Congress held in 1815, was an artificial problem created by the Great Powers within the imperialist development process that targeted the territories of the Ottoman Empire. The artificial creation of this Eastern Question became the breaking point of Turkish-Armenian relations. As a result, the “Armenian Question” emerged as a sub-dispute and area of intervention within overall strategy pursued for the sake of the “Eastern Question”.¹⁰

After the establishment of German national unity on 18 January 1871 under the leadership of Prussia, Germany became an active party in the Eastern Question with its policy of “*Weltpolitik*”. If we emphasize this with a more comprehensive expression, Germany under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck was basically suspicious about the European Great Powers reaching an agreement against Germany, and worried about the cooperation of the British and the Russians in the East Problem. Bismarck saw the basic interest of Germany as agreeing upon a unanimous opinion between Austria and Russia and the preservation of the Three Emperors League. Within this context, Germany tried to cause a disagreement among the Great Powers regarding the Eastern Question in line with its strategic priorities by partially intervening in the sharing of those territories of the Ottoman Empire that remained in the Balkans. The famous sentence by Bismarck, “*all of the problems of the East are not worth the life of a single Pomeranian soldier*”¹¹ summarizes very clearly how Germany viewed the Eastern Question.

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Although Germany did not follow a policy that prevented the realization of the aspirations of the Great Powers pertaining to the Ottoman Empire, since it prioritized its own security concerns, it did not actively support them either. Another matter that needs to be noted regarding this flexible policy of

10 For detailed assessments regarding the development of the Turkish-Armenian relations, which we have conveyed in general terms, and the sources we have used for these works, please see: Barış Özdal, “Ayastefanos ve Berlin Anlaşmaları İtibarıyla Ermeni Sorunu”, *Askeri Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Ağustos 2006, Yıl 4, Sayı 8, p. 109-119; Barış Özdal, “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Taraf Olduğu Uluslararası Anlaşmalar İtibarıyla Ermeni Sorunu (1918–1922 Dönemi)”, *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi*, Aralık 2006, Yıl 2, Sayı 4, p. 173-186 ; Barış Özdal, “Ermeni Sorununun Analizinde Önemli Bir Parametre: Tehcir”, *Global Strateji Dergisi*, 2007, Yıl 3, Sayı 10, p. 95-104.

11 Özdal, “Doğu Sorunu Kapsamında...”, p. 305.

Bismarck is the thought that one could appeal to the military power of the Ottoman Empire if Germany had to get into a war with Russia. Within this context, dispatching a German military delegation for the reforms that Sultan Abdulhamid II wanted to implement in the Ottoman army was accepted. Starting in 1882, the military delegation headed by Colonel von Kähler began the reform work in the Ottoman army and then German weapon firms started selling weapons to the Ottoman Empire, which was partly due to the impact of the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian War.

The policies of Germany within the context of the independence demands of Ottoman Armenians were based on the principle of “non-intervention” until Wilhelm II came to power in 1888, which was a principle unlike that of the other states. In a broader sense, since Germany achieved its national unity in the wake of other states and was only able to partake in the international level in general and in the “Eastern Question” in particular as a powerful actor far later than other states, there were not any remaining non-Muslim communities on which Germany could be influential. Within the development process of the Eastern Question, France undertook the role of patron for the Catholic community, Britain acted as the patron of the Protestant community, and Russia undertook the role of patron for the Orthodox community. Therefore, Germany pursued a policy of supporting the unity of the territories of the Ottoman Empire.¹²

What was influential on Germany pursuing such a policy was the balance policy followed by the Ottoman Empire under the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II, as well as the internal factors we mentioned above, because Sultan Abdulhamid II no longer trusted the US, France, Russia, and Britain with regards to the Armenian Question. Therefore, the Sultan pursued policies that would prevent the domestic chaos that might emerge since he worried that Armenians would be used by especially Russia and Britain to destabilize the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, he ensured the neutrality of Germany, which was waging a battle of supremacy with Britain on this issue.

Germany did not support the secessionist demands of the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire both during the Sultan Abdulhamid II period and during the rule of the Union and Progress Party. Within this context, Germany did not participate in the dividing up of the territories of the Ottoman Empire when Britain and Russia were deciding on the future of these territories at the Reval

12 İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Alman Nüfusu* (İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1998), p. 173-176; Fahir Armaoğlu, *19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarih (1789-1914)*, 3. Baskı (Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 2003), p. 566-567.

meeting in June 1908, which in turn paved the way for the Union and Progress government to see Germany as an ally. The internal and external political problems and economic difficulties that the Ottoman Empire had in that period set forward the formation of a close friendship -even closer than during Abdulhamid II's reign- between the Union and Progress government and Germany. After 1912, Enver, Cemal, and Talat Pashas became the top decision-makers of the Ottoman Empire, and the German influence turned into an admiration of the Germans in the Ottoman Empire.¹³ In addition, Sultan Abdulhamid II had seen that Germany under the rule of Wilhelm II was a new world power with "*Weltpolitik*" after the Treaty of Berlin within the same conjuncture and pursued a strategy of containing/balancing the imperialist interests of Russia and Britain with the interests of this new imperialist state. As it is known, the Ottoman Empire used the support of France until 1871 and the support of Russia for a short time, and then the support of Britain more intensively. After the Treaty of Berlin, Germany was seen as a balancing state in relations with the other states.

After the development of the Turkish-German friendship that was desired within the context of this policy of Sultan Abdulhamid II in the aftermath of 1890, Germany started to change its attitude and policy in line with its own interests. It started to intervene in the Ottoman-Armenian relations and tried to manipulate these relations. After this policy change, an effort was made to strengthen Turkish-German friendship by granting various economic concessions such as the Baghdad Railway concession. Reform demands of Britain, France, and Russia within the context of the Armenian Question were left pending during the process until the World War I by giving duties to many German soldiers in the modernization and training of the Ottoman army.

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13 M. Şükrü Hanioglu, "Jön Türkler ve Osmanlı'da İç-Dış Politika Bağlantısı", 3. Baskı, der. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), p. 57-81; Norbert Saupp, *Das Deutsche Reich und die Armenische Frage 1878—1914* (Cologne, 1990), p. 75; Doğan Avcıoğlu, *Milli Kurtuluş Tarihi 1838'den 1995'e*, 3. Kitap (İstanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1974), p.1075; Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Alman Nüfusu*, p. 197-204.

GERMANY'S STANCE ON THE ARMENIAN PROBLEM DURING WORLD WAR I

As stated earlier, Germany became an active party in the Eastern Question after ensuring its national unity on 18 January 1871. During the Bismarck period, Germany did not actively support the Great Powers even though it did not pursue a policy aimed at obstructing the wishes of the Great Powers regarding the Ottoman Empire either, due to its prioritization of its security concerns. The policies pursued by Germany within the context of the independence demands of the Armenian subjects¹⁴ were based on the principle of “non-intervention” until Wilhelm II came to power in 1888. Meanwhile, as stated earlier, Sultan Abdulhamid II recognized very well that Germany became a new world power under the rule of Wilhelm II and pursued a policy of containing/balancing the imperialist interests of Russia and Britain with the interests of a rising Germany.

Despite the German policy mentioned above, Germany pursued some strategies geared towards winning the support of Ottoman Armenians especially in Adana and Iskenderun regions during the World War I. The reason for this partial change was to prevent the manipulation of Armenians in the region by the Russians and the British.

After the start of the World War I, many German officers served in decision-making posts of almost all Ottoman units during the implementation of the Relocation Law, which was put into effect by the Ottoman Empire on 27 May 1915 due to the previously explained military security reasons.

For example, in November 1913 the Ottoman Empire made a five-year agreement with German General Otto Liman von Sanders. The general was appointed as the commander of the 1st Army in Istanbul, a member of the National Council, supervisor of all the military schools and educational institutions, organizer of promotion exams, and the official in charge of the theoretical training of staff officers. The names and duties of some of the German officers who served in the Ottoman army during the implementation of the Relocation Law are as follows: General Otto Liman von Sanders, Commander of the First Army (later on Commander of the Yıldırım Armies in Syria); General Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf, Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Army; Admiral Souchon and his successor, Commander of the Ottoman Navy; Major Felix Guse, Executive Officer of the Third Army

14 Özdal, “Ayastefanos ve Berlin...”, p. 109-119; Özdal, “Osmanlı Devleti'nin Taraf...”, p. 173-186; Özdal, “Ermeni Sorununun Analizinde...”, p. 95-104.

Command (later on, Chief of the General Staff); General Otto von Lossow, General Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein, and Carl Mühlmann, who acted as the aide-de-camp of General Otto Liman von Sanders when he came to the Ottoman Empire; General Freiherr Colmar von der Goltz, German Military Attaché Major Human¹⁵.

The fact that many German officers were serving at important decision-making posts of the Ottoman units during the implementation of the Relocation Law have caused the claims of German manipulation in the “genocide” that is claimed to have been committed by the Ottomans against the Armenians, as seen in the Western press.¹⁶

For example, the American Ambassador Morgenthau, who was in Istanbul between 1914 and 1916, claimed that Germany was the primary architect of the relocation and the massacre of Armenians. Ambassador Morgenthau wrote in his memoirs that German Admiral Usedom told him personally that the Germans suggested to the Turks that the Armenians be relocated. American historian and missionary H. A. Gibbons also held the Germans responsible for the “extermination” of the Armenians.¹⁷ Therefore, Germany started to defend itself and started to pursue pro-Armenian policies.

As a result of this policy change, Germany began to work to prove that it did not have anything to do with what it was accused of immediately after World War I. Within this framework, Dr. Solf, who was the German Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at that time, wanted Johannes Lepsius to put forward the attitude of German diplomacy about the Armenian Question by publishing the documents related to the Armenian Question in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive in 1919. Lepsius, who reviewed the documents on the Armenian Question in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive and cherry-picked documents according to his agenda, published a highly biased and un-scientific book titled “Deutschland und Armenien 1914–1918” in 1919. Lepsius tried to prove that the German government of the time did almost

15 Celalettin Yavuz, “1915 Ermeni Zorunlu Göçüne Alman Subaylarının Bakışı”, 2006, *Türk Yurdu*, Cilt: 26, Sayı: 226; Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarih 1914–1980 Cilt 1*, 9. Baskı (Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları: Ankara, 1993), p. 101-102; Murat Özyüksel, “Abdülhamit Dönemi Dış İlişkileri”, 3. Baskı, der. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2004), p. 11-14; Oral Sander, *Anka'nın Yükselişi ve Düşüşü - Osmanlı Diplomasi Tarihi* (Ankara: İmge Yayınları, 1993), p. 265-279.

16 Ortaylı, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Alman Nüfusu*, p. 179; Selami Kılıç, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Almanya – Türk-Alman Arşiv Belgeleriyle* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2003), p. 67-82.

17 Şükrü M. Elekdağ, “Almanya Kendi Vicdanını Temizlemek İçin Türk Milletinin Tarihini Karalıyor! (1)”, *Zaman Gazetesi*, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=186251> (access date: 25. 06. 2005)

everything in order to improve the situation of the Armenians and to ease their situation through its consuls and officers in the Ottoman Empire and that therefore, Germany was totally innocent.¹⁸

On this issue, the ideas of Wolfgang Gust have been of great importance. Indeed, Gust (who has been accepted as one of the leading experts on Armenia like Tessa Hoffmann), referring to Lepsius and based on the Lepsius Archives in Martin-Luther University, suggested in his work titled as “Magisches Viereck” that the goal of Germany was “to defend itself without taking Turks into consideration”. In his personal letter to Otto Göppert, Gust also explained that Lepsius compared his own mission to creating a magical square to “absolve Germany, blame Turkey, meet the need for document flow of the bureau [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], and win the trust of Armenians”.¹⁹ Although they were criticized by Ulrich Trumpener, Major V. Staszewski, Nobert Saupp, and Hans Barth, and although it has been proved that the archive documents used to support his claims were manipulated by Lepsius himself,²⁰ the works of Lepsius, unfortunately, are still accepted as the fundamental sources on the Armenian issue in Germany.²¹

18 Johannes Lepsius, *Deutschland und Armenien 1914-1918 -Sammlung Diplomatischer Aktenstücke- (Mit Einem Vorwort Zur Neuauflage Von Tessa Hofmann Und Einem Nachwort Von M. Rainer Lepsius)* (Bremen: Donat und Temmen, 1986), p. 7-12, 16; Cem Özgönül, *Der Mythos Eines Völkermordes* (Cologne: Önel Verlag, 2006), p. 115-254; Ramazan Çalık, “Armeniermorde im Jahre 1915?”, *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, Yıl 2000, Cilt XVI, Sayı 46, <http://www.atam.gov.tr/index.php?Page=Dergiler&IcerikNo=304> (access date: 21.08.2014); Mustafa Çolak, “Kaynak Kriğiği ve Tehcir Olayında Belge Tahrifati -Johannes Lepsius Örneği-”, *Belleten*, Cilt: LXVI, Yıl 2002, Sayı: 247, p. 967-984; Günter Wirth, “Der Todesgang des Armenischen Volkes”, *UTOPIE Kreativ*, Heft 169, 2004, p. 1035-1038.

19 Wolfgang Gust, “Magisches Viereck - Johannes Lepsius, Deutschland und Armenien”, <http://www.armenocide.de/armenocide/armgende.nsf/GuidesView/MagischesViereckDe?OpenDocument> (access date: 21.08.2014)

20 In his work which we have cited above, Wolfgang Gust argued that the documents in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs were manipulated by the Ministry, not by Lepsius himself. On the other hand, Cem Özgönül suggests that, in his book titled as “Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16. Dokumente aus dem Politischen Archiv des deutschen Auswärtigen Amtes”, Gust only discussed the manipulations performed by Lepsius on behalf of Germans. For detailed information on the analysis of Gust’s works and arguments, see Özgönül, *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16...*, p. 115-121; Kılıç, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Almanya...*, p. 235-238.

21 Prejudicial works written by the missionaries who were commissioned in the region such as Jakob Künzler, Ernst Sommer, Brono Echart, Armin T. Wagner, and Fridtjof Nansen created resources for the other books on the alleged genocide. For detailed information on this subject, see Kılıç, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Almanya...*, p. 330-334; Türkaya Ataöv, *Ermeni Belge Düzmeçiliği*, 2. Baskı (İstanbul: İleri Yayınları, 2006), p. 41; Hans Barth, *Türk Savun Kendini* (translator: Selçuk Ünlü) (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı Yayınları, 1988), p. 11-16; Özgönül, *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern 1915/16...*, p. 115.

CONCLUSION

As it is emphasized in the whole of this work, the Armenian Question was a part of the Eastern Question that was first brought onto the agenda in the 1815 Congress of Vienna and which was artificially created by the Great Powers on the subject of sharing the lands of Ottoman Empire during the development of imperialism in Europe.

While Armenians advocated their demands (gathered under the title of the Armenian Question) in the form of an independence struggle and hoped for the assistance of the Great Powers, they changed their definition of the Armenian Question and transformed it into an allegation of extermination (and later on, “genocide”) after the relocation. The most important reason for this planned change of definition by the Armenians was, without any doubt, to make the historical dimension of the subject be forgotten by portraying the enforcement of the relocation as a starting point of the whole ordeal between Turks and Armenians. Thus, what is aimed is to place the idea that Armenians are the first nation to have lived through a genocide into the individual and collective minds.

Thinking this subject specific to Germany, it is clear that Germany was an active party to the Eastern Question through its “*Weltpolitik*” as of 1890, following its achievement of national unity in 1871. However, although the policies pursued by Germany within the context of demands of independence by the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire changed from time to time, it can be seen that the attitude and policies of Germany at this stage depended on the principle of “non-involvement”, unlike the other states, and that Germany pursued a policy supporting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

The fact that, in the World War I, many German officers were employed in the decision-making offices of almost all of the Ottoman troops during the implementation of 1915 Relocation Law accepted by the Ottoman Empire for the military security reasons caused allegations about the guidance of Germany in the so-called genocide toward Armenians by Turks, as it is being portrayed by the Western media. Thus, Germany began to pursue pro-Armenian policies, and, as the first consequence of this change in policies, Germany gave start to various scientific and political studies just after the end of the World War I in order to prove that it had nothing to do with what is alleged to have been done to Armenians during 1915. Within this context, biased archive documents, false documents, and false photographs were used in the books prepared first by Johannes Lepsius, then by Heinrich Vierbücher, and finally by Tessa Hofmann.

As understood from the general and abstract information provided, the first fundamental goal of Germany within the context of Armenian Question was to prove that Germany was not responsible for the alleged genocide. During the period following World War II, Germany, who was found guilty of committing the Holocaust, started to become more interested in the 1915 events and Armenian allegations in the ways emphasized by this study in order to get rid of the image of being the first state to have implemented a genocide.²²

Another goal which Germany developed in parallel with its fundamental goals was to use the Armenian issue in blocking the membership of Turkey to the European Communities (and later on, the EU). After each substantial development in the Turkey-EU relations, the Armenian issue has been brought into the agenda directly or indirectly by France and Germany in particular. However, although Germany has played an important role in this process together with France, their perception on self-interests are fundamentally different; because as the most basic data, there is an active Armenian diaspora in France whereas there is a tiny Armenian community in Germany.

To emphasize more clearly, despite of the 2.5 million Turks living in Germany, the only reason for Germany to pursue such an active policy on the Armenian issue and to take the resolution numbered 15/5689 dated 16 June 2005 is the policy of absolving its own history by blaming Turkey. By accepting this resolution in question, Germany implicitly accepted the “Armenian genocide”, but the real goal is to make the German Penal Codes to accept this alleged crime explicitly.

Taken into consideration together with the so-called “Assyrian and Rum genocide” allegations which have been brought into the agenda frequently in recent years by Germany, and together with the claims of discrimination against minorities living in Turkey, it is imperative to track closely the policies developed by Germany in terms of Turkey’s national interests.

22 Murat Bardakçı stated the following in an interview: “From where do all the Armenian researchers get their financial support? Do they get it from the Diaspora? No. They get it from German foundations. Why? Because Germany looks for partners in crime in its own genocide. It is the Germans who started the genocide charges against Turkey”. Murat Bardakçı, “Soykırımını Almanya Kışkırtıyor”, *Radikal Gazetesi*, 6 Haziran 2005, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=154980>

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ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

(DAĞLIK KARABAĞ SORUNUNUN EKONOMİK UNSURLARI)

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Abstract: *This research paper represents an overview of the economic factors of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The aim of the research is to discuss the theoretical aspects of the conflict and analyze the socio-economic issues of the Nagorno-Karabakh and its influence on Caucasus region. The conflict, alongside with other regional conflicts, is one of the main causes of destabilization in the Caucasus region, hindering its full-fledged development. The Nagorno-Karabakh case is particularly interesting as it was the first ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union and other ex-Soviet republics should draw lessons from it. Besides Armenia and Azerbaijan, outside players too have much influence in this conflict. After so much time has passed since the beginning of the conflict, it has become obvious that war is not the way out of this conflict and that without compromise and negotiation, the parties involved will not reach lasting solution for this conflict.*

Keywords: *Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Caucasus, conflict resolution, economy.*

Öz: *Bu makale Dağlık Karabağ sorununun ekonomik unsurlarına ilişkin genel bir bakış sunmaktadır. Makalenin amacı, sorunun kuramsal boyutunu tartışmak ve Dağlık Karabağ ile ilgili sosyo-ekonomik sorunlarını ve Kafkasya bölgesine olan etkilerini incelemektir. Diğer bölgesel sorunlarla beraber Karabağ sorunu, Kafkasya bölgesini istikrarsızlaştıran ve bölgenin tam anlamıyla gelişmesini engelleyen başlıca sebeptir. Dağlık Karabağ meselesi, eski Sovyetler Birliği coğrafyasında etnik temelli olarak ortaya çıkmış ilk sorun olması sebebiyle önemli bir vakadır ve bu nedenden dolayı eski Sovyet cumhuriyetleri olan ülkeler bu vakadan kendilerine ders çıkarmalıdır. Ermenistan ve Azerbaycan dışında dış aktörler de bu sorun üzerinde ciddi oranda etkiye sahiptir. Sorunun ortaya çıkmasından bu yana geçen bunca zamandan sonra, bu sorununun içinden çıkmanın yolunun savaş olmadığı ortadadır ve ilgili taraflar uzlaşma ve müzakere olmadan bu sorunla ilgili olarak kalıcı bir çözüm üretemeyeceklerdir.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dağlık Karabağ, Ermenistan, Azerbaycan, Kafkasya, uyumsuzluk çözümü, ekonomi*

INTRODUCTION

The Nagorno-Karabakh region (4,400 sq. km in size), is located in the South-Eastern part of Azerbaijan, between the Caucasus and the Karabakh range.¹ The region has numerous mineral springs as well as deposits of lithographic stone, marble, and limestone. Farming and grazing are important and there are also various light industries. Before the disintegration of USSR (Soviet Union), the population of Karabakh was around 192 000 people (1990). During this period, the population of the region was mainly Armenian (76%), with Azerbaijanian (23%), Russian, and Kurdish minorities.²

The history and the origins of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is subject to serious contention. For every aspect of the conflict, there are two competing arguments, an Armenian and also an Azerbaijanian version of the same aspect. This level of contention even spills over to the region`s name itself, turning even the region`s name into a dispute.

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According to Armenian sources, the territory of modern Nagorny-Karabakh was part of the province of Artsakh when the Erevanduni (Orontid) dynasty first established the kingdom of Armenia after the collapse of the Kingdom of Urartu in the sixth century BC.³

With regard to the Azerbaijan sources, researcher Mehriban Aliyeva states that “Garabagh is one of the most ancient lands, not only in Azerbaijan’s history, but also in the history of the world. Throughout the history Garabagh was an inseparable part of Azerbaijan. Significant changes in Garabagh history took place in the 7th – 9th centuries, with the Arab Caliphate occupation and disappearance of the Albanian state from the scene”.⁴

After the establishment of Azerbaijan State of Safavids in 1501, centralization of Azerbaijani lands started. Garabagh or Ganja province was one of the four

1 Robert H. Hawsen. *Armenia: A Historical Atlas* (The University of Chicago Press. 2001), p. 264.

2 Human Rights Watch, *Seven Years of Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh*, December 1994, p. xiii, ISBN 1-56432-142-8. Citing: Natsional’nyi Sostav Naseleniya SSSR, po dannym Vsesoyuznyi Perepisi Naseleniya 1989 g., Moskva, “Finansyi Statistika”.

3 Robert H Hawsen, “The Kingdom of Artsakh”, In: T. Samuelian & M. Stone, eds. *Medieval Armenian Culture*. Chicago, CA, 1983, map 19: Orontid (Ervanduni) Armenia.

4 M. Aliyeva, *Brief Information of the History of Garabagh* (Baku: Heydar Aliyev Foundation, 2006).

provinces established in those times. After the death of last decedent of Safavids dynasty Nadir-Shah, Safsavids state came to an end and several little Khanates and Sultanades emerged in Azerbaijan, one of them was Garabagh khanate. Its founder was one of the prominent statesmen of Azerbaijan - Panahali Bey Javanshir.⁵

The greatest problem concerning Nagorno-Karabakh is that it was always a disputable territory from a geographical, demographic, and cultural point of view. Geographically, it is situated on the Azerbaijani side of the mountainous watershed that runs down between the Azerbaijan and Armenia. Demographically, it was a mixed region, as it evidently had been for centuries: the Armenians predominated in the hills with more Azerbaijani in the plains, as well as in the city of Shusha (or Shushi, as it was known to its Armenian inhabitants). Culturally, it had great significance for both sides. For Armenians, the meaning of Nagorno-Karabakh lay in the dozens of Armenian churches dotted around the territory, its tradition of local autonomy through the “melik” princes of the Middle Ages and the high standard of living of Karabakh Armenians. For Azerbaijanis, their association with the region was primarily with the khanate based around the great Eighteenth century city of Shusha and with the great cultural flowering of composers and poets such as Vagif, Natevan and Uzeir Hajibekov. Karabakh was, in short, a culturally rich border-zone and it was exactly for this reason that it was always a place of battlefield between sides of competing interests and claims.

For centuries, the region has had an allure due to its unique aspects. Karabakh has been famous for its mixed Christian-Muslim population; for the independence of its rulers (whether Christian or Muslim); for being fought over by rival empires; for its forests and monasteries, for producing warriors and poets, and for its grapes, mulberries, silk, and corn.

THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONFLICT

The last twenty years in international relations is characterized by the aggravation of disputes about the nature of the conflicts, main reasons of the internal and interstate conflicts etc. Until the end of 1980s, Soviet scientific literature regarded that Soviet governance had created a conflict-free model of society development. In Soviet scientific literature, ethno-political conflicts were seen as the examples of past historical process or processes that occurred only in Western countries. In contrast to this, Western scholars gathered huge scientific-practical experience on what would become the base of the following

5 Aliyeva, *Brief Information of the History of Garabagh*.

formation: the school of conflict studies. The main object of the conflict studies is to study the nature, reasons, and mechanisms of existing conflicts.

In contemporary literature and other means of information, we come across many explanations on the nature of conflict. Even, specialists on conflict do not have a common opinion on the concept of “conflict”. Very often, specialists use terms such as “fight”, “argument”, “tension in relations”, “incident” and etc. as the synonyms of the concept of “conflict”.

Despite disagreements on the details of the concept “conflict”, the basic premise of the concept is that conflict arises between two or more sides, which are in themselves the main participants of the conflict. In international relations, such participants are states or state groups, and in domestic conflicts, they are official governments, different political movements, and ethnic or religious groups. Finally, in interstate domestic conflicts, there are so called non-state participants (for example business groups, NGOs etc.) who play very active role. There are also indirect participants, who possibly do not participate in the conflict, but support it or who induce it by economical methods or by realizations of open or secret delivering of arms.

Johan Galtung is of the opinion that social structures have an integrative but violent character for social groups and individuals. Within this framework, Galtung introduced the concept of “structural violence”. Structural violence is the result of unrecognized political decisions. Galtung is also associated with “negative and positive peace”. According to this conception, “negative peace” means the absence of the war or other forms of the direct violence. At the same time, “positive peace” discusses about conditions, according to which non-violence, social justice, and environmental security removes the reasons for violence. “Positive peace” also includes the relations among the different social groups. Accordingly, “positive peace” is much more than simply the absence of violent conflict.⁶

Philip Wright characterizes conflict as the confrontation of social units. They utilize all their strength to reach distinct aims, despite such aims not being satisfactory for all.⁷ In Wright’s opinion, conflict can be divided into four stages: 1) considering emergence of incompatibility; 2) growing tension; 3) pressure without using the force, and 4) military intervention or/and war with the purpose to dictate one’s decision. Each stage represents the means of

6 J. Galtung, *Essays in Peace research* (Copenhagen: Ejers, 1978), p. 565, 656.

7 Q. Wright, *The Study of International Relations* (New York, 1995), p. 241.

pressure for changing the existing political course. Each stage gives additional impulse to confronted sides to clearly realize their own interests.⁸

Conflict appears in two main forms: Those that involve armed forces or those that do not. Which form will appear in any specific occasion is dependent on the political culture of society, common condition of the social-economic system, the relationship between mass and elite etc. Once more, this means that, it is impossible to solve a conflict without looking into the real reasons underneath it. Related to this, conflict observation has shown that the higher economic or cultural (for example, being experienced in reaching a compromise instead of resorting to force) level of the country is, the less chance there is for confrontations to take place between different groups. One variety of political conflict is ethno-political conflict. Its main point is that some nation sees the best guarantee in creating its own state to protect its culture, independence or spiritual unity. Yet this inevitably constitutes a problem, because to creating a problem, a separate state for each nation is only possible in a utopia.

When the World War II colonial system collapsed and hundreds of African, Asian or Latin American ethno-national groups gained state independence, people were led to believe that the world once and for all was divided by the state borders. On the territory of former USSR, 15 independent states came into being. Former Yugoslavia was destroyed by bloody battles, leading to the creation of several states. Such processes have not finished yet, and the Caucasus is a good example for this. There are ethnic tensions in Turkey (with Kurds), Russia (with Chechens), Georgia (with Abkhazians and Ossetians), and Azerbaijan (with Karabakh Armenians) that have led and can still lead to armed conflict. Sometimes certain state policies specifically select certain nations or ethnic groups whose confrontation carries a high probability of conflict. When there are political mistakes involved as well, the explosive potential of inter-group conflicts is multiplied. There are clear examples of such conflicts is South Caucasus. If not for the harmful policies of the Soviet Union and then independent Russia, we could have avoided the bloody struggles in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and in Tskhinvali region. In other words, ethnic confrontation was not the defining factor in the conflict in the South Caucasus, the defining factor was Kremlin's imperial policies.

The only way to solve conflicts is for the confronted sides to take bilateral steps. Nowadays, there is no universal conception for regulation the conflicts.

⁸ Q. Wright, "Escalation of International Conflict", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1965, Vol. 9, #4, p. 435.

The modern theory is mostly built on case studies, opinions of sociologists, political scientists, and politicians. Solving the conflicts can be put off or prolonged in time. Yet, such delaying tactics do not eradicate conflicts. On the contrary, they only deepen and strain the relations between the confronted sides.

In ethno-political conflict sphere, there is one acknowledged truth; to foresee the conflict in advance and to avoid it is easier than to solve it later on.

I. William Zartman thinks that the important problematic character of a conflict is its asymmetry. Such asymmetrical relations are rarely subordinated on regulations, because the strong side has fewer stimuli to talk with weak side on an equal basis. Meanwhile, the weak side does its best to change undesirable correlation of forces.⁹

The opposing sides that seek to regulate the conflict by joint decisions recognize that the problem is solved only when both sides reach an agreement. In spite of the positive side of joint decision making process, opposing interests and demands are not eradicated. That is why it is necessary to seek the results that, establish balance that is to the interests of the opposing sides. Reaching such an aim involves the “bargaining” element, which means the development of negotiation processes.

The standard definition of “bargaining” was given by J. Rubin and B. Brown. In their opinion, bargaining process must be in accordance with the following: 1) at least two sides must interrelate to each other; 2) between these sides, there is conflict of interests about several issues; 3) from time to time, the sides go in the voluntary bilateral negotiation; 4) the most complicated steps in these bilateral relations is connected with the exchanging recourses between conflict subjects and solving some (or several) questionable issues; 5) these steps are more consecutive, than simultaneous in the means, and that one side offers its own suggestions and demands and then follows the counter-offer from another side. This process continues until no further avenue for bargaining is found or the sides feel that they have been backed into a corner¹⁰.

The most important problem of the ethno-political conflict is the so - called “right of nation for the self-determination”, though the wrong interpretation and support for the self-determination concept would theoretically lead to

9 C.R. Mitchell, *Asymmetry and Strategies of Regional Conflict*, In: I.W. Zartman and V.A. Kremenyuk, *Cooperative Security-Reducing Third World Wars* (Syracuse University Press, 1995), p. 36.

10 J.Z. Rubin and B.R. Brown, *The Social Psychology of Bargaining and Negotiation* (New York: Academic Press, 1975), p. 5.

the formation of hundreds of new sovereign states. And accompanying such wrong interpretations is perpetually occurring armed clashes and wars that drag on for years in one form or another. The world has already witnessed such examples with the South Caucasian “frozen” conflicts. If we look at the present conflicts around the world, it becomes clear that practically each of them is connected to the wrong interpretation of self-determination by the national minorities.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS WHICH THAT INFLUENCE THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Paying attention to the economic aspects of a conflict is also very important. It is worth to noting that to build a country, it is very important to first build an economy. Business may play a leading role in conflict resolution. At the moment, both parties of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are in very hard position. After the destruction of the Soviet Union, the economy of post-Soviet states was badly damaged, because according to Soviet economic plan, countries were to be dependent on each other. The ongoing conflict between the two neighbors, Azerbaijan and Armenia also making the situation even worse.

When the parties of the armed conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh accepted the situation of “no war, no peace”, they faced mixed economic prospects. Though some Azerbaijanians were growing richer and richer by entering in oil business, the economic security of majority of the population remained extremely low. Despite of the fact that Armenia is considered as the winner in the war, the economic situation of the country remains in much harder position than in Azerbaijan. Armenians lost many economic opportunities as a result of this conflict. During the Soviet Union period, most of the goods for living and oil were entering to Armenia through Azerbaijan. After the war, the borders between two countries were closed. Armenia also did not have good relations with Turkey. Northern neighbor Georgia had its own problems, so Iran and Russia were the only hope for Armenia. Karabakh itself suffers much from severe unemployment, and it is increasingly dependent on “external” support from the Armenian Diaspora groups in Western countries and loans from Armenia. So, as it happens in most situations, although the decision for the war was taken by the elites, it was the elites, it was the ordinary people struggled, fought and died.

On both sides of the conflict, understanding of the economic costs are minimal. Potential of “peace dividend” has not resulted in visible policy changes by any

party. So here rises the following question: “What will be the profit for each side to lead the diplomatic peace negotiations?” In this case, Azerbaijan is in much better situation because it has oil resources and is the part of the dynamics of diplomacy. Oil resources not only increases the income of the country by which they are able to support increased military capacity, but also it is used to court the support of the international community.

International Alert in 2003-2004 provided a research in rural areas of Azerbaijan far away from Baku; research demonstrated that for the Azeri population living in rural areas, oil was regarded as the key point for returning

So, Azerbaijan has the recourses, but does not have the military victory, while Armenia on the contrary has the military victory but no resources. Yet, there are some people who want to reach out to Turkey trough informal business-to-business contacts. Armenian businessman found it easier to strengthen ties with Turkey than to resolve the conflict with Azerbaijan, but Turkish option is not the easy one either.

lost territories. The opinion shared by all of them was that oil brings funds for the army and guarantees support from those Western governments whose companies extract Azeri oil, which will bring an end to the economic hardship, and also this will lead the way for the returning of Karabakh.¹¹ It is also a theory of change that suits those who want to strengthen stereotypes of “Armenian enemy” already prominent with these same communities.

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businessman found it easier to strengthen ties with Turkey than to resolve the conflict with Azerbaijan, but Turkish option is not the easy one either. Although there are flights from Armenia to Turkey and the people of two countries cross the boarders, the physical border between two countries is still closed. A diplomatic impasse deriving from a combination of reasons, including the disputed assessment of the Ottoman Empire’s treatment of its Armenian community in 1915, makes the situation hard. Armenians blame Turkey for genocide and want Turkey to confess it, while Turkey will never accept this accusation. The second important factor is that Turkey is in alliance with neighboring Azerbaijan over the Karabakh conflict. The two countries share the same language, culture, and religion. Turkey’s partnership with Azerbaijan

11 T. Tskitishvili, Master Thesis: “General Overview of Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict as the First Ethno-Political Conflict in Post-Soviet Area”, 2010, *International Black Sea University* (Tbilisi, Georgia), p. 39.

has been reinforced by construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, which strategically aligns Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey and thereby amplifies the conflict-fault-line in the region.

The importance of oil as an economic force in the South Caucasus and as a component of conflict-dynamics is too significant and necessary not to discuss. At the same time, the problem Azerbaijan faces in oil business is connected with corruption. Oil business, its development and the opportunities it offers to distribute patronage, tends to strengthen elites who will do their best to hold into offices given, because it is the main source of the power and prosperity. If the government tries to increase the efforts for gradually reducing corruption by increasing influence of local “oil watchdog” non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and with the international community’s backing of transparency initiatives such as the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), the country has ability to move decisively towards more transparent state-structures that will effectively regulate its oil-dominated economy.

On the other hand, economists believe that if the money earned by oil business can be kept within the formal economy and directed towards strengthening the non-oil sectors, then the prospects and benefits will be felt in many other directions. If this fact happens (together with positive policy developments at the international level), there is no doubt that peace will become the greater political and economic motivator for Azerbaijan in the Karabakh conflict. In this case, EITI would have more chance to gather momentum and Azerbaijan would begin to develop a more far-reaching economic role as the hub for regional economic development in South Caucasus.

One important factor that reduces the economic development of the region are the closed borders and fault lines. Land borders between Armenia and Turkey and Armenia and Azerbaijan are closed (Armenia interprets these closed borders as a blockade), there are also problems in Georgia’s de-facto Abkhazia and South Ossetia. These factors for sure create particular economic dynamics in the region that is consequence and feeder of the conflict. Closed borders are in fact porous, and support rising unregulated trade across borders, whilst the conventional wisdom of the international community prevents international actors from leading economic support to unrecognized entities such as Nagorno-Karabakh.

These so-called black markets are testament to the inevitability of business activities despite the closed borders and fault lines. Trade is the most important aspect for building community life, because it provides employment and income generation. Without any kind of trade, there is no chance for any

community to survive. During decades previous to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, trade between Armenia and Azerbaijan was commonplace and dynamic. All communication and trade between two countries was stopped when the borders were officially closed. Yet people of both countries manage to distribute goods between each other by using the neighbors Georgia and Iran as a middleman to enable Armenian goods to find their way to the Azerbaijan and vice-versa.

According to Arc News (Armenian News Agency), “the unofficial trade between Armenia and Azerbaijan reached 40 million USD annually by 2002, while the trade between Armenia and Turkey reached 60-80 million USD.”¹²

Due there being no regulation, unofficial trade strongly affects the tensed relationship between the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia and their citizens. In the democratic countries, governments that are elected by the people for the people should have the legitimacy to tax their citizens in order to provide the services required for society’s needs to be met. Lack of trade regulation means that these taxes are not collected and that service provision based on democratic principles is replaced by inconsistent provision and ‘protection’ by what some refer to as ‘corruption networks’. In a narrow sense, this term refers to the cross-border links between people of comparable levels of authority and resourcefulness. Most often, these are local authorities and specialized law-enforcement institutions, namely police, and border guards and customs officials. Such a context certainly provides alternatives for survival to those trading in legitimate goods, but it also creates space within which exploitation is commonplace and criminality prospers. Criminal activities, such as trade in weapons and drugs, endure with some degree of overlap with the corruption networks within the public sphere of the South Caucasus sovereign states and unrecognized entities.

The clearest example of this dynamic is the Sadakhlo market. This is the space on Georgian border territory with Azerbaijan and Armenia created by Nagorno-Karabakh conflict where flour, bran, salt and other goods from the Azerbaijani side are sold. Meanwhile, Armenia offers its customers smoked fish. During 1991-1992, it was the only place where the cross border trade was possible between conflicting sides. The evidence of this market’s dependence on the conflict’s dynamics is the nervousness that was caused between traders when they have heard about the prospect of the opening Armenian-Turkish border. Opening of the border would definitely mean the death of Sadakhlo market

12 T. Tskitishvili, Master Thesis: “General Overview of Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict as the First Ethno-Political Conflict in Post-Soviet Area”, 2010, *International Black Sea University* (Tbilisi, Georgia), p. 41.

through the competition such an opening would create. The traders dependent upon Sadakhlo want the stability that the conflict brings, in a context devoid of effective public institutions. The price of stability is the unregulated system, which sustains the 'no war, no peace' situation. By my mind, to transform this context into a positive peace, both the Azerbaijani and Armenian governments should take efforts for establishment justice and regulation. Governments should arrange efficient and transparent state structures that can work in partnership with the private sector and civil society. Here, the other problem arises: has the private sector the ability to play a role in such a transformation process?

Engagement with the legitimate business community is strongly opposed by people engaged in the trade of guns, drugs, and people. (In fact, this kind of business flourishes well in uncontrolled zones). A meeting of business people from across the South Caucasus convened by International Alert in Trabzon in December 2004 demonstrated that there is an outward-looking business community in the Caucasus aware of the status quo's detrimental effects to their interests, and which in response seeks 'to improve the legal framework for business, strengthen the dialogue between business and state and expand the reach of business from a national to a regional level'. This kind of regional meetings are one of the ways of establishing the safe space for Azerbaijani and Armenian business people to engage with one another. It should be admitted by all means that, in fact, there is no chance to imagine concrete business ventures materializing without a change in the political context. The role of business is to lobby for political support, first of all, for cross-border economic collaboration, and when the political context gives opportunity, prepare to act.

If business communities take this role on their shoulders, peace-building organizations should interfere and help developing business ideas for it cannot be assumed that business will always act in the interests of peace. Additionally, taking a regional approach to economic cooperation is likely to bring greater rewards. Measures should be taken to link the whole Caucasian regions, not only Armenia and Azerbaijan but also Georgia, Turkey, and Iran. The debate surrounding potential rail links in the South Caucasus is an example of the importance of taking a regional perspective. Whilst some argue for opening a Baku-Nakhichevan-Yerevan-Gyumri-Kars railway link connecting Azerbaijan and Armenia that would take in Nagorno-Karabakh, others suggest opening the Baku-Ijevan-Yerevan-Nakhichevan route, which would avoid and exclude Karabakh. Meanwhile, Georgia actively lobbies for a Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki-Kars rail link that would connect Azerbaijan with Turkey via Georgia, thereby marginalizing Armenia. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is a very good example of operating the oil industry that reinforces East-West

alliances between Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, but at the same time bypasses Armenia. As it was mentioned above, it is impossible to separate economic and political interests, and the only constructive way out of these competing economic interests is of course diplomatic compromises.

GEO-ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL APPROACHES FOR THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

During the discussion about the possibilities of the resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in my point of view, what should be taken into consideration is the realization of main concepts of international relations – idealism and realism. In particular, if we are discussing about the idealistic approaches for the conflict's resolution, we should discuss two main principles of international law: from one side the principle of territorial integrity of the state and from the other side, the right of nation for the self-determination. With regard to the last one, it does not always mean the foundation of the independent states. Taking into the consideration the current realities of the modern world, there are above two hundreds states on the political map. From the another side, there are about 4000 national and ethnic groups settled on our planet. Accordingly, it is practically impossible neither from idealistic nor from the realistic point of view to grant full independence to each distinct group in the world. For the balancing of this principle, what is required is to engage in the discussion of granting political, cultural, and/or economic self-governance or autonomy of national or ethnic groups within a state. Arguing about the possibilities of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the principles of international law should be observed. Particularly, this means a high level of autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan. In this regard, experience of the leading democratic states toward the dependent territories should be taken into consideration. In particular, relations of Denmark with its dependent territories – Faroe Islands and Greenland, Finland towards Åland Islands, USA towards Puerto Rico, etc. should be considered. Maybe at this stage, discussion about the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict according to the principles of international law does not seem realistic, but in the long term perspective, in the case of changing geopolitical realities based on the approach of Francis Fukuyama related to his prognosis about gradual enlargement of democracy, resolution of the conflict based on the liberal approaches would be possible.

With regards to the realism approach, political bargaining issues could be considered. In particular, dividing of the conflict resolution process into two stages. The first stage would be: the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the

occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh instead of the restoration of direct trade between the Armenian side and the Azerbaijani and Turkish side and restoration of use of the Kars-Gyumri Railway. After this, in the second stage, there would be discussions about final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

At the same time, there are two main scenarios of resolving of the conflict whether in favor of Armenia or Azerbaijan. First scenario: in the current situation, despite the functioning of Minsk Group on behalf of OSCE with participation of Russia, France and USA, the de-facto monopolistic position in the framework of the “mediation” process can be considered to be in favor of Russia. Taking into consideration the geographic factor of Russia bordering South Caucasus, Russia keeps its geopolitical influence in South Caucasus. its continuing geopolitical presence in South Caucasus and in the entire post-Soviet space means that Russia would continue its policy “divide and rule”, especially related to the conflicts in the region. In this regard, for Russia, what is most convenient is to keep the “status quo” related to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and at the same time to play the role of the “mediator”.

By this way, Russia will be able to have under its influence both countries: Armenia and Azerbaijan. Armenia will also be forced to counter-balance the increasing GDP and defense expenditures of Azerbaijan by keeping strong links with Russia. One of the clear examples of this is Armenia’s refusal to sign with the European Union Association Agreement and instead joining the Eurasian Economic Union (spear-headed by Russia) and by this way, having the guarantee to keep Nagorno-Karabakh under its control. If Russia keeps its geopolitical influence in the South Caucasus, Armenian presence in Nagorno-Karabakh will continue and Azerbaijan will be forced to accept the existing situation.

The second scenario involves taking into consideration the recent events in Ukraine and international sanctions against Russia, decreasing oil prices, etc. In this context, the position of Russia over the post-Soviet space could be diminished. This will allow Western countries to be involved more actively in the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in compliance with the principles of international law – respect of the territorial integrity of the state. At the same, the following issues should be taken into account: Western countries will be more and more interested in the decreasing energy dependence on Russia – for example, reduction in the volume of import of gas and oil from Russia and accordingly, there will be more interest toward the implementation of Caspian energy projects with participation of Azerbaijan. The successful implementation of the Caspian energy projects can raise interest of Armenian society with regard to those projects as well, which in the long term

perspectives can cause a more eager approach of Armenian side towards the conflict resolution process. One of the clear examples of increasing EU interest in the conflict resolution process is its intention to revise the Minsk format due to the fact that it has not produced any positive results throughout the years since the formation of the Minsk Group.

CONCLUSION

After the conflict outbreak in Nagorno-Karabakh in the second half of the 1980s, two perspectives of ethnic incompatibility have emerged. One perspective justified ethnic cleansing by the idea of matching state borders with regions occupied by ethnic groups. The other perspective, the Great Game narrative, examined the conflict as part of the global power struggle in the Caucasian area while disregarding societies and the shortcomings in the democratic mechanisms of the regimes in the region. Despite all that has happened since the outbreak of the conflict, time has revealed that these perspectives neither appreciate the internal conditions of the conflict nor offer a way out of the current impasse. By criticizing the ‘commonsense’ and ‘realness’ of these representations, analyzing who gains what from the current status quo will offer solutions for a sustainable peace in the region. As long as the regimes of Azerbaijan and Armenia (both of which possess democratic shortcomings), are satisfied with the status quo and outside powers maximize their interests, the ‘no war, no peace’ situation will not be challenged. The only resolution possible is to include the people, who are actually missing out on the “peace dividend”, in the decision-making and peace-making process.

The conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh is not only a problem of Armenia and Azerbaijan. This is the problem of the whole region of the Caucasus. This conflict is one of the many in the region and is historically the first factor that started the destabilization of the region. More than 20 years have passed after the destruction of the Soviet Union and many inside or outside parties tried to take part in the resolution of this conflict resolution, but none of them succeeded. It is clear for both sides of the conflict that due to the unstable situation not only the Nagorno-Karabakh region, but the whole countries of Armenia and Azerbaijan suffer. In our globalized world, it is impossible to imagine the development of economy without involvement of international business, but due to the unstable situation, many business people avoid bringing their business in these countries. Due to badly developed or unevenly developed economies, both countries suffer from the effect of unemployment and lack of trade.

The suggestions to both parties of the conflict is that they must finally realize and understand very well that the only way to attain a resolution for the conflict is for building consensus and reaching compromise. The diplomats of both countries should sit together on a round table, try to put aside or forget the anger and hatred that they feel towards each other and try to find the ways to out of this conflict that drags both countries into more trouble the more unstable it gets. Today, both countries are concentrating their energy and resources on proving to the whole world how cruel and bad their enemy (the neighboring country) is, but this approach is not and will never be the way out of this complicated conflict.

Despite of the politics, there is a role for ordinary people in this conflict as well. People should not be caught up in provocations, and they should remember that during decades prior to the conflict, they were in good relationship with their neighbors; they were classmates, friends, relatives, and so on. Good and bad nations or ethnic groups do not exist, there only are good and bad policies. Meanwhile, business people from both sides should lobby their politicians and put their interests in their countries` agendas. Neighbor countries cannot thrive if they do not have trade relations between each other, and as it was also mentioned above, without the trade there is no economy, and without economy there is no development or country.

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KARABAKH PROBLEM IN THE LIGHT OF GLOBAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS*

(KÜRESEL VE BÖLGESEL GELİŞMELER IŞIĞINDA KARABAĞ SORUNU)

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Abstract: *In this study, we will analyze the impact of regional and global developments on the Karabakh problem which has an important place in terms of the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan and the relations between Turkey and Armenia. In this regard, we will first discuss the historical change and transformation in the Karabakh region. Secondly, after briefly mentioning the developments in the region during the Ottoman Empire and the Soviet era, we will especially focus on the warplane crisis between Russia and Turkey and its impact on the relations between Turkey and Armenia and the Karabakh problem. In this study, both direct and indirect impacts of regional and global developments on the relations between Turkey and Armenia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan and the Karabakh problem will be analyzed in general terms.*

Keywords: *Turkey, Armenia, Karabakh, Azerbaijan, Armenian.*

Öz: *Bu çalışmada Türkiye-Ermenistan ve Türkiye-Azerbaycan ilişkileri açısından önemli bir yere sahip olan Karabağ sorununda, bölgesel ve küresel gelişmelerin etkileri ele alınacaktır. Bu çerçevede ilk olarak Karabağ bölgesinin tarihsel süreçte geçirmiş olduğu değişim ve dönüşüm ele alınacaktır. Daha sonra Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Sovyetler Birliği döneminde Karabağ bölgesinde yaşanan gelişmelere kısaca değinildikten sonra güncel gelişmeler ışığında, özellikle de Türkiye-Rusya arasında yaşanan uçak krizinin Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkileri ve Karabağ sorununu nasıl etkilediği değerlendirilecektir. Çalışmada genel hatlarıyla küresel ve bölgesel gelişmeler doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak Türkiye-Ermenistan ve Ermenistan-Azerbaycan ilişkilerine etkileri ve Karabağ sorununa yansımaları üzerinde durulacaktır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Türkiye, Ermenistan, Karabağ, Azerbaycan, Ermeni.*

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INTRODUCTION

Relations between Turkey and the Russian Federation entered a new era with the downing of the Russian warplane within the rules of engagement in accordance with international law. A serious crisis began between Turkey and Russia due to a Russian bomber aircraft crossing Turkey's border with Syria on November 24, 2015, while bombing positions near the Syrian border and continuing to violate the border despite warnings. Statements by Russia following the incident and Moscow's policies to directly pressure Turkey brought Turkey-Russia relations nearly to a halt.¹

In the past centuries, the region saw numerous turmoils and changes. Persian, Ottoman and Turkestani sultans conquered these provinces and drew different borders, built castles, and named them differently.

These developments, in addition to Turkey-Russia relations, led to several changes in relations of countries in the region with one another as well as with Turkey. In this context, the effects of the crisis on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenian and Azerbaijan became a current issue. Following the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia, a new process began in which the ceasefire between Armenian and Azerbaijan was violated by Armenia and the sides began to mutually accuse each other.

Therefore, it would be beneficial to touch upon the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict before analyzing the aircraft crisis between Turkey and Russia.

According to history books, the frontiers of Karabakh are: From the south, the Aras River, from the Khudafarin Bridge to the Siniq Korpu Bridge. What is known as the Siniq Korpu today is found on the territory of the Kazakh, Shamsaddin, and Demirchi-Hasanli communities and is named as the Golden Bridge by Russians. From the east - the Kura River, which joins with the Aras River in Javad village and flows into the Caspian Sea. From the north - the Goran River, which flows from the Elizavetpol frontier of Karabakh to Kura River that reaches the Araz river at different. From the West - the high mountains of Karabakh, which are called Kushbek, Salvarti and Erikli. In the past centuries, the region saw numerous turmoils and changes. Persian, Ottoman and Turkestani sultans conquered these provinces and drew different borders, built castles, and named them differently.²

1 Vügar İmanbeyli, "Uçak Krizi" ve Türkiye-Rusya İlişkileri", *SETA Perspektif*, Issue: 119, December 2015, p. 1.

2 Mirza Cemal Cavanşir Karabağî, "Karabağ Tarihi" (Trans. Muhammet Kemaloğlu), *Hikmet Yurdu*, Year: 7, Volume: 7, Issue: 14, July-December, 2014/2, p. 212. Also see: Elvin Valiyev, *XVIII. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Güney Kafkasya: Osmanlı, Safevi ve Rusya Kışkacında*, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Tarih Anabilim Dalı, Yeni Çağ Tarihi Bilim Dalı, Konya, 2014, (Unpublished master's thesis).

The earliest records on the Karabakh region go back to the fourth millennium BC. Hurrians were among the people who lived in the region in that period. Furthermore, it is recorded that the Urartu also lived in the region in the beginning of the 1st millennium BC and later the Saka settled to the region. In 250s BC the Arsaks, who were from the Üçoklar tribe that belonged to the Oghuz tribal union, in the 1st century AD the Turkic Caucasian Albanians, in the 2nd century, the Romans, in the 3rd century the Sassanids, in the 6th century the Huns, and in the 7th century the Khazars are also known to have ruled over the region.³

Stating that the dominance of Muslim forces in the Karabakh region began in the 7th century, Aliyev describes the developments in the period until the Ottoman conquest of the region as follows:

The Karabakh region entered under the rule of Muslim forces in the 7th century onward. In 642, Arabic Muslim armies, then in 646, the Muslim Oghuzes began to dominate the region. In the 8th century, revolts broke out in the region against the Muslim administration. These revolts reached a peak in the 8th century under the leadership of Babek who was of Turkic origin. This revolt was suppressed in 837, and the rebel leader Babek was brought to Samarra and executed there in 838. The Sajid Dynasty, a Muslim Turkic principality, ruled over the region between the years 892-930. Beginning from the 9th century, the region saw the influx of the Seljuks. In 1064, Alp Arslan, who returned from his campaign to Georgia, and in 1076, his son and heir Malik-Shah settled the area entirely. From 1256 onward, the Karabakh region came under the rule of the Turkic Ilkhanates. After 1396, Timur, who returned from his Kipchak campaign, conquered the region. During the 15th century, the region was mostly under the rule of the Akkoyunlu. Until the Ottoman conquest at the end of the 16th century, the region was ruled by the Safavids.⁴

Being one of the most ancient regions of Azerbaijan and being situated between the Lesser Caucasus Mountains and the Kura and Aras rivers, Karabakh, prior to the Common Era and in the Middle Ages, was a part of the Christian Caucasian Albanian state, which was located within the current borders of the

3 Toğrul Aliyev, *Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu ve Uluslararası Örgütler*, Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Ankara, 2006, p. 5-6, (Unpublished master's thesis). Taken from the following source: Cemalettin Taşkıran, *Geçmişten Günümüze Karabağ Meselesi*, Ankara, Genel Kurmay Basımevi, 1995, p. 31.

4 Toğrul Aliyev, *ibid.*, p. 6-7.

Republic of Azerbaijan. The mountainous region of Karabakh⁵ was a province of the Caucasian Albania known as Artsakh Orkhistine.⁶ The local community were the Christian Caucasian Albanians. Following the Arab invasion in the 17th century, while a portion of the community converted to Islam, a large part remained as Christians. As a result of the efforts of the Armenian Church, which was a dogmatic part of the Arab Caliphate and the Caucasian Albanian Church, a large portion of the population of Artsakh became both Gregorianized and Armenianized. In the Middle Ages, the region became a part of the Ottoman and Persian Empires. In the 18th century, after Nader Shah lost his power, many khanates, including the Karabakh Khanate, were formed in the Azerbaijani geography. With the construction of the Shusha Fortress by Panar Ali Khan, which was the khan of Karabakh and an Azerbaijani Turk, Shusha became the capital of the Karabakh Khanate. In the second half of the 18th century, the rulers of Shusha and a large portion of its population were Muslim Azerbaijani Turks.⁷

Stating that the Azerbaijanis⁸ came from the Oghuz tribe, researchers indicate that the region was unified until 1828. With the Treaty of Turkmenchay, the territories of Azerbaijan were divided among Russia and Iran. Thus, the North and South Azerbaijan regions were formed and the term “Azeri” began to be used after the Ilkhanates (one of the Turkish clans that lived in that region). The region, which was completely Turkified, had previously seen the Assyrian-Babylonian rivalry as well as the Persian-Greek-Macedonian rivalry. Parthians and Romans, Sassanids and Byzantines also clashed in this region. According to researchers indicating that the Arab-Sassanid, Arab-Byzantine, Turkmen-Mongol raids took place in this region, the region also saw the Ottoman-Persian, Ottoman-Russian, Russian-Persian rivalries. Pointing out that Azerbaijan became Turkified within three periods, researchers indicate that these periods are the Kara Koyunlu, Ak Koyunlu and Saffavid periods, which took place after the Seljuk and Mongol period. Stating that Russia’s conquest of Azerbaijan was not difficult, researchers indicate that the Ottoman Empire did not sufficiently pay attention to the Caucasus at the time. On the other hand, since Persia was dealing with internal disorder, Russia, taking advantage of the situation, conquered Azerbaijan. Russia, which first attempted

5 In Azerbaijani Turkish, Karabakh means “black garden”. Gülşen Paşayeva, Irada Bağirova, Kamal Makili-Aliyev, Ferhad Mehdiyev, “SSCB’de Yarı-Özerkliğiñ Hukuki Durumu: Dağlık Karabağ Özerk Bölgesi Örneği”, *Uluslararası Suçlar ve Tarih*, 2013, Issue: 14, p. 71-72.

6 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p.71. Taken from the following source: Movses Kalankatutcy, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians*, Oxford University Press, London, 1961, p. 26; F. Mamedova, *Politicheskya istoriya i istoricheskaya geografiya Kavkazskoy Albanii*, Baku, 1986, p. 104-105.

7 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p. 71.

8 “Azer” means fire in Persian.

to win over local tribes but failed, got hold of Azerbaijan through conquest. With the 1813 Treaty of Gulistan, Russia divided Azerbaijan into two. On the other hand, The Treaty of Turkmenchay divided Azerbaijan between Russia and Persia. With the Ottoman-Russian war, which broke out after the Treaty of Turkmenchay, the Ottoman Empire lost to Russia in the Balkans and the Caucasus. With the Treaty of Edirne, the Ottoman Empire ceded Nakhichevan and Erivan to Russia. Thus, Russia planned to be effective in the Caucasus by settling Russians to the region. However, this plan, which took away the lands of the *aghas* and *beys* in Azerbaijan, was a failure for Russia in the long run. Dealing also with the longstanding problem of Imam Shamil, Russia adopted a law in 1846 and gave back the *aghas* and *beys* their lands. By establishing the Erivan Governorate, the Tsar attempted to prevent direct contacts between Turks and Azerbaijanis. Thus, the Tsar also laid the foundations of a Christian Armenian population loyal to him. In that period, the Russians also laid the foundations of an Armenian province by expelling the Turkish population from the region for various reasons. Russians also claimed that the Azerbaijanis were Tatars, thus were not related to either the Turks or Persians. Banning the Turkish language, they also attempted to convert Muslims to Orthodox Christianity. Russians even established the “Union to Promulgate Christianity” in order to Christianize the Muslims. In the 1820s and 1830s, the Russian Empire brought 150,000 Armenian families from Iran and Turkey to Azerbaijan and resettled them in Erivan. In general, the Russians attempted to separate Azerbaijanis from their Turkic identity, language, religion and lands. By bringing the Armenians to Azerbaijani territories, they established an Armenian province and local Turks were exiled from their lands.⁹

THE HISTORY OF THE KARABAKH REGION

In the beginning of the 18th century, the South Caucasus region came under the rule of two great Turkic Empires -the Ottoman Empire and the Saffavid Empire. While a large portion of the South Caucasus (Kartli, Kakheti, Shirvan, Ganja-Karabakh, Erivan and Nakhichevan) was under Saffavid rule, the western part of the South Caucasus (Saatabago, Imereti, Abkhazia and Guria) was under Ottoman rule. The South Caucasus under the Saffavid rule was divided into the Shirvan, Ganja-Karabakh and Chukhur-Saad *beylerbeyliks*, which were ruled by *beylerbeys* appointed by the Shah.¹⁰ After annexing the

9 Betül Aslan, *I. Dünya Savaşı Esnasında “Azerbaycan Türklerinin “Anadolu Türklerine “Kardeş Kömeği (Yardımları)” ve Bakü Müslüman Cemiyet-i Hayriye’si, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, Ankara, 2000, p. 1-17.*

10 Elvin Valiyev, *XVIII. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Güney Kafkasya: Osmanlı, Safevi ve Rusya Kısacında, Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yeni Çağ Tarihi Bilim Dalı, Konya, 2014, p. 34, (Unpublished master’s thesis). Taken from the following source: Sadık Müftü Bilge, *Osmanlı Çağında Kafkasya 1454-1829 (Tarih-Toplum-Ekonomi), Kitabevi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2012, p. 127.**

South Caucasus, the Ottoman Empire, in order to collect taxes regularly, conducted censuses and divided the region. As a result of the divisions, the South Caucasian territories annexed by the Ottoman Empire were split into three provinces: Tbilisi, Ganja-Karabakh, and Erivan.¹¹

When looked at the process of the region's transfer from the Ottoman Empire to Russia, it is seen that the first important phase was the Treaty of Kurekchay, which was signed in 1805 between the Karabakh Khanate and Russia. This treaty, which would join Karabakh to Russia, was signed with Azerbaijani Turks. Therefore, this treaty could be regarded as an important indicator that the ethnicity of the region was largely Turkic.¹²

According to the first official census conducted by Russia in 1832, %64 of the population of Karabakh was Azerbaijani Turk, while %34 was Armenian. The Armenian migrations in large number especially after the First World War and the resettlement of these Armenian migrants to Karabakh increased the number of Armenians in the region, and an artificial Armenian region was created within Azerbaijani territories.¹³

As it is seen, between the years 1813-1827, Russia settled Armenians in Azerbaijani territories in order to create a group that would support its policies. With the Treaty of Turkmenchay, Armenians from Iran were resettled to the Caucasus. Armenians especially from Iran were resettled to the most fertile lands of Karabakh. Since the Tsarist government gave precedence to Armenians, numerous Armenians were brought to Baku and were ensured to have a say in different fields such as petroleum.¹⁴ In brief, Tsarist Russia was willing to settle Armenians to this region. Armenians were encouraged by Tsarist Russia to migrate from the Ottoman Empire and Persia and were settled to border regions. With the Treaty of Edirne signed after the 1828-1829 Ottoman-Russian war, Armenians living in Ottoman and Persian lands were brought to areas in the South Caucasus in which Azerbaijanis were the majority. Following the 1853-1856 Crimean War and the 1877-1879 Ottoman-Russian war, many Armenians were settled to the South Caucasus, especially to Karabakh. Therefore, Russia's expansion in the South Caucasus throughout

11 Elvin Valiyev, *ibid.*, p. 81.

12 Araz Aslanlı, "1828 Yılından Sonra Karabağ Topraklarında İdari Değişiklikler", *Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Dağlık Karabağ İhtilafı: Bölgesel Barış ve Güvenliğe ve Komşuluk İlişkilerine Bir Tehdit*, AVİM Yayınları, Ankara, 2014, p. 24.

13 Mustafa Gökçe, "Yukarı Karabağ Sorunu ve Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", *Turkish Studies*, Volume 6/1, Winter 2011, p. 1112. Taken from the following source: S. Gömeç, *Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Topulukları Tarihi*, Akcağ Yay., Ankara 1999, p. 22-23.

14 Betül Aslan, *ibid.*, p. 30-33.

the 19th century led to fundamental changes in the demographical and political landscape of the region. In Karabakh, in particular, the Armenian population rose from 19,000 up to approximately 119,000 as a result of migrations between 1831-1916.¹⁵

Although border disputes in Nagorno-Karabakh date back to the 19th century, it is possible to say that these reasons were the cause for war between Azerbaijan and Armenia within the process from the dissolution of the short-lived Transcaucasian Federation in early 1918 immediately after the First World War and Azerbaijan's, Armenia's, and Georgia's demand for independence, until the region coming control under Soviet control in 1920.¹⁶ In this context, although the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region was established within the borders of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, it is possible to say that the first steps for the resolution of the conflict was taken in 1918. At the time, talks were held between the Azerbaijan People's Republic (APR) (1918-1920) and Armenia. Until the settlement at the Paris Peace Conference, the APR government appointed Hosrov Bey Sultanov as the Governor of Karabakh and Zangezur.¹⁷ A temporary agreement, according to which the mountainous part of Karabakh inhabited by Armenians was within the borders of the APR, was signed between the Karabakh Armenians and the APR in August 1919. The resolution of the problem, agreed upon by both sides, was based on the "cultural self-determination" of the Armenian population of Karabakh.¹⁸ Afterwards, Azerbaijan, and Armenia was occupied by the Red Army. However, the conflict between both countries continued in the 1920s. In 1923, a decree for the establishment of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous

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15 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p. 72.

16 Mehmet Merdan Hekimoğlu, "Self-Determinasyon Hakkı Bağlamında Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu", *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika*, Volume. 11, Issue. 41, p. 103-105. Taken from the following source: L. Jerry Johnson, *Crossing Borders - Confronting History: Intercultural Adjustment in a Post-Cold War World*, University Press of America, Lanham, 2000, p. 142.

17 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p.73.

18 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p.73. Taken from the following source: Vremennoye soglasheniye arмян Nagomogo-Karabakha s Azerbaydjanskim Pravitelstvom, 26 avgusta 1919 g., parag. 2 // K istorii obrazovaniya NKAO Azerbaycanskoj SSR, Sbornik dokumentov i materialov Baku, 1989, p. 25.

Region (NKAR) was prepared by the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR). In 1924, Nagorno-Karabakh was approved as a part of the Azerbaijan SSR. Later on, Armenians in other regions of Azerbaijan began to settle into Karabakh. This led to a change in the demographics of Nagorno-Karabakh. It is possible to say that Armenian administrators' discriminatory policies towards Azerbaijanis during the Bolshevism period played a role in the Armenian population becoming the majority in the region compared to the Azerbaijani population.¹⁹

As a result, it is seen that the Karabakh region, which was ruled as an inseparable part of the Ottoman central administration beginning from 1590, frequently changed hands among the Ottoman, Russian, Turkish, and Persian dynasties. While the region was under the rule of Turkic states and dynasties from the 10th century onwards, it came under the possession of Russia with the 1828 Treaty of Turkmenchay and the 1829 Treaty of Edirne. As a result of Russia's ethnic policies, Karabakh and Erivan systematically became Armenianized. Hereby, Russia tried to create an ally in the Persian and Ottoman border that it could use for its policies. This policy by Russians also aimed at creating a Christian barrier between Turks and Azerbaijanis.²⁰ Therefore, it is possible to say that the policy to increase the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh began in the 19th century and gained even further momentum during the Soviet period. However, these policies also led to the emergence of numerous problems. In the Soviet period, Karabakh was given to Azerbaijan by Stalin.²¹ In 1988, representatives from NKAR had applied for the transfer of NKAR from the Azerbaijan SSR to the Armenia SSR. However, this request was turned down by USSR. While the NKAR declared its secession from Azerbaijan SSR in 1988, this decision was declared illegal by the Azerbaijan SSR. Rejecting NKAR's decision to join Armenia SSR, the USSR decided to establish a commission to support and monitor NKAR's independence. It was also decided that the commission would be led by the USSR committee. Through this commission, the administration of NKAR was taken away from Azerbaijan SSR. However, in official statements, it was stated that NKAR was a part of Azerbaijan SSR.²²

It is possible to say that, although the Soviet era was uneventful with regards to the Karabakh conflict, the Soviet administration's strategies led to the

19 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p. 74-75.

20 Yusuf Sarımay, "Osmanlı Arşivlerinde Karabağ", Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Dağlık Karabağ İhtilafı: Bölgesel Barış ve Güvenliğe ve Komşuluk İlişkilerine Bir Tehdit, AVİM Yayınları, Ankara, 2014, p. 22.

21 Araz Aslanlı, *ibid.*, p. 24.

22 Gülşen Paşayeva, *ibid.*, p. 76-77.

simmering of the problem within Azerbaijan. In this sense, it is propounded that Moscow applied double standards regarding the Karabakh conflict and pursued pro-Armenian policies in this “uneventful period”.²³

It should be underlined that the Karabakh region, which is described by researchers as important in terms of both local geography and geopolitics, is also symbolic for Armenians in terms of the realization of the dream of “Greater Armenia”. Within the scope of this policy, researchers indicate that the years between 1838-1953 was referred as the “exiling period of guilty peoples” in the Soviet Union. Within this framework, according to Mustafayev who states that the Soviet Union (Russians) had declared its own Turkic and Muslim citizens “public enemy” despite the fight they put up and the victory they won during World War II, Russia’s main objective was to remove Muslims from Armenia.²⁴ Similarly, Toğrul Aliyev indicates that, although Armenians generally make claims that Karabakh was forcibly taken away from them and attached to Azerbaijan by the Soviet administration, the truth and official documents show the opposite.²⁵

Ultimately, as a result of Soviet migration policies, it is seen that ethnic borders do not conform to political borders. The 1979 Soviet census shows that there were 104 different nationalities in the Soviet Union. As seen in the Karabakh example, this structure formed by the Soviet Union laid the groundwork of ethnic conflicts during the dissolution of the Soviet Union, since various nationalities, despite their differences, were living under a single precise political system.²⁶

THE EFFECTS OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS ON THE KARABAKH CONFLICT

Due to its geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic features, the Caucasus region is of vital importance with respect to the realization of many projects such as Nabucco Project, South Stream Project, North Stream Project, Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan Oil Pipeline Project, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Gas Pipeline Project, Blue Stream Project, Turkish Stream Project, TANAP. Therefore, it is possible to say that there is a competition among China, EU, Iran, Turkey, and

23 Toğrul Aliyev, *ibid.*, p. 17.

24 Beşir Mustafayev, “Sovyetler Döneminde Rusya’nın Dağlık Karabağ Politikası”, *Karadeniz Araştırmaları*, Fall 2013, Issue 39, p. 53.

25 Toğrul Aliyev, *ibid.*, p.13.

26 Mustafa Gökçe, “Yukarı Karabağ Sorunu ve Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme”, *Turkish Studies*, Volume 6/1, Winter 2011, p. 1113.

especially Russia and the US for the energy resources of the region such as oil and natural gas.

When looked from this aspect, it is possible to say that the relations of especially Azerbaijan, which is located in the Caspian Basin, and other countries in the region with global powers is of particular importance for the countries in the region. At this point, Turkey's geopolitical and geostrategic importance comes into play. The determination of which course to use to transfer energy especially from the Caucasus and Central Asia to the world is largely associated with the policies of global and regional powers. This increases the possibility of issues in the region being deliberately revived by global and regional powers.

The most recent example of this came to the fore with the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia. Along with the crisis, several developments took place with regard to the Karabakh conflict, which is described as a "frozen conflict". As mentioned above, the Karabakh region, which is directly or indirectly affected by global and regional developments due to its geographical and strategic importance, this time became a current issue in consequence of the Russia-Turkey crisis. In the wake of the crisis, the actions taken by Russia with regard to the Armenian question and the Karabakh issue appeared in the press with the word "war" as follows:

...Russia, which has a more aggressive foreign policy following the plane crisis, now plays the Armenian card. Puppet Armenia, which relies on Russia's military bases and power, declared war on Azerbaijan, which has drawn closer to Turkey. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which caused tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia since the 1990s, thanks to also Russia, led to a new crisis between the two countries. Speaking on the issue, Artsrun Hovhannisyan, the spokesman of occupant Armenia's Defense Ministry, said: "this is war. We must use the word war." As the reason for the war, he cited Azerbaijan's assault against them in Karabakh. Thus, Armenia declared that the ceasefire signed with Azerbaijan in 1994 was no more...²⁷

The fact that Armenia violated the ceasefire following the plane crisis between Russia and Turkey revealed once more that Armenia was pursuing a Russia-led foreign policy. Furthermore, it is argued that tightening relations especially in economic terms between Turkey and Azerbaijan, following the plane crisis had bothered Moscow and therefore Armenia was put into action. There were

27 "Rus Gazıyla Savaş", *Star*, 25.12.2015.

also statements made indicating that through military agreements between Russia and Armenia, 7,000 Russian troops would be deployed near Armenia's border with Turkey, Russia and Armenia would unite their air defense systems against Turkey, and Russia would reinforce its military base in Armenia with combat helicopters.²⁸

According to researchers who indicate that Russia increased its military potential in the Caucasus, especially in Armenia, in order to increase its influence in the settlement process of the Karabakh conflict, Russia lately took serious steps to prolong the lease of the Russian 102nd military base in Armenia and to define a new status for the military base. Nevertheless, the countries in the region, especially Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey failed to be responsive with regard to these actions by Russia.²⁹

Since both the South Caucasus and energy projects concerning the region are of great interest for global and regional powers, the Karabakh conflict, similarly to numerous other issues concerning the region, is the center of attention for these powers. Therefore, it is possible to say that the strategic importance of the region gives rise to the dynamism and permanence of the problems in the region.

When viewed from this aspect, it is seen that, although ethnic conflicts in the South Caucasus, such as in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Karabakh maintain its actuality, states reawake these conflicts upon foreign policy developments. Within this context, Turkey's and Karabakh's strategic and geopolitical importance automatically comes into prominence. Turkey being a neighbor to Caspian, Middle Eastern and South Mediterranean countries which possess more than 70 percent of world's hydrocarbon reserves is a feature that further increases Turkey's strategic and geopolitical importance. Therefore, in regional and global terms, it is possible to say that Turkey is an important actor in almost all regional energy projects.

The fact that the Caucasus region is ranked first in terms of natural gas and second in terms of oil causes regional and global powers to be interested in the Caucasus. The Caucasus region, which is rich in terms of resource reserves, hosts many pipeline projects for transferring the rich resources of the Caucasus to other geographies, especially to the West.

28 "Rus Gazıyla Savaş", *Star*, 25.12.2015.

29 Ali Asker, "Kafkasya'daki Silahlanma: Rusya-Türkiye İlişkilerinin Neresinde?", *21. Yüzyıl*, October 10, Issue 22, p. 21.

When looked to the Karabakh conflict in terms of global developments, the resumption of clashes between the sides especially after the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia became one of the most significant indicators of how the Karabakh conflict, which is a regional conflict, could be affected by global developments. Soon after the plane crisis, the ceasefire in Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan was violated and the two countries began to accuse each other. Following the increasing tension between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the Karabakh conflict, in statements by the Armenian side, the fact that the clashes had never stopped and that they were used to this situation are expressed as such:

When looked to the Karabakh conflict in terms of global developments, the resumption of clashes between the sides especially after the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia became one of the most significant indicators of how the Karabakh conflict, which is a regional conflict, could be affected by global developments. Soon after the plane crisis, the ceasefire in Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan was violated and the two countries began to accuse each other.

...The war in Karabakh has never ended. There is a ceasefire, but Azerbaijan has been violating it in different ways since the first day; they were using cannonballs first and now, they are using tanks and mines. Since they don't gain anything with the attacks, they intensify the attacks and try different ways of attacking. There are even traditional attack dates like December 31, January 6, April 24 and other religious or national holidays...³⁰

There is no doubt that the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia affected the Karabakh conflict and thus, the Turkey-Armenia relations. When viewed from

this aspect, statements by the Armenian side reflected how Armenia was affected by the Turkey-Russia crisis as follows:

...I believe that the tension will not turn into a war. As long as NATO is there, I personally do not see such a threat. However, there will definitely be economic and political crises. Russia's impact on Turkey will be asymmetrical. Erdoğan, like Mikheil Saakashvili, is on Putin's "black list" now; putting the relationship between Turkey and Russia aside, he is a personal enemy now. There is no doubt that Turkey will act in accordance with its own interests, but a political ground for solving this problem will be found. What is important for us is Armenia's position during this process. We shouldn't let anybody use us. We have to avoid this. We have to keep a level head and we shouldn't be used by Russia

30 Alin Ozinian, "Karabağ'daki çatışmalar masaya güçlü oturabilmek için", *Agos*, 21.12.2015.

*and Turkey. Even if things get worse, we shouldn't trust anybody and we have to act in line with our own interests. At the end of the day, we have military agreements with Russia and we are unable to develop relations with Turkey. However, it is illogical to pick a side based on these. We have to first think for ourselves...*³¹

Azerbaijan, which is the other party to the Karabakh issue, stating that they are ready give any kind of support to reduce the tension between Russia and Turkey, gave the message that they are ready to do their share for the resolution of the issue.³² Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Memmedyarov's following statements reveal that the crisis indirectly affected Azerbaijan as well:

*Of course, the tension between Russia and Turkey concern us. I discussed this issue with both my Turkish and Russian counterparts. We are endeavoring for this issue to remain in the past and not bring harm to both Turkey and Russia as well as other countries. Turkey is a strategic partner of Turkey. We have strategic relations with Russia as well. Both countries are among the biggest trade partners of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is making efforts for resolution of the crisis and reestablishment of relations between the two countries.*³³

The Karabakh issue, which went through three phases (pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet periods) and survived up to the present day, maintains its topicality and is affected by both global and regional developments. The most recent example of this is the crisis between Turkey and Russia. The crisis, which began with the downing of the Russian jet that violated Turkish airspace, triggered the tension between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and led to low intensity clashes between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces after a long time.³⁴

The plane crisis between Russia and Turkey, although indirectly, affected the Karabakh issue and led to the violation of the ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia.³⁵ When looked at the news in the Armenian and Azerbaijani press, it is seen that relevant countries have made statements revealing their sides in the conflict.

...The crisis between Turkey and Russia, which began on September 24 with the downing of the Russian jet that violated Turkish airspace,

31 Alin Ozinian, "Karabağ'daki çatışmalar masaya güçlü oturabilmek için", *Agos*, 21.12.2015.

32 "Azerbaycan'dan flaş Rusya Türkiye açıklaması", *İnternet Haber*, 27.11.2015.

33 "Azerbaycan'dan Türkiye-Rusya açıklaması", *Yeni Şafak*, 02.02.2016.

34 "Türk-Rus krizi, Karabağ tansiyonunu yükseltti", *HaberRus*, 27.12.2015.

35 "Türk-Rus krizi, Karabağ tansiyonunu yükseltti", *HaberRus*, 27.12.2015.

triggered the Azerbaijan-Armenia tension. Azerbaijani and Armenian forces, after a long break, began to engage in low intensity clashes. The fact that the fighting broke out right after Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's visit to Baku on December 3-4 drew attention. Davutoğlu had announced during that visit that Turkey would get closer with Azerbaijan. Russia, on the other hand, responded to this move by turning towards Armenia. First, Moscow reinforced the base in Erivan with six combat and transport helicopters (Mi-24-Mi-8). Afterwards, it signed an agreement with Armenia to establish a joint air defense system. The agreement also includes military cooperation, training support, vehicle-equipment grants and joint military exercises. Armenia toughened its stance towards Baku following the signing of the agreement in Moscow. Armenian Defense Ministry spokesperson Artsrun Hovhannisyanyan, during the week, said that the ceasefire had ended and described the increasing clashes along the Karabakh border line as 'war' ...³⁶

It is clearly seen from the developments regarding the Karabakh issue how Russia tries to use the Caucasus as in the past with regard to the plane crisis with Turkey. The leader of the Just Russia Party Sergey Mironov's statement via Twitter during crisis days, "We have just submitted a bill on responsibility for failure to acknowledge the fact of a genocide of Armenians by Turkey in 1915,"³⁷ is a sign on how regional and global powers act in a disingenuous manner with regards to not only the Karabakh issue but also the Armenian controversy. Similarly, how the plane crisis will change the balances in the South Caucasus is indicated in the Armenian press as follows:

...Reciprocal steps would be taken, which can be considered as a new challenge for the South Caucasus region. "This will be a signal for a longer-term planning in Russia's policy in the South Caucasus..."³⁸

Another sign that reveals that the plane crisis between Russia and Turkey was well received by Armenia is the statements by Armenian Agriculture Minister Sergo Karapetyan who took action to turn this crisis into an opportunity. In his statement, Karapetyan said that the crisis between Turkey and Russia could provide Armenia with new opportunities for the export of agricultural products.³⁹

36 "Türk-Rus krizi, Karabağ tansiyonunu yükseltti", *HaberRus*, 27.12.2015.

37 Varduhi Balyan, "Türkiye-Rusya gerginliği Ermenistan'ı da olumsuz etkiler", *Agos*, 30.11.2015.

38 "Milletvekili: Rusya-Türkiye krizi, Dağlık Karabağ çatışması üzerinde doğrudan etkide bulunmaz", *News.am*, 02.12.2015.

39 "Ermenistan Tarım Bakanı: Türk-Rus Krizi İhracatımız İçin Fırsat", *Haberler*, 27.11.2015.

The most important problem for Azerbaijan, which has great importance for Turkey in terms of ethnical, religious, cultural structure as well as geopolitics,⁴⁰ is Karabakh. Turkey's policy with regards to Karabakh has brought it face to face with Russia and Iran. The most obvious example of this was the plane crisis between Russia and Turkey. Statements made by Armenian and Azerbaijani officials following the crisis clearly revealed how interstate relations could affect issues in the region.

Besides the Karabakh issue and Armenian question, Russia's activities with regard to terrorist organizations has brought the Karabakh region to the fore once again. Statements made by researchers in previous years claimed that Russia was the only country that supported PKK, and was striving to protect the PKK from Turkey's blows. It was indicated that as part of the negotiations conducted by Russia with regard to the placement of PKK to Armenia, PKK leaders had come together in Moscow and that it was envisaged to move the PKK from Northern Iraq to Qandil Mountains, then to Armenia.⁴¹ Similarly, following the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia, Karabakh region came to the fore once more with opening of a representation in Moscow by the PYD, which is the Syrian extension of the PKK. It is claimed that Russia, which uses the Kurdish card in every opportunity and pursues a policy of becoming effective in the whole geography, wanted to establish itself as the US's counterpart in the Middle East and in regions in which Turkey is effective. For this reason, the main reason behind Russia's hostile attitude towards Turkey is its desire to corner Turkey and hold it captive. Therefore, Russia, just like it used the Armenian question in the past, is using matters such as the Kurdish issue, the Karabakh issue and the opening of PYD representation in Moscow, as trump cards against Turkey today.⁴²

In relation to the Turkey-Russia crisis, statements in Russia indicating that the Treaty of Kars has expired and the Treaty should not be recognized by Russia⁴³ also provides clues about policies Russia will pursue in the South Caucasus in the long run. According to this, Russia, with the steps it has taken with regards to the PKK, actually aims to both form a pro-Russian structure in Karabakh and to intimidate Turkey. Russia's plan to *de facto* settle in the South Caucasus once again and to deploy the PKK in Karabakh in order to ease a Russian intervention in the region was covered in the press as follows:⁴⁴

40 Çağrı Kürşat Yüce, *Kafkasya ve Orta Asya, enerji Kaynakları Üzerinde Mücadele*, Ötüken Yayınları, İstanbul, 2006, p. 353-354.

41 "PKK'yı Dağlık Karabağ'a Rusya Yerleştiriyor", *Gün Seher*, www.byegm.gov.tr, 15.03.2016.

42 Sevil Nuriyeva, "PKK'nın Yukarı Karabağ'a yerleştirilmesi kime yarar?", *Star*, 13.03.2016.

43 Sevil Nuriyeva, *ibid.*

44 Sevil Nuriyeva, *ibid.*

...When the Soviet Union's role in the establishment of the PKK is taken into consideration and when the demographic structure in the former Soviet republics is examined thoroughly, it is possible to accurately grasp malicious plans against Turkey. The emergence of politicians stating that "the Treaty of Kars has expired and the Treaty shouldn't be recognized by Russia" is not a coincidence. Today, Azerbaijan's territory of Nagorno-Karabakh is at the hands of Armenia thanks to the support of Russia and it is a well-known fact that Armenia does not act in Karabakh without Russia's permission. Therefore, the deployment of PKK in Nagorno-Karabakh is actually a product of Russia's ill-intentioned ideas...⁴⁵

It is seen that problems between the countries of the region will increase as long as Armenia continues its uncompromising policies towards Azerbaijan and Turkey. Several researchers believe that, although the diaspora is happy with the said policies of Armenia, these policies will do more harm than good to Armenia. It is indicated that in case Armenia continues its current policies, the already poor relations with Turkey could reach a complete impasse and therefore, more support to Azerbaijan could be at Turkey's agenda, leading an unhappy Armenia to base its policies completely on Russia.⁴⁶

The fact that both international organizations and countries of the region could not resolve the Karabakh conflict since 1994 is, as mentioned above, directly related to global powers evaluating the issue within the scope of their own interests. However, Azerbaijan's growing strength and international law decisions in favor of Azerbaijan are indicators of the fact that Armenia is the losing party in the matter of the Karabakh issue. Especially the ECtHR's judgement dated 16 June 2015 is extremely important. It is possible to say that the judgement, which indicates that Karabakh is not independent, has removed the possibility of Karabakh being recognized by other countries. Similarly, the fact that the parliamentary and local election held last year in Karabakh was not recognized by many countries could be regarded as a development against Armenia's independence thesis with regard to Karabakh. Lastly, the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe pointed out that Karabakh was not independent and adopted a draft resolution, which indicated that the expulsion of Azerbaijanis in the region resembled the concept of ethnic cleansing (however, this draft resolution's impact became limited when the draft resolution failed to be adopted in the plenary session of

45 Sevil Nuriyeva, *ibid.*

46 Ömer Engin Lütem, "Ermenistan: 2015 Bilançosu", *Avrasya İncelemeleri Merkezi 2015 Yıllık Rapor*, AVİM Yayınları, Ankara, 2016, p. 133.

the Assembly). Although Armenia thinks that it will ensure its security by siding with Russia, the fact that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which are Muslim members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, seem to support Azerbaijan could be regarded as a critical development that could weaken Armenia's hand.⁴⁷

CONCLUSION

The fact that Turkey, which borders the South Caucasus and is heavily dependent on outside energy sources, is geographically located right in the middle of producer and consumer countries makes Turkey a natural energy bridge. Oil and natural gas pipeline projects in Eurasia are the most important projects for Turkey in the 21st century. However, the instability and uncertainty in countries with oil and natural gas reserves as well as in countries where pipelines will cross prevents the development of economic relations that will benefit all sides.⁴⁸ Turkey-Armenia relations is an example of this. Closed borders between the two countries due to issues such as Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Armenian question, causes Armenia to be excluded from many projects, especially those in the energy field, and leads to problems in economic and political relations. Therefore, with regards to the power struggles in the region, it is possible to say that, in terms of regional peace, it would be more beneficial in the long run for the countries in the region to adopt a peaceful attitude rather than becoming a party of the problem.

In the light of developments, it is possible to say that Russia will preserve the status quo in the Caucasus, especially in the South Caucasus, in the long run. When viewed from this aspect, a settlement with regard to ethnic and other issues in the region that will harm Russia's interests or sideline Russia is unlikely to be achieved. Therefore, it is possible to say that the resolution of the Karabakh conflict will first have a regional effect, then a global effect. As a matter of fact, the resolution of the Karabakh conflict will have a global effect as it will affect both Turkey-Armenia and Turkey-Azerbaijan relations besides Armenia-Azerbaijan relations.

Although the Russia's reinforcement of its bases in Armenia came to the fore more frequently following the plane crisis between Turkey and Russia, the regional aspect of the issue must also be pointed out. With the reinforcement of these bases, it is possible to say that Russia has been involved in activities

47 Ömer Engin Lütem, *ibid.*, p. 134.

48 Çağrı Kürşat Yüce, *ibid.*, p. 366-367.

that will ease an intervention not only towards Turkey, but also towards the Caucasus, which it describes as its backyard. Therefore, as noted earlier, it must be mentioned that global and regional problems have many different dimensions and effects in the present day. When looked at regional and global developments from this aspect, it is seen that ethnic and other problems are used against a possible challenge as well as a means in the struggle for influence in the Caucasus, especially in the South Caucasus.

Ultimately, the crisis between Turkey and Russia led to the escalation of the Karabakh conflict. The outbreak of low intensity clashes on the Azerbaijani-Armenian front line and Russia's reinforcement of its air power in Armenia suggests the possibility of Russia taking the revenge of its downed jet via Armenia.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the opening of a PYD office in Moscow, claims regarding the deployment of the PKK in Karabakh, and statements with regards to the Armenian question is significant in terms of how Karabakh has been placed at the center of global developments.

49 "Türk-Rus krizi, Karabağ tansiyonunu yükseltti", *HaberRus*, 27.12.2015.

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ENEMIES TO THE DEATH OR FRIENDS FOR LIFE? LOOKING INTO PREJUDICE AGAINST TURKS AMONGST ARMENIANS IN ARMENIA*

(YAŞAM BOYUNCA DOST, VEYA ÖLÜME KADAR DÜŞMAN MI?
ERMENİSTAN ERMENİLERİ'NİN TÜRLERE KARŞI OLAN
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Abstract: *Armenia is a fairly new nation-state in which the process of creating a new identity is also a newly started process. Within this process of creating a new identity, there are various tools to be used. One of these tools is the process of 'otherization', in other words, the process by which 'the other' is created. When creating an image of yourself, as being the righteous one, you also depict one or more peoples as "the other". In some cases, this even cultivates into the creation of "the other" as the archenemy or anti-Christ himself. In the case of Armenia, this is exemplary in how Armenia views itself and its people in respect to Turkey and Turks. This case study focuses on how the Turk are viewed upon in Armenia and what this means for the sentiments towards Turks amongst Armenians in Armenia. This article also sheds light on how these sentiments came into existence, the historical context it is derived from, and how it is to be seen in the perspective of various theories of nationalism, nation-building, and the process of creating a national identity. Lastly, this article will also deal with what this means for an eventual Turkish-Armenian reconciliation in specific, and the Turkish-Armenian relations in general.*

Keywords: *Armenia, Turks, Armenian sentiments towards Turks, Armenian-Turkish reconciliation, Turkish-Armenian Relations, creating the other.*

* This is an extended, updated, and edited version of the original article 'Foes and Friends: a survey of sentiments and emotions towards the Turks in Armenia' that was presented at Atatürk University in Erzurum, Turkey during the 'Second International Symposium concerning the Great Powers and Turkish-Armenian Relations', which took place from May 6th, 2015 until May 8th, 2015 at the before mentioned Atatürk University in Erzurum, Turkey. The article was presented in the form of a fifteen-page PowerPoint-slide presentation during the nineteenth panel of the before mentioned symposium on May 7th, 2015. My presentation revolved around my field research in Armenia, which is comprised of two different visits to Armenia during 2014. During this research, I looked at the various sentiments that were present in Armenia when describing Turks and the way people in Armenia were looking at Turks in general. Both visits were financed by the European Union and were part of a project that was made possible by the European Union.

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Öz: Ermenistan, oldukça yeni bir ulus devletidir ve bu süreçte yeni bir kimlik oluşturma çabası da yeni başlamıştır. Bu yeni kimlik oluşturma sürecinde, kullanılacak bir sürü araç vardır. Bu araçlardan biriyse, 'öteki' yaratma veya 'ötekileştirmek' sürecidir. En doğru millet görüntüsü oluştururken, aynı zamanda diğer milletleri ötekileştiriliyor. Bazı durumlarda, ötekileştirmek bir 'öteki' milletin baş düşmanı ve kötülüğün özü olarak gösteriliyor. Ermenistan'a bakacak olursak, bu durumda Ermenistan'ın Türkiye ve Türkler bakarak kendisini nasıl gördüğünü anlamak için çok uygun bir örnek. Bu alan çalışmasında, Ermenistan'da 'Türk'e nasıl bakıldığına, bu bakış, Ermenistan'da yaşayan Ermenilerin Türklere karşı var olan duyguları nasıl etkilediğine odaklanmaktayız. Bu yazı, ayrıca bu duygular ve önyarguların nasıl oluştuğuna, geçmişte hangi çerçeve içerisinde geliştiğini, ve milliyetçilik, ulus-inşası ve ulusal kimlik oluşturma süreci gibi çeşitli savlar açısından nasıl bakılması gerektiğini açıklamaktadır. Son olarak da, bu yazı, bu üç unsurun olabilecek başta Ermeni-Türk uzlaşması olmak üzere, Türk-Ermeni ilişkileri için ne anlama geldiğini ele almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ermenistan, Türkler, Türklere karşı Ermeni duyguları, Ermeni Türk Barışı, Türk Ermeni İlişkileri, ötekileştirmek.

INTRODUCTION

When the First World War ended, the entire region of the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus was left in utter chaos. One of the biggest outcomes was the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922). Most of this huge empire was then occupied by the victorious Allied forces of the First World War.¹ Although the Ottoman Empire was a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic state, it now spiraled in a downwards circle of civil war and chaos in which Turks, French, British, Italian, Greek, Russian, Armenians, and Kurdish armies fought their own wars in former Ottoman lands. However, the most important struggle lay in the difficult process of the various peoples of the former Ottoman Empire to unite into one nation-state outside of the Ottoman Empire.² Armenians are a unique case in this process.

The process of creating a national unity amongst Armenians (one of the successor peoples of the Ottoman Empire) resulted in the establishment, in 1918 until 1920, of the Republic of Armenia, in which the dominating identity and culture was called “Armenian.” In this process, some tried to fall back on their religious identity as a Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox Christian, while others allied themselves with others out of “fear” for other nationalities. Yet others -for instance, refugees from Anatolia, the Caucasus, and the Middle East- focused on their violent backgrounds, since the era of 1885-1915 was dominated by the Armenian committees such as Armenakan/Ramgavar, Dashnaksutyun, Hunchakyan, amongst others which behaved mostly as guerrilla-terror squads. Together, these units were responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths, mostly Muslims -Zazas, Kurds, Turks- but also fellow Armenians³ Amid the chaos of the breakup of an empire and the formation of an Armenian state, a search was mounted for key elements to forge a new unity in which there was room for all these groups, united under one umbrella.⁴

1 Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: İmparatorluğun Çöküşünden Ulusal Direnişe*, 3. Basım, Ankara 1991/2008.

2 Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: “(Birinci Bölüm) Yeni Türkiye’nin Oluşumu (1923-1938)”*, 2. Basım, Ankara 1995/2005 ; Durmuş Yalçın, Yaşar Akbıyık, Yücel Özkaya, Gülnihal Bozkurt, Dursun Ali Akbulut, Erdinç Tokgöz, Refik Turan, Nuri Köstüklü, Mustafa Balcıoğlu, Mehmet Akif Tural, Cezmi Eraslan & Cemal Avcı, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi II*, Ankara 2010 ; Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *History of the Ottoman State, Society & Civilisation II*, İstanbul 2002.

3 Durmuş Yalçın, Yaşar Akbıyık, Dursun Ali Akbulut, Mustafa Balcıoğlu, Nuri Köstüklü, Süslü, N., Refik Turan, Cezmi Eraslan & Mehmet Akif Tural, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi I*, Ankara 2011 ; Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: Ulusal Direnişten Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’ne*, 3. Basım, Ankara 1992/2009 ; Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *History of the Ottoman State, Society & Civilisation I*, İstanbul 2001.

4 Soner Çağaptay, *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?*, London/New York 2006/2009.

Uniting people of a certain land into one nation is not considered peculiar.⁵ Every state in the world at one point struggled with this problem. In the nineteenth century, the smaller German states formed one nation, or *Kulturnation*, to speak in the terms of Friedrich Meinecke,⁶ without actually becoming one unified state.⁷ It was then widely believed that the concept of “nation” was interchangeable with that of “race,” because it was accepted that a nation was carved out by descent.⁸ In order to forge new nations, it became important to invent myths, traditions, a suitable history, cultural trademarks, and linguistic commonality.⁹ This process of “inventing” a nation made oral history an important tool of the newly established nation-state.¹⁰ Most states focused on earlier times in order to depict an ancient “golden age.” In this defining process, oral history was the main tool for selecting or neglecting parts of the national history in order to create a nation in which people felt united and part of the same community.¹¹

When creating a community in which people feel that they are part of the same unit, there is the need for a national identity to identify with.¹² One shares this sense of belonging to one state, or to one nation, with a group of people, regardless of one’s citizenship status.¹³ National identity comes from elements (either present or not) that include national symbols, language, national colors, history, national consciousness, blood ties, culture, music, cuisine, radio, and television, among many others.¹⁴ The national identity of most citizens of one state or one nation tends to originate in the promoted concept of “national identity” within that state or nation.¹⁵ The sense of belonging to the nation, as

5 Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London 1991.

6 Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat: Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates*, München, 1922.

7 Constantin Iordachi, “The Ottoman Empire: Syncretic Nationalism and Citizenship in the Balkans”, *What Is a Nation?: Europe 1789-1914*, Oxford, 2006, p. 120-151.

8 Adrian Collins & Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, Charleston 1855/2010 ; Mark Hewitson, “Conclusion: Nationalism and the Nineteenth Century”, *What Is a Nation?: Europe 1789-1914*, Oxford 2006, p. 312-355.

9 Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach*, New York 2009 ; Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1983 ; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd Edition, London 1991/1983 ; Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge 1990.

10 Nicholas J. Higham, *King Arthur, Myth-Making and History*, London 2002.

11 Ernst Cassirer, *The myth of the state*, USA (Connecticut) 2009.

12 Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston 1969.

13 Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, USA (Connecticut) 1993.

14 Joseph-Arthur Comte De Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, Paris 1853-1855 ; Louis Leo Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism*, New Brunswick 1954.

15 Carlton Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism*, New York, 1931.

experienced by the inhabitants themselves, becomes essential to (especially) newly formed states.¹⁶ In the process of molding a national identity, a certain construction of the past becomes eminent.¹⁷

The range of instruments includes oral history such as songs, poems, art, novels, and, in modern times, even movies, among others. In these works, the national identity of a state can be emphasized through playful legends and myths that reinforce the image of the nation.

NATIONALISM IN ARMENIA

In the case of Armenia, it was especially the oral history that created sentiments towards their neighbors in general, and the Turks in specific. Although these sentiments were mostly ‘friendly’ during the approximately thousand years that Armenians and Turks lived together in various empires in and around Anatolia, the new Armenian leaders of the Armenian Republic (1918-1920) felt like this should be changed into sentiments that saw the Turks as “foes” instead of “friends”.¹⁸

The Ottoman Empire (much like its predecessor, the Seljuk Empire) was portrayed as an undivided state with one common culture but much ethnic diversity, encompassing Turks, Armenians, Zazas, Arabs, Greeks, Jews, Laz, Kırmançî (and other Kurdish tribes), and many more ethnic groups.¹⁹ All were supposed to originate from one geographical culture. Many of these groups (including the Armenians, but not the Turks) had already formed their own concept of a national identity some two centuries ago in the eighteenth century, and many were reluctant to agree that “their” culture was part of a “common” culture in the twentieth century (just before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire).²⁰ Because these ethnic minorities had come in direct contact with nationalism, they had their own views on nationalism. Some felt more connected to their own group than to the Ottoman Empire. For example, an ethnic Greek living in the Ottoman province of Anatolia during the 1910s, might have felt more connected to the Greek nation and subsequently dismissed

16 Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, İstanbul, 1923/2001 ; Mahir Ünlü & Yusuf Çotuksöken, *Türkçülüğün Esasları (Günümüz Türkçesiyle)*, İstanbul 2001.

17 Umut Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction (second edition: extended and updated)*, Hampshire 2010 ; Smith, *National Identity* ; Gabriel Almond & Lucian Pye, *Comparative Political Culture*, Princeton 1965.

18 Yalçın vd., *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi II*.

19 İhsanoğlu, *History of the Ottoman State I*.

20 Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: Ulusal...*

the Ottoman views on identity.²¹ This was also the case with the Armenians, who tried to carve out their own independent nation-state in the heart of the Ottoman Empire but failed miserably.²² These Armenian revolts lasted from 1885 until well into 1915, and in this context, the sentiments of Armenians towards Turks changed, which was something that was further instigated by the leaders of the Armenian Republic of 1918-1920.²³

The new fierce Armenian nationalism was built upon the violence of Armenian guerrilla-terror squads on one side, and the notion that ‘all non-Armenians, in particular Turks, were all enemies’ on the other. In this context, the new Armenian Republic declared war on their neighbors Georgia (1918), Azerbaijan (1918-1920), Kars Republic (1918-1919), and even waged war against the newly forming Turkey (1920). The subsequent Soviet invasion of Armenia, in late 1920, quelled the Armenian war effort for some seventy years until Armenia become independent once again in 1991 after being part of the Soviet Union from 1920 to 1991. As Soviet Armenia, anti-Turkish sentiments were still fuelled and the Turkish recognition of Armenia as an independent state in 1991 (as one of the first states to recognize the Armenian Republic) was a friendly gesture of goodwill that became a direct contradiction with the way the Armenian government wanted Armenians to see Turkey; namely not as a “friendly nation”, but as the “archenemy”.²⁴

CREATING ‘THE OTHER’

Vamık Volkan has called this process, instigated by the Armenian government, of changing the view on Turks from friendly to archenemy, as the process of ‘ötekileştirmek’; or “otherization”.²⁵ He explains this thesis by pointing to the acclaimed author George Orwell and his book “1984”:

By “nationalism” Orwell meant, “first of all the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labeled ‘good’

21 Constantin Iordachi, “The Making of Citizenship in the post-Ottoman Balkans: State Building, Foreign Models, and Legal-Political Transfers”, *Ottomans into Europeans: State and Institution-Building in South Eastern Europe*, London 2010, 179-220.

22 Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi* “Birinci Bölüm”.

23 Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: İmparatorluğun...*

24 Yalçın vd., *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi I*.

25 Vamık Volkan, “The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: A Developmental Approach”, *Political Psychology*, 2, 1985, p. 219-247.

or 'bad'” (p.362). Political psychologists would modify this only by substituting “allies” or “enemies.”²⁶

By doing so, creating these categories is one of the tools a regime can use to uphold and expand their grip on peoples of a certain nation. According to Volkan, the regime (or the seat of power) can perpetuate itself by creating very black-and-white-categories of “we/us” and “them/the others/our archenemy”. In this process, the before mentioned “we” is portrayed as having all the attributes, qualities, and other cultural trademarks that one considers to be very positive. Amongst these are: honesty, integrity, cleanliness, and loyalty. The category of the “others” is subsequently portrayed as the exact opposite. By doing so, a member of the “us/we” category is prone to believe that the very core existence of his culture and nation-state is tied to his protection of his own way of life. This slowly becomes a culturally-instilled belief for the entire nation.

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This psychological behavior within political science further constructs the link between political science and psychology where the latter is used for the first. Political science clearly makes the link between the political need for enemies, and the creation of “the other” in order for it to make it fit in, in the general picture of ‘us against them’ in order to create unity against possible outside enemies. Volkan explains the process of creating the other by comparing it to the making of a protective armor; “primitive man sought a measure of protection for his vulnerable nakedness by adopting the armor of the lower animals, wearing their skins, leathers, and claws.” Both are aimed at protecting one against the other, in the literal sense of the word. Volkan argues, one “can go further and say that each small group needs to see another as the enemy. Those ethnic antagonisms that run, not along economic or social lines, but along racial and cultural ones,

26 Vamik Volkan, “The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: A Developmental Approach”, Vamikvolkan.com, London 1985/2016 (last visit 23/05/2016). Available online: <http://www.vamikvolkan.com/The-Need-to-Have-Enemies-and-Allies%3A-A-Developmental-Approach.php>.

would seem to bear this out. In turn, however, the larger group (the nation) may unite to oppose another nation seen as a common enemy. Animal bonding is strengthened by exhibitions of this approved behavior; a mate who bares his teeth at an intruder strengthens his bond to his mate.”²⁷

In the process of “creating the other”, this bond is based on (the notion of, or the allegation of, or even the belief of) being oppressed by “the others”.²⁸ Societal traumas at the hand of “the others” can, obviously, also be inflicted during armed conflicts. The effects of these situations are different because these traumas also induce shared shame, humiliation, helplessness, and dehumanization, but make mourning complicated, or even impossible since the “blame factor” cannot be established within armed conflicts. In almost all armed conflicts, both sides conduct war crimes and this makes it very difficult (or even impossible) to position only one of the two parties as the innocent victims.²⁹ However, this does not take away the trauma of either side. Both sides will feel victimized and both victimized groups will share, within their own group, a shared sense of shame, humiliation, and even dehumanization. These shared unfinished psychological tasks are passed from generation to generation; often in correlation with the seat of power (for example as is the case in Armenia, which has formed the image of ‘the Turk’ in Armenia as we know it today).³⁰

IMAGE OF ‘THE TURK’

Against this background, the current sentiments and emotions that are present in Armenia towards the Turks are examined in this study.³¹ These sentiments

27 Volkan, “Enemies and Allies”.

28 Vamik Volkan, “Massive Traumas at the Hand of “Others”: Large-group Identity Issues, Transgenerational Transmissions, “Chosen Traumas” and Their Consequences”, Vamikvolkan.com, London 2007/2012 (last visit 23/05/2016). Available online: <http://www.vamikvolkan.com/Societal-Well-Being-After-Experiencing-Trauma-at-the-Hand-of-%22Others%22%3A-The-Intertwining-of-Political%2C-Economic-and-Other-Visible-Factors-with-Hidden-Psychological-Processes-Affecting-Victimized-Populations.php>.

29 Vamik Volkan, “Traumas Masivos Causados Por los “Otros”: Problemas de Identidad en Grandes Grupos, Transmision Generacional, “Traumas Elegidos” y sus Consecuencias (Massive Traumas at the Hand of “Others”: Large-group Identity Issues, Transgenerational Transmissions, “Chosen Traumas” and Their Consequences)”, Los Laberintos de la Violencia, Buenos Aires 2008, p. 153-172.

30 Vamik Volkan, “Societal Well-Being after Experiencing Trauma at the Hand of’ Others”: The Intertwining of Political, Economic and Other Visible Factors with Hidden Psychological Processes”, *Measuring and Foster in the Process of Societies: The Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy*, Paris, 2007.

31 This study comprised of two field researches in Armenia. The first visit was between May 13th, 2014 and May 22nd, 2014 to Yerevan, Tatev, and back to Yerevan, while the second was between August 6th, 2014 and August 16th, 2014 to Yerevan, Tsaghkadzor, and back to Yerevan. Both research visits were part of projects of the European Union, and financed by the European Commission.

and emotions were researched using oral history; asking random people in Armenia of their thoughts concerning Turks. People from all layers of the society (students, villagers, government officials, university professors, locals, etc.) were included in this research. The raw data eventually led to the presentation at Atatürk University, which in turn led to the article: ‘Foes and Friends: a survey of sentiments and emotions towards the Turks in Armenia’. That article was the base for the article you are reading now.

This research took place in two stages and consciously went both to the south and north of Armenia to see if there were different sentiments and emotions in various places in Armenia. The first field research concentrated to the south of Armenia, in specific, the region around Goris (especially Tatev), from May 13th, 2014 and May 22nd, 2014. Subsequently, the second field research focused on the region surrounding Sevan (especially Tsaghkadzor), situated north of the Armenian capital Yerevan. This field research was conducted during August 6th, 2014 and August 16th, 2014. Both visits were realized by the European Union and financed by the European Commission.

*Map 1: Armenia in the region*³²



*Source: Turkey-Visit.com, ‘Where is Nagorno Karabakh & Map of Nagorno Karabakh’, edited by the author A. Sag (17.05.2016).*³³

³² Turkey-Visit.com, <http://www.turkey-visit.com/nagorno-karabakh.asp> (last visit: 03/03/2016).

³³ Turkey-Visit.com, ‘Where is Nagorno Karabakh & Map of Nagorno Karabakh’, <http://www.turkey-visit.com/images/nagorno-karabakh/map-of-nagorno-karabakh.jpg> (last visit 03/03/2016).

During this research, it became apparent fairly early on that the image of ‘the Turk’ as it exists in Armenia, actually comprises of three categories. Each of these categories will be explained further on in this article by the use of examples of the respondees. The categories, in order of most frequently encountered responses that correspond with the various categories, are the following (in order of high to low): the image of the cruel barbaric Turk (1), the image of the ‘neighbor’ that needs to be approached with friendly words (2), and the image that the Turkish yin is part of the Armenian yang (3).

Firstly, the most-heard sentiments concerning the Turks, are (not surprisingly) that of ‘the cruel barbaric Turk’ in which the Turks are depicted as the archenemy of Armenians. This image of the cruel barbaric Turk was actually the official point of view for a long time in Armenia as spread by the Armenian government. The depiction of the Turks as “cruel barbarians out to get the Armenians” is the core of the Armenian nation-building process and as such the sole reason that the Armenians were able to create unity after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, despite differences in religion (Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, etc.), language (West-Armenian, East-Armenian, etc.), history, and culture. The reason for creating an image of the Turk was to ensure

the unity of Armenians against “this external enemy out to annihilate and destroy everything Armenian, and every Armenian”. Subsequently, many Armenians think that “Turks have no other purpose in life than to try and annihilate all Armenians from the earth”. This idea was fueled by the Armenian guerrilla-terror squads Dashnaksutyun (or the Dashnaks) which dominated the feared 1885-1915 period and used the anti-Turkish rhetoric to ensure their existence for decades to come. This actually worked, since Dashnaksutyun still exists to this day and even holds multiple seats in the Armenian parliament.

Along with Dashnaksutyun, which openly advocates for a fierce anti-Turkish stance, there is one other Armenian terror group that openly advocated for an anti-Turkish stance: ASALA³⁴. ASALA was a violent terrorist organization that operated from 1975 until the late 1990s, although their last terrorist attack was

34 Louise Nalbandyan, *Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, USA (California) 1963.

a failed assassination in 1991. ASALA targeted Turks for assassination for the sole reason that they were Turkish. Most of their victims were Turkish diplomatic personnel and also innocent bystanders. ASALA, and the wide support its bloody attacks gained throughout Armenian circles, showed the consequences of the dangerous anti-Turkish sentiments amongst Armenians. The wide support for ASALA, and the joy after which every death of a Turkish citizen was celebrated by Armenians, also illustrated how many Armenians were actually anti-Turkish. A third situation in which the hate and anti-Turkish sentiments were fueled and even encouraged by the Armenian government was the war in Karabakh. The Karabakh War (1992) was in fact a continuation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani War of 1918-1920. Armenia invaded Azerbaijan to occupy the Azerbaijani province of Karabakh and in this process implemented a policy of ethnic cleansing in which Armenia viewed Azerbaijanis simply as “Turks” due to the anti-Turkish sentiments prevalent in Armenia. The Karabakh War, which is still technically continuing and is in a state of cease-fire since 1994, on one side shows where hatred and anti-Turkish sentiments can lead to, and on the other side also increased anti-Turkish sentiments as dictated by the Armenian government to ensure the support of the Armenian population for the war against “Turks” (be it Azerbaijani Turks or Turkey Turks).³⁵ These three factors not only fueled the anti-Turkish sentiments in Armenia, but also influenced generations to come as the Armenian government still spreads this image of “the cruel barbarian Turk”. When talking to Armenian people, this image certainly came back in various answers. Some answers, which were frequently used by the older (but not elderly) Armenians, were the following:

“You can’t be Turkish?! You look normal?!” (Respondee A)³⁶

This specific situation was when our own guide (and photographer) heard I was Turkish myself. When I explained that I was indeed Turkish, and had no tail and was just an ordinary human being (just like him), he started to explain that a lot of Armenians in Turkey hide their true identity for many decades now because otherwise the Turks will kill them all immediately when they discover it. Seeing that I am not “a weird monster with a tail, but look normal like a human”, he concluded I surely needed to be one of the Armenians he mentioned before:

“You must be Armenian, then?” (Respondee A)

He was probably referring to the Hemshin Armenians, of which one theory states that they were Armenian by origin, but eventually converted to Islam

35 İhsanoğlu, *History of the Ottoman State II*.

36 Respondee A, Male, Age 35-45, tourist guide and photographer, Yerevan/Tatev.

during the reign of the Ottomans. His next question illustrated how he thought Turks were thinking about Armenians. He actually thought that the process in Armenia, where hate against Turks is promoted, was a reaction to the hate that was supposed to be promoted in Turkey by the Turkish government:

“Do you hate Armenians?” (Respondee A)

When I responded with a “no”, he was actually surprised and asked what the Turkish government was teaching about Armenians. A similar story also comes from another respondee, when asked if she would ever want to visit Erzurum in Turkey, since she told about her ancestors being from Erzurum:

“I can’t go to Turkey, Turks would kill me!” (Respondee B)³⁷

Although she was in no way related to Respondee A, she did follow the same line in her perspective of Turkey and Turks. Even after she told about a vacation in Antalya (south of Turkey), she was still afraid that she would be killed if she went to Erzurum, arguing that she was in a five-star hotel in Antalya with a lot of Russian tourists. My remark that she made it to and from Antalya alive, did not struck a chord.

While both responses from the first category were given in Tatev (the south of Armenia, close to the Turkish and Azerbaijani borders), the two respondees were actually from Yerevan and also resided in Yerevan, but were just in Tatev for a short while. One was just on a road trip with friends for the weekend, while the other was there to guide tourists for about a week. The locals from Tatev were mostly friendlier towards Turks, which brings us to the second category: the image of the Turk as the “neighbor”. The profile of people in this category was that they were people who visited Turkey many times by passing to Turkey by Georgia, and they were mostly from Tatev. A third characteristic was that the people that saw Turks more as neighbors and not enemies, was that they wanted to benefit from trade and wealth with their much richer neighbor. The frustration of being so close to the border but not being able to cross it and trade, was clearly present. This category saw Turkey as a neighbor and people in this category rather would rather have a good neighbor than a bad neighbor. Some examples from people in this category, where I could not see any age-restricted sentiments, were the following:

- Middle-aged peoples of this category told about Turkish trade through Georgia, and even illegal trading in Turkey. One middle-aged woman told

37 Respondee B, Female, Age 25-35, university student and state official, Yerevan/Tatev.

about her trip to the Turkish market through Georgia where she sold her vegetables and fruits in about one or two days, where after she was able to live of the profit in Armenia for approximately one or two months.

- Youngsters and students from this category told me about their frequent visits to Turkey with (international and national) projects in recent years where they had no bad encounters but only friendly experiences of being an Armenian visitor in Turkey.

- All age-categories also underlined that they see the similarities in cultures (cuisine etc.), and this makes them feel more close to Turks.

- Again, all age-categories acknowledged that Armenia needs neighbors, even the elderly Armenians who were subjugated to many years of excessive propaganda and indoctrination from the Armenian government were still able to balance the situation. However, one needs to state that outside of Yerevan, the presence of government officials is seriously lacking which may be a reason why the official governmental views are not as present outside the region of Yerevan as they are in Yerevan itself.

This category seems relatively large but surely is not the majority, which is still the first category, but is numerous enough to slowly start a shift in the way Armenians perceive Turks. It also paves the way for the third category, which must be seen as a sort of mid-way view between the first and the second category. While the first category strongly believes that the Turks are essential “bad creatures”, the second category sees the Turks as neighbors with which Armenians need to have good relations. However, the third category of Yin and Yang merely states that apart from having good or bad relations with Turks, the core is that Armenians need Turks; either to point at them and see them as the bad guys (and by doing so, furthering Armenian unity and the process of nation-building in Armenia and even within the Armenian diaspora), or by having good relations with the Turks and being able to trade with them (making Armenia a wealthier country than it is now). In both cases, this category strongly believes that they (more than anything else) need Turkey because without the Turks, the Armenians will have no aim as the image of the Turks as an external factor is what keeps the Armenians together. One quote that is illustrative for this position was a conversation between two Armenians which was told to me as follows:

“* *We should move to Australia.*

- *What about the historical buildings?*

* *We can build them again there.*

- *What about Ararat?*

* *We can bring the dirt and rocks with us, and make a new mountain.*

- *What about the Armenians?*

* *We can just persuade them to come, and when they see the wealth and riches they will for sure come.*

- *And what about the Turks?'' (Respondee C)³⁸*

This story, which has multiple versions, is being told numerous times within Armenia and illustrates that the bond between Armenians and Turks is one which is to be compared with "can't live with them, can't live without them".

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THE PORTRAYAL OF 'THE TURK

'The portrayal of 'the Turk' is firstly promoted by the Armenian government with a strong emphasis on 'the terrible Turk'. This is, in fact, the only official portrayal from the government. This is also seen in the brand names which are meant to keep the distorted memory of 'cruel Turks' alive. Popular brand

names are the cigarettes of 'Akhdamar', the beer of 'Kilikia', the cognac of 'Ararat', and many more. Akhdamar, Kilikia and Ararat are all geographical names for regions that Armenia claims from Turkey and argues are "occupied" by Turks. Using the name for every day products keeps the name, and the allegations, still very much alive in Armenia.

However, the official indoctrination by the Armenian government is a grim contrast between reality and the portrayed image of Armenia. For people that are not able to verify the reality, the propaganda of Armenia becomes their one and only truth. For people that are able to see the reality, it becomes a big contrast. For example, the girl that went to Antalya is still afraid of Turks. In her mind, she tries to find reasons to implement both the unrealistic image of the Armenian government, and the reality she saw in Turkey, into one 'reality'.

³⁸ Respondee C, Male, Age 30-40, journalist, Yerevan.

In her case, she created a reality in which she found multiple arguments why the ‘cruel Turk’-image was inconsistent. According to her, the tourist places in Turkey were different from the other cities; she was there as a tourist from Russia; she did not leave the hotel very often; the Turks did not know she was Armenian; and Turks were only aggressive in “former Armenian lands”. In her mind, she found a possible outcome in which she could combine both the Armenian propaganda, and the reality she herself witnessed. This effort was not in itself incomprehensible; amongst Armenians there was almost no gray area, but it was mostly black and white. Turks were either evil or not. Turks in regions where Armenians used to live, called ‘Western Armenia’ in Armenia, were exceptionally cruel, but Turks in tourist places could in some situations behave properly as long as they did not know you were Armenian and thought you were Russian or at least from Russia. This black-and-white-thinking was not unusual, as far as I could see during my field research.

Other findings that were interesting were the following:

There were no region-based sentiments in Armenia, although closer to the border with Turkey and further away from the Armenian capital Yerevan, the more people spoke a bit more about the neighbor Turk’ and not the ‘evil Turk’. This was especially the case in Tatev. There were also no age-groups with distinct sentiments about Turks. What struck me during my study visit in Armenia was the presence of the Turkish language, as a lot of young Armenians spoke the language in order to communicate with tourists. In addition, a lot of elderly Armenians still spoke Turkish because they remembered their youth in Turkey, while middle-aged Armenians did not speak Turkish because their parents (the elderly Armenians we spoke of earlier) taught them Armenian. This was very interesting indeed. Another aspect was that many Armenian youngsters spoke of having Turkish friends, which were either Turkish tourists, Turkish students and/or interns. All of them were relatively young: both the Armenians claiming to have Turkish friends, as the ones they claimed were their friends. This brought me to the question; “Is Turkish-Armenian reconciliation near?”. And with such a broad positive sentiment between, especially, the youngsters of both nations, it seems to be (at least) the beginning of the end of the era of wrath between the and two nations, and one could even argue that it is the beginning of a new era of reconciliation between the two nations for at least the upcoming generation.

It needs to be said that this research comprised only of Armenians from Armenia, and not the Armenians from the Diaspora. This needs to be underlined, just as much as the fact that this research was preliminary. Lastly, although this research was funded by the European Union, its careless approach

of the matter (especially the possible reconciliation between Turks and Armenians) seemed the opposite of constructive to me. The way how Armenians were approached (“Don’t ask too much about Turkey, they hate Turkey.”) and the way of questioning (“But you probably hate Turks, right?”) by some of the researchers that were handpicked by the European Commission

seemed to have the opposite effect of reconciliation and seemed like the European Union was not effective in trying to bury the hatchet between Armenians and Turks.

Of the three most dominant images that exist in Armenia, namely that of the “barbaric Turk”, that of the Turk as a ‘the neighbor’; and the Turk as a yin and yang symbol with the Armenians, two of the three images are actually (relatively) positive. This is something to be underlined and seen as something very interesting. It is a radical change in the views of Armenians towards Turks. It also means that Armenian society is ready for more. This could mean that reconciliation is a real possibility.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of my short but intensive research is as following; Of the three most dominant images that exist in Armenia, namely that of the “barbaric Turk”, that of the Turk as a ‘the neighbor’; and the Turk as a yin and yang symbol with the Armenians, two of the three images are actually (relatively) positive. This is something

to be underlined and seen as something very interesting. It is a radical change in the views of Armenians towards Turks. It also means that Armenian society is ready for more. This could mean that reconciliation is a real possibility. Although state to state level interactions between Turkey and Armenia are definitely stalled at the moment, it is simply a matter of time before reconciliation will be successful so long as people to people efforts are not halted, since the population (and especially the younger generations) are willing for a reconciliation.

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Map 1: Armenia in the region, source:

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RESPONDEES

Respondee A, Male, Age 35-45, tourist guide and photographer, Yerevan/Tatev.

Respondee B, Female, Age 25-35, university student and state official, Yerevan/Tatev.

Respondee C, Male, Age 30-40, journalist, Yerevan.

AFTER THE RELOCATION

(TEHCİR SONRASI)

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***Abstract:** Being one of the significant incidents that took place in our recent history, the Armenian issue, the relocation and the return of Armenians, should be investigated from all aspects. The investigation of this issue should absolutely be realized in an objective manner that abstains from emotional approaches. The involvement of political ideas and parliaments taking sides in this issue cause it to shift from academic research to different areas. Such a situation causes an increase in resentment and hatred rather than contributing to the resolution of the issue.*

The relocation of Armenians, which is an important aspect of the Armenian issue, is a matter that is going remain on the agenda despite the fact that a century has passed since that time. This matter will continue to remain on the agenda so long as national parliaments keep taking political decisions regarding it.

While investigating the relocation matter, the current events and situations of that time and the geopolitical positions of countries must especially be taken into consideration. Without investigating why the relocation law was put into effect, in which conditions it was applied, and what happened after the relocation, it will not be possible to make a healthy assessment of the relocation. Attempting to make an assessment of the relocation without taking into account the details mentioned above will be akin to an extrajudicial execution.

This article discusses the developments that took place after the relocation. Based on archive documents and research done on this subject, this article attempts to explain the post-relocation period. The return of Armenians, the decrees issued for their return, the investigations, the trials, the punishments, and the exiles are all discussed in this article and the assessment of this relocation matter is left to the discretion of the readers and researches.

Keywords: *Relocation, Return, Trial, Talat Pasha, Union and Progress Party.*

Öz: *Yakın tarihimizde meydana gelen önemli olaylardan Ermeni meselesi, Ermenilerin tehciri ve geri dönüşleri, çok yönlü araştırılması gereken bir konudur. Bu meselenin mutlaka duygulardan uzak, tarafsız olarak araştırılması gerekmektedir. Bu konuya siyasi fikirlerin ve parlamentoların taraf olması, meselenin akademik araştırmadan başka alanlara kaymasına neden olmaktadır. Bu durum, meseleye çözüm getirmedeği gibi kin ve nefretin artmasını sebep olmaktadır.*

Ermeni meselesinde önemli bir yer işgal eden Ermenilerin tehciri olayı, aradan geçen yüzyıllık zamana rağmen gündemde kalmaya devam etmektedir. Ülke parlamentoları siyasi kararlar aldıkça bu durum devam edecektir.

Tehcir meselesi araştırılırken özellikle o dönemdeki olayların, gelişmelerin ve ülkelerin jeopolitik konumlarının göz önünde bulundurulması gerekmektedir. Tehcir yasasının neden çıkarıldığı, hangi şartlarda tehcirin uygulandığı, tehcir sonrası neler yaşandığı konuları araştırılmadan tehcir hakkında bir karar vermek sağlıklı olmayacaktır. Sıralanan detaylar incelenmeden tehcir hakkında karar vermek, yargısız infaz olacaktır.

Bu makalede tehcir sonrası gelişmelere yer verilmiştir. Arşiv belgelerine, bu konuda yapılan araştırmalara dayanarak tehcir sonrası anlatılmaya çalışılmıştır. Ermenilerin geri dönüşleri, geri dönüş için yayınlanan kararnameler, yapılan tahkikatlar, yargılamalar, cezalandırmalar, sürgünler ele alınmış, konu okuyucuların ve araştırmacıların takdirine bırakılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Tehcir, Geri Dönüş, Yargılama, Talat Paşa, İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası.*

INTRODUCTION

The Armenian relocation matter still preserves its topicality despite the time passed since then, and I am of opinion that it will remain to be so. In order for this issue to fall off the agenda, parliaments need to avoid taking biased political decisions, and the matter should be investigated in detail by allowing researchers to enter archives and encouraging impartial scholars. Otherwise, this subject will become a festering wound.

In this study, it is aimed to elucidate and document a two and a half year period, namely, events that took place between the Relocation Decision (27 May 1915) and the Decree of Return (31 December 1918), and post-relocation developments.

1. THE ARMENIAN RELOCATION

The invasion of Van by Armenian gangs on 17 May 1915 and by Russian troops on May 20 of the same year compelled the Ottoman government to take new precautions. The burning of Van, the expulsion of its people to Bitlis under cruel treatment, and pressures had a significant effect on forthcoming relocation decision.

The invasion of Van by Armenian gangs on 17 May 1915 and by Russian troops on May 20 of the same year compelled the Ottoman government to take new precautions. The burning of Van, the expulsion of its people to Bitlis under cruel treatment, and pressures had a significant effect on forthcoming relocation decision.

As a response to these developments, Talat Pasha requested the evacuation of Armenians from Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis and their resettlement into southern Mosul, the District (Tr. *Sancak*) of Zor, and the rural areas of the District of Urfa through his encrypted text sent to 4th Army Command in 23 May 1915. He also asked for the resettlement of Armenians from nearby areas of Adana, Aleppo and Maras into eastern Syria, and east and southeast of Aleppo.¹

After the Armenian issue gained an international status, Talat Pasha sent an official message on 26 May 1915, to the Prime Ministry/Grand Viziership (Tr. *Sadaret*) in order for the relocation to have the force of law.²

The next day, on 27 May 1915, the “Provisional Law on the Measures to be

1 Bengi Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Eskişehir 2005, p. 3

2 Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, C. I, ks. II (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1991), p. 30.

Taken by the Military Regarding Those Who Refuse to Comply With the Government's Actions In Times of War" (Tr. *Vakt-i seferde icraat-ı hükümete karşı gelenler için cihet-i askeriyece ittihaz olunacak tedabir hakkında Kanun-u Muvakkat*) was adopted. On 1 June 1915, the law came into force after its publication in the official gazette *Takvim-i Vekâyi*. With this law, it was decided to relocate on a single basis or en masse those withstanding the orders of the government and security related implementations, and those who were found to be engaged in armed assaults, resistance, espionage, or treason.³ Thus, the Armenian relocation was officially begun with this law.

Shortly after, on 14 June 1915, in an encrypted text sent to the Provinces (Tr. *Vilayets*) of Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, and Bitlis, it was requested to secure the lives of Armenians, and to avoid any incidents between Muslims and Armenians that could result in killings and that also could seem flagrant abroad.

Armenians to be relocated in new settlement areas were gathered in certain centers such as Konya, Cizre, Diyarbakır, Birecik, and Halep (Aleppo). Those who were dispatched from Kayseri and Samsun were sent to Mosul through Malatya; those from Sivas, Elazığ, and Erzurum and nearby regions sent to Mosul through Diyarbakır-Cizre; those dispatched from Urfa through Nusaybin were sent to the District of Zor through Siverek; those from Western Anatolia were sent to the District of Zor through Kütahya-Karahisar-Konya-Karaman-Tarsus by way of Kars-ı Maraş-Pazarcık.⁴

Ultimately, with the relocation decision, an Armenian population ranging from 400,000 to 600,000 were relocated and resettled to the southern provinces of Ottoman Empire.⁵

Right after the relocation, the below regulation was issued to preserve the lands, possessions, and properties left behind by Armenians who were subjected to obligatory relocation and resettlement.

*Regulations to be applied to the properties and real estates of the Armenians who were subjected to relocation due to state of war and extraordinary political circumstances.*⁶

3 *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, nr. 2189, 18 Recep 1333 ve 19 Mayıs 1331 (1 Haziran 1915)

4 ŞFR. nr. 54-A/157; nr. 56/280; nr. 56/387 – ŞFR. nr. 56/278; nr. 56/280; nr. 56/308

5 Kemal Çiçek, *Ermenilerin Zorunlu Göçü 1915-1917* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005), p. 247 ; Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001), p. 76.

6 T.C. Genelkurmay Başkanlığı *Arşiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri 1914-1918*, Cilt I, Genelkurmay Atase Ve Genelkurmay Denetleme Başkanlığı Yayınları (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basım Evi, 2005), p. 139-142. (KOLEKSİYON KLASÖR NO; E. DOSYA NO; Y. DOSYA NO; FİHRİST NO; BDH 361 1030 1445 1-3)

Article 1. Specially designed committees, whose duties and authorities are set in the statutes, are responsible for the management and administration of the real estates, abandoned fields, and other related properties belonging to Armenians under the regulations listed below.

Article 2. After the evacuation of a village or a town, all the properties and the belongings will be taken under protection by locking up and affixing a seal by a specially appointed official or by a special commission immediately.

Article 3. The type, amount, and estimated value of the goods as well as the names of the owners will be recorded in detail; and they will be sent to suitable storage places such as churches, schools, and inns to be kept in utmost care in order of owners; a records book showing the places where the goods are taken, their numbers and qualities along with their owners shall be prepared; the original shall be given to the local administration and a signed copy shall be given to the Derelict Property Committee.

Article 4. Movable goods, whose owners are not known, will be taken under protection by registering them to the village where they were found.

Article 5. A specially appointed committee, to be formed by the commission, will sell any goods that will spoil in a short period, and livestock by a public auction. The money shall be entrusted in the owner's name; and if the owner is not known, the money will be entrusted to village's or town's savings commission. The type, amount, estimated value, the name of the owner, as well as the name of the buyer, and the price at which they are sold will be registered in detail in a book, and after having had signed by the auction committee the original shall be given to the local administration and a signed copy shall be given to the administration of the Derelict Property Commission.

Article 6. The sacred books, paintings, and the properties found in the churches shall be registered in a book, and shall be protected with care at the site in attachment to the minutes, and shall later be sent to their places of relocation by the administrators.

Article 7. The type, amount, and value of all the estates shall be registered in the name of the owner, and charts pertaining to the abandoned fields of the villages and towns shall be drawn and given to the administrative committee.

Article 8. If there are crops on the abandoned fields, the committee will appoint a committee to sell the crops by public auction, and the money gained shall be transferred to the savings commissions on behalf of the owners, and the original minutes shall be given to the local administration and an approved copy shall be given to the administration committee.

Article 9. If a buyer cannot be found for the crops, a surety shall be found, and the crops shall be shared in half with the purchaser upon a contract to be devised. The money to be gained from these sales shall be transferred to the savings commissions on behalf of the rightful owners.

Article 10. No further procedures shall be followed for the writs pertaining to the usage of the estates drawn after the relocating of the owners [without the presence or prior to the permission of the owner].

Article 11. The lands and the houses in the evacuated villages will temporarily be distributed among the immigrants in proportion to their needs and agricultural abilities of each family with temporary documents.

Article 12. All the information related to the immigrants settled in the villages – such as their names, place of origins, date of settlement, place of settlement, as well as the types, amount, value of the properties – shall be registered in the books, and each immigrant shall be given an official certificate stating the amount of the estates he received after settling.

Article 13. As the immigrants are all responsible for the keeping of the trees that have been previously planted any damage to trees will be paid by the all the members of the village regardless of the doer. Those who give damage to the trees shall be removed from the village immediately and shall lose all their privileges given by law.

Article 14. After the settlement of the immigrants, Nomadic tribes shall be settled in the remaining villages and they shall have the same privileges with the immigrants.

Article 15. The immigrants coming from towns and cities shall be settled in the houses evacuated in the towns and cities, and shall be given adequate amount of fields in relation to their economic status and abilities in development.

Article 16. As for the places that are not suitable – shops, large commercial buildings, public baths, and stores – for the settlement of the immigrants and the remaining buildings; or the places mentioned in Article 18, and the fields that remain after the distribution of lands in proportion to immigrants' abilities in development and their economic means, may be subjected to sale through public auction by the local administrative committees appointed under the control of civil and financial administrators.

Article 17. All the information related to the immigrants settled in the towns and cities – such as their names, ages, place of origins, date of settlement, place of settlement, as well as the types, amount, value of the properties – shall be registered in the books.

Article 18. The vineyards, gardens, orchards, olive groves and the like around the towns and cities shall be distributed among the immigrants, on condition that they provide written certificates and guarantors, in proportion to their abilities in development; after having registered in the books they will be given certificates stating the reasons for approval, and the amount of property given. The remaining properties shall be sold through public auction in accordance with Article 16.

Article 19. Excluding the immigrants, coming from the other cities, who are holding permits of the local administrators or of the Ministry of Interior; all the people who are to be settled in the evacuated villages as immigrants should demonstrate their official documents certifying that they are immigrants, that they were not settled in any other region or that they were not sent to another place for settlement but to their place of arrival given by the administrators.

Article 20. The properties that were not sold can be rented, for not more than two years, to the people provided that they shall guarantee the development and protection of the property by a written contract and by providing a strong guarantor.

Article 21. Charts showing the buyers, tenants, the amount of money received from the sales and the rents, and the type, amount, and place of the sold or rented estates, as well as the shared properties shall be drawn.

Article 22. The money received from the sales and from the rents will be invested on behalf of the owners in the savings commissions and will be given to the owners in accordance with the announcements to made.

Article 23. Derelict Property Administrative Committees are directly responsible for the governance of all the properties in the evacuated villages and towns in accordance with the regulations stated here by.

Article 24. Administrative committees shall be liable directly to the Ministry of Interior on the issues pertaining to the derelict property; and shall act upon the orders of the Ministry, and shall inform the local administrators about the practices and decisions to be put in effect.

Article 25. Derelict Property Administrative Committees are responsible for the formation of the necessary committees and boards that will aim at the protection and administration of the derelict property, as well as for the appointment of the paid officials prior to the orders of the Ministry of Interior, and to issue regulations and the declarations. Copies of the regulations and declarations shall be sent to the governors' offices.

Article 26. Although the immigration committees and officials are charged with the duty of reporting the movements of the immigrants in detail; Derelict Property Administrative Committees are responsible for realization of the settlement of the immigrants, inspection of the development procedures, and for taking measures together with the local administrators for the implementation of the decisions taken.

Article 27. Committee shall report all the decisions and implementations performed after the inspections and observations to the ministry and to the office of the governor, at least in every 15 days.

Article 28. Local administrative officials shall abide by the rules and procedures issued by the Derelict Property Administrative Committees on the administration of the properties in the scope of these regulations.

Article 29. The members of the Derelict Property Administrative Committees are equally responsible for the keeping of the financial books pertaining to the administration and protection of the available property as well as the abandoned fields in the regions where they are assigned.

Article 30. Derelict Property Administrative Committees are composed of a specially appointed chairman, and of two officials: one being an administrative officer, the other being a financial officer. Article 31.

Correspondences are made by the chairman or by his deputy on his behalf.

Article 32. The president of the Derelict Property Committee may appoint a member of his choice for the inspection or control of an issue under the scope of these regulations.

Article 33. The presidents of the Derelict Property Committees are allotted 1.5 liras, and the members are allotted 1 lira daily to be met by the immigrants' subsidies. They are also allotted extra money from the special subsidy for their travels in relation to their duties.

Article 34. In places where no Committee is appointed, local administrative councils shall be responsible for the application these regulations.

10 June 1915 (27 Receb 333 / 28 Mayıs 331)

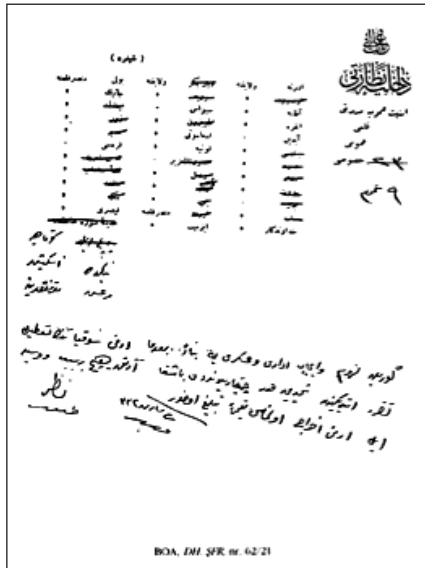


Regulations to be applied to the properties and real estates of the Armenians who were subjected to relocation due to state of war and extraordinary political circumstances (Tr. Ahvâl-i Harbiyye ve zarûret-i fevkalade-i siyasiyye dolayısıyla mahall-i âhere nakilleri icra edilen Ermenilere aid emvâl ve emlak ve arazinin keyfiyyet-i idaresi hakkında talimatnamedir)

2. ARMENIANS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE RELOCATION

The accumulation of people during the relocation was steadily increasing. Harsh climate conditions also led to occasional stoppages in the transfer of people. With orders sent to all provinces, it was notified that starting from 25 November 1915, transfers had been stopped temporarily due to harsh winter conditions.⁷ This temporary order that was conveyed to all provinces indicated that the transfer of Armenians would end on 21 February 1916. However, harmful individuals would not benefit from this order; on the contrary, those who associated with revolutionary committees would be immediately gathered and transferred to the District of Zor.

As a result of administrative and military needs, the Ottoman government, twenty days after the initial order, on 15 March 1916, issued a second general order to provinces and districts, informing that the transfer of Armenians was stopped and that henceforth transfers should not be conducted for any reason or occasion.⁸ Therefore, it was ordered that Armenians who had not yet reach their destination and who were still on the road should be settled within the provinces in which they were at.⁹



The Cessation of the Relocation of Armenians

7 ŞFR., m. 57/273; m. 58/161; m. 59/123; m. 60/190

8 ŞFR., nr. 62/21.

9 Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, p. 82.

20 months after these orders, a decree of return was issued for Armenians who were subjected to the obligatory resettlement. With this decree, the relocation was completely ended and Armenians who wanted to return were allowed to do so.

3. PERMISSION FOR THE RETURN OF ARMENIANS

On 7 September 1918, Talat Pasha resigned, and Ahmet İzzet Pasha was appointed as Prime Minister/Grand Vizier (Tr. *Sadrazam*) on September 13.

One of the issues that Ahmet İzzet Pasha government dealt with immediately after it came to power with was the Armenian issue. On 18 October 1918, the government issued a notice that allowed the return of Armenians to their original places of residence. The notice foresaw allowing Armenians to travel, avoiding the settlement of abandoned properties, and emptying of houses used by soldiers and civil servants. However, upon receiving news that some of the Muslim immigrants/muhajirs (Tr. *muhacir*) who were temporarily settled in homes abandoned by Armenians had panicked and attempted to ruin

The Ministry of Interior, in the below coded telegram (given here in Ottoman Turkish with Latin alphabet), informed that Greeks and Armenians who were transferred to other locations due to war were now allowed to return in safety, and that they should be provided with food and settlements.

these housings, the government issued a second decree. In this new decree, it was stated that immigrants would be resettled again, the return of Armenians' properties would be conducted gradually, and therefore, there was no need to panic. It was also notified that new immigrants would not be left out, either by means of their accommodation with relatives or several families living together if necessary. It was also announced those among immigrants and refugees who disturbed the peace and safety would be punished.

Furthermore, sending an encrypted message to provinces on 22 October 1918, the Ahmet İzzet Pasha government declared that Armenians were allowed to return by the decision of Council of Ministers (tr. *Meclis-i Vükela*); however, due to food shortages in the Provinces of Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, and Mamûratülaziz, and the District of Erzincan, they would be permitted to settle gradually in order for them to not experience any difficulties.¹⁰

10 Feridun Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005), p. 19.

The Ministry of Interior, in the below coded telegram (given here in Ottoman Turkish with Latin alphabet), informed that Greeks and Armenians who were transferred to other locations due to war were now allowed to return in safety, and that they should be provided with food and settlements.¹¹

Bâb-ı Âlî

Dâhiliye Nezâreti

Aşâyîr ve Muhâcirîn Müdüriyyet-i Umûmiyyesi

İskân Şu'besi

Dâhiliye Nezâretinden İstanbul, Adana, Hüdâvendigâr, Konya, Ankara, Kastamonu, Haleb, Ma'mûretü'l-azîz, Diyârbekir, Sivas, Edirne, Aydın vilâyetleriyle, İzmit, Bolu, Kütahya, Karesi, Kayseri, Niğde, Menteşe, Antalya, Urfa, Canik, Eskişehir, İçel, Mar'aş livâlarına keşide edilen 21 Teşrin-i Evvel sene [1]334 târîhli şifre sûretidir.

1- Ahvâl-i harbiyye dolayısıyla karâr-ı askerî ile bir mahalden çıkarılarak diğer mahalle sevk edilmiş olan bi'l-umûm ahâlinin çıkarıldıkları mahallere avdetlerine müsâ'ade edilmesi Meclis-i Vükelâca takarrur etmiş olduğundan avdete tâlib olanlara müsâ'ade edilecektir.

2- Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Diyârbekir, Ma'mûretü'l-azîz vilâyetleriyle Erzincan Mutasarrıflığı dâhilinde vesâ'it-i i'âşenin âdemi kifâyesine binâ'en işbu mahaller ahâlîsinden avdet etmek isteyenler için evvel-i emrde mahalleriyle bi'l-muhâbere selâmet-i seyr ve seyâhatleri ve i'âşe ve iskânları esbâbı te'mîn edildikçe pey-der-pey azîmetlerine müsâ'ade edilmesi muktezîdir.

3- Bu karâr menâfi'-i âliye-i memleket nazar-ı i'tibâra alınarak ittihâz edilmiş olduğundan emr tatbîkâtında kat'iiyen ta'allül ve te'ahhura meydân verilmeyecektir.

Aslına Muvâfıktır.

(Mühür)

Dâhiliye Nezâreti Aşâyîr ve Muhâcirîn

Müdüriyyet-i Umûmiyyesi

(16 M. 1337 / 22 Ekim 1918)

11 HR. MÜ, 43/34



Permission for the Return of Armenians

Such steps taken by the Ahmet İzzet Paşa government was well-received and welcomed. In fact, following the decision allowing the return of Armenians and the return of their properties, the Armenian Patriarch, in a letter he sent to the Ministry of Justice (Tr. *Adliye ve Mezâhib Nezareti*) on 25 October 1918, wrote the following: “All subjects will no doubt be in indebted gratitude for the just decision of the Ottoman government that always has infinite compassion and affection for its loyal subjects” (Tr. “*Tebaa-ı sâdıkası hakkında merhamet ve şefkati her zaman bîpâyan olan hükümet-i Osmaniyenin şu kararı âdilânesine bilumum tebaanın medyûn-ı şükran olacağı şüpheden varestedir*”).¹²

15 days after the above coded telegram, a second coded telegram was sent to the Ministry of Interior. In this telegram, it was requested that Greeks and Armenians who were transferred to other locations due to war be allowed to travel without travel documents, that they be provided food free of charge, that

¹² Ata, *İşgal İstanbul’unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 20.

their other needs be met, and that they be able to safely reach their destination.¹³ The coded telegram was as follows (given here in Ottoman Turkish with Latin alphabet):

Bâb-ı Alî

Dâhiliye Nezâreti

Aşâyir ve Muhâcirîn Müdüriyyet-i Umûmiyyesi

1- Yerlerine avdet edecek Ermenilerin seyâhat vesîkası istihsâline mecbûr tutulması ve mezkûr vesîkaların da bir takım mu'âmelât netîcesinde verilmekte olması yüzünden ahâlinin hayli müşkilâta dúcâr olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Bunlar taraf-ı Hükûmetden gönderilmekte olduğu cihetle vesîka istihsâline hâcet olmadığından trene irkâblarında bir liste tanzîmiyle seyyâre tevdi'i ile iktifâ olunması.

2- Seyâhat vesîkası i'tâsı akîbinde hükûmet-i mahalliyece Ermenilerin yedindeki ekme vesîkalarının istirdâd edilmekte olduğu ve hâlbuki tren bulunamamak yüzünden bunların günlerce ekmezsiz kaldığı bildirildiğinden bunlara orada ve yolda kifâyet edecek mikdârda ekme i'tâsı ve güzergâhda da it'âm edilmeleri.

3- Seyâhat edecek Ermenilere haftada iki def'a tren tahsîsi için Harbiye Nezâreti'nden hat komiserliklerine emir verildiğinden vilâyât ve elviye ve kazâlarda bu teblîğâtдан istifâde edilerek sevkîyâtın a'zamî dereceye iblâğ olunması.

4- Ermenilerin yol masrafları Harbiye tahsîsâtından te'mîn ve ta'ahhüd edilmiş olduğundan mesârif-i seferiyyelerinin tahsîsât-ı mezkûreden tesviyesi.

5- Cebr ve tazyîk ve hayf ile ihtidâ edenler hakkındaki teblîğât-ı sâbika mücebince kendilerinin serbest bırakılmaları hakkındaki ahkâmın kemâl-i ehemmiyetle tatbiki ve peyderpey buraya da ma'lûmât i'tâsı.

6- Ermeni cemâ'atine hemân kilise tedârîki için Hükûmetçe mu'âvenet-i mü'essire ifâsı (Yalnız Konya'ya).

7- Ermenilerin esnâ-yı seyâhatlerinde hiç bir gûnâ ta'arruz ve tecâvüze ma'rûz kalmamalarının te'mîni ve âsâyiş ve inzibât-ı mahallînin muhâfazası husûslarına son derece i'tinâ edilmesi.

13 HR. MÜ, 43/34.

Husûsât-ı muharrere hakkındaki tebliğât-ı adîdeye rağmen şikâyatın tevâlîsi vazifeye karşı lâkaydâne hareket edilmekte olduğunu göstermekte olduğundan ba'de-ez-în bu bâbda vukû'a gelecek şikâyâtdan dolayı me'mûrîn-i mülkiyyenin şahsen mes'ûliyyetleri muhakkak bulunduğu ta'mîmen ve kemâl-i ehemmiyyetle tebliğ olunur.

Aslına Mutâbıkdır:

(Mühür)

Dâhiliye Nezâreti Aşâyir ve Muhâcirîn

Müdüriyyet-i Umûmiyyesi

30 M. 1337 5 Kasım 1918



Assisting the Return of Armenians and Meeting Their Needs

A commission under the chairmanship of Deputy Director of the General Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Refugees (Tr. *Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyeti Umumiyesi Muavini*) Sabri Bey, which also included members from the Armenian Patriarchate, was established with a view to inspect the return of Armenians, to provide their settlement, and to ensure that they were not homeless. This commission also had given orders to relevant authorities for the provision of the needs of Armenian immigrants in the places they went to.¹⁴

Beginning from December, Armenian immigrants began to return to their original places of residence. The commission convened at the Ministry of Justice under the chairmanship of Undersecretary Kemal Bey asked the Director for the Settlement of Immigrants (Tr. *Muhacir İskân Müdürü*) Sabri Bey to provide information with regard to the return of movable and immovable properties to relocated Armenians. Since it would take the Council of Ministers too long to finalize a law to regulate of the return of properties, the commission tried to find faster solutions with regard to the return of properties to their owners.¹⁵

The above commission decided to return movable and immovable properties to Armenians and keep its records, and wrote to the Sublime Porte (Tr. *Bab-ı Âli*) in this regard.

The commission, which was convened under the chairmanship of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Yusuf Kemal Bey, demanded the swift implementation of a law on the return of movable and immovable properties to those relocated.¹⁶

14 Bengi Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tarih Anabilim Dalı, Eskişehir 2005, p. 88.

15 *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, 3 Kanun-i Evvel 1334 (3 Aralık 1918), nr. 13557.

16 Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, p. 90.



Measures taken with regard to returning Armenians (DH. ŞFR., 93-57)

4. DECREE FOR RETURN

Shortly after the above coded telegrams, the Ottoman government issued a decree on the return of relocated Armenians to their original places of living. In a letter sent by Minister of Interior Mustafa Pasha to the Prime Ministry on 22 December 1918, it was stated that necessary instructions with regard to the transfer of Armenians who wished to return to their original places of residence were communicated to relevant places, and that necessary measures were taken. Following this telegram, the government completed necessary preparation and issued the decree for return on 31 December 1918.¹⁷ According to this decree:

17 BOA, Bâb-ı Âli Evrak Odası, No. 341055.

- 1- Only those who wished to return would be returned; the rest would not be touched.
- 2- Necessary measures would be taken in order to prevent returning individuals from falling into miserable conditions on their journey and facing problems with regards to food and housing; the process of transfer and return would begin after necessary correspondences with the local administrations of the places they were going to return were made and necessary measure were taken.

In a letter sent by Minister of Interior Mustafa Pasha to the Prime Ministry on 22 December 1918, it was stated that necessary instructions with regard to the transfer of Armenians who wished to return to their original places of residence were communicated to relevant places, and that necessary measures were taken.

- 3-Houses and lands of those who returned under these conditions would be returned to them.
- 4-Immigrants living in the houses of those who returned would be evacuated.
- 5-In order for no one to be left homeless, several families would be settled in the same house.
- 6-Buildings of institutions such as churches and schools, as well as revenue-yielding properties of these institutions would be returned to the communities they belonged to.
- 7- Orphans, if requested, would be returned to their guardians or communities after a careful examination.
- 8- Those who had previously converted to Islam were free to return to their original faith.
- 9- Armenian women who had converted to Islam and married to Muslim men were free to return to their original faith. In such a case, the marriage would be considered automatically void. Issues of those who did not want to return to their original faith and divorce their husband would be solved by the courts.
- 10- Properties of Armenians that were not under the possession of others would be returned to them. The return of properties whose ownership had been transferred to the Treasury would be subject to the approval of local officials of the Treasury. Descriptive documents would be prepared with regard to such properties.

- 11- Properties previously sold to immigrants would be returned to their original owners as they returned. Regarding these properties, the provisions of the Article 4 would be strictly implemented.
- 12- If properties such as houses and shops, which were to be returned to their original owners, had been repaired or enlarged or if the lands and olive groves had been cultivated by the immigrants, the rights of both the original owners and the immigrants would be protected.
- 13- The travel and food expenses of Armenians who were in need would be met from the funds of the Ministry of War.
- 14- The total number of Armenians transferred to their homes, and the number of Armenians transferred on the fifteenth and final day of each month would be reported.
- 15- Armenians who went beyond the Ottoman borders and wanted to return would not be accepted until further notice.

Provisions of this decree covered not only Armenians, but also Greeks who were obliged to leave their homes.



The Decree for the Return of Armenians and its Articles

5. ARMENIANS WHO RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES

The Ottoman government gave instructions and requested all necessary measures to be taken for the return of relocated Armenians to their homes. The expenses and catering of returning Armenians were met by the government. Their return was gradually permitted after the approval of authorities based on the circumstances of their destination.

A commission was established for the return of schools, churches, and other establishments that were occupied due to war to their relevant communities, as well as for the return of movable and immovable properties of Armenians.

Despite all measures taken by the government, several inconveniences took place. The fact that transfers were made only through the railways and the fact that this process coincided with return of soldiers as a result of the armistice caused this process to lag. Although some of Armenians were able to return to their homes free of problems, others inevitably perished in the journey back. Some also did not want to return to their homes. The houses of some returning Armenians were destroyed. The government tried to meticulously solve these problems.¹⁸

Different numbers are given in various sources with regard to how many Armenians returned with the decree for return. From these sources, it is understood that there was a substantial amount of Armenians who stayed and did not emigrate from Anatolia after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, and that there was a significant amount of Armenians who returned to their homes from the relocation areas.

Different numbers are given in various sources with regard to how many Armenians returned with the decree for return. From these sources, it is understood that there was a substantial amount of Armenians who stayed and did not emigrate from Anatolia after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, and that there was a significant amount of Armenians who returned to their homes from the relocation areas. Moreover, it is seen that the number of Armenians who returned to regions occupied by Allied Powers were higher than number of Armenians in those regions before 1914. This was especially the case in Kilikya (Cilicia). A British intelligence report indicating that this situation was also confirmed by the Armenian Patriarchate states the following:

Istanbul Armenians and Armenians from Kütahya and Aydın were not forced to migrate. Armenians from İzmit and Bursa, Kastamonu, Ankara,

18 Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, p. 93.

and Konya were forced to migrate but have currently returned back. There are many Armenians in Kayseri and Sivas, Harput, Diyarbakır and especially in Kilikya and İstanbul who have returned but cannot make their way back to their villages. The remainder of all Erzurum and Bitlis Armenians are in Kilikya.

However, since it was not possible to exactly determine how many of those who returned were Armenians who were not forced to migrate and those who had returned from migration, the determination of the Armenian population in Anatolia was given a particular importance from 1919 onwards.¹⁹

That said, it is certain that there was a substantial increase of the number of Armenians who returned to Anatolia with the publication of the decree for return at the end of 1918. As a matter of fact, a chart prepared by the Armenian Patriarchate in early 1921, which shows locations inhabited by Armenians, indicates the number of Armenians in Anatolia and Ottoman territories in the Middle East, or the number of Armenians that returned to their homes, as being 644,900.²⁰

6. MEMORIES AND OPINIONS ON THE RELOCATION

6.1. Opinions of Cemal Pasha

Cemal Pasha, indicating that he was at the Palestinian Front during the Armenian relocations and was not informed about it, stated:

I am certainly firmly convinced that the Armenians planned insurrections which endangered the rear of our Army in the Caucasus and which might under certain circumstances have completely destroyed it. Consequently, my friends held it more expedient to transfer the whole Armenian people to another region where they could do no harm, rather than to expose the whole Ottoman Empire to a catastrophe which would have involved Russian occupation of the whole of Anatolia. [...] These must be ascribed to 60-70 years of friction between Turks and Armenians. May Allah curse the Muscovite policy which made enemies of these peoples who for centuries had lived together in peace.

19 Hikmet Özdemir, Kemal Çiçek, Ömer Turan, Ramazan Çalık, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeniler; Sürgün Ve Göç* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2004), p. 116-117.

20 Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, p. 120.

Let us assume that the Ottoman government relocated a million and a half Armenians from the East Anatolian Provinces, and that 600,000 of them died, some murdered, some collapsing on the way from hunger and distress (yet, in that period, the Armenian population in the said locations was not a million and a half). But does anyone know how many Turkish inhabitants of the Provinces of Trabzon, Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis were barbarically massacred by the Armenians and how many were perished after the invasion of these provinces by Russians? Then let it be stated that the number of Turks killed on this occasion far exceeded one and a half millions. If the Turks are to be made responsible for the Armenian massacres, then why not the Armenians for the massacres of the Turks? Or are the Turks of no more value in the eyes of politicians than flies?²¹

6.2. Memories and Opinions of Talat Pasha

Talat Pasha, who was a member of the Union and Progress Party (UPP) and the Minister of Interior of the Ottoman government during Armenian relocation, and who is held as being primarily responsible for the relocation, had defended himself with the following statements at the final congress of the UPP on 1 November 1918, before leaving for Germany in the evening of the same day:

The relocation of the Armenians, in some localities of the Greeks, and in Syria of some of the Arabs, was used inside and especially outside the empire as a source of attack on the [Ottoman] war cabinet. First of all, I wish to inform the public that the rumors of relocation and assassination were exceedingly exaggerated. The Armenian and Greek propaganda, being aware that stories of atrocities would influence the American and European public, which knows little or nothing of the Turks, excessively overstated things and caused quite a stir.

In saying this, I do not mean to deny the event. However, I desire to speak the truth and eliminate the exaggerations. Leaving the exaggerations aside, I admit that there were a fair sum of incidents that took place during the relocation. However, the Sublime Porte never acted in this matter upon a previously prepared scheme. The responsibility for these acts falls first of all upon those who committed intolerable acts. Of

21 A. Alper Gazigiray, *Osmanlılardan Günümüze Kadar Vesikalarla Ermeni Terörünün Kaynakları* (İstanbul: Gözen Kitabevi, 1982), p. 345-347 ; M. Törehan Serdar, *Bitlis'te Ermeniler ve Ermeni Mezalimi*, Bitlis Valiliği Kültür Yayınları No: 14, Bitlis 2006, p. 336.

course, entire Armenians or entire Greeks cannot be to blame. However, in a war which would determine the fate of our country, it was natural and necessary to show no tolerance towards rebellious activities in the rear hampering the army's freedom of movement and endangering its safety and well-being of the country.²²

Armenian bands endangering our Army's maneuverings in Erzurum were being assisted and protected by Armenian villages. When they needed help, the Armenian peasants, taking out their arms hidden in their churches, were running to their aid. It was impossible to shut our eyes to the continuous acts endangering the army's line of retreat and rear guard support. Consistent information from the administrators of provinces and army's proved the necessity to take drastic measures.

Relocation was a measure taken due to the such necessities of war.

What I mean is that the relocation was conducted in an orderly fashion and to the extent that it was necessary. In many places, this also caused long-accumulating hostilities to burst out, leading to completely undesired misconducts. Some of the officials misbehaved and engaged in cruelty and violence. In many places, a set of innocent people unjustly were also victimized. I admit this.

Talat Pasha, during the days he had taken refuge in Germany, in an interview he gave to a British author shortly before his assassination, had said the following:

... Can any nation go through a war and acquiesce when it is stabbed in the back? ... Even if all the Armenians who had been driven into the Caucasus were to return, they would represent only a small fraction of the population, who are mainly non-Armenian.²³

Talat Pasha, who was assassinated in Berlin in 1921 by an Armenian with a shot to the back, stated the following on the topic of the Armenian relocation:

A law with regard to the relocation of Armenians was prepared in the general command and was submitted to the Council of Ministers. The gendarmerie was fully and the police was partially taken to military service, and they were replaced by militias. Thinking ahead, I insisted that this law should not be implemented, and I delayed the law's entry into force.

22 Hasan Babacan, *Mehmed Talat Paşa 1874-1921* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2005), p. 138.

23 Babacan, *Mehmed Talat Paşa 1874-1921*, p. 139.

Sometime later, Van was occupied by Russians, or rather, by Armenian gangs. It was found out later that these voluntary gangs were under the command of Pastirmadjian and Papazian of the Dashnak Committee, both of who were deputies in the Ottoman general assembly. From the testimonies of those who managed to save their lives, it was understood that Muslims who could not escape during the occupation of Van were killed, that women were subjected to dishonor, and that the young, married women and girls were gathered in houses, and that these houses were regarded as brothels. Those who escaped consisted of thousands of women, men, and children, and these unarmed people were attacked with machine-gun fire by the Armenians.

These events in Van were followed by events in the interior. Soldiers who were sent to join their units were killed by these gangs. According to reports sent to the general command by the commanders, massacres and assaults against the Muslims in cities, villages and roads had negative effects on soldiers deployed in the Russian front.

The military command once again insisted on the implementation of the Relocation Law. I once again opposed the adoption of this law. Several past tragic events had shown me that in Europe, while atrocities committed by Christians against Muslims were met with leniency and silence, even the smallest move by Muslims was overly exaggerated. Therefore, I knew beforehand that the disorder to be caused due to Russians being by the side of Armenians would be exploited against us.

During negotiations, some of my friends went as far as accusing me of indifference and disloyalty to the homeland. Indeed, the army was in grave danger.

The army had the opportunity to take necessary measures before passing a law about this matter. Therefore, there was no point in delaying the law. This law was giving army and corps commanders the authority to move insurgent people to other regions individually or en masse. Since martial law was declared all over the country, civil administration was given over to the military.

Atrocities and murders committed during the occupation of Van, Bitlis, Muş, and Erzurum and admitted by the Russians themselves were conducted so brutally that Muslims did not dare to go to their houses and were obliged to migrate hungry and bare. Thus, 600,000 Muslims died. The Armenian issue, which is utilized by the Armenian committee

members in favor of their plans, and which puts all the blame on the government, has transpired as I have explained.

In case an impartial court is set up, without defending the incidents, I can sincerely attest that it was Armenians themselves who caused these events.²⁴

In another memoir, Talat Pasha states the following:

If this obligatory relocation had not been made, Armenians would have been condemned to death for treason by the Court Martial (Tr. Divan-ı Harp), because they, while being Ottoman subjects, in collaboration with our enemies, were doing all possible misdeeds for the country's invasion and occupation. Even though some were involuntary, a crime was a crime. The existence of the country was unmercifully and unscrupulously being ravaged. They had renounced the centuries-old blessings and compassion for the sake of a bloody fantasy. Although it was difficult and challenging for us, sending them away from the warzone as far as possible was the most humanitarian service. Were there any incidents during its implementation? Of course there were. However, the reason for these incidents were again the Armenian committee members. Among those [the Muslims] whose honor and dignity had been attacked, the ones who survived may have overcome the state's protection [for the relocation convoys] and settled the score with these treacherous and disloyal criminals who had committed these horrible crimes without any moral reason. However, I will put it very clearly and point-blank; these retaliations do not amount to even one percent of those crimes in terms of the numbers, incidents and outcomes.²⁵

6.3. Opinions of Foreign Researchers

While European states condemned the Ottoman government due to the relocation, several researchers, especially European researchers, stated that the Armenian had revolted before the relocation and that the Ottoman government had taken the decision to relocate after the revolt.

To prove that the rebellion by Armenians had broken out before their exile, Leo states:²⁶

24 A. Alper Gazigiray, *Osmanlılardan Günümüze Kadar Vesikalarla Ermeni Terörünün Kaynakları*, p. 352, 354, 358-359.

25 Cemal Kutay, *Talat Paşa'nın Gurbet Hatıraları*, Cilt III (İstanbul 1983), p. 1202.

26 Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi* (İstanbul, 1976), p. 617.

7000 Armenians were armed in Muş and in the valley. They were dispersed over several villages. Many escaped to not serve in the Turkish army. Sasun contributed neither soldiers nor any other help. Moreover, they killed officers sent for this purpose. The Armenian youth trained in Muş raised the standard of revolt when the Russian army approached.

Towards the end of June, the Ottoman army corps under Cevat Pasha, fighting in the area north of Muş near the Euphrates, suffered defeat and had to withdraw. The Russian communique issued in connection with this event described the situation in the following words: *“The Armenian rebellion is raging with all its violence and fury in Muş, or rather in the villages around. In the region of Bitlis, the rebellion also continues with all its fury.”*

This revolt was organized to showcase Rupen (a famous Dashnak ringleader nicknamed “Pasha”), who directed activities in Muş and Sasun for the Russian army, and his deeds to the commander of the Caucasian army.

When Rupen managed to escape safe and sound from the deserted and ruined valley of Muş, the newspaper Horizon published in block letters the following telegram: *“Rupen and Vahan arrived here with thirty of their comrades. They are telling that there are still 30,000 rebels in Sasun and that it would be possible to save them since they could last out for another month.”*²⁷

Afterwards, Rupen went to Moscow and delivered a speech in which he stated that the incidents of Muş and Sasun were, in fact, revolts.

The Armenian author Vaspuragan said the following:

It is possible to explain the uprisings in Muş and Bitlis with the fact that these provinces had become battlefields. But how can we explain the revolts in such distant places as Şebinkarahisar or Zeitun (Maraş)? What cause for hope could these Armenians, who were very few in number in these regions, have had in taking up arms against the state? It must, however, be remembered that those who led the rebellion here were the Hunchaks. In that case the situation becomes clear. The reason

While European states condemned the Ottoman government due to the relocation, several researchers, especially European researchers, stated that the Armenian had revolted before the relocation and that the Ottoman government had taken the decision to relocate after the revolt.

²⁷ Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, p. 617.

*that lies behind the revolts was the rivalry between the Hunchaks and the Dashnaks. We have seen this happen so often. Both these revolts were suppressed. Zeitun, where revolts had become a customary affair, was violently punished this time. The experiences of Şebinkarahisar sufficed for applauses. The bravery of the insurrectionists was praised in books and newspaper articles.*²⁸

7. DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARDS TO THE RELOCATION

7.1. During the Relocation

Neurath, who was the Councilor at the German Embassy in İstanbul, in his report dated 26 June 1915, expressed his opinions on the relocation as follows: “*The relocation of the Armenian population in East Anatolia was decided upon by the Turkish government mainly for military reasons, to prevent the insurgency of those districts heavily populated by Armenians.*”²⁹

Although necessary measures to execute the safe transfer of Armenian convoys were taken, adverse conditions brought by the war and the necessity to complete the relocation in a short span of time made the conditions worse. Therefore, contagious diseases and attacks by Arab and Kurdish tribes led to the death of many Armenians. In the fact of diseases, the government sent medical officers to treat Armenian convoys. Furthermore, regional authorities were ordered by the government to not let any convoy set off without policemen (Tr. *zaptiye*), to increase the number of policemen, and to apprehend and punish those who attacked the convoys. Upon news of wrongful treatments and misconducts towards Armenian convoys during relocation, inquiry commissions consisting of members of the Court of Appeal (Tr. *Mahkeme-i Temyiz*) and the Council of State (Tr. *Şuray-ı Devlet*) and judges of criminal courts were sent to Anatolia.³⁰

İsmail Hakkı Bey, a member of Council of State, was appointed to the commission chaired by the President of the Court of Appeal, Hulusi Bey. The government was especially laying emphasis on the safety of life and property, and continuously gave instructions for necessary precautions to be taken. Those who failed to show necessary diligence and those who committed crimes were brought before courts. A large part of the 1397 people, who were found guilty

28 Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, p. 618.

29 Özdemir ve diğerleri, *Ermeniler; Sürgün Ve Göç*, p. 67.

30 Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, p. 79.

and brought into court, received various kinds of sentences including the death penalty.³¹

7.2. After the Relocation

After the Allied Powers' victory in World War I against the Ottoman State and the occupation of the capital İstanbul by these Powers, in 1918, press institutions in the Ottoman State began to report developments with regard to the relocation. These press institutions mostly gave coverage to comments by newspapers in Armenian and Turkish language that followed an anti-Union and Progress Party policy.

The 10 December 1918 issue of the newspaper *Vakit*, which saw the relocation of the Armenians as a disaster and considered its results more disastrous than the hardships of the war, wrote the following:

If these murders and the crazy policy in Syria had not happened, even though being defeated, we would not have been in such deplorable position in the face of world civilization and humanity. We have been living with Armenians for about five centuries. If these deplorable events that we saw in the past couple of years had taken place back then, there would not have been any Armenians or Turks left in this country by now. Yet, for centuries, we have lived with Armenians as two brothers, or, at least, as two friends, two neighbors. We have helped and trusted each other. Turks have relied on Armenians more than any other countryman and entrusted them duties that required trust. History does not show one individual among Armenians who undertook such duties that committed treason or at least, that committed malfeasance.³²

The Armenian language newspaper *Janamak* of the same date, asked its readers what kind of a punishment Enver and Cemal Pasha deserved – the newspaper believed that Enver and Cemal played a major role in the events suffered by Armenians - and gave place to answers from readers. One reader answered as such:

These three butchers should be publicly exhibited and everyone should watch them for 5 kurush and the proceeds should be endowed to orphans. 75 dirhams of bread should be given to these three monsters for every 24 hours.

31 Kamuran Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, 2001, p. 228.

32 Kümbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, p. 81 (*Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, 10 Kanun-i Evvel 1334 [10 Aralık 1918], nr. 13564.)

Another reader said, “*These three butcher of Armenians should be chained in Beyazıt and each should be given 50 dirhams of bread per day.*”³³

After the relocation, the Western press, as usual, began to make adverse publications, and the Ottoman government and the Turkish people were unjustly accused through the distortion of actual events. Countries such as the United States, Russia, and United Kingdom and the Western media used these events against the Turks without researching and questioning. Reports from the U.S. Consul in Mersin, Edward Nathan, to the U.S. Ambassador in İstanbul, Henry Morgenthau, were falsely reported to the U.S. by the Ambassador. Biased, false, unfounded reports deliberately sent by Morgenthau were used against the Turks by the American press.

In accordance with U.S. President Wilson’s instruction to find incidents to legitimize US’s entry to war and to create a public opinion for this, Morgenthau, who at the time served as the American Ambassador to the Ottoman State, used the Armenian relocation issue. Identifying the Armenians as a Christian people that was being “oppressed and exterminated”, Morgenthau turned developments with regard to Armenians and several incidents of death during the forced migration of Armenians into a successful propaganda of massacre. A scenario that flagrantly contradicted with Morgenthau’s actual reports was prepared by the Morgenthau’s Ottoman Armenian translator and consultant, Arshag K. Schmavonian, journalist Burton J. Hendrick and U.S. Foreign Minister Robert Lansing, and was published in New York in 1918 under the name of “*Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story*”.

Lord James Bryce, who mostly got his information from Morgenthau, Johannes Lepsius, a German Protestant priest who was far away from the incidents, and Arnold Toynbee, who was a young historian at the time, also joined this propaganda bandwagon. Arnold Toybee, who would play a major role in creating public opinion, being employed by British Foreign Ministry’s War Propaganda Bureau, was at the forefront of the anti-Ottoman campaign. It was Toynbee, in his propaganda booklets, who first put forward the thesis that some 1.5 million were killed from a population of 1.8 million Armenians that allegedly lived within Ottoman territories.³⁴ In later years, such propaganda publications became treated as serious reference materials.

While partial newspapers and especially the Allied Powers were putting pressure on the newly formed government to accept the Western propaganda

33 Kumbül, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesine Göre Osmanlı Ermenileri (1914-1918)*, p. 81.

34 Özdemir ve diğerleri, *Ermeniler; Sürgün Ve Göç*, p. 68.

related to Armenians and to punish the alleged criminals, the Ottoman government took a decision that surprised everyone and asked for the establishment of an inquiry commission with regard to the relocation.

The government requested the establishment of an inquiry commission and asked for the participation of impartial lawyers in the commission. In order for this to happen, on 13 February 1919, the government sent notes to the governments of Sweden, Holland, Spain and Denmark. These four were countries that did not participate in the war. The Allied Powers, however, and especially the UK, prevented the four countries to send lawyers to the commission.

Below is the note sent by the Ottoman government, originally written in French.³⁵

While partial newspapers and especially the Allied Powers were putting pressure on the newly formed government to accept the Western propaganda related to Armenians and to punish the alleged criminals, the Ottoman government took a decision that surprised everyone and asked for the establishment of an inquiry commission with regard to the relocation..

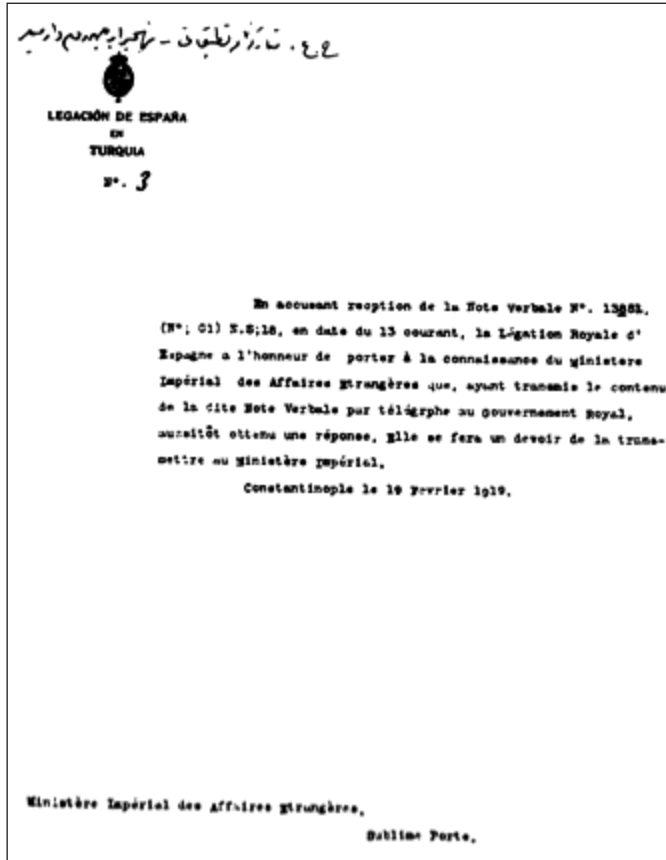
35 BOA. HR. MÜ, 43/17.

BOUTIME PORTE
 MINISTERE DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES
 No. 137
 N. 5
 M. N. N. N.
 N. 137
 1385A-18
 (Stamp)
 Lettre de recommandation
 que vous m'adressez.

Il est à la connaissance
 de la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 que S. M. le Roi a
 actuellement dans la juridiction
 comprise les habitants des
 pays de la partie
 de la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 et de la partie de la Maj. de
 S. M. le Roi de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 de la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)

arête, pour ce qui est de la
 partie
 S. M. le Roi a
 décidé cette question
 pour un objet de haute
 esprit et d'importance et
 décide d'ajourner une
 nouvelle Commission d'enquête
 de ces objets étranger ainsi
 parmi la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 pour ce que S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne) a
 décidé de faire la Maj. de
 S. M. le Roi de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 de rendre lui-même une
 copie de ce S. M. le Roi de
 Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 de rendre lui-même une
 copie de ce S. M. le Roi de
 Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)
 la Maj. de S. M. le Roi
 de Saraceni, (A. de la
 Roi de Pape. Or. P. Espagne)

Lettre vous sera bien adressée
 à cette demande.
 Il est bien entendu que tous
 les frais de voyage, apparemment,
 et autres de ce nombre sont
 à la charge de S. M. le Roi.



The note sent to the governments of Sweden, Holland, Spain and Denmark with regard to participation of impartial lawyers to inquiry commissions to be established with the aim of identifying the reasons of the relocation

8. THE INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED REGARDING THE RELOCATION

Furious over the fact that the relocation law was put into effect, Armenians continuously produced propaganda that put forth unbelievable numbers about the relocation. The United States and the United Kingdom began to investigate the Armenian claims. In this respect, the British mobilized all the members of their consulates and embassies after the occupation of İstanbul and began a serious investigation. The British brought experts from the UK for this investigation. Additionally, Greek and Armenian experts and translators were hired and they worked day and night for this investigation.

The British seized all documents related to the relocation. Additionally, live witnesses were gathered and were questioned for months. The British had already occupied all state offices. They expended great effort to place the Ottoman State into the position of a suspect. In the end, the British failed to find any evidence that could be used to incriminate the Ottoman State. Despite this, they arrested 144 high ranking military personnel and civilian Turks and exiled them to the Island of Malta. Though the British questioned these individuals for months, they failed to produce any results.

Actually, the previous UPP government, which had given the orders to have the Armenians relocated and resettled to different parts of the Ottoman State, had already opened investigations against those who had engaged in wrongful conduct or those who had gone against their orders by behaving in wrong ways.

The British thus asked the Americans for help, who were conducting their own investigation in the region. The United States, through its embassies, consulates, missionaries working in the schools set up by the US, and Major General James G. Harbord, carried a serious investigation. Despite the fact that they had carried out a long investigation in the region, the Americans too could not find any incriminating evidence and regrettably informed the British about this.³⁶

9. PROSECUTIONS REGARDING THE RELOCATION

9.1 The Establishment of Investigation Committees

The Ottoman government that newly came to power was put under pressure from all sides to investigate the past actions of the Union and Progress Party government and punish the perpetrators of some misconducts. Among the misconducts that were demanded to be investigated were the ones that took place during the relocation of Armenians.

Actually, the previous UPP government, which had given the orders to have the Armenians relocated and resettled to different parts of the Ottoman State, had already opened investigations against those who had engaged in wrongful conduct or those who had gone against their orders by behaving in wrong ways. In fact, in order to uncover such misconducts, special commissions constituted of the heads of the Council of State, Court of Appeal, and High Criminal Courts (Tr. *Yüksek Ceza Mahkemeleri*) had gone to various provinces in Anatolia and

36 Azmi Süslü, *Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayları*, Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Yayın No: 5, Ankara 1990, p. 145.

had conducted investigations. As a result of this investigation, many state officials had been sentenced to various punishments (including capital punishment) at a Court Martial (Tr. *Divan-ı Harb-i Örfi*) while the war was ongoing. The fact that those whose crimes were firmly established had already been subject to various punishments was affirmed by Sami Bey as well, who was the prosecutor at the first hearing of the Yozgat Relocation lawsuit. Sami Bey explained the numbers related to those who had been sentenced by the Court Martial upon the report of the Investigation Committees (Tr. *Tahkik Heyetleri*) as follows: 19 civil servants and civilians from the Sivas Province; 28 civil servants, 11 gendarmerie officers, 69 gendarmerie privates, and 111 civilians from Mamüratülaziz (Elazığ) Province; 69 people from Bitlis; 16 from İzmit; 29 from Nallıhan; and in total, 377 people were sentenced to various punishments.³⁷

Furthermore, although UPP was being accused of encouraging and supporting the misconduct that had taken place during the relocation, the UPP had in fact expelled its own members that had gotten involved in the aforementioned cases of misconduct.

Moving back to the time after the war ended, when the need arose for Investigation Committees to be sent to regions outside of İstanbul, the necessary decision was decided upon in the Council of Ministers meeting held on 11 December 1918. When the decision was taken, what was aimed was to accelerate the pace of the investigation, and ensure the tranquility and the security of the country. Due to the importance and the scale of the task at hand, it was deemed appropriate to divide the country into various zones. The Committees were to be constituted of civil servants from the Ministry of the Interior and the judiciary. It was decided that the civil servants to be appointed would be paid daily an additional three liras on top of their normal salaries. The regions that the Committees were to go to were as follows:³⁸

Provinces of Ankara and Kastamonu, and District of Bolu,
 Province of Trabzon and Shire (Tr. *Liva*) of Samsun,
 Provinces of Bursa and Edirne, and District of Çatalca,
 Province of Aydın, and Districts of Çanakkale and Karesi,
 Province of Konya, and Districts of Eskişehir, Karahisar (Afyon),
 Kütahya, and Antalya,

37 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargulamaları*, p. 63.

38 BOA., MV. 213/60; BOA., BEO., 340885

Province of Sivas, and Districts of Kayseri and Yozgat,
Provinces of Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis,
Provinces of Diyarbakır and Mamûratülaziz (Elazığ),
Province of Adana and District of Maraş,
Districts of Urfa, Zor, and Antep.

Council of Ministers' decision dated 12 December 1918, which was sent to the Ministries of Interior, of Justice and of Finance, to dispatch committees for the inquiry of those who committed crimes during the relocation and mobilization period, and to finance these committees from the treasury, is as follows (given here in Ottoman Turkish with Latin alphabet):³⁹

*Meclis-i Vükelâ
Müzâkerâtına Mahsûs Zabıtname
Sıra numrosu: 490
Târîhi 7 Rebî'ü'l-Evvel sene [1]337
11 Kânûn-ı Evvel sene [1]334*

*Tebliğ olunduğu devâ'ir:
Mâliye, Dâhiliye, Adliye
Târîh-i tebliği: 12 Kânûn-ı
Evvel [1]334*

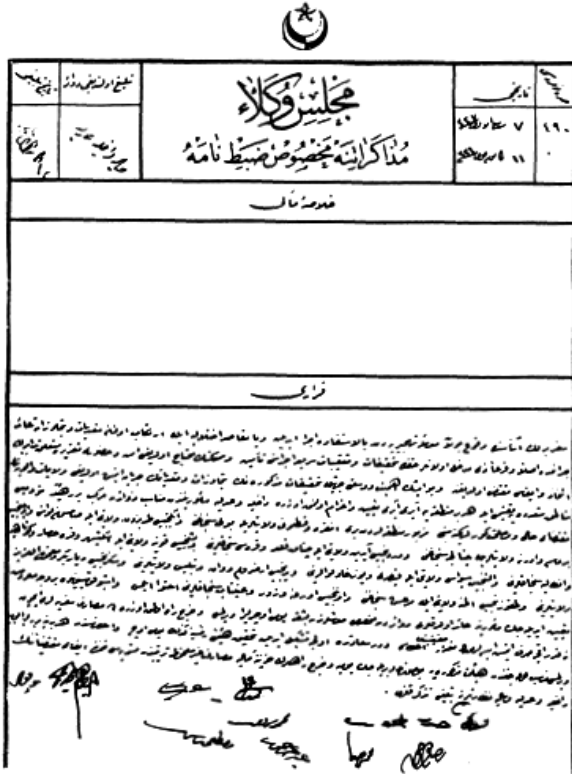
Karârı:

Seferberlik esnâsında vukû' bulan mu'âmele-i tehçiriyyeden bi'l-istifâde icrâ edilen eyâ makâsıd-ı ihtilâliyye ile irtikâb olunan ta'addiyât ve tecâvüzâtâ â'id cerâ'imde aslen ve fer'an zî-medhal olanlar hakkında tahkîkât ve ta'kîbât-ı serî'a icrâsını te'mîn ve memleketin muhtâc olduğu emn ve huzûru takrîre müte'allik tedâbîrin ittihâz ve îfâsı muktezî olduğuna ve bu işin ehemmiyet ve vüs'ati cihetiyle tahkîkât-ı mezkûrenin tecâvüzât ve ta'addiyâtın cereyân etmiş olduğu vilâyât ve elviyenin menâtik-ı müte'addideye taksîmi ile her bir muntakaya ayrı ayrı ta'yîn ve i'zâm olunmak üzere dâhiliye ve adliye me'mûrîninden münâsib zevâtdan mürekkeb birer hey'ete tevdî'i muktezâ-yı hâl ve maslahat görüldüğüne mebni mezbûr muntakalardan biri Ankara ve Kastamonu vilâyetleriyle Bolu sancağı ve ikincisi Trabzon vilâyeti ile Sâmşun livâsını ve üçüncüsü Bursa ve Edirne vilâyetleriyle Çatalca sancağını ve dördüncüsü Aydın vilâyeti ile Çanakkal'a ve Karesi sancaklarını ve beşincisi Konya vilâyeti ile Eskişehir ve Karahisâr ve Kütahya ve Antalya sancaklarını ve altıncısı Sivas vilâyeti ile Kayseri ve Yozgad livâlarını ve yedincisi Erzurum ve Van ve Bitlis vilâyetlerini ve sekizincisi Diyârbekir ve Ma'mûretü'l-azîz vilâyetlerini ve dokuzuncusu Adana vilâyeti ile Mar'aş sancağını ve onuncusu Urfa ve Zor ve Ayıntab

39 BOA. Meclis-i Vükelâ Mazbataları, 213/60.

sancaklarını ihtivâ eylemesi. Ve iş bu komisyonlara ber-vech-i ma'rûz ta'yîn edilecek me'mûrîne, â'id oldukları devâ'irden muhassas ma'âşlarından başka yevmî üçer lira verilmesi ve harc-ı râh olmak üzere de mesârif-i seferiyyeleri için ne kadar akçe sarf etmiş iseler bunun mikdâr-ı hakikîsinin i'tâsı ve Dersa'âdet'de evvelce teşkil edilen tahkik hey'eti re'îsine kezâlik yevmî üç ve a'zâsından her birine birer lira yevmiye verilmesi münâsib olacağından hey'ât-i mezkûreye bu suretle verilecek yevmiye ve harc-ı râhların Hazine-i Mâliye mesârif-i gayr-i melhûza tertibinden tesviyesi zımında îfâ-yı mukteziyyâtının Dâhiliye ve Adliye ve Mâliye nezâretlerine tebliği tezekkür kılındı.

Mehmed Şerîf	Rıza Tefvik	Hayri
Mehmed Rızâ	Ahmed Bey	Mustafa Reşid
İbrâhîm Mecîd Bey	Ali Bey	Abdurrahmân
Kostaki	Tefvik



Decision with regard to sending and reimbursing commissions for the inquiry of those who committed crimes during the relocation period

The tasks of the Investigation Committees were determined in the 14 December 1918 meeting of the Council of Ministers according to the points stated in the eight article of the 1 September 1910 (Rumi calendar: 19 August 1326) dated enactment concerning the “*banishment of armed gangs*” (Tr. *müsellâh çetelerin tenkîli*). According to this, Investigation Committees could carry out investigations regarding criminals whose misdeeds were notified and documented by deduction (Tr. *istidlal*) commissions and as well as civil servants. The Investigation Committees were also authorized (contingent upon a decision to be taken by the majority of their members): to have suspects arrested, to have suspects discharged with or without bail, to reclaim suspects’ arrest warrants, to send suspects to be tried by the Courts Martial upon the result of an investigation or to have them discharged upon being deemed that there was no need for a prosecution. Besides these, it was indicated that the verdicts of the Investigation Committees could not be appealed.⁴⁰

The places that the Investigation Committees were to go to were from time to time subject to change according to need or circumstance. Such changes occurred due to; the need for the setting up of Courts Martial in regions subject to martial law (Tr. *İdare-i Örfiye*), the country being more and more subject to occupation, the Ottoman State’s loss of control over the administration of certain regions, or the failure to civil servants who could go to such regions.⁴¹

9.2 The Establishment of Courts Martial

Taking as base the Martial Law Enactment (Tr. *İdare-i Örfiye Kararnamesi*) of 2 October 1877 (Rumi calendar: 20 September 1293), the government decided on 14 December 1918 for the establishment of the Court Martial. In the decision, it was indicated the Court Martial would punish (in the legally appropriate manner) those who, through taking advantage of the relocation process carried out during the mobilization, were involved in crimes related to the injustice and transgressions committed with revolutionary intentions. Moreover, based on the examination of the Investigation Committees, there were criminals who committed misdeeds during relocation (relocation criminals) and who as such needed to stand trial in criminal courts. It was expressed that there was a need for a speedy verdict mechanism due to these criminals’ trials’ “*need for time*” (Tr. *vakte muhtaç*).⁴²

40 BOA., MV. 213/62

41 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul’unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 69.

42 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul’unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 74.

Like the Investigation Committees, the Council of Ministers determined the structure and the working principles of the Court Martial according to the enactment dated 1 September 1910 concerning the “*banishment of armed gangs*”. According to the 24th Article of the aforementioned enactment, the Courts Martial’s verdicts were to be implemented by the order of the commander of the military administration (set up by Martial Law/*İdare-i Örfiye*), while death sentences were to be approved by the Ottoman sultan. According to the 25th Article, a Court Martial was to be constituted of one chief and four members and also one prosecutor. The chief and two of the members were to be members of the military and appointed by the Ministry of War, while the other two members were to be from the judiciary and appointed by the Ministry of Justice. Trials in the Court Martial were to be carried out openly and in a transparent manner. The verdicts of the courts were to be given with an absolute majority and without the right of appeal, however, the justification for the verdicts were the based on a present law.⁴³

The jurisdiction of the court immediately became a subject of dispute when the court was established. The issue of the jurisdiction of the court was to frequently come up during the trials in the forthcoming years, and became even more pronounced with the arrest of the members of the UPP. In opposition to the circles who viewed the arrest of UPP members as being unjust and unlawful, the anti-UPP press was defending UPP members’ arrests by stating that there was a martial law in place and that such courts were congruent with the Constitution (Tr. *Kanun-i Esasi*) of the Ottoman State. In fact, in an article published in *Türkçe İstanbul* and addressed to the Minister of the Interior, it was expressed that the government could not even be a factor within the framework of a civil law such as the Constitution, let alone be a factor within the framework of Criminal Procedures (Tr. *Ceza Muhakemeleri Usulü*). It was indicated that UPP members had no right to talk about procedures, and that it was not possible for them talk about procedures either politically or administratively. There was even a request to have the martial law enforced more strictly.

As a result, it was decided that Martial Law would be applied for relocation criminals outside of İstanbul and that Courts Martial would be set up in the provinces. In an official message sent from the Prime Ministry to the Ministries of War and Justice on 8 January 1919, it was notified that six Courts Martial, one each in Bursa, Tekfudağı, Edirne, Samsun and Antep had been established and that these courts would be formed by the appointments from high ranking administrators (*bey*s and *emir*s) (Tr. *ümera*), and members of the military and

43 BOA., Mv, 213/62; BOA., BOE., 340905.

the judiciary (the members from the judiciary's primary duties would be kept intact). In 14 January 1919, the members of the courts that were set up in the aforementioned provinces were appointed.⁴⁴

The courts that were formed on 20 January 1919 or which were planned to be formed and their area of jurisdiction are as follows:⁴⁵

İstanbul Court Martial: Province of İstanbul and Shires of Çatalca and İzmit,

Tekfurdağı Court Martial: Province of Edirne and Shire of Kale-yi Sultaniye,

İzmir Court Martial: Province of İzmir and Shires of Antalya and Menteşe,

Antep Court Martial: Province of Adana and the Shires of Urfa and İçel,

Bursa Court Martial: Province of Bursa and Shire of Karesi,

Van Court Martial: Province of Van,

Beyazıt Court Martial: Shire of Beyazıt,

Samsun Court Martial: Shire of Samsun.

The Edirne Court Martial and the Bandırma Court Martial that had been established on 8 January 1919 were dissolved upon the changes made on 20 January.

Upon the orders of Prime Minister Damat Ferit Pasha, new arrests were initiated on 10 March 1919. Excluding those from the time of ex-Prime Minister Tevfik Pasha, 22 people were arrested in the first wave of arrests. Among those arrested were individuals who had served in important positions of the state such as prime-ministership, *şeyhülislamlık* (supreme religious official of the Ottoman State), ministership, and deputyship in the general assembly, and also high ranking members of the UPP. Among those arrested were also the owner and lead columnist of the *Vakit* Newspaper Ahmet Emin (Yalman), the owner and lead columnist of *İleri* Newspaper Celal Nuri (İleri), and also two other journalists. Journalists Yunus Nadi and Cavid Bey

44 *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, 14 Kanun-ı Sani 1335 (14 Ocak 1919), nr. 3445.

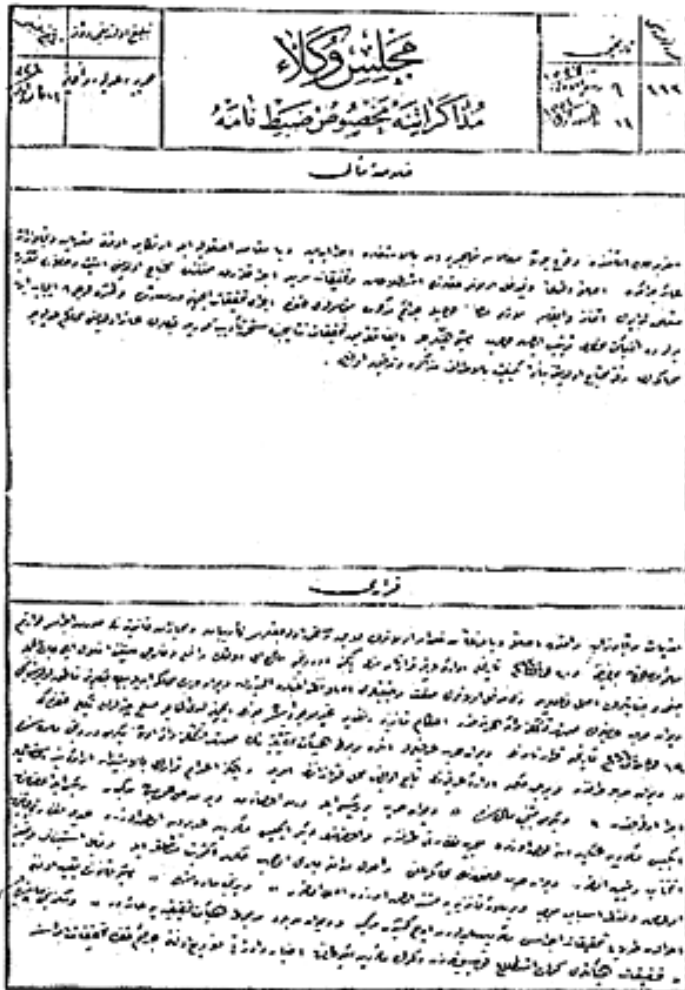
45 BOA., BEO., 341346; BOA., MV., 214/25.

meanwhile hid themselves to avoid arrest. In reality, Celal Nuri and Ahmet Emin did not have organic ties with the UPP members. Their arrest had more to do with the fact that they had criticized the Freedom and Agreement Party (Tr. *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası*), which was Damat Ferit Pasha's party, and had reacted against the arrests of UPP in the beginning of January during the prime-ministership of Tevfik Pasha. Some were arrested due similarity in name and were released once they were considered not to have committed any crimes.

Starting on 20 March 1919, including the ones who were arrested during the time of Tevfik Pasha, the number people who were kept under arrest at the Bekirağa Division (Tr. *Bölük*) had reached 106 and those who were arrested were accused for the Armenian relocation, mistreatment of the prisoners of war, and dragging the county into war.

On 4 April 1919, Halil Pasha (Enver Pasha's uncle and the former Commander of the Sixth Army), Atıf Bey (who had served as governor in various provinces), and Cemal Oğuz Bey were found in their place of hiding and arrested. The arrests were made in line with both the wishes of the Damat Ferit Pasha's government and the list given by the British. In fact, the British Deputy High Commissioner Webb had given between 15 March and 7 April 1919 a list of 61 people and demanded their arrest. These people were being accused of having carried out a "massacre" against Armenians. Meanwhile, not all people on the lists given by the British were arrested, and some of arrests were not included in the lists.⁴⁶

46 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 136-137.



The decision dated 14 December 1918 regarding the establishment and structure of the Courts Martial (MV, 213-62-1)

9.3 The Trials

The first case the Courts Martial handled was the trial regarding the Yozgat relocation. The trial was taken up by Court on 16 December 1918 under the leadership of retired general Mahmut Hayret Paşa, and the participation of two members from the military, and two members of the judiciary in the Extraordinary Court Martial formed in İstanbul.

Suspects accused of engaging misconduct during the relocation of people from Yozgat began to be arrested from the middle of the December 1918. Among the accused were Kemal Bey (District Governor [Tr. *Kaymakam*] of Boğazlıyan), Feyyaz Bey (civil servant for foundations in Yozgat), Major Mehmet Tevfik Bey (Commander of the Yozgat Gendarmerie Battalion), and three police officers.

The Yozgat Relocation trial that began in the Court Martial on 5 February 1919 was concluded with the deliverance of the verdict on 8 April 1919. In the verdict of the Court Martial headed by Mustafa Nazım Pasha, it was indicated that District Governor Kemal Bey and Major Mehmet Tevfik Bey did not carry out the relocation in accordance with their orders and that they had not respected the rights of Armenians for their own personal benefit. Furthermore, it was indicated in the verdict that the defendants had appointed irresponsible individuals as heads of the relocation convoys to realize their ill intentions, and that the defendants' guilt had been understood from the testimonies of the witnesses in the court.

Consequently, Kemal Bey and Tevfik Bey were deemed to be guilty according to the 45th Article of the Civil Criminal Code (Tr. *Mülkiye Ceza Kanunu*). However, because he was the highest ranking civil official of the district and alleged to be the organizer of the killings and the pillage that had taken place, Kemal Bey was deemed to be the main culprit, while Tevfik Bey was deemed to be a partner to the crimes that were committed. Thus, Kemal Bey was sentenced by the Court Martial to death according to the 171st Article of the Military Penal Code (Tr. *Askeri Ceza Kanunu*) and the 170th Article of the Civil Penal Code, while Tevfik Bey, who was considered to be guilty in the secondary degree, was sentenced to 15 years of temporary hard labor according to the 2nd Paragraph of the 45th Article of the Penal Code.

One day after the verdict, on 9 April 1919, Prime Minister Damat Ferit Pasha went to the palace to meet with Sultan Vahdettin, and put in a special effort to have the Court's decision urgently signed.⁴⁷

The Trabzon Relocation Trial began after the conclusion of the trial in Yozgat. This trial regarding the Trabzon relocation was concluded after the depositions and pleas of the sides and the verdict was delivered on May 28.

In the decision, former Trabzon Governor was found guilty of issuing secret orders, while Trabzon Union and Progress Ranking Clerk (Tr. *Kâtib-i Mesul*)

47 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 167, 169.

Nail Bey was found guilty of adhering to the secret orders and taking a number of measures to have Armenians killed in line with his secret order while seemingly implementing the relocation law. Both men were sentenced to death in absentia according to the 171st Article of the Military Penal Code and the 170th Article of the Civil Penal Code.

Amongst the defendants, Director of Taxation (Tr. *Rüsûmat Müdürü*) Ali Bey was found guilty of being a party to Governor Vali Azmi's crimes and serving for the furtherance of his corruption and was thus sentenced to 10 years of hard labor. Meanwhile, Chief of Police Nuri Bey was found guilty of not protecting Armenians and their properties enough despite being tasked with maintaining order in the city. He was sentenced to one year in prison and two years of being barred from civil service. The verdicts given were approved by the sultan on 29 May 1919, the text of the verdicts for published in *Takvim-i Vekayi* (official gazette) on 1 June 1919.

However, it must be noted here that the operating principles of these Courts Martials were legally flawed.

On the other hand, in the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 10 December 1919, it was expressed that the people who had been sentenced should be pardoned because the sentences had been delivered without taking heed of the statutory limitation. In response, Nuri Bey and Acente Mustafa Efendi's sentences were pardoned on 27 December 1919, however, according to the Council of State (Tr. *Şura-yı Devlet*) decision on 27 July 1920, the sentence regarding them being barred from civil service was excluded from the scope of the pardon.

Cemal Azmi, who had been sentence to death in absentia during the Trabzon relocation trial, was assassinated when he was on the run in Berlin by two Armenians on 17 April 1922.⁴⁸

These trials were followed by other trials in other Courts Martial and many people were sentenced to various punishments.

However, it must be noted here that the operating principles of these Courts Martials were legally flawed.⁴⁹ As stated earlier, there was no chance to appeal

48 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 174-183.

49 Feridun Ata, "Divân-ı Harb-i Örfî Mahkemelerinde Ermeni Tehciri Yargılamalarına İstatistiksel Bir Bakış (1919-1921)", *T.C. Başbakanlık Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu – Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi*, <http://www.atam.gov.tr/dergi/sayi-62/divan-i-harb-i-orfi-mahkemelerinde-ermeni-tehciri-yargilamalarina-istatistiksel-bir-bakis-1919-1921> (date of access: 10.08.2016). Also see; Pulat Tacar and Maxime Gauin, "State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility: The Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey and the Armenian Genocide: A Reply to Vahagn Avedian", *The European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 23 No. 3, 2012, p. 828-829.

against the Courts' verdicts. Furthermore, the Courts did not employ cross-examination of witnesses and, even worse, false witnesses were employed for the accusation of the defendants. In April 1920, Prime Minister Damat Ferit Pasha had even banned the defendants from hiring lawyers. In essence, these trials carried out by the Courts Martials were politically motivated in nature. They reflected the animosity between the Union and Progress Party (the party of the former government) and the Liberty and Agreement Party (the party of Damat Ferit Pasha's government). They were carried out under the behest of Damat Ferit Pasha's government that was keen to be in good terms with Allied Powers that had invaded the Ottoman State, and these Powers were pressuring the Ottoman government to punish Ottoman officials of the war. When Damat Ferit Pasha's government was replaced, the individuals that had been sentenced by these Courts Martials appealed against the verdicts and were subsequently "*acquitted of all or most of the charges [sentences]*".⁵⁰

9.4 Malta Exiles and Trials

Besides the other Ottoman officials of lower ranks, members of the Union and Progress Party began to be arrested with great enthusiasm as if there was a witch hunt and subsequently the trials in the Court Martial began. However, as days went by, no concrete verdicts emerged from the courts. The reason for this was that the alleged crimes put forth in the courts were not substantiated with clear evidence. Furthermore, disputes about the legal methods of the courts had continued for quite a long time. Having already suspected that no serious verdict would come out of the courts to the aforementioned disputes, the Allied Powers, upon seeing that the process of the trials was slowing down, began to lose hope that the UPP members would receive the punishment desired by the Allied Powers. The UK, upon seeing that the UPP members would not get punished by the extraordinary courts that it had pressured the Ottoman government to set up, moved to enact a plan to have UPP members taken to the Island of Malta.

UPP members began to be put on trial in Court Martial on 27 April 1919. In the session on May 4, the part of the trial regarding to the UPP pashas who were on the run was decided to be separated from the trial, since documents relevant to them could not be compiled. The trial of the other members continued until May 25. While the trial was still continuing, on May 28, the UPP members under arrest were taken away from the Bekirağa Division by a major tasked by the British Command.

50 Tacar and Gauin, "State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility...", p. 829.

Around six o'clock in the morning, three British officials arrived to the prison with transport cars and handed the prison's warden District Governor Ali Bey two lists containing names. In this event during which Custodian of İstanbul (Tr. *İstanbul Muhafızı*) Seyid Paşa was present, the individuals that were requested by the British were ones who had served in the highest positions of the Ottoman State. These individuals were taken outside and first made to line up, and were then boarded onto five transport cars (each carrying six of the individuals) under the escort of French and British soldiers. With no opportunity to sit down and thus forced to stand for the entire journey, these individuals were first taken to the Arapyan Inn (Tr. *Han*) and were later on exiled to the Island of Malta via a merchant ship. According to the list given to the Undersecretary (Tr. *Müsteşar*) of the Ministry of War Fevzi Paşa, the number of exiled individuals was first indicated to be 20, but a second list given later notified that the number of exiled individuals was 67.⁵¹

However, the questionable manner in which these Courts Martial operated was considered be problematic during the Malta Trials. The British prosecutors of the Malta Trials refused to use the evidence and proceedings of the Courts Martials.

The Court Martial that had been established with extraordinary powers to give heavy sentences to the leading figures of the UPP and the those responsible for the war, failed to

bring the trial to an end due to the fact that the defendants were taken away from the Court. Upon this development, the Court Martial notified that of the former administrators Prime Minister Said Halim Pasha, Ministers of Public Works Abbas Halim Paşa and Ali Münif Bey, *Şeyhüislam* Hayri Afendi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Nesimi Bey, Ministers of Justice Halil Bey and İbrahim Bey, Minister of Interior İsmail Canbolat, Minister of Education Şükrü Bey, and Minister of Provisions Kemal Bey were among the 67 individuals who were taken away to Malta, and that it was not possible for them to come to court. As such, the Court notified that it had decided that the part of the trial involving these individuals would be concluded later on from where it had been left off, and that “*for the time being*”, this part would be separated from the rest of the trial.⁵²

However, the questionable manner in which these Courts Martial operated was considered be problematic during the Malta Trials. The British prosecutors of the Malta Trials refused to use the evidence and proceedings of the Courts Martials. The trials of the former UPP ministers in the Court Martial was in

51 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 203-204.

52 Ata, *İşgal İstanbul'unda Tehcir Yargılamaları*, p. 206.

fact null and void, since the Ottoman Constitution stated that the ministers “could be tried only by the High Court for crimes committed in the exercise of their responsibilities”.⁵³ Beyond this, as alluded to earlier in Section 8 of this study, the British, despite their allies’ and their own extensive investigation, failed to find incriminating evidence against the exiled Ottoman officials, and these officials were eventually released by the British after two years.⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

The main topic of this study is about the relocated Armenians’ experiences after the relocation, the Ottoman government’s decisions regarding these people, and the return of these relocated people to their former place of residence. This study also looks into the measures that were taken to alleviate the difficulties that might have been experienced by the returning Armenians and the investigations regarding the relocation.

During these investigations, unfair trials had been conducted under the pressure from the Allied Powers and the Armenian Patriarchate, resulting in for example the hanging of an Ottoman district governor and a 15-year heavy sentencing for the *Şeyhülislam*.

The trials should have been conducted in an objective manner, Armenians that had been guilty of various crimes too should have been put to trial, the law should have been upheld during the trials. Not only were these not done, but all of the decisions that the Ottoman government had taken to the benefit of Armenians concerning orderly implementation of the relocation and the return of Armenians were disregarded, and the entire empire was placed into the position of the suspect.

The Courts Martial that had been established in various provinces had delivered unfair verdicts, and had portrayed innocent people as if they were murderers. With such decisions, the Ottoman State, which had co-existed with the Armenians for 600 years, had acted as the guardians of the Armenians, and had viewed them as the loyal people, was branded by these unfair Courts as a criminal.

53 Tacar and Gauin, “State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility...”, p. 829.

54 Ata, “Divân-ı Harb-i Örfî Mahkemelerinde...”; Tacar and Gauin, “State Identity, Continuity, and Responsibility...”, p. 829.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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FOREWORD

“TURKS AND ARMENIANS: NATIONALISM AND CONFLICT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE”

(SUNUŞ

“TÜRKLER VE ERMENİLER: MİLLİYETÇİLİK VE OSMANLI
İMPARATORLUĞUNDA ÇATIŞMA”)

The latest book of Professor Justin McCarthy, an eminent scholar of high reputation, was recently published, bearing the title “Turks and Armenians”.*

Prof. McCarthy, an eminent scholar of high reputation, is no stranger to the topic or the events of the First World War. He has done voluminous research, both demographical and historical, on the losses of the Turkish and Moslem populations of the Ottoman Empire, preceding and during WWI. Inevitably, this has also drawn him into Turkish-Armenian relations. He has, as an academic historian, recognized that reflecting the historical facts accurately, which are frequently manipulated and distorted to suit political ends, would be an uphill endeavor, swimming against the main stream. He has nevertheless kept to his scholarly integrity. Despite the hardships and obstacles he knew he would face -which actually reached such levels as efforts of academic defamation and threats to his well-being, he has valiantly written profusely on what his research showed to be the historical facts and truth against what has been propagated in the Christian World and the West about the bogus Armenian narrative and claims.

* McCarthy, Justin. *Turks and Armenians: Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire*. Madison, Wisconsin: Turko-Tatar Press, 2015. This book is available for online order from *Amazon.com*: <http://www.amazon.com/Turks-Armenians-Nationalism-Conflict-Ottoman/dp/1892381079>

This latest book “Turks and “Armenians” is the résumé, imbibed from his lifelong research on the subject, a conclusion of his previous works,** a collective assessment and an academic synthesis. As such, it carries a special significance and is worthy of outstanding recognition, as it reflects upon his life time research and studies, making it a master piece based on all previous work.

The challenging title of the book “Turks and Armenians”, certainly magnetic for those interested in the topic, has not been one of vanity or exaggeration. It has tackled and succeeded to uncover the roots of a historical development of how, with what machinations, two peoples of Anatolia, who lived together, side by side, in harmony, with common ways of life and traditions, with mutual moments of joy and grief could end up as adversaries or rather, were induced to be enemies.

The book does not overlook or underestimate the tragedies and losses suffered by the Armenian population. They are recorded within the proper context of the First World War, within their historical background and with analysis of the causes. On the other hand, the book equally acknowledges the tragedies and losses suffered by the Turks and Moslems, no less in magnitude -if not more, however totally overlooked and consciously side tracked by the Christian and Western narrative. Consequently, the book also reflects on the prejudice and defamation against the Turks in the Christian and Western World, further elevated with the support for the Armenian cause, reactivated in contemporary times by groups with their own political agenda.

Prof. McCarthy indicates that the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, rebelling to establish their own state with tactics and acts of terrorism inspired by Hunchak and Dashnak parties were so much detached from reality that they could not see that their cause was a lost one from the beginning -no matter how the war ended, that they unnecessarily made themselves pawns to serve allied powers' ends, leading themselves to a big calamity. As a demographer, Prof. McCarthy makes his point with the following reality: “If all the Armenians in

** - Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of an Empire

-Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims

-The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923

-The Ottoman peoples and the End of Empire

- Population History of the Middle East and the Balkans

- Who are the Turks? A Manual for Teachers

- The Armenian Rebellion at Van

- The Turk in America

- Sasun: The History of an 1890 Armenian Revolt

the Ottoman Empire had moved to what was called ‘Ottoman Armenia’ (the Six Vilayets), they would still have made up less than one fourth of the population. If all the Armenians in the World had moved there, they would have been less than forty percent.”

“Turks and Armenians” is published in English only. It is of necessity and importance to have it, first and foremost, translated into Turkish, and if possible, to those languages where Armenian allegations and claims are voiced. Prof. McCarthy has shown very clearly that consistent and scholarly counter arguments can be presented to Armenian narrative. Surely, views supporting Armenian allegations will linger on. Chauvinism and religious spirituality is as prevalent as ever. Furthermore, what Prof. McCarthy does not delve in his book, but what one can surmise is that many historical accounts with Turkey are again surfacing. Keeping the Armenian claims in the agenda becomes a means to serve others’ political ambitions.

However, from now on, those who will take part in discussions and presentations on Turks and Armenians, particularly those coming to the support of Armenian narrative, will have to take into consideration the overall content of Prof. McCarthy’s book, since only if they can come up with historical facts that could invalidate his findings would they be worthy interlocutors. Any discussion not taking into account those facts will not have any merit other than a jingoistic and/or religion based approach.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks, Professor Justin McCarthy, for your courage and academic integrity in writing such a fundamental book.

Seher ÇELEN
Hazel Çağın ELBİR
Ekin GÜNAYSU
Aslan Yavuz ŞİR
Ali Murat TAŞKENT
Mehmet Oğuzhan TULUN

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER SYNOPSIS AND REVIEW OF TURKS AND ARMENIANS: NATIONALISM AND CONFLICT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE BY JUSTIN MCCARTHY

(JUSTIN MCCARTHY'NİN "TÜRKLER VE ERMENİLER: MİLLİYETÇİLİK VE OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞUNDA ÇATIŞMA" KİTABININ BÖLÜM BÖLÜM ÖZET VE ANALİZLERİ)

Author: Justin McCarthy

Title: *Turks and Armenians: Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire*

Published: Madison, Wisconsin: Turko-Tatar Press, LLC, 2015

Language: English

Number of Pages: 265

Introduction and Chapter One

In the introductory pages and the first chapter of *Turks and Armenians: Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire*, Prof. Justin McCarthy makes a strong argument by stating that the widely accepted belief that the Turks are guilty of one-sided massacre of Armenians is a result of a traditional prejudice against Turks based on religious and ethnic racism. One of Prof. McCarthy's biggest success in this section of the book is the fact that he immediately captures the reader's attention by making his arguments more concrete with the racist quotations from an article published in 1827 in *Blackwood's* magazine in Britain and with his reference to August Keane who claims that Turks are "dull, reserved, somewhat sullen and apathetic, nearly all brave, warlike, even fierce, and capable of great atrocities". By pointing out to these two sources, he not only underlines the fact that the racist portrayal of Turkish people was embraced by the

intellectual and educated section of the Western society as well as the general public, but also effectively demonstrates the scope of the bias against Turks. It is also important to note that the prejudice against Turks continued well into the 20th century; the CASR/NER publications in 1916 used statements such as “bloodthirsty Turks,” and “Ottoman hordes” during the WWI.

In the introduction of the book, Prof. McCarthy makes three important points which, on the one hand, prepare a solid ground for his arguments presented in the following chapters, and, on the other hand, introduce the content of the book to his readers. First and foremost, by noting that Islam was seen as the traditional enemy of Christianity, he affirms that the prejudice against Turks had a religious dimension. Second, he elaborates on how the Caucasian race was deemed superior to the “yellow race”, which was associated with Turks, setting the basis for racial discrimination. Last but not least, he touches on how this propaganda was used by the politicians and missionaries to further their own practical ends.

Prof. McCarthy’s clear and straight forward language engages the reader from the first pages of the book. Though his arguments might be new to many readers in the West, given the fact that the commonly accepted version of the relations between Turks and Armenians is quite different than the facts presented in this book, the logic and the scientific approach behind his work not only disproves the “Myth of the Terrible Turks” but also deserves credit, for his objective accounts of the history of Anatolia.

Prof. McCarthy begins his first chapter, on Eastern Anatolia and the Southern Caucasus, by stating that “the thinkers who spent time on such questions speculated that the Garden of Eden must have been in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates river”, as a reference the beauty of the region. First few paragraphs of the chapter give an overview of the region’s geographic features, such as its climate and topography. In fact, Prof. McCarthy makes comparisons between the temperatures of the eastern and southern cities of Anatolia with that of American cities, thus effectively making the content specifically interesting for American readers.

After highlighting the obstacles posed by the physical geographical barriers of the region, he continues with giving important demographic information on the Turkish, Kurdish and Armenian populations. He attaches particular importance to the distribution of the Armenian population in Bursa (5%), Ankara (9%), Izmit (18%) and Istanbul (9%) and emphasizes the fact that “the Armenian populations in western Anatolia and Europe were quite different than those in eastern and central Anatolia” under the Ottoman rule. It is also important to note that he presents the relevant data in a clear and organized

manner by providing four detailed tables on the climate, the population distribution by religion and the demographic picture of Eastern Anatolia, Cilicia and the Russian Southern Caucasus.

Following his analysis on demographics, he focuses on education and reaches a clear conclusion that “nowhere was the superior situation of the Armenians more evident than in education”, basing his argument on a number of striking statistical facts. Here, we learn that “in 1901 there were only 201 Muslims in secondary schools” whereas the number of Armenian students attending Armenian private schools was as high as 1,070 and 390 in those operated by American missionaries. Gregorian, Catholic and Protestant communities had their own schools funded by American religious congregations. While the Armenians could afford to pay for their education in American missionary schools, supported by donations from the United States, “the impoverished government could not match the foreign and Armenian educational expenditure”. Due to these imbalances in education caused by the unequal financial resources, he argues, the Armenian populace “was better educated and more able to cope with the modern world”.

In the final section of this chapter, Prof. McCarthy takes a critical look at the relationship between the Armenians and the Ottoman State, and he underlines Armenians’ ability to interact with the European merchants due to their familiarity with the European finance industry and their language skills, which enabled them to become “intermediaries between European merchants and the government and the Ottoman market”. He also draws attention to the fact that Armenians became high officials in the government such as the ministers of Foreign Affairs, Treasury and Finance during the final decades of the Empire.

Chapter Two: Early History

In chapter two, “Early History”, Prof. McCarthy elaborates on the ethnic diversity in Anatolia by focusing on the origins of Armenians, Turks and Kurds. One of the positive things about this chapter is that despite his detailed analysis of the complex economic, social, political and religious relationships between the groups in question, the historical processes are presented in a simple, clear and understandable way, which makes his narration appealing for the readers regardless of whether or not they have the adequate prior knowledge on the subject matter.

Among the important points made in this chapter, religion occupies a crucial place, given the fact that in the early ages the construction of the Armenian

identity was in large part based on their religious ties with the Armenian Apostolic Church. In fact, Prof. McCarthy very effectively indicates how Christianity served as a common ground for European, American and Russian entities in providing certain social and economic support systems for the Armenians which were not available for the Muslims.

Refraining from over-sympathizing with any of the groups he mentions, he objectively lays out the complex relationship between the Armenians, Turks and Kurds by touching on every factor that plays a significant role in the construction process of these relations. In this context, he highlights how some Kurdish tribes assisted Armenian revolutionaries in smuggling weapons into the Ottoman East, while some Armenian revolutionaries were attacking Kurdish tribes. Yet, his most outstanding argument is that during the 19th century, as the Ottoman Empire extended its governmental control over its territories, not only Armenians, but also the Turks and Kurds suffered in Eastern Anatolia, mainly due to geographic factors, raids by armed Kurdish tribes and Russian attacks. In fact, multiple times throughout the chapter, he stresses that neither the Turks nor the Armenians living in eastern Anatolia were better off; that both groups had difficult lives.

Also central to this chapter is his analysis of Russia's quest for warm water ports and its political agenda set up towards this goal. Prof. McCarthy not only elaborates on Armenians collaborating with Russians when the latter invaded the eastern Anatolia in 1828, but he also highlights the fact that "the result of the Russian invasion was enmity and suspicion between peoples who had lived together for centuries", which is especially crucial to understanding the effects of the Russian policy of *divide and conquer*.

Prof. McCarthy effectively rebuts the widely accepted argument that only Armenians suffered under the Ottoman rule by making references to concrete historical events that uncover the complex relationship between Armenians, Turks and Kurds. Thus, *Turks and Armenians: Nationalism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire* is a thought provoking book presenting Prof. McCarthy's criticisms of the ongoing Armenian allegations and rebuttal of their arguments.

Chapter Three: Armenian Revolutionaries

In the 3rd chapter titled "Armenian Revolutionaries", Prof. McCarthy writes about the two major Armenian revolutionary societies: Dashnaks and Hunchaks. He elaborates the formation process of these revolutionary groups,

their ideologies, goals, and activities. While doing this, he demonstrates Armenian revolutionary uprising with the help of the maps of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, saving the readers from the event-space dilemma. He also stays away from shallow explanations and biased arguments and provides cause-and-effect analysis to understand the conflicts and complicated relationships in these regions.

First of all, Prof. McCarthy states that the Armenian revolutionaries were influenced by revolutionary and nationalistic ideologies which was spread among the Ottoman Armenians by Europeans and Americans. He presents the advantages and disadvantages of the Armenian revolutionaries and the Ottoman government in their conflict. However, he points out that success of the Armenian rebellion depended on the support from European powers.

McCarthy begins to explain the development of the Armenian revolts with the foundation of the Hunchakian Revolutionary Party in Geneva, Switzerland in 1887 by Armenian students from the Russian Empire. He states that the Hunchaks wanted to create a socialist Armenian state and believed that only after the Ottoman Armenians were “liberated” would the Armenians in Iran and Russia be joined with them in one state. He also touches upon Hunchaks’ official program, which called for violence and terrorism to achieve their goals.

He expresses that the Hunchaks took the Bulgarian Revolt in 1876 as a guideline to create their own nationalist state out of the Ottoman Empire. An Armenian revolt would follow the plan seen in Bulgaria: First there would be revolt and attack on Muslims, leading to reprisals. Europeans would condemn the Ottomans for the death of Christians, taking no notice of the slaughter of Muslims. Finally, either through diplomacy or war, Europeans would force the Ottomans to cede territory to a new Armenian land and Muslims would be forced out or killed, leaving an Armenian majority.

However, Prof. McCarthy states that Hunchak’s plan taken from the Bulgaria example did not work for the Armenians. The main reason was that in Bulgaria, the majority of the population was ethnically and religiously Bulgarian and Christian, but it was not the case for Armenians. If they wanted to create an Armenia, they had to kill or forcefully relocate more than half of the population, which was obviously not possible for Armenians to do. Therefore, their purposes depended on interventions of Europe, but the Europeans were unwilling to intervene.

In the light of such a background, Prof. McCarthy talks about the Hunchak Rebellion in Anatolia between 1894-96. Revolutionary gangs, mainly from

Russia, attacked Muslims in towns and villages. They attacked Turks and Kurds (McCarthy uses the term Muslim to define all of them) and Muslims responded Armenians with their own counter attack. Such events took place in Bayburt, Muş, Tokat, Sasun, and Sivas regions, and shortly after, all over eastern Anatolia. Revolutionaries destroyed Muslim's houses, shops and attacked soldiers and civilians. As one can guess, furious Muslim groups also lashed out at Armenians. While explaining the Hunchak Rebellion, Prof. McCarthy puts all historical realities on the table and does not show only one side's pains and sorrows during the Hunchak Rebellion, which is essential when writing about historical events.

Another crucial Armenian revolutionary group was the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaks), which was founded by Armenians in the Russian Empire. Prof. McCharthy states that the Dashnaks were more successful and planned than the Hunchaks. Like the Hunchaks, the Dashnaks aimed to create an Armenian state and believed that an European intervention was necessary. He states that although the Dashnaks were socialist, they emphasized on nationalism to unite all Armenian population.

He notes that Dashnak activities and main Dashnak organizers were known by the Ottoman government but that the government could not take necessary action due to the fear of an European intervention. Europeans were symphatetic to Armenians due to the anti-Turkish propaganda and religious prejudice. Any action against rebel Armenians was portrayed in the European press as attacks on innocents.

Prof. McCarthy also states that the Dashnaks and Hunchaks murdered Armenians who did not join their cause or who stood against them. He also states that these groups forced Armenians to pay 'revolutionary taxes', 'revolutionary donations' and other funds. Thus, Prof.McCarthy points out that Armenians had no choice but join the revolutionaries and fund their cause.

He also elaborates on the smuggling operations of the Armenian revolutionaries. Prof. McCarthy indicates that Armenians revolutionaries, in order to arm themselves, were smuggling weapons from Russia almost immediately after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 until World War I. He also states that revolutionaries smuggled in fighters for the cause. The main routes for smuggled armes and fighters were on the Ottoman-Russian border or from Russian territory through Iran. Most of the time, the Russian government and the Russian border guard generally overlooked the smuggling. By World War I, the Armenian revolutionaries were armed and ready to rebel.

Chapter Four: European Intervention, Ottoman Pacification

In the fourth chapter titled “European Intervention, Ottoman Pacification”, Justin McCarthy mainly elaborates on European Intervention in Ottoman affairs regarding Armenians before World War I. This chapter clearly exposes how the European powers watched over Armenian rebels and how the Ottoman government’s hands were tied by the Europeans when it tried to stop the Armenian rebel activities and maintain order in eastern Anatolia.

First of all, Prof. McCarthy underlines that European powers claimed the right to act as protectors of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and saw the 1878 Treaty of Berlin as a justification for their constant interference in Ottoman affairs concerning Armenians. He points out that Europeans forced the Ottoman government to implement reforms in favor of Armenians in eastern Anatolia, which actually aimed to weaken government’s sovereignty in the region by giving Armenians power. Indicating that the European powers, in essence, intended the dissolution of the Empire, McCarthy argues that the Empire was saved due to disagreements among them.

Prof. McCarthy acknowledges that, judged by modern standards, the Ottomans did not enforce satisfactory government in eastern Anatolia. The region was indeed not secure for both Muslims and Armenians and the economic situation in the region was poor. On the other hand, McCarthy points out that the actions of the Armenian revolutionaries prevented the government to make reforms. Also, poverty of the Ottoman state impeded any reforms or improvements. However, as Justin McCarthy clearly puts it in this chapter, Europeans were not helping in this respect.

This chapter clearly shows that Europeans constantly acted in favor of Armenians. Muslim attacks on Armenians were always portrayed as Muslim murders of Christians and “atrocities”, even if in some cases it was the Armenian rebels who attacked first and provoked Muslims. When Muslims attacked Armenians, European consuls and ambassadors complained to the Ottoman government, demanding action. On the other hand, if Muslims were attacked by Armenians, Europeans did nothing.

Furthermore, Prof. McCarthy points out that the Ottoman government was in a near impossible position when it attempted to stop and prosecute Armenian rebels due to continuous interference by Europeans. Arrests of rebels were reported in the European press as Ottoman oppression. Pro-Armenians demanded the release of the rebels convicted of treason which they called “political prisoners.” McCarthy provides several examples where Armenian

rebels, due to pressures especially by the British, were granted amnesty, which eventually emboldened the rebels and led them to believe that they can act with impunity. He also mentions that Russia in particular prevented the Ottomans to prosecute rebels by claiming that they were Russian subjects and therefore, could not be tried and punished by Ottoman courts. Correspondingly, McCarthy reveals Europe's hypocrisy and double standards. In Europe, such rebels guilty of treason, would have been punished severely. Having said that, the Europeans were making it nearly impossible for the Ottomans to prosecute the Armenian rebels.

Prof. McCarthy highlights poverty and lack of resources as the key for many of the problems in Eastern Anatolia. 1877-78 Russo-Turkish war had damaged the Ottoman Empire both militarily and economically. As a result of the war, the Empire had lost manpower, supplies and productive territory and was forced to pay Russians ruinous amounts of indemnities, although it was the Russians who started the war. Furthermore, the fear of another Russian attack had forced the Ottoman government to make huge military expenses and it couldn't spare soldiers for internal security. European powers also worsened the economic state by enforcing capitulations. These factors prevented the government to improve the lives of the population in Eastern Anatolia.

However, Prof. McCarthy points out that the Ottoman government did what it can to ensure the security of Armenians and appease them. Most importantly, more Armenians were included in the government and even in security forces in order to make them feel more loyalty to the government. Also, in order to maintain order in eastern Anatolia and preventing conflicts, the government also tried to take measures such as assigning more soldiers to internal security, despite its economic burden, to protect Armenians in their conflicts with several Kurdish tribes.

Ultimately, Prof. McCarthy indicates that Ottomans had tried to improve the situation in eastern Anatolia and in fact, in the 1890s, conditions had started to improve and order was gradually restored. However, at the same period, ironically, Armenian revolutionaries had begun their campaigns against the Ottomans. Therefore, it is possible to say that the Europeans, although indirectly, prevented the restoration of peace and order in the region due to their support to Armenian rebels.

Chapter 5: Armenians and the Ottoman Revolution

McCarthy's narration of this chapter begins with an overview of Abdülhamit II's reign and its consequences. The repressive reign of sultan Abdülhamit II

led to the formation of revolutionary groups amongst Ottoman military officers and intellectuals who came to believe that radical changes were needed to prevent the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Some believed in centralization of power with a strong government, a unified state, and an Ottoman nationalism that moved passed ethnic identities. Others believed in a system of autonomous national groups which would nevertheless work together for the good of the empire.

These differing revolutionary plans were cut short by the revolt of the Third Army in 1908, which brought a different kind of Ottoman Revolution that placed the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) to power within the empire. Out of practical considerations, CUP chose to collaborate with the Dashnaks, seeing them as a key to appeasing Western powers. The Dashnaks became an integral part of the political alliances that kept CUP in power, became the main representative force of Ottoman Armenians, and used their position to bring many of their members (who actively worked to undermine the empire) into positions within the empire's administrative and political system. However, despite their proclaimed loyalty to the empire, the CUP always suspected that the Dashnaks were in fact vying for secession. When, in the subsequent years, the CUP managed to firmly establish itself in power and when it realized that there was simply no way to appease the Western powers, relations between CUP and the Dashnaks began to deteriorate.

The incident in Adana in 1909 only served to mark up the tension between the Armenian revolutionaries such as the Dashnaks and the empire. Armenian revolutionaries were encouraging local Armenians in this region to arm themselves. As put forth by the British consul in Adana, the swagger with which the local Armenians carried their guns and their verbal remarks began to provoke the local Muslims. Tensions between both sides eventually turned a minor altercation into a major communal fight. Although the local Armenians had the guns, the local Muslims had the numbers. Roughly 5000 Armenians and 1000 Muslims perished in the violence and excessive behavior that ensued. The Ottoman government took action against the perpetrators of violence, albeit in an ineffective way, for example by executing some of the culprit Muslims and Armenians. As McCarthy puts it; "No one planned the events in Adana, neither the Armenians nor the Turks. The deaths resulted from a long-simmering distrust between Muslims and Armenians."

The fight over property rights in eastern Anatolia further damaged the relations between Ottoman Armenians and the empire. The Ottoman government exercised weak control over the Kurdish tribes who operated in eastern

Anatolia. These tribes vied for power amongst each other, extracting protection money from Muslim and Armenian farmers alike, and paying few taxes to the government. Meanwhile, wealthy Armenian money lenders also preyed on the population by lending money and seizing property when debts were not paid. As such, Kurdish overlords and Armenian lenders turned local farmers into little more than serfs. The Dashnaks wanted reforms to improve Armenian farmers' situation. However, the Ottoman Empire lacked the manpower to truly bring the Kurdish tribes and carry out reforms for the good of both Muslim and Armenian farmers, and furthermore did not wish to alienate the Kurdish tribes too much and risk losing their military support against the Russian Empire. Some Kurdish tribes actually collaborated with the Russians when it suited their interests. As such, the Ottoman government adopted a delaying tactic against all sides, which pleased no one, and increased the suspicion held both by Armenian revolutionaries and Kurdish tribes. The Dashnaks wanted the "feudalist" Kurdish tribes to be punished, something the government was incapable of doing. Meanwhile, the Kurdish tribes saw the government as an "enemy of traditional status and privileges" of the tribes. As such, the Ottoman Empire was caught in the middle of two conflicting sides, incapable of finding an effective solution.

The Dashnaks gained great legitimacy and influence from being a part of the CUP government. They used pressure and punishment to silence or remove any Armenian who did not agree with their work and methods. This included forcing the removal of the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul. Knowing that the CUP regime's reluctance to put a stop to their machinations to avoid Western interference, the Dashnaks went about stockpiling weapons and recruiting revolutionaries. They intimidated local Armenians into buying the weapons they were selling, making a huge profit out of them. They also drew up elaborate plans for what McCarthy calls "partisan warfare", meaning a revolutionary and secessionist struggle that was to be waged against the empire and the Muslim population. These plans were distributed in communities where Armenians lived, who were expected to carry out the orders given to them. As McCarthy points out, the actions of Armenian revolutionaries such as the Dashnaks was very alarming for the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian revolutionaries' involvement in the creation of the two "inspectories" (easily exploitable special administrative zones established with the pressure of Western powers and Russia) in the eastern section of the empire was the final nail in the coffin for relations between the Ottoman government and the Armenian revolutionaries. The Ottoman government came to see the Armenian revolutionaries as untrustworthy groups that posed a danger no different than that of the one posed by the British, French or Russians.

McCarthy's narration of these events serve to highlight the following fact to the reader: the latter half of the 19th century and the 20th century presented a number of conundrums for the Ottoman Empire. Both the Western powers and the people of the Ottoman Empire were well aware that the empire was in decline and that reform was need to resuscitate it. However, the Ottoman Empire lacked the resources and unity needed to carry out such reforms.

As McCarthy explains, the empire needed the cooperation of both Ottoman Armenians and Kurdish tribes to make reforms easier to carry out, but both groups actually worsened the situation with their behavior. In the end, the weakening Ottoman Empire became caught in the middle of the power struggle of Western powers and Russia, and the machinations of both Kurdish tribes and Armenian revolutionaries. It simply lacked the capacity to carry out changes that would have help put a stop to its disintegration.

Chapter 6: World War I

McCarthy tries to give an overall picture of the most critical phases of Ottoman-Armenian relations in this very densely informative chapter. He concludes that the war was devastating for all people in Anatolia and states that “at the end of the war, the population of eastern Anatolia was far different than it had been for centuries... Armenians were gone... number of Muslims were greatly diminished”. The result of the World War I was a region that was left with ruins, disease, and devastation.

McCarthy begins his narration by explaining the events that led to this ruin. He argues that the reemergence of the Armenian rebellion in eastern Anatolia, their joining of forces with the Russians, and coordinated assistance for the Russian advance in Eastern Anatolia proved successful as the Armenians and Russians occupied Van. Armenians provided intelligence, struck a blow to communications between Ottoman army outposts, raided civilian posts to divert attention of the Ottoman security forces behind the front lines and therefore successfully forced the Ottoman army to detach one third of its forces to fight the Armenians in and around Van. Armenians proved very helpful for the Ottoman defeat and tried make the occupation even easier for the Russians when they began the occupation of Van in advance of the anticipated Russian occupation.

As McCarthy delicately highlights, the Armenian rebellion became uncontrollable when the Russians realized they were taking action not only against the Ottoman forces in the region but rather acted against the Muslim

civilian population. Russians were later defeated and during their retreat they abandoned the Armenians in Van, determined not to seek Armenian support again in the future.

McCarthy argues that the main effect of the rebellion in Anatolia was to create chaos in the interior and draw away soldiers who should have been fighting the Russians. Ottoman government realized that the Armenian rebellion was a critical factor and their success was a direct result of local support, either voluntary or involuntary. Thus McCarthy later describes some of the prominent rebellions by the Armenians that occurred in 1915 that reflects the level of the threat to internal security of Anatolia; in Sasun-Muş-Bitlis (February 1915), Sivas-Karahisar (February 1915), Zeytun-Maraş (January 1915), Urfa (August 1915), Musadağı (August 1915). As a result, Ottoman government had to treat these rebellion as an extensive insurgency and therefore took measures to deal with this growing security threat during a time of war. Ottoman government lacked the adequate resources and manpower to come up with a gradual counterinsurgency policy, thus it necessitated a more radical approach, namely what McCarthy calls the “forced migration” of the Armenian population from the provinces in active, large-scale rebellion and/or occupied previously by the Russians. McCarthy recommends the use term “forced migration”, but he continues to use the terms “relocation” and “transfer” interchangeably and frequently during the chapter.

McCarthy argues that the forced migration process did not include all the Armenians. Accordingly most Armenians in western Anatolia and Ottoman Europe, who were not considered a danger, were excluded from the relocation order. All the orders and regulations regarding the process indicated to the fact that there was concern for the well-being of the relocated Armenians and in no way reflected a desire to cause death or directly kill Armenians. In fact, as McCarthy correctly points out, there were no documents, regulations, or orders that directly indicated an intention or will to destroy Armenians. All the evidence, with regard to the official policy of the state, proves the opposite. McCarthy admits that Armenians suffered greatly from the process, as did all the peoples in the empire who bore the effects of the war in Anatolia, but this was due to government inefficiency, lack of resources, and rapaciousness of Kurdish tribes, criminals, and even some avaricious Ottoman officials. McCarthy states that in theory the relocation process were to be orderly and well supervised, but the system could not cope with the process.

McCarthy tries to give some estimates with regard to the number of people who were relocated, which is only possible when someone makes use of the relocation statistics, what is known of the relocation process, and population

records. Accordingly, McCarthy argues that slightly more than half of Armenians in territory controlled by the Ottomans were not relocated; most of them also either left before or during the war for Istanbul and other cities, or other countries such as Greece, US, Canada, France, Bulgaria, and Egypt.

One of the most important arguments McCarthy makes in this chapter with regard to the intention of the Ottoman government to keep the well-being of the Armenians who were relocated is that the Ottoman government openly supported and invited the American efforts to aid the Armenians in need. Ottoman government accepted missionary aid to Armenians that amounted to approximately 10 billion dollars today, which McCarthy correctly calls the greatest expenditure of non-governmental relief funds in history. He also points to the fact that at the same period, Muslim population in Anatolia was also suffering from diseases and starvation, but they could only make use of the limited government resources.

McCarthy uses this example to show that Ottoman attempts to protect the Armenians were deficient. But he also argues that the Ottoman government could not protect the Armenians from other threats besides starvation and disease. Ottomans were incapable of properly protecting either the Armenians or even its own troops from the attacks of the Kurdish tribes, bandits, looters etc. However, explaining the underlying reasons behind the attacks against the Armenians in the region, McCarthy claims that a good deal of the hatred and vengeance against the Armenians was an inevitable result of their earlier attacks and collaboration with the Russians, and their rebellion that cost the lives of the Muslim civilian population in the region. The existence of over 250,000 Muslim refugees who were forced out of Southern Caucasus and their sufferings at the hands of the Armenians under Russian command could probably be another factor. In the end, McCarthy states that there were unprincipled state officials who misbehaved against the Armenians, but Ottoman government recognized these crimes took place and responded with investigations that led to trials and even executions at the time. He correctly points out to the fact that neither the Russians nor the Armenians ever tried those who were guilty of crimes against Muslims.

McCarthy suggests that the Armenian killings and expulsion of the Muslims was not a result of pragmatic interest calculation. Armenians were destroying the region and cities together with the infrastructure and the settlements, the space that they were aiming to take under control. According to McCarthy, the only remaining explanation was the hatred felt against the Muslims, because the level of destruction made no sense. Even when in 1916 Russians invaded eastern Anatolia again, Armenians proved uncontrollable by continuing

murders of Muslims, and therefore Russians began to court-martial the Armenians in the region prior to their retreat in 1917 revolution.

McCarthy shows that the atrocities by the Armenians continued after the Russian retreat to the South Caucasus. Anticipating Ottoman advance, Armenians fought the Muslims in the region, especially the Kurdish tribes, and when the Ottoman forces began to take control of the region the remaining Armenians fled, leaving devastation and committing mass killings on their way. Armenian executions of the Ottoman prisoners of war, who were kept under guard by the Russians were an example of the hatred McCarthy mentions throughout the chapter.

McCarthy analyzes the Armenian attempts to establish control over the lands in the south, mainly in Adana, by assisting the French occupation in the region and argues that in the end this attempt also failed due to Armenian atrocities against the Muslim population in the region, which resulted in a coordinated collaboration between the Turks and Kurds against the French and the Armenians. Armenians were abandoned by the French as a result, and most of those Armenians fled with the French.

McCarthy's evaluation of the World War I is full of details despite the shortage of space. He successfully points out to several critical points that clearly shows how the Ottoman state fairly perceived a direct threat that had been gradually developing before and during the war. Despite the physical and social devastation of the threat McCarthy also shows how the Ottoman government displayed a delicate concern for the civilian lives, however deficient the implementation of the process, and showed good intentions by admitting to the fact that the administration of the precautions for the safety of the Ottoman state were inadequate and therefore any help to that end were welcome. He profoundly demonstrates how the Armenian rebellion and insurgency were abandoned by the foreign powers at the end of the war and even then how the Armenians played a devastating role for the region.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In the conclusion part, McCarthy gives a general framework of his book, "Turks and Armenians" by focusing on how Turks were seen and what was believed of the Turks. Besides that, although Armenians had the lesser population in Six Vilayets, McCarthy highlights the irrationality of desire for minority rule by giving examples and providing documents. McCarthy, points out the importance of the right description of the genocide term by submitting

names who tried to form the definition of the genocide term including the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Justin McCarthy states that the true history is always underestimated and virtual sources were only mentioned by newspapers and magazines. What happened in the World War 1 is the product of American missionaries and British propagandists' studies.

McCarthy emphasizes that the true events in the Eastern Anatolia was never reflected in a just way. The events were always narrated by the pro-Armenians and prejudice against Turkey was fed with one-sided reports.

On the other hand, McCarthy states that no one tried to narrate events with the contributions of Turks. There is an unjust case here according to McCarthy. Actually, Turkey had no time to deal with such discussions because they tried to rebuild the ruined country. Turkey still have problems of defending herself but these are directly related with not dealing with older problems. Nevertheless, Armenians' modern claims were grounded on the historical propaganda activities. It is pointless to ground the Armenian nationalist identity on historical propaganda data, because none of them are based on truths, but based on what they want to believe, like the classification of "Terrible Turks".

Armenians has always dreamt the creation of Ottoman Armenia. Nevertheless, there is a distinct problem; Armenians were always dreaming of acting as a majority. This is nothing more than emulation to European majorities who had been integrated in the community they had been living in. However, Armenians were distinct to Professor McCarthy for being very few in Six Vilayets. Moreover, McCarthy adds if all Armenians in the world had come to Anatolia, the population would have been still below forty percent. According to Justin McCarthy, Armenians were less than one-fourth of the population in these Six Vilayets. What the Armenians sought was to dominate the whole population, although they were minority in the Anatolian community.

McCarthy mentions that, according to Armenians, eastern Anatolia, Cilicia and southern Caucasus were Armenian lands and everyone but Armenians were invaders and foreigners. McCarthy states that the Dashnaks claimed that the whole land belonged to them. McCarthy states that, despite the fact that 1.7 million Muslims were forced to leave their lands in the South Caucasus and Crimea, they had never made territorial claims.

McCarthy says, today, Armenians use their allegations as their warranty and

Armenians are certain that Turkey will not gain European Union accession if they will not accept the Armenian allegations.

The question of genocide is very confusing in general as Justin McCarthy says. However, it is clear that, if there is an intention to exterminate a group of people, it can be one of the acceptable components of act of genocide. Justin McCarthy highlights some names to make the definition of genocide clear in readers' mind. McCarthy says that, there is an evolution of the term 'genocide'. Henry Huttenbach and Peter Drost's definitions are grounded on killing of individuals, but what missing is "an attempt to kill all members of large groups.

As a wider definition of genocide, Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn are brought to the attention of the readers of Turks and Armenians. According to McCarthy, their definitions seem much clearer than the definitions of Huttenbach and Drost. Chalk and Jonassohn made a strong contribution to the definition by using "one-sided mass killing" and "authority intend". Israel Charney, the last name who made a final contribution to the definition of genocide, emphasized "the essential defenselessness of the victim." All stages of the genocide definition lead people to identify Nazi state of mind during the act of genocide.

Pointing out that "the most important quality of genocide is intent", Justin McCarthy states that, "most definitions of genocide, including the UN definition, are strangely silent on intent." According to McCarthy, if Ottoman administration had intended to kill Armenians, it would not have enacted a relocation policy. Moreover, there is no proof of any Ottoman intended to kill all the Armenians. On the contrary, there are countless indicators that Ottomans had never intended to exterminate the Armenian population in Anatolia. For instance, McCarthy draws attention to the fact that officials who persecuted Armenians were tried by Ottoman courts.

To conclude, McCarthy highlights that there had been a mutual massacre during World War I and in a war case, it is a natural result to be subjected to starvation and disease. McCarthy ends his words by saying no one was guilty and no one was innocent. Therefore, the case was not genocide, but it was a war.

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THERE WAS AND THERE WAS NOT

(*BİR VARDI, BİR YOKTU*)

Author: Meline Toumani

Title: There Was and There Was Not

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Language: English

Number of Pages: 286

Meline Toumani's *There Was and There Was Not* was published in 2014 and was acknowledged as one of the remarkable books of the year. In this book, Armenian American author Meline Toumani, who grew up in the US, reflects on Turkish and Armenian approaches to the events of 1915. She also questions the attitudes of the Armenian diaspora in five chapters. Toumani emphasizes that what motivated her to write this book was to obtain rational reasons that would enable her to accuse Turkey for the 1915 events (since she considers the 1915 events to be a genocide) and also surpass the perspective of the Armenian diaspora.

The first chapter, titled *Diaspora*, stresses upon the successful impact of summer camps held in Massachusetts (United States) that elaborate upon the memories and convictions of the previous generation Armenians and pass them onto next generation Armenians. Notably, Toumani carefully delves upon the continuous oppressive atmosphere to which she has been exposed to since her childhood by her Armenian community in the US. The author indicates the sense of pressure is also the result of various methods that are akin to brainwashing, and result in a domineering discourse about the “genocide” in the summer camps.

In the rest of the book, Meline Toumani explains the reasons why she became obsessed with the events of 1915. Accordingly, she narrates the protests between Armenians and Turks held in New York and some noteworthy statements made during these protests against Armenians and Turks. For her, this can be considered as the main reason that provoked her to think about the claims of these two groups of people.¹ Furthermore, the diaspora's accusatory attitude towards Turkey has influenced her thinking about the dispute about the 1915 events. It can be seen that this attitude pushes some individuals like Toumani towards seeking of new ways of thinking about long-running disputes.

The following chapters are primarily concerned with Turks' and Armenians' attitudes and views towards the current diplomatic relations. In order to examine realistically this relationship and to observe Turks' approach to the Armenian question, Toumani settled in Turkey in 2006 for some time. Although she felt like a stranger and had feelings of hatred in the first instance, she admitted that she demolished these feelings stemming from the biased attitude of the diaspora. Then, she left Turkey to carry on her studies in Armenia. Toumani indicates fairly that she could not feel a sense of belongingness to Armenia, despite the fact that it is the country of her people. On the other hand, Toumani underlines that some historical facts are deviated by the diaspora, such as the number of Turks killed in 1915. In this way, Toumani tries to shed light on the historical background of the 1915 events.

One of the crucial things provoking Toumani to write this book was Hrant Dink and his assassination. Toumani states that his ideas concerning the relationship between Armenia and Turkey, and Armenians and Turks, are similar and she has often taken inspiration from his opinions. His death has therefore caused a great amount of shock and pain for Toumani.

In the final chapter, titled *Power*, Toumani emphasizes the online petition organized by four Turkish writers and scholars titled "We apologize" (Tr. *Özür Diliyoruz*).² This petition contains a common declaration towards Armenians and is signed by a group of like-minded people in Turkey. It should be noted here that the people who signed this petition showcase a common, peculiar mindset; they have an opposition to Turkish identity and/or to the Turkish state due either to personal or ideological reasons, and dogmatically latch onto the genocide narrative as a way to criticize Turkishness or Turkey. Moving back to the Toumani's narrative; she makes some remarks about the use of the term

1 Meline Toumani, *There Was and There Was Not* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2014), p. 97.

2 Toumani, *There Was and There Was Not*, p. 271.

“Great Catastrophe” instead of “genocide” in this petition. According to her, “Great Catastrophe” is a deliberate usage and is not sufficient to empathize with the feelings and pain of Armenians. The organizers of the petition, meanwhile, have indicated that the use of the term “Great Catastrophe” makes it easier for Turks to recognize the events of 1915 as “genocide”.³

According to the author, one must first become a free-thinking individual by exceeding the approach of the Armenian diaspora and understanding the Turkish public in order to reveal the truth. According to Toumani, this necessitates a change in perspectives of these two groups of people. As a matter of fact, though Toumani defends these views, she uses the terms “we” and “us” when referring to Armenians, which actually conflicts with her point of view, undermining the uniqueness and individualism that she is trying to emphasize throughout her book. Besides these, harshly criticizing the Armenian diaspora’s approach does not prevent her from defining 1915 events as genocide. As Toumani refers in the book, one can easily realize that the Armenian diaspora is mainly organized around the idea of having the 1915 events recognized as a genocide.

Meline Toumani and *There Was and There Was Not* has been both positively and negatively criticized by members of the Armenian diaspora. There have also been some Armenians who have declared Toumani as a traitor. Toumani being branded as a “traitor” should come as no surprise, since she, despite holding the conviction that there was a genocide, has publicly criticized (through her book) the attitude of a diaspora that is completely obsessed with the idea of accusing Turks and Turkey at every turn. The following comments, appraisements, and interviews carried out by various newspapers or writers showcase some of the reaction that Toumani’s book has received:

*Toumani considers beyond national identities and reflects an individualistic approach.*⁴

*Meline Toumani’s brave book provides a different view for the relationship between the Turks and Armenians. While she deals with the Armenian diaspora persisting [that] the genocide should be recognized, the ignoring of Turks [about the “genocide”] is [also] criticized.*⁵

3 Toumani, *There Was and There Was Not*, p. 272.

4 Joanna Scutts, “Review: ‘There Was and There Was Not,’ hate and possibility, by Meline Toumani”, *The Washington Post*, 5 December 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/review-there-was-and-there-was-not-hate-and-possibility-by-meline-toumani/2014/12/05/5c7587e0-5959-11e4-8264-deed989ae9a2_story.html

5 Eric Bogosian, <http://www.melinetoumani.com/>

*Toumani tries to reach a consensus at the human level in spite of Turkish culpability.*⁶

*Armenian obsession with genocide restrains Armenians to progress and reach high potential.*⁷

As can be seen from such comments, despite the fact that she wholeheartedly believes that there was a genocide, her ability to criticize the diaspora's overall attitude was presented as a brand new approach to the Armenian question.

In conclusion, it can be stated that Meline Toumani tries to find concrete and logical answers for the Armenian obsession regarding the claim of genocide. In general, it is often emphasized in her book that habit of acting like an imitator and servant of the diaspora's discourse must be overcome and that Turkey has to acknowledge her "culpability". In *There Was and There Was Not*, Meline Toumani states that reconciliation can be achieved only by the bilateral acknowledgement of differences, the objective examination of historical facts, and self-criticism of the parties subject to these discussions. Taking all of these ideas in, the main importance of this book lies in the fact that, irrespective of her convictions about the 1915 events, Toumani was able to: 1) Overcome the dogmatic attitude that was instilled upon her during childhood, 2) Muster the courage to live among those who are portrayed as the enemy (the Turks), and 3) Muster the courage to publicly criticize her own people's attitude about an extremely sensitive subject such as the 1915 events.

6 Christopher De Bellaigue, "There Was and There Was Not" by Meline Toumani", *The New York Times*, 23 January 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/25/books/review/there-was-and-there-was-not-by-meline-toumani.html?_r=0

7 Neery Melkonian, "Meline Toumani, the Armenian Genocide and the Politics of Appeasement", *Huffington Post*, 28 January 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/christopher-atamian/meline-toumani-the-armeni_b_6548486.html

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