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ARMENIAN STUDIES
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Facts And Comments

Alev KILIÇ

The South Caucasus In 1905-1906 According
To "The New York Times" Coverage

Nigar GOZALOVA - Eldar AMIROV

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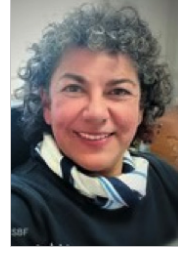
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As always, the first article in the 43rd issue of our journal is “**Facts And Comments**”. This article covers Turkey-Armenia relations as well as domestic and international developments of Armenia in the period of January-July 2021. During this period, Armenia endured serious internal instability caused by the outcomes of the 2020 Karabakh War. Amidst this instability, the Armenian government vacillated between adopting a realist and peaceful policy based on regional cooperation and a surrealist and revanchist one. The consequences of the defeat in the war against Azerbaijan further increased Armenia’s dependence on Russia, narrowing its margin of double play between Russia and the West. Although the war and the following ceasefire agreement testified to the fact that Karabakh is part of the territory of Azerbaijan and that the question of status is confined solely to the question of what rights are to be accorded to the Armenian minority living in Karabakh, Armenia nevertheless continued in its contacts with the West to plea for sovereignty over Karabakh. The West did not surprise and once again unscrupulously sided with and further encouraged the Armenian narrative. Meanwhile, Turkey continues to be seen as an enemy, but the search for regional cooperation and neighborly relations with acknowledged benefits has gained prominence in the agenda. The internal instability and heavy criticism of the Armenian government led to snap elections, resulting in a landslide victory for Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

In their article titled “**The South Caucasus In 1905-1906 According To ‘The New York Times’ Coverage**”, Nigar Gozalova and Eldar Amirov evaluate the news coverage received by the Armenian-Azerbaijani Turkish clashes that took place in the South Caucasus in the years 1905-1906. For this, the authors chose *the New York Times* (NYT) newspaper due its position as one the leading newspapers of that time (a position it continues to enjoy today). This evaluation enables the authors to understand how the clashes were portrayed to and perceived by the public, especially in the West. It is revealed in the article that the NYT closely followed the events related to the clashes and produced numerous reports. However, the article also reveals that the reports were not objective, because despite the numerous facts cited about the complex nature of the clashes and significant casualties on both sides, the Azerbaijani Turks were still portrayed as main the culprits. The western mentality behind such unfair coverage of ethnic clashes persists to this day, as we have witnessed in the unfair treatment Azerbaijan received during the 2020 Karabakh War against Armenia and its efforts to retake the lands occupied for years by Armenia.

In her article titled “**Red Army Propaganda In The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic: An Investigation On Posters**”, Elif Hatun Kılıçbeyli uses a special analytical method called “semiotic model” to analyze Soviet era posters meant to glorify the Red Army and Armenia’s forceful incorporation to the Soviet Union. Kılıçbeyli first delves into the formation of the Red Army and what is to be understood from the words “ideology” and “propaganda”. Forming this historical and theoretical context, the author proceeds to analyze Soviet era posters to uncover the explicit and implicit meanings they were meant to convey to their audience and the effects they were meant to have on them. The author’s analysis reveals that, through the Red Army propaganda posters, Soviet authorities sought to explain the ideological purpose of the Red Army’s incorporation of Armenia into the Soviet Union and emphasized the Red Army’s “indispensable” role in ensuring the internal and external security of the Union.

In his review essay titled “**Aurore Bruna’s Anti-History Of The Ankara Agreement**”, Maxime Gauin evaluates the 2018 book version of the Chair of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) of Marseille, Aurore Bruna’s master’s thesis titled *L’Accord d’Angora de 1921. Théâtre des relations franco-kémalistes et du destin de la Cilicie* (English: *The Ankara Accord of 1921. Theater of Franco-Kemalist Relations and the Fate of Cilicia*). Gauin indicates that the book is “a repetition of most of the [unjustified] traditional grievances of the Armenian nationalists against Turkey, the French diplomacy, and the large majority of the French press in 1920-1923.” He points out that the book contains several factual errors and the misreading of the way events unfolded between the Turkish national liberation movement headed by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, France, and militant Armenian nationalists. Even more serious are some references made by the author herself that, when scrutinized, contradict her own arguments. Gauin thus argues that Bruna’s book cannot be considered a scholarly contribution due to its numerous and substantial flaws, and that it should be viewed as a propagandist, political pamphlet that symbolizes the opposite of what a scholarly historical work should be.

Have a nice reading and best regards,

Editor

EDITORIAL / BAŞYAZI

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FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

Alev KILIÇ*

Abstract: *This article covers Turkey-Armenia relations as well as domestic and international developments of Armenia in the period of January-July 2021. The period under review has already been registered in the historical annals as one where the second independent Republic of Armenia (third according to Armenian sources, which also count the Soviet era republic), has waged a war, endured defeat and gone through serious internal havoc and instability. During these uncertain times, Armenia's government has vacillated between adopting a realist and peaceful policy based on regional cooperation and a surrealist and revanchist one encouraged by the Diaspora, the Apostolic Church and western partisan supporters. The defeat in the 2020 Karabakh War against Azerbaijan and its consequences have further increased its dependence on Russia, narrowing Armenia's margin of double play between Russia and the West. Although the war and the following ceasefire agreement testified to the fact that Karabakh is part of the territory of Azerbaijan and that the question of status is confined solely to the question of what rights are to be accorded to the Armenian minority living in Karabakh, Armenia has nevertheless continued in its contacts with the West to plea for sovereignty over Karabakh. The West did not surprise and once again unscrupulously sided with and further encouraged the Armenian narrative. The US President's 24 April statement was one such partisan step. The strategic dilemma and vacillation have kept on as well with regards relations with Turkey, as on the one hand, Turkey is seen as an enemy, while on the other hand, the search for regional*

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cooperation and neighborly relations with acknowledged benefits has gained prominence in the agenda. Heavy criticism from the vociferous old guard, unabashedly pro-Russian yet vehemently against the ceasefire and eventually the peace agreement, accusing Pashinyan with treason -one of the lesser disparaging remarks pronounced against him- inevitably led to snap elections. Interestingly, the Diaspora representatives also openly joined the anti-Pashinyan rhetoric. Pashinyan's landslide victory was a surprise to many.

Keywords: *Pashinyan, Ayvazyan, Putin, Lavrov, ceasefire agreement, transport corridors, snap elections, US President's statement*

Öz: *Bu incelemede Ermenistan'ın iç ve dış dinamiklerinde ve Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerinde Ocak-July 2021 ayları arasındaki gelişmeler ele alınmaktadır. İncelediğimiz dönem, 1992 yılında tarihinde ikinci kez (Ermeni siyasetçilere göre, Sovyet dönemi de hesaba katılarak üçüncü kez) bağımsız olan Ermenistan devletinin bir savaş yaptığı, bir yenilgiye, ciddi bir iç karışıklığa ve istikrarsızlığa girdiği bir zaman dilimi olarak tarihe geçmiştir. Bu dönemde Ermenistan yönetimi; bölgesel işbirliğini esas alan, gerçekçi ve barışçı bir politika ile Diasporanın, Apostolik Kilisenin ve batılı yandaşlarının baskısı ve teşvikiyle, hayalperest ve intikamcı bir strateji benimseme arasında yalpalamıştır. 2020 Karabağ Savaşı yenilgisi Rusya'ya olan bağımlılığını daha da arttırmış, Ermenistan'ın Batı ile Rusya arasında ikili oynama marjını daraltmıştır. Savaş ve ateşkes anlaşmasının Karabağ'ın Azerbaycan'ın toprak bütünlüğü içinde yer aldığını kanıtlanmasına, statü konusunun münhasıran Karabağ'da yaşayan Ermeni azınlığa tanınacak haklara inhisar ettiğini göstermesine rağmen, Ermenistan Batı ile temaslarında Karabağ üzerinde hak iddia etme girişimlerini sürdürmüştür. Batı'nın Ermenistan'ı bir kez daha bu iddialarında destekleyen, hatta teşvik eden izansız tutumu şaşırtıcı olmamıştır. ABD Başkanının 24 Nisan açıklaması da bu yönde taraftar bir adım olmuştur. Türkiye ile ilişkiler konusunda da stratejik ikilem ve yalpalama devam etmiş, Türkiye bir yandan düşman olarak tanımlanırken, diğer taraftan sağlayacağı çıkar açık olan bölgesel işbirliği ve komşuluk ilişkilerinin nasıl geliştirilebileceği arayışı gündeme gelmiştir. Diğer taraftan, bir yandan Rusya'ya kayıtsız şartsız bağlılık beyan eden, diğer yandan ateş-kes anlaşmasına ve izleyecek barış anlaşmasına karşı çıkan eski yönetim önderlerinin ve taraftarlarının Paşinyan'a karşı başlattıkları ses getiren kampanya ve Paşinyan'ı en hafifinden vatana ihanet ile suçlamalar erken seçime gidilmesini kaçınılmaz kılmıştır. İlginç olan, Diasporanın önde gelen temsilcilerinin de Paşinyan aleyhtarı bu kampanyayı açıkça desteklemiş olmalarıdır. Paşinyan'ın seçimlerde sağladığı ezici çoğunluk birçoklarını yanıltmış ve şaşırtmıştır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Paşinyan, Ayvazyan, Putin, Lavrov, ateşkes anlaşması, ulaşım koridorları, erken seçim, ABD Başkanının açıklaması*

1. Domestic Developments in Armenia

Following the 44-day war with Azerbaijan in 2020 settling the Karabakh conflict, the heavy defeat and Azerbaijan regaining its territory under occupation, except approximately two-thirds of Nagorno-Karabakh, led to deep disappointment, grief, and reaction in Armenia and in the Armenian Diaspora. While the Armenian Government, aware of the realities in the field, displayed a relatively more realistic stance, the old guard of previous administrations and their followers, chanting under the banner of opposition, as well as radicals and militants of the Diaspora spearheaded by the Dashnaksutyun (the Dashnak Party, Armenian Revolutionary Federation-ARF) with head quarters in the United States (US) and France, adopted a revanchist approach and refused to acknowledge the defeat. In search of changing the outcome, envisaging preparations for a new military venture, they initiated a vociferous opposition to topple the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

On the other hand, in the Armenian press, although in a covert manner, self-criticism was expressed to the effect of “we reaped what we sowed”. There were also those who drew links with the mistakes made a hundred years ago.¹ The following were cited as the main mistakes:

- We deluded ourselves that we could continue for 50 more years the occupation that we maintained for 25 years and make it permanent.
- We exaggerated our army’s power and the belief that it could not be defeated.
- We dreamed about a new war and gaining new lands.
- We thought that Azerbaijan could not dare fight a war.
- We could not take into account Turkey’s support for Azerbaijan.
- We thought that Armenia’s closed borders with its neighbors would not prevent Armenia’s development.
- We exaggerated the Armenian Diaspora’s power, support, and our expectations.
- We forgot our mistake of a hundred years ago regarding the support from sympathizing western countries.

¹ “What Happened and Why: Six Theses,” *Mirror Spectator*, November 24, 2020, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2020/11/24/what-happened-and-why-six-theses/>

- We paid the price of our greed by not withdrawing in time from the seven Azerbaijan provinces we occupied.
- We took the easy way out by accusing the administration of treason, betrayal, and being sold out to foreign interests.

In the aftermath of the war, with the exploitation of intense emotions and fresh grief, the mistakes leading to the defeat were covered up. The voice of the opposition, despite being the minority, was at a level that could drown out the realities. The Government was left under pressure. 17 “parties” formed of various non-parliament groups and spearheaded by Dashnaksutyun members initiated protests and rampancy, demanding the immediate resignation of Prime Minister Pashinyan, the forming of a temporary government of technocrats, and the holding of early elections.²

In his national address broadcasted on television on 27 November 2020, Pashinyan reiterated his discourse that the Armenian people support him and that the opposition was acting to spread chaos with the help of “external forces” known by the people.³ On 3 December, the opposition agreed on senior politician Vazgen Manukyan, who was the first prime minister during the years 1990-1991 following the independence, to become the transitional prime minister candidate.⁴ With a joint declaration, the opposition once again rejected the November 2020 ceasefire agreement signed between Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia, describing it as a “national disaster and treason”.⁵

The President of Armenia, Armen Sarkissian, who adopted a stance in support of the opposition, questioned the use of the 170 million Dollar remittance from the Hayastan Armenian Fund sent on 7 December from the US and France and requested a detailed report from the administration.⁶ The Prime Ministry and Fund administration did not respond directly to this attempt and it was stated that a large portion of the provided revenue came from Los Angeles and that 370 million Dollars of aid was made to Armenia since the Fund’s establishment in 1992.

2 “17 Armenian Political Parties Demand Resignation Of Nikol Pashinyan and His Team,” *Arminfo*, November 9, 2020, https://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=57905&lang=3&_cf_chl_jschl_tk_=pmd_3cbbab9d9dfa1f239a3379046ac522f0c96b13a9-1627411803-0-gqNtZGzNAjijcnBszQ96

3 ““Most important objective is to provide for stability and security around Armenia, Artsakh’ - PM,” *ArmenPress*, November 27, 2020, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1036087/>

4 “Opposition Names Vazgen Manukyan Candidate for Prime Minister,” *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, December 3, 2020, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2020/12/03/opposition-names-vazgen-manukyan-candidate-for-prime-minister/>

5 Gayane Saribekian, “Opposition Leaders Insist on Pashinian’s Resignation,” *Azatutyun*, December 29, 2020, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31025195.html>

6 “Armenian President Wants Government To Return \$100 Million Donation,” *Azatutyun*, December 7, 2020, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/30988085.html>

Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Armenia's first President, a benefactor of Pashinyan in that period, ventured to meet with the former Presidents Serzh Sargsyan and Robert Kocharyan, for the second time in 20 years to back the demands of the opposition for Pashinyan's resignation (the three men reportedly met for the first time in October 2020 to discuss ways of stopping the Karabagh war. Ter-Petrosyan and Kocharyan offered to jointly travel to Moscow for urgent talks with Russian leaders. Pashinyan refused to authorize them to negotiate on behalf of his administration). In this 25 March 2021 meeting, Ter-Petrosyan made a public call for Armenia's two other former presidents to form an electoral alliance with him to jointly try to oust Prime Minister Pashinyan's "criminal and nation-destroying regime". Kocharyan rejected it out of hand, while S. Sargsyan did not immediately express any opinion but later made his rejection clear. Not giving in, Ter-Petrosyan repeated his call of alliance again on 5 May, again to no avail. On this occasion, Ter-Petrosyan said, "the continuation of Pashinyan's regime is much more dangerous for Armenia and Karabagh than even the possible or supposed threats coming from Azerbaijan and Turkey".

Ter-Petrosyan also condemned the opposition for resorting to violence and threatening to overthrow the government by a coup d'état. Moreover, he took issue with the opposition's prime minister candidate's statements, for instance, his "A great force will gather against Turkey, the world will not forgive Turkey for its insolence. If an alliance is formed against Turkey, we are in that alliance", warning such utterances would have destructive consequences for Armenia and were thus very dangerous. He also underlined that Manukyan did not understand that his dream of a non-existent anti-Turkey alliance might constitute an action, not only against Turkey or against the Turkish-Russian agreement, but also against Russia. Ter-Petrosyan increasingly hardened his anti-administration discourse in time. In March, he said that Pashinyan had to resign "in the interest of the nation" and suggested that the parliament grant him legal guarantees and immunity and that he at the least temporarily left the country.⁷

The opposition, which issued a decision of joint action under the title "National Salvation Movement", called for nation-wide demonstrations on 5 December. The Dashnaksutyun representative that assumed the movement's coordination issued an ultimatum to Pashinyan that he resign until 8 December.⁸ Kocharyan also called on his supporters to participate in the

7 "Ter-Petrosian Calls For Armenian PM's 'Immediate Resignation'," *Mirror Spectator*, March 18, 2021, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2021/03/18/ter-petrosian-calls-for-armenian-pms-immediate-resignation/>

8 "Hundreds Protest in Armenia after PM ignores the Deadline to Resign," *Al Jazeera*, December 8, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/8/hundreds-protest-in-armenia-after-pm-ignores-deadline-to-resign>

opposition demonstrations, thus making public his political ambitions.⁹ In his speech broadcasted on television, Kocharyan did not hesitate to mention that the Pashinyan administration legitimized Azerbaijan's operation with its approach creating an impression of non-reconciliation and not knowing what it wanted during the negotiation period with the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, that it placed its territorial integrity principle on the forefront through its "Artsakh is Armenia" discourse, that it appropriated the aggressor title by provoking conflict in the North at Tavush in June 2020. Furthermore, he claimed that the Pashinyan administration's handing war medals to 70 Armenian soldiers after this conflict with the discourse of defeating Azerbaijan and Turkey constituted warmongering, that the Minister of Defense's "new wars for new territories" discourse did not leave any alternative to Azerbaijan other than a military response. He ended his speech by stating "If I were in power, the war would not have started."

The Armenian Apostolic Church also actively took part in the politics and openly displayed a stance supporting the opposition. In his message on 8 December addressing the Armenian people and the Diaspora, the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin, Karekin II, accused Pashinyan of dictatorial governance and called on him to resign immediately for the country's welfare.¹⁰ The Catholicos also called for the national parliament to act responsibly and elect a new prime minister. The Catholicos of Cilicia (in Antelias/Lebanon), Aram I, did not remain idle either. In his message broadcasted to the Armenian public, he stated "(...) despite the brave resistance of our heroic army against the Turkish-Azerbaijani army we lost. We also lost our national dignity and pride. Our expectation is that the conciliatory transitional government to be formed under the leadership of the new Prime Minister to be elected will give priority to the organization of elections to the National Assembly." Moreover, Aram I declared the year 2021 as the year of "Artsakh" (Karabakh). These high-level clerical statements demonstrated once again how much religion and politics are intertwined and the role of religion in Armenia's politics.

The Diaspora Armenians, mainly in the US and France, also issued declarations of support to Armenia, calling for unity while supporting the opposition to a large degree. A US citizen of Armenian origin, purporting to be employed in the US legislative branch and justice departments, published statements targeting the Pashinyan administration in the name of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), which is the biggest contributor to the Armenian cause in the world. Below are some of the odd claims of this

9 "Robert Kocharian: The Current Authorities Consciously or Unconsciously did Everything to Make This War Inevitable," *Arminfo*, December 5, 2020, https://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=58982&lang=3

10 "Catholicos Karekin II Urges Pashinyan to Step Down," *Asbarez*, December 8, 2020, <https://asbarez.com/199029/karekin-ii-urges-pashinyan-to-step-down/>

Diaspora statement, which disparages the Pashinyan administration and exhibits Turcophobia:¹¹

“PM Pashinyan abolished the original ministry and created the role of High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs. This new position would serve to coordinate programming between all of the Armenian ministries and diasporan communities. Rather than appointing someone with vast experience in community organizing or with an existing network in the Armenian government, PM Pashinyan appointed Zareh Sinanyan, the former Glendale Parks & Recreation Commissioner, former Glendale City Mayor, and a once law practitioner. High Commissioner Sinanyan then appointed Sara Anjargolian as his Chief of Staff, an Armenian-American attorney with a vast network of ties to American non-governmental organizations and expats living in the Armenian capital of Yerevan. This undynamic duo has failed to demonstrate leadership.”

“After Pashinyan marginalized Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan (arguably the most qualified minister in the present administration), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has become rudderless. With resignation after resignation, the title of Foreign Minister recently landed on Ara Ayvazyan, an individual with no known diplomatic accomplishments that would merit his elevation to the highest diplomatic office.”

“Tigran Khachatryan resigned from the Pashinyan government with the efficiency of a paratrooper jumping from an airplane. Pashinyan then appointed Vahan Kerobyan to the position. The highlights of Kerobyan’s resume are that he managed a supermarket chain in Armenia from 2004 to 2012 and later served as CEO of ‘Menu.am,’ the restaurant delivery start-up in Armenia (which I should mention has terrible reviews). Kerobyan may demonstrate a native business management background but he lacks the credentials and experience to manage economic policy, financial regulation, and foster economic stability in the aftermath of a war. For example, after the capitulation document was announced on November 9th, 2020, Kerobyan seeking to ingratiate himself with Armenia’s war-mongering neighbors, commented in an interview that ‘Turkish ports will open and many vast opportunities will be provided... perhaps the Azerbaijani market will open for us, and our market for Azerbaijan.’ This statement not only betrays Kerobyan’s inability to consider Armenia’s national security but also reveals an astounding failure to understand the calamity of

11 Sarig Armenian, “The Pashinyan Amateur Hour in Armenia,” *California Courier*, December 15, 2020, <https://www.armenianclub.com/2020/12/15/the-california-courier-online-december-17-2020-2/>

flooding Armenia with cheaper Turkish and Azerbaijani goods, which would undoubtedly destroy entire sectors of Armenia's economy. Kerobyan may be an expert grocer but he has no business running an economy.”

“In this tour of amateurs, the biggest winner is the first lady turned wannabe commando, Mrs. Anna Hakobyan, the prime minister's spouse. Through a series of tone-deaf social media posts, GI Anna appears perfectly coiffed with nails done and a pressed uniform attempting to persuade the audience that she is serving on the battlefield.”

In response to early election pressure, Pashinyan declared on 25 December that he was ready for an early election next year.¹² The oppositional front rejected Pashinyan's early election offer on 28 December. The opposition insisted on their demands that Pashinyan first resign and leave office, that a transitional government be established, and only then should early elections be held. In view of this conditionality, the parliament majority party spokesperson requested Pashinyan to withdraw his early election offer due to the opposition rejecting it.

It was announced on 5 January 2021 that President A. Sarkissian, who spent the new year vacation in the United Kingdom (UK) where his children and grandchildren live, was infected with Covid-19 and taken into quarantine. It was stated that he was taken to the hospital for treatment on 13 January.¹³ In his article titled “Towards The Fourth Republic¹⁴” published on the Presidency's official website on 11 January, A. Sarkissian dwelled in self-criticism and evaluation of the past thirty years. He attributed the failure of defeat to the implementation of certain tactics and policies from the very beginning. He claimed that “the information war was lost both externally and internally, we had only managed to deceive ourselves”. The press comments were that A. Sarkissian, who taught in London during the Soviet period between the years 1984-85, assigned as ambassador to the UK, the EU, Belgium and the Vatican in 1992, assigned to the UK once again as a Special Ambassador during the years 1998-2000, acquired British citizenship, was elected as the first president of the presidential system with former President S. Sargsyan's patronage despite his British citizenship, needed to answer many

12 Avet Demourian, “Armenia's prime minister offers to discuss early election,” *Associated Press*, December 25, 2020, <https://news.yahoo.com/armenias-prime-minister-offers-discuss-200155575.html>

13 “Ermenistan Cumhurbaşkanı Sarkisyan hastaneye kaldırıldı,” *Sputnik Türkiye*, 12 Mart 2021, <https://tr.sputniknews.com/dunya/202103121044017473-ermenistan-cumhurbaskani-sarkisyan-hastaneye-kaldirildi/>

14 Armen Sarkissian, “Towards the Fourth Republic,” *Presidency of Armenia*, January 11, 2021, <https://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2021/01/11/President-Armen-Sarkissians-article/>

of the questions himself while making those criticisms. With this prelude, prosecutors initiated an official criminal investigation on 3 May into renewed allegations that A. Sarkissian was not eligible to serve as head of state because of his past British citizenship. The President and his Office did not immediately react to the development.

The Prime Minister, who traditionally participates in the Orthodox Christmas, did not attend the 6 January celebrations due to his self-isolation from the pandemic. It was claimed in the comments that the real reason was the dispute with the Church and the demands by senior clerics for his resignation. The opposition's calls for Pashinyan's resignation and street demonstrations continued unabated. The former President Kocharyan also increased the level of criticism and made the accusation that "If the Prime Minister of Armenia was Turkey's agent, he would take all the actions that have been taken in Armenia"¹⁵ in a speech on 28 January.

Statements in favor of terrorism also started to surface in such an atmosphere. The "press bureau" of the criminal terror organization ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberalization of Armenia) published a long interview with the terror organization's "political bureau" representative. In the interview, based on anti-Turkish claims and hate mongering, ASALA made the threat that it reserves the right to retaliate by the same logic. It was expressed that the only means for Armenia's sovereignty and security will be Turkey's partition and ensuring Armenia's access to international waters. The importance of the Diaspora was emphasized in this outcome. Additionally, ASALA's political leadership issued a declaration on 20 January celebrating the 46th anniversary of ASALA's establishment.¹⁶ This declaration stated;

"Armenian Secret Army for the Liberalization of Armenia, with reference to the official applications it has received, decided to 'tactically stop' the actions in the armed struggle for national-independence. However, taking into account the decline of the independent role of the Republic of Armenia and the restriction of its sovereignty, [ASALA] has been invited to revise its attitude towards 'tactical stop' by developing a new strategy of reasonable activity".

The state of emergency that was declared in Armenia on 11 September 2020 due to the Covid-19 outbreak was extended for six months on 11 January 2021 as the efforts to curb the pandemic failed.

15 "Robert Kocharyan: 'We will win Armenia's next election'," *OC Media*, January 28, 2021, <https://oc-media.org/robert-kocharyan-we-will-win-armenias-next-election/>

16 Barçın Yınanç, "Turkey warns its foreign missions against 'ASALA threat'," *Yetkin Report*, January 28, 2021, <https://yetkinreport.com/en/2021/01/28/turkey-warns-its-foreign-missions-against-asala-threat/>

Pashinyan, who was exposed to the question of the former President S. Sargsyan on why the ballistic Iskander missiles purchased from Russia were not used and to accusations of making mistakes in the 2020 Karabakh War and being responsible for the defeat, explained that these missiles “either didn’t explode at all or only by 10 percent [of them exploded]”. The subject turned into an international argument that led to the reaction and protest from Russia, in which Pashinyan resorted to stepping back with his defense that he was misinformed.¹⁷ Afterwards, Azerbaijan also brought the subject to the agenda and shared records that these missiles were used in Shusha in a way that would cause the civilian casualties.

On 25 January, the Armenian military unexpectedly sided with the opposition groups demanding Pashinyan’s resignation through a declaration issued by the Chief of General Staff and approximately 45 high-level commanders in the Armenian military.¹⁸ In response, Pashinyan qualified the action as a coup attempt and dismissed the Chief of General Staff. Pashinyan accused the Chief of General Staff of attempting to end the “power of the people” through military means with the instigation of former President S. Sargsyan and other opposition leaders. It is understood that the reason which triggered the military to take this action was the Deputy Chief of General Staff refuting Pashinyan’s statement regarding the Iskander missiles in a sarcastic manner during a press interview one day prior and thereupon Pashinyan dismissing the Deputy Chief of General Staff. The legal conclusion of this procedure was dependent on the President’s approval. President A. Sarkissian promptly approved the dismissal of the Deputy Chief of General Staff. However, he abstained from approving the dismissal of the Chief of General Staff, stating that he considered this decision to be improper. Consequently, he initiated a long legal process taking it to the Constitutional Court to enable his return to post.

The entire opposition, former President Kocharyan being in the forefront, protested this dismissal decision and voiced its support for the military. Pashinyan, without waiting for completion of the legal process, announced on 10 March that he assigned retired lieutenant general Davtian, who previously served in this post during the years 2018-2020, as the new Chief of General Staff. President A. Sarkissian did not approve this assignment either, however, de facto did not obstruct the assignment by not forwarding his objection to the Constitutional Court. Pashinyan conducted a meeting in the Ministry of Defense on 22 March for the introduction of the newly

17 Pavel Felgenhauer, “Russia’s Iskander Missiles Fail in Karabakh but Cause Crisis in Armenia,” *Jamestown Foundation*, February 25, 2021, <https://jamestown.org/program/russias-iskander-missiles-fail-in-karabakh-but-cause-crisis-in-armenia/>

18 “Ermenistan ordusu muhtıra verdi... Paşinyan: darbe girişimi var,” *Gazete Duvar*, 25 Şubat 2021, <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/ermenistan-ordusu-muhtira-verdi-pasinyan-darbe-girisimi-var-haber-1514391>

assigned Chief of General Staff to the military's upper echelons and highlighted in his speech that the military must stay out of politics. On 24 March, it was announced that the state of emergency which was in force since 27 September due to the 2020 Karabakh War had ended by the decision of the parliament.

In this period, during which the inner turmoil and uncertainty was increasing strikingly, President A. Sarkissian repeated his call from 27 February for Pashinyan to resign. Pashinyan invited the people on 28 February to a large rally that would take place on 1 March.¹⁹ He explained that the rally's aim was advocating the democratic constitutional order and the people's power in Armenia. Referring to the disorder following the presidential elections on 1 March 2008 and the clashes that ended with the deaths of ten people in Yerevan, Pashinyan stated "there will be no other clashes in Armenia", announced that he would make statements in the rally regarding the 2008 events, the legal process in which the former President Kocharyan was also a culprit, the recent "military coup attempt", the President's statements and his incomprehensible decision to not approve the Chief of General Staff's dismissal.

In his hour-long speech during the 1 March rally, Pashinyan began by apologizing to the Armenian people for his mistakes, expressed that the new constitution, which was ratified in 2015 and entered into force in 2018, did not fulfill the requirements and has many shortcomings and suggested conducting a national referendum in October 2021 to adopt a new constitution or making amendments to the current one.²⁰ He also repeated his suggestion of an early election if the parties represented in the parliament came to an agreement. The Security Council of Armenia made a statement on the same day, "strongly condemning all attempts wishing to pull the army into the political process", called on the President to approve the decision to dismiss the Chief of General Staff.

To resolve the political tension and uncertainty, of which President A. Sarkissian was also a part of, Pashinyan met with the President on 13 March and evaluated the early election suggestion. After Pashinyan met with the opposition parties in the parliament on 18 March, he officially announced his decision to conduct snap elections on 20 June. Thus, Armenia would be going to the early election polls for the third time in four years. In accordance with

19 "Ermenistan'da Darbe Girişimi: Paşinyan Halkı Sokağa Çağırıldı," *TRT Haber*, 25 Şubat 2021, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/ermenistanda-darbe-girisimi-pasinyan-halki-sokaga-cagirdi-559515.html>

20 "Ermenistan Başbakanı Paşinyan: Erken Seçime Hazırım, Darbe Girişiminin Sorumlusu Eski Cumhurbaşkanı Serj Sarkisyan," *BBC Türkçe*, 1 Mart 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-56237502>

the procedure required in the Constitution for the conducting of early elections, Pashinyan announced that he would resign on 28 March. He also pointedly explained that a new candidate would not be elected in his place, that he would serve his duty ad interim with full authority.

In a trustworthy public opinion survey conducted on 31 March upon the early election becoming certain, it was estimated that Pashinyan's party could receive %31.7 of the votes, the other two parties within the Parliament %2.7 and %2.4, former President Kocharyan %4.4 from outside of the Parliament, and the other groups could receive more marginal votes. It was indicated that %24.6 of the survey's participants would not vote for anyone and %20 of the participants were undecided. Yet, in a Gallup poll on 18 June, Kocharyan appeared to lead with 28.7% against Pashinyan's 25.2%. In a relevant statement, the opposition leader in the parliament informed that he would not support Pashinyan in the case of a coalition becoming necessary after the election and that they wanted neither Pashinyan nor Kocharyan to become prime minister. On the eve of election day, there was much speculation of polarization of equal strength and such dire predictions that there would be clashes after the elections as stated by Ter-Petrosyan.

On 31 March, the Minister of High-Tech Industry was forced to resign following the reaction caused by him slapping a journalist in a restaurant. Tavush Governor Hayk Chobanyan was assigned in his place on 2 April.²¹

On 23 April, the Labor and Social Affairs Minister handed in his resignation after only five months in office. He was promptly relieved of his duties. He gave no reasons for his resignation and neither did the Prime Minister.

In a surprising move, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayvazyan announced on 27 May his resignation just hours after an emergency meeting of the Security Council where Pashinyan is reported to have proposed deployment of observers from Russia or other OSCE Minsk Group countries to ease tensions on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. In a public address, Ayvazyan said "The reason for my decision to resign was to make sure that there are never any suspicions that this ministry could take some steps or agree to some ideas, initiatives going against out statehood and national interests". Pashinyan responded to those remarks through his press secretary as follows: "While we thank Mr. Ayvazyan for his work, we believe our national and state interests require Mr. Ayvazyan to publicly explain who, where and how was going to take some step or to make decisions contradicting our country's national and state interests". No further comments on part of Ayvazyan were forthcoming,

21 "Hayk Chobanyan appointed Minister of High Technological Industry," *ArmenPress*, April 2, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1047905.html>

but the three deputy ministers as well as the speaker of the ministry rendered their resignations shortly after, curtailing the function of the ministry. Only on 15 July, former Secretary General of the Security Council Armen Grigorian was appointed as First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, seen as being slated to the vacant ministerial position ahead of the formation of the new cabinet.

On 20 July, Defense Minister Harutiunian, appointed on 20 November shortly after the defeat, resigned ahead of the expected installation of the new cabinet. In a related development, another general, A. Karapetian was appointed as the First Deputy Defense Minister.

The Armenian Parliament ratified certain amendments in the election law during early April. The opposition claimed that these amendments, which were planned prior to the early election, envisages amendments in favor of the ruling party and would compromise the legitimacy of the elections if they were finalized.

The former President Kocharyan, who was standing trial for the accusation of contravening the constitutional order was acquitted despite all Pashinyan's efforts and attempts for his conviction. Following the verdict, Pashinyan accused the judges of being "the supporters of the old regime". Kocharyan immediately filed a lawsuit for moral compensation against Pashinyan on 8 April with the claim of disdain and personal defamation.²² Within this context, Armenian President A. Sarkissian refused to sign a bill, which was approved by the parliament with the government's support, on the grounds that he considered it as a threat to the opposition's judicial independence. He considered it to be unconstitutional and forwarded it to the Constitutional Court for review.²³

Another clash with the President came when A. Sarkissian blocked a bill passed by the National Assembly in March which would empower the government to appoint most members of the boards that elect university rectors and make other key decisions. On 22 April, he announced his decision not to sign the bill on being "contentious in terms of constitutionality".²⁴ He also asked the Constitutional Court to rule on its conformity with the constitution. Pashinyan nevertheless put the bill into circulation with an executive order in early May²⁵.

22 "Armenia ex-President Kocharyan sues PM Pashinyan," *APA.az*, April 8, 2021, <https://apa.az/en/cis-countries-news/Armenia-ex-President-Kocharyan-sues-PM-Pashinyan-346343>

23 "Armenian President Objects to 'Unconstitutional' Bill on Court," *Azatutyun*, April 12, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31199835.html>

24 "Armenian President Blocks Another Government Bill," *Azatutyun*, April 23, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31219190.html>

25 "Government seeks to take over three public universities," *Asbarez*, June 12, 2021, <https://asbarez.com/government-wants-to-take-over-3-public-universities/>

Armenia's Central Election Commission approved on 31 May a record of 22 parties and 4 alliances to run in the 20 June snap elections²⁶. To be represented in the Parliament of 107 seats, there is a threshold; the parties need to win at least 5% of the votes, while alliances need at least 7%. The election campaign was officially launched on 7 June to last until 18 June. Bitter recriminations were traded during the campaign. On the campaign trail, Pashinyan pledged to “purge” the state bureaucracy and wage “political vendetta against those heads of communities and entities who [were] trying to coerce people”²⁷. He also criticized the Apostolic Church during several rallies. Top level officials of the Church had earlier expressed “deep concern” over “hate speech” by political forces during the campaign. Pashinyan said, “they are telling us that we are trying to discredit the Armenian Apostolic Church and traditional values. No, those values are discredited by corrupt clergymen”. The Church responded to the accusations with a written statement, rejecting “unfair accusations” of the Prime Minister. It is well known that Pashinyan has had frosty relations with Catholicos Karekin II throughout his three-year tenure.

Of the four alliances, the largest bloc was that of Kocharyan's “Armenia” bloc. Early on, the Dashnaksutyun, which has branches in Armenian Diaspora, most prominently in the US with financial support and political headquarters, followed by France, had officially confirmed that they would join forces with Kocharyan. In fact, the Dashnaksutyun was allied with Kocharyan during his presidential term of 1998-2008. It was not represented in the parliament, as it received only about 4% of the votes in the December 2018 elections. Kocharyan was probably counting on the Dashnaksutyun as he warned of post-election protests should the result not be clear cut. In fact, the Dashnaksutyun came out with a declaration on 27 May, published in the US-based Armenian newspaper *Asbarez*, demanding the immediate de facto removal of Pashinyan and the appointment of a new interim head of government²⁸. It went further on extorting “The inaction by members of the government and law enforcement in this matter makes them an accomplice and each of them bears individual responsibility for the failures of the country's security diplomatic efforts”.

Two other alliances were formed around former Presidents Ter-Petrosyan and S. Sargsyan. S. Sargsyan's Republican Party announced an alliance with the party of former National Security Service Director Venetsian, which was named “I have the Honor”. Both Kocharyan and Venetsian based their

26 “26 Parties, Blocs Cleared For Armenian Elections,” *Azatutyun*, May 31, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31283049.html>

27 “Pashinian Vows Post-Election ‘Vendettas’,” *Azatutyun*, June 8, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31296393.html>

28 “Armenia ARF Calls for Pashinyan's Immediate Removal,” *HyeTert*, May 27, 2021, <https://hyertert.org/2021/05/27/armenia-arf-calls-for-pashinyans-immediate-removal/>

campaign pledges on closer ties with Russia. Venetsian repeatedly called for Armenia's "deeper integration" with Russia. Kocharyan, known for his close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin, also repeatedly made a case for much closer ties with Russia. Pashinyan on the other hand, who decided to run with his own party, the Civil Contract, played to the West, the US, France, and the EU, while also vowing to deepen Russian-Armenian ties.

The official results of the 20 June elections revealed a landslide victory for the Civil Contract Party of Pashinyan. He received 687,251 votes (53.92%), the Armenia bloc of Kocharyan 21.04%, and the third eligible to enter the parliament, "I have the Honor" Bloc, 5.23%. The Civil Contract Party thus obtained a constitutional majority to form a government. Of the 107 seats in the new parliament, Civil Contract received 71 seats, the Armenia bloc 29, I Have the Honor bloc 7. The ruling party has thus a larger proportion of seats as the two dozen other contenders could not clear the legal threshold despite polling a combined 20% of the vote²⁹. Nevertheless, Pashinyan's party will be one vote short of the two-thirds parliamentary majority required to amend the constitution, calling a referendum, or impeaching the president.

Despite this incontestable showing, the opposition objected the results for irregularities and applied to the Constitutional Court, but as expected, to no avail. Kocharyan for his part predicted that snap elections might be held again in a year and a half. The two opposition blocs also wavered in their decisions whether to take up their seats in the Parliament or to boycott it. Finally, both decided to take part. However, Kocharyan gave up his seat for a party member on the grounds that he is an executive and not a legislator. The new parliament is scheduled to assemble for its first meeting on 2 August.

The economy was also critically impacted within this period. The fragile structure collapsed due to the pandemic and the war. Armenia's public debt soared by more than 1 billion to 8.65 billion Dollars or 63.5% of the GDP. The Central Bank raised its main interest rate in May, for the third time in five months, to 6%.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) sent during the first half of December a 37 million Dollar portion of the 443 million Dollar support assistance (stand-by) it approved in May 2020. Thus, the total loan received reached 332 million Dollars. In his statement on 14 January, the Minister of Economy indicated that Armenia's economy had shrunk by 8.5% in 2020. The Minister stated that exports, imports, and domestic consumption experienced a decrease of 20% in total. The President of the Central Bank explained on 2 February that a

29 "Armenian premier's party wins parliamentary vote: Unofficial results," *Anadolu Agency*, June 21, 2021, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/armenian-premier-s-party-wins-parliamentary-vote-unofficial-results/2280280>

7.8% recession was foreseen in the economy in 2020. In addition, the Central Bank President stated that 750 million Dollars-worth of Eurobonds were issued, and the interest of the ten-year bonds would be 3.875%. The economic growth envisaged for 2021 dropped from 2% to 1.4%.³⁰ The IMF reaffirmed in April its earlier projection that Armenia's economy would grow only 1 percent in 2021 after shrinking by 7.6 % in 2020.

In its statement on 5 February, the Armenian Statistical Committee (*Armstat*) informed that Armenia's foreign trade volume decreased to 7.1 billion Dollars with a 13.2% drop in comparison to 2019.³¹ Russia is the leading country with regards to the foreign trade. Mutual trade decreased by 3.5% in comparison 2019, becoming 2.155 billion Dollars. China came in second place with the trade volume increasing by 2% in comparison with 2019, reaching 964 million Dollars. Switzerland reached 485 million Dollars, the EU 276 million Dollars, and the US 152 million Dollars.

The World Bank cautioned in its April report that its GDP projection is a baseline scenario which assumes that the country will avoid pandemic related lockdowns and further political upheavals. The report said, "the risks to the Outlook are weighted heavily to the downside".

2. Developments Following the 2020 Karabakh War

The 2020 Karabakh War, which started on 27 September 2020, lasted for 44 days and ended with the ceasefire agreement signed on 9 November in Moscow by the Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister in the presence and with the participation of the President of Russia. The ceasefire provisions were duly respected towards ending the fighting. Armenian occupied territory of Aghdam was returned on 20 November, Keljeber was returned on 25 November, and Lachin was returned to Azerbaijan on 1 December. The Armenian government, feeling the brunt of the defeat, put all its efforts to healing the wounds of the war and preventing the instability and chaos caused by the few but militant and influential internal opposition. On the other side, there was urgent need to prepare a peace strategy.

The initial steps taken by the Armenian administration indicated that it had not derived the necessary lessons from its wrong and unlawful Karabakh policy, as it was still searching for ways to become a garrison state and reach

30 "IMF Staff Concludes Visit to Republic of Armenia," *International Monetary Fund*, April 21, 2021, <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2021/04/21/pr21111-armenia-imf-staff-concludes-visit-to-republic-of-armenia>

31 Karine Melikyan, "Armenia's Foreign Trade Turnover Decreased in 2020 by 13.2% per annum," *Finport*, February 9, 2021, https://finport.am/full_news.php?id=43617&lang=3

its expansionist ambitions through military power instead of establishing regional cooperation and good neighborly relations. The Armenian administration did not have a free hand in pursuing this radical approach, as it was under intense pressure from the Diaspora militants, the Apostolic Church (more overtly from the Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias) and encouragement from its all too well-known western sympathizers.

On 25 November, the French Senate adopted a resolution recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent republic.³² The other wing of the parliament, the French National Assembly followed suit with 188 votes and only 3 rejections. In his address to the members of the parliament, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France Jean-Yves Le Drian stated “I hear your anger, your fears, your questions that you ask, however, I do not share the objective of this resolution, namely the recognition, because our Armenian friends are not asking us to do that. They themselves haven’t recognized [Karabakh].” He expressed objection, not to the principle or incorrect legal aspects, but to its written formulation. During the same time frame, the Foreign Ministry State Secretary went to Armenia, together with French officials, aid organizations and the Armenian community activists in France, with the aim of delivering in person the second batch of the aid material to the Karabakh Armenians. Le Drian also made accusatory statements against Turkey.

President of France Emmanuel Macron, who accused Azerbaijan in the very beginning of the Karabakh War and criticized Turkey for her firm political and military support for Azerbaijan, met with the Armenian community representatives in France during a dinner event and criticized Pashinyan. Macron expressed that Pashinyan did not call him prior to or just after the signing of the 9 November ceasefire agreement, did not inform him that he was forced to sign such an agreement, or consult with him on what could be done to alleviate the results of the agreement. Macron said, “After all, I am the president of an OSCE Minsk Group co-chairing country. Why didn’t he inform me, or ask for assistance before or after signing?” and asked the Armenian community representatives present at the dinner how they expected France to act - stay in the Minsk Group and continue to assist the negotiation process, or push the “Artsakh” recognition process forward, leaving the Minsk Group.³³

32 “Turkey: France’s resolution recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh as independent republic ‘biased, unrealistic’,” *Daily Sabah*, November 26, 2020, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkey-frances-resolution-recognizing-nagorno-karabakh-as-independent-republic-biased-unrealistic>

33 “Newspaper: France’s Macron expresses bewilderment over Armenia’s Pashinyan,” *News.am*, December 26, 2020, <https://news.am/eng/news/621007.html>

The other Minsk Group co-chair, the US, also showed its colors in a short time. The US House of Representatives Resolution no. 1165, which was presented to the House on 1 October 2020 and sent to the Foreign Relations Commission within the period, is sufficiently enlightening. Some of the articles of the text are here below:³⁴

“Condemning Azerbaijan’s military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh and denouncing Turkish interference in the conflict.”

“According to multiple reports, including the Washington Post, Reuters, and the Guardian, in the weeks prior to Azerbaijan’s military operation Turkey recruited mercenaries from Syria and, as of September 29, 2020 and has facilitated their deployment to Azerbaijan.”

“According to newspaper reports of the Armenian Foreign Ministry, Turkey shot down an Armenian Su–25 fighter jet in Armenian airspace, killing the pilot. That the House of Representatives:

1. Condemns Azerbaijan’s continued aggressive military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh and breaches of the cease-fire agreement,
2. Denounces Turkey’s reported participation in and escalation of the conflict under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan,
3. Supports an immediate return to the cease-fire agreement along the line of contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan and a peaceful solution which protects all parties’ human rights and joins with other countries supporting the same goals; and,
4. Reaffirms United States support of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Minsk Group efforts to secure an agreement from Azerbaijan to cease offensive military operations against Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia and to accept independent third-party monitoring along the line of contact.”

The US-Armenian Diaspora’s supporters in the US Congress and the strength of their lobbies was observed once again, this time after the war with an anti-Azerbaijan resolution. Azerbaijan, which was in the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Bill’s list, together with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, regarding preparing reports for and aiding displaced people, was removed from the list.

34 “H.Res.1165 - Condemning Azerbaijan’s military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh and denouncing Turkish interference in the conflict,” *US Congress*, October 1, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116th-congress/house-resolution/1165/actions?r=1&s=1>

Acting Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker made the following statements on 8 December at the US Congress' Helsinki Commission: "We have expressed our concern about Turkey's role, the foreign militants being brought in, weapons being provided. These are issues of concern and remain a part of our dialogue with Turkey and Russia.³⁵" The Acting Assistant Secretary hereby stated that the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs would go to Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Despite the revealing of the partiality and dysfunctionality of the two members of the Minsk Group co-chairmanship to such a degree, practically disqualifying themselves, their aspirations and ambitions for continuing with their role have not decreased. On the occasion of the OSCE Council of Ministers meeting held in Tirana on 3 December, the three co-chairs made a statement at the ministerial level confirming the continuation of the process. In the statement issued on the OSCE website, the co-chairs expressed their satisfaction with regard to the cessation of the hostilities through the 9 November ceasefire agreement, stated their concerns and sentiments in support of Armenia in a covert manner, through a well disguised effort to give the appearance of an impartial approach. The co-chair states called for the parties to promptly initiate negotiations for a lasting and sustainable peace agreement within the ceasefire environment and under the supervision of the co-chairs. In this framework, the co-chairs made a call to the to parties to receive them in their respective countries as early as possible.³⁶

Thus, the two co-chairs visited Baku on 12-13 December and Yerevan on 13-14 December.³⁷ The third co-chair, Russia, was represented during these visits by its ambassadors in these capitals. The statement made by the co-chairs following this imposed visit indicated that it was neither efficacious nor was a concrete result achieved.

The Diaspora Armenians and the Armenian Apostolic Church also not accepting the defeat, spearheaded a revanchist and militant approach during the period. The Dashnaksutyun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation-ARF), which is not represented in the Armenian Parliament, assumed a leading role. Deriving its strength and support mainly from the organizations in the US and France, it called for the international community, through its communique issued on 11 December, to take action. The communique targeted Azerbaijan and Turkey. Some of the statements in the text are as follows:

35 "U.S. is Concerned with Turkey's Role in Karabakh," *Asbarez*, December 8, 2020, <https://asbarez.com/199036/u-s-is-concerned-with-turkeys-role-in-karabakh/>

36 "Joint Statement by the Heads of Delegation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair Countries," *OSCE*, December 3, 2020, <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/472419>

37 "Statement of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs," *OSCE*, December 14, 2020, <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/473649>

“During a military parade in Baku on December 10, 2020, the leaders of Turkey and Azerbaijan took the liberty of making declarations that amount to hate speech, threatening the physical existence of the Armenians living on Armenian lands, and questioning the territorial integrity of the Republics of Armenia and Artsakh (Karabakh).

The Azeri leader did not hesitate, once again, to consider Syunik [Zengazur], Gegharkunik [Sevan] and the capital Yerevan as Azerbaijani territories. Furthermore, the Turkish leader, by invoking the name of Enver, crowned himself a successor of one of the greatest executioners of the Armenian people. [...]

It is also evident that after the November 9 trilateral declaration, Turkey is pursuing its policy of destabilizing regions, especially the South Caucasus, with renewed vigor, by overtly pursuing its long-held goal of uniting the Turkish-speaking people from Azerbaijan—through Armenia’s southern territories—to Central Asia. [...]

[...] the Armenian Revolutionary Federation calls on the international community, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairing countries and partner international organizations to closely monitor and prevent Turkey’s expansionist policies [...]³⁸

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), which is Armenian Diaspora’s largest and most powerful organization, whose headquarters is located in the US, also issued a communique on 11 December calling on the Armenian people to be united. The AGBU called for the Prime Minister’s resignation and the forming of a transitional period government. It was expressed that the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, which has been “the people’s beacon of hope in their 1700-year history”, had a role to play in this process. The current period Armenia is passing through was defined as constituting a “defining moment” and it was expressed that;

“As an organization that has accompanied our nation on its arduous journey since our founding in 1906 and has stood by our nation through both Ottoman and Soviet governance, as well as independence, we solemnly renew our pledge to ensure the bright future of Armenia, to the reconstruction of our ravaged Artsakh, and to our mission to tend to the humanitarian and social needs of our people in Armenia and across the globe”.³⁹

38 “ARF Bureau strongly condemns statements by Azeri and Turkish leaders,” *Armenian Weekly*, December 12, 2020, <https://armenianweekly.com/2020/12/12/arf-bureau-strongly-condemns-statements-by-azeri-and-turkish-leaders/>

39 “AGBU Statement on Transition Government,” *Armenian General Benevolent Union*, December 11, 2020, <https://agbu.org/news-item/agbu-statement-on-transition-government/>

Certainly, also under the influence of these discourses, the Armenian administration began faltering between the options of a peaceful, realistic approach and pursuing their radical dreams. The newly installed Minister of Foreign Affairs, who carries the primary responsibility of expressing Armenia's peace strategy to the world, let alone learning lessons from the fanatical mistakes of his predecessor, continued revealing the same fanaticism in a more inept manner. Some of the Minister's statements during the 27th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council are as follows:

“During the 44 days of war Azerbaijan and Turkey, in a clear defiance of their international obligations, and in violations of their commitments towards the OSCE, despite numerous calls made by OSCE Minsk Group Co-chair countries, despite three agreements to cease hostilities, despite persistent calls of international community, continued the offensive. The aggression was accompanied by numerous gross violations of the laws and customs applicable in armed conflicts, by war crimes including deliberate targeting of civilian population and critical infrastructure, executions, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners of war and civilian captives, beheadings, mutilation of dead bodies and other well documented crimes with the ultimate purpose of ‘ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population from their ancestral lands.’ “The actions of Azerbaijan and its allies [Turkey] created new dangerous precedent for addressing conflict situations in the area of responsibility of the OSCE. Turkey recruited, transferred and deployed foreign terrorist fighters and jihadists from Syria and Libya in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone. Secondly, Azerbaijan's aggression against Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh] was greatly instigated and supported politically and militarily by the Turkish leadership in its pursuit of expansionist power projection into the South Caucasus and beyond. Thirdly, Azerbaijan and its allies unleashed the war against Artsakh falsely claiming the legitimate right to use force, which is a clear breach of international law. Furthermore, Azerbaijan and Turkey now insist that the situation resulting from the use of force, aggression and war, large-scale violations of international law, war crimes and ethnic cleansing, should be considered as resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.”⁴⁰

The Minister listed the factors of a lasting and sustainable peace in the region as follows:

“-Status of Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh] based on realization of the right of self-determination, security of its people,

40 Ara Aivazian, “Statement by Ara Aivazian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia at the 27th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, December 3, 2021, https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2020/12/03/OSCE_Ministerial/10688

- De-occupation by Azerbaijan of the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh,
- Safe and dignified return to their homes of the recently displaced population of Artsakh,
- Preservation of Armenian cultural and religious heritage on the territories that fell under the control of Azerbaijan.⁴¹

The Minister finished his words by emphasizing that the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can only be achieved through the negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship. Moreover, he did not omit mentioning Turkey's "well-known genocidal record" against Armenians. A comment that could be made for these surrealist expectations and statements would probably be "no comment".

The most important development following the 9 November ceasefire agreement was the Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister coming together once again in Moscow on 10 January 2021 by the invitation of the Russian President and signing a 4 article accord on the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. The text of the accord is as follows:

“1. For the purpose of implementing the 9th point of the November 9, 2020 statement, which refers to the unblocking of all economic and transport links in the region, we support Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin’s proposal to create a trilateral Working Group under the joint chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation.

2. The Working Group will hold its first meeting by January 30, 2021, according to the results of which it will draw up a list of primary tasks arising from the implementation of the aforementioned Paragraph 9 of the Statement. The priorities shall include rail and road communications, as well as the identification of other directions as agreed upon by the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, hereinafter referred to as the Parties.

3. In order to implement the primary directions, the Working Group’s co-chairs will approve the composition of expert subgroups in these areas from among the officials of the competent authorities and organizations of the Parties. Within a month after the Working Group’s meeting, the expert subgroups will submit a list of projects, which

41 Aivazian, “Statement by Ara Aivazian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia at the 27th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council.”

should specify the necessary resources and activities for their implementation and approval at the highest level by the Parties.

4. By March 1, 2021, the Working Group shall submit for the Parties' approval at the highest level a list and timetable of activities to restore or build new transport infrastructure necessary for initiating, implementing and providing for the safety of international traffic through the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, as well as ensuring the safety of transportations carried out by the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia through the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia."⁴²

The working groups assembled and started with their work in accordance with the envisaged modality and time frames. Russian President Putin, who called his counterparts in Azerbaijan and Armenia on 12 March, evaluated the developments in Karabakh with his interlocutors. The issued statement signified positive developments and it was expressed that the activities of the working groups, established in January, were satisfactory.

The 10 January Moscow high level meeting showed once again Russia's role, interest, sincerity, and influence towards regional economic cooperation. It was also another indication that the OSCE Minsk Group was being sidelined. Following the meeting, Pashinyan expressed that he was pleased with achieving some outcomes after these meetings, however he was upset that no progress was made regarding the exchange of prisoners of war. Pashinyan's statements concerning his meeting with Putin were as follows:

"I am certain that the agreements formulated in our joint statement can seriously help change the economy in the region and seriously increase the potential for investments. However, in my opinion, the economic issues will become difficult to solve, if the humanitarian issues aren't solved and, of course, as I already said, the humanitarian issue related to the exchange of prisoners of war, missing persons and bodies of deceased is the most sensitive and most painful issue for us Armenians.

I would like to thank you for supporting this position. Of course, your personal contribution to the peace process is very, very tangible, especially now after the well-known events. I am certain that the relations between Armenia and Russia will grow deeper. Russia has been and remains Armenia's key strategic ally... also in the security

42 "Joint statement issued following meeting between Nikol Pashinyan, Vladimir Putin and Ilham Aliyev," *Prime Ministry of Armenia*, January 11, 2021, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2021/01/11/Nikol-Pashinyan-Moscow-meeting-Announcement/>

sector. Of course, we need to discuss not only the future of the region, but also the agenda for bilateral relations, and I am glad for this meeting and this opportunity.”

The accord achieved in Moscow and the new document signed sparked intense reactions in Armenia. The opposition called it Pashinyan’s “second treason”. Turkey was a prominent subject in the criticisms. Premonitions regarding Turkey’s interest for the southern corridor, that Turkish investments will dominate the Armenian economy were voiced. Pashinyan expressed the following in his statement upon his return:

“Regretfully, a single meeting couldn’t bring a solution to all issues. I hope, we will proceed and want to stress that one of the most important issues pending implementations are those related to the humanitarian aspect, in particular, the exchange of war prisoners, as envisaged by Point 8 of the November 9 trilateral statement. Armenia is ready to continue the talks under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group.”

A statement of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov issued on 18 January brought clarity to the subject. Lavrov explained that “The status of Nagorno-Karabakh remains unresolved and it must be a subject of future Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations.”⁴³ In addition, Russia imposed obligations as of 8 February for foreigners to travel through the Lachin corridor that they would be under their supervision and would need to obtain permits beforehand.

On 12 January, the Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayvazyan sent a comprehensive letter to the UN Secretary General accusing and criticizing Azerbaijan in a multi-faceted manner regarding the post-war situation in Nagorno-Karabakh.⁴⁴ While it was indicated through a document signed a day prior in Moscow by the Prime Minister himself that progress and cooperation was achieved in the implementation of the ceasefire provisions, Ayvazyan’s letter revealed the degree of how much the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministry were disconnected and how much discord existed within the Armenian Administration. On the other hand, the adverse discourses expressed several times within the period have created the impression that conscious and arranged attempts were being made to use different discourses for Russia and separate discourses for third parties. Such appeared to be the new period’s “multi-vector” foreign policy.

43 Aza Babayan, “Deal On Karabakh’s Status Not Urgent For Russia”, *Azatutyun*, January 18, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31051257.html>

44 “The letter of Foreign Minister Ara Aivazian to the UN Secretary General,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, January 13, 2021, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/01/13/UN_SG_letter/10751

In late-January, the Turkish-Russian joint monitoring center was established to supervise the implementation of the ceasefire agreement which began its field duty.⁴⁵

Through a decision taken on 12 March by the illegitimate separatist Armenian administration in Nagorno-Karabakh, Russian language was approved as the second official language.⁴⁶ This decision, which is clearly seen as a step taken with the intention of obtaining Russia's support, will likely be evaluated as a self-ingratiating move.

On 1 April, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs discussed the developments in Nagorno-Karabakh with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan and Armenia separately and evaluated the final situation. It was expressed in the statement issued by Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the three ministers discussed humanitarian issues and the region's economic and transport corridors.

On 13 April, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs issued a new joint declaration. The essence of the declaration is the co-chairs' and OSCE term president special representative's expression of intent for playing a leading part in the developments hereafter. It remains to be seen how realistic and applicable this will prove to be. A relevant clue can be found in the words of the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov at his press conference on 6 May during his visit to Armenia. In response to the statement of his host Armenian Foreign Minister Aivazyan that Armenia is interested in strengthening the mediation mission of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, Lavrov described the work of the Minsk Group co-chairs as "needed" but went on to qualify it as follows:

"Russia, having played a decisive role in stopping the war, is more interested than anyone else in seeing everything done in practice. We have no doubt that when the Armenians and Azerbaijanis begin to feel the benefits of a peaceful life and when all sanctions and blockades are lifted, they will begin to treat the issues that today some of our colleagues are trying to bring to the fore in a different way.

"There is no need to politicize the process today while the issues of the opening of communications in the region and delimitations of the borders are being discussed. These are practical and understandable things that need to be resolved in order for the region to breathe freely. Those who propose leaving these issues for later and those who are now

45 "Türk-Rus Ortak Merkezi'nin İlk Görüntüleri Ortaya Çıktı," *Sözcü*, 30 Ocak 2021, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/dunya/turk-rus-ortak-merkezinin-ilk-goruntuleri-ortaya-cikti-6235796/>

46 "Russian Language To Get Official Status In Nagorno-Karabakh," *RFL/RL*, March 25, 2021, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-language-official-status-nagorno-karabakh/31169752.html>

engaging in political discussions are turning the process upside down. Political issues are easier to solve when people begin to live a normal life.”⁴⁷

As Armenia decided to hold snap elections, three issues came to the fore with regard to Karabagh and fully exploited during the campaign with strong populist appeal. These were the return of war prisoners, maps for demining the formerly occupied territories, and border demarcations.

The Armenian Defense Ministry announced that on 12 May that Azerbaijani Armed Forces had attempted to carry out “certain activities” in the Syunik (Zangezur) border. Prime Minister Pashinyan then claimed that the Azerbaijani Armed Forces had crossed Armenia’s border and had moved 3.5 kilometers into the country. Pashinyan officially applied the next day to the Collective Security Council’s (CSTO) Chairperson in Office to initiate the mechanism of immediately launching emergency consultations to come to the aid of Armenia. A day later, Pashinyan criticized the CSTO for not publicly siding with Armenia. Frustrated with the inaction of CSTO, Pashinyan tried extortion tactics, saying that he could turn to the UN Security Council if the CSTO or the joint Russian-Armenian military contingent were not enough to resolve the problem. Once again, he could not convince his allies of his concocted Azerbaijani aggression tale.⁴⁸

Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry drew attention to the fact that the border between the two South Caucasus states had not been properly demarcated ever since the breakup of the Soviet Union, that Soviet-era maps are the only indicators and affirmed unambiguously that Azerbaijan’s soldiers did not cross into Armenia⁴⁹.

The French President intervened the same day, expressing strong support for Armenia in its ongoing border standoff with Azerbaijan. He said that he was considering taking the issue to the UN Security Council and with a UN mandate France was also prepared to provide, if necessary, military support to international efforts to resolve this issue. The US for its part urged Azerbaijan to immediately withdraw its troops. A US State Department

47 “Russian FM Lavrov’s visit to Armenia leaves many questions unanswered,” *Jam News*, May 6, 2021, <https://jam-news.net/russian-fm-lavrovs-visit-to-armenia-leaves-many-questions-unanswered/>

48 “CSTO Rejects Yerevan’s Appeal for Help in Armenia Border Breach by Azerbaijan,” *Asbarez*, July 4, 2021, <https://asbarez.com/csto-rejects-yerevans-appeal-for-help-in-armenia-border-breach-by-azerbaijan/>

49 “No:199/21, Information of the Press Service Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on another provocation by Armenia in the direction of Kalbajar region of Azerbaijan,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan*, May 27, 2021, <https://www.mfa.gov.az/en/news/no19921-information-of-the-press-service-department-of-the-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-of-the-republic-of-azerbaijan-on-another-provocation-by-armenia-in-the-direction-of-kalbajar-region-of-azerbaijan>

spokesperson told the reporters, “We expect Azerbaijan to pull back all forces immediately and cease further provocations. Military movements in disputed territories are irresponsible and they are also unnecessarily provocative. Border demarcation issues should be resolved through negotiation and discussion.”⁵⁰ The EU High Representative issued a written statement saying that the EU was following closely the worrying developments along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and asked both sides to exercise utmost restraint and to de-escalate the situation.

Russia was instrumental again, arranging three partite contacts and meetings at the border with a view to engaging the two sides for the demarcation and delimitation of their internationally recognized border. The Russian Foreign Minister said Moscow proposed that the two sides set up a commission on the delimitation and demarcation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and expressed readiness to participate in its activities as a “consultant or mediator”. On 21 May, Armenia’s Secretary of the Security Council said that a new Armenia-Azerbaijan-Russia trilateral group would be created which would finally determine the country’s borders.

President of Armenia, who would be expected to contribute to the easing of tension, did an insidious move and issued a statement on 19 May, calling on the Defense Ministry, the General Staff of the Armed Forces, and the National Security Service to make all possible efforts and take the toughest measures against the encroachments on Armenia’s territorial integrity and border violations.

The November 9 Moscow cease-fire agreement called for the unconditional release of all prisoners held by the conflicting sides. It is known that several prisoner swaps took place, arranged by the Russian peacekeepers stationed in Karabagh. Armenia asserts that Azerbaijan has not complied and has not returned more than one hundred prisoners. Azerbaijan does not deny the existence of some detained Armenians, but says they are not covered by the cease-fire agreement because they were captured inside Azerbaijan territory after the 9 November agreement and detained for carrying out acts of sabotage and terrorism. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan has been subject to international criticism and pressure to free all such prisoners or detainees.

On the other hand, Azerbaijan has serious grievances stemming from non-delivery of maps of the minefields in territories that the Armenian military withdrew, considering it a breach of understanding of the agreement. Since the ceasefire, seven soldiers and 15 civilians had been killed and many more

50 “State calls for Azerbaijan to pull back forces from Armenia border,” *The Hill*, May 14, 2021, <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/553648-state-calls-for-azerbaijan-to-pull-back-forces-from-armenia-border>

wounded due to mine explosions. The death of two Azerbaijani journalists and a local government official in a land mine explosion on 4 June in an area opening for displaced civilian population to return brought the problem to international attention. An EU parliament resolution of 18 May called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to cooperate on issues including “the provision of maps of minefields” and to “provide available maps of minefields to permit civilians to return to former conflict regions.”⁵¹

In a relevant development addressing the two issues simultaneously, a deal was brokered by the US and Georgia on 13 June whereby Azerbaijan set free 15 Armenian prisoners after receiving information from Armenia about minefields around Karabagh⁵². In a deal brokered by Russia, Azerbaijan set 15 more Armenian prisoners free on 4 July. They were flown from Baku to Yerevan by a Russian military transport. In a statement to the press in Yerevan, the commander of Russian peacekeeping forces said that earlier he had handed over to Azerbaijan Armenian maps detailing the location of thousands of landmines in two districts South of Karabagh recaptured by Azerbaijani forces during the Autumn war.

On 9-10 July, Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan organized a tour for the diplomatic corps to the recently recovered historical Azerbaijani city of Shusha in Karabagh⁵³. The reaction of official Armenia was astonishing and telling. The heads of the diplomatic missions of the participating countries were called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be delivered a verbal note stating that Armenia considered it utterly unacceptable the visit of diplomatic representatives accredited in Azerbaijan to the occupied territories of Karabagh. The Ministry acknowledged that it further delivered this message in the capitals of respective countries which do not have resident diplomatic missions in Armenia. It is an incontrovertible evidence of militant and expansionist dreams, in total contradiction with the cease-fire agreement and acknowledgement of defeat. Pashinyan could have been given the benefit of doubt had this taken place before the snap elections, but after a landslide victory which granted him the authority to act with common sense and follow realistic, peaceful policies, he has once again revealed how fickle he can be.

In view of the machinations of the Armenian regime, the warning made by the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on 14 July did not come

51 “Azerbaijan demands “mine maps” from Armenia,” *Eurasianet*, June 11, 2021, <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijan-demands-mine-maps-from-armenia>

52 “Georgian mediation obtains the release of 15 Armenian POWs by Azerbaijan,” *Euractiv*, June 14, 2021, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/eastern-europe/news/georgian-mediation-obtains-the-release-of-15-armenian-pows-by-azerbaijan/>

53 “Azərbaycandakı diplomatik korpusun nümayəndələri Şuşa qalası ilə tanış olublar,” *APA*, 9 Temmuz 2021, <https://apa.az/az/xeber/xarici-siyaset/azerbaycandaki-diplomatik-korpusun-numayendeleri-susa-qalasi-ile-tanis-olublar-foto-651928>

unwarranted. He complained that Armenia was reluctant to sign a “peace treaty”. He said such a treaty must commit the two sides to recognizing each other’s territorial integrity. He added, “the Armenians must think carefully about that because it could be too late for them in the future.”⁵⁴ In that context, he referred to parts of Armenia’s territory, including the capital Yerevan as “historical Azerbaijani lands”. Pashinyan retorted by saying that Azerbaijan was hampering regional peace and stability with “statements threatening Armenia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.” He added, “Armenia will defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity by all possible means, including the mechanisms of the joint Russian-Armenian military contingent and the CSTO. Pashinyan also pointed to President Aliyev’s threats to forcibly open a “corridor” connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan through Armenia’s Syunik (Zangezur) province. He said there was no commitment for such a corridor in the agreement. The agreement commits Armenia to opening rail and road links between Nakhchivan and the rest of Azerbaijan.

3. Armenia’s Foreign Relations

In the aftermath of the 2020 Karabagh War and defeat, Armenia’s major goal in its foreign relations and contacts became how to alleviate, and to the extent possible, overturn the results of the war with diplomatic initiatives. On the other hand, its increasing dependency on Russia after the war has created limitations to its foreign policy previously defined as “multi-vector” to be interpreted as dual discourse and double game, towards Russia on one hand and to the West on the other.

The Russian President Putin, who spoke at the Collective Security Treaty Organization’s (CSTO), summit held online in 2 December 2020, consoled and praised CSTO member Armenia’s Prime Minister Pashinyan for accepting a painful ceasefire. He said that Pashinyan ““had to make painful but necessary decisions’ to stop the conflict” and added;

“Everybody at today’s session understands the level of responsibility when such decisions are made. [Pashinian] took that responsibility and our task now is to support the prime minister as well as his team in their efforts to establish peace, achieve the implementation of all of the decisions made, and assist people who found themselves in very difficult life situations.”⁵⁵

54 Joshua Kuchera, “What’s the future of Azerbaijan’s ‘ancestral lands’ in Armenia?,” Eurasianet, July 16, 2021, <https://eurasianet.org/whats-the-future-of-azerbaijans-ancestral-lands-in-armenia>

55 “Putin Calls On Leaders Of CSTO Member States To Support Armenia’s Prime Minister,” *RFL/RL*, December 2, 2020, <https://www.rferl.org/a/putin-calls-on-leaders-of-csto-member-states-to-support-armenia-s-prime-minister/30980306.html>

Armenia's then new Minister of Foreign Affairs Aivazyan made his first official foreign visit of two days to Moscow on 7 December. He met with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov, and the two ministers held a press conference afterwards. The statement issued by Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that the two ministers evaluated regional matters and the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Within this scope, the ministers discussed humanitarian aid, the re-construction of infrastructure and the opening of transit corridors in the region. Other than Karabakh, the ministers discussed the bilateral relations, the CSTO, the Eurasian Economic Union and cooperation in other multi-lateral organizations. According to the news reports in Armenia, Aivazyan "Turkey, as the main instigator and supporter of the Azerbaijani aggression against the people of Artsakh [Karabagh]. He added that Turkey today as well continues advancing a destructive policy for the region". He further demanded that Turkey withdraws the soldiers and foreign mercenaries, which he claimed that Turkey had sent to Karabakh.

Armenian Minister Aivazyan travelled directly from Moscow to Paris for his second official visit. He met with his French counterpart Le Drian on 8 December. Aivazyan expressed the following during the press conference:

"A ceasefire is not an accord, it's the end of a war. We think that we need a lasting solution to this conflict, notably on the questions relating to the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh, its administrative [border] delimitations, mode of governance. Under the auspices of the co-presidency of the OSCE Minsk Group, France will assume all its responsibilities to achieve that."⁵⁶

The French Minister Le Drian stated that "France will stand with Armenia in order to accompany it on this trajectory". Aivazyan thanked France for its "courageous and at the same time impartial position adopted since the beginning of the war." The Armenian Minister met with the President of the French Senate on 9 December and thanked the Senate for its 25 November Karabakh resolution. To be on the safe side, during his interview published in *Le Monde* on 10 December, he thanked the Russian President and Minister of Foreign Affairs for their efforts towards the ensuring of the ceasefire.

From Paris, he proceeded to Brussels on 17 December to attend the third meeting of the EU Partnership Council. Prior to the meeting, the Minister explained that the Armenian side would focus on Karabakh and regional matters during this meeting. The Minister also had a meeting with the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs with whom he repeated the same narrative.

56 "Self-determination is a key point in the negotiations on Karabakh' – Armenian FM," *Jam News*, December 10, 2020, <https://jam-news.net/armenian-foreign-minister-in-france-ara-ayvazyan-settlement-of-the-karabakh-conflict/>

Likewise, he met with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell.⁵⁷ Borrell expressed that the EU is ready and willing to play a part in the shaping and supporting of a lasting resolution in Nagorno-Karabakh in close cooperation with the Minsk Group co-chairs. Borrell stated that he was in contact with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan and Armenia and attempted but failed to organize a trilateral meeting with the EU, that he envisaged meeting with the two countries' ministers separately.

Russian President Putin expressed during his new year address his wish and hope to establish stronger ties with Armenia. Pashinyan responded shortly after, stating on 1 January 2021 that he planned to further deepen Armenia's relations with Russia, that his country "needs new security guarantees after the recent war in Nagorno-Karabakh". This discourse was frequently repeated and underlined within the period by the Armenian Administration.

Following the shipment of new humanitarian aid via air from France, Pashinyan made a phone call on 7 January with French President Macron.⁵⁸ In the statement issued by France, Macron expressed "his determination to strive for a balanced political process in order to find a lasting political solution after the ceasefire agreement of November 9".

The Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif, representing an interested party in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the war that followed, its results and consequences affecting the region, visited Armenia on 27 January within the framework of a contact tour of the regional countries including Azerbaijan, Georgia as well as Russia and Turkey.⁵⁹ Armenia was disturbed by Zarif stating "Iran is happy to see that Azerbaijan has regained control over its occupied territories from Armenia" while visiting Azerbaijan prior to visiting Armenia. "Iran lost its impartiality" headlines were published in the Armenian press and cast clouds on the visit before it began. The Iranian Minister, hosted by his Armenian counterpart, also had a private meeting with Prime Minister Pashinyan. This time, he tried to ingratiate himself with the catch phrase "Armenia's territorial integrity is our red line"⁶⁰ and added, "We have common concerns, including the presence of terrorists and foreign fighters." In this context, during an interview on 27 February with a Russian

57 "EU-Armenia Partnership Council Discusses Karabakh, Covid-19 Issues," *Hetq*, December 18, 2020, <https://hetq.am/en/article/125534>

58 "Pashinyan and Macron Discuss Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh," *MassisPost*, January 7, 2021, <https://massispost.com/2021/01/pashinyan-and-macron-discuss-situation-in-nagorno-karabakh/>

59 "Foreign Minister Zarif to Visit Baku, Moscow, Yerevan, Tbilisi, Ankara," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran*, January 23, 2021, <https://en.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/625455/Foreign-Minister-Zarif-to-Visit-Baku-Moscow-Yerevan-Tbilisi-Ankara>

60 "'Armenia's territorial integrity is our red line' – Iranian FM says in Yerevan," *ArmenPress*, January 27, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1041595.html>

newspaper, the Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs made the claim that “Azerbaijan and Turkey have transferred foreign armed terrorists to the conflict zone to engage in the hostilities against Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). This fact has been confirmed by our international partners”.

The EU made an official announcement on 10 February, to inform that the ratification process of the European Union-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), signed on the occasion of the Eastern Partnership Summit at Brussels on 24 November 2017 was completed and that the agreement would enter into force from 1 March 2021 onwards. EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Borrell expressed in a written statement on 1 March that the agreement “sends a strong signal that the EU and Armenia are committed to democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as to a wider reform agenda.” On 9 March, the EU’s representative in Armenia stated “The European Union is a reliable partner and we are supporting Armenia. But we are also ready for greater involvement in the conflict’s resolution.” On the other hand, it was highlighted in the Armenian press that the Head of the European Council visited Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, but not Armenia, implicating that this indicated Armenia being placed in a different category.

The British Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office made an official visit to Armenia on 16 February.⁶¹ During the two-day visit, the minister attended the opening of the new British Embassy office.

On 24 February, Armenia’s Consulate General in Erbil in the Kurdish Regional Government of Iraq was inaugurated.⁶² The Consul General who spoke at the ceremony explained that an agenda was essentially established based on mutual interests as a result of active contacts with his counterparts during the previous months and that they were ready to deploy efforts in order to make progress. Shortly after, the Consul General was granted the title of Ambassador with a Presidential decree. In some articles and commentaries published in the Armenian press during this period, comments were made to the effect that, in the event of Kurdish activities leading to break up of Turkey, opportunity can be created for Armenia.

On 26 February, it was indicated in the Armenian press that two pro-Armenian resolutions were adopted in the Dutch Parliament, one being the request for the Dutch Government to recognize the alleged genocide, the other being the

61 “UK Minister for European Neighborhood to visit Armenia,” *MediaMax*, February 16, 2021, <https://mediamax.am/en/news/foreignpolicy/41937/>

62 “Armenia opens consulate in the Kurdistan Region,” *Kurdistan 24*, February 25, 2021, <https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/story/24001-Armenia-opens-consulate-in-the-Kurdistan-Region>

request for Azerbaijan to return the imprisoned Armenian soldiers. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in response to the Dutch Parliament's resolutions.

The US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, made a phone call with Prime Minister Pashinyan on 5 March.⁶³ Regarding the phone call, the US Department of State spokesperson explained that both parties emphasized the importance of the US-Armenia bilateral relations, that the Secretary of State underlined respect to the rule of law and democratic institutions and that the US' support towards the development of the democratic process and institutions in Armenia will continue. The Secretary of State also expressed that he was pleased with the efforts towards the ensuring of a lasting political resolution in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that will be beneficial to the people in the region.

On 20 January, the US Secretary of State Blinken's responses to the questions, comments and statements spearheaded by the highly biased, Armenophile Chair of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations gained the admiration and praise of the Armenian organizations in the US and was published broadly in the Armenian press. In his written response to a question, the Secretary of State stated "I support the provision to Armenia of security assistance and aid to strengthen democratic governance and promote economic growth, both of which will help to strengthen Armenia's security and resilience... In light of the recent outbreak of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Biden-Harris administration will review our security assistance to Azerbaijan".

Another interesting development that was published in the US press was the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) announcement for offering a reward for the identification of the perpetrators responsible for the arson attack of an Armenian church's administration building in San Francisco in September 2020. As it can be recalled, a similar attack had occurred in July in the same region. Such clear acts of provocation are well known in Turkey in the years preceding the First World War. The exposing of these perpetrators bears importance, and the FBI is to be commended for its efforts. Whether or not the perpetrators will be identified and whether it will be made public will be observed closely.

On 9 March, Armenia declared a United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) representative as persona non-grata, urging her to leave the country. When the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson was asked for the justification of this decision, she responded

63 "Secretary Blinken's Call with Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan," *US Department of State*, March 5, 2021, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-call-with-armenian-prime-minister-pashinyan/>

by saying “shortcomings in the implementation of her mandate” and “non-cooperative style of work.”⁶⁴

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayvazyan made a phone call with his counterpart in the Vatican on 31 March and requested the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic Church Pope Francis’ support regarding the latest developments.⁶⁵ Ayvazyan went to Moscow on 1 April to attend the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) ministers’ assembly. The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov on this occasion separately met and assessed the latest developments in the region with the ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia on 2 April.

On 1 April, the Armenian government approved the signing of a cooperation agreement in which China will donate a 100 million Yuan (approximately 15 million Dollars) grant.⁶⁶

Prime Minister Pashinyan went to Moscow for a working visit on 7 April and met with Russian President Putin. Pashinyan expressed that the meeting was very fruitful, that he was very pleased with the outcomes and that he wishes to further strengthen Armenia’s relations with Russia. Pashinyan added the following:

“We didn’t sign any documents but spoke about the further implementation a number of documents, including on security, signed in the past. Russia is helping Armenia reform its armed forces after the autumn war in Nagorno-Karabakh. This was one of the most important issues discussed by us. One thing is clear. The character of Russian-Armenian relations is strategic and this strategic cooperation must be made deeper in view of the existing challenges and situations that we face.”⁶⁷

Putin also emphasized the “strategic” attribute of the relations during the beginning of the meeting. Pashinyan also proposed to Putin that Russia constructs a new nuclear power plant in Armenia.

64 “Mediaport: UNICEF Armenia Country Office head spied in favor of Azerbaijan and Great Britain”, *IamMedia.am*, March 9, 2021, <https://www.iammedia.am/en/post/unicef-6>

65 “Foreign Minister Ara Aivazian’s phone conversation with Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, the Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, March 31, 2021, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/03/31/fm_vatican/10874

66 “China to donate 100,000,000 yuan to Armenia,” *ArmenPress*, April 1, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1047783.html>

67 “Putin, Pashinyan meet in Moscow,” *Anadolu Agency*, April 7, 2021, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/putin-pashinyan-meet-in-moscow/2201463>.

Upon his return, Pashinyan gave the following statement regarding the meeting in Moscow on 14 April:

“The Armenian-Russian military alliance reinforced by several dozen international agreements of a strategic nature and mutual allied obligations is the axis of ensuring the external security of the Republic of Armenia.”

“The Armenian-Russian joint military grouping and the joint Armenian-Russian air defense system in the Caucasus Collective Security Region are of practical importance for Armenia’s security. By the logic of the agreements formed by these two systems, an attack on Armenia means an attack on Russia, the two countries must jointly face external challenges.”

“In the strategic perspective, we look to seriously discuss the transition to a professional army, and we should be able to significantly change the structure of military service or conscription.”⁶⁸

In this scope, Pashinyan expressed that Russia is also interested in the expansion of its military base stationed in Gyumri and that “very fruitful meetings” were held among the Russian and Armenian officials regarding the stationing of more Russian soldiers in the Zangezur (Syunik) province in the southeast, along the border with Azerbaijan⁶⁹.

Visits to Armenia from abroad were rare and not necessarily bilaterally oriented. The speaker of French Senate attended the 24 April ceremonies.⁷⁰ The Lithuanian Foreign Minister was also there during this time. Lithuania appeared to willingly represent the EU to express solidarity with Armenia throughout the period.⁷¹

Foreign Minister of Russia Lavrov paid a landmark visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan in early May. At a joint press conference with his Armenian counterpart on 6 May in Yerevan, he repeatedly underlined that Russia would keep doing its best to ensure the full implementation of the ceasefire

68 “Putin, Pashinyan meet in Moscow,” *Anadolu Agency*.

69 “Armenia and Russia discuss the possibility of expanding the 102nd Russian military base and establishing its foothold in the Syunik region,” *Arminfo*, April 14, 2021, https://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=61908&lang=3&_cf_chl_jschl_tk_=pmd_988586642ee793d201c582ffd691b93230983c0c-1627414725-0-gqNtZGzNAjjcnBszQqQ

70 “French Senate Speaker to attend Armenian Genocide commemoration in Yerevan,” *Public Radio of Armenia*, April 22, 2021, <https://en.armradio.am/2021/04/22/french-senate-speaker-to-attend-armenian-genocide-commemoration-in-yerevan/>

71 “Lithuanian FM visits Armenian Genocide Memorial in Yerevan,” *ArmenPress*, April 26, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1050362.html>

agreement that stopped the war. The main concrete outcome of his visit however was the signing of a memorandum on biological safety, in practical terms, access to and supervision by the Russian specialists of the bio laboratories that was founded and operated by the US. The biological laboratories were created in Armenia in 2008 with the participation of the US Department of Defense (Pentagon), working on the American Defense Biological Participation Program. The Russian Foreign Minister had already expressed this urge during his visit in 2019, without a clear conclusion.

The Russian Minister praised Russia's ties with Armenia on the occasion of a forum in Moscow on 21 May. He spoke of an unprecedented "political dialogue" between the two states. He said, "There is an unprecedentedly active political dialogue based on mutual trust between us at the high and other levels. There have already been two meetings and numerous phone calls between the leaders of Armenia and Russia this year". He added that bilateral commercial ties were also expanding.

Pashinyan participated in a virtual summit of the Eurasian Economic Union in Yerevan on 21 May⁷². He reiterated his call for the creation of a single energy market that could lower the cost of Russian natural gas imported by Armenia and other members.

On 26 May Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif paid a visit to Armenia, his second in four months. He was received also by the Prime Minister and the President. Pashinyan stated;

"Our good neighborly relations with Iran are of strategic importance. The common border with Iran has ensured the security of our country in a number of ways ever since the first years of Armenia's independence. It is my pleasure to note that there is a similar perception in Iran about our relationship. Our economic ties have developed over several decades, especially in Syunik [Zangezur] region. There has always been a great interest in implementing joint projects. We have set up a free economic zone in Meghri with a view to deepening economic exchanges with friendly Iran."⁷³

Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif's response was as follows;

"I have had a very strategic dialogue with our Armenian partners. Our representative, our negotiator will arrive in Armenia at the first

72 "Yerevan Insists On Ex-Soviet Common Energy Market," *Azatutyun*, May 21, 2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31267360.html>

73 "Armenia-Iran dialogue is of strategic importance - Nikol Pashinyan Receives Iran's Foreign Minister," *Prime Ministry of Armenia*, May 26, 2021, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2021/05/26/Nikol-Pashinyan-Mohammad-Javad-Zarif/>

opportunity as a follow-up to the ongoing dialogue. There are many important issues, both bilateral and regional that need to be addressed. We want peace in this region. And we have always highlighted the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty and the peaceful resolution of crises. Islamic Republic of Iran prioritizes respect for international law. In order to resolve the recent escalation, three visits were paid from our country to Armenia. I was the first to pay a visit, then our special envoy came to Armenia and now I am visiting Armenia again. I am sorry that you have been a victim of this new escalation. Yesterday I had a very detailed and meaningful conversation with the president of Azerbaijan. I hope that today's meeting, like the one I had with my esteemed colleague, will help resolve the crisis."⁷⁴

Pashinyan gave a pause in his election campaign and paid a short visit to France and Belgium on 1-2 June. He was welcomed by the French President in Paris. He also met with the Speaker of the French National Assembly and then the Speaker of the Senate, as well as the Mayor of Paris. On the other hand, French Armenians held a protest against his visit. In Brussels, he met with the President of the European Council and then with the Prime Minister of Belgium. The whole visit appeared to be a subtle electioneering tactic to show his western affiliations to his constituency against the two rival blocs with singular Russian ties.

Armenian President A. Sarkissian paid a working visit to Kazakhstan on 3 June.

US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Asian Affairs visited the three South Caucasus states 6-13 June to advance bilateral and regional priorities and to express support for democratic and economic developments across the region. In his talks in Armenia, the sides reaffirmed the key role of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs format for the resettlement of Nagorno Karabagh conflict. On 16 July, the US State Department reaffirmed US support for "the Minsk Group co-chairs process" and stated, in what appeared to be an effort to turn the clock back, that Washington remains committed to helping Armenia and Azerbaijan achieve a "lasting settlement to the conflict" based on the principles of territorial integrity of states, people's right to self-determination and non-use of force.

The Foreign Ministers of Austria, Lithuania, and Romania made a joint tour of the three South Caucasus states with the mandate of the EU Foreign and Security Policy Chief. The ministers arrived at Yerevan on 25 June. The aim

74 "Armenia-Iran dialogue is of strategic importance - Nikol Pashinyan Receives Iran's Foreign Minister," *Prime Ministry of Armenia*.

of the visit was to “signal the EU’s readiness to support broader cooperation both with and between the South Caucasus countries, including through the opportunities available under the eastern partnership.”⁷⁵ This opening was followed up by the visit of the EU Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement on 9 July. He announced at a news conference that the EU pledged to provide Armenia up to 2.6 billion Euros in economic assistance and investments over the next five years. The aid is part of a package for the EU’s six Eastern Partnership countries. Armenia’s share among them far outweighs others. The crescendo was the visit of the President of the European Council on 17 July. He told his Armenian hosts that the 2.6 billion Euro assistance package for Armenia was aimed for the implementation of deep reforms as well as the economic development of the country. Referring to Nagorno-Karabagh, he highlighted together with his hosts the statement of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs of 13 April 2021.

Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan made his first visit abroad to Moscow on 7 July following his election victory. Russian President Putin congratulated Pashinyan on that victory and said that he has a popular mandate to address “very acute and sensitive issues”. Kremlin spokesman said earlier that they would discuss the situation in and around Karabagh and Russian-Armenian relations.

4. Turkey-Armenia Relations

Turkey was put in the dock again for all the misery that befell from the 2020 Karabakh War. In the efforts to find a scapegoat to put the responsibility for the war and the defeat, Turkey became the primary target and enemy. Widespread statements and comments claimed that Azerbaijan would not have been able to attempt this war without Turkey’s support, that Armenia was not defeated by Azerbaijan but by Turkey, NATO’s second largest military. According to a public opinion research poll published by the press on 4 December 2020, in response to the question which country or countries constitute the greatest threat to Armenia, 86.5% designated Turkey while 70.9% designated Azerbaijan.

In the press conference held in Moscow during his first foreign visit on 7 December, the Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs demanded that Turkey withdraws its soldiers and foreign mercenaries in Karabakh. Ayvazyan (as we previously discussed in this article) accused “Turkey, as the main instigator

75 “South Caucasus: Visit of Foreign Affairs Ministers of Austria, Lithuania and Romania mandated by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell,” *European Union External Action Service*, June 23, 2021, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/100571/south-caucasus-visit-foreign-affairs-ministers-austria-lithuania-and-romania-mandated-high_en

and supporter of the Azerbaijani aggression against the people of Artsakh [Karabagh].” During his meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister, with regards to relations with Turkey, he claimed that Armenia was taking steps towards the normalization of the relations, but that Turkey was placing preconditions. He said, “I believe we Armenians agree with this vision for the South Caucasus and want peace and stability and cooperation with all of our neighbors but Ankara needs to gain the trust that it has lost during this period.”⁷⁶ Ayvazyan repeated similar claims and more during his visit to France, Belgium, at the EU and in the OSCE Ministerial Council.

The statements of the Presidents of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the celebrations held in Baku on 10 December after the Karabakh victory were criticized and condemned by Pashinyan’s spokesperson.

The 10 December Baku military ceremony was also condemned by a communique issued by the Dashnaksutyun on 11 December. It was claimed in the Dashnaks’ communique that the statements of the two countries’ leaders constituted hate speech, that it threatened the physical assets of the Armenians living in Armenian lands, that it questioned the territorial integrity of the “republics of Armenia and Karabakh”. It was alleged in the communique that Turkey is increasing its political-military power, altering the demographic and religious aspect of some sections of South Caucasia by bringing “jihadist extremists” to the region and a call was made for the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair countries and supportive international organizations to closely observe Turkey and prevent “its expansionist policies”. Moreover, the Dashnak communique blamed the Armenian administration for suffering a shameful defeat and stated that the Dashnaksutyun will continue to serve Armenia and the people’s interests and stand against the joint lobby network initiatives of Azerbaijan and Turkey against all odds.⁷⁷

The Human Rights Representative (Ombudsman) of Armenia also made a long speech on the same subject, which criticized the two countries, but mostly targeted Turkey. The Ombudsman claimed that the Turkish President Erdoğan’s mentioning of the Islamic Army of the Caucasus in the early 20th century and Enver Pasha during his speech carried a “clearly genocidal intent” and that the aim of the speech was undoubtedly to spread more hate.

In its communique simultaneously issued on 11 December, AGBU called for unity “in this decisive period in our history” without referring to the Baku ceremony or naming any country.

76 “Ara Aivazian: Ankara needs to gain Armenia’s trust to achieve peace in South Caucasus”, *News.am*, December 7, 2020, <https://news.am/eng/news/617526.html>

77 “ARF Bureau strongly condemns statements by Azeri and Turkish leaders,” *Armenian Weekly*.

On 25 December, Armenian customs officials announced that Armenia's decision taken on 20 October of banning imports from Turkey would come into force on 31 December, that its duration would be six months and might be extended if necessary. According to Armenia's statistics, trade with Turkey comes in fourth place, ahead of Iran. Armenia's imports from Turkey, in million Dollars, was 137 in 2015, 164 in 2016, 223 in 2017, 253 in 2018, and 268 million Dollars in 2019, repeating the record reached in 2008. It was indicated that exports to Turkey showed a similar increase and that 914,000 Dollars' worth of exports were made in 2017. Turkey's place in Armenia's foreign trade was 9.8% in 2018 and 9.2% in 2019.

A statement made by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson on 28 December regarding the infringement of the ceasefire agreement by Armenia is as follows:

“The attacks carried out by Armenian elements who refused to lay down their weapons and withdraw against Azerbaijani armed forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are clear violations of the ceasefire regime established by the Trilateral Declaration of 9 November 2020.

The earlier attacks of Armenian armed elements on 26 November, 8 and 11 December, as well as the latest on 27 December caused military and civilian casualties and injuries.

As a signatory of the Trilateral Declaration, Armenia bears the primary responsibility for the withdrawal of Armenian armed groups and adherence to the ceasefire.

Using its right of self-defence, the Azerbaijani side gave the necessary response to the said provocations by these Armenian armed elements.

Armenia has to accept the facts on the ground and fulfil the commitments that it has undertaken with the Trilateral Declaration in order to become one of the stakeholders of the lasting peace that is trying to be established in the region.

We wish Allah's mercy upon our Azerbaijani brothers who lost their lives in these attacks, a speedy recovery to the wounded and extend our condolences to the people of Azerbaijan.”⁷⁸

78 “QA-124, 28 December 2020, Statement of the Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hami Aksoy in Response to a Question Regarding the Attacks Carried Out By Armenian Elements Who Refused to Lay Down Their Weapons Against Azerbaijani Armed Forces in Azerbaijan's Hocavend Region,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey*, December 28, 2020, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc-124_hocavend-rayonunda-silah-birakmayan-ermeni-gruplarin-azerbaycan-ordusuna-yonelik-saldirilar-hk-sc.en.mfa

The following questions was asked on 22 January 2021 to Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson:

“Recently, Foreign Minister of Turkey Cavusoglu stated that if the peace is lasting, Turkey and Azerbaijan are ready to undertake steps aimed at normalizing relations with Armenia. Can you comment whether the Armenian side is ready to ‘normalize the relations’? What does this statement mean? Has any initiative been undertaken in this regard, particularly by the Turkish side?”

The spokesperson's response was as follows:

“I would not like to comment on the statements of Turkish-Azerbaijani leadership, which are not consolidated by any action. Moreover, they contradict each other. The Turkish-Azerbaijani military exercises carried out near the Armenian border in violation of relevant OSCE commitments do not prove that the Turkish-Azerbaijani leadership has peaceful intentions towards Armenia. The cessation of hostile actions against Armenia may create conditions for building trust in the region.”

On 3 February, Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson was asked to comment on news reports in the Turkish media stating that some Armenian churches were being put up for sale and Foreign Minister of Turkey Cavusoglu's “Armenia must take lessons from history” statement. In response, the spokesperson expressed that they were aware of the news reports in the Turkish media regarding some Armenian churches being put up for sale, that they strongly condemn the destruction and misappropriation of the Armenian cultural heritage and, as for the “advice to learn lessons from history”, that no one has the right to “speak disrespectfully with the language of threat and give lessons of history to the nation who survived genocide”.

In a news report published in the Armenian press on 5 February referring to the Turkish Statistical Institute, it was stated that the number of citizens of Armenia officially living in Turkey has decreased to 1257, which is a 30% drop in comparison to 2019.

Responding to a question in the Parliament on 10 February, Armenia's Minister of Foreign Affairs stated “As you know, the [Turkish] blockade, the closure of Turkish-Armenian border was the result of the Nagorno-Karabakh status-quo, which has changed through a use of force. Turkey therefore no longer has any reason to keep its border with Armenia closed”. These statements caused much displeasure within the Armenian Diaspora. Through an “extremely harsh” communique issued without wasting time, the Armenian National Committee (ANC) International, based in the US, demonstrated its

militant, fanatical claims and its pressure and threats towards the people and administration of Armenia. The communique's outlines are as follows:

“From this extremely problematic statements we can make the following assertions:

1. The Government of Armenia is planning to come to terms with the status quo that was created throughout the use of force by the Turkish-Azerbaijani axis against Artsakh that resulted in the occupation of a large part of Artsakh, deportation and ethnic cleansing. In this instance, the Armenian government, is essentially relinquishing its responsibilities as the guarantor of Artsakh's security.

2. Effectively, the Armenian government believes that there are no other pressing issues in Armenia-Turkey relations than the Karabakh issue. Specifically, there is no reasonable doubt that the Armenian government is going to forget the policy of international recognition of and reparations for the Armenian Genocide, as well as other issues related to the Armenia-Turkey interstate border.

It is not clear how the Armenian government envisions the normalization of Armenia-Turkey relations, when only a few months ago, with the full and overt support of Turkey, a part of our homeland was subjected to aggressive attacks, coupled with war crimes. At the same time, the representative of the Armenian government speaks about the prospects of normalization of relations with Turkey at a time when large-scale Turkish-Azerbaijani military exercises are taking place near the Armenian border, which coincide with the statements of high-ranking Turkish and Azerbaijani officials about Armenia's sovereignty.

Even at time when there have been fundamental disagreements with the Armenian authorities, the ANC International's worldwide network not only did not retreat from its positions of defending the interests of the Republics of Armenia and Artsakh, but also continued close cooperation with embassies in different countries and Armenian representations within international organizations.

However, the minister's statement yesterday, threatens to create a serious ideological divide between the network of organizations that function in dozens of countries as conduits of Armenia's diplomacy, and Armenia's Foreign Ministry.

The fact of the matter is that Turkey has not given up on the other preconditions it has been advancing for 30 years in regards to establishing diplomatic relations with the Republic of Armenia and the

lifting the land blockade that include the process of the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide, and demanding Armenia to make concessions on the Armenia-Turkey legal border. Turkey maintains its hostile attitude toward Armenia and the Armenian people, which manifested itself with its overt participation in Azerbaijan's attacks unleashed on Artsakh on September 27, 2020, and the continuous anti-Armenian measures taken by the Turkish authorities inside and outside Turkey. Until Turkey fundamentally changes its anti-Armenian policy, any attempt by Armenia to enter into dialogue with the latter will be used by Turkey to achieve its aforementioned goals. Especially on the eve of the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, it will be an opportunity for Turkey to take advantage of it.

The Armenian government's criminal ineptitude and its inability to serve the vital interests of Armenia are nothing new for us. We anticipate, however, that Armenia's Foreign Ministry—one of the government institutions that have not been completely destroyed—will demonstrate the resolve to not give in to Turkey's deceitful policies. The primary precondition for strengthening the security of Armenia, as well as Artsakh, is a fundamental change in Armenia's domestic situation, which can begin only with the removal of the person who led the country to defeat and has been clinging to his position as Armenia's Prime Minister. Only then it will be possible to fathom, plan and act in order to create 'a favorable atmosphere to strengthen Armenia's security.'⁷⁹

The Armenian administration proved to be much too vulnerable to counter these severe provocations, threats, and insults, hence had to swallow them and to step back. It also showed the limits of its independence and sovereignty with regard the Diaspora. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson thus stated the following on the same day of the ANC communique:

“We highly appreciate the cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the offices and committees of the Armenian National Committee, which have always been aimed at advancing our national Armenian agenda”.

“The concerns contained in the ANC International statement were taken out of context, and in no way reflect Armenia's assessment and approaches to Turkey's involvement in the region”.

79 “ANC International Criticizes Foreign Minister for Remarks on Turkey”, Asbarez, February 11, 2021, <https://asbarez.com/anc-international-criticizes-foreign-minister-for-remarks-on-turkey/>

“Armenia has not reevaluated its assessment of Turkey’s destructive involvement in the region, and those concerns were clearly stated in the question-and-answer session, in particular, regarding the conduct of the joint Turkish-Azerbaijani military exercises near the Armenian border. At the same time, the Armenian Foreign Minister referred to Turkey’s illegal blockade of Armenia, insisting that at the present time there is not even an excuse referring to the fact that Turkey has closed its border with Armenia for decades”,

“The position of the Republic of Armenia on this issue has not changed, neither has the determination to pursue the priorities of the foreign policy of the Republic of Armenia. We are convinced that Turkey’s direct involvement in the war unleashed by Azerbaijan against the people of Artsakh, the war crimes committed against the people of Artsakh and other mass crimes make the international recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide more urgent in order to prevent the reoccurrence of such crimes in the future.”⁸⁰

When the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlut Cavusoglu condemned the insurgency by the military against the Prime Minister, which Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan himself considered to be a military coup attempt, the comments of “A development that worries Turkey cannot be supportive of Armenia, it can only be anti-Armenian” that appeared in the Armenian press, was indicative of the anti-Turkish mentality in Armenia.

On 26 February, Turkey’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the following statement on the 29th Anniversary of the Khojaly massacre:

“On the 26 February 1992, 613 innocent Azerbaijani civilians, including women and children, were murdered and hundreds of Azerbaijani citizens were injured as a result of the attacks carried out by the forces of the Republic of Armenia towards the city of Khojaly in Nagorno-Karabakh. During the attacks more than a thousand people were taken captive. The fate of those who are missing remain unknown.

We know that the scars of the Khojaly Massacre which took place before the very eyes of the world are still open. We feel and share the grief of brotherly Azerbaijan deep in our hearts.

We wish Allah’s mercy on our Azerbaijani brothers who have lost their lives in this inhumane massacre and humbly bow before their sacred

80 “Foreign Ministry Responds to ANC International’s Concerns,” *Asbarez*, February 11, 2021, <https://asbarez.com/200487/foreign-ministry-responds-to-anc-internationals-concerns/>

memories. We also extend our most sincere condolences to the brotherly Azerbaijani nation.

On this occasion, we once again mercifully and respectfully commemorate those martyrs who lost their lives in the Patriotic War which liberated Azerbaijan's invaded territories and enabled nearly a million displaced Azerbaijanis to return to their homes."⁸¹

In response to the Governor of the US State of California announcing that he will abide by a relevant court decision and accept the release of Armenian terrorist Hampig Sassounian, Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on 11 March condemning this decision:

"Following the decision of Los Angeles County Superior Court that paved the way for the release of Armenian terrorist Hampig Sassounian who had murdered Kemal Arıkan, Consul General of the Republic of Turkey in Los Angeles, California Governor Gavin Newsom stated that he would not appeal this decision. We strongly condemn this approach, that deeply hurts the conscience of the Turkish nation.

This grave decision, that could not be reversed despite all attempts of the US Administration, is in conflict with the universal principles of law and the understanding of justice.

Turkish citizens, including 31 diplomats, have lost their lives as a result of the attacks perpetrated by Armenian terrorist organizations. In a period when hate crimes are on the rise and international solidarity is most needed, release of a brutal murderer with political motivations harms the spirit of cooperation in fight against terrorism.

This murder, which was heinously committed by the terrorist Sassounian who has never shown a sign of remorse during his 38 years of conviction, will never be forgotten as a crime that represents a sick and distorted ideology.

On this occasion, we commemorate with respect our martyred diplomat Kemal Arıkan and all our martyrs who lost their lives in the attacks of Armenian terrorist organizations."⁸²

81 "No: 74, 26 February 2021, Press Release Regarding the 29th Anniversary of the Khojaly Massacre," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey*, February 26, 2021, www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-74_-hocali-katliaminin-29-yildonumu-hk.en.mfa

82 "No: 92, 11 March 2021, Press Release Regarding the Release of Terrorist Hampig Sassounian Who Had Murdered Kemal Arıkan, Consul General of the Republic of Turkey in Los Angeles," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey*, March 11, 2021, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-92_-sehit-los-angeles-bk-kemal-arikan-in-katili-teroristin-saliverilmesi-hk.en.mfa

On the centenary of the Treaty of Moscow signed between Turkey and Russia on 16 March 1921, the notoriously militant Dashnaksutyun, which receives its primary support from its organizations in the US, issued a communique condemning and rejecting the Treaty. It purported that this Treaty, not to their liking, which determined Turkey's eastern borders, was illegal. The communique also made a call to the Armenian administration, which "has ceded a large portion of the motherland to the enemy and lost its legitimacy", warning it to not to enter into negotiations with Turkey as it would acknowledge the recognition of the Moscow and Kars Treaties.

The subject of relations with Turkey came into question once again in Armenia during late March. In response to the question "Is Turkey another enemy state for Armenia?" asked during a TV program, the Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia stated, "If we are going to open up, then there should be some corrections in our approaches, and we are working in that direction." When the question was pressed, his response of "It would not be right to state unequivocally that there is no threat from Turkey, but the events in the region also create other opportunities." This response was interpreted as a refusal to define Turkey as an enemy and was heavily criticized.⁸³ What this response meant was asked to the Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister responded by saying "Please address that question to the Secretary of the Security Council, I do not comment". When further pressed, the Minister stated on 29 March that Armenia is not negotiating with Turkey for the normalization of the relations and underlined that "there [were] no talks with Turkey [as of that moment]". Continuing, he highlighted that, before speaking about a process, the issue of the return of prisoners must be resolved.

The subject was also brought to the Parliament. The Minister of Foreign Affairs answered that those who are authorized to state Armenia's official stance regarding foreign policy are the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He reiterated that one of Armenia's priorities is the international recognition and condemnation of the "Armenian Genocide". Additionally, with a reference to the 2009 Zurich Protocols, he reminded that Armenia has made various initiatives for the normalization of the relations with Turkey and claimed that the initiatives to normalize relations without preconditions were not reciprocated by Turkey.

On 29 March, an interview with the editor of Turkey's *Agos* newspaper's Armenian section, Pakrat Estukyan, was published in the Armenian press. This interview, in which views reflecting the radical Armenian discourse were

83 "Disturbing Contradictions by Armenia's Top Officials on Ties with Ankara," *Asbarez*, March 29, 2021, <http://asbarez.com/201477/disturbing-contradictions-by-armenias-top-officials-on-ties-with-ankara/>

expressed, constituted an example of the freedom of thought and expression in Turkey, which cannot be said for Armenia.

After its communique issued on 11 March, the ANC issued a second communique on 29 March in the same vein. Also referring to the Dashnaksutyun's communique of 16 March "strongly warning" the administration, it was claimed that recent events, especially statements made by the Prime Minister, the Secretary of the Security Council and the Vice-Speaker of the Parliament proved that the authorities of Armenia, who capitulated, were pursuing, guised as normalizing the relations with Turkey and ending blockades,

"a succinct policy which aims to forget the historical past of our people, to renounce the international demand for the recognition of the Armenian genocide, to legally recognize the de facto Armenia-Turkey interstate border, to renounce the Karabakh issue, and with it the restoration of Artsakh's territorial integrity and status, and to make the territory of the Republic of Armenia a geographical corridor connecting the two Turkish states."

This second communique, longer and more threatening than the first, in addition to its warning of not negotiating with Turkey in any way, repeated and highlighted the call for the Armenian administration to resign immediately.

The Dashnaksutyun issued the identical communique stemming from the same pen, on the same day in their own name.

Armenia's second President Kocharyan asserted in the presence of press during the election campaign on 6 April that Turkey constitutes the greatest threat to Armenia.

The subject of relations with Turkey is always on the agenda in April of every year, marked by speculations and expectation of the terminology that the US President will use in his message on 24 April. At the evening of 23 April, a telephone call was held between the President of Turkey Erdoğan and the President of the US Joe Biden, the first encounter since Biden assumed office. Press agencies in Turkey spread the news that the US President would use the word "genocide" the next day.

The message delivered on 24 April demonstrated that the US President chose to act like a populist politician under the influence and pressure of the Armenian lobbies instead of displaying the wisdom of a statesperson. Consequently, not only Turkey-US relations were harmed, but the establishing of a lasting peace in the South Caucasian region also took a blow. Biden's

statement can be seen as a testament that the new US administration chose to continue with its partisan policy in the peace efforts following the Nagorno-Karabakh war and cannot tolerate the active policy of regional stability and cooperation Turkey is pursuing.

Biden's statement is as follows:

“Each year on this day, we remember the lives of all those who died in the Ottoman-era Armenian genocide and recommit ourselves to preventing such an atrocity from ever again occurring. Beginning on April 24, 1915, with the arrest of Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople by Ottoman authorities, one and a half million Armenians were deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in a campaign of extermination. We honor the victims of the Meds Yeghern so that the horrors of what happened are never lost to history. And we remember so that we remain ever-vigilant against the corrosive influence of hate in all its forms. Of those who survived, most were forced to find new homes and new lives around the world, including in the United States. With strength and resilience, the Armenian people survived and rebuilt their community. Over the decades Armenian immigrants have enriched the United States in countless ways, but they have never forgotten the tragic history that brought so many of their ancestors to our shores. We honor their story. We see that pain. We affirm the history. We do this not to cast blame but to ensure that what happened is never repeated. Today, as we mourn what was lost, let us also turn our eyes to the future—toward the world that we wish to build for our children. A world unstained by the daily evils of bigotry and intolerance, where human rights are respected, and where all people are able to pursue their lives in dignity and security. Let us renew our shared resolve to prevent future atrocities from occurring anywhere in the world. And let us pursue healing and reconciliation for all the people of the world. The American people honor all those Armenians who perished in the genocide that began 106 years ago today.”⁸⁴

Responding to this statement of the US President, Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued the following statement:

“We reject and denounce in the strongest terms the statement of the President of the US regarding the events of 1915 made under the pressure of radical Armenian circles and anti-Turkey groups on 24 April.

84 “Statement by President Joe Biden on Armenian Remembrance Day,” *US White House*, April 24, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/24/statement-by-president-joe-biden-on-armenian-remembrance-day/>

It is clear that the said statement does not have a scholarly and legal basis, nor is it supported by any evidence. With regards to the events of 1915, none of the conditions required for the use of the term “genocide” that is strictly defined in international law are met.

The nature of the events of 1915 does not change according to the current political motives of the politicians or domestic political considerations. Such an attitude serves only a vulgar distortion of history.

The European Court of Human Rights has clearly confirmed the controversial nature of the events of 1915. Moreover, in 2005 Turkey proposed to Armenian side to establish a Joint History Commission in order to reach a just memory in the light of historical facts of that period. Although Armenia has never responded to this proposal, it is still on the table. In this respect, the statement made by the President of the US, who is neither legally nor morally authorized to judge historical matters, has no value.

As a country located at the center of a region that is called as the cradle of civilizations and who has adopted the attitude of exercising effort for the peace and serenity for humanity despite all her sufferings, Turkey has never avoided facing her history and would not take lessons from any country, including the US, in this regard.

On this occasion, we once again commemorate the cherished memories of the individuals from all the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire, who lost their lives under the extraordinary conditions of the period before and during the First World War. The message conveyed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on 24 April, for the Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives at the First World War which was read during the liturgy at the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul, this year as well, reflects the approach of Turkey on this topic.

After more than a hundred years of this past suffering, instead of exerting sincere efforts to completely heal the wounds of the past and build the future together in our region, the US President’s statement will not yield any results other than polarizing the nations and hindering peace and stability in our region.

This statement of the US, which distorts the historical facts, will never be accepted in the conscience of the Turkish people, and will open a deep wound that undermines our mutual trust and friendship.

We call on the US President to correct this grave mistake, which serves no purpose other than to satisfy certain political circles and to support the efforts aiming to establish a practice of peaceful coexistence in the region, especially among the Turkish and Armenian nations, instead of serving the agenda of those circles that try to foment enmity from history.”⁸⁵

As it has been expressed by Turkey, the impacts of this decision (which has no legal bearing) on the Turkish-Armenian relations need to be closely examined. To shed light on to the subject from a different angle, we have included an AVİM commentary dated 26 April 2021 in Annex 1 of this article.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Çavuşoğlu completely rejected the US President’s use of the term genocide. He stated, “We are not going to take lessons about our history from anyone. Political opportunism is the biggest betrayal of peace and justice. We completely reject this statement that is only based on populism”. The US Ambassador was summoned to the Ministry and was told that Turkey found the statement unacceptable, and that it was totally rejected and strongly condemned.

President of Turkey Erdoğan addressed a letter to the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Sahak II Mashalian (head of the historical Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul which was established in the year 1470) shortly before US President’s statement, offering condolences to “Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives under the difficult circumstances of World War I” and also stating that Turkey was ready to develop relations with Armenia based on mutual respect. In turn, Patriarch Sahak II issued a statement following the US President’s statement. Some excerpts are here below:

“It saddens us to see that the suffering of our people and the suffering of our ancestors are instrumentalised by some countries for every day political purposes. The tension caused by the usage of the issue in parliamentary agendas for decades has not served the rapprochement of the two nations. On the contrary, it provokes hostile feelings and delays peace. We, just like our predecessors and late Patriarchs, will continue to wish for peace, friendship and well-being between Turks and Armenians. We will encourage the rebuilding of relations based on neighborhood and common grounds speedily. We prefer to be one of those who hopefully expect the revival of neighborly relations, which are unique to these lands and exist in the traditions of the two communities.”⁸⁶

85 “No: 160, 24 April 2021, Press Release on 24 April,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey*, April 24, 2021, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-160_-24-nisan-hk.en.mfa

86 “Using 1915 incidents for politics saddens Armenians,” *Anadolu Agency*, April 23, 2021, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/using-1915-incidents-for-politics-saddens-armenians/2218547>

The Turkic Council deplored the statement of the US president on the Events of 1915, saying it harms the hopes of regional cooperation and stability. Secretary General of the Council reminded in a written statement that “Weaponization of distorted historical allegations towards another country could only play into the hands of those willing to fan the feelings of hatred, revenge and enmity among the societies”.

Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan, on the other hand, welcomed the statement and commented that “the US had once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to protecting human rights and universal values”⁸⁷ He said it was much needed message to the international community. When he was asked in the Parliament to comment on the statement, Pashinyan said there were four factors which contributed to US President’s recognition of genocide. Elaborating on them he said;

“I believe there is one long term, one mid-term and two short term factors here. The long-term factor is definitely the consistent work of the Armenian-American community and all the organizations of the diaspora. The mid-term factor is Turkey’s regional policy and in this context the dissonance which appeared between Turkey and the US. First of the short-term factors is the 44 day war and Turkey’s explicit and active involvement in it, the second is Armenia being a democratic country.”⁸⁸

Armenian President A. Sarkissian sent letters of gratitude to the heads of Armenian organizations in the US; the Dasnaksutyun (the Armenian Revolutionary Federation-ARF), Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), and the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA).

As was to be expected, Armenian lobbying groups and organizations as well as supporting politicians were jubilant. However, once their immediate target was achieved, a tempered satisfaction came to the agenda to now push for deeds after words and to put more pressure on Turkey. One such comment was “it is a middle step because the statement did not name Turkey”. The director of US based Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) immediately pronounced publicly that the Armenian Diaspora now looked to courts after US President’s statement. ANCA was nevertheless not short of criticism, as they publicly expressed disappointment over reports that US President was waiving a congressional sanction and thereby clearing way for American aid to Azerbaijan.

87 “USA once again demonstrates its unwavering commitment to protecting universal values – Pashinyan,” *ArmenPress*, April 24, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1050280/>

88 “Pashinyan comments on factors behind US recognition of Armenian Genocide,” *ArmenPress*, May 3, 2021, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1051078/>

In Armenia, at the ceremony of commemorating 24 April attended by the President and the Prime Minister, Pashinyan spoke of an existential “pan-Turkic threat” facing Armenia and Karabakh. “The second Karabagh war, the Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression aimed at annihilating the Armenians of Karabagh, Turkey’s expansionist foreign policy and territorial aspirations towards Armenia testify to the revival of a genocidal ideology” read a statement released by the Prime Minister.⁸⁹ Pashinyan stressed at the same time that Armenia is open to a regional dialogue with Turkey and Azerbaijan. “However, the dialogue we imagine cannot be engaged from a position of strength. It can only succeed if underpinned by the principle of equality” he said and added, “We will never question the fact of the Armenian genocide”.

The same day, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister told reporters that nothing has changed in the position of official Yerevan, that Armenia is ready for normalization of relations without any preconditions, but Turkey that presents preconditions. “The preconditions are about both the Armenian genocide and Nagorno Karabagh conflict”, he clarified.

Commenting on the possible impact of US President’s statement on Armenia’s relations with Turkey in an interview with *BBC Weekend* on 27 April, Armenian Foreign Minister said;

“As far as relations with Turkey are concerned, Turkey has been pursuing hostile and aggressive policy toward Armenia since the restoration of independence back in 1991. Turkey rejected the establishment of diplomatic relations, it closed border with Armenia and pursued increasingly hostile policy against Armenia. Moreover, Turkey directly got involved in the Azerbaijani aggression against the people of Nagorno Karabagh by dispatching thousands of foreign terrorist fighters to our region. We do hope that this very important statement by the US President will pave the way for dialogue and eventually to the normalization of relations. It will also contribute to the regional peace and stability.”⁹⁰

Russia’s response was expressed by the President’s spokesman reported by *TASS* news agency, according to which he expressed doubt that the desire to understand history was behind the US President’s statements on recognizing a genocide of Armenians under the Ottoman Empire and added that it was an internal affair of the US and that it was part of a “carrot and stick” policy.

89 “Armenia Marks Genocide Anniversary,” *Azatoryun*, April 24, 2021, <https://www.azatoryun.am/a/31220589.html>

90 “Interview of Foreign Minister of Armenia Ara Aivazian to the BBC Weekend programme,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, April 27, 2021, https://www.mfa.am/en/interviews-articles-and-comments/2021/04/27/Aivazian_BBC/10917

President of Turkey Erdoğan paid a state visit to Azerbaijan on 15-16 June. He addressed Azerbaijan's Parliament where he voiced his vision of a regional platform and Azerbaijan recovering from the detrimental effects of the past occupation. At the historical town of Shusha, Erdoğan and his Azerbaijani counterpart Aliyev signed the "Shusha Declaration" to cement allied relations between the Turkey and Azerbaijan. The declaration, text of which is included in Annex 2 of this article, consists of many important points and is seen as a road map for the multifaceted aspects of bilateral relations.

Armenia reacted sharply both to the visit to Shusha (which incongruously calls Armenia's historic and cultural center in Nagorno-Karabagh, claiming it to be under Azerbaijan occupation) as well as to the Declaration itself. Regarding the visit to Shusha, the Armenian Foreign Ministry issued a statement on 15 June calling it a provocation aimed at undermining regional peace and security.

On 17 June, the Foreign Ministry of Armenia issued another statement, this time on the Shusha Declaration. Some excerpts are here below;⁹¹

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia has already issued a statement strongly condemning the joint visit of the Presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan to the currently occupied city of Shushi of the Republic of Artsakh and described it as an outright provocation against regional peace and security.

"The declaration signed by the Presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan in Shushi, as well remarks made by the President of Turkey in the Parliament of Azerbaijan are equally deplorable and provocative.

"The 'Zangezur corridor' expression used in the declaration proves that Turkey and Azerbaijan, encouraged by the impunity of their joint aggression and mass atrocities committed against the people of Artsakh [Karabakh], are now making public agreements against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Armenia. The agreement of the two states to fight against the international recognition of the Armenian genocide is equally worrying.

"Amid such an Armenophobic context, the proposals of the President of Turkey voiced in the Parliament of Azerbaijan on creating a platform for regional cooperation are hypocritical and misleading".

91 "The comment of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia on the declaration signed by the Presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, June 17, 2021, https://www.mfa.am/en/interviews-articles-and-comments/2021/06/17/mfa_statement_on_the_decl/10995

Foreign Minister of Russia Lavrov paid a working visit to Turkey and met with his Turkish counterpart Çavuşoğlu in Antalya on 30 June. Talking to the reporters, Lavrov justified the visit of Turkey's President to Shusha, saying it was within the context of a partnership between Ankara and Baku. Some quotations from his remarks are here below;⁹²

“Today Cavusoglu and I agreed that both of us will use our resources to contribute to the reconciliation between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the normalization of relations and to help the Armenians, Azerbaijanis and people of other nationalities to live as good neighbors,

“Russia supports Erdogan's and Aliyev's proposal to create the ‘three plus three’ mechanism for promoting the development of the region, including the three countries of Transcaucasia and the three neighbors -Russia, Turkey and Iran”.

At a government sitting in Yerevan on 24 June, a decision was taken to extend the ban on import of Turkish goods to Armenia for another six months. As was previously mentioned in our article, the six-month ban introduced on 31 December 2020 was to expire on 1 July 2021.

92 “Lavrov says Erdogan's visit to Shusha was in the context of Ankara-Baku relations,” *CCBS*, July 1, 2021, <https://ccbs.news/en/article/4338/>

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ANNEX 1

THE GREEK INDEPENDENCE: MEMORY AND POLITICS, THE US PRESIDENT RUBS SALT TO THE WOUND**



Pictures: (Left) Archbishop Germanos III of Old Patras, whose slogan for the Greek rebellion was “Peace to the Christians! Respect to the Consuls! Death to the Turks!” - Source: MutualArt.com / (Right) Guerilla leader Theodoros Kolokotronis, the ultimate symbol of the Greek independence, who played a leading role in the extermination of the Turks of Morea.

Source: GreekReporter.com

25 March of this year was a symbolic day for Greece as it marked the 200th anniversary of Greek independence. Yet, 25 March was not only the anniversary of the Greek independence, but also the annihilation of the Turks of Peloponnese (also known as Morea) and the surrounding areas who were wiped out in a matter of weeks.

The bicentennial celebrations in Greece, cherished in an overtly nationalistic and mythical mood, for obvious reasons, made no mention of the fate of the Turks that had been completely exterminated by Greece during its

** AVİM, “The Greek Independence: Memory And Politics, The US President Rubs Salt To The Wound”, *Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)*, Commentary No: 2021/38, April 26, 2021, <https://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/THE-GREEK-INDEPENDENCE-MEMORY-AND-POLITICS-THE-US-PRESIDENT-RUBS-SALT-TO-THE-WOUND>

“independence” struggle. The more surprising element was not the attitude of the Greeks but that of the “civilized” West. From the United States to France to Germany, European and other western countries rushed to enthusiastically celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Greek independence without, however, a single reference to the fate of the Muslim population in Greece.

To add insult to injury, French and US warplanes flew over Athens to join the celebrations and publicly show their moral and material support to Greece. This gross and insulting indifference on the part of western countries can hardly be reconciled with their oft-repeated references to the human rights and the sacredness of the human lives, and their efforts to point themselves as the champions of humanity in suffering. The US President Joe Biden, in his 24 April statement of this, even referred to Istanbul as “Constantinople”, which no doubt sound like music to the ears of Greek “megali idea” fanatics.

When the Greek rebellion started 200 years ago on the 25 March, the Turkish inhabitants in Morea became the victims of a barbaric campaign of extermination. The symbolic slogan of the rebellion, proclaimed by the Greek Archbishop Germanos III, was “Peace to the Christians! Respect to the Consuls! Death to the Turks!” And indeed, the archbishop’s slogan was realized to the maximum extent possible. As the British historian William St. Clair noted:

“The Turks of Greece left few traces. They disappeared suddenly and finally in the spring of 1821, unmourned and unnoticed by the rest of the world... Upwards of 20,000 Turkish men, women and children were murdered by their Greek neighbours in a few weeks of slaughter. They were killed deliberately, without qualm and scruple... Turkish families living in single farms or small isolated communities were summarily put to death, and their homes burned down over their corpses. Others, when the disturbances began, abandoned home to seek the security of the nearest town, but the defenceless streams of refugees were overwhelmed by bands of armed Greeks. In the smaller towns, the Turkish communities barricaded their houses and attempted to defend themselves as best they could, but few survived. In some places they were driven by hunger to surrender to their attackers on receiving promises of security, but these were seldom honoured. The men were killed at once, and the women and children divided out as slaves, usually to be killed in their turn later. All over the Peloponnese roamed mobs of Greeks armed with clubs, scythes, and a few firearms, killing, plundering and burning. They were often led by Christian priests, who exhorted them to greater efforts in their holy work.”

As the massacres continued, horrifying scenes emerged:

“... the miserable [Turkish] inhabitants were given over to the lust and cruelty of a mob of savages. Neither sex nor age was spared. Women and children were tortured before being put to death. So great was the slaughter that [Greek guerrilla leader] Kolokotronis himself says that when he entered the town [Tripolitsa], from the gate of the citadel his horse’s hoofs never touched the ground. His path of triumph was carpeted with corpses. At the end of two days, the wretched remnant of the Mussulmans were deliberately collected, to the number of some two thousand souls, of every age and sex, but principally women and children, were led out to a ravine in the neighboring mountains, and there butchered like cattle.”

In this context, the Turkish population in Tripolitsa became the victims of attacks and barbaric treatment. In addition to the reference above, British writers and documents also described in gruesome and graphic detail how the Turks “were slowly burnt to death on a fire, after their arms and legs were chopped off.”

The gross indifference of the western countries and their leaders can hardly be attributed to a genuine ignorance. Popular work such as the Victorian classic, George Finlay’s *History of Greece*, or modern works by scholars such as William St. Clair’s *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, would have known that the Greek War of Independence started with the massacre of the Turkish inhabitants of the Peloponnese.

In addition, these horrifying and disgraceful acts were quite well known to the contemporary Europeans (such as Colonel Thomas Gordon) who volunteered on behalf of the Greeks and later had written what they witnessed with remorse and horror. Wilhelm Boldemann, a contemporary German philhellene who volunteered as a doctor in Greek ranks, was so overwhelmed by what he witnessed that he even committed suicide by taking poison.

Many years later, Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term “genocide,” even listed events during the Greek independence as “Genocide by the Greeks against the Turks” in his list of genocides. The international community through the United Nations adopted a definition of “genocide” that was different from that of Lemkin’s. However, Lemkin’s name continues to be frequently referenced (rightly or wrongly) in genocide disputes. In this context, there has not been a single case of condemnation by the European Parliament or the US Congress or individual European countries or states within the US.

In marked contrast to the full-scale campaigns of hate and insult launched against Turkey, there has never been a case in which these self-proclaimed

champions of humanity ever expressed remorse or a desire to remember (or remind people of) the Turkish victims. Greece was never asked to recognize this dark page in history by the European parliament or other European institutions or countries and was never asked to face its history. The Greek people or the Greek State was never asked to apologize to the victims' descendants.

The double standard on the part of the West is thus hardly a veiled one. When it comes the human rights and facing history, the West has never been a genuine defender and promoter of the human rights and their attempts to lecture other countries on human rights is no less disingenuous.

US President Biden has demonstrated this bluntly most recently through his 24 April 2021 statement that nothing has changed in the attitude of the West, promoted both by the church, Catholic as well as Evangelic, and the politicians.

ANNEX 2

SHUSHA DECLARATION ON ALLIED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AND THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY***

The Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey,

Emphasizing the historic significance of the meeting between President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the city of Shusha, the ancient cradle of culture of Azerbaijan and the entire Turkic world,

Once again reaffirming their adherence to all international documents signed between the two friendly and fraternal countries, and to the Treaty of Kars of 13 October 1921,

Guided by the “Agreement on the Development of Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey” and the “Protocol on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey” signed on 9 February 1994, as well as the “Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance” signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey on 16 August 2010”,

Emphasizing that raising the relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey to a qualitatively new and allied level on the basis of friendship and brotherhood between the two countries and peoples serves the interests of the two countries and peoples,

Realizing the importance of combining the capabilities and potentials of both countries in the political, economic, defense, cultural, humanitarian, healthcare, educational, social spheres, in the field of youth and sports in common interests,

Stressing the importance of continuing joint efforts to ensure global and regional peace, stability and security in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations,

Expressing the need for mutual coordination of activities in regional and international strategic issues of common interest,

*** “Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey,” *AzerTAC*, 17 June 2021, https://azertag.az/en/xeber/Shusha_Declaration_on_Allied_Relations_between_the_Republic_of_Azerbaijan_and_the_Republic_of_Turkey-1809375

Proceeding from the principles of solidarity and mutual assistance in bilateral and multilateral formats in such issues of national interest as independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, inviolability of their internationally recognized borders,

Combining efforts in promoting joint activities on the regional and international plane aimed at the stable development of the Turkic world,

Emphasizing that the wise sayings of the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the national leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, “The joy of Azerbaijan is our joy and its sorrow is ours too” and “One nation, two states”, are regarded as the national and spiritual heritage of our peoples,

Comprehensively considering the prospects for further expansion and deepening of bilateral relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey,

Hereby declare as follows:

The sides, expressing their satisfaction with the level of strategically developing relations between the two friendly and fraternal countries, note the importance of continuing the political dialogue at all levels and mutual visits at the highest level.

The sides proudly declare that Azerbaijan, having won a victory during the 44-day Patriotic war, put an end to the aggressive policy of Armenia that lasted for 30 years, liberated its lands from occupation, secured the victory of justice and the restoration of international law.

Azerbaijan highly appreciates the moral and political support of the Republic of Turkey in ending the 30-year Armenian aggression, liberating the occupied lands and restoring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The parties will continue their efforts aimed at strengthening stability and security in the Caucasus region, restoring all economic and transport links, normalizing the relations between countries of the region and ensuring long-term peace. In this context, the special geographical location of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of the Republic of Azerbaijan will be taken into account. The sides emphasize that the contribution made by Turkey to the operation of the Turkish-Russian Joint Center in the territories of Azerbaijan liberated from occupation plays an important role in ensuring peace, stability and prosperity of the region.

The Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, guided by the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of

internationally recognized borders, noninterference in the internal affairs of states, determine the political and legal mechanisms of their allied relations.

The parties note the importance of coordinating their foreign policies and holding regular bilateral political consultations and emphasize in this context the importance of activities between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey within the framework of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

The parties pursue an independent foreign policy aimed at protecting and ensuring national interests.

The parties make joint efforts aimed at the development of international relations based on peace, friendship and good-neighborliness through stability and prosperity on a regional and international scale, as well as the settlement of conflicts and the solution of issues of global security and stability.

Demonstrating solidarity and mutual support on international issues of a topical nature and of mutual interest, the parties, speaking from a consolidated position, will deepen bilateral cooperation and support each other within the framework of international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

If, in the opinion of one of the parties, there is a threat or an act of aggression from a third state or states against their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability or security of their internationally recognized borders, the parties will hold joint consultations and, in order to eliminate this threat or acts of aggression, carry out initiatives in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and provide each other with the necessary assistance in accordance with the UN Charter. After determining through urgent discussions the volume and form of such possible assistance, a decision will be made to secure defense needs for the adoption of joint measures and coordinated activities will be organized of power-wielding and administrative agencies of the Armed Forces.

Joint meetings of the security councils on national security issues of the parties will be held on a regular basis, discussing issues of national defense, regional and international security that may affect the interests of the parties.

The parties will continue to make joint efforts aimed at reorganizing and modernizing the armed forces of the two fraternal countries in accordance with modern requirements.

Guided by the clearance of mined areas, the parties will support activities aimed at normalizing life in the regions liberated from Armenian occupation.

The parties will encourage the exchange of personnel aimed at strengthening the defense capability and military security, conducting joint exercises and trainings, increasing the interaction capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries, cooperating closely in the management of weapons and ammunition on the basis of modern technologies, and ensuring coordinated activities of authorized agencies and institutions for this purpose. Azerbaijan and Turkey will support the implementation of military exercises together with the armies of other friendly states.

The parties, carrying out mutual technological exchange in the maritime, air and space spheres, and taking into account their national and international obligations, will encourage the implementation of common projects in order to develop joint capabilities and make a positive contribution to the development of mutual technologies in the defense industry, provide their weapons and ammunition, and mutually encourage production technologies and support the creation of production industries that do not currently exist in their countries, the implementation of joint research and production activities, cooperation between defense industry bodies of the two countries in the field of technology, military products and services in the domestic and international markets.

The parties note that the military-political cooperation developed between the two states and meeting their national interests is not directed against third states.

The parties emphasize the importance of further developing cooperation in the field of cyber-security, and will conduct joint scientific research, train specialists in this area and encourage mutual technical cooperation.

The parties will step up efforts aimed at diversifying national economies and exports in trade and economic relations, as well as creating joint production in promising industries and developing more favorable conditions for the mutually beneficial development of investment cooperation. In this context, Azerbaijan and Turkey will take measures aimed at creating mechanisms for organizing the free movement of goods.

The parties emphasize the advanced role of Turkey and Azerbaijan in the implementation of the strategic Southern Gas Corridor, which contributes to the energy security of the region and Europe and ensures the diversification of sources and routes of natural gas. The parties will continue their efforts in a coordinated manner aimed at rational use and further development of the

Southern Gas Corridor. The parties, taking into account the processes in the global energy sector, also express their intention to continue their efforts in the field of electricity and to intensify efforts towards regional cooperation in order to enhance the security of energy supply of the region.

The parties will strengthen their cooperation in order to increase the competitiveness of the East-West Transport Corridor passing through the territory of the two countries. Azerbaijan and Turkey, using the technologies of intelligent transport systems, will further develop the transit and transport potential on the Azerbaijani-Turkish sections of international transport corridors.

The parties note that the opening of the corridor connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey between western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of the Republic of Azerbaijan (the Zangazur corridor) and, as a continuation of this corridor, the construction of the Nakhchivan-Kars railway will make an important contribution to the development of transport and communication links between the two countries.

The parties emphasize that the current level of relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan contributes to the overall regional and international peace and prosperity and that by bringing peace and prosperity not only to the two countries but also to the region as a whole, these relations serve stability, peace and the interests of the international community headed by countries of the region.

The parties will expand and deepen their joint efforts and cooperation in the field of combating various threats and challenges that have a negative impact on regional and international stability and security, in particular terrorism, all its forms and manifestations, financing, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, money laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking, illegal migration.

The Republic of Azerbaijan condemns any activity directed against the sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, stability and security of the Republic of Turkey, including all forms and manifestations of terrorism, and resolutely supports the fight the Republic of Turkey is waging against terrorism.

The parties will consolidate their efforts to further develop cooperation between Azerbaijani and Turkish diasporas living in different countries, take joint action against common problems they face and show consistent solidarity.

The parties will encourage coordination and mutual support of diaspora activities in representing their countries and communicating the historical truth related to the protection of national interests to the world.

The parties, stressing that Armenia's unfounded claims against Turkey, attempts to distort history and politicize historical facts through their distortion, harm peace and stability in the region, strongly support the efforts of Turkey in this context, which has opened its archives in connection with the events of 1915 in order to encourage the opening of archives in Armenia and other countries and enable a research to be conducted on this topic by historians.

In accordance with the "Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey in the Field of Media" signed on 10 December 2020, the parties, taking into account the capabilities of the Azerbaijan-Turkish media platform, will further strengthen cooperation between relevant agencies of the two countries in the field of information, communication and public diplomacy. Within this framework, active consultations and exchanges of information will be regularly held between the ministers of foreign affairs.

The parties encourage further strengthening of inter-parliamentary cooperation and increased interaction in this direction.

The parties will ensure the provision of the necessary public support for important manifestations of the common values of the two peoples and carry out joint activities to protect the historical and cultural heritage.

The parties note the intensification of national and international efforts that will serve the unity and well-being of the Turkic world.

The parties will strengthen cooperation in the field of promoting and advancing Turkic cultural heritage at the international level.

In order to further strengthen Turkic cooperation, the parties will give an impetus to the activities carried out within the framework of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, the Turkic Academy, the Foundation of Turkic Culture and Heritage, TURKSOY and the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries.

The parties express their satisfaction with the agreement reached on the entry of citizens of one party into the territory of the other party with domestic passports only and, noting the exceptional importance of this agreement in terms of proximity between our peoples and ties between them, approve the adoption of appropriate measures to enable citizens of one party to obtain the

right to reside in the territory of the other party in accordance with the principle of reciprocity.

The parties, providing the necessary state support, will continue to develop and deepen close ties on the basis of common values in the humanitarian sphere, in the field of social protection, science, education, healthcare, culture, youth and sports. To this end, relevant agencies of the two countries will carry out joint activities on a permanent basis.

This Declaration is signed in the city of Shusha on 15 June 2021 in the Azerbaijani and Turkish languages in two original copies, and all texts are equally authentic.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan

RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ

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THE SOUTH CAUCASUS IN 1905-1906 ACCORDING TO “THE NEW YORK TIMES” COVERAGE

(“THE NEW YORK TIMES” KAYITLARINA GÖRE
1905-1906 ARASI GÜNEY KAFKASYA)

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Abstract: *Abstract: In the years 1905-1906, events took place in the South Caucasus that were called "Armenian-Tatar (Azerbaijani Turkish) clashes" or "Armenian-Tatar massacres". The main sources in the study of this issue, along with archival documents, official records, and memoirs of eyewitnesses of events are newspaper periodicals. Newspapers are an irreplaceable source of scientific information, and for historical research, they have often been used as an additional source of information that provides an understanding of the historical context of past events. In this sense, newspaper periodicals are the most significant source for the reconstruction of the events of 1905-1906 in the South Caucasus. This article analyzes the events of 1905-1906 based on the coverage they received in the American press, the most important being the New York Times newspaper. The study of the materials convincingly shows that they*

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were not objective, because despite the numerous facts cited about the huge casualties on both sides, the Azerbaijani Turks were still portrayed as the culprits of the conflict.

Keywords: *South Caucasus, Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, ethnic conflict, massacre, The New York Times*

Öz: *1905-1906 yıllarında Güney Kafkasya'da "Ermeni-Tatar (Azerbaycan Türkü) çatışmaları" veya "Ermeni-Tatar katliamları" olarak adlandırılan olaylar meydana gelmiştir. Arşiv belgeleri, resmi kayıtlar ve olayların görgü tanıklarının hatıraları dışında bu mesele üzerinde çalışması için esas kaynak gazete yayınlarıdır. Gazeteler eşsiz bir bilimsel bilgi kaynağıdır ve tarihi araştırmalarda sıklıkla geçmiş olayların tarihi bağlamının anlaşılması sağlayan ek bilgi kaynakları olarak kullanılmaktadırlar. Bu anlamda gazete yayınları, Güney Kafkasya'daki 1905-1906 olaylarının tarih yazımı için en önemli kaynağı teşkil etmektedir. Bu makale, 1905-1906 olaylarını -en önemlisi New York Times gazetesi olan- Amerikan basınında haber yapıldığı şekliyle incelemektedir. İncelenen belgeler, ikna edici bir şekilde bu haberlerin objektiflikten uzak olduğunu göstermektedir, zira iki tarafın da çok büyük kayıplar verdiğini ortaya koyan olgulara atıf yapılmış olsa da Azerbaycan Türkleri çatışmanın esas sorumluları olarak tasvir edilmiştir.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Güney Kafkasya, Ermeni-Azerbaycan çatışması, etnik çatışma, katliam, The New York Times*

Introduction

Interethnic conflicts are one of the most acute problems of the modern world. Initially localized as internal political and/or ethnopolitical conflicts, they often develop into international problems. Considering the frightening scale of the current ethnopolitical conflicts and the potential humanitarian catastrophes associated with them, it is necessary to develop a conscious attitude towards them; doing research, consolidating all forces that could prevent this destructive process, and involving the media into this process.

In this article, we tried to study the events of 1905-1906 in the South Caucasus according to coverage of *The New York Times*¹ (NYT) newspaper. Since the 19th century, the United States of America has been holding the leading position in the publishing of periodical newspapers based on the number of publishers, the circulation of its newspapers, and a huge staff of correspondents working all over the world.

We reviewed the articles of NYT covering the events in the South Caucasus spanning two years, from January 1, 1905, to December 31, 1906. NYT was selected as a source for several reasons. First, it ranks among the most circulated daily newspapers not only in the United States but also in different countries around world. Secondly, the said newspaper has always paid great attention to events that took place not only in the US, but also far beyond its borders. Therefore, on the pages of newspapers, a lot of information can be found about the events of 1905-1906 in the South Caucasus. From the moment of its establishment to the present time, this newspaper has been and remains one of the key sources of information and the formation of public opinion in the United States and in the world.

From January 1, 1905, to December 31, 1906, NYT published a large number of materials in which the news about the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict (or, in the terminology of that era, “Armenian-Tatar²”) was mentioned at least once in different contexts (we collected the material not selectively but as a whole for the South Caucasus). Of these, we have selected 100 articles reporting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre of 1905-1906. It should be noted that the news published in NYT was duplicated by many European newspapers and vice versa. The reports on the events in the South Caucasus in NYT were presented in a stingy telegraphic style or were limited to the publication of eyewitness narratives. For example, one of them talks about

1 Founded by Henry Raymond (1820-1869) on September 18, 1851.

2 From the 19th century onwards, the Russian authorities, who traditionally referred to all Turkic people as “Tatars”, defined Turks living in the South Caucasus as “Caucasian Tatars” or “Azerbaijani Tatars” to distinguish them from other Turkic groups living in Iran and the Ottoman Empire.

the situation of British subjects during the events in 1905 in Baku.³ Trying to bring readers closer to understanding the essence of these events, the newspaper also published analytical materials, such as an essay on oilfields in the Baku province⁴, on Russian rule in the South Caucasus⁵, or about the causes of the conflict⁶ etc. News about the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was rarely placed on the front page, however, references to these events were found in almost all journalistic materials (notes, reports, articles, essays) of the newspaper. The relevant NYT articles were often accompanied by several flashy, intriguing headlines, typed in fonts other than the main text.

The Historical Context for the Armenian-Azerbaijani Massacre of 1905-1906

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian Empire entered a period of a protracted socio-political crisis, accompanied by a rise of the workers' and peasants' movement, the activation of opposition and revolutionary parties, and the strengthening of national movements in the outskirts. All these appeared against the background of the weakening of government and a growing conviction in the society on its failure. The government turned out to be completely unprepared for this crisis, which manifested itself, in particular, during the interethnic conflict in the South Caucasus in 1905-1906.⁷ Therefore, in the conditions of the ongoing war with Japan (1904-1905) and the revolution that began in 1905, the Russian authorities faced another problem: in February, bloody clashes began in almost all the settlements of the South Caucasus, where Azerbaijani Turks and Armenians lived. In the city of Baku alone, bloody clashes occurred three times - in February, August, and October 1905- that claimed the lives of thousands of people. Riots also took place in the Erivan and Elizavetpol provinces. According to Tadeusz Swietochowski, "an estimated 128 Armenian and 158 'Tatar' villages were pillaged or destroyed. The estimates of lives lost vary widely, ranging from 3,100 to 10,000."⁸ Martial law was declared in the Baku, Elizavetpol, and

3 "Baku is not pacified. Bomb thrown at Kovno. Chief of Police and Six Other Persons Badly Hurt. Tell of Caucasus horrors Rescued Englishmen Describe Relentless Butchery by the Tartars and Armenians. Article 2 - No Title", *The New York Times*, September 27, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/27/archives/article-2-no-title.html>

4 "Troops powerless to check Baku mob", *The New York Times*, September 10, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/10/archives/troops-powerless-to-check-baku-mob.html>

5 "Russia in the Caucasus", *The New York Times*, September 18, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/18/archives/russia-in-the-caucasus.html>

6 "Moslem Hatred of Armenians", *The New York Times*, September 9, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/09/archives/moslem-hatred-of-armenians.html>

7 Ф.Р. Джаббаров, "Власти Российской империи и армяно-азербайджанский конфликт", *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. История*, Т. 62. Вып. 3 (2017): 450.

8 Tadeusz Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920, the Shaping of a National Identity in a Muslim Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41.

Erivan provinces, and punitive expeditions were sent to Nakhchivan and Shusha to end the interethnic massacre. Thus, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict of 1905-1906 revealed not only serious problems in the national policy of the Empire, but also revealed shortcomings in the management of the region, the weakness of the local administration, its lack of flexibility, firmness, and timely reaction to the first symptoms of interethnic contradictions.⁹

After the conquest of Northern Azerbaijan¹⁰, the Russian Empire began a purposeful Christianization of the newly conquered territories. In general, the Russian government pursued a number of important foreign policy goals in its Caucasian policy: the creation of a strategic bridgehead on the borders with the Qajar Iran and the Ottoman Empire; the transformation of the South Caucasus into a reliable military base for further invasion to the west and south; ensuring control over the coast of the Caspian Sea and its water area, as well as trade routes running through this territory from south to north and from west to east and etc. Since most of the Christian population of Georgia was, from the point of view of some circles of the Russian government, not a completely reliable ally, the Russian government considered appropriate the mass resettlement of Christians of Armenian origin to the region. The Russian government proceeded from the fact that Armenians, more than other ethnic groups, would need protection as migrants, and therefore would be filled with a sense of gratitude and become reliable subjects. As a result, a mass resettlement of Armenians from Qajar Iran and the Ottoman Empire started. The Armenians resettled from Qajar Iran and the Ottoman Empire to the territory of the South Caucasus were placed mainly in regions where the predominant population was Azerbaijani Turks. The process of resettlement of Armenians stretched for a whole century and experienced new stages as a result of the Russia-Iranian (1804-1813 and 1826-1828) and Russian-Turkish wars (1828-1829, 1853-1856 and 1877-1878)¹¹. The resettlement had a

9 Ф. Джаббаров, *Армянский экстремизм на Южном Кавказе: вторая половина XIX-начало XX вв* (Баку: TEAS Press, 2018), 358.

10 Having defeated Qajar Iran in wars (1804-1813 and 1826-1828), and in accordance with the treaties of Gulistan and Turkmenchay signed in 1813 and 1828 respectively, Tsarist Russia annexed a part of Azerbaijan which is known as “North Azerbaijan”, now the Republic of Azerbaijan, and a larger part of Azerbaijan known as “South Azerbaijan”, which currently is situated in the East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Ardebil, Zanjan, Qazvin and Hamadan provinces of Iran.

11 N.N. Shavrov claims that in 1828-1830 about 200,000 Armenians were resettled to the Southern Caucasus according to the terms of the Turkmanchay (Article 14) and Adrianople peace (Article 15) treaties. Shavrov noted; “We began our colonization policy in Transcaucasia not by settling Russian people, but by settling foreigners... After the war of 1826-1828 we resettled more than 40,000 Persian and 84,000 Turkish Armenians to Transcaucasia from 1828 to 1830, Armenians from Persia and Armenians from the Ottoman Empire (total 124,000) moved to the Caucasus and settled in Erivan province and Elizavetpol – where before the number of Armenians was almost zero as well in Tiflis region. To settle down they were given more than 200,000 acres of state-owned lands, in addition private-owned lands worth 2 million rubles were bought from Muslims. The mountainous part of Elizavetpol governate and the shores of lake Goycha were occupied by these Armenians. It should

negative impact on the demographic situation in the South Caucasus, causing serious changes in the ethnopolitical map of the region, and, primarily, of North Azerbaijan.

An important sign characterizing the attitude of the Russian authorities towards Muslim population was the ethnic name of the people, distorted in the official interpretation. For many years, in official documents and periodicals, they were referred as “Tatars”, “Transcaucasian Tatars”, “Azerbaijan Tatars”, “Persians”, and sometimes, based on their confessional affiliation, “Muslims”. The self-chosen name of the people – “Turks”, “Azerbaijani Turks” and the language “Turkic”, “Azerbaijani-Turkic” – was completely ignored.¹²

The Russian government placed Armenians on the fertile lands of the Azerbaijani Turks, giving them special privileges. In a short time, these settlers, having become rich with the help of these privileges, began to actively oppress the Azerbaijani Turkic population of the region. Until the end of the 1880s, protectionism towards Armenians would accompany the policy of the Russian Empire in the South Caucasus, combining at the same time an open distrust of Muslim Turks and restriction in their rights, in comparison with Armenians. This dualism would constantly be present in the national policy of the Russian Empire in Northern Azerbaijan, causing either minor friction or serious antagonism in interethnic relations between Azerbaijan Turks and Armenians. Using the Armenians as an equivoque to the notorious “Muslim danger”, the Tsarist government openly demonstrated selectivity in its policy towards these two peoples.¹³

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Russian government made some changes in its policy towards Armenians. Concerned about their separatist aspirations, ideas to create an autonomous Armenian state on the territory of Russia, in 1903, the Russian authorities confiscated the property and lands of the Armenian Church and banned them from opening Armenian schools.¹⁴ This led to an increase in the influence of the radical terrorist party Dashnaktsutyun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation), which demanded an independent Armenian state. With the beginning of the revolution, a real

be remembered that apart from officially resettled people, that is about 124,000 Armenians, there were a lot of people who resettled illegally, therefore the total number of immigrants exceeds 200,000 people. After the Crimea campaign some more Armenians resettled, but their exact number was not fixed”. (Н.Н. Шавров, *Новая угроза русскому делу в Закавказье: предстоящая распродажа Мугани иноподданам* (С.-Петербург: Рус. собрание, 1911), 59)

12 Джаббаров, *Армянский экстремизм на Южном Кавказе*, 67.

13 Джаббаров, *Армянский экстремизм на Южном Кавказе*, 73.

14 Thanks to the efforts of the governor of the Caucasus I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkovs in April 1905, it was decided to return the confiscated property to the Armenian Church. Р.А. Городницкий, “Учреждения министерства внутренних дел на Кавказе в 1905–1917 гг.”, *Вестник Московского университета. Серия 21. Управление (государство и общество)*, №3 (2004): 69.

bacchanalia of terror perpetrated by Armenian radicals, mainly Dashnaks, unfolded in the South Caucasus. Its victims included the Baku governor Mikhail Nakashidze, the chief of staff of the Caucasian military district General Fedor Gryaznov and other high-ranking Russian officials. In addition to attacks on “servants of Tsarism”, terrorist attacks by such radicals were instigated on arsenals with the aim of seizing weapons and engaging in armed robberies. The authorities gave preference to the use of force in the fight against the riots. In the spring of 1905, additional military units and two Cossack divisions were introduced to the region.¹⁵

However, the massive resettlement of Armenians, coupled with political discrimination, caused tension and discontent among the Azerbaijani Turks. Imperial laws gave the Armenians more advantages and they became a wealthy ethnic minority with wider privileges compared to the Turkic majority. The Armenians were present in large numbers within the state apparatus while the Azerbaijani Turks (as well as Muslims in general) were almost non-existent in the same apparatus. The oil boom that began in the Absheron peninsula around Baku in the mid-nineteenth century attracted a large number of workers – Armenians, Russians and Azerbaijanis, including from Qajar Iran. Many Armenian oil tycoons emerged in Baku – Mantashev, Gukasov and others. However, growing competition created a basis for conflict, particularly in agricultural areas.¹⁶

On February 6, 1905, Emperor Nicholas II (1894-1917) issued a decree on the restoration of the Caucasian governorship within the borders of the entire Caucasus, with the exception of the Stavropol province. By decree of May 3 of the same year, the new governor, Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov¹⁷ received the broadest of powers. The governor could also introduce martial law in the region and cancel the decisions of the provincial and regional authorities. The main task that the Tsar set before the new governor of the Caucasus Vorontsov-Dashkov was the suppression of riots, which took on a large scale in the region. As in the rest of Russia, the revolutionary movement in the Caucasus consisted of three components: workers’ uprisings in cities, peasant unrest, and national movements. Workers in the cities of the Caucasus received less than in other regions, and their working conditions were especially difficult.¹⁸

15 Городницкий, “Учреждения министерства внутренних дел на Кавказе в 1905–1917”, 68.

16 Ф. Шафиев, “Истоки армяно-азербайджанского конфликта: события 1905-1906 годов”, *Irs* 34, № 4 (2008): 49 ; Farid Shafiyev, “Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict: roots. Massacres of 1905-1906”, *Journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, № 18-19 (2008): 16.

17 Illarion Ivanovich Vorontsov-Dashkov (1837-1916) – Viceroy of Caucasus in 1905-1915.

18 Городницкий, “Учреждения министерства внутренних дел на Кавказе в 1905–1917”, 67.

When we consider the American newspaper publications, there is no doubt that the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre made a considerable impression on American society. However, characteristically, the American press paid close attention to the events in the South Caucasus in connection with the fires in the oil fields. "Who owns oil rules the world" - these famous words of the British Admiral Fisher reflect the undoubted fact that oil had become increasingly important in the world economy since the beginning of the 20th century. The beginning of the 20th century was characterized by an active growth of industry in the Russian Empire and the Baku province was the main oil base of the country. By this time, the Baku oil industry had moved to the first place in the world in terms of its development rate and production volume, giving in 1901 more than half (672 million pounds) of world and 95% of all-Russian oil production. From 1874 to 1899, 29 corporations were established, including those with the participation of foreign capital. As the position of foreign capital strengthened, the oil industry passed more and more into the hands of foreign investors. Therefore, for example, if in 1902 16% of the capital invested in the oil industry belonged to foreign investors, then in 1912 the share of foreign capital in the oil industry was already 42%. The growing demand of the world's industrial centers for oil and petroleum products contributed to a significant increase in oil production in the Baku province. In 1901, 11 million tons of oil was produced here, which was more than half of the world's oil production. The period that we are studying falls in the crisis years for the Russian industry (from 1900 to the beginning of a new industrial boom in 1908-1909). The outlined overcoming of the economic crisis at the end of 1903 was stopped by the Russo-Japanese War and the revolutionary events of 1905-1907. The decline in the oil industry on the Absheron Peninsula in 1905-1906, during the period of interethnic conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijani Turks, had an impact not only on the economy of the Russian Empire, but also on the entire world economy.

For the Baku province, 1905 was characterized by repeated strikes of workers in Baku and in the adjacent industrial areas, no less frequent strikes of railway employees, a one-and-a-half-month break (from mid-November to the end of December) postal and telegraph communications, and finally, as a result of interethnic massacres throughout the year, accompanied by fires of houses in the city, oil rigs in the oilfields, destruction of property and craft equipment. All this was reflected to a large extent on the state of the oil industry in 1905. Destruction in the Baku oilfields, in August 1905, which destroyed more than half of all production and periodic strikes that continued throughout the Caucasus among oilfields workers, riots and terror reduced oil production in Baku to an extreme minimum.¹⁹ Some researchers believe that foreign

19 А.В. Коновалова, "Акции нефтяных предприятий в начале XX века на С.-Петербургской фондовой бирже", *Экономическая история. Обзорение / Под ред. Л.И.Бородкина*, Вып. 10 (2005): 41.

companies, to maximize profit margins, often neglected basic safety requirements in oilfields. It was because of these gross violations that a large-scale fire occurred in 1905 in Baku. In a few days in August 1905, 1,429 oil rigs burned down - over 58% of all oilfields in the Caspian, as a result of which the export of oil products from Russia decreased by more than 2 times and Russian companies lost a significant share of the world market. If in 1904 the sales of kerosene from Baku accounted for more than 30% of world exports, this dropped to only about 18% in subsequent years. Some promising markets were almost completely lost - supplies of Russian oil products to China stopped, and Russia’s share in the supply of kerosene to India fell from 78 to 2%.²⁰

Press Coverage and Modern Interpretations

Using the articles from *The New York Times* allows us to see how the perception of this conflict changed in the American media in historical retrospect. This allows us to identify what kind of main factors influenced the formation of public opinion about this conflict. An analysis of the American press of that time allows us to assert that the view of the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre in the South Caucasus in 1905-1906 was dominated by the interpretation of events that the massacre was provoked by the Russian authorities. The American press of that time (like the European one) primarily emphasized the incendiary role of the Russian authorities and the different attitudes of Armenians and Azerbaijani Turks to the 1905 revolution. The newspaper’s analysts argued that, in this way, the Russian government carried out the policy of “divide and rule”, setting the peoples against each other, that the police set the Azerbaijani Turks against the Armenians, and that they were even given weapons in police stations, and the police were inactive at the sight of street riots.

“Scarcely any better illustration can be found of the way in which the Russian government has played fast and loose with the races under its control that the history of Armenians in the Caucasus and Eastern Turkey. At one time flattering them and giving them hopes of high success, at another time crushing them down by edicts of the most destructive type. It was not very long after this that the Russian Government issued its edicts by which the Armenian language was practically forbidden, Armenian school were closed and Armenian ecclesiastical property were confiscated.

20 Н.В. Лукьянович and И.В. Прокофьев, “Исторические аспекты нефтяного соперничества России и США”, *Проблемы национальной стратегии* 58, № 1 (2020): 191.

Meanwhile, in the general policy the Moslem had no special share. When however it came to be a question of suppressing the Armenians, naturally the Russian Government was not anxious to appear as prime agency”²¹

Archival documents at the disposal of modern historians allow us to trace these events in the South Caucasus and their causes and prerequisites. As a result of the introduction of archival materials and documentary sources into scientific circulation and its critical analysis, it became possible to approach the issue of the ethnic conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis at the beginning of the 20th century from a different perspective.²² The author newest to the research of this issue, F. Jabbarov, states the following:

“Today, more than a hundred years after the massacre of 1905-1906, when researchers have access to previously closed archives, and there is an opportunity to put forward an alternative view of the events of the past, it can be reasonably asserted that [the narrative asserting that the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre was] planned by the ruling circles of Russia does not hold water. The imperial government was the least interested party in unleashing ethnic massacres”²³

At the same time, it is obvious that the colonial policy of the Russian Empire in the region played a key role in unleashing and continuing interethnic clashes. This ongoing Russian colonial policy served to intensify discontent of among the Azerbaijani population. The perception of Russian favoritism toward the Armenians exacerbated ethnic relations in the South Caucasus. It seems; however, the Russian administration did not act as the executer of these

21 “Russia in the Caucasus”, *The New York Times*.

22 See more detail at: Б. Наджафов, *Лицо врага. История армянского национализма в Закавказье в конце XIX - начале XX вв.* в 2-х чч. Ч. 1. (Баку: ЭЛМ, 1992); X. Мөммədov, *Azərbaycan milli hərəkatı (1875-1918-ci illər)* (Баку: Sabah nəşriyyatı, 1996); D. Seyidzadə, *Azərbaycan XX əsrin əvvəllərində: müstəqilliyə aparən yollar* (Баку: Ulduz, 1998); S.Y. Süleymanova, *Azərbaycanda ictimai-siyasi hərəkat (XIX yüzilliyin sonu-XX yüzilliyin əvvəlləri)* (Баку: Azərbaycan Dövlət Kitab Palatası, 1999); Ф. Шафиев, “Истоки армяно-азербайджанского конфликта: события 1905-1906 годов”, *Irs* 34, № 4 (2008): 48-53; Ф. Шафиев, “Истоки армяно-азербайджанского конфликта: события 1905-1906 годов”, *Irs* 35, № 5 (2008): 18-23; E. Əzizov, “*Difai*”: *XX əsrin əvvəllərində erməni-azərbaycanlı münaqişəsinin ilkin tarixi şərtləri və səbəbləri* (Баку: CBS, 2009); A.Ə. Paşayev, *XIX-XX əsrlərdə ermənilərin azərbaycanlılara qarşı ərazi iddiaları, soyqırımları və deportasiyalar (arxiv sənəd və materialları əsasında)* (Баку: Çaşioğlu, 2011); И.С. Багирова, *Политические партии и организации Азербайджана в начале XX века (1900-1917)* (Баку: ЭЛМ, 1997); F. Valehoğlu, *Tiflis quberniyasında azərbaycanlılara qarşı 1905-ci il kütləvi qırğınları*. (Баку: Turxan NPB, 2013); М.Дж. Гасымлы, *Анатолія и Южный Кавказ в 1724-1920-е гг.: в поисках исторической истины* (Москва: АНО ИИЦ «Инсан», 2014); Ф. Джаббаров, *Армянский экстремизм на Южном Кавказе: вторая половина XIX-начало XX вв* (Баку: TEAS Press, 2018).

23 Ф. Джаббаров, “Князь М. А. Накашидзе: организатор армяно-азербайджанской резни 1905 г. или жертва клеветы?”, *Proceedings of the Institute of Georgian History of the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University Vol. XII* (2017): 342.

events but rather facilitated to the massacres by its inaction and later manipulated the two ethnic groups. The Russian authorities manipulated both sides: the dissatisfaction of the Azerbaijani Turks with the colonial authorities and the revolutionary sentiments of the Armenians were directed into the mainstream of interethnic enmity.²⁴

An analysis of the events that took place on the eve and during the interethnic massacre invariably points to the only force interested in destabilizing the situation in the region and provoking an interethnic conflict. This force was represented by the most radical part of the Armenians, represented by the Dashnaktsutyun. During the massacre, the Dashnaks vent their anger both against the Azerbaijani Turks – as the main obstacle for their ideas of “Great Armenia”, and against the Tsarist administration for its “Golitsyn” methods of fighting against the chauvinism and separatism of groups like the Dashnaks.²⁵ Under the influence of a powerful propaganda campaign deployed in the press and at public meetings, rarely did anyone look for the cause of the Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes not in the notorious incitement of the authorities, but in the terrorist activities of the Armenian revolutionary parties, which launched a struggle, on the one hand, against the Azerbaijani Turks population of the South Caucasus, but on the other, against the Russian government.²⁶

“.. that the educated Armenians are largely responsible for the outbreak, especially the members of the Technical Association. Independent Russian and foreign opinion also blames the Armenian extremists”;²⁷

American journalists were more inclined to emphasize the fact that the Russian government found its support precisely in the Turks, who were shown as the embodiment of “barbarism”.

“Narrow-minded natives opposed all innovations”;²⁸

24 Ф. Шафиев, “Истоки армяно-азербайджанского конфликта: события 1905-1906 годов”, *Irs* 35, № 5 (2008): 23 ; Shafiyev “Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict: roots. Massacres of 1905-1906”, 16, 28.

25 Джаббаров, *Армянский экстремизм на Южном Кавказе*, 347.

26 Ф.Р. Джаббаров, “К вопросу о «панисламистском следе» в межнациональном конфликте на Южном Кавказе в 1905–1906 гг.” *Исламоведение*. Т. 8, № 4 (2017): 54-55.

27 “Feared at Shulavery. Tartars kill journalist are conducting a crusade against Newspaper Men — Oil. Workmen Threatened”, *The New York Times*, September 16, 1905,

<https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/16/archives/many-fights-at-baku-troops-sent-to-kutais-racial-war-is-also-feared.html>

28 “The Baku Oilfields; Great Fires Will Cripple Russia’s Oil Trade. Story of the industry Rothschilds and Russian Government Interested in the Fields Which Produce Nearly Half World’s Supply”, *The New York Times*, September 10, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/10/archives/the-baku-oilfields-great-fires-will-cripple-russias-oil-trade-story.html>

“Moslems were acting with the full knowledge and tacit, if not explicit, approval of Government”;²⁹

“M.Nobel says the racial and religious war is merely a complication. The active dangerous elements at Baku being Russians and Armenians, the Government relied upon the conservative Tartar majority to serve as a check whereas it only brought another disturbing element into the field”;³⁰

The leitmotif of the attitude of the wider American and world community to the Caucasian events was unconditional sympathy for the Armenians, who were seen as a “cultured people” who became a victim to the provocations of the autocracy, as well as the darkness and ignorance of the surrounding peoples.

“The one element of any positive character has been the Armenian. The Armenians of the Caucasus differs in many respects from his fellow in Turkey. He is more aggressive, more unscrupulous more ambitious. His grip upon trade is even stronger at Tiflis than in Constantinople or Smyrna; his school had better; his share in public life more pronounced”;³¹

“The first and principal cause of the disorders at Baku is the Moslem hatred of the Armenians. This feeling is of long standing and is never absent. The Armenians have been detested as parasites and exploiters of the Mohamedan and other populations in the Caucasus and for several years past the Russian authorities have had much difficulty in restraining the Tartars from cruel and bloody reprisals. The Armenians understood the situation and aware of their danger, armed themselves. The Baku massacres in February showed how well they could defend themselves. This was shown again in the past seven days by the large number of Tartars killed in the rioting”³².

A careful analysis of the mass of newspaper information reveals a multitude of news, reports and articles reflecting the real picture of the events that took place, including the facts of mass killings of the Turkic-Muslim population.

29 “Russia in the Caucasus”, *The New York Times*.

30 “Moslem Hatred of Armenians”, *The New York Times*.

31 “Russia in the Caucasus”, *The New York Times*.

32 “Moslem Hatred of Armenians”, *The New York Times*.

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“Yesterday eleven Cossacks, eighty five Tartars and ten Armenians were killed and many houses were fired. The troops and Armenians were acting together against Tartars”³³;

“About 1500 Tartars it is announced [sic] have been killed or wounded”³⁴;

“After describing the commencement of the outbreak on September 2, when the Armenians massacred 300 Tartars”³⁵;

“Two Armenian and nine Tartars villages have been already destroyed”³⁶;

“Turkish Consul at Batum reports that the Armenians are massacring Tartars at the rate of 500 daily”³⁷;

“700 Armenians from a number villagers attacked the Tartar village of Gors³⁸, killed 400 of a villagers, and plundered and burned all the property”³⁹;

“At Elizabethpol the Armenians, who managed to get possession of a number of filed guns, are said to have massacred a great number of Mussulmans”⁴⁰;

33 “Fierce fighting in Shusha 85 Tartar slain in Cossacks and Armenians,” *The New York Times*, September 4, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/09/04/archives/fierce-fighting-in-shusha-85-tartars-slain-in-attack-on-cossacks.html>

34 “Troops powerless to check Baku mob”, *The New York Times*.

35 “Baku is not pacified., *The New York Times*.

36 “New Tartar-Armenian war. Eleven Villages Already Destroyed in Elizabethpol District”, *The New York Times*, October 15, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/10/15/archives/new-tartararmenian-war-eleven-villages-already-destroyed-in.html>

37 “Wiping out the Tartars. Armenians at Batum said to be killing 500 a Day,” *The New York Times*, December 23, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/12/23/archives/wiping-out-the-tartars-armenians-at-batum-said-to-be-killing-500-a.html>

38 Information about the massacre in the village of Gors on the historical lands of Azerbaijan in the Sharur-Daralagez district of the Iravan province, when about 400 civilians of the village were killed in one night, i.e. practically the entire population, naturally suggests an analogy with the events of February 26, 1992, when the Armenian military units in the city of Khojaly (Qarabakh) carried out a massacre that may be deemed as an act of genocide against the Azerbaijani population. This massacre was one of the most heinous crimes committed against the Azerbaijani population during the war of Armenia against Azerbaijan. 613 people were killed (including 106 women, 63 children, 70 old men), 1,000 people of different ages were maimed. 8 families were annihilated, 130 children lost one parent, while 25 lost both parents, and 1275 peace residents were taken hostages, while the fate of 150 of them is still unknown.

39 “Massacre 400 Tartars. Armenians Destroy a Village — Mujiks Continue Pillaging”, *The New York Times*, November 15, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/11/15/archives/massacre-400-tartars-armenians-destroy-a-village-mujiks-continue.html>

40 “Slaughter in Caucasus. Armenians Have Field Guns — Rebel Government Runs Courland”, *The New York Times*, January 10, 1906, <https://www.nytimes.com/1906/01/10/archives/slaughter-in-caucasus-armenians-have-field-guns-rebel-government.html>

“The whole district around Agdam is harried by Armenians and others who are perpetrating horrible atrocities, not giving any quarter to the wounded or to women or children”⁴¹;

“in spite of the pledges of the belligerent races to observe a truce during the negotiation for peace, Armenians set fire to several Tartar houses and killed a number of nomad Mussulmans, who came to the assistance of the Tartars”⁴².

During massacre of the Turkic population in 1905-1906 by armed Armenian gangs, several immovable Turkic cultural heritage, Islamic religious monuments - mosques, tombs, shrines, and other places of worship - were either desecrated or completely destroyed.

“The Mohammedans are greatly enraged at the attack made on the celebrated shrine of Karapirim⁴³”⁴⁴;

“Armenians during the last week sacked and burned several Mahommedan villages in the Emchiadzin and Erivan Governments, profaning a mosque, attacking women, and slaying promiscuously”⁴⁵.

At the same time, it can be seen that even the ferocity of the Armenians was perceived as something natural and almost necessary in the given conditions. There were Azerbaijani Turks who were similarly armed and who resisted the violence perpetrated against them. However, based on available documents, we can argue that in most cases it was the Azerbaijani Turks who were the overall victims.

“Information reaches me that after the riots at Baku 300 corpses were counted in the streets. The Tatars were let loose on the Armenians, and the authorities refrained from interference on the old plea that they were without instructions.

41 “Armenians give no quarter. Said to be Committing Frightful Atrocities in Transcaucasia”. *The New York Times*, January 21, 1906, <https://www.nytimes.com/1906/01/21/archives/armenians-give-no-quarter-said-to-be-committing-frightful.html>

42 “Article 2 - No Title”, *The New York Times*, August 9, 1906.

43 The shrine of Kara Pirim was located in the village of Paravend, Agdam region, and again was destroyed by Armenian militants in 1992.

44 “Armenians give no quarter”. *The New York Times*.

45 “Persians menace Armenians. Mahommedans Plan to Aid Co-Religionists — Barbarities by Armenians”, *The New York Times*, June 27, 1905, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1905/06/27/120277143.html?pageNumber=2>

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Its looks uncommonly [sic] as if the ill-fated Christians of the East were not better off under Russian than under Turkish misrule”⁴⁶;

“Sanguinary fighting has taken place between Tatars and Armenians in the village of Khankend. There is great alarms here. All the Armenians shops are closed and troops are patrolling the streets day and night”;⁴⁷

“The Bourse Gazette says the authorities at Erivan have discovered unmistakable evidence of a Mohammedan plot for the conquest of the country. A deport of arms has been found on Crown lands bordering on Aras. The agent of this property, a Mussulman, furnished arms to his coreligionist on both sides of the Persian frontier for the massacres at Erevan and Nakhchevan. The Persian Khan of Makin have always been on close terms with the Tartar Khans of Nakhchevan and co-operated with them for the spread of the Pan Islamic propaganda, of which Baku is stronghold.

Proclamations headed, ‘Long Live Islam! Down with the Giaours! [infidels]’ have been found in the possession of men who attacked the Armenians. Moreover the leaders of the Mussulmans wore red fezes, as if bloody proclaiming themselves farriors [warriors] of the Khalif of Stamboul”⁴⁸;

“The situation at Baku has again assumed a highly critical phase. The feeling between the Tartars and Armenians is so tense that the slightest incident may provoke a repetition of the massacres.

The Tartars refuse to open their shops, in order to starve the Armenians, many of whom are reported to have died from eating poisoned fruit.”⁴⁹

During the massacre in Tiflis Governorate, not only the Turkic population, but also other Muslims - subjects of the Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran -

46 300 Corpses found after riots at Baku. Tatars Were Let Loose on the Armenian Population. Poti reported bombarded Tumult in Many Cities of South Russia — Manufacture of Armaments Stopped. *The New York Times*, February 24, 1905, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1905/02/24/101409376.html?pageNumber=2>

47 “Article 2 - No Title”, *The New York Times*, September 6, 1905.

48 “War in Caucasus over 1,000 killed. Czar’s Troops Are Surrounded by Tartars. Oil towns wiped out. Government Will Lose an Enormous Sum. A Mussulman rebellion. Turkey Accused of Fomenting It — Inhabitants of Many Villages Massacred — Exodus from Baku”, *The New York Times*, September 8, 1905, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1905/09/08/101828944.html?pageNumber=1>

49 “15,000 Troops sent to Russian oilfield. Tartars and Armenians Ready to Fly at Each Other. Many Armenians poisoned. Naphta Operators Decide That No Work Is Possible Under the Present Conditions”, *The New York Times*, September 18, 1905, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1905/09/18/100493385.html?pageNumber=2>

were attacked by Armenian gangs, in this connection, the diplomatic missions of these countries repeatedly appealed to the Russian government with a request to ensure the safety of their subjects. At the end of December 1905, the Ottoman Sultan issued a decree in which the border authorities were instructed to accept into the country all Muslims - subjects of the Russian Empire, arriving through Batumi and fleeing the massacre.

“The Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg has been instructed to draw Russia’s attention to the serious situation at Tiflis, Caucasia, where it is alleged, the Russian authorities are distributing arms to the Armenians and inciting them to massacre the Tartars.

It is stated that the Armenians, with the assistance of the troops, have taken full advantage of the opportunity and have invaded Mussulman residences, including those of Turkish subjects, slaughtering the women and children as well as the men.

The appeals of the Turkish Consul to the local authorities at Tiflis were unavailing”⁵⁰.

“Telegrams from Tiflis describe the condition of the Caucasus as bordering on anarchy. It is stated that the Armenians, having gained the upper hand, are now massacring the Mussulmans, whom the Government makes no effort to protect.

There is growing feeling in Mussulman circle that the Sultan, who is bound as Khalif to watch over the Mohammedans, ought to send the army corps across the frontier to put an end to the massacres which the Russian government is either unable or unwilling to prevent.

The Austrian and Russian ambassadors have sent to [Ottoman Sublime] Porte lists of outrages, not very numerous, committed by Mussulmans on Christians between May and October in the vilayet of Kosovo, and they request the Turkish government to put the end to the anarchy prevailing. At the Porte it is regarded as showing deplorable lack of humor on the part of Russian ambassador that he should put his signature to such a note at a time when Constantinople is crowded with Christians, Jewish and Muhammedan refugees from the Caucasus and other parts of Russian.”⁵¹

50 “New Caucasus outbreak. Turkey Alleges That Russia Is Inciting Massacres of Tartars. Article 2 - No Title”, *The New York Times*, December 16, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/12/16/archives/article-2-no-title.html>

51 “Want sultan to intervene. Mussulmans Say He Should Send Army to End Caucasus Massacres,” *The New York Times*, December 21, 1905, <https://www.nytimes.com/1905/12/21/archives/want-sultan-to-intervene-mussulmans-say-he-should-send-army-to-end.html>

Undoubtedly, the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacres in the Tiflis, Elizavetpol, Baku, and Erivan provinces were tragic events in the history of the interethnic conflict of 1905-1906. Despite the lack of accurate statistics on the number of victims, the available sources create a fairly clear idea of the scale of the terror perpetrated by Armenian radicals against the Azerbaijani Turkic population of the South Caucasus in 1905-1906.

Conclusion

Analysis of the materials published in the *New York Times* allows us to say with firmness that the American periodicals, due to their capabilities, took an active part in covering the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict of 1905-1906. Tadeusz Swietochowski noted “the events were reported in the world press generally with a tone of partiality toward the Armenians”.⁵² The publications of the newspaper for 1905-1906 in its content bore a clearly pro-Armenian assessment of the events; however, the facts presented in the articles during the analyses indicate the opposite.

With great regret, we must admit that the coverage of this conflict, both in those days and at its present stage, were not and are not endowed with objectivity and impartiality. This is based on the stereotype-fueled perception of the massacre as a conflict between Christian Armenians and Muslim Azerbaijanis. These stereotypes continue to this day, as we unfortunately observe double standards in relation to “Christian” Armenia and “Muslim” Azerbaijan in the Western media. The Western media continues to play on the perceived opposition between Muslim and Christian cultures.

The massacres in the South Caucasus in 1905 and 1906 became the first act of an open, large-scale, and organized attack by Armenians against Azerbaijani Turks. In 1918⁵³, as well as at the beginning of 1990⁵⁴, the destruction of the

52 Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920*, 41.

53 See more detail at: Азербайджанская Демократическая Республика. Внешняя политика. (Документы и материалы) (Баку: «Азербайджан», 1998) ; *Куба. Апрель-май 1918 г. Мусульманские погромы в документах*, (Составитель: д.и.н. Солмаз Рустамова-Тогиди, Баку, 2010) ; *Март 1918 г. Баку. Азербайджанские погромы в документах* (Составитель: д.и.н. Солмаз РустамоваТогиди, Баку: Индиго-пресс, 2009) ; Yusuf Sarıнай, ed. *Azerbaycan Belgelerinde Ermeni Sorunu (1918-1920)* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müd. 2001) ; А. Халилов, *Геноцид против мусульманского населения Закавказья в исторических источниках* (Баку: Азернешр, 2000) ; İ.V. Niftəliyev, *İrəvan quberniyasında azərbaycanlıların soyqırımı (1918-1920)* (Баку: Elm, 2014) ; K.N. İsmayilov, *Azərbaycanın Zəngəzur bölgəsində türk-müsəlman əhalisini soyqırımı. 1918-1920-ci illər* (Баку: Elm, 2014) ; V.Ş. Abışov, *Azərbaycan xalqına qarşı 1918-ci il soyqırımları* (Баку: Elm, 2016) ; N.R. Gözəlova, *Azərbaycanın türk-müsəlman əhalisinin soyqırımı Britaniya Kitabxanasının arxiv sənədlərində (1918-1920)* (Баку: Elm, 2014).

54 As a result of Armenia’s military aggression in 1988-1993, 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory – Khankandi, Khojalı, Shusha, Lachin, Khojavand, Kalbajar, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayıl, Gubadlı, Zangilan regions, as well as 13 villages in Tartar, 7 villages in Gazakh and 1 village in Sadarak region

Azerbaijani Turks and the centuries-old cultural heritage of Azerbaijan continued in almost the same scenario and with even greater violence. For more than a hundred years, the international community failed to properly condemn the crimes against humanity perpetrated against Azerbaijani Turks, thereby allowing their repetition in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The Aggressive and ultranationalist policy of the Republic of Armenia to this day continues to remain a dangerous destructive factor not only for Azerbaijan, but also for the region as a whole.

in Nakhchivan – had been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. During the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, more than one million Azerbaijanis became IDPs, while 20,000 people were killed in military operations, and 50,000 were wounded or became disabled. During the 2020 44-Day War between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Azerbaijan succeeded in retaking these occupied territories.

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ANNEX 1

MASSACRE 400 TARTARS.

**Armenians Destroy a Village—Mujiks
Continue Pillaging.**

TIFLIS, Nov. 14.—It is reported from Erivan that 700 Armenians from a number of villages attacked the Tartar village of Gors, killed 400 of the villagers, and plundered and burned all the property.

The New York Times

Published: November 15, 1905
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ANNEX 2

CONSTANTINOPLE, Dec. 15. — The Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg has been instructed to draw Russia's attention to the serious situation at Tiflis, Caucasia, where, it is alleged, the Russian authorities are distributing arms to the Armenians and inciting them to massacre the Tartars.

It is stated that the Armenians, with the assistance of the troops, have taken full advantage of the opportunity and have invaded Mussulman residences, including those of Turkish subjects, slaughtering the women and children as well as the men.

The appeals of the Turkish Consul to the local authorities at Tiflis were unavailing.

The New York Times

Published: December 16, 1905
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ANNEX 3

ARMENIANS GIVE NO QUARTER.

Said to be Committing Frightful Atrocities in Transcaucasia.

ELIZABETHPOL, Transcaucasia, Jan. 20.—A courier arrived here to-day from Agdam with dispatches describing the repeated attempts made by the authorities to get a convoy of provisions to the starving and beleaguered Mohammedans of Shusha, Transcaucasia.

The convoy set out three times with a strong escort of troops, Mohammedan volunteers, and auxiliaries, but was intercepted by the Armenians holding the mountain passes.

The whole district around Agdam is harried by Armenians and others, who are perpetrating horrible atrocities, not giving any quarter to the wounded or to women or children. The Mohammedans are greatly enraged at the attack made on the celebrated shrine of Karapirim. After a savage conflict the Armenian attackers broke and fled, leaving fifty dead or wounded.

The New York Times

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RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ

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RED ARMY PROPAGANDA IN THE ARMENIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC: AN INVESTIGATION ON POSTERS

(ERMENİSTAN SOVYET SOSYALİST CUMHURİYETİ'NDE KIZIL ORDU
PROPAGANDASI: AFİŞLER ÜZERİNDEN YAPILAN BİR İNCELEME)

Elif Hatun KILIÇBEYLİ*

Abstract: *After the October Revolution in Russia, in early 1918, the Board of People's Commissars, headed by V.I. Lenin, decided to form an army of volunteer workers and peasants to ensure internal and external security. The red color symbolizing the Bolsheviks was added to the name of the army. Visual materials for the ideological purposes of the Soviet Union (SU) had been widely used since 1918 with slogans supporting political discourse. Much propaganda was made towards all components of the SU (the Republic, region, autonomous administration, and all Soviet citizens) for the acceptance and support of the Red Army. One of the republics that made up SU was the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR). The aim was the acceptance by the Armenian people of the Red Army, which had ended the Republic of Armenia at the end of 1920 that had been declared independent by the Armenian National Council under the control of the Dashnaksutyun. Another aim was to receive the support of the Armenian people for the Red Army as a security institute. This article discusses Red Army-themed posters, the main elements of the Red Army's image, and the causality of these elements within the propaganda activities in the ASSR. The mentioned visual works were created by Soviet artists in the years*

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between 1920 and 1960. This article analyzes the elements of visual materials, Roland Barthes's semiotic approach and the meanings of cultural symbols, the dynamics of transition from the Russian state to the Soviet context and its effects on Soviet political power. This qualitative analysis study reveals that, after the Red Army's entry into Armenia in 1920 and the establishment of the Armenian Red Army, the ideological purpose of the Red Army's incorporation of the far-flung Armenia into the SU was sought to be explained, the need for ensuring the internal and external security of the expanding SU geographical boundaries was strongly emphasized.

Keywords: *Armenia, Red Army, Soviet Union, Political Communication, Visual Materials*

Öz: *Rusya'daki Ekim Devrimi'nden sonra, 1918'in başlarında, V.I. Lenin başkanlığındaki Halk Komiserleri Kurulu, iç ve dış güvenliği sağlamak için gönüllü işçi ve köylülerden oluşan bir ordu kurmaya karar verdi. Bolşevikleri simgeleyen kırmızı renk ordunun isminin başına eklendi. Sovyetler Birliği'nin (SB) ideolojik amaçları için görsel çalışmalar, 1918'den beri siyasi söylemi destekleyen sloganlarla yaygın olarak kullanılmıştır. Kırmızı Ordu'nun kabulü ve desteği için SB'nin tüm bileşenlerine (Cumhuriyet, bölge, özerk yönetim ve tüm Sovyet vatandaşları) yönelik birçok propaganda faaliyeti yapılmıştır. SB'yi oluşturan cumhuriyetlerden biri de Ermenistan Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti (ESSC) idi. Amaç, Taşnaksutyun'un kontrolü altında Ermeni Ulusal Konseyi tarafından bağımsızlığı ilan edilen Ermenistan Cumhuriyeti'ni 1920'nin sonunda sona erdiren Kırmızı Ordu'nun Ermeni halkı tarafından kabul edilmesiydi. Bir diğer hedef ise Kırmızı Ordu'nun Ermeni halkı tarafından bir güvenlik kurumu olarak benimsenmesiydi. Bu makalede ESSC'deki propaganda faaliyetleri içinde Kırmızı Ordu temalı posterler, Kırmızı Ordu imajının ana öğeleri ve bu öğelerin nedenselliği tartışılmaktadır. Çalışmada belirtilen görsel çalışmalar, 1920-1960 yılları arasında Sovyet sanatçılar tarafından yapılmıştır. Bu makale; görsel çalışmaların ana öğelerini, Roland Barthes'in göstergebilimsel yaklaşımını ve sembollerin kültürel anlamlarını, Rus devletinden Sovyet bağlamına geçiş dinamiklerini ve Sovyet siyasi gücü üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir. Bu nitel analiz çalışması; Kırmızı Ordu'nun 1920 yılında Ermenistan'a girmesi ve Ermeni Kırmızı Ordu'sunun kurulması ardından, Kırmızı Ordu'nun merkezden uzak Ermenistan'ı SB'ye dahil etmesinin ideolojik olarak ispatlanmaya çalışıldığını ve genişleyen SB coğrafi sınırlarının iç ve dış güvenliğinin sağlanmasının önemine güçlü bir şekilde vurgu yapıldığını ortaya koymaktadır.*

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ermenistan, Kırmızı Ordu, Sovyetler Birliği, Siyasal İletişim, Görsel Malzemeler*

Introduction

Essentially, “[i]deology calls individuals as subjects.” It is obvious that the phase of establishing a hegemony and a counterhegemony belonging to the opposing classes also plays an active role during the construction of power and the production/reproduction of consent. The class character of the ideology’s function of the subjectivation of individuals mostly follows a line determined by the hegemonic project of the ruling class¹. Propaganda, leading authorities agree, is a systematic attempt to persuade an audience to adopt a specific viewpoint or to undertake a given course of action. Propaganda is the tool of a special interest group, and it features a deliberate effort to manipulate the audience².

The Soviet Union (SU) was founded as a union of states in a political structure that realized an alternative state system challenging imperialists and capitalists. Propaganda activities, which played an important role in the 20th century, were very effectively used for the deployment of the new system that was established in Russia with the October Revolution of 1917³. The Red Army was founded immediately after the revolution when the Bolshevik Party came to power, but the official day of its creation is considered 23 February 1918. This was when the Soviet Republic announced the first victory of the Red Army over the Germans on the very last days of Russia’s World War I campaign. The “slogan” or “watchword” is the combative and constructive aspect of this propaganda. It is the verbal translation of one phase of the revolutionary tactic. It is a driving concept, expressing as clearly, briefly, and euphonicly as possible the most important objective of the moment⁴.

The Red Army (*Krasnaya Armiya*), the red color referring to the Bolsheviks, was a common name for the Russian National Military Forces from 1918 to 1946, which was also known by the abbreviation RKKK (Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army). Two weeks later, the Bolsheviks signed a peace agreement with Germany, as it was difficult to fund the army that was short of everything including guns, ammunition, and human resources. Some historians argue that no true victory was achieved here⁵.

1 Emek Yıldırım, “Sovyetler Birliği’nde Propaganda ve Proleter Hegemonik İdeolojinin Kurulumu Üzerine”, *Doğu-Batı Düşünce Dergisi*, Sayı 69 (2014): 5.

2 Neil M. Heyman, “Leon Trotsky: Propagandist to the Red Army”, *Studies in Comparative Communism* 10, no. 1/2 (1977): 35, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45367161>

3 Mertcan Akan, “Sovyet Propaganda Afişlerinde ‘Doğu’ İmgesi”, *Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi*, Sayı 17 (2017): 77.

4 Jean-Marie Domenach, “Leninist Propaganda”. *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 15, No. 2 (Summer, 1951): 267.

5 Russia Today (RT) is a news network financed by the Russian Federation. RT began its 24/7 English broadcast from Moscow in December 2005. RT carries out many online historical projects such as “Russiapedia”.

SU was established after the Eighth Congress of Soviets on 30 December 1922⁶. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, as a leader of the Council of the people's commissars, believed that the development of political ideologies through propaganda activities would be strengthened by educated culture. Lenin gave priority to the strengthening of the state through communist ideology⁷.

Propaganda is a series of methods that "guide" the development of the individual and society for political purposes. In the case of the SU, it was constantly and effectively applied to create a 'Soviet man', which would in turn create a useful being for the homeland and Soviet peoples. With full control over mass communication, the Soviet administration used cinema, radio, theatre, music, visual materials, posters, and much more for purposeful propaganda⁸. Therefore, much importance was given to literacy education and publishing after the October Revolution⁹. Although the resources and tools of the period were narrow, limited, and difficult to access, the existence and security of the state was also of great importance. Despite material constraints, there was an all-out movement for both education and motivation and job production. Here, propaganda posters played an important role. Literacy rates of peoples in the Soviet and surrounding administrations was low. For adults, young people, and children who did not speak Russian, or did not know the grammar of their own national language, the visual elements of posters would be impressive and easy to understand. And these visual products could be circulated at an affordable price in society as part of the propaganda management.

Lenin's plan had many targets, but main aim was on economic progress for SU in all its components. His plan for production propaganda was through the study of political and cultural enlightenment. It emphasized the need for political experience related to economic structuring to form the basis of all ideologically structured propaganda and agitation of the Soviet Union¹⁰. The *sine qua non* of political enlightenment was education with understandable, sympathetic means, the habit of reading, and common social areas that society would share. In a revolutionary period, this objective may be to overthrow the

6 Lenin was the first Soviet administrator to serve as head of the Council of People's Commissars elected by the Congress of Soviets of the Soviet Union on 30 December 1922. On 21 March 1922, a new state was established with the establishment of the Soviet Union. Leonid Vasylevich Milov, Alexander Sergeyich Barsenkov, Alexander Ivanovich Vdovin, Svetlana Vladimirovna Voronkova, "Istoriya Rassii XX-nachala XXI veka", Moskovskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet imeni M.V. Lomonosova (Moskva: Eskimo, 2006), 324.

7 Y.A. Ahapkini, "Lenin", Institute of Marxism-Leninism under CCCP of the SU (Moscow: Panorama, 1990), 311.

8 Akan, "Sovyet Propaganda Afişlerinde Doğu İmgesi", 81.

9 P.N. Pospelov, *V. İlyiç Lenin - Biyografi*, çev. Gönül Özen Sezer (Sorun Yayınları, 2000), 427.

10 Marcel Cahin and Clara Zetkin, *They Knew Lenin: Reminiscences of Foreign Contemporaries* (University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 26.

class enemy and rally the masses (“All power to the Soviets,” “Land and Peace,” “Bread, Peace and Liberty,” “For a Liberal, Democratic Government,” etc.). Or, in a period of “socialist edification,” this objective may be essentially one of planning (“To reach and exceed the plan in four years,” etc.)¹¹.

Many people of different nationalities took part in the Red Army, the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. Soldiers within the Soviet Union administration and the Red Army were trained for Leninist propaganda purposes. Through the glorification of the ideology of communism and maintaining the legitimacy of the Communist regime, it was thought that the Soviets would be more entrenched, highly confident, and long-lived. It was planned that it was possible for the life of the Soviets to expand first to its immediate surroundings and then to states interested in communism.

These propaganda activities related to the Red Army were carried out in the Socialist Republics that formed the Soviet Union. It was aimed to create an image of a strong, protective, and dynamic Red Army in the minds of people. It was also aimed to increase the loyalty of the soldiers to the Red Army and, at the same time, to ensure that the people of the Soviet Union supported the Red Army. In Armenia, like the rest of the SU, it was not only the soldiers who were the target audience for propaganda activities concerning the Red Army. In other words, propaganda tools were also developed for parties who had nothing to do with military service. The decision-making mechanism of the Soviets, headquartered in Moscow, planned all propaganda activities for all administrative units of the union, while implementing the visual materials and content to be used. Throughout this process, the propaganda apparatus of the SU effectively used posters, one of the advanced forms of mass media of the era. These posters were visual materials usually designed in Moscow or St. Petersburg, printed in capital cities of the SU, and hung in places where the public could easily see them.

Various academic articles have been published on the Red Army and propaganda. Some of them are:

- Bonnell¹²: Iconography of power - Soviet political posters under Lenin and Stalin
- Domenach¹³: Leninist propaganda

11 Domenach, “Leninist Propaganda”, 267.

12 Victoria E. Bonnell. *Iconography Of Power: Soviet Political Posters Under Lenin And Stalin* (Berkeley, CA/USA: University of California Press, 1999).

13 Domenach, “Leninist Propaganda”.

- Kutskaya and Dorozhkin¹⁴: the Soviet technical propaganda tools of the Red Army in Europe during the Second World War
- Posvyatenko¹⁵ and Levshin¹⁶: propaganda in the Red Army during the Russian Civil War
- Wark¹⁷: British propaganda and the Red Army between 1945-1952
- Jarkov¹⁸: propaganda in the Red Army in 1921-1941
- Shin¹⁹: Red Army propaganda for Uzbek soldiers
- Cheravitch²⁰: Wrote an article titled “Open Your Gates to Us, Wide and Trustingly: The Foundation of Special Propaganda in the Red Army”. Between 1938 and 1940, the Soviet army conducted an intense propaganda campaign with the idea that ‘special propaganda’ (*spetsprop*) represented one of the oldest forms of Soviet asymmetric warfare that would decimate even the Soviet state.

In addition, in Turkey in recent years, academic works in the field of political communication have conducted propaganda analyses focusing on the Nazi period of Germany and the Soviet Union period. These include:

- Çağmar²¹ : Propaganda techniques in Nazi Germany
- İnceoğlu²²: The West and its image in Soviet propaganda animations
- Karakuş²³: Transformation of propaganda tools from the traditional to the digital format

14 Olesia Nikolayevna Kutskaya and Sergey Ivanovich Dorozhkin, “Sovyetskie tehicheskie sredstva propagandy b period bayevih diestviye Krasnoy Armii na territori Yevropi v godi ftoroy mirovoy vayni”, *Revista Militară* 11, no.1 (2014): 145-157.

15 Aksana Nikolayevna Posvyatenko, “Propaganda v voskah Krasnoy Armii v gody Grajdanskoy vayni (1918-1920 gg.)”, *Klio*, no.2 (2012): 120-122.

16 Konstantin Viktorovich Levshin, “Agitatsia i propaganda s massovim dezertirstvom krasnoarmetsev v gody grajdanskoy vayni”, *Trudy istoricheskovo fakulteta SPBGU*, no. 14 (2013): 158-176

17 Wesley K. Wark, “Coming in from the Cold: British Propaganda and Red Army Defectors, 1945–1952,” *The International History Review* 9, no.1 (1987): 48-72.

18 Vitaly Viktorovich Jarkov, “Propaganda i agitatsia v Krasnoy Armii v 1921-1944 gg.”, *Yaroslavsky Pedagogichesky vestnik*, no.1 (2009): 197-204.

19 Boram Shin, “Red Army Propaganda for Uzbek Soldiers and Localised Soviet Internationalism during World War II”, *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 42, no.1 (2015): 39-63.

20 Joe Cheravitch, “‘Open Your Gates to Us, Wide and Trustingly’: The Foundation of Special Propaganda in the Red Army”, *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 33, no.4 (2020): 556-579.

21 Mehmet Çağmar, “Nazi Almanya’sında Propaganda Teknikleri”, *Akademik Tarih ve Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Sayı 2 (2020): 191-205.

22 Çağrı İnceoğlu, “Sovyet Propaganda Animasyonlarında Batı ve Batılı İmgesi”, *Galatasaray Üniversitesi İletişim Dergisi*, Sayı 19 (2013): 23-40.

23 Melis Karakuş, “Gelenekselden Dijitale Propaganda Araçlarının Dönüşümü”, *Selçuk İletişim* 14, Sayı 1 (2021): 462-491.

- Işık et al.²⁴: Propaganda posters for the United States Army in 1914-1917
- Çetin et al.²⁵: The anti-USA Propaganda Posters in the Iranian Revolution
- Baytimur et. al.²⁶: The Soviet Union’s major economic development goals for its five-year development plan
- Çakı and Gazi²⁷: Soviet people against German armies in the context of Soviet propaganda posters

This article focuses on the use of Red Army propaganda posters in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) between 1920 and 1960 using the semiotics analysis technique developed by Roland Barthes. The article aims to reveal how the administration of the Soviet Union reflected the Red Army to the people in Armenia to ensure that the people’s support for the Red Army remained strong and active, and to reveal what discourses were used for the Red Army through propaganda posters. In this way, it seeks to answer the following question: “what kind of perception was formed in the ASSR through Red Army propaganda posters?”. The methodology of the article and its findings are important as an original resource for researchers in history, politics and communication sciences working on Armenia and the Red Army. In this context, it is thought that this article will contribute to multidisciplinary studies in the field in terms of the subject being studied with a new perspective.

1. The Establishment of the Red Army and Its Duties

The Red Army was formed on 15 January 1918, shortly after the October Revolution led by the Bolshevik Party in Russia²⁸, although the official date of establishment of the Red Army’s is considered 23 February 1918. From its

24 Metin Işık, Mehmet Ali Gazi, Caner Çakı ve Gül Çakı, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı’nda Amerikan Kütüphaneciliği’nin ABD Ordusuna Yönelik Hazırladığı Propaganda Posterleri Üzerine İnceleme”, *Türk Kütüphaneciliği* 35, Sayı 2 (2021): 131-158.

25 Muammer Çetin, Caner Çakı and Mehmet Ali Gazi, “The Examination of The Anti-USA Propaganda Posters in The Iran Revolution According to Claude Lévi-Strauss Binary Opposition”, *International Journal of Social Sciences (INJOSS)* 1, Issue 3 (2018).

26 Tuğba Baytimur, Caner Çakı, and Ferit Arda Arıca, “The Propaganda In Armenia Of The Five-Year Development Plans Implemented In The Soviet Union”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, no. 42 (2020): 81-102.

27 Caner Çakı and Mehmet Ali Gazi, “The Use of Nationalism Discourses in the Soviet Propaganda in the Second World War”, *International Journal of Social Science Research* 7, Issue 2 (2018): 291-306.

28 “Декрет об организации Рабоче-Крестьянской Красной Армии”, January 15 (28), 1918, official document, *Moskovskiy Gosudarstvennyy Universitet imeni M.V. Lomonosova*, <http://www.hist.msu.ru/ER/Etext/DEKRET/rkka.htm>

conception, the Bolsheviks introduced a new system of leadership in the Red Army military units. Each unit, in addition to commanders, also had a *politruk* (political leader). These officers were appointed by the Bolsheviks to monitor the troops' morale as well as every move of the leading officers. If the order of the commander contradicted the line of the Bolshevik Party, the *politruk* could cancel it²⁹. A few weeks after its establishment, the Bolsheviks were unable to fund the army (which lacked everything from weapons, ammunition, to human resources) and were thus forced make a treaty with Germany.

In Russia, which experienced internal strife, a civil war between the Bolsheviks (also called the Red Guard) and the remaining factions of the former Russian army (also called the White Guard) caused decimation. Those opposing the Bolsheviks were heavily supported by the British and Americans, and by regiments from other countries which wanted to intervene against the Bolsheviks in 1918. As a result, the Soviet republic found itself in a ring of opposing forces with Cossacks in the South, Kolchak and Czech battalions in Siberia, and British and American troops in the north of Russia. For the fledgling Red Army, a rather difficult new process had begun. Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) was the leader of the Red Army and played an important role in the struggle of the Bolsheviks against the White Army. In addition, the Red Army fought against the Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army of Ukraine (*Револуційна Повстанська Армія України*) and against Poland in the Soviet-Polish War (1919-1921). During the Russian Civil War between the years 1917-1923, the Bolsheviks struggled to remain in power. During this period, the White Army received support from various countries such as the United States, Britain, and Japan and thus became a significant threat to the Red Army. The support of the peasants was important for the military expedition in Russia. As a matter of fact, the army had to be composed largely of peasants and fed by them.

The civil war in Russia ended with the victory of the Red Army. After the fall of the Russian Empire, the territorial integrity of the destroyed state was restored. The civil war had made the country's difficult conditions worse. Damage to the country's economy amounted to about 50 billion gold rubles, industrial production had fallen to 4-20% of the 1913 level, agricultural production had almost halved.

The Red Army's lost 940,000 troops (mostly from typhoid outbreaks), while 6.8 million people died because of poor sanitary conditions. Meanwhile, the White Guard troops, according to incomplete data, lost only 125,000 people in their battles. Russia's total losses in the civil war were about 13 million

29 *Russiapedia*, <https://russiapedia.rt.com/>

people. Amidst all this loss, the Red Army managed to mobilize more peasants than the Whites³⁰ and succeeded in overcoming its enemy, resulting in the victory of the Bolsheviks.

The Red Army was subsequently developed in terms of military equipment and a large number of tanks, aircraft and combat vehicles were added to its arsenal after the establishment of the Soviet Union on 30 December 1922. During the reign of Joseph Stalin, the Red Army became one of the leading military powers in the world. On the other hand, the Great Purge initiated during the reign of Stalin in 1936 led to significant purges of the upper echelon of the Red Army. It is claimed that this purge movement negatively affected the Red Army in the ongoing process. The Winter War between the Soviet Union and Finland³¹ is presented as one of the most important consequences of this purge. As a matter of fact, the Soviet Union suffered heavy losses against Finland in the war that took place between 1939-1940. Even though the Soviet Union managed to prevail over Finland in the end, the losses it suffered during the war caused the image of the Red Army to be negatively affected.

After Nazi-ruled Germany invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, the Red Army also started to invade Poland on 17 September of the same year. After the defeat of Poland, the lands of the country were divided between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. In the following process, the Red Army occupied the Baltic States, Bessarabia, and Northern Bukovina. A non-aggression agreement called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany on 23 August 1939³². However, in violation of the Pact, German armies invaded the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. On the other hand, Italy, Romania, Hungary, and Croatia became involved in the war between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany and these countries fought against the Red Army. In addition, Finland started a war against the Red Army to seize the lands it lost during the Winter War.

The Red Army suffered heavy losses at the beginning of the war against the German army and many important cities of the Soviet Union were occupied. The German army managed to reach the suburbs of Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union. However, Soviet regime survived. The occupation generated patriotic feelings and increased sympathy for the government that had defended the homeland. As a result, the communist rule gained strength. Despite great losses, the Red Army managed to stop the Germans and continued to fight until

30 Orlando Figes, "The Red Army and Mass Mobilization during the Russian Civil War 1918-1920", *Past & Present*, no. 129 (1990): 209.

31 Bernard Kelly, "Drifting Towards War: The British Chiefs of Staff, the USSR and the Winter War, November 1939–March 1940," *Contemporary British History* 23, no.3 (2009): 267.

32 Alfred Erich Senn, "Perestroika in Lithuanian Historiography: The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact". *The Russian Review* 49, no.1 (1990): 43.

victory³³. In 1943, the Red Army succeeded in defeating the German army at the Battle of Stalingrad, resulting in the German army losing its initiative against the Red Army. In the same year, the German army failed to gain the upper hand against the Red Army in the Battle of Kursk, forcing the German army to move from an offensive position against the Red Army to a defensive one. Then, the Red Army managed to enter the territory of Nazi Germany and capture Berlin, the capital of Nazi Germany, on 2 May 1945. Shortly after the fall of Berlin, Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally.

As a result of the achievements of the Red Army during the Second World War, socialist administrations were established in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Together with the United States, the Soviet Union became one of the two superpowers of the world. From 25 February 1946 onwards, the Red Army was named the Armed Forces of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. The Armenians in the Red Army and the Great Patriotic War

After the Turkish-Russian war of 1877-1878, Kars, Ardahan, and Batumi provinces were abandoned to the Russians as war compensation. This region rejoined with Turkey following the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk of 3 March 1918 signed with the Bolsheviks. But this situation was short-lived, the region was evacuated after the signing of the Armistice of Mondros. Therefore, it was again left to Armenian and Georgian control³⁴.

Since September of that year, Turkish and Armenian forces were engaged in conflict along the border. Turkish nationalist forces under the command of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) began to recapture territory taken from the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s by the Tsarist regime of Russia. On 30 October, under the strong offensive of Mustafa Kemal's Turkish army, the Armenians abandoned the strategic city of Kars. Georgian troops occupied a neutral zone between the two sides with the permission of Armenia, preventing the Armenian army from being decimated by the Turkish army. On 15 November 1920, the population was evacuated from Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, due to the approach of Turkish national troops from the South. According to media reports, the Armenian army left the city, running out of ammunition, and the roads leading out of the city were filled with refugees, more than 100,000 of them fled Armenia to neighboring Georgia.

The Republic of Armenia, ruled by the Dashnaksutyun bourgeois government as Democratic Republic of Armenia (DRA), invited the French and British

33 V. Nicholas Riasanovsky ve D. Mark Steinberg, *Rusya Tarihi*, çev. Figen Dereli (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınları, 2011), 568.

34 Sadi Koçuş, *Tarih Boyunca Ermeniler ve Türk Ermeni İlişkileri* (Ankara, 1967).

military forces to the country, but in the end, it was only a small number of Greek soldiers who helped Armenia. Armenia was forced to demand peace, and on 18 November, the ceasefire came into force. On 1 December, a peace treaty was signed between the two sides. A few days after the armistice agreement with the Turkish government of Ankara, an uprising led by the Bolsheviks occurred in northern Armenia. Armenia was administered under the control of the Bolshevik revolutionary committee until 30 November 1920. After the uprising, the Armenian government, which had no political will left, agreed to the entry of the Red Army into the country. By then, the DRA, founded in 1918, had ceased to exist. The Red Army, coming from the Soviet Azerbaijan region, invaded Armenia. The Red Army entered Yerevan on 1 December, resulting in a change in Armenia's state-system and the country being named the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) as a part of Soviet Union³⁵. The ASSR provided soldiers to the Red Army, as was the case in the other socialist republics that formed the Soviet Union, and was directly involved in the military activities of the Red Army. Especially in the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945),³⁶ the ASSR made significant contributions to the war efforts of the Red Army. In addition, the ASSR played an important role in providing support to the SU in both industry and agriculture. During the war, many Armenians joined the Red Army, and some Armenians took important military positions in it. Although the battles of the war did not take place in the territory of Armenia, Armenia nevertheless lost many of its soldiers.

While some of the Armenians supported the Red Army in the Great Patriotic War, some of them sided with Nazi Germany instead. Nazi Germany launched the invasion of the SU, called Operation Barbarossa, on 22 June 1941. Despite poor strategic deployment and operational and tactical deficiencies during Operation Barbarossa, the Red Army survived the summer and autumn of 1941³⁷. During the war, the Nazis formed various armies to use the manpower in the SU against the Red Army and the Communist regime. At this stage, the *Russian Liberation Army* (*Русская освободительная армия*) was formed under the leadership of Andrey Vlasov against the Red Army. In addition, the Nazis formed divisions called *Georgian Legion* (*Georgische Legion*), *Azerbaijani Legion* (*Aserbajdschanische Legion*), and *Armenian Legion* (*Armenische Legion*).

35 *Vayannaya Ensiklopedia*, 8 toms, Vaenizdat (Moskva, 2004).

36 Anvar Ismailovich Ismailov, "On the Issue of Human Losses during the Great Patriotic War, 1941–1945", *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 24, no.2 (2011): 232.

37 Alexander Hill, "Offense, Defence or the Worst of Both Worlds? Soviet Strategy in May-June 1941", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 13, no.1 (2010): 61.

3. Methodology

A total of 616 propaganda posters were found in the Armenian Soviet Posters Collection³⁸ from the website of the Library of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)³⁹. After the scanning all the Armenian Soviet Posters Collection, seven posters containing propaganda for the Red Army and the Armenian SSR were determined for sampling from the said 616 posters. In the selected posters, attention was paid to the graphic transmission of images or symbols containing references in whole or in part to the Red Army and the ASSR. The propaganda posters identified in the study were analyzed using the semiotic model (a qualitative research method) of the French linguist Roland Barthes (1915-1980).

Semiotics involves a greater and deeper awareness of the roles acquired by people in the construction of reality in all areas of interest to society, and the roles and meanings of the indicators used as tools is an important part of the semiotics theory⁴⁰. Today, semiotic practices that combine different disciplines in academic and social studies can achieve innovate results. Analyses can be reproduced and compared to form different points of view. As a result, semiotics is a fairly broad analysis theory with a wide range of applications. It is a theory that includes applications that can meet the needs of the technological progress of our age and offers propositions from different angles to problems, and is among the methods of searching for qualities that are open to analytical interpretations.

38 "Armenian Ephemera", *University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Library*, <http://idep.library.ucla.edu/armenian-ephemera> ; "Soviet Armenian Posters", *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021. <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/collection=Soviet+Armenian+Posters>

39 Benjamin Alkaly, "Beyond the Library Walls", *University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Library*, September 16, 2019, <https://www.library.ucla.edu/news/beyond-library-walls>

40 Murat Kalelioğlu, "Göstergebilim Kuramının Genel Bir Değerlendirmesi, Türkiye'deki Yeri ve Önemi", *Söylem Filoloji Dergisi* 6, Sayı 1 (2021): 198.

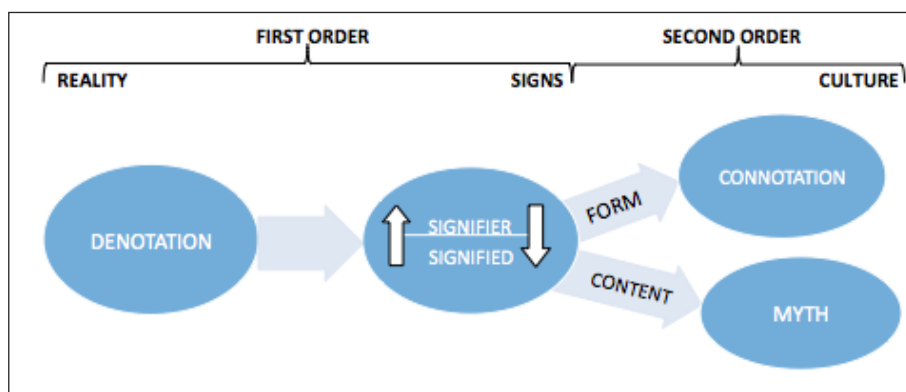


Figure 1. Roland Barthes' Semiotics Model⁴¹

According to Barthes, the image is characterized by a structural independence associated to what is aesthetic and ideological to address the recipient who is able to read it on the connotative level through his/her cultural and symbolic background. In addition, Barthes was able to study the graphic signs through the interpretation of the social worlds whether they are things, text, or adverts. He established a new method to analyze the image on the denotative and connotative level. The graphic image as a myth is a semiological system, a sign combined of the signifier and the signified, therefore, the image is a nonverbal language which is open to many interpretations, readings and significance. In photography, the scene is captured mechanically and man's interventions in the photograph (framing, distance, lighting, focus, speed) all effectively belong to the plane of connotation⁴².

4. Results and Discussion

Roland Barthes's *S/Z*, which purports to be an exhaustive structuralist reading of Honoré de Balzac's short story "Sarrasine", which is a classic of what we today understand by post-structuralism in its relentless exposure of the structuration of the structures of the realist narrative. The following is an outline of the so called "five codes" he uses to analyze the different dimensions of realism. The combination of codes and their functions provides a positive attempt to establish discursive constraints that make communication both possible and meaningful. The following are the codes identified by Barthes in his breakthrough post-structuralist text, *S/Z*:

41 John Fiske, *İletişim Çalışmalarına Giriş*, 5. Basım, çev. Süleyman İrvan (Ankara: Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları, 2017), 186.

42 Feyrouz Bouzida, "The Semiology Analysis in Media Studies-Roland Barthes Approach", Proceedings of SocioInt14-International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities, September 8-10, 2014, Istanbul/Turkey, p. 1004.

- “1. Proairetic code (the voice of empirics): The code of actions. Any action initiated must be completed. The cumulative actions constitute the plot events of the text.
2. Hermeneutic code (the voice of truth): The code of enigmas or puzzles.
3. Connotative [or Semic] code (the voice of the person): The accumulation of connotations. Semes, sequential thoughts, traits and actions constitute character. “The proper noun surrounded by connotations.”
4. Cultural or referential code (the voice of science [or knowledge]): Though all codes are cultural we reserve this designation for the storehouse of knowledge we use in interpreting everyday experience.
5. Symbolic code (voice of the symbol): Binary oppositions or themes. The inscription into the text of the antithesis central to the organization of the cultural code.”⁴³

For this article, the third item, the connotative code was selected and applied on the visual materials for analyzing the posters on Red Army and Armenia. In this way, we have had the chance to resolve details and define materialistic codes on these visual works. Seven propaganda posters on military equipment, war training, socialist homeland, air force, the enemy, the front, and celebration are analyzed employing the semiotics method.

4.1. Propaganda Poster on Military Equipment

The propaganda poster on military equipment was prepared by Ashot Mamadzhanian in 1933. When considered in the denotation dimension, it is seen that three soldiers are depicted next to the gatling gun in the poster. One of the soldiers looks in one direction with his binoculars. It is seen that there are *budenovkas* belonging to the Red Army on the head of the soldiers. It is understood that a big production plant (or a big dam) is depicted in the background of the poster. Armored vehicles, tanks, and aircraft are next to the production plant (or dam) in the poster. The picture below shows soldiers training with weapons. In the bottom picture, there is a train and a truck carrying a tank. There is an inscription stating “Let us master [improve ourselves in the use of] the military tactics the Bolshevik way (*Բայլ շեղիկորեն տիրապետենք նազմական տեխնիկային*)” on the poster.

43 John Phillips, “Roland Barthes and the Coding of Discourse”, *National University of Singapore*, accessed July 20, 2021, <https://courses.nus.edu.sg/course/elljwp/5codes.htm>



Poster 1. Propaganda Poster on Military Equipment⁴⁴

Security and power issues come to the fore as signified in the poster. When analyzed in terms of connotation, the message that the Red Army protects Armenia is given in the poster. The soldiers in the poster are used as the metonym of the Armenian people joining the Red Army. The production plant (or dam) symbolizes the production in Armenia. The armored vehicles, tanks, and planes featured in the poster constitute the perception that the Red Army is equipped in terms of military hardware and that the Red Army is ready for any attack against Armenia. The Red Army is used as a metaphor for both power and security in the poster. The poster gives the message that the strength of the Red Army is important for the security of Armenia. In this respect, the poster constructs the propaganda myth that “The strength of the Red Army is the strength of Armenia”. Through this myth, Armenians are called upon to improve themselves within the Red Army so that Armenia can be a strong country.

44 “Բայլելիկորեն տիրապետեն ռազմական տեխնիկային,” *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:407>

Signifier	Soldier, production plant, weapons
Denotation	Providing military training
Signified	Security, strength
Connotation	The Red Army protects Armenia
Myth	The strength of the Red Army is the strength of Armenia

Table 1: Propaganda Poster on Military Equipment

4.2. Propaganda Poster on War Training

The propaganda poster on war training was prepared by Ashot Petros Mamajanyan. The poster is dated between 1927-1951 years. When examined in terms of denotation meaning, a man wearing a Red Army uniform holding a machine gun is depicted on the poster. Tractors plowing a field are behind the man and planes, parachutes, a tank, and civilians standing at the head of weapons are in front of him. The color red is used in the background of the poster. There is an inscription stating “We give to the Red Army strong conscripts for combat” (Կարմիր բանակին տանք մարտականորեն կռիված զորակոչիկներ) on the poster.



Poster 2. Propaganda Poster on War Training⁴⁵

⁴⁵ “Կարմիր բանակին տանք մարտականորեն կռիված զորակոչիկներ”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemeria Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:80>

Security and power issues come to the fore as signified in the poster. When considered in terms of connotation, the poster gives the message that the Red Army protects the Armenian people. The soldier in the poster is used as the metonym of the Armenian people joining the Red Army. The tractors plowing the field behind the man in the poster symbolize the production in Armenia, the planes, parachutes, and the tank symbolize the power of the Red Army. The perception is formed that the Red Army ensures the security of Armenia and that it is ready for a possible attack against Armenia, as is the case in the first poster that was examined. In this respect, the Red Army is used as a metaphor for both power and security in the poster. The propaganda myth “Armenians should join the Red Army” is constructed in the poster and thus Armenians are encouraged to join the Red Army this myth.

Signifier	Soldier, field, weapons
Denotation	Providing military training
Signified	Security, strength
Connotation	Red Army’s protection of the Armenian people
Myth	Armenians should join the Red Army

Table 2: Propaganda Poster on War Training

4.3. Propaganda Poster on Socialist Homeland

The propaganda poster on the socialist homeland was prepared by Aleksandr Grigoryan. The poster is dated between 1939-1950 years. Considered in denotation terms, the poster depicts a soldier holding a rifle and bayonet. It is understood from the uniform of the soldier that he is a soldier of the Red Army. A big production plant is depicted in the background of the poster. There is an inscription “Let the Red Army of the workers and peasants, who are the watchful guardians of the socialist country, grow and become stronger (*Пусть растёт и крепнет Рабоче-Крестьянская Красная Армия зоркий часовой социалистической родины*)” on the poster. Unlike the other posters examined within the scope of the study, the propaganda message is given in Russian.



Poster 3. Propaganda Poster on Socialist Homeland⁴⁶

The content of this poster bears resemblances to the previous two posters. Security comes to the fore as the signified in the poster. When examined in terms of connotation meaning, the poster gives the message that the Red Army is the guarantee of the safety of production. The soldier in the poster is used as the metonym of the Armenian people joining the Red Army. The production plant in the poster also symbolizes the production in Armenia. The poster creates the perception that the Red Army is the guarantee of Armenia’s security. Red Army is used as a security metaphor in the poster. The propaganda myth “The Red Army protects the gains of the Armenian people” is constructed in the poster, and the Armenians are thus encouraged to support the Red Army through the myth.

Signifier	Soldier, production plant
Denotation	The Red Army soldier protects the production plant
Signified	Security
Connotation	The Red Army is the guarantee of the safety of production
Myth	The Red Army protects the gains of the Armenian people

Table 3: Propaganda Poster on Socialist Homeland

⁴⁶ “Пусть растет и крепнет Рабоче-Крестьянская Красная Армия зоркий часовой социалистической родины”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:325>

4.4. Propaganda Poster on the Air Force

The propaganda poster on the air force was prepared by Andrey Borisovich Yumashev, Viktor Nikolaevich Deni, and Nikolai Andreevich Dolgorukov in 1940. When examined in terms of denotation meaning, black and red airplanes are depicted in the air on the poster. In the foreground of the poster, one of the red airplanes goes over a black plane. The black plane crashes and smoke rises from it. There are star symbols on the red plane. In the poster, there is an inscription stating “‘Who is strong in the air is strong in our time.’ K. Voroshilov” (“Ով ուժեղ է ոդում, նա մեր ժամանակ ընդհանրապես ուժեղ է” Կ. Վորոշիլով) on the poster.



Poster 4. Propaganda Poster on the Air Force⁴⁷

47 “Ով ուժեղ է ոդում, նա մեր ժամանակ ընդհանրապես ուժեղ է” Կ. Վորոշիլով”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:199>

Power and success come to the fore as the signified in the poster. When considered in terms of connotation, the poster gives the message that the Red Army defeats its enemies. The red plane in the poster is used as the metonym of the Red Army’s air force. The perception is formed that the Red Army is strong in the air as it is on the ground and that it is ready for a possible air attack against Armenia. Red Army is used as a power metaphor in the poster. Thus, the propaganda myth “The Red Army is strong against its enemies” is constructed in the poster. In this way, the perception is formed that the Red Army is strong enough to defeat its enemies.

Signifier	Black, red planes
Denotation	The red airplane prevails over the black airplane
Signified	Strength, success
Connotation	The Red Army defeats its enemies
Myth	The Red Army is strong against its enemies

Table 4: Propaganda Poster on Air Force

4.5. Propaganda Poster on the Enemy

The propaganda poster on the enemy was prepared in 1941 but it is unknown who prepared it. Considered in a denotation sense, the poster depicts soldiers on horseback carrying two flags advancing in one direction. On the front of the poster, there is an inscription stating “For the homeland, for Stalin (*за родину за сталина*)” on the red flag. A star is depicted on the helmets worn by the soldiers. Airplanes are depicted on the upper left of the poster. There is an inscription stating “Attack the enemy, brave soldiers of the Soviet country (*Հարձակույթ թշնամու վրա դրա դյուցազներ սովետական երկրի*)” on the poster.



Poster 5. Propaganda Poster on the Enemy⁴⁸

This is a poster steeped in communist elements. When analyzed in terms of connotation, the poster gives the message of the Red Army as the protector power of communism. The soldiers on the poster are used as the metonym of the Armenian people who have joined the Red Army. The red flags on the poster symbolize the ideology of communism. The development of the defense industry is demonstrated by the aircraft. It refers to air military support for the Red Army. The poster shows the inscription on the flag they carry while the Red Army is fighting for the homeland. It is also significant that the strong message is now written in Russian because Armenia remained a member of the SU at the end of 1920. The planners of the propaganda must have calculated that the Armenian people could speak, read, and write Russian. On the other hand, through the visual signs, a perception is inadvertently formed that the Red Army is struggling to maintain the ideology of communism. Overall, the propaganda myth that “communism could be threatened without the Red Army” is built on the poster. In this way, the perception is formed that the Red Army’s defense of communism is the defense of Armenia. Information from the poster shows that the Red Army is a force ready to fight. On the other hand, the poster also highlights Stalin’s personality cult.

48 “Հառա՛ջ թշնամու վրա դուրսագնէր սովետական երկրի”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:158>

Signifier	Red flags, soldiers
Denotation	Red Army attack
Signified	Communism
Connotation	The Red Army is the protector of Communism
Myth	Communism can be under threat without the Red Army

Table 5: Propaganda Poster on Enemy

4. 6. Propaganda Poster on the Front

The propaganda poster on the front was prepared in 1944, but like the previous poster, it is unknown who prepared this poster. When examined in terms of denotation meaning, tobacco and cotton images are highlighted in the poster. In the background of the poster, two soldiers smoke on the left side and one soldier gives clothes to another soldier on the right. There is an inscription stating “We will give more tobacco and cotton to the front” (*Տանք ֆրոնտին սվելի շատ ծխախոտ ու բամբակ*)” on the poster.



Poster 6. Propaganda Poster on the Front⁴⁹

49 “Տանք ֆրոնտին սվելի շատ ծխախոտ ու բամբակ”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed May 4, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:432>

Aid and support stand out as the signified in the poster. When considered in terms of connotation, the poster gives the message that the Armenian people support the Red Army. The soldiers in the poster are directly used as the metonym of the Red Army. The Soviet Union is among the countries that experienced the Second World War with great intensity and suffered the greatest decimation. Tobacco and cotton were grown in Armenia, and during this difficult war, Armenia provided full military support to the Red Army. This poster clearly shows the support of Armenia, which gave the Soviets all the crops it grew. In the poster, the Armenian people’s support for the Red Army is perceived as a responsibility. At this stage, the propaganda myth that “The Armenian people should support the Red Army” is constructed and the perception that the Red Army needs cigarettes and clothing is formed. Based on this perception, it can be claimed that the poster gives the message that the Armenians should support the Red Army in its need for tobacco and cotton.

Signifier	Tobacco, cotton
Denotation	Cigarettes and clothing for Red Army soldiers
Signified	Aid, support
Connotation	Armenian people’s support for the Red Army
Myth	The Armenian people should support the Red Army

Table 6: Propaganda Poster on the Front

4.7. Propaganda Poster on Celebration

This poster was designed and drawn in 1960 by Armenian artist Khachatur Hovhannes Gyulamiyan. The words of the prominent inscription, “There is no end to our march, there is no defeat to our bright endeavor...” (*Մեր երթիկն վախճան չկա, մեր պայծառ գործին՝ պարտություն...*), belongs to the Armenian writer Yeghishe Charents. Born in Kars in 1897, Charents died in a Yerevan prison hospital in 1937. We can see that excerpts from Charents’ poems, who was arrested by the authorities of the communist system for engaging in “nationalism” and involved in other common crimes, were nevertheless used by the same system after his death. The fact that the Armenian writer was more sympathetic to the Armenian people (over any system or state) makes it a poster that would attract attention, which was probably deliberated on by the final decision maker who approved the publication of this poster. On the poster, the army troops that went to fight at the front are used prominently with strong lines. Again, history was preferred to be written in Red Army color and the blue color of freedom. Against the morning or bright cloudy skies in the background, the poster reflects both comfort and energy. In terms of the meaning of the expression, on the left side

of the poster is a dynamic army unit armed with a rifle with a bayonet attachment, on the right side is a student girl, a woman with her hair carefully collected, and a man with a strong expression just to her right. Behind the girl, woman, and the man is the flag of the Red Army with the coat of arms of Lenin. The flag being waved shows the year 1960, signifying the 40th anniversary of the Armenian SSR.



Poster 7. Propaganda Poster on Celebration⁵⁰

From the point of view of connotation, the poster gives the message that the Armenian people are watching the Red Army with sympathy and adoration. The soldiers on the poster are used directly as the metonym of the Red Army. In the poster, the Armenian people -the figures of the girl, woman, and man in the poster- are perceived to have positive feelings for the Red Army. At this stage, the poster gives the message that “the Armenian people have adopted the Red Army and believe in it”. The Red Army is strong here and refers to the crowd, the multiplicity, but is passive. We can understand from this that the army does not have any demands. For this purpose, this poster creates the perception that forty years of unity and harmony has been achieved. Based on this perception, the poster claims that the Armenians, as one entity, adopted a system, believed in it, and became a whole with themselves.

50 “Մեր երթին վախճան չկա, մեր պայծառ գործին՝ պարտություն... Չարենց”, *University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)-International Digital Ephemera Project*, accessed July 17, 2021, <https://idep.library.ucla.edu/search#!/document/armeniaposters:393>

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Signifier	Army, people, flag
Denotation	Red Army soldiers, people
Signified	Loyalty, Fidelity
Connotation	Armenian people have adopted and trust to the Red Army
Myth	The Armenian people are grateful to the Red Army.

Table 7: Propaganda Poster on Celebration

Conclusion

It is an indisputable fact that modern political propaganda was initiated with the Bolsheviks. After the October Revolution, Soviet propaganda, especially developed by Lenin and Trotsky, began to be aired on the radio for the first time with the positivity of Lenin and the innovation of Trotsky. It is often impossible to definitively limit the propaganda space. Propaganda is only one aspect of the political purpose of the state; it covers a general program of action ranging from school to industrial and agricultural production to the formation of armies. Citizens whole life become an object of propaganda.

The basic triangle of Soviet propaganda was indoctrination, agitation, and practice. The Leninist political propaganda technique was perceived to be directly proportional to Lenin’s moderate and calm structure. The messages were quickly adopted by proletarians, peasants, intellectuals, soldiers. All propaganda efforts were aimed at the “unification of forces”. Through speeches, films, songs, publications, posters, and decorations, the workers and the soldiers were committed to a successful and prosperous future.

After the Bolshevik-led uprising in northern Armenia, the 11th Red Army invaded Armenia from Soviet Azerbaijan. By 30 November, power had passed into the hands of the Bolshevik Revolutionary Committee. On 1 December, the Red Army entered Yerevan, and the Soviet Republic of Armenia was proclaimed. The entry of the Red Army into Armenia and the immediate establishment of the Armenian Red Army without reaction by the Armenians was an unusual development. The quick acceptance of the Red Army in Armenia may have been due to the failure of the independent Armenia to offer adequate protection. Another factor may be the inability of the Dashnak government to succeed against the Turkish army. But more serious for the Dashnak government and its supporters was the demand for troops from Britain and France for border protection. The fact that this was ignored by the countries concerned also destroyed trust in imperialist states.

On the other hand, there was excitement for the strengthening and development of the Red Army's capacity. The revolution that began in Russia was also reflected in the Caucasus region. The most important factor can be considered as the lack of political power of Armenia. In all these possibilities, the presence of the Red Army in Armenia and the establishment of the National Red Army attached to the central army did not cause a local reaction. The Soviet Union also found an area of expansion in the Caucasus, located in the south-west region –of more strategic importance, in accordance with its own policies. This is a situation that shows that the security of SU was ensured both in the geographical area and in the ideological periphery.

In the propaganda posters examined in this article, it appears that the propaganda of the Soviet Union emphasized the importance of the Red Army in the defense of the motherland in general. The posters form the perception that there was a strong industry in the ASSR based on the guidance of the communist regime in the SU. At this stage, the idea rises that the industry continued in the ASSR and it was possible to remain a strong country with the communist regime. The posters put forth the Red Army as a guarantee of the communist regime in the ASSR, and the Red Army is presented to the public as the protector of prosperity in the ASSR. In this way, it turns out that propaganda posters in the ASSR sought to both legitimize the communist regime and create a positive perception of the Red Army. Soviet propaganda was successful at the point where the activities of the state appeared to all political, economic, and intellectual groups in Armenia.

The propaganda posters made it clear that the presence of the Red Army ensured peace and security of the ASSR. At this stage, the Armenian people were asked to join and support the Red so that they could remain strong. It was perceived that the expertise in the military equipment of people who joined the Red Army in the ASSR contributed to the strength of the Red Army. The posters were intended to depict the Armenian people willingly supporting the Red Army and were given the message that the Red Army was the army of the Armenian people. On the other hand, propaganda posters tried to create the perception that the Red Army was strong, determined, and dynamic in the minds of the Armenian people. This stressed that the Red Army was ready for any possible attack against the ASSR.

In the findings obtained from posters used in Red Army propaganda in the ASSR, it becomes clear that there was an effort to establish a relationship with the Red Army in the ASSR, and in this way the Armenian people would accept the Red Army as their own army. In propaganda posters, Stalin's cult of personality was surprisingly in limited use (considering the power of his cult of personality in the SU), while what came to the fore was the Red Army, which was depicted as engaged in the defense of the country. In this way, it can be

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argued that the purpose of the Red Army's existence in the ASSR was to ensure the security of the Armenian people and that a positive image of the Red Army was sought to be cultivated in the eyes of the Armenian people. After the Red Army, which entered Armenia in 1920 and changed its name in 1946, it is possible to say that these propaganda works had a positive effect on justifying its existence in Armenia until the end of the Soviets in August 1991.

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REVIEW ESSAY: AURORE BRUNA’S ANTI-HISTORY OF THE ANKARA AGREEMENT

(DEĞERLENDİRME YAZISI: AURORE BRUNA’NIN
ANKARA ANTLAŞMASI HAKKINDAKİ ÇARPIK TARİHÇESİ)

Maxime GAUIN*

Aurore Bruna, *L’Accord d’Angora de 1921. Théâtre des relations franco-kémalistes et du destin de la Cilicie* (Paris : éditions du Cerf, 2018).

The political affiliation and agenda of authors are not, in themselves, relevant to assess the value of their books; but the counterpart of this principle is that historians must, as much as possible, leave aside their political preferences in working on history and in writing it. Aurore Bruna is currently (2021) serving as chair of the Ramkavar-affiliated Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU, *UGAB* in France) of Marseille, after having been, from 2018 to 2020, president of the southern branch of Coordination Council of France’s Armenian Associations (CCAF), also headquartered in Marseille. Regrettably, this book is not a scholarly contribution; it is not even a partly valuable, politically oriented work akin to what other Armenian nationalist historians have made.¹ This is, rather, a

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1 For example, please see: Gregory L. Aftandilian, *Armenia, Visions of a Republic. The Independence Lobby in America, 1918-1927* (Boston: Charles River Books, 1981) ; Mark Malkasian, “The Disintegration of the Armenian Cause in the United States, 1918-1927,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, XVI-3, August 1984: pp. 349-365 ; Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923*, (London-Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984).

kind of political tract, but without the quality of any ordinary tract, namely concision. It is a repetition of most of the traditional grievances of the Armenian nationalists against Turkey, the French diplomacy, and the large majority of the French press in 1920-1923. According to these grievances, in essence; the Armenians, a people entirely made up of innocents, were betrayed by France (and other powers) for poorly conceived economic interests, while Turkey is evil and the Turks have never done anything right.

Chaotically organized, the book irritates in this regard even the most favorably disposed reader, and in fact, no review or citation can be found on Google scholar more than two years after its publication. The introduction is an overview, often inaccurate, of the late Ottoman history and of the subject of the book: The Ankara Agreement between France and Turkey in 1921 (a peace treaty in practice), its causes, its perception in the French press and its short-term consequences. The two first chapters are devoted to the Turkish national movement and the Greek-Turkish war. The three next chapters speak about the preparation, the signature, and the context of the Ankara Agreement. Two other chapters claim to be devoted to the public opinion and the Agreement, but are in fact mostly devoted to British and Swiss articles attacking this peace and to the tiny minority of French newspapers defending such views, with an odd and irrelevant reference to the short-lived pro-Armenian movement in France (1896-1897). The last three chapters speak about the aftermath of the Agreement.

The General Problem Of The Sources

This book is the published version of a master's thesis submitted in 2007. It cannot be judged according to the standards of a doctoral dissertation, still less as the author never got a PhD. However, as it has been published more than ten years after the master's thesis was submitted, it is only fair to expect somewhat more than the references of a master's thesis. Yet, it is far from reaching even what is normally required for such a research.

Regarding the bibliography, the only major book written in a Western language on the French occupation of Çukurova, namely the published dissertation of Robert Zeidner,² is never cited (even to criticize it) and the monumental history of the Turkish war of national liberation by Stanford Jay Shaw³ is equally absent. A master's thesis should be rejected for less than that.

2 Robert Zeidner, *The Tricolor over the Taurus* (Ankara: TTK, 2005) (1st edition: New York, 1996).

3 Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic. The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923* (Ankara: TTK, 2000).

Barely less serious is the ignorance of most of the basic bibliography regarding the end of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of modern Turkey: Feroz Ahmad, Edward Erickson, Kemal Karpat, Bernard Lewis (mentioned in name only), Andrew Mango, Xavier de Planhol, Jean-Paul Roux, Salâhi Sonyel, Stéphane Yerasimos and Gilles Veinstein are never cited, even negatively. Correspondingly, no book or article published after 2007 has been used. Even more incredibly, the voluminous literature on the relations between the Anglo-Saxon powers and the Armenian nationalists is disregarded, despite the numerous pages devoted by the author to the policy of Britain and to a lesser extent of the United States.

Concerning the printed sources, the *Speech* (1927) of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is cited only one time, the recollections of Damar Arikoğlu and Abdülgani Girici (two Turkish witnesses of the events in Çukurova at that time), the book of Turkish journalist Alaeddine Haïdar published in 1921, etc., are completely ignored. Even more paradoxically, the author emphasizes the importance of memoirs and of the point of view of the officers, but in practice, she has neglected the majority of the published testimonies of French officers who served in Çukurova and the neighborhood during the occupation and/or evacuation, namely Maurice Abadie, Édouard Andréa, Maxime Bergès, Georges Boudière, Raoul Desjardins, Jean Pichon, Dr. Simon, Auguste Sarrou (Ms. Bruna mentions him pp. 96-97, but does not seem to know even his first name), C. Thibault, the wife of Gaston Anfré (I include her in the list because her husband expressed the same views in the archival documents), an anonymous officer⁴, and the first book of Roger de Gontaut-Biron.⁵ The book of Gustave Gautherot is mentioned in the bibliography but never used within the main text. The testimony of two civil servants having worked in Adana, namely Paul Bernard and Adrien Léger, and the book of Pierre Lyautey, chief of the civilian staff of General Henri Gouraud at the High Commission of Beirut, titled *The Oriental Drama and the Role of France*⁶ are also conveniently omitted.

The amazement of the reader does not stop here: Even most of the basic printed sources written by the Armenian nationalist leaders, such as the published diary of Avetis Aharonian, the Memoirs of Alexander Khatissian, or the books of Jean Loris-Mélicof (a member of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia) and Kricor Tellalian (who was representative of the of Catholic Armenians at the Armenian National Union of Adana) are not cited a single time. Similarly, no Anglo-Saxon witness (except George Horton, a fanatic Turkophobe,

4 ***, « Le soldat syrien », *Le Correspondant*, 25 septembre 1924, pp. 865-877.

5 Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France s'est installée en Syrie (1919-1920)* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1922).

6 Pierre Lyautey, *Le Drame oriental et le rôle de la France* (Paris: Société d'éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1923).

discussed below) is cited, making it legitimate to wonder if Ms. Bruna even knows the book of Mary Caroline Holmes, head of the Near Relief Station in Urfa from 1918 to 1922.⁷ Last but not least in this regard, no compilation of British or American documents is ever utilized.

Regarding now the archives, the less serious grievance is the absence of any work in the police records, despite their utility in finding data on the Turks and Armenians acting in France for their respective countries: This is only too typical of the historians of the international relations who have no postgraduate courses on social history. Much less forgivable is ignorance of the personal papers of Édouard Brémond, Chief Administrator in Adana from January 1919 to September 1920; of the archives of this same administration (located at the Center of the Diplomatic Archives of Nantes); and of the reports of the Navy's Intelligence Service. Not only is no box of the military archives in Vincennes (specifically containing such reports) cited, but even the copies contained in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives are disregarded. Moreover, no microfilm of the subseries Armenia 1918-1940 is used for this book.

Briefly discussing the Turkish archives, the author claims, p. 28, that they are “in Osmanli until 1928” and that “a special authorization is always a must to consult them.” In truth, most of the Ottoman diplomatic documents are in French during the late period, a part of the Enver Paşa papers (to mention only this example) contain documents in the same language (as well as others in German) and no “special authorization” is required.⁸ The question of the Armenian archives is not discussed a single time by Ms. Bruna.

The result is an over-reliance on a few books and booklets, particularly those of Paul de Rémusat (aka Paul du Véou), Michel Paillarès, and René Puaux. Yet, de Rémusat/du Véou was an agent of influence of Fascist Italy⁹ and his book used by Ms. Bruna is structured around the thesis of a Jewish-Masonic plot behind the Committee Union and Progress (CUP), the Turkish national movement led by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and the signature of the Ankara Agreement in 1921.¹⁰ Ms. Bruna herself plays with fire when she echoes the myth of the Freemasons as string pullers, an occult leader (pp. 97 and 113),

7 Mary Caroline Holmes, *Between the Lines in Asia Minor* (New York-Chicago-London-Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923).

8 Yücel Güçlü, *Historical Archives and the Historians' Commission to Investigate the Armenian Events of 1915* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2015), pp. 29-118.

9 René Massigli, *La Turquie devant la guerre. Mission à Ankara, 1939-1940* (Paris: Plon, 1964), pp. 53-55 and 127-129.

10 Paul du Véou (Paul de Rémusat), *La Passion de la Cilicie* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1954), pp. 32, 107-108, 286-289 and 303. Some of the most delirious parts of the original (1937) edition (pp. 62-63 and 66-67 of this first version) have disappeared without explanation 17 years later. The anti-Masonic obsession is also visible in: Paul du Véou, *Chrétiens en péril au Moussa Dagh* (Paris: Baudinière, 1939), p. 183.

and the myth of a Jewish background of Atatürk (p. 35). Paillarès was a journalist who also used the topic of the Jewish-Masonic plot (in the book cited by Ms. Bruna¹¹) and who wrote from 1890s to 1920s at the request of Greece and with Greek money,¹² something Ms. Bruna cannot ignore, as she also refers to a book where the corruption of Paillarès is exposed with French documents.¹³

René Puaux is the author of the fake news, spread in February 1919, regarding imaginary persecutions and threats against the Christians of western Anatolia. He also was shameless in using anti-Semitic, bogus allegations against the CUP leadership.¹⁴ During most of his trip in western Anatolia in 1919, he refused to meet any French citizen, as he did not want to hear any bad things about the Greeks.¹⁵

A Reign of Error

The book as a whole is remarkably inaccurate in both major and minor matters. P. 16, the arrival in power of Abdülhamit II is dated 1878 (he actually became the sultan in 1876). P. 265, the agreement for the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey is dated 1924 (it was signed in 1923). The real name of Captain Pierre André and his pen name (Pierre Redan) are systematically confused. P. 41, Ms. Bruna writes that Damat Ferit Paşa resigned before the Sivas Congress of 4 September 1919 even though he actually resigned on 30 September. Much more seriously, p. 145, she confuses the armistice signed on 11 November 1918 with Germany and the Versailles Peace Treaty. Then on p. 158/n. 5, she writes that a booklet of Pierre Loti (strangely called a “book”) on the Armenian issue, printed in 1918, was published in 1898 and was devoted to the 1894-1896 events.

On p. 44, Ms. Bruna claims that the Sèvres Treaty “reveals the deep intents of the imperialist powers,” which is absolutely false regarding France (the Quai d’Orsay tried, in vain, to leave Trabzon and Izmir to the Turks; the treaty was signed at a moment when the overwhelming majority of the press was against

11 Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les Alliés* (Istanbul-Paris: éditions du Bosphore, 1922), pp. 50 and 472.

12 Note de M. de Perretti, 31 octobre 1922, Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, La Courneuve, P 3958 ; Le commissaire spécial, chef du Service de sûreté, 30 novembre 1922, Service historique de la défense (SHD), Vincennes, 20 N 1103.

13 François Georgeon, « La presse de langue française entre les deux guerres mondiales », in G. Groc and İ. Çağlar (ed.), *La Presse française de Turquie, de 1795 à nos jours* (Istanbul: Les éditions Isis, 1985), p. 33, n. 18.

14 René Puaux, « Le péril de l’Asie mineure », *Le Temps*, 15 février 1919, p. 2 ; René Puaux, « La Grèce et la question d’Orient », *Revue bleue*, 4 février 1922, p. 80.

15 Lettre de Georges Bourdon à Robert de Billy, 13 mars 1919, Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, La Courneuve (AMAE), P 14497.

the treaty¹⁶ and when it was clear that there is no majority to ratify it¹⁷) and Italy, then, on pp. 45 and 47, she admits that Rome gave weapons to the Turkish national movement (whose raison d'être was precisely to obtain the cancellation of the Sèvres Treaty) and even was "the undeclared ally" of the Kemalists. On p. 45, too, she claims that "In 1921, the Italian troops completely leave continental Turkey and remain on the Dodecanese only." Yet, beside the fact that Italian soldiers remained in Istanbul and the Straits region until 1923, the Italian military presence in Kuşadası continued until April 1922. Even more incredibly, the book contains several sentences (pp. 36, 96, 184, 217, 218, etc.) where an error of French is obvious.

These confusions serve no polemical purpose, but this is not the case of all. On p. 22, Ms. Bruna speaks about "the [political] parties in Ankara," which is barely an approximation. Parties in the contemporary sense of the word did not exist yet, but there were several parliamentary blocs in practice: an opposition, a majority, and a group in the middle. It would not deserve to be mentioned if she did not claim, pp. 97 and 209, that the single party regime already existed in Ankara during the war of national liberation, which is nonsense; this regime was imposed in 1925 (and disappeared in 1945-46) after a brief interruption in 1930.

On p. 179, the author dares to claim that "Smyrna was attributed to Greece [by the Sèvres Treaty] because the population was almost exclusively Greek and Greek-speaking." Of course, no source is provided. Yet, beside the fact that the city and its hinterland were attributed to Greece in practice rather formally, the province and even the city itself had no Greek majority. The last Ottoman census found 47.5% Muslims (mostly Turks), 35% of Greeks, 5.2% of Armenians in the agglomeration of İzmir, and the others being Jews and

16 Jacques Bardoux, « L'action inter-alliée en Allemagne et en Turquie », *L'Opinion*, 27 mars 1920, p. 345 ; Jean Lescure, « Faut-il détruire la Turquie ? », *Revue politique et parlementaire*, avril 1920, pp. 42-48 ; Jacques Bainville, « L'ordre des questions examinées à San Remo », *Excelsior*, 21 avril 1920, p. 2 ; Saint-Brice, « Les clauses essentielles du traité turc », *Le Journal*, 10 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Jacques Bainville, « L'Asie contre l'Europe », *L'Action française*, 11 mai 1920, p. 1 ; « Le traité avec la Turquie — Le règlement oriental est-il définitif ? », *L'Écho de Paris*, 12 mai 1920, p. 3 ; Antoine Peretti, « Le traité turc est-il acceptable ? Non ! », *La Lanterne*, 15 mai 1920, pp. 1-2 ; Édouard Herriot, « La crise de la démocratie », *Le Rappel*, 14 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Georges Scelle, « Le traité turc et l'opinion française », *L'Information*, 19 mai 1920, p. 1 ; « Il y a un traité turc... Mais il y a aussi des Turcs », *L'Intransigeant*, 26 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Jean Longuet, « L'Islam et le Socialisme », *Le Populaire*, 29 mai 1920, p. 1 ; Paul Allain, « Un "bandit" », *Le Radical*, 26 juin 1920, p. 1 ; René d'Aral, « Notre politique en Orient », *Le Gaulois*, 27 juin 1920, p. 1 ; Saint-Brice, « La révision de la liquidation orientale », *Correspondance d'Orient*, 30 juin 1920, p. 531 ; René Johannet, « Il faut réviser le traité turc — Constantinople », *La Croix*, 1er juillet 1920, p. 1 ; René Johannet, « Il faut réviser le traité turc — Smyrne », *La Croix*, 15 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; « La réponse des alliés à la Turquie », *Le Temps*, 19 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; « La Turquie signera-t-elle ? — Le grand vizir et les sultanes inclinent à la soumission », *L'Œuvre*, 23 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; « Encore une paix qui ne paie pas — La paix de Sèvres », *Le Rappel*, 27 juillet 1920, p. 1 ; A. Jacque-Ollivier (Jacques Kayser), « L'Inde bouge — Funestes conséquences du traité turc », *La Dépêche de Toulouse*, 30 juillet 1920, p. 3 ; « Le pauvre vieux Grand Turc », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 3 août 1920, p. 1.

17 « La journée », *La Croix*, 27 juin 1920, p. 1.

Levantines (these two last categories being as hostile as the Muslims to any annexation or domination by Greece). In the province as a whole, it was 77.6% Turks, 18.5% Greeks and 1.2%.¹⁸ The report of the French, American, British and Italian officers on the Greek landing of 15 May 1919 also concluded that the Turks were in majority in the province and more numerous than the Greeks in the city itself.¹⁹ More insidiously, p. 77, Ms. Bruna quotes the British allegation, made at the London conference of February-March 1921 (which was supposed to revise the Sèvres Treaty), about a Greek majority in eastern Thrace. In fact, there was a Turkish majority.²⁰ The city of Edirne had, in 1913, 120,000 inhabitants, including 55,000 Turks and almost 20,000 Jews, the second being as loyal as the first to the Ottoman state.²¹

Concerning the Jews, precisely, they are conveniently omitted, on p. 172, where Ms. Bruna claims that the French influence in the Ottoman Empire was only due to Christians. Actually, during the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, the Jewish minority was, with the Maronites, the most French-speaking and French-oriented community²² and targeted by Christian anti-Semitism.²³ But this is not the only aberration of Ms. Bruna's claim: Her sentences totally forget the tensions between the Christians themselves, such as the hatred of many Orthodox Greeks and Orthodox (Apostolic/Gregorian) Armenians against the Catholics or the rivalry between Protestant and Catholic missionaries,²⁴ and, in the last analysis, the Muslim students of the French schools cannot be ignored, even if they were less numerous, because they were overrepresented in the Ottoman administration.²⁵

The most incredible errors, regardless, are about the French-British rivalry. This rivalry is underestimated (pp. 118-120) as the author seems to believe that

18 Meir Zamir, "Population statistics of the Ottoman empire in 1914 and 1919," *Middle Eastern Studies*, XVII-1, January 1981: p. 90.

19 Nihat Reşat, *Les Grecs à Smyrne* (Paris: Imprimerie Kossuth, 1920), p. 13.

20 Meir Zamir, "Population statistics of...", p. 89.

21 Gustave Cirilli, *Journal du siège d'Andrinople (Impressions d'un assiégé)* (Paris: Chapelot, 1913), p. 31.

22 Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews. The Alliance israélite universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling, 1860-1925* (Bloomington-Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1990), pp. 147-148.

23 Paul Dumont, "Jewish Communities in Turkey during the Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century in the Light of the Archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle," in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (ed.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (New York-London: Holmes & Meier, 1982, volume I), pp. 222-224 ; Leon Kontente, *L'Antisémitisme grec en Asie mineure. Smyrne, 1774-1924* (Istanbul: Libra, 2015).

24 « Arménie », *Œuvre des écoles d'Orient*, n° 167, juillet 1888, p. 317 ; « Correspondance — Asie mineure », *Les Missions catholiques*, 16 février 1894, p. 74 ; « Informations diverses », *Les Missions catholiques*, 9 mars 1894, p. 110 ; « Correspondance — Syrie », *Les Missions catholiques*, 15 octobre 1897, p. 493.

25 Sinan Kunalalp (ed.), *Une ambassadrice de France à Constantinople. Les souvenirs de Gabrielle Bompard de Blagnères, 1909-1914* (Istanbul: Les éditions Isis, 2016), p. 38.

it became relatively serious in 1920 only and mentions in the half of a sentence only the dispute regarding Germany (p. 132). Actually, the tensions started before the armistice was even signed, among other reasons, because David Lloyd George was not clear in 1917-1918 about the restitution of the Alsace-Moselle to France and because the French protectorate on the Christians of Jerusalem was unilaterally suppressed by the British after the capture of this city.²⁶ Regarding Germany, the military in France, as well as a large part of the big business and all the civilian nationalists, from the center left to the far right, were deeply displeased by the successful veto of the Anglo-Saxon powers to a permanent occupation of Rhineland and to an annexation of Saarland without referendum, during the preparation of the Versailles Treaty.²⁷ In the East, the tension rose faster: As early as January 1919, a formal protest was sent by Paris to London regarding the bullying of Francophile Arabs, French schools, and French diplomatic agents by a part of the British officers in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Lebanon as well as regarding the promotion by the British of Emir Feysal—who asked for an unified Arab state.²⁸ Considering that Ms. Bruna rightfully used the detailed book of journalist Jacques Bardoux titled *Lloyd George and France*,²⁹ where the disputes regarding Germany are discussed at length, and that her master's thesis supervisor Robert Frank is a well-respected specialist of international relations, particularly in western Europe during the interwar, such an ignorance is quite difficult to understand.

The Legacy Of The Ottoman Period And The Armenian Issue Until 1918

Bernard Lewis observed that, in the 1990s, “the view which the genocide proponents have maintained,” had “remained unchanged for three-quarters of a century.”³⁰ It remains unchanged in this 2018 book, concerning the Ottoman history in general and the Armenian issue before and during the First World War.

26 Colonel Brémond, Note à Monsieur de Margerie, 16 janvier 1918, in Hasan Dilan (ed.), *Les Événements arméniens dans les documents diplomatiques français* (Ankara: TTK, 2005, volume I), pp. 387-392 ; Un officier, « La France et ses rivaux dans l'Empire ottoman », *L'Opinion*, 27 avril 1918, p. 330 ; Pierre Renouvin, « Les buts de guerre du gouvernement français (1914-1918) », *Revue historique*, CCXXXV-1, janvier-mars 1966: pp. 34-35.

27 Georges-Henri Soutou, « La France et les marches de l'est, 1914-1919 », *Revue historique*, CCLX-4, octobre-décembre 1978: pp. 341-388.

28 Note pour le ministre, 2 novembre 1918, AMAE, P 1426 ; Le haut-commissaire de la République française à Beyrouth à la direction des Affaires politiques et commerciales, 6 décembre 1918 ; Note sur les menées anglaises en Asie mineure, 31 janvier 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 6 ; Note sur les intérêts moraux et matériels de la France en Syrie, 1er février 1919, AMAE, 196 PA-AP 8.

29 Jacques Bardoux, *Lloyd George et la France* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1923).

30 Bernard Lewis, *Notes on a Century. Reflections of a Middle East Historian* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2012), p. 289.

On p. 209, the author pretends that “the Christian minorities” of Çukurova “had experienced exactions since 16th century.” As a no source is provided, a few examples will suffice to refute this extraordinary claim. In the province of Adana, from 1860 to 1908, the Armenian presence in the Ottoman administration was: “One to three were employed in the control of revenue and expenditure and in the taxation department; one or two in the Ottoman Bank, and between two and four in the branch of the Agricultural Bank, as well as in the public debt and in the salt administration.”³¹ Unlike provinces such as Erzurum or Diyarbakır, almost no eruption of violence took place in Adana during the 1890s. The most serious attempt happened in Tarsus in December 1895, but the *kaymakam* (governor) and his men blocked a threatening Muslim crowd, “even broke a cane on the head of the most recalcitrant and the rest dispersed.”³² During the last six decades of Ottoman history, the cotton production the same province was dominated by Greeks.³³ Where were the “exactions”?

On p. 14, Ms. Bruna claims that “between 1894 and 1896, 300,000 Armenians have been massacred” and gives as only source a press interview given by Claude Mutafian, an assistant professor in mathematics, and Anahide Ter-Minassian, a specialist of the Caucasus and a Dashnak. No source is provided in the interview. Not fearing the internal contradiction, Ms. Bruna gives, without any reference, the figures of “between 200,000 and 250,000” for the same casualties, during the same period, pp. 158-159/n. 5. None of these figures is even close to the truth. The only estimate based on a research in Ottoman and western archives gives the figure of 20,000—and more than 5,000 Turks and other Muslims killed during the same period by Armenian insurgents.³⁴ It remains unchallenged to this day.

Returning to the 1894-1896 events on p. 167, Ms. Bruna alleges, one more time without any source, that they had been “orchestrated by Sultan Abdülhamit II.” There is in fact no evidence for such an accusation, which is a convenient and political way to avoid the issue of the bloody provocations and insurrections organized by the Armenian revolutionary nationalists,³⁵ and

31 Mesrob K. Krikorian, *Armenians in the Service of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 66.

32 M. Summaripa, consul, chargé du vice-consulat de France à Mersine, à M. Paul Cambon, ambassadeur de la République française à Constantinople, 14 décembre 1895, in *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires arméniennes (1895-1896). Supplément* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1897), p. 98.

33 Charles Issawi, “The Transformation of the Economic Position of the *Millets* in the Nineteenth Century,” in Bernard Lewis and Benjamin Braude (ed.), *Christians and Jews...*, p. 264.

34 Kâmuran Gürün, *Le Dossier arménien* (Triangle, 1984), pp. 189 and 200-201.

35 Gaston Aubyneau, *La Journée du 26 août 1896 à la Banque impériale ottoman* (Villeurbanne: Imprimerie Chaix, 1912), pp. 28 and 34 ; Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2005), pp. 11-29; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism, Evangelism and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878-1896* (London-Portland: Frank Cass, 1993), pp. 54-157 ; Bilâl Şimşir (ed.), *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, volume III, 1891-1895 (Ankara: TTK, 2008) (1st edition, 1989), p. 334 and passim.

contrary to all the pragmatic policy of Abdülhamit II, particularly the fact that 20% of the best paid civil servants of Istanbul were Armenians in 1896.³⁶ Incidentally, it may be remarked that Archag Tchobanian, future Ramkavar leader in France, denied the responsibilities of the Armenian insurgents of the 1890s when he wrote in French, but denounced them in vivid terms when he wrote in Armenian.³⁷

On p. 15, Ms. Bruna alleges that the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF-Dashnaktsutyun) helped the CUP a lot to impose the restoration of the Constitution in 1908. It was in fact the CUP that saved the ARF from a complete destruction by the Hamidian regime.³⁸

The laconic description of the Adana events in April 1909 is even worse. According to the author, “the liberation army sent by the Young Turk cabinet” supposedly “massacred 25,000 Armenians in Adana.” One more time, no source is provided. Actually, there were three steps in the Adana events: Violent clashes between Armenians and Muslims (about 500 deaths on each side), caused by the numerous provocations by Armenian nationalists since Autumn 1908; mutual massacres in the countryside at the same moment; then, after order was restored, the murderous shootings of many Turks, followed by indiscriminate reprisals of the army.³⁹ Of course, not a word is said by Ms. Bruna about the action of Governor Cemal (later Cemal Paşa) for reconstruction and reconciliation, from 1909 to 1911.⁴⁰

The most concerning, not to say scary, is the part on the 1915-16 events and the Nemesis Operation (a series of terrorist attacks against former Ottoman officials, former Azerbaijani officials, and loyal Ottoman Armenians, carried out by the ARF), p. 184:

“[It is] the implementation of the Nemesis operation that brings justice to the Armenians. Soghomon Tehlirian assassinates Grand Vizir Talat

36 Sidney Whitman, *Turkish Memories* (New York-London: Chas. Scriber’s Sons/William Heinemann, 1914), p. 19.

37 Archag Tchobanian, *L’Arménie, son histoire, sa littérature, son rôle en Orient* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1897), pp. 9-12 and 80-88; William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism. 1890-1902* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), p. 160, n. 50.

38 Maxime Gauin, “The Missed Occasion: Successes of the Hamidian Police Against the Armenian Revolutionaries, 1905-1908,” *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 30 (2014): pp. 113-131.

39 Le vice-consul de France à Mersine et Adana à Son Excellence M. Pichon, 23 octobre 1908, AMAE, P 16742 ; Dispatches of Bie Ravndal, U.S. consul in Mersin, to the Undersecretary of State, 25 April and 6 May 1909, p. 5, National Archives and Record Administration, RG 84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, Diplomatic Posts Istanbul, vol. 216; Mikael Varandian, *Rapport présenté au congrès socialiste international de Copenhague par le parti arménien « Daschnakzoutioun ».* Turquie — Caucase — Perse (Geneva, 1910), pp. 27-28.

40 For instance, please see: M. Barré de Lancy, vice-consul de France à Mersine et à Adana, à Son Excellence M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 24 août 1909, AMAE, P 16742.

Pasha, the grand organizer of the extermination of the Armenians, in Berlin, where Talat had fled. The testimonies of Tehlirian, Christine Terzibashian, Johannes Lepsius and even of General Limand von Sanders, as well as the hold documents, among them 5 ciphered telegrams sent by Talat to Naim Bey [sic] give a new dimension to the trial, where the genocidal crime of Talat and the Young Turks is in turn exposed. The tribunal acquits Soghomon Tehlirian.”

Not a single source is cited; almost everything is false and dangerous. The first assumption is that a terrorist operation can “bring justice”—which is in itself a reason to wonder what the author actually thinks about the later terrorist attacks by the ARF and other Armenian nationalists, during the 1970s and 1980s for example. The five forged “documents” published Ramkavar member Aram Andonian in 1920 were not supposed to have been sent to “Naim Bey” and were not accepted by the court: Facing the profound skepticism of the prosecutor and finding no support from the president, the defense lawyers of Tehlirian themselves renounced their demand for “authentication” of these “telegrams.”⁴¹ Later, references were made to these fakes for the defense of terrorists of the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation for Armenia (ASALA), especially during the trials of Paris, January 1984 (the bloody hostage taking at the Turkish consulate) and Créteil, February-March (Orly bombing).⁴²

The “testimony” of Tehlirian was completely false, as proved by a comparison with his memoirs, with the apologetic obituary published in 1960 in the *Dashnak Armenian Review* and even more with the ARF archives.⁴³ Lepsius’ testimony was equally misleading and it is even contradictory to praise at the same time Lepsius and Nemesis as a whole, because Nemesis assassinated also Sait Halim Paşa and Cemal Paşa, two former Ottoman leaders Lepsius himself publicly called innocent.⁴⁴ Concerning the statements of General Otto Liman von Sanders, far from having accused Talat or the CUP in general of “extermination,” they actually described the forced relocation as an understandable security measure in war time and then put the blame for the “cruelties” on local, small civil servants. Liman von Sanders emphasized the fact that he never saw any order of Talat against the Armenians as such.⁴⁵

41 Ara Krikorian (éd.), *Justicier du génocide arménien. Le procès de Tehlirian* (Paris: Diasporas, 1981), pp. 137-138 and 160-161.

42 *Armenian Terrorism and the Paris Trial/Terrorisme arménien et procès de Paris* (Ankara University, 1984), pp. 24 and 48 ; *Terrorist Attack at Orly: Statements and Evidence Presented at the Trial, February 19 - March 2, 1985* (Ankara: Faculty of Political Science, 1985).

43 Christopher Gunn, “Getting Away With Murder. Soghomon Tehlirian, ASALA and the Justice Commandos, 1921-1984,” in Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (ed.), *War and Collapse* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016), pp. 909-917.

44 Johannes Lepsius, *Le Rapport secret du Dr Johannès Lepsius sur les massacres d’Arménie* (Paris: Payot, 1918), pp. 253-254, 258 and 261.

45 Ara Krikorian (éd.), *Justicier du génocide....*, pp. 127-137.

In such conditions, this is not a surprise to notice that, in dealing with the report of U.S. Major General James G. Harbord (pp. 177-178), Ms. Bruna omits the most embarrassing (for the Armenian nationalists) parts of this document, such as the description of the massacres of Anatolian Muslims by Armenians of the Russian army during the First World War.⁴⁶

Imaginary “Engagements” And Fictional Loyalties

Far from being a dispassionate description and analysis, the book is a permanent (and deeply negative) judgment of the French policy after the armistice, a judgment mostly based on assertions that are far removed from the truth. On p. 171, the author alleges the existence of “French engagements for the minorities fighting for their survival”; on p. 191, that “France promised to build the Cilician Armenian”; and on p. 201, she claims again the existence of “promises made to the Armenians.” The last allegation is reiterated on p. 218; The Ankara Agreement supposedly meant the breaking of these “promises.” On p. 111, the word “betrayal” is used. No source is provided. In fact, there never was any “promise” or “engagements”. Boghos Nubar (the founder of Ms. Bruna’s party) actually claimed, at the end of 1920, of having received a promise for an autonomous Armenia in Çukurova, in exchange of the recruitment of Armenian volunteers for the Eastern Legion (see below about this unit), but no document proves it. Even the word “Cilicia” is not used in the letter of President of the Ministers’ Council Aristide Briand to Nubar (8 November 1916) or in the speech of Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Pichon after the capture of Jerusalem (27 December 1917). The demands of Archag Tchobanian in June 1915 and of Nubar in October 1916 for a separated “Cilicia” were explicitly rejected and no positive answer followed the demand, in December 1918, for a recognition of the “Integral Armenia.” Also, at the end of 1920, Boghos Nubar was forced to admit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he could provide no evidence.⁴⁷ Earlier, in February of the same year, Nubar similarly had to acknowledge in front of Lord Robert Cecil that he had received no written promise.⁴⁸ Correspondingly, one of the few French supporters of an Armenia from the Karabakh to Mersin explicitly wrote that Paris promised nothing of this kind and, far from blaming the government for that, he explained that the only persons responsible were the leaders of the

46 James G. Harbord, *Conditions in the Near East. Report of the American military mission to Armenia* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), pp. 8-9.

47 Extrait du discours de M. Pichon, ministre des Affaires étrangères, à la Chambre des députés, le 27 décembre 1917 ; Le ministre des Affaires étrangères à M. de Selves, président de la commission des Affaires étrangères au Sénat, 28 décembre 1920 ; Id., 13 février 1921 ; Note pour le ministre, 25 décembre 1918, AMAE, P 16670.

48 Avetis Aharonian, “From Sardarapat to Sèvres and Lausanne. A political Diary — Part III,” *Armenian Review*, XV-1, Spring 1963, pp. 57-58.

(Ramkavar) Armenian National Delegation, unable to prove that such a huge Armenia was in the interests of France.⁴⁹

Equally frivolous is the claim of a violation, by the Ankara Agreement, of the duties of France as mandatory power in Syria (explicitly pp. 169-170 and 201; implicitly p. 212). The occupation of Adana, Mersin, etc., by 1918-1919, was accompanied by no engagement regarding the duration of the occupation, the final statute of the territories, or anything related to the minorities. The only promises made to the Assyrians specifically, namely facilities for immigration in Syria and the recruitment of an Assyrian battalion there, were carried out.⁵⁰

False, too, is the claim of the existence of an “Armenian national home under French protectorate” supposed to have been “created” in Çukurova in 1919 (p. 190). As usual, no reference is cited and this “home” is not defined. Such a vague wording did not exist in 1919 and was invented in 1921, as a way to maintain more or less the US President Woodrow Wilson arbitration in spite of the signing of the Gümrü/Gyumri Treaty during the night from 2 to 3 December 1920, a treaty by which Armenia repudiated Sèvres (yet, Wilson officially announced the arbitration three days after this new treaty). During the first months of 1919, High Commissioner François Georges-Picot actually organized repatriation of Armenians forcibly relocated in 1915 from Çukurova and favored their concentration, but, beside the fact he began to change his policy in the middle of the same year—under the double effect of the emergence of the Turkish national movement and of the crimes of the Armenian Legion (see below)—he never announced anything like an “Armenian national home.”⁵¹

On p. 207, the reader can find a perfect illustration of the saying “as many words, as many errors”: “Ethnographically, in Cilicia, the minorities are united and shape a Francophile majority opposed to the Turanians.” Actually, at the eve of the First World War, the population of the province of Adana had a very large Muslim (mostly Turkish) majority: 73% according to the British High Commission, 83% according to the Ottoman census, 86% according to Justin McCarthy.⁵² The Jews, like anywhere else in Anatolia, were loyal to the Muslim Turks and victims of Christian anti-Semitism, for example during the anti-

49 Paul Poulgy, « Le différend franco-arménien en Cilicie — Les hommes de plâtre », *Aiguillon*, 25 avril 1919, p. 4.

50 Engagements pris depuis l’armistice [1921], AMAE, P 16670.

51 Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France...*, p. 97 ; Jean Pichon, *Sur la route des Indes un siècle après Bonaparte*, Paris : Société d’éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1932, p. 215.

52 Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities. The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire* (New York-London: New York University Press, 1983), p. 112 ; Meir Zamir, “Population Statistics...”, pp. 90 et 102.

Muslim riots of July and August 1920 in Adana: The synagogue, too, was attacked and plundered.⁵³

Concerning the alleged “Francophilia” of the Christians, Colonel Édouard Brémont, chief administrator in Adana from January 1919 to September 1920 and a seemingly reliable source for Ms. Bruna, reported, as early as April 1919, that “the Armenian opinion is turning to America.”⁵⁴ Some months later, even the Catholic Armenians asked for an American mandate instead of a French one.⁵⁵ Aram Turabian, an independent Armenian nationalist cited in the bibliography of the book reviewed here, and never criticized by its author, blamed the “dementia” of the Ramkavar, which asked for an Armenia from Karabakh to Mersin under the American protectorate—not because Turabian was against such an Armenia, but because he considered the American mandate impossible and such a demand as only able to cause “the collective hostility of the powers.”⁵⁶ When the Armenian nationalists understood that the French state was against any Armenian or even Christian separatism in Çukurova and that the American mandate would never take place, they organized a kind of pogrom against the Muslim majority in July 1920, then various attacks and not less than three failed coups, on 2, 4-5 August and 22 September 1920.⁵⁷ Even Paul de Rémusat (aka Paul du Véou), felt forced to mention a part of these misdeeds in his book on “Cilicia.”⁵⁸

The French orientation of the Maronites and Assyrians was more real, but their leadership broke up with the Armenian committees on 7 August 1920, in a joint letter “condemn[ing]” the insistence of the Armenian leadership to obtain a Christian Republic in Adana and presenting regrets for having initially supported the failed coup organized by the local Ramkavar leader, Mihran Damadian, on 4 and 5 August.⁵⁹ The whole narrative of the allegedly betrayed and united “minorities” is pure fiction.

53 Le commandant Tommy Martin, gouverneur militaire de la ville et du sandjak d’Adana, à M. le chef du contrôle administratif de Cilicie, 1er août 1920, Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes, ISL/1V/135.

54 Télégramme du colonel Brémont à François Georges-Picot, 10 avril 1919, AMAE, P 16671.

55 Harry N. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission: An American Inquiry in the Middle East* (Beirut: Khayats, 1963), p. 140.

56 Aram Turabian, *L’Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne : l’Arménie* (Marseille: Imprimerie nouvelle, 1929), pp. 66-70. This book of Turabian is precisely the one cited by Ms. Bruna in her work.

57 Tommy Martin, Renseignements n° 178, 7 juin 1920, Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes (CADN), ISL/1V/222 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920, SHD, 1 BB7 236 ; Le colonel Brémont, chef du contrôle administratif, à M. Damadian, représentant de la Délégation de l’Arménie intégrale, 11 juillet 1920, CADN, ISL/1V/174 ; Paul Bernard, *Six mois en Cilicie*, Aix-en-Provence, éditions du *Feu*, 1929, pp. 59-108.

58 Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, pp. 239 and 245. Also see p. 99 for the reproduction of the verdict of the French military justice (23 April 1920) sentencing in absentia Ramkavar leader Moucheq Séropian for conspiracy, fabrication of bombs, etc.

59 CADN, ISL/1V/135.

A General Misrepresentation Of The French Policy And Its Actors

At the core of Ms. Bruna's thesis, there is the claim of a "dichotomy of the diplomats' opinion and the soldiers' opinion" (pp. 31, 68 and 208-213). Such a dichotomy has simply nothing to do with the historical reality and is so utterly false that some parts of the author's book itself provide evidence of the opposite. Indeed, among her favorite targets, noteworthy are Colonel Louis Mougín and Lieutenant-Colonel Auguste Sarrou (pp. 81, 96-97, 112 and *passim*). Who were they, if not soldiers? Even more incredibly, p. 208, Ms. Bruna puts forth General Henri Gouraud (High Commissioner in Beirut from 1919 to 1923) and Colonel Édouard Brémond (Chief Administrator in Adana from 1919 to 1920), then, defeated by the most overwhelming evidence, she is forced, p. 214, to admit that General Gouraud and his General Secretary Robert de Caix prevailed on Colonel Brémond (who was actually recalled in Paris by order of General Gouraud) and that the outcome of this internal dispute announced the evacuation of Çukurova.

Regardless, the background and the concrete actions of General Gouraud are never explained. Yet, having fought at Çanakkale and against the Germans, he had "known during the war only one chivalrous enemy," namely the Turk.⁶⁰ Far from having been against the Ankara Agreement, General Gouraud went to Paris at the end of 1921 and was physically present to support President of the Ministers' Council Aristide Briand during the debate at the Senate on this agreement, this presence causing "loud applause," "cheers on all the benches" and "prolonged applause" when Briand referred to him as a guarantee of the seriousness of the text signed.⁶¹ This is true, and Ms. Bruna is perfectly entitled to mention that General Gouraud would have preferred to maintain, in the Ankara Agreement, the article present in the aborted text of March 1921 concerning the presence of French officers in the active command of the Turkish gendarmerie at Adana, Tarsus, Mersin, Antep, and Killis. But thinking that an agreement could, or should, have been better is quite different from opposing it.

The major misrepresentation of General Gouraud leads to the discussion of the biggest omission of Ms. Bruna's book, namely, her absolute silence on Marshal Hubert Lyautey, the mentor of General Gouraud. General Resident in Morocco from 1912 to 1925 (with a short interruption in 1917, when he was replaced by General Gouraud), Marshal Lyautey called, as early as 1919, for a fair peace with the Turks, as such a peace would ease the French domination in Morocco considerably, and became very interested in the Turkish national movement of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). In good terms with Aristide Briand, Marshal Lyautey played a considerable role in the lobby for the change of the French policy. In

60 Léon Rouillon, *Pour la Turquie* (Paris: Grasset, 1921), p. 55. Also see: René d'Aral, « France et Turquie — La mission du général Gouraud », *Le Gaulois*, 19 mars 1921, p. 1.

61 *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Sénat*, 30 décembre 1921, p. 2426.

his relations with Mustafa Kemal, Marshal Lyautey used as go-between journalist Berthe Georges-Gaulis, one of the favorite targets of Ms. Bruna;⁶² and the same Berthe Georges-Gaulis also acted as an intelligence agent for General Gouraud.⁶³ Claude Farrère, another firm supporter of the Turks, also attacked by Ms. Bruna, pp. 150 and 158-159 (without specific arguments on the merits of Farrère's reasoning), was closely connected to Marshal Lyautey, was a personal friend of several of his collaborators and defended his work in Morocco by a series of articles in the press.⁶⁴ This Moroccan connection is the clearest refutation of the "dichotomy" invented by Ms. Bruna.

Marshal Lyautey is the biggest, but not the only considerable omission in Ms. Bruna's book. Captain Henri Rollin, Chief of the Navy's Intelligence Service for Turkey, the Caucasus, and Southern Russia from 1919 to 1921, is not a cited a single time. Yet, the reports written by him and his collaborators are merciless against the Armenian nationalists, most of the time lucid on the Turkish national movement and explicitly advocating, by 1920, an agreement with Ankara against the expansion of Communism.⁶⁵ Beside these two cases, it is remarkable that Ms. Bruna cites the book of Pierre Loti, *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient*, but never the letters of French officers sent to Loti to support his campaign in favor of the Turks.⁶⁶ Similarly, the only interesting and somewhat original contribution of Michel Paillarès, one of the main sources of Ms. Bruna, is the account of his interview of officers of the occupation corps of Istanbul, confirming that the preponderant opinion here was in favor of Turkey and very against the Greek and Armenian nationalists (Paillarès reported these conversations with deep regret, of course).⁶⁷ In other words, Ms. Bruna perfectly knows that this "dichotomy" is contrary to the historical reality.

62 À M. Wladimir d'Ormesson, 6 janvier 1919 ; À M. Clemenceau, président du Conseil, 15 juin 1919 ; À M. Georges Leygues, président du Conseil, 21 décembre 1920 ; À M. Briand, ministre des Affaires étrangères, 17 juin 1921 ; À M. Poincaré, 22 janvier 1922 ; Id., 1er mars 1922, in Pierre Lyautey (ed.), *Lyautey l'Africain. Textes et lettres du maréchal Lyautey* (Paris: Plon, volume IV, 1919-1925, 1957), pp. 3-18, 102-112 and 114-120 ; Fuat Pekin, *Atatürk et le maréchal Lyautey*, Nancy : Publications de la Fondation Lyautey, 1961.

63 Berthe Georges-Gaulis, *Les nouveaux nationalismes*, 29 novembre 1919, AMAE, 399 PA-AP 130, dossier 1.

64 Claude Farrère, *Souvenirs*, Paris : Fayard, 1953, pp. 174-176, 228-231 and 247-248 ; Claude Farrère, « Lyautey l'Africain », *La Revue hebdomadaire*, 3 juillet 1920, pp. 3-16 ; Claude Farrère, « Promenades au Maroc », *Le Gaulois*, 2 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — La ville champignon », *L'Information*, 3 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — Casablanca la neuve », *L'Information*, 4 décembre 1920, p. 1 ; Claude Farrère, « Le Maroc en 1920 — Les grands vassaux de la République », *L'Information*, 21 décembre 1920, p. 1.

65 For example: S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2343, 18 septembre 1920 ; Henri Rollin, *La situation en Orient au 1er décembre 1920*, SHD, 1 BB7 236 ; S.R. Marine, Turquie, n° 2493, 13 avril 1921 ; Henri Rollin, *La situation en Orient au 15 avril 1921*, SHD, 1 BB7 238.

66 Pierre Loti, *La Mort de notre chère France en Orient*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1920, pp. 75-76, 197-204, 207-208, 211-213, 235-238, 251-256 262-274 and 276-277.

67 Michel Paillarès, *Le Kémalisme devant les alliés* (Istanbul-Paris: éditions du Bosphore, 1922), pp. 72-79, 82, 91-96, 117 and 119-120.

The climax (if I dare to say) of this falsification is on pp. 52-53, where the author affirms: "A military intervention [against the Turks] is advocated by the military milieu" in Spring 1921, referring to only one telegram written by one officer, General Maurice Pellé, High Commissioner in İstanbul. Yet, in this telegram, he does not advocate a military intervention but a *diplomatic* intervention (a mediation) and "to be efficient," and that such an action "should give to the Turks the satisfaction of their legitimate territorial aspirations: possession of Smyrna, remoteness of the boundary from the walls of their capital city [İstanbul] and, I would add, internationalization of the Thrace" (he *did not* write: "Eastern Thrace"). He also argued that "logically, Greece has no right to be maintained in Asia Minor or Thrace."⁶⁸ And there is more. The same Pellé, quickly becoming more favorable to Ankara, allowed in May 1921 the officers of Mustafa Kemal to take weapons and ammunitions in the stocks of the Ottoman army in Istanbul; then, in mid-September, he signed with Kemalist representative Hamid Bey an agreement for the sale of weapons and ammunitions to the Turkish national movement: 100,000 rifles, 1.3 million bullets, one heavy cannon and 194,000 cannons shells, etc.⁶⁹ Incidentally, it also proves wrong the claim of Ms. Bruna, p. 262, that all the weapons given to Ankara by France were free of charge.

General Pellé is not the only victim of this dishonest treatment of the sources and facts. Indeed, on p. 99, Ms. Bruna affirms that Raymond Poincaré (President of the Republic from 1913 to 1920, President of the Ministers' Council from 1922 to 1924, then from 1926 to 1929) called Henry Franklin-Bouillon, the main negotiator of the Ankara Agreement in 1921, a "mediocre candidate." Checking the given source proves that these words were not from Poincaré but from one of his biographers, and were only referring to Franklin-Bouillon's failed candidacy to the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies in 1928.⁷⁰ Trying to use Poincaré against Franklin-Bouillon is even more absurd, as the first convoked the second in September 1922 to congratulate him for having opened the way to a Turkish victory backed by France.⁷¹ Beside these congratulations, the whole policy of Poincaré on the Eastern Question, in 1922, was in favor of the territorial part of the Turkish national pact (by diplomacy, then by a new delivery of weapons to Ankara) and for equality with Greece as far as the minorities rights were concerned.⁷² This is ignored on purpose by Ms. Bruna.

68 Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 5 avril 1921, AMAE, P 1528.

69 Nur Bilge Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923* (Leiden-Boston-Köln: E. J. Brill, 1999), pp. 124-125 ; Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume III-1, pp. 1434-1435.

70 François Roth, *Raymond Poincaré. Un homme d'État républicain* (Paris, Fayard, 2000), p. 517.

71 « Explosion de joie », *Aux Écoutes*, 24 septembre 1922, p. 4.

72 For instance, please see: Réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de Grande-Bretagne, d'Italie et de France, à Paris, pour traiter de la question d'Orient — 2e séance, jeudi 23 mars 1922, pp. 2, 5-8, 12-17 and 20 ; Réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères de Grande-Bretagne, d'Italie et de France, à Paris, pour traiter de la question d'Orient — 3e séance, jeudi 23 mars 1922, 15h, pp. 11-20, AMAE, 118 PA-AP 62 ; Roger de Gontaut-Biron and L. Le Révérend, *D'Angora à Lausanne, les étapes d'une déchéance*, Paris : Plon, 1924, p. 100.

Even more inexcusable is the cavalier treatment inflicted to Aristide Briand, President of the Ministers' Council from 1921 to 1922, then Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1925 to 1932, who was, in last analysis, the person main responsible, on the French side, for the Ankara Agreement, namely the subject of Ms. Bruna's book. None of the biographies of Briand published since the 1970s (Christophe Bellon, Jacques Chabannes, Bernard Oudin, Ferdinand Siebert, Gérard Unger) is used and the proceedings of the symposium on his foreign policy during the last part (1919-1932) of his life is ignored.⁷³ The result is a disastrous and laconic development, pp. 94-95, where nothing is explained on Briand's ideas, motivations, and personality. Ms. Bruna is so unfamiliar with him that she writes that Philippe Berthelot was Briand's Chief of Staff. Actually, Berthelot was the General Secretary of the Ministry (a different job) and was appointed to this position *before* Briand became the Minister. The importance of Louis Barthou, Briand's Minister of War and who also was a personal friend of Pierre Loti (even helping Loti to publish articles in defense of the Turks)⁷⁴ and Raymond Escholier, a self-described Turkophile⁷⁵ and Chief of Staff of Briand, the fact that Briand had read Loti and Farrère on the Turks in 1920,⁷⁶ the personal intervention of Marshal Hubert Lyautey and General Maxime Weygand at the same time, etc., all of this is ignored as well.

Ms. Bruna is, alas, only too representative of the Ramkavar historiography. In his foreword for her book, Raymond Haroutioun Kévorkian tries to oppose Georges Clemenceau (President of the Ministers' Council from 1917 to 1920) to his successors, yet it was Clemenceau who appointed General Gouraud and Robert de Caix in Beirut, in 1919, knowing well what their ideas were.

The Violence That Was And The Violence That Never Was

It is not until p. 212 that the author places a laconic—and entirely positive—description of the Eastern Legion, established in 1916. This unit is presented in the context of a development on the evacuation of Çukurova. Yet, the Eastern Legion had been divided as early as January 1919 between an Armenian Legion and a Syrian Legion, as a result of numerous cases of clashes, threats, rapes,

73 Jacques Bariéty (ed.), *Aristide Briand, la Société des nations et l'Europe. 1919-1932* (Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007).

74 Pierre Loti, *Soldats bleus. Journal intime, 1914-1918* (Paris: La Table ronde, 2014), pp. 39, 228, 232, 316-317, 324 and 331-332 ; Alain Quella-Villéger, *La Politique méditerranéenne de la France. Un témoin, Pierre Loti* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992), p. 172.

75 Raymond Escholier, « En feuilletant les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 27 décembre 1921, p. 4 ; Raymond Escholier, « Les livres nouveaux », *Le Petit Journal*, 14 juin 1923, p. 4.

76 Raymond Escholier, *Souvenirs parlés de Briand* (Paris: Hachette, 1932), p. 168.

and plunder by Armenian legionnaires, in today's Israel, then Lebanon, then in İskenderun.⁷⁷

A comprehensive list of the crimes of this unit would be out of the scope of this article, but some examples are needed to understand the importance of Ms. Bruna's dishonesty. On 16 February 1919, dozens of Armenian legionnaires clashed with Algerian soldiers, and another group attacked the Turkish civilian population, killing, plundering, and burning. The "canons and machineguns" of the French Navy had to be used to put an end to the mess. One sergeant was sentenced to fifteen years of hard labor for plunder, two legionnaires were sentenced to ten years, two to eight years, and one to five years in jail. 400 other legionnaires were sent in Egypt in a disciplinary battalion. Twenty civilians were sentenced (between two months and two years in jail, depending on the cases) for dealing in stolen goods.⁷⁸ Even Paul de Rémusat, (aka Paul du Véou), one of the favorite sources of Ms. Bruna, felt necessary to describe the events of January and February 1919 in his book, putting a large part of the blame on the incitement by the Ramkavar-dominated Armenian National Union and adding this merciless comment: "We could not count anymore on the Armenian Legion."⁷⁹ It means that Ms. Bruna's omission cannot be attributed to genuine ignorance, but to a deliberate will to hide the truth.

Regardless, the most incredible thing in Ms. Bruna's description of the Eastern/Armenian Legion is that it appears in a part devoted to the year 1921. Indeed, the Legion, "this troop of deserters and thieves that dirties the French uniform"⁸⁰ was suppressed during the summer 1920, after insistent demands of the officers on the field, for example the two reports of C. Beaujard, the last commander of the Armenian Legion (12 and 17 April 1920) and the supportive note (27 April 1920) of Major General Julien Dufieux, commander of the occupation troops in Çukurova.⁸¹ Yet, one more time, Ms. Bruna perfectly

77 François Georges-Picot, 2e lettre à M. Pichon, 11 janvier 1919, AMAE, P 17784 ; Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministre de la Guerre, 1er février 1919, AMAE, P 1426 ; Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Lebon au sujet des incidents survenus le 18 novembre au soir à Beyrouth, 30 novembre 1918, SHD, 4 H 3, dossier 5 ; Conseil français des troupes du Levant — Jugement, 27 juin 1919, CADN, 1/SL/1V/183 ; Gustave Gautherot, *La France en Syrie et en Cilicie* (Courbevoie: Librairie indépendante, 1920), pp. 134-136, 141-142 and 146-150 ; Docteur Simon, « Avec le détachement français de Palestine et de Syrie », *La Revue de Paris*, 1er décembre 1919, pp. 552 and 559-560.

78 Rapport du gouverneur militaire d'Alexandrette, 18 février 1919 ; Rapport du lieutenant-colonel Romieu, 28 février 1919 ; Télégramme du général Hamelin au ministère de la Guerre, 21 février 1919 ; Id., 27 février 1919, CADN, 1SL/1V/126 ; Jugement rendu par le conseil de guerre de la Légion arménienne, n° 70, 26 février 1919 ; Id., 6 mars 1919 ; Id., 26 mars 1919, SHD, 11 J 3073 ; Le général Hamelin, commandant les Troupes françaises du Levant, à M. le ministre de la Guerre, 22 mars 1919, SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6 ; Gustave Gautherot, *La France en...*, pp. 153-166 ; Roger de Gontaut-Biron, *Comment la France...*, pp. 54-55.

79 Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, pp. 68-70.

80 Le lieutenant Arrighi à M. le général Quérette, commandant la 1re brigade à Djihan, 25 avril 1920, 1SL/1V/173.

81 SHD, 4 H 42, dossier 6.

knows that, as she refers to the box where the reports of Beaujard and Dufieux are, but deliberately avoids any reference to the file where they are located.

Dissimulating the crimes of the Armenian nationalists, the author also perpetuates the myth of the “massacre” of Armenians in Maraş by Turks in 1920, in its most unsophisticated form. Indeed, she writes, p. 200, that in January-February 1920, “the Kemalists attack [sic] Marash” and that “7-8,000 Armenians are killed after the French evacuation of Marash.” Ms. Bruna also refers to this accusation in citing General Dufieux, pp. 193-194. All of this is utterly wrong. The battle for Maraş primarily involved the French forces (Armenian Legion, Senegalese soldiers, Metropolitan soldiers) against the Kemalists of this same city; it was basically a rebellion of the majority of the population against the occupation. The rebellion was caused by the crimes of the Armenian Legionnaires (including burning of villages around the city) and the incompetence of the officer in charge until December 1919, Pierre André (aka Pierre Redan).⁸² The book of Redan (who left Maraş in December 1919 and never went back there) is the only source claiming the existence of a “massacre” after the French evacuation (and without providing any proof). Even the vehemently anti-Turkish recollections of Pastor Abraham Hartunian, who was present here in 1920-1921, denies the existence of such a massacre, accusing the Turkish side of killings *during* the clashes.⁸³

Now, regarding the claim of “massacre” itself, it is true that General Dufieux believed it in February 1920, namely when he had no contact with his officers in this city.⁸⁴ However, in his final report, 34-pages long, written after having heard the officers who fought in Maraş, he blamed the indiscipline and “plunder” by a part of the Armenians but did not refer anymore to any killing of unarmed civilians or prisoners by Turks.⁸⁵ Colonel Robert Normand, Chief of the Rescue Unit sent to Maraş never mentioned any “massacre” of Armenians in his book or in his reports on the battle for this city—but he mentioned the arsons by Armenians.⁸⁶ Similarly, the General Staff in Paris concluded that “there were no massacres strictly speaking,” but 3,000 Armenians killed in fighting and later by adverse winter conditions.⁸⁷

82 [Commandant Morbieu], Renseignement, n° 10, 2 février 1920, Archives nationales, Pierrefitte, 594 AP 4 ; Commandant Morbieu, Note sommaire sur la situation politique du sandjak de Marasch, depuis l'occupation française jusqu'au soulèvement du 21 janvier 1920, CADN, ISL/1V/166 ; Édouard Bernier, « La question turque — Dans l'attente de la solution », *L'Europe nouvelle*, 28 février 1920, p. 342.

83 Abraham H. Hartunian, *Neither to Laugh nor to Weep* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976) (1st edition, 1968), p. 149.

84 Le général Dufieux à M. le haut-commissaire de la République en Syrie-Cilicie, 9 mars 1920, p. 25, CADN, ISL/1V/166.

85 Ibid. (quotation p. 28).

86 Colonel Robert Normand, Historique de la colonne de secours de Marasch, 15 février 1920, CADN, ISL/1V/166 ; Robert Normand, *Colonnes dans le Levant* (Paris-Limoges: Charles-Lavauzelle & Cie, 1924), pp. 30-48.

87 Note de l'État-major des armées, 3e bureau, 17 avril 1920, SHD, 6 N 197.

The Ankara Agreement And The Withdrawal

Strangely enough for a book entitled *The Ankara Agreement*, the study of this text and of the withdrawal that followed represent only a minority of the volume (mostly pp. 197-221; and 293-299, where the agreement and its appendices are reproduced). Regardless, this is not the worst problem.

On p. 212, Ms. Bruna claims: “Yet, the Armenian minority has already been the victim of the first genocide of 20th century, which implies, for the French soldiers, the certitude that the return of the Turkish armies on these territories will mean, one more time, massacres.” There is hardly a shred of truth in this sentence, and actually, it is not supported by any reference. A critic wonders where to begin. To debunk these allegations in the order of the sentence, the “first genocide of 20th century” was, as can be gathered from Germany’s May 2021 statement after the negotiation process between the German and Namibian governments, the extermination of the Herero and Nama tribes in Namibia (directly inspired by the racist theories of Paul Rohrbach,⁸⁸ co-founder in 1914 of the Germany-Armenia Society). Furthermore, the “Armenian genocide” label is wrong⁸⁹ and, in any case, irrelevant, because as one historian who supports this label observes; (but, it is true, with more nuances than Ms. Bruna) “most of the Armenians of Adana, for instance, were not killed.”⁹⁰

Regarding the opinion of “the French soldiers,” only the late (1937) book of Paul de Rémusat could provide a beginning of justification to Ms. Bruna’s extraordinary claim. Most of the officers concluded that most of the Armenians of Adana, Tarsus, and Mersin emigrated “obeying an order of the committees,” namely the Ramkavar, the Hunchak, and the ARF.⁹¹ In other words, “it is evident that we face a pre-planned scheme, likely organized by the Armenian committees of Cairo and Constantinople.”⁹² Actually, the Hunchak newspaper of Istanbul openly asked for emigration and justified itself as follows: “We merely bowed in front of the [opinion] of the National Council of Cilicia [the umbrella organization of the ARF, Hunchak, Ramkavar, and churches], which *unanimously decided emigration* [italics added]. It was in a better place than us to decide, to weigh the pros and cons.”⁹³

88 David Olusoga and Casper Erichsen, *The Kaiser’s Holocaust* (London: Faber & Faber, 2010), p. 112 and passim.

89 Maxime Gauin, “Uneven Repression: The Ottoman state and its Armenians,” in Edward J. Erickson (ed.), *A Global History of Relocation in Counter-Insurgency Warfare* (London-New York: Bloomsbury, 2019), pp. 115-140 ; Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres...*, pp. 43-149 and 250-257.

90 “Study the Armenian Genocide with Confidence, Ara Sarafian Suggests,” *The Armenian Reporter*, December 20, 2008.

91 Bulletin périodique n° 39, 5 décembre 1921-5 janvier 1922, p. 2, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

92 Bulletin périodique n° 37, 5-20 novembre 1921, p. 5, SHD, 4 H 59, dossier 1.

93 Extrait du compte-rendu du Service de renseignements de Constantinople, n° 16, 23 décembre 1921, p. 4, AMAE, P 17787.

General Julien Dufieux, in spite of the obvious humiliation he bitterly felt (he was among the officers who defeated the Germans in 1918), answered the Near East Relief (NER), in November 1921, that his “personal impression” was that the Armenian employees of this organization had nothing to fear, until further notice, as a result of the French withdrawal.⁹⁴ The NER clearly shared this view; its bulletin explained that the Christian employees of Adana “deserted”⁹⁵ and later its official history, far from being pro-Turkish, regardless admitted that “the incoming Turkish officials would grant the organization all necessary facilities as in other relief stations within the Nationalist territory.”⁹⁶ In November 1921, too, General Dufieux called “irrational” the fear of the majority of the fleeing Armenians and expressed the hope that at least a part of the Armenians and Greeks would come back, considering that the new Turkish administration could relieve them.⁹⁷ Ms. Bruna should know this, as this telegram is in a microfilm she read.

Now, regarding the only appearance of argument from one French officer, not in a contemporary document but in a book published almost 16 years later (as part of Fascist propaganda, as we already saw) namely the book of de Rémusat/du Véou, it is true that it contains one very threatening quotation attributed to one Turkish officer (a quotation reproduced by Ms. Bruna on p. 219). Yet, de Rémusat/du Véou does not provide any source for this quote, and his book contains numerous falsified statements and clumsy lies. To cite only a few striking examples, it was him who invented the attribution to Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) a statement on the 1915-1916 relocations that was actually pronounced by a pioneer of Kurdish nationalism, Nemrut Mustafa Paşa.⁹⁸ De Rémusat/du Véou also invented a fake quote of Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Kemal (Tengirsenk), on Franklin-Bouillon, supposedly “ready to sign ‘without taking his glasses.’”⁹⁹ The very fact that the negotiations took one month is enough to prove how absurd this invention is. Not caring even about plausibility, de Rémusat/du Véou also claimed that the Ankara Agreement suppressed the Capitulations (the special legal statutes for

94 Le général Dufieux, commandant la Ire division, à Miss Lore, directrice du NER, 16 novembre 1921, CADN, 1SL/IV/160.

95 Nan O. Lowe, “Adana Unit Carrying on Midst Cilician Evacuation,” *Near East Relief*, January 14, 1922, p. 1.

96 James L. Barton, *Story of the Near East Relief. An Interpretation* (New York: The MacMillan, 1930), pp. 147-148.

97 Le général Dufieux, commandant la Ire division du Levant, à M. le haut-commissaire en Syrie et au Liban, commandant de l’armée du Levant, 21 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

98 Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, p. 54 (On p. 13, he also quotes one of the fake documents published in 1920 by Aram Andonian). Same lie in Paul du Véou, *Le Désastre d’Alexandrette* (Paris: Baudinière, 1938), pp. 121-122, n. 1. On this false attribution, please see: James Tashjian, “On a ‘Statement’ Condemning the Armenian genocide of 1918 Attributed in Error to Mustafa Kemal, Later ‘The Ataturk,’” *Armenian Review*, XXXV/3-139, Autumn 1982: pp. 227-244.

99 Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, p. 54.

foreigners in the Ottoman Empire) and that maintaining them would have been a solid guarantee for the Christians of “Cilicia.”¹⁰⁰ Yet, the Ankara Agreement was absolutely silent on this subject, as anybody can check in the book of Ms. Bruna herself (pp. 293-299) and anyway, most of the Armenians of the region were not citizens of a foreign country.

Regardless, we have not yet seen the worst. The pp. 216-217 are characterized by a monumental confusion. Ms. Bruna refers to the demand presented by the Vicar of the Catholic Armenian Patriarchate Jean Naslian on 8 November 1921 and inverts two documents. This error will be treated in a moment. For now, let us see the content of the telegram sent on that day.¹⁰¹ General Pellé reported that Naslian asked to the Kemalists for the exemption of military duty for the Christians, the promise that no forced relocation would be decided, the sending of “an Armenian delegation” of personalities Ankara could trust; to the French, all facilities to emigrate; and to both a full liberty of circulation. Yet, except the delegation, all these demands were accepted; and if there was no delegation as wished by Naslian, joint commissions for the protection of the properties of the emigrants, commissions established with the aim to incite them to go back after some weeks and months. Ms. Bruna should be aware of the existence of these commissions and of their activities,¹⁰² as she read the report of the commission of evacuation and its appendices. This leads to the conclusion that she deliberately hides these facts and then claims that the demands of Naslian had been rejected by the Turks (p. 216).

Now, it is time to check which document she confused with the telegram dated 8 November 1921 (a telegram erroneously cited in her next footnote). This is a telegram of General Gouraud to Paris, summarizing the thesis of Lieutenant-Colonel Auguste Sarrou, who considered that the emigration of Armenians had been “organized in advance by [an] Armenian committee [Ramkavar] whose civilian leaders [were] in Egypt and religious leaders in London.”¹⁰³ In other words, Ms. Bruna, by pure lack of care, gave as evidence a document presenting a thesis diametrically opposed to hers.

At the next page (217), however, the main problem is not any error, but an outright misleading presentation of the facts. Indeed, the author presents the demand of the religious Armenian leadership (Gregorian, Catholic, and

100 Paul du Véou, *La Passion de...*, p. 32.

101 AMAE, P 17785.

102 Capitaine Peulvey, *Compte-rendu en fin de mission*, 16 janvier 1922, pp. 4-5 ; *Rapport du capitaine Bourgon, délégué de la sous-commission d'évacuation sur l'organisation de la commission des biens des émigrés* ; Capitaine Bourgon, *Compte-rendu de la séance du 17 décembre 1921 de la commission des biens des émigrés* ; *Procès-verbal de la réunion de la commission de protection des biens des émigrés de Killis*, le 26 décembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

103 *Télégramme du général Gouraud au ministère des Affaires étrangères*, n° 1532/10, 23 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17785.

Protestant) of Istanbul for maintaining the occupation of Adana, without quoting the comment of General Pellé. Yet, this officer noticed “an unusual directive role” played by Zenope Bezdjian, the Protestant leader, a role “that the [numerical] importance of the elements he represents do not justify at all.” General Pellé added that Bezdjian and the Orthodox (Apostolic/Gregorian) Armenian Patriarch were “in constant relations with the English general staff.”¹⁰⁴ Yet, as Ms. Bruna herself explains, the British government was very hostile to this withdrawal (p. 157).

The most incredible falsification can be found on p. 205. Ms. Bruna claims that all the Christian policemen and gendarmes were fired by the new Turkish authorities in Adana, Mersin, and Tarsus, as early as December 1921, and gives as reference a “telegram”. In fact, this is not a telegram but two reports. The report on the gendarmerie actually mentions “fired” gendarmes but crucially specifies that they had been evicted only after persisted in their desire to “leave.” The introductory comment specifies that all the Christian gendarmes resigned right after the salary was paid, roughly when the Turks recovered the control of the gendarmerie. Similarly, the document on the police and its introductory comment explain that all the Christian policemen resigned and did not speak about any pressure exerted on them by the Kemalist authorities.¹⁰⁵

The description of the situation after the withdrawal is hardly better, it must be said. For example, pp. 220-221 claims that “About 20,000 Armenians [were] victims of the Turkish revenges after the total evacuation of Cilicia.” Nothing is accurate in this claim. The only source provided is a book signed “E. Altıar,” the pen name of ARF leader Avetis Aharonian, a detail Ms. Bruna never gives, although she uses this reference several times (pp. 165, 166, 167, 200, 202, 207, 221, etc.). More importantly, this book was written and published *before* the Ankara Agreement. At the indicated page, or at any other, there is, as a result, nothing about the situation of Çukurova after the evacuation of November 1921-January 1922.

The Polemical Alterations Of The Truth Regarding The Kemalist Movement (Outside Çukurova)

All these false assertions are not enough for Ms. Bruna, who seems to want to demonize by every possible means the Turkish national movement led by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) and recycles several of the most discredited allegations regarding it. One of her favorite affirmations in this regard is an

104 AMAE, P 17785.

105 Gendarmerie [1921] ; Instruction concernant l'arrivée de la gendarmerie envoyée par Angora et son entrée en fonction, 30 novembre 1921 ; Police [1921] ; Instruction concernant l'arrivée de la police envoyée par Angora et son entrée en fonction, 30 novembre 1921, AMAE, P 17787.

alleged continuity with the CUP. On p. 185, she writes that Talat and Enver gave to Mustafa Kemal the leadership of the CUP before leaving the Ottoman Empire. As usual, no source is provided. Considering the complicated (to say the very least) relations of Mustafa Kemal with them, particularly Enver (Ms. Bruna herself mentions the tensions, at the same page then at the next one, but without solving the contradiction), this allegation is not only baseless but highly unlikely.¹⁰⁶ Even vaguer is, p. 184, the claim of “Young Turk generals” supposed to dominate the staff of Mustafa Kemal in Ankara. No name or reference is given to justify this daring assertion. Not surprisingly, the name of Rıza Nur, a former member of the anti-CUP Liberal Union who joined the Turkish national movement and was a negotiator in Lausanne, in 1922-1923, is not cited a single time. The fact that Nihat Reşat (Belger), the main person in charge of the public relations (as we would say today) of the Kemalist movement in Paris from 1920 to 1922, also was a former member of the Liberal Union, who had to flee Istanbul in 1913,¹⁰⁷ is never mentioned in the various occasions Ms. Bruna mentions him (pp. 24, 89-90, 102 and 175).

On pp. 89-90, Ms. Bruna repeats the old allegation of “Bolshevism” against the Turkish national movement, basing this claim on a selective quote of Nihat Reşat and the alleged complete dependence of Ankara vis-à-vis Moscow for weapons. Yet, Nihat Reşat's bulletin published in Paris justified the Ankara Agreement, among other reasons, by the common interests of Turkey and France against Soviet Russia.¹⁰⁸ We already saw that Italy gave weapons in 1919, before Soviet Russia and this continued after as well.¹⁰⁹ Nowhere in her book does Ms. Bruna explain how a government which admits pluralism in the parliament and does not suppress private property can be assimilated to Bolshevism. The charge is actually very ironical, coming from an official of the Ramkavar and AGBU, not only because this party supported Joseph Stalin¹¹⁰ but also because the British branch of the AGBU took part to the circuit of funding for the Communist guerillas in Vietnam until 1953.¹¹¹

106 Nothing confirms Ms. Bruna's extraordinary claims in, for instance, George Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk. From Ottoman Soldier to Statesman of Turkey* (London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), pp. 62-70 ; Alexandre Jevakhoff, *Kemal Atatürk. Père fondateur de la Turquie* (Paris: Tallandier, 2015), pp. 57-121 ; Shaw, *From Empire to...*, volume I, pp. 61-62, 71, 104-105 and 177.

107 Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, « Talât Paha », *Beyoğlu*, 10 octobre 1936, p. 2.

108 [Nihat Reşat Belger], « Contre l'accord franco-turc — Les ennemis de la paix et de l'Islam à l'œuvre » ; Alfred Jacque (Jacques Kayser), « France et Turquie », *Échos de l'Orient*, 15 novembre 1921, pp. 1 and 4.

109 Rapport hebdomadaire, 31 août 1920, p. 4 ; Id., 9 septembre 1920, p. 10, SHD, 4 H 58, dossier 2.

110 « L'Arménie soviétique a célébré son Ve anniversaire », *L'Humanité*, 6 décembre 1925, p. 1 ; Union nationale arménienne de France and Comité de défense de la cause de l'Arménie turque, *La Cause nationale arménienne* (Paris, 1945) ; Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), pp. 314-315.

111 Jacques Despuech, *Le Trafic des piastres* (Paris: La Table ronde, 1974) (1st edition, 1953), pp. 106-109 and 119-120.

The part on the Greek-Turkish war and the İzmir fire is not better than the rest of the book. On p. 180, the author claims that “near 100,000” perished in the fire and the footnote justifying this claim requests the reader to see the Appendix No. 19. Yet, this appendix (p. 311) is made of a gravure made in Athens and of a photo of the fire where not a single corpse is visible. Without completely endorsing the accusation against the Turkish army, regarding the origins of the fire, Ms. Bruna considers it to be the most likely hypothesis (pp. 181-183). One of her main references in this regard is the book published by George Horton, a former U.S. consul in İzmir. This is a more than problematic argument. Indeed, Ms. Bruna has worked in the microfilm P 1380 of the Diplomatic Archives in La Courneuve, which is in itself excellent, but precisely, this microfilm contains the most serious indictment against Horton, namely a report by Admiral Charles Dumesnil. This naval officer expressed “a suspicion that our Consul General [Michel Graillet] is not far from sharing,” namely that Horton knew in advance that the fire would take place: “On September 12, the Consul General of the United States, who remained very quiet, and kept in close contact with his colleagues, ordered suddenly the departure of *all the American citizens* [underlined by Admiral Dumesnil].” Yet, as continues Admiral Dumesnil, Horton had Armenian informants; it seems, as a result, that Horton “knew in advance the danger to the city because of the Armenian or Greek arsonist organizations.”¹¹²

Another highly problematic aspect in any positive and uncritical reference to Horton is that this man was stridently racist, even for the standards of his country and time. Indeed, according to him, “The Turk [...] is the lowest of Mohammedans intellectually, with none, or at best few, of the graces and accomplishments of civilization, with no cultural history. [...] He destroys but cannot construct.” More generally, “The East is tired of being civilized by superior peoples.” Horton then writes a Nazi-styled hymn to the “Aryan civilization.”¹¹³ Thought this racism does not seem to shock, at any degree, Ms. Bruna, she accuses the Turkish side of “racism” because of the reprisals in the Armenian quarter (p. 183). While the indiscriminate reprisals were inexcusable by nature, these ones in particular were not due to any racist theory but entirely to the participation of Armenian nationalists to the devastation of western Anatolia by the Greek forces and their major role in the İzmir fire in particular.

Indeed, Ms. Bruna reduces the question of the Greek scorched earth policy to the accusation by Turks concerning İzmir city. She completely avoids any discussion of the devastation in place such as Manisa, Afyon, Eskişehir, Aydın,

112 Qui sont les auteurs de l'incendie ?, 28 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

113 George Horton, *The Blight of Asia* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill C°, 1926), pp. 209, 211 and 268.

or the villages of the province of Bursa.¹¹⁴ Yet, these destructions and other crimes are exposed in the microfilm P 1380 where Ms. Bruna has worked.¹¹⁵ She fails to cite even one of the documents of this kind. Similarly, she avoids saying anything on the publicly admitted participation of Armenian volunteers to the Greek forces in 1922, particularly the unit of “General” Torcom¹¹⁶ and about their crimes in western Anatolia, well documented in the microfilm she has consulted.¹¹⁷ Regardless, seemingly deliberate omission is not the worst. Indeed, and one more time, Ms. Bruna distorts (pp. 181-182) what General Pellé wrote. She summarizes his arguments for a criminal origin of the fire; the multiplicity of the fire and the attacks against those who tried to extinguish the fire. But she neither quotes nor summarizes the following sentence: “There are presumptions that the perpetrators are Armenians and Greeks.” She also ignores the explanations of General Pellé on “testimonies” accusing Turkish soldiers to have put fire to buildings. He personally checked these “testimonies” and found material evidence that they were absolutely wrong.¹¹⁸

Ms. Bruna's allegations on the coverage of the fire by the French press are equally dishonest: She accuses the newspapers of “defect,” without really discussing what was actually published (p. 182). Yet, not less than five special envoys had been sent by five different newspapers. One envoy affirmed that it was “difficult” to conclude on the origins of the fire, but mentioned the conclusions of the French authorities (an arson perpetrated by Armenians and Greeks) without criticizing them and observed “the unanimity” of the sources on “the barbarity of the Greeks devastating everything during their retreat to Smyrna.”¹¹⁹ The author cites this article positively but does not quote, or even paraphrase, the sentence on the “barbarity of the Greeks.” One envoy found

114 Compte-rendu synthétique militaire n° 5 — Atrocités grecques en Asie mineure, 27 septembre 1922, SHD, 20 N 1112 ; Henri Nahum (ed.), *La Grande Guerre et la guerre gréco-turque vue par les instituteurs de l'Alliance israélite universelle d'Izmir*, Istanbul : Les éditions Isis, 2003, p. 70 ; Grace Ellison, *An Englishwoman in Angora*, London: Hutchinson & C°, 1923, p. 74; Rodolphe Haccius and Henri Guénod, « Un document sur les dévastations grecques », *Échos de l'Orient*, 1er février 1923, pp. 493-497 ; Henri Mylès, « L'énigme de Moudania », *Journal des débats*, 20 octobre 1922, pp. 1-2 ; Arnold J. Toynbee, “The Truth About Near East Atrocities,” *Current History*, XVIII-4, July 1923: pp. 545-546.

115 For example, please see: Télégramme de Michel Graillet au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 5 septembre 1922 ; Père Ludovic Marseille, Rapport sur les événements qui se sont passés à Eski Chéhir du 27 août au 2 septembre 1922 ; Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 8 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

116 « Général » Torcom, « La Légion arménienne du général Torcom », in Aram Turabian, *L'Éternelle victime de la diplomatie européenne : l'Arménie*, Marseille : Imprimerie nouvelle, 1929, pp. 146-161. It is not unnecessary to remind, here, that this book of Turabian is cited in Ms. Bruna's bibliography (p. 332). As a result, she cannot ignore the existence of the Armenian Legion led by “General” Torcom.

117 Elzéar Guiffroy, Rapport sur la situation récente en Asie mineure, 27 juillet 1922 ; Extraits de lettres reçues de Smyrne [1922] ; Camille Tourelle, Prise de Smyrne par Moustafa Kemal — Incendie de Smyrne par les Grecs et les Arméniens, pp. 1-2, AMAE, P 1380.

118 Télégramme du général Pellé au ministère des Affaires étrangères, 21 septembre 1922 ; Id., 23 septembre 1922, AMAE, P 1380.

119 Jean-Clair Guyot, « Dans les rues de Smyrne anéantie », *L'Écho de Paris*, 22 septembre 1922, p. 1.

very likely the explanation of the catastrophe by arsons put by Armenians and Greeks.¹²⁰ Three envoys accused the Armenian nationalists without hesitation.¹²¹ Detailed articles were published by other newspapers in using such sources.¹²²

Conclusion

This review essay does not pretend to be comprehensive but, at least, it has exposed the most serious cases of manipulations of sources and of deliberate omissions as a part of the factual errors. Such flaws, alas, typify Ms. Bruna's book from the beginning to the end. There is literally nothing to save in the author's work: No new facts, no new and valuable interpretation. At best, it could serve as example of what a historian must always avoid, at any price. Norman Stone wrote the following about Peter Balakian's *The Burning Tigris*; "The book is an insult to its subject."¹²³ The same may be said here. However, if a professor of literature playing the historian such as Mr. Balakian rarely achieves anything reliable, it is much more disappointing to see more or less the same result from a person received a BA in history, then a MA in contemporary history from Parisian university. Any victory of political fanaticism over scholarship should be viewed with sadness.

120 Georges Vitoux, « Une journée dans les ruines de Smyrne », *Le Petit Parisien*, 28 septembre 1922, p. 3.

121 « Dans les décombres de Smyrne — Ce sont les Arméniens qui allumèrent l'incendie en abandonnant leur quartier », *Le Matin*, 22 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; Louis Daussat, « Dans Smyrne fumante — Visions d'horreur ! », *Le Petit Marseillais*, 28 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; G. Ercole, « Devant Smyrne en flammes », *L'Illustration*, 30 septembre 1922, p. 279.

122 « La moitié de Smyrne est en cendres », *L'Œuvre*, 16 septembre 1922, p. 1 ; « La ville de Smyrne a bien été incendiée par les Arméniens et par les Grecs », *Le Rappel*, 23 septembre 1922, p. 1.

123 Norman Stone, "A Bungled Case for the Prosecution," *The Spectator*, April 27, 2004, p. 43.

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118 PA-AP 62 ; 196 PA-AP 6, 196 PA-AP 8 ; 399 PA-AP 130.

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1 BB⁷ 236, 1 BB⁷ 238.

4 H 3, 4 H 42, 4 H 58, 4 H 59.

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6 N 197 ; 20 N 1103.

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