

THE CLASH OF TURKISH AND ARMENIAN NARRATIVES: **THE IMPERATIVE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND NUANCED PUBLIC MEMORY**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The debates and tensions that very often characterize the interactions between the Turkish and Armenian peoples do not easily fit into frameworks adopted by studies of international affairs. One problem is that of identifying specific actors: states, diasporas, community-level and international organizations, religious bodies, individuals, broader regional or global players and trends. A second problem is identifying what is at stake: moral, ethical, or religious principles, core hard power interests, legal disputes, economic calculations. The complexity of the case challenges any single approach to analysis but at the same time offers the opportunity for multiple points of view to bring forward meaningful insights. This study uses narratives as a source and as a method.

Narrative moved out of its realm of literature and the arts and began to be applied to the social sciences during the 1970s and 1980s. It provided an alternative to the more rigid theoretical frameworks that reflected natural science methodologies. Accounting for a phenomenon through narrative allows for more personal, more subjective points of view. This is problematic for objective analysis but can nevertheless prove to be useful for a more comprehensive understanding. In the case of Turkish-Armenian relations, there are no current immediate security threats, no reasonable expectations of hostilities between the two states, much less between dispersed peoples. Nor are there any living participants of the most significant episode in Turkish-Armenian relations, namely the Armenian Genocide. Instead, it is the public memory of 1915 in Turkey, in Armenia, and around the world that most deeply informs inter-personal, inter-communal, and inter-state relations regionally and globally. If there is to be any resolution and lasting reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples, it will begin at the level of the narrative.

For the purposes of this study, narrative is defined as "Current perceptions and assessments in the general public in accounting for and interpreting historical events and in establishing cause-and-effect relationships that explain and justify current realities while also setting expectations for future trends." This study uses official publications to present the dominant Turkish and Armenian narratives as systematically as possible, supplemented by interviews with fifteen individuals from the political, diplomatic, and academic spheres.

The Turkish narrative portrays the Armenian people as enjoying much privilege within the Ottoman realm, later turning into a pawn in the hands of the Great Powers who had long been planning the dismemberment of the empire. Finding greater opportunity during the rise of nationalism in the 19th century, Armenian terrorist groups moved forward with their agenda, provoking violence to draw in the British, the French, the Russians, and others in order to achieve independence or autonomy, much like the cases involving Lebanon and Bulgaria. The culmination of these activities took place during the First World War, during which Armenian separatists were indeed targeted, but the Armenian people as a whole were moved for their own safety and to prevent the rise of a fifth column. In the midst of war and the collapse of an empire, there was much suffering, poor planning, and criminal activities, all of which were condemned by the authorities. However, there was no genocidal agenda of eliminating the entire Armenian nation or other minority groups. Besides which, millions of Muslims themselves suffered at the same time. With the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the region was stabilized, and the new regime today offers acceptable living conditions for everyone in Turkey, including Armenians.

The Armenian narrative portrays the Ottoman Empire as a conquering force that brought suffering for centuries upon the Armenian people who struggled for their independence throughout. Towards the end of the 19th century, revolutionary activities aimed at national liberation received sporadic support from abroad, mostly to little end. As a thorn in the side of rising Turkish nationalism, the First World War offered an excellent cover for the genocidal plan that had formed part of the Young Turk regime and its aim of creating a pan-Turkic empire. One and a half million Armenians were killed and half a million were deported from their ancestral lands starting in 1915, along with other minority groups, in order to ethnically cleanse Anatolia and Asia Minor of all non-Muslim elements. Even though the Great Powers were aware of what was going on, they did not intervene. Ultimately, the revolution led by Mustafa Kemal was able to establish a homogeneous Turkish state and to push aside any talk of the Armenian Genocide, which is denied until today. Proper acknowledgement and restitution would resolve this human rights issue by destroying a culture

of impunity that pervades the region, thereby serving to prevent future atrocities.

The dominant Turkish and Armenian narratives both fall within nationalist frameworks that strongly reflect one another. Both deeply value their ethno-national identity and strive to achieve or consolidate statehood as the ultimate expression of that identity. Both perceive themselves as victims and as survivors in that process, having been duped by the self-interested Western world. This similar prism of accounting for history may in fact serve as a meaningful basis for the two peoples to understand the perspectives of one other.

Both the Turkish and the Armenian narrative also do not dwell much on the experiences of the Muslims of the Balkans and the Caucasus who likewise underwent the same processes as did the Armenians and others in 1915. Giving a greater place in the public memory for those victims may likewise serve as a basis for empathy—even though the potential of damaging relations with Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, or others and watering down the Armenian experience would not sit well with Turkish and Armenian nationalists, respectively.

There are a number of factors at play in the complex history of that period, some episodes of which still require further research, for example, the exact demographics of Anatolia and Asia Minor during the turn of the 20th century, the effects of the Balkan Wars and the role that Armenians and other minorities played in them, and the participation of Armenians and other minorities in fighting for the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, such as at Çanakkale/Gallipoli, to name just a few. Other experiences of narrative building and narrative shift could likewise be researched and applied to the Turkish and Armenian case, such as relations between Turkey and Greece, or the public memory and policies regarding the experience of native populations in the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere, or, even more broadly, narratives of former imperial powers in post-colonial societies.

The Turkish narrative ignores or downplays voluminous research on the Armenian Genocide and such significant episodes as the massacres of 1894-1896 and 1909. The Armenian narrative circumvents Armenian terrorist groups and militias in the run-up to the First World War and armed actions later on, in the Caucasus, Cilicia, and elsewhere, as well as the more recent acts of violence aimed mostly at Turkish diplomats during the 1970s and 1980s.

If there were to be a narrative shared by the Turkish and Armenian peoples, this study suggests a few key elements: non-violent nationalism; non-intervention by external actors, especially from the West; less focus on the word "genocide"; more acknowledgement of the experiences of Balkans and Caucasus Muslims and non-Armenian minorities of the Ottoman Empire; reassessments of individuals and episodes based on new, objective research; meaningful future public commemorations. One possible scenario could be a shared narrative in which the Turkish and Armenian sides maintain conflicting accounts, but in which both interpretations are well-known to both parties at the same time, enough to form a basis for a working, civil relationship moving forward.

Ultimately, a shared public memory of the Turkish and Armenian peoples about the other must be comprehensive and nuanced. This is a tall order due to the complex nature of the case and because narratives tend to be rather simple, black-and-white affairs. Whereas there have indeed been noticeable shifts in both the Turkish and Armenian narratives over the past decade and more—such that the phrase "Armenian Genocide" has become less taboo in Turkey and the Armenian emphasis on victimhood has been replaced by stronger calls for justice within a discourse of righteous indignation—regional political dynamics are currently not conducive to promoting a trend of a comprehensive and nuanced public memory, which would in any case take some generations to accomplish.

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to give a single, accurate name to the debates and tensions between the Turkish and Armenian peoples. Calling it "The Armenian Question" is quite outdated; one might offer equal justification in calling it "The Turkish Question." Simply pointing out where the issue lies and what is at stake can be problematic. Are there disputed territories under consideration? Is there control of natural resources to be fought over? Issues of money or property? Diplomatic rows? Commercial ties? Legal cases? Moral or ethical concerns? All of the above may or may not apply. Even the actors of this phenomenon are not always fully clear. Two states exist on the world map today—the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia. But this is not a classic inter-state disagreement. There are individual Armenians and groups outside of Armenia—the Armenian Diaspora—including an Armenian population within Turkey itself, all of which can claim a voice, to say nothing of other voices within broader Turkish society. There are also Turkish communities outside of Turkey (though not in Armenia). Sometimes the more classic dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh draws in another Armenian population as well as a third state, the Republic of Azerbaijan, into the mix. Regional powers and global hegemons are never far behind.[1] This is a complex case. The present study aims at tackling the issue in a broad manner through the prism of narrative.

The first presumption in this study is that the debates and tensions between the Turkish and Armenian peoples manifest themselves today most vividly and consequentially as narratives. Over the course of a few generations, it is the stories that Turks and Armenians relate about themselves and each other that has most deeply affected and continues to affect the thinking that the two groups possess, as well as their attitudes, their reactions, and their expectations with regards to one other, whether at the individual level, as collective groups, at the broader social level, all the way to state policy.

The second presumption in this study is that reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples is possible, and it must first take place at the level of the narrative in order for there to be a legitimate and lasting peace.

This study shall very briefly discuss the concept of the narrative, then present the Turkish and Armenian narratives (in particular those espoused by the nationalist segments that continue to dominate the two societies). Various facets of those narratives shall be processed in as systematic a manner as possible, fleshing out where and how they diverge and where and how there might be overlaps. Finally, an attempt shall be made to point out possible paths towards bringing those narratives together, singling out relevant points, and offering suggestions for worthwhile directions to be taken in the future.

1 I have written an essay outlining these various actors and their positions in greater detail: "Genocide Politics: Players, Moves and An Endgame," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Fall 2010, accessed December 20, 2016, http://turkishpolicy.com/article/391/genocide-politics-players-moves-and-an-endgame-fall-2010.

NARRATIVE AND NARRATIVE THEORY

The Oxford English Dictionary has a few definitions for narrative, including:

> An account of a series of events, facts, etc., given in order and with the establishing of connections between them; a narration, a story, an account.[2]

Given this first, general definition, narrative as an object of study has not surprisingly been primarily in the field of literature or other art forms, such as film, in which the story or the plot plays a key role in offering avenues for analysis. (There is a separate entry in the dictionary for narrative as a term in literary criticism.) Narrative as an inter-disciplinary methodological approach began to emerge in the social sciences in the 1970s and 1980s. It encompasses a variety of fields today. The use of narrative as an explanatory tool grew as a reaction to theoretical frameworks with presumptions that at many points proved less than useful in accounting for human behavior. The expectation of seeking out extreme objectivity and the prevailing preference for quantification also pushed more researchers towards the new frontiers offered by narrative as a methodology. In psychology and social work, for example, the utilization of narrative offers much more flexibility and capacity to account for phenomena as opposed to more rigid positivist theories that try to mirror natural sciences more closely. Conducting narrative interviews has some methodological advantages over more structured in-depth interviews in terms of giving more leeway to the interviewee. Sometimes tangential thoughts end up being more significant than what a fixed questionnaire might have yielded.[3]

Narratives can be fluid, however. Relying too much on what comes out of a narrative account may therefore be controversial in scholarship as there is no greater theoretical explanation above and beyond, outside the subjects and their self-evaluated settings. Such aspects of the use of narrative invite reasonable criticism. While less appealing than more demonstrable, rigorous theories, narrative as a tool to account for behavior can nevertheless prove to be a useful method in human and social sciences.[4]

What differentiates a narrative from a theory is that it puts forth events, episodes, or various elements in a series that makes for meaningful connections in a way that immediately involves the subjects in explaining their actions. When it comes to the human and social sciences, then, the primary realm of narrative is at the personal level. The story as told by an individual has connotations of subjectivity and irregularity, even unpredictability—not always desirable for objective analysis. How meaningful can the application of narrative be, in that case, on a larger scale, at the collective, social, or national level?

As a response, one could take another definition for that word provided by the Oxford English Dictionary:

> In structuralist and post-structuralist theory: a representation of a history, biography, process, etc., in which a sequence of events has been constructed into a story in accordance with a particular ideology; ... [grand narrative:] a story or representation used to give an explanatory or justificatory account of a society, period, etc.

This meaning extends the narrative as a general order of events at the social and historical level—a way in which history is not just recounted but explained, usually within a larger framework, ideology, or otherwise. People tell stories to explain the way things are, whether in talking about themselves as individuals or in accounting for groups, societies, or nations. Moreover, going beyond simple causal explanations, narratives offer moral judgments and justifications. They set normative standards that are not only taken from the past but also extrapolated to the present and extended into the future.[5] These norms constructed by narratives can be very powerful frameworks indeed within which individuals and groups are compelled to act and react.

2 Oxford English Dictionary Online, "narrative, n.," accessed January 3, 2017, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/125146?result=1&rskey=nKAIOz&.

3 "Introduction," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, eds. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1997); Catherine Kohler Riessman. "Narrative Analysis", in *Narrative, Memory and Everyday Life*, eds., Kelly, Horrocks, Milnes, Roberts, Robinson (Huddersfield, UK: Huddersfield, 2005) accessed October 20, 2016, http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?-doi=10.1.1.470.1392&rep=rep1&type=pdf.

4 Shaul R. Shenhav, "Political Narratives and Political Reality," *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique* 27, no. 3 (July 2006): 245-262.

5 Molly Patterson and Kristen Renwick Monroe, "Narrative in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* (1998): 315-331.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

For the purposes of this study, I offer my own working definition of narrative:

> Current perceptions and assessments in the general public in accounting for and interpreting historical events and in establishing cause-and-effect relationships that explain and justify current realities while also setting expectations for future trends.

Admittedly a little long and cumbersome, this definition contains all the key elements that are the focus of this work. The definition involves "current" goings-on because narratives are known to change. Those goings-on are "perceptions and assessments" as they echo more subjective points of view. The category of "general public" is problematic and difficult to measure, but publications and media productions may be taken to adequately reflect and, of course, shape prevailing attitudes, besides statements by political and community leaders that likewise both echo and generate public feeling. That might be a limited way of gauging the public's attitudes, but short of a massive survey, it is a practical approach. By this working definition, historical events are both accounted for (i.e., the facts are presented) and interpreted (i.e., the facts are purposefully given meaning). There is sequence, as all narratives should have, but that sequence outlines a cause-and-effect relationship. The definition includes the explanation and justification of "current realities"—again, the realities might change, the narrative with it. Finally, the definition takes into account future expectations.

With that definition in mind, this study has three broad aims:

- to articulate the narrative or narratives among Turks and Armenians about the other,
- to analyze those narratives, indicating the mismatches and discovering any overlaps across them in as systematic a manner as possible,
- and to explore possibilities, pointing out elements or trends that may render themselves useful for any future reconciliation.

Official publications—made or supported by the state or political leadership—shall be used as primary sources, augmented by in-depth interviews with figures from the political and diplomatic spheres among Turks and Armenians, as well as scholars. The interviews shall use the narrative approach, asking very broadly, "What happened?" (basic information, facts, events), "Why did it happen?" (causality, sequence), and, "How did we get to where we are now?" (interpretation, general conclusions, rounding out the narrative). In conclusion, the question, "Where do we go, where can we go from here?" is also raised.

As further justification of approaching the narrative as an object of study in this case, it is worth noting as contrasts the conflicts over Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabakh. Surely, narratives by and about Turks and Greeks, and Armenians and Azerbaijanis form part of those conflicts. Lasting resolutions to those conflicts will involve reconciled narratives as far as possible. However, those cases have issues of security and territory in immediate play. Moreover, individuals with direct involvement in the conflicts are still alive; both perpetrators and victims bear living memory of the events of those conflicts. Also, there are processes for settlement in place in Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabakh, namely international negotiations involving diplomats, mediators, civil society organizations, and so on. Finally, those conflicts began after the Second World War, after the establishment of the United Nations and the crystallization of international humanitarian law and other norms that regulate international affairs. None of the above arguments apply in the Turkish-Armenian case. There is no identifiable structure to it, nor a clear field where it plays out (in fact, it is not merely bilateral or inter-governmental in practice either but is manifested through numerous spaces across a number of different countries). Any security concerns between Turkey and Armenia are only theoretical potentials. Any negotiations or mediations have been very limited in scope and effectiveness. In fact, many customs and expectations of international affairs simply do not or cannot apply in this case. If the big question is around 1915, very few living people can claim any direct involvement with the First World War era today. It is rather a variety of intangible memories that come up, having been handed down over generations. So, it is in the narratives where this unorthodox dispute is most vivid, and it is in the narratives that its resolution must come about, or at least must start to come about.

Some caveats. It is important to point out that the intention of this study is not a relativization of the past or the present, nor a selective reading of history in order to come up with an artificial understanding with which these two peoples will fool themselves into good

relations or by which one will claim undue advantage over the other. It is easy to be cynical about the power of narratives, especially given their fluid nature. It is also easy to be drawn into the quagmire of what truth is, who decides it and how, invoking metaphysical or sophistical argumentation. The intention in this study is simply (an adverb I use with caution) to present the current perceptions and assessments of the Turkish and Armenian peoples about the other, bring to light their expectations, and point out opportunities that will allow for perceptions, assessments, and expectations that, at the very least, will discourage hostility and encourage civil engagement with the other.

THE TURKISH NARRATIVE

Below is a list of general perceptions and assessments as one would encounter from a Turkish perspective, more specifically as part of the nationalist discourse that prevails. The bullet points are arranged in as systematic a manner as possible to form a rough narrative, one that is broadly shared in Turkish society.[6]

- The conquest of Armenia was followed by centuries of good governance during which all the peoples of the Ottoman Empire lived in peace. The Armenians in particular enjoyed much autonomy, with full cultural rights and vast economic opportunity and advantages. The Armenians were in fact known as the *millet-i sadıka*, the most loyal of Ottoman subjects. Even today, Armenians bear centuries of shared cultural heritage with Turks.

- As the Ottoman Empire began to decline starting from the 17th century, the Great Powers of Europe constantly conspired to break it up, if not through outright warfare, then by meddling in the empire's internal affairs. This often manifested in one or more of the Great Powers sponsoring a local minority Ottoman population: the French for the Catholics, the Russians for the Orthodox, and so on. Examples of outside interference in the 19th century include the Capitulations, interventions in Greece, Lebanon, the Crimean War, etc. Even though the Great Powers were in competition and often on opposite sides, they all desired to dismember the Ottoman Empire and agreed to recognize mutual spheres of influence within its territories.

- The Russians were in particular interested in the Armenians, having their own population of Armenians in their imperial holdings south of the Caucasus Mountains. A series of wars between the Russian and Ottoman empires in the 19th century often featured Armenians taking the Russian side, since they preferred to be ruled by a Christian power. This same policy was most significantly followed during the First World War as well. These were all manifestations of disloyalty and betrayal—the Armenians acting as a fifth column.

- With the period of the *tanzimat* reforms starting in 1839, greater freedom and more opportunities came about for all inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire.

- Interventions by the Great Powers through the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin in 1878 following the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 called for significant reforms with regards to the Armenian-populated regions of the Ottoman Empire. This only served to encourage nationalism and ever-greater political demands by Armenians and others.

- From the late 1880s-1890s on, there were a number of committees of revolutionary Armenians that were dissatisfied with the slow and insufficient reform process and were working towards outright secession, carrying out violent activities, terrorism, sometimes even targeting Armenian leaders, in order to achieve the goal of dismembering the Ottoman Empire and establishing an independent Armenian state. These groups received support from abroad, whether from other Armenians or the Great Powers.

- The Armenian Church had some leaders advocating for Armenian independence, while others maintained loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.

- Christian missionaries (Europeans and Americans) who were supposed to be involved in religious life were in fact carrying out political work while evangelizing to local, largely Christian, Ottoman populations and undertaking educational and publishing activities in the 19th and into the 20th century.

- The poor governance and weakness of the Ottoman Empire, internal instability and external losses during the 19th century and early 20th century had a negative affect on all inhabitants, not just Armenians or Christians alone.

6 The sources for this list are: Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed* (Nicosia: Rustem, 2001) (originally published in 1983); Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Controversy between Turkey and Armenia about the Events of 1915," accessed November 1, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/controversy-between-turkey-and-armenia-about-the-events-of-1915.en.mfa—a page that includes some 25 documents and is fifth on the list of main issues of Turkish foreign policy, behind Cyprus, EU, NATO relations, and terrorism, ahead of the environment, human rights, arms control, corruption, and other policy points (a banner linking to this page is also on the bottom of the website, further indicating the significance given to it by the Turkish Foreign Ministry); In addition, in-depth interviews were carried out with some members of the Turkish political, diplomatic, and academic spheres for this and the following sections—the full list of interviewees is available in the appendix.

- Likewise, the First World War brought horrors for everyone—millions of Muslims were killed or exiled, in particular from the Balkans and the Caucasus.
- Armenians were relocated in 1915 due to the war. They were not forcibly deported or exiled. Their lives and property were meant to be guaranteed by the state, with due assistance and compensation, and amounts equivalent to assets to be transferred accordingly.
- There was no plan to methodically exterminate the Armenian people in whole or in part. Allegations of genocide are unfounded.
- Areas where the Ottoman Empire was more secure and better-organized, such as Istanbul or Izmir, did not witness any relocations.
- The Armenian population was purposefully dispersed—for example, their settlements were planned far away from each other and from the Baghdad railway, Armenian schooling was prohibited, etc.—in order to discourage rebellious activity in the midst of war, which was an immediate, existential security threat to the Ottoman state. Many Armenians were involved in secessionist activities, after all, especially supporting the advancing Russian army. They were targeted for their treacherous political activities, not because of ethnicity or religion. Targeting political groups falls outside the scope of the 1948 Genocide Convention.
- Unfortunately, some unscrupulous officials as well as violent tribes and bandits took undue advantage of the situation and harassed the Armenians, sometimes attacking, killing, robbing, and raping them, taking away their children, and causing other harm. The Ottoman government consistently condemned such activities and worked to punish the perpetrators, many of whom were executed as criminals.
- Some 300,000 to 600,000 or so Armenians died in the end, mostly due to disease, harsh weather conditions, famine, or as a result of regrettable violence during the relocation, all of which was happening in uncontrollable conditions of war and the general chaos of an imploding empire.
- The Armenians were simply pawns in the games of the Great Powers—states that were only looking out for their own interests.
- Muslims constituted a majority of the population in the Armenian-populated regions of the Ottoman Empire. Estimates of the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire are inexact; the numbers presented by Armenians are not impartial.
- Muslims suffered in the Ottoman Empire as well. Besides those who were massacred and deported from the Balkans and the Caucasus for many decades before the First World War, many were subject to attacks by Armenians at the time. There is no empathy for them, being ignored by Armenian and Western sources. Besides irregular militias that undertook violent activities, armed Armenians served under their own flag in the Caucasus, fought in the region of Cilicia under Allied command, and also collaborated with Greek forces in other parts of Turkey. They all carried out reprehensible atrocities against local Muslim populations. Armenians celebrate those brigands and terrorists as national heroes today.
- Armenian propaganda has kept public opinion in the West on the Armenian side since the late 19th century, decades before the First World War, and Armenians continue to carry out successful lobbying work today, pushing an agenda against "denialism." Turks are not good at promoting themselves, and their calls fall on deaf ears also because of general anti-Turkish and anti-Islam sentiments prevalent in the West.
- Some specific claims by Armenians, such as the Naim Bey telegrams published by Aram Andonian, are all dubious in their basis. The same goes for accounts by Westerners in the Ottoman Empire at the time, many of whom relied on hearsay or were moved by their general anti-Turkish and anti-Islam bias.
- Armenians have brought forth allegations of genocide using very questionable materials, often forged documents, and manipulated figures. Their presentations and interpretations of history are selective and biased. For example, the memoirs of U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau have a clear political agenda and cannot be considered a reliable source.
- The trials held in Istanbul after the First World War were purely political events manipulated by the Allied Powers, especially the British, in order to further legitimize their condemnation of the

Young Turks leaders and to facilitate their plan to divide up the Ottoman Empire among themselves. There was no real legal basis or evidence for them. The Ottoman officials held in Malta by the British were in any case later released.

- Armenian terrorist groups nefariously assassinated many Young Turks leaders during the 1920s during the so-called Operation Nemesis, using those post-war trials as a legitimating basis for their violent acts.
- Cold War conditions later allowed for Armenian terrorism that took the lives of tens of Turkish diplomats and others during the 1970s and 1980s as a means of publicly raising the issue in a bloody manner by nationalist Armenian groups. Those terrorists, some still alive, continue to be celebrated as heroes.
- The Armenians may have indeed regrettably suffered in 1915, but it is inaccurate to characterize that experience as genocide, as Armenians insist on doing. There is real scholarly dispute about that characterization. A fuller understanding of the events of 1915 can only be achieved through proper, impartial historical research. It is unfortunate that so many nationalist Armenian individuals and groups work actively to block such useful initiatives.
- What about the suffering of Muslims or Turks during that period? They were victims, too, and in greater numbers, over many decades. It is not fair to have such a biased interpretation of events, with allegations of genocide on top of everything else.
- No legal ruling has taken place regarding a characterization of the events of 1915 as genocide.
- It makes no sense having parliaments or other legislative bodies pass judgments with non-binding resolutions on this issue—in effect, legislating history.
- Forcing educational curricula to include segments on the events of 1915 described as genocide is likewise a public disservice.
- The Armenians continue to live in Turkey and enjoy full rights as citizens today.
- The Jewish Holocaust is qualitatively different than any experience of the Armenians as the Jews of Europe were innocent civilians without any political agenda of secession or revolution. In fact, there were Armenians who collaborated with the Nazi regime during the Second World War. The quote attributed to Hitler ("Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?") is fake.
- The state always pursues its own self-preservation. So many Western countries have carried out horrific atrocities during the course of war, imperialism, and colonialism, to say nothing of suppressing their own people to achieve political ends. How were the actions of the Ottoman Empire any different? Why ought the Ottoman Empire have acquiesced to independence for Armenia or any other group as long as Ireland or India or Algeria or any number of other countries and peoples were under the shackles of European overlords?

If the 33 points above seem somewhat simplistic or a little disjointed, and if a few of them are outside the flow of a sequence or essentially repeated in more than one context, it is because they are meant to synthesize public perceptions quite broadly as opposed to analyzing nuanced articulations or academic points of view. The above may not form a smooth narrative, but it offers a meaningful distillation of the perceptions and interpretations of the past.

THE ARMENIAN NARRATIVE

As with the previous section, below is a list of general perceptions and assessments as one would encounter from an Armenian perspective, more specifically as part of the nationalist discourse that prevails. The bullet points are arranged in as systematic a manner as possible to form a rough narrative, one that is broadly shared in Armenian society.[7]

- The Armenians lived for centuries under the duress of the Turkish yoke after the Ottoman conquest of their historical homeland, suffering from discriminatory policies and practices.

- The treaties of San Stefano and Berlin in 1878 internationalized the Armenian Question and forced the Ottoman government to implement reforms in Western Armenia (the Armenian-populated regions of Anatolia). Even though the provisions in Berlin weakened the San Stefano initiatives, nevertheless the Ottoman leadership ended up viewing the Armenians more and more as a thorn in their side and an opportunity for the Great Powers to meddle in the Ottoman Empire's internal affairs. The Armenians were presented by an influential religious leader who had been to Berlin with the allegory of the iron ladle: other nations partook of *herise* stew in Berlin with iron ladles, i.e. weapons, whereas the Armenians who approached with a paper ladle, i.e., letters of supplication, could not scoop anything out of the bowl. Thus, it became necessary to fight for one's rights.

- In order to discourage the Armenians, Sultan Abdul Hamid II enlisted Kurdish armed groups into a special cavalry regiment known as the Hamidiye in order to carry out large-scale atrocities against Armenians during the period from 1894-1896, referred to as the Hamidian Massacres. Some 300,000 Armenians were killed, entire villages and cultural or religious centers were destroyed, and many thousands of Armenians were forced to convert to Islam. There was resistance in such places as Sassoun and Zeytoun (modern Sason and Süleymanlı) but ultimately to no avail.

- The restoration of the constitution with the revolution of 1908 created great opportunities for Armenians and for all previously suppressed groups in the Ottoman Empire. The wealth and culture that Armenians had anyway generated beforehand developed even more, inviting the envy and suspicion of the Turks. The Committee of Union and Progress, or the Young Turks, led the efforts towards greater liberalization, but they turned out to be nationalists.

- Already in 1909 indications of the real intentions of the Young Turks became clear following another series of massacres in the region of Adana during which some 30,000 Armenians were killed.

- By the 1910s, after the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Empire was quickly collapsing. The Young Turks leadership adopted a position of Pan-Turkism or Pan-Turanism in order to unite all Turkic-speaking populations from the Balkans, through Anatolia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Siberia, all the way to China. The Armenians were an obstacle in the fulfillment of that ideology. Following a secret meeting in Thessaloniki in 1911 that brought up the idea of the genocide, the First World War served as a useful opportunity to carry out the plan.

- As the First World War was breaking out, the Young Turks leadership demanded that Armenians of the Ottoman Empire organize a rebellion of Armenians in the Russian Empire. With subsequent Ottoman victory, Armenians would be promised independence. But the Ottoman Armenians refused to do so, citing their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and the expectation of the loyalty of the Russian Armenians to the Russian Empire.

- The Young Turks government of the Ottoman Empire began the Armenian Genocide in 1915. It achieved its final state with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey by Mustafa Kemal in 1923.

7 The sources for this list are: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, "Genocide," "Recognition," "Cultural Genocide," accessed November 3, 2016, http://mfa.am/en/what-is-genocide/, http://mfa.am/en/recognition/, http://mfa.am/en/cultural-genocide/; The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, "What is Genocide," "Armenian Genocide," "Chronology," accessed November 3, 2016, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/genocide.php, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/armenian_genocide.php, http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/chronology.php; "Pan-Armenian Declaration on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide," accessed November 7, 2016, http://armeniangenocide100.org/files/uploads/2015/02/declaration-eng.pdf; In addition, in-depth interviews were carried out with some members of the Armenian political, diplomatic, and academic spheres for this and the following sections—the full list of interviewees is available in the appendix.

- April 24, 1915 marked the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. That day, hundreds of Armenian community leaders, intellectuals, clergymen, professionals, artists, etc. were arrested in the Ottoman capital Constantinople (Istanbul), to be executed or sent into exile. Likewise, prominent Armenians at the local level in other centers throughout what is the territory of Turkey today were arrested, killed, or exiled. This way, Armenians lost their leadership and had minimal opportunities to counter or resist the genocide that followed.

- Tens of thousands of men were conscripted into the army and then executed. The Armenian population of villages, towns, and cities were taken on death marches through the Syrian desert, with the major end point of Deir ez-Zor on the banks of the Euphrates being the site of particularly large-scale massacres. Kurdish and Circassian mobs raided the Armenians en route. Armenians were killed outright, or robbed, or raped. Many succumbed to disease and famine. Many were separated from their families, especially young women and children, taken away as brides or slaves, forced to convert to Islam.

- The genocide was organized by the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa or Special Organization, consisting of criminals freed for the purpose of massacring, torturing, and carrying out other heinous acts on Armenians. The entire nation was meant to be destroyed, to be relegated to history. "Armenia" and "Armenian" were to become designations used in museums alone.

- Britain, France, and Russia condemned the massacres and deportations of Armenians as early as May 1915, vowing to seek justice for the "crimes against humanity" carried out by the regime of the Young Turks.

- The leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress or the Young Turks included Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha, and Jemal Pasha—these were the three most powerful individuals of the Ottoman Empire of the time and the masterminds behind the Armenian Genocide. There were other central and local figures as well who were involved in planning and implementing the genocide.

- German involvement with the Armenian Genocide was significant. Construction of the Berlin-Baghdad railway line was a top priority. Armenians were meant to work on the railway and develop the economy of that area, being forced that way also to lose their ties with rival Russia.

- There were some two million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. By 1923, 1.5 million had been killed. A small part of the rest survived within the new Republic of Turkey, many of whom were forcibly converted to Islam. Most survivors were exiled and spread throughout the world.

- Besides the wholesale murder of a nation, the Young Turks also ordered the destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage, such as churches, monasteries, cemeteries, books, works of art, etc. Such structures that testify to the antiquity of the Armenian people continue to be neglected or purposefully destroyed in Turkey today. Church buildings still standing have been converted into mosques, storehouses, or stables, or are used for other functions.

- The Ottoman Empire confiscated the personal and community property of the Armenians, whether homes or fields, clothes or furniture, schools or businesses. Both confiscations as well as deportations were given a legal cover, with laws that were enacted for the emergency war situation. They were meant to be temporary on paper, but in reality served as pretexts for the genocide.

- Armenian place-names in Anatolia have been changed to further erase historical Armenian traces in Turkey. This is yet another manifestation of genocide.

- Besides the Armenians, the Young Turk regime also targeted other Christians, such as Greeks and Assyrians (various denominations of Syriac Christians), as well as Yazidis.

- All major international periodicals reported on the Armenian Genocide at the time. Foreigners based in the Ottoman Empire—diplomats and missionaries—gave extensive accounts, both during and immediately following the events. These are foundational and unassailable primary sources on the Armenian Genocide.

- There is documentation on the Armenian Genocide by the Young Turks leaders themselves, such as the secret telegrams sent by Talaat Pasha to Naim Bey, among other sources.

- There were some episodes of armed resistance during the Armenian Genocide, such as in Van, Sassoun, Mousa Dagh, etc., and later in 1920-

1921 in parts of Cilicia. Though not ultimately successful, at the very least, there were more survivors as a result than there otherwise would have been. The people fought heroically in those places. (The Mousa Dagh resistance is especially well-known because of the novel based on it—*The Forty Days of Mousa Dagh*—written by the Viennese Jewish author Franz Werfel, published in 1933; it was meant as a reaction to anti-Semitism, presaging the impending Holocaust.)

- The Armenian Legion was formed as a volunteer regiment serving under the British and French, consisting of Ottoman Armenian émigrés. They fought with valor in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, and ultimately liberated Cilicia.
- Cilicia was disgracefully abandoned by the French as the forces loyal to Mustafa Kemal moved in, causing further massacres and deportations of Armenians.
- Widespread humanitarian efforts were organized to offer support to Armenians and other persecuted groups of the Ottoman Empire—the earliest examples of modern relief work. American assistance, spearheaded by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson among others, was most significant, ultimately saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of orphans and refugees. Missionaries and others continued to care for stricken Armenians throughout the Middle East well into the 1920s.
- Following the Russian Revolution, the Russian armed forces withdrew from the Caucasus, thereby creating an opportunity for the Ottoman invasion of Russian Armenia and the continuation of its genocidal policy there.
- The new leadership of Russia collaborated with the Ottoman Empire, relinquishing territory and abandoning the Armenians to their fate. Later treaties signed by Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey likewise disregarded Armenian interests.
- The battles at Sardarabad (Sardarapat), Bash-Aparan (Aparan), and Gharakilisa (Vanadzor) were desperate efforts of a barely-surviving Armenian struggle against the onslaught of the regular Ottoman military. They were miraculously won and caused the establishment of the Republic of Armenia in May 1918, which was a short-lived state, being sovietized in December 1920.
- The Ottoman army engaged in war with the Republic of Armenia, invading and massacring Armenians, also supporting the likewise-short-lived Republic of Azerbaijan in which, for its part, Armenians were being targeted and massacred.
- Even though the regime of the Young Turks failed and the Ottoman Empire fell, the movement led by Mustafa Kemal continued the same genocidal policy against the Armenians. Former members of the Young Turks participated in Mustafa Kemal's movement and later served in official capacities in the Republic of Turkey.
- After the First World War, the leaders of the Young Turks were tried, some in absentia, by the Ottoman Military Tribunals in Constantinople (Istanbul) and condemned for their crimes. They had meanwhile fled the country.
- Armenians organized the so-called Operation Nemesis to hunt down and assassinate the Young Turks who had escaped. The most notable action in this regard was the killing of Talaat Pasha in Berlin in 1921. His assassin, Soghomon Tehlirian, underwent a public trial in Germany and was set free, having moved the court with his tale of suffering.
- The Treaty of Sèvres of 1920 guaranteed an independent Republic of Armenia with vast areas of territory of what is eastern Turkey today, including a section of the Black Sea coast. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson was called upon and agreed to draw the boundary between Turkey and Armenia.
- The Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 was negotiated successfully by the new Turkish leadership under Mustafa Kemal to supersede the Treaty of Sèvres and completely ignore the Armenians. It allowed for an internationally recognized Turkish republic. By the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey superficially accepted obligations towards three minority groups: Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. But Armenians were prohibited from returning to their homes in Anatolia. Many later events continue to demonstrate the discriminatory policies of the Republic of Turkey towards minorities.
- Genocide is the planned, systematic extermination of a group. It is often viewed as a crime by a state against its own population as it is more

likely that a government would have resources and capacity to carry out such an act. When Polish-Jewish lawyer and legal scholar Raphael Lemkin coined the term "genocide" and worked to define it and have it enshrined in international law during the 1940s, he had the experience of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire in mind alongside the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime. The Nazis, in fact, based the planning and implementation of the Holocaust on the Armenian Genocide. Germans working with the Ottomans during the First World War built on their experiences during the Second World War. In a speech delivered before invading Poland, Adolph Hitler exhorted his subordinates to carry out heinous acts because, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" If the 1948 Genocide Convention can be retroactively applied in the case of the Holocaust, it can be done so in the case of the Armenian Genocide, as well.

- A number of foreign governments, international organizations, scholarly bodies, noted individuals, and other groups have recognized the Armenian Genocide and have called for Turkey to do the same.
- The Republic of Turkey continues to deny the Armenian Genocide despite the overwhelming evidence demonstrating it as a fact. Turkish lobbying includes propaganda, manipulation, and very high expenditure in capitals around the world in order to distort public opinion and the views of key decision-makers.
- The few remaining Armenian schools, churches, and newspapers in Turkey (almost all in Istanbul) function in an atmosphere of tension and strict oversight by the government. Cultural rights or freedoms are suppressed. The assassination of journalist and public intellectual Hrant Dink in January 2007 is just one manifestation of the precarious condition of Armenians and other minorities in Turkey.
- Impunity with regards to the Armenian Genocide continues to empower Turkey today, such as its blockade of the Republic of Armenia, its continual anti-Armenian positions in the international community, and its insistence on preconditions for establishing normal inter-state relations—to say nothing of its policies regarding Kurds and other regional activities.
- The Armenian Genocide is a universal human rights issue. By ignoring it, by not condemning it, one only encourages the propagation of genocide. The proper acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide would lead to historical justice. Only then can the Armenian and Turkish peoples be reconciled.

Again, the 40 points above do not always flow smoothly as they offer broad perceptions and interpretations—the widely-shared narrative among Armenians—as opposed to researched works of historiographical nature.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The most immediate reaction to being exposed to these two sets of points is a lot of "he said, she said," "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist," etc.—a clash of narratives that cannot really be reconciled. That is not unexpected. It is also too simplistic a conclusion to draw and end with, not a critical approach to the problem at hand.

I offer below some broader perspectives and specific take-aways that arise from juxtaposing the two narratives.

Overlap 1: Nationalism as Worldview

With nationalism as the prevailing framework, both the Turkish and the Armenian narratives match inasmuch as they both consider the nation as the highest value and the state established exclusively for that nation as the greatest end. This is a point that both sides could at the very least acknowledge about the other. There is some irony in this mutual appreciation, but I suggest that it in fact makes it easier for one side to understand the other—as opposed to, for example, the Cold War clash of ideologies across two blocs or intra-denominational or sectarian clashes within the same religion. In those examples, some basic tenets are in conflict, and therefore, two or more sides find it difficult to even sit and talk around the same table. But if two groups at odds with one another both espouse the same starting point, then their mode of thinking is at the very least appreciable by the other side.

Nationalism tends to be very zero-sum in its outlook, however. A state established for a nation must be exclusively for that nation alone, secure in its borders. So, nationalists from, say, Ukraine and Georgia may indeed find a lot of commonalities sharing a worldview, historical Soviet and renewed Orthodox Christian legacies, as well as probable anti-Russian sentiments. The two can support one another in advocating for their territorial disputes. But nationalists from Ukraine and Poland or Georgia and Azerbaijan might have tense interactions because those states border each other and there may be perceptions (and narratives) of, for example, historical territories under the other's control.

But can't that be said for all neighboring states throughout history? Well, then the outcome for Turks and Armenians becomes a rather simplistic, "The Turks won, the Armenians lost." This is dangerous, because it can imply, "The Turks won, the Armenians lost *this time*." This is how history can play out and has played out in the nationalist mindset. After all, the prohibition of use of force in international affairs and instruments of international humanitarian law and human rights were put in place after the Second World War, following centuries of violence being considered a legitimate means of implementing policy.

It is imperative today that if the nationalist framework continues to exist, then it must necessarily incorporate peaceful means of expression—such as efforts in Québec, Scotland, and Catalonia. Those examples remain the exceptions rather than the rule at present. For Turks and Armenians, non-violent nationalism is not a realistic expectation in the near future given past experience and current trends, or even just taking into account, for example, the activities of Armenian terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s or any number of policies regarding minorities adopted by the modern Turkish state throughout its nearly century-long existence. Violence will most probably remain a part of the narrative—and a legitimate policy option from the nationalist perspective—for a while yet.

One might relegate such pessimistic attitudes to some inherent aspect of human nature. But one might also point to very encouraging situations in many parts of Europe and in other places as more positive examples for future possibilities in which nationalism is transformed or redirected towards less violent manifestations. Germany and France have managed to set aside their bloody legacies for a pleasantly anomalous 70 years now, and it seems like a viable position to maintain for the long term on the continent. Those same sorts of European aspirations that have boosted relations among, say, Belgrade, Sarajevo, and Zagreb could also apply to Ankara and Yerevan (even if, admittedly, both Turkey and Armenia have begun to look away from Brussels in recent years). Though ultimately not an impossible outlook, the second overlap below is additionally discouraging on that front.

Overlap 2: Don't Trust the West

The second overlap regarding the Turkish and Armenian narratives is a moral of the story that can be derived from both: don't trust the West. Whether one considers the Great Powers of the turn of the 20th century or the European Union and United States today, and also including Russia (even if that country is not often categorized as part of the West nowadays), both Turkish and Armenian nationalists would have

the same cynical reaction to the foreign policies of those states. The world powers are only out for their own interests. Their actions are aimed at weakening others, overpowering them, exploiting them—whether those others be Turks, Armenians, or any other people or state. Both Turks and Armenians can agree that the Armenians were used in machinations against the Ottoman Empire. That the Armenian hope of getting a state out of it was dashed does not so much highlight any naïveté among Armenian revolutionaries of the era as it does the exploitative nature of London and Paris and St. Petersburg and elsewhere, at the same time confirming Turkish suspicions of external meddling. In Turkey the saying goes, "The only friend of a Turk is a Turk." One mid-20th century Armenian poet for his part wrote, "O Armenian people, your only salvation lies in the strength of your unity."

Part-Overlap, Part-Mirroring: Nationalist Perceptions of Self and Other

An element that is not as explicitly visible in either narrative but can be discovered on deeper inspection is the sense of self-perception of these two peoples. Once again from the nationalist point of view, Turks and Armenians espouse very similar attitudes towards nationhood and the value of the ethno-national identity. The X people is an ancient one, with roots and a homeland that reach far into the past. The X people has had a glorious history and deep influence on the world. Now the X people must hold its own rightful place among the family of nations. And so on and so forth. Of course, X here can be Turkish or Armenian or any number of other identities. It is also notable that the X people is constantly in the process of establishing itself, trying to prove its self-worth to itself and to the world.

Genocide features very awkwardly within such a worldview, whether casting the X people as perpetrators or victims. The common point that both the Turks and the Armenians say about themselves is that they underwent tremendous, traumatic experiences, but they survived and created something new and worthwhile. Indeed, the Armenians often repeat that they are a nation of survivors,[8] whereas for Turks, the creation of the Republic of Turkey in the face of existential danger to the Ottoman Empire stands as an inspiring testament to imperviousness, one that strongly persists in public discourse about Turkey in Turkish society today. (The narrative of steadfastness in the face of danger was, if anything, reinforced following the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016.)

Conversely, the Turks and the Armenians do not have much to flatter about each other when it comes to their perceptions of the other's origins, history, or global standing. The Turkish narrative considers the Armenians a small, obscure people who hardly had any experience with sovereign statehood, being constantly ruled by a variety of empires until the Ottomans showed up (or, in some circles, until the Ottoman Empire appeared on the land of Anatolia, which had been inhabited by Turks since ancient times). The Armenian narrative in a similar vein presents the Turks as marauding bands of uncivilized nomadic tribes from Central Asia, Siberia, or Mongolia whose only interests are conquest, pillage, and exploitation. "They do not even have their own culture," is a common refrain: anything that is claimed to be Turkish is in reality stolen from Armenians or Greeks or Arabs or Persians or taken from elsewhere.

Again, this can be a "he said, she said" irreconcilable clash of narratives. But it once again highlights similar attitudes towards the other—something that can be very useful in making one side understand the perspective of the other, with due irony.

There is also similarity between perceptions that Turks and Armenians have about the other's standing with the West today. The Turkish narrative laments the general anti-Turkish and anti-Islam attitudes in the West, how Christian Armenians play the religion card and the sympathy they thereby manage to obtain, how the Armenian Diaspora organizes its lobbying work and has the ears of so many Western leaders, etc. The Armenian narrative very similarly laments the power and influence of the Turkish state, the Turks as "a diplomatic nation" with strong powers of persuasion, the rich coffers in Ankara that fund Turkish lobbying in capitals around the world, the deep economic and military ties that Turkey possesses of which Armenia could only dream, etc. It is really remarkable how the attitudes of both so strongly reflect the other. (Similarly remarkable is how quickly anyone familiar with the reality would dismiss those perceptions of the other as highly inaccurate exaggerations: Turks and Armenians also seem to possess a similar attitude of self-deprecation—an interesting element alongside more tangible or identifiable cultural similarities such as food or music.)

Yet another example of similar reactions that Turks and Armenians have employed in facing the other can be seen in language. In the late 1920s-early 1930s, the "Citizen, speak Turkish!" ("*Vatandaş, Türkçe konuş!*")

8 See, for example, the celebrated poem "We Are Few But We Are Called Armenians" by Paruyr Sevak (1924-1971) written and read out in Yerevan in 1965 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide—the first time there was a public commemoration of the event in Soviet Armenia, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.armenians.com/genocide/wearefew.html (translator unknown).

movement called for speaking only Turkish in public spaces. This was especially aimed at Armenian- and Greek-speaking inhabitants of Istanbul, who still formed a substantial segment of the population in that city. Along similar lines, there was a movement in the 1970s-1980s in the Armenian-populated district of Bourdj Hammoud in Beirut, Lebanon, called "Respond in Armenian to those who speak in Turkish." An interviewee[9] shared with me his memory of that phrase. He also mentioned campaigns of burning Turkish videos and tapes at the time—which meant, as he said, that some people had to be watching Turkish films or listening to Turkish songs.

Two observations are shared below not on the matching of Turkish and Armenian narratives but on similar dynamics that both display, though tending to move in disparate directions.

Mirroring 1: Noticeable Gaps

The absence of any points between the 1920s and 1970s in the Turkish narrative listed above is indicative of the fact that just about nothing on Armenians or Armenia was known or discussed in Turkish public life for most of the 20th century except for in a closed manner within some educated circles, even despite the very visible presence of an Armenian community at least in Istanbul. That gave way to outright denial or dismissal of Armenian claims at an institutional level as a reaction to Armenian terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s.[10] It was only later that any systematic approach or study of Armenian issues was taken up in Turkey. Probably the collapse of the Soviet Union and the appearance of an Armenia next door (not to mention Azerbaijan and the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh) acted as a catalyst.

The Turkish narrative also glosses over details of the period in the run-up to 1915, such as the Hamidian Massacres or the Adana Massacre, nor does it seem to make much of Pan-Turkic or Pan-Turanic movement that shows up in the Armenian narrative.

As for the Armenian narrative, two significant elements in the story are missing. Firstly, the legacy of the armed Armenians in the late 19th-early 20th century is less than present, whether the militias in the mountains of Anatolia or violent acts of terrorism in the capital or other cities in the earlier period, the forces of the army of the Republic of Armenia later during 1918-1920, or the Armenian Legion under Allied command, as well as perhaps Armenians serving with Greek forces in Asia Minor. The men (and some women) involved in those exploits are considered national heroes, with songs to their name being sung until today.[11] (For consideration of armed resistance by Armenians during the course of the genocide itself such as at Van, Zeytoun, or Mousa Dagh, see relevant paragraph below.)

Secondly, the activities of Armenian terrorists of the 1970s and 1980s do not feature prominently. For example, they are absent on the relevant pages of the website of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Armenia. The two major groups—ASALA (Armenian Secret Armenia for the Liberation of Armenia) and JCAG (Justice Commandoes of the Armenian Genocide)—and other smaller operations have mixed discourse in Armenian circles nowadays. Suffice it to say, however, that they are largely celebrated by nationalist Armenians.[12]

The active silence on these above points is matched by the seemingly more passive avoidance of two additional points.

The first is the experience of Muslims who ended up in the Ottoman Empire, in particular the *muhacirs* from the Balkans and the Caucasus—a group whose experience was not unlike that of the Armenians. Surely their massacres and deportations do not justify the Armenian Genocide. But they could perhaps form a basis of empathy. There is the larger question of why the *muhacir* experience is not publicly commemorated in Turkey itself. Perhaps it would be dangerous and allow for equal public discourse about the Armenians and others. Furthermore, if it had been the Armenians who had caused the *muhacirs* to be exiled from the Balkans or the Caucasus, then the narrative could easily be turned into a simple us vs. them scenario. It was not the Armenians, however. To claim that the *muhacirs* were victims of genocide would be tantamount to accusing Russia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and possibly other states and groups of perpetrating genocide in the 1910s and 1920s, even earlier and later. That might make new enemies for Turkey today.

9 Interview with Giro Manoyan in discussion with the author, January 20, 2017. The movement's name in Armenian was "Թրքերէն խօսողին Հայերէն պատասխանէ" ["*Trkeren khosoghin Hayeren badaskhane*"].

10 See, for example, memoirs as recounted by Murat Belge, *Edebiyatta Ermeniler* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2013), 8, who knew about the *tehcir* ("deportation" or "relocation") and *kıyım* ("slaughter") of Armenians as a child. I thank Engin Kılıç for acquainting me with this source and that first narrative shift.

11 See, for example, Rubina Peroomian, "Armenian Resistance to Genocide: An Attempt to Assess Circumstances and Outcomes," *Asbarez*, April 24, 2013, accessed November 28, 2016, http://asbarez.com/109615/armenian-resistance-to-genocide-an-attempt-to-assess-circumstances-and-outcomes/.

12 See, for example, "EDITORIAL: Remembering the Heroes of Lisbon 5," *Asbarez*, July 26, 2013, accessed November 28, 2016, http://asbarez.com/112023/editorial-remembering-the-heroes-of-lisbon-5/.

Now, in the case of the Armenians, the *muhacir* narrative of the 1910s and earlier periods might prove less than relevant, but the experience of the Muslims in the areas of the Caucasus that came under Armenian control in 1918-1920 could be worth reviewing. Accusations of genocide committed by Armenians would be very serious and difficult to demonstrate, and consequentially the simple us vs. them narrative would end up in a stalemate. But if indeed future research brings to light unsavory activities carried out by Armenians in the Caucasus, or in Cilicia, or in Asia Minor under Greek command, that might help forge a more comprehensive narrative. The danger, of course, would lie in taking away from the gravity of the Armenian Genocide. No Armenian—nationalist or otherwise—would be keen on such an endeavor.

The second is the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the role of Armenians and other minorities in it. The Armenians fought for their homeland back then—for the Ottoman Empire, that is. This fact is rather remarkable in hindsight. The homeland ended up losing the war and losing territory. This was a loss borne by the Armenians as well, it is not difficult to argue. The Turkish narrative ignores this participation of Armenians and other minorities for the sake of the empire. This could be the subject of additional research, one that could perhaps prove significant in re-shaping at least one aspect of the narratives. A strong Armenian nationalist reaction to such a study could range from painting a picture of the Turks as ingrates ("We fought for them, and yet they killed us") to painting a picture of the Armenians as naïve ("We Armenians are so stupid to have sacrificed ourselves for such an awful regime"). I am not certain what a Turkish nationalist reaction would look like ("Obviously there was no genocide, for how could we have committed genocide against such a loyal population?", perhaps, or, "The Armenians discovered warfare and intended to use their Balkan Wars training against their own government, so they were clearly a threat to the state"?).

Likewise, work that would bring more to light the Armenians as well as Greeks, Jews, and others who fought for the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, in particular at Gallipoli (Çanakkale), would also be helpful in shattering monolithic narratives held by Turks and Armenians about their relationship with one another. The memoirs of one Captain Sarkis Torossian published in recent years generated at least some public discussion in this regard.[13]

13 For an account of those discussions, see Taner Akçam, "A short history of the Torossian debate," *Journal of Genocide Research* 17, no. 3 (2015): 345-362.

Mirroring 2: Shifts at Variance

There has been a significant shift noticeable in the Turkish narrative over the past decade or so. Ever since the mid-2000s, with the rise of the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AK or Justice and Development Party), there has been some general public acknowledgement in Turkey of Armenian suffering during the First World War, even going so far as the issuance of messages of condolence by then-Prime Minister Erdoğan in April 2014 and then-Prime Minister Davutoğlu in April 2015—both times in the run-up to annual April 24 commemorations held by Armenians around the world. But any acknowledgement of Armenian suffering has come with the strong qualification of a "common pain" or "shared pain,"[14] alongside a call for more active collaboration in terms of historical research in order to achieve a "just memory"—building a narrative of what really happened in 1915. Ankara continues to push forward the proposal of a joint historical commission. The proposal even formed part of the normalization package known as the Turkey-Armenia Protocols that were signed in 2009 but never ratified.

At the same time, a minority voice is being heard in Turkey more in recent years—one that often, though not always, echoes the Armenian narrative—being carried by individuals variously referred to as liberals, liberal academics or scholars, civil society activists, leftists, or ethnic, religious, political, social or other minority figures, or a combination of such labels. The assassination of Turkish-Armenian journalist and activist Hrant Dink in January 2007 served as a catalyst for those voices to come together. A good example of that minority voice is the "*özür diliyorum*" or "I apologize" campaign launched in late 2008, which involved an online petition garnering over 30,000 signatures. The statement on the website is a very brief one, rejecting "the denial of the Great Catastrophe that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to in 1915," empathizing with "Armenian brothers and sisters," and apologizing to them.[15] Although avoiding outright the term "genocide" or calls for reparations or restitution by the Republic of Turkey, it marked a significant public step, one that could not have been taken even a few years prior (and, it can be argued, would be less welcome today, in 2017). The campaign was met with skepticism in some quarters, both Turkish and Arme-

14 See, for example, a piece by then-Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, "Turks and Armenians – we must follow Erdoğan's lead and bury our common pain," *The Guardian*, May 2, 2014, accessed November 1, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/may/02/turks-armenians-erdogan-condolences-1915-armenian-massacre.

15 "özür diliyorum," accessed November 7, 2016, http://www.ozurdiliyoruz.com/.

nian.[16] Although a noteworthy phenomenon, "I apologize" remains an exceptional case. It has not managed to generate or sustain a narrative that prevails across any substantial segments of society in Turkey. It took advantage of the opening up of Turkey in the mid-2000s and has helped generate greater discussion. But it tellingly also generated a counter-campaign, "*özür bekliyorum*" or "I expect an apology," a website that has since shut down.[17]

In all events, there has been a significant shift in Turkish public discourse, such that, for example, saying "Armenian Genocide" explicitly in the media or elsewhere is not as unacceptable as it used to be. Invocations of the Article 301 law insulting Turkishness or the Turkish nation have become a far less common tool than before. As such, the period beginning around the assassination of Hrant Dink in January 2007 up to the falling out between the ruling AK Party and the movement led by the cleric Fethullah Gülen in December 2013 can be characterized as one of particular openness in public discussions and opportunities for minority voices to occupy space in politics, society, and the media as never before in the country. The phenomena of the Turkey-Armenia Protocols and the peace process that began with the Kurds are also indicative of that thaw in Turkey. Unfortunately, those movements have not been sustained. The clash with Gülenist groups escalated to the attempted coup d'état in July 2016 followed by profound restrictions and emergency rule (still in place as of this writing). Major security concerns over Syria, Iraq, refugees, and the Kurdish issue have placed every other policy priority in the back seat. Finally, a new, strong presidential regime for Turkey set for 2017 will probably not bode well with regards to any possibilities for more liberal, open narratives of any kind, whether or not about Armenians.

Just as there has been a noticeable shift in the Turkish narrative in recent years, so too in the Armenian case one comes across a new line of thinking cropping up very often in public discourse in that same timeframe. In the past, the emphasis of the Armenian experience was one of victimization. Public commemorations would often include prayers and requiems for the repose of the souls of the innocents who were ruthlessly killed. The acknowledgement of their tragedy and its characterization of genocide—by the public in general and by the Turkish government specifically—was the main point. Nowadays, the horrors of the victims are not shunted aside, but there are louder calls for steps beyond recognition: reparations, restitution, some form of compensation or justice. Studies have taken place in this direction as well, including arguments invoking the legality and legitimacy of the Treaty of Sèvres while invalidating the treaties of Moscow, Kars, and so on.[18] The Armenian narrative has also taken on new research in recent years that emphasizes the economic losses suffered in 1915 alongside the human ones.[19] Moreover, the 1.5 million Armenians who perished in and after 1915 were canonized in 2015 as saints of the Armenian Church. As a consequence, there will no longer be any requiems in their memory, since saints are not lamented but venerated. A popular manifestation of this new attitude is the use of the hashtag "#TurkeyFailed" in Armenian activism online to stress the survival and resurgence of the Armenian people as opposed to the horrors of the massacres and deportations.

The move away from victimization is also manifested through emphasis on the armed resistance by Armenians in Van and Zeytoun, among other places. Of course, the resistance at Mousa Dagh is widely celebrated as a heroic venture, thanks to the novel by Franz Werfel mentioned above. But there is an ambiguous relationship with regards to Armenian resistance for Armenian nationalists. On the one hand, daring exploits of individuals and groups can be framed in an adequately romantic manner. On the other hand, discussing armed resistance could reduce the experience of the genocide to a regular two-sided conflict, one that Armenians simply lost. Another problem in this regard would be the fact that the fighting at Van began on April 20, 1915 and at Zeytoun even earlier—before the commemoration date of April 24. With a more nuanced approach, then, the Turkish narrative would be uncharacteristically matched more closely: it would be Armenian rebels vs. the Ottoman state, potentially justifying Turkish retribution, even if not justifying

16 See, for example, Harut Sassounian, "Turks' Apology for Armenian Genocide: Good First Step, but not Good Enough," *The World Post/The Huffington Post*, January 18, 2009, accessed November 7, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/turks-apology-for-armenia_b_151959.html.

17 "özür bekliyorum," available via the Internet Archive, accessed November 30, 2016, https://web.archive.org/web/20081227061656/http://www.ozurbekliyorum.com/?. I thank Fatma Ulgen for mentioning this campaign in: Fatma Ulgen, "Reading Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on the Armenian genocide of 1915," *Patterns of Prejudice* 44, no. 4 (2010): footnote 78, accessed November 30, 2016, http://www.academia.edu/1146173/Reading_Mustafa_Kemal_Atat%C3%BCrk_on_the_Armenian_genocide_of_1915.

18 Armenian Genocide Reparations Study Group, "Complete Report of the Armenian Genocide Reparations Study Group," accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.armeniangenocidereparations.info/?page_id=229; Armenian Genocide Losses 1915, accessed November 8, 2016, http://armeniangenocidelosses.am/.

19 The ice on that front was broken with: Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London/Oxford/New York/New Delhi/Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2011)

wholesale genocide. April 24, 1915 would become not quite the beginning of the genocide either, in that case (even though its choice as a symbolic date could probably remain acceptable).

Some other points worth noting that inform the Turkish and Armenian narratives and their interplay are shared below.

Narrative Timeline and Structure

Armenians tend to begin the narrative with the period of the Hamidian Massacres of 1894-1896 and end in 1923—or at least end the first part in 1923, as some would extend the Armenian Genocide all the way until today. Denial of a genocide is still a genocidal act, the argument goes. In the Turkish narrative, 1915 stands out as a single year, a single event. Both of these approaches are less than fair, because, indeed, the Armenian experience in the Ottoman Empire built up to 1915. But to claim that the Hamidian Massacres or the Adana Massacre of 1909 or the Turkish War of Independence or discriminatory policies against Armenians or other minorities during the republican period were all acts of genocide would be a disservice to that strictly defined term.

The Armenian narrative also tends to be longer and more detailed than the Turkish one. There are 40 items in the Armenian bullet points above, for example, as opposed to 33 on the Turkish list. Now, admittedly, I as an Armenian researcher am more aware of Armenian perspectives and can write in more detail about them. However, a more straightforward explanation can also be given for this disparity. The legacy of the Armenian Genocide has naturally been a part of Armenian life to a much greater degree than whatever position it has held in Turkish society. There is far more scholarship or more works of art, consequently more discourse and public perceptions among Armenians about the Armenian Genocide than among Turks. Whether in terms of family stories, school textbooks, or university chairs, songs or films, Armenian efforts at generating a narrative or researching the phenomenon still exceed corresponding Turkish activities. Along similar lines, more Armenians know about Turkey and care to study Turkey and Turkish issues than vice-versa.

Analogy with Post-Colonial Relations

Imperial powers were often involved with the transition to independence of their colonies in the 20th century. It was a new reality with which everyone ultimately agreed, even with some obstacles, instability, or civil wars that came about as a result. In the case of the Armenians and the Turks, the Armenians lost their cause, and they did not quite lose it on a battlefield but in a more traumatic manner. The narrative of loss and trauma has been maintained with no meaningful interaction with the other party to the narrative. The process has been similar on the Turkish side. Though the narrative is, of course, different, it was not forged in agreement with the Armenians, no matter how rough and cumbersome that process might have been. A meaningful comparison here might be taken from speeches and other statements given by Gandhi and Nehru about the British and the relationship they expected an independent India to create with the UK, even with the horrors of the Partition that took place in 1947. There was nothing equivalent in the Turkish-Armenian case.

It would be worthwhile all the same to acknowledge in this context that horrific atrocities carried out by England, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Austria, Japan, the United States, and others during times of war or conquest have constituted gross violations of human rights, some certainly amounting to genocide. So the element of the Turkish narrative that accusations from the West are hypocritical could be one point that is reasonable to agree upon by all sides. But does that offer any meaningful justifications for genocide? These are very sensitive balancing acts. Popular perceptions tend to be more black-and-white and less nuanced.

Analogy with Indigenous Populations[20]

One more interesting way to think about the Turkish-Armenian case is by analogy with indigenous populations. What narratives exist about the relationship between the natives of the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere and the dominant populations of immigrant descent? Are there lasting, meaningful narratives in those countries? What public steps have been taken to build legitimate, peaceful, lasting relationships within those societies? On the surface, there have been public apologies, the bestowing (restoring?) of cultural rights, some autonomy within reservations, etc.[21] The tradition of Columbus Day has become less popular lately, to give another example. It is no longer publicly commemorated in many parts of the United States as the actions of Christopher Columbus and those who followed in his wake have been reevaluated.

20 I thank Tom Samuelian for acquainting me with this idea.

21 See, for example, Melissa Nobles, ""To Apologize or Not to Apologize?": Historical Facts and Political Claims in Australia and the United States," workshop paper, January 2003, accessed November 29, 2016, http://web.mit.edu/rpeters/papers/nobles_apologize.pdf; Michael Tager, "Apologies to Indigenous Peoples in Comparative Perspective," *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* 5, no. 4 (October 2014), accessed November 29, 2016, http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1161&context=iipj.

It has taken academic work to push public opinion in that direction.[22]

Can Armenians—and other groups, in fact—be likewise considered "indigenous" to Anatolia or Asia Minor as opposed to the "immigrant" Turks? The analogy might not fully hold on some counts, such as the fact that the Turkish presence has a comparatively ancient thousand years or so of history, to say nothing of any number of other groups and identities that have made their way across those same territories through conquest and settlement in the past. And, anyway, the equivalence might be less than meaningful because most Armenians do not live on their historically populated territories anymore. But it can have meaning for the remaining Armenian community centered in Istanbul. And it can also have meaning particularly for Kurds and other minorities in Turkey. The larger question of how such a narrative could be created, shared, and find legitimacy would take more work, of course.

Analogies and Comparisons with Other Sets of Narratives

More comparative analyses could prove useful in this context. What equivalent scenarios of clashing and reconciled or potentially reconcilable narratives exist in the world? Turkish-Greek relations could be particularly relevant to view in this light. How was the narrative of the population exchange that was codified by the Treaty of Lausanne formed, setting the stage for the new Republic of Turkey as a neighbor with the Greek state? Has it held? What do Turks and Greeks say about each other today? Are there lessons to be learned, models to be emulated there? (In fact, as a historical curiosity, there were plans to have a similar population exchange with Soviet Armenia at the time.[23])

The narrative of the Armenians of Iran has had similar origins but with largely positive outcomes: the Armenians were deported from their homeland to the interior of the country in 1604, but they were given privileges on practicing their crafts and carrying out trade. Today the Armenians claim to have very positive reputations in the country, being looked after well, even being given special rights in terms of religion and culture—a Christian minority in an Islamic republic no less (and not too dissimilar to the Turkish perspective on Armenians as the loyal Christian *millet* of the Islamic Ottoman Empire in the past). It has been some 400 years and more, though, since 1604, so the case for comparison may be weak.

Archives

The question of archives looms large here. The proposal from Ankara has long been that of establishing a commission of historians to study the events of 1915 in an objective, scholarly manner. Armenians downplay such calls as cover for denialist activities or, at the very least, shifting public opinion away from facts that have long been established through pertinent scholarship already available.[24] Even though much source material is publicly accessible, at least a part of some archives in Turkey remain closed to scholars researching the Armenian issue. At the same time, the archives of the Armenian Republic of 1918, located in the Boston area in the United States, as well as the archives of the Armenian patriarchates in Istanbul and Jerusalem are only selectively at the disposal of scholars. Once again both sides seem to echo each other's approaches, consciously or not.[25]

Demographics

The debate over demographics could also serve to shed more light on the era and help forge a fuller, more meaningful narrative. What was the population make-up of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 20th century? Sources on this point are in substantial disagreement.[26]

22 For example, Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: HarperCollins, 1980)

23 Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford University Press, 2016), 91-92.

24 International Association of Genocide Scholars, "The Armenian Genocide Resolution Unanimously Passed By The Association of Genocide Scholars of North America," June 13, 1997, http://www.genocidescholars.org/sites/default/files/document%09%5Bcurrent-page%3A1%5D/documents/IAGSArmenian%20Genocide%20Resolution%20_0.pdf;
"Turkish State Denial Open Letter," June 13, 2005, http://www.genocidescholars.org/sites/default/files/document%09%5Bcurrent-page%3A1%5D/documents/Turkish%20State%20Denial%20Open%20Letter.pdf;
"An Open Letter Concerning Historians Who Deny the Armenian Genocide," October 1, 2006, http://www.genocidescholars.org/sites/default/files/document%09%5Bcurrent-page%3A1%5D/documents/Scholars%20Denying%20Armenian%20Genocide--.pdf. All of these articles were accessed November 28, 2016.

25 Yücel Güçlü, "Will Untapped Ottoman Archives Reshape the Armenian Debate?" *Middle East Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 35-42;
WikiLeaks, "Armenian "Genocide" and the Ottoman Archives," July 12, 2004, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/04ISTANBUL1074_a.html. Both articles were accessed November 29, 2016.

26 Benjamin C. Fortna, "The Reign of Abdülhamid II," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Volume 4: Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Resat Kasaba (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 54;
"Justin McCarthy. "Armenian Population"," accessed December 1, 2016, http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~fisher/hst373/readings/mccarthy.html;
Türk Tarih Kurumu, "Relocation of the Ottoman Armenians in 1915: A Reassessment (Kemal Çiçek)," accessed December 1, 2016, http://www.ttk.gov.tr/index.php?Page=Sayfa&No=259;
University of Minnesota Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies, "Turkish Genocide of Armenians (1914 - 1922): Armenian Population," accessed December 1, 2016,
http://chgs.umn.edu/histories/armenian/theArmenians/genocide.html.

Estimates for the Armenian population at the eve of the First World War range from 1.4 million to over 2 million. If somehow figures were discovered such that the number of Armenian lives lost was reduced from 1.5 million to something lower, it would not be welcome by nationalists as that would ruin the long-standing number which is often used as a slogan. It should, however, cause much joy. This is the sort of meaningful shift in narrative that takes courageous political (and academic) will. But even considering the possibility is a risk that would no doubt entail public backlash.

Diversity of Turkish and Armenian Attitudes at the Time

The Armenian narrative treats the diversity of its position and role in the Ottoman Empire inadequately. Indeed, there were armed groups fighting for reforms, for autonomy, for secession—but there were also very active and valuable Armenian members of the Ottoman government, public figures who were trying to work within the system. This was especially the case after the 1908 revolution. Some very high-ranking and key officials within the Ottoman bureaucracy were Armenian. The Armenian Church, for its part, was institutionally never too keen on nationalistic aspirations, barring the activities of some clergymen.

Likewise there is not enough public memory today about various voices among the Ottoman Turkish elite on attitudes and reactions regarding the Armenians and other minorities of the empire at the turn of the 20th century. This is yet another point on which more research would generate a more comprehensive narrative.

Common Culture

Common cultural ground—a broad concept though that it might be—could prove useful in developing a shared narrative that is meaningful and fair. Unfortunately, one finds a lot of regional rivalry in terms of elements of popular culture, such as food or music.[27] Different ethno-national groups claim priority over some cultural manifestation or other commonly found across a given region. (Sometimes the competition extends to who can make it first to have UNESCO include something on its cultural heritage list.)

Isn't it possible to somehow build on a shared cultural heritage anyhow? This is perhaps too vague an idea to develop without specific contexts or projects. The cultural autonomy Armenians enjoyed in the Ottoman Empire might be a factor, in any case, worth featuring more prominently in the Armenian narrative—although any nationalist would quickly include discriminatory aspects of day-to-day Ottoman Armenian life alongside any freedoms of worship or education. One Turkish-Armenian interviewee[28] mentioned that specifically Western Armenian culture stopped after 1915: there are no new songs or stories since then, and institutions have ceased to function. He also had a vision for Istanbul as the center for a revived Western Armenian culture, taking its place once again in that sphere.

It is worth recounting on this point what was noted above: Turks and Armenians have remarkably similar attitudes about themselves and the other as perceived through matching nationalist frameworks. That ultimately reflects rather deep cultural similarities.

"Historical Justice"

The concept of "historical justice" is an element that features explicitly in the Armenian narrative. This is, of course, a problematic category. If a narrative builds a cause-and-effect interpretation of history, then "historical justice" points towards a "what should have been" interpretation of history—a kind of moral rationale. This is impossible to demonstrate, but it appeals to the nationalistic way of thinking. Something has to be done "to set history right," to put it back on a course that should have been taken. The details of what "historical justice" might entail are not always clear. The term is used in both the declaration of independence of the Republic of Armenia dating from 1990 and the Pan-Armenian Declaration on the occasion of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide in 2015.[29]

For one interviewee from Armenia,[30] "historical justice" entails at least the recognition of the past, if not its restoration, with some legal reflection—even without handing over territory or moving populations. Armenia's rightful place in the world and its role in preventing genocides everywhere would be

27 See, for example, *Whose is this Song?*, a 2003 documentary by the Bulgarian filmmaker Adela Peeva about a melody shared across the Balkans; Sibel Hurtas, "Pizza wars: flatbread becomes latest battlefield in Turkey-Armenia dispute," Al-Monitor, October 25, 2016, accessed November 9, 2016, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/10/turkey-cultural-heritage-leads-to-cuisine-wars.html.

28 Interview with Garo Paylan in discussion with the author, February 4, 2017.

29 The Government of the Republic of Armenia, "Armenian Declaration of Independence," accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.gov.am/en/independence/; "Pan-Armenian Declaration on the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide," accessed November 7, 2016, http://armeniangenocide100.org/files/uploads/2015/02/declaration-eng.pdf.

30 Interview with Tevan Poghosyan in discussion with the author, December 23, 2016.

acknowledged. It would be "historical justice" if there was no more denial, no more saying that the Armenian Genocide did not happen, that the Armenians did not live on those lands. Modern Turks must consider themselves in that light and consequentially act as normal neighbors. Regional threats and instability would also be reduced as a result.

For Turks, one manifestation of frustration over "historical justice" can be gauged by perceptions of territorial losses following the Treaty of Lausanne, besides ongoing perceptions of threats arising from the Treaty of Sèvres. As recently as December 2016, both were invoked by President Erdoğan in a speech within the context of the regional security situation and the fresh memory of the coup attempt in July.[31]

Legal Aspects

Putting the question of genocide under legal light has been a common refrain from Ankara. The characterization of 1915 as genocide must be made by a court of law authorized to do so. One Turkish interviewee in particular[32] stressed the importance of such a mechanism as opposed to national parliaments who have no purview over such matters passing resolutions on historical events. Only a legal ruling could leave Turkey's dignity and Armenia's ego intact.

Leaving aside a number of thorny factors associated with such a case, what would a legal ruling accomplish in terms of narratives about the other? It might make it more publicly acceptable in Turkey to admit to a past genocide if it is established through an authoritative body. On the other hand, any such conclusion drawn by a foreign, Western court would probably meet with harsh reactions in the country. Could there ever be a Turkish court that would enjoy such a jurisdiction and be secure in its legitimacy on this issue? Additionally, would the Armenian nationalist narrative change if any court anywhere judged that no genocide took place during the First World War?

31 Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, "'Turkey is Putting Up Its Biggest Struggle Since the War of Independence,'" accessed January 4, 2017, http://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/68472/turkey-is-putting-up-its-biggest-struggle-since-the-war-of-independence.html.

32 Interview with Doğu Perinçek in discussion with the author, February 1, 2017.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE AND NUANCED PUBLIC MEMORY

Public memory and public discourse shape and convey the presentation and propagation of narratives. What would comprise a fair and accurate shared public memory for the Turkish and Armenian peoples? As is evident from the above discussion, there are a number of factors to consider. They would somehow all have to find their rightful and just place in any shared narrative. For the sake of developing a critical approach and with the sincere hope of overcoming the challenge, I offer some preliminary considerations on this problem.

Public Memory and 1915

A "just memory" is all well and good, but that is a problematic category, because both the concept of justice and what goes into making memory (and public memory even more so) are not straightforward. I would propose "a comprehensive and nuanced public memory" as much as possible, at the same time bearing in mind the complexity of this suggestion itself. Narratives avoid nuance, preferring more black-and-white accounts, as mentioned above.

As far as the big, central question around the Armenian Genocide goes, it would be most fair to say that neither "Armenians were traitors to a multi-cultural and tolerant Ottoman Empire" nor "Armenians were struggling for centuries-long dreams of independence from the horrible Turkish regime" tell the full story. The real mood borne by the public back then would be difficult to gauge today. But it would probably be fair to say that most people—whether Turkish or Armenian or bearing any other identity—simply wanted to go about their daily lives. However, certain individuals and groups—again, whether Turkish, Armenian, or otherwise—embraced zero-sum nationalistic visions. Those groups were organized, some of them were armed, and they made their voices heard and carried out at times violent activities. The Turkish nationalists were more powerful, and they undertook a rather extreme course of action, which by its description qualifies as genocide according to most modern specialists. One scholar describes it in a way that would perhaps be least objectionable to nationalist Turkish sentiments today: "Perhaps it was not genocide by design, but it was definitely genocide by default."[33]

A Turkish interviewee[34] believes that the last word on this point may not yet be said. Regardless, a crime against humanity did occur. Had only the population on the front been moved for wartime calculations, then it might have just been a deportation. There was a general movement, however, and one in which a number of people died (it does not matter how many, whether hundreds of thousands or over a million), some being killed purposefully, some dying as a result of disease or some other factor. This was a crime against humanity that may be called genocide but which one might not expect everyone to term as such.

An Armenian interviewee[35] offers for his part an interesting framework to understanding 1915. He presents three different historical actors, each with a duality of internal conflicts. First, the Ottoman government, which was both a decrepit and oppressive regime, while at the same time a victim of the Great Powers vying to divide and control it. Second, the Great Powers, who were themselves oppressors and conquerors, while at the same being a source of ideas of equality and freedom. Third, the Armenians, the representative institutions of which were both urging reform and revolution while at the same their plight was being exploited by outside forces. That can be one way to systematically consider this complex scenario.

Another interviewee from Turkey[36] characterizes the processes around 1915 within the framework of nation building. The Turks were the last group to adopt a national outlook, at the same time trying to maintain the Ottoman Empire—an impossible task. The only common denominator that could be exploited to create a nation was the Muslim religion, and so all non-Muslims had to go. Today, those in Turkey with a more liberal approach carry out work in policies of memory, on many occasions successfully breaking taboos. But the current atmosphere in Turkey is far from conducive for any impactful, long-term changes. Properly implemented policies of memory would take decades anyway under normal circumstances.[37]

33 Robert Brenton Betts, "Book Review: The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide / The Armenian Rebellion at Van," *Middle East Policy* XV, no. 1 (Spring 2008), accessed November 29, 2016, http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/armenian-massacres-ottoman-turkey-disputed-genocide/-armenian-rebellion-van.

34 Interview with Fikret Adanır in discussion with the author, January 15, 2017.

35 Interview with Gerard Libaridian in discussion with the author, January 7, 2017.

36 Interview with Cengiz Aktar in discussion with author, December 27, 2016.

37 For more on the policies of memory and memory work by the interviewee, see Cengiz Aktar, "Memory Revisited in Turkey," in *Dealing with the Past in Spaces, Places, Actions, and Institutions of Memory: A Comparative Reflection on European Experiences*, ed. Cengiz Aktar et al. (American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 2016).

Many interviewees, in fact, expressed discouragement at the current state of affairs of Turkey, both in terms of its domestic political developments and possible directions its foreign policy might take. As of this writing, relations with Armenians and Armenia are anyway not very high on the priority list in Turkey.

Asymmetrical Attitudes in the Two Societies

In contrast to the Turkish case, such priorities are never very low on the list in Armenia and among Armenians. This difference was discussed by two Turkish interviewees[38] who also pointed out shortcomings on the part of liberal segments of Turkish society and various programs and projects carried out by them as being ultimately less than consequential. History is past; it is the creation of historians. In addition, the modern Armenian identity was carved largely out of the experience of 1915. This was a mistake of the Armenian elite. There is thus a continuing one-sided dependence, a fixation on Turkey from the Armenian side. On the other hand, Turkish identity and Turkish policy does not look to Armenians or Armenia for any fundamental reason. The relationship between these two societies suffers from this imbalance. An Armenian interviewee[39] likewise mentioned that, to an extent, there is no real perception of an independent neighboring Armenia with which relations must be established in Turkish political thinking.

Indeed, as mentioned above when discussing how much more detailed the Armenian narrative is than the Turkish one, there is clearly more interest in the Turkish state and society from Armenians than vice versa. But surely modern Armenian identity could not circumvent the trauma of 1915 as a key marker. It might have been inadequate or illegitimate otherwise. Or, to offer a contrast, it might have taken on the more rigid Turkish model, where the trauma of the Balkan and Caucasus Muslims were downplayed. Still, the suggestion to look to other episodes as well and to try to seek wider common ground for a viable and healthy Turkish-Armenian relationship is a meaningful point—one that underlies this study, in fact.

The Two States as the Ultimate Parties

More than one interviewee stated that the interactions between the two states would be the most meaningful platform to regulate relations. That might not always seem the most straightforward path, given the significant presence of Armenians outside of Armenia organized into institutions independent of the country. One Armenian interviewee in particular[40] underscored how the establishment of the Armenian state in 1991 caused a major shift in the narrative. He also mentioned the years of AK Party rule in Turkey as significant in that sense and likened the entry of the *Halkların Demokratik Partisi* (Peoples' Democratic Party, or HDP) into the national parliament to the revolution of 1908, with similar hopes leading to similar disappointments—a relevant demonstration of the narrative process, how perceptions of the past inform interpretations of the present and expectations for the future.

The complication from the viewpoint of statehood is that the Turkish state must speak for all the voices within the country, including nationalists, Armenians, other minorities, liberals, and conservatives, as well as Turks abroad, and the Armenian state must likewise offer the platform to a variety of voices within the country and from the Diaspora as well. Both current governments are unfortunately not well-known for sharing the stage with much enthusiasm. Both current governments also have significant legitimacy issues. So, the meaningful inter-state interaction forging a new narrative will be a long time coming—once again, a discouraging conclusion to draw, a recurring theme in the interviews conducted for this study. But some interviewees echoed each other in emphasizing that the intervention by third countries would probably be more harmful than helpful. The notion that the Turks and the Armenians can sort out matters exclusively between themselves is worth noting.

It is also worth noting that the status and influence today of President Erdoğan offers an opportunity of addressing this issue from the top Turkish leadership that can have a deep, lasting impact on society in the country. His statement of commiseration to the Armenian people in April 2014 was in all events historic, even if it did not fully acknowledge the genocide.[41] But there is no single individual on the Armenian side with equivalent standing, enough to frame a new narrative alone. In fact, simply getting the Armenian voices in one room and hammering out one legitimate, lasting position remains a major challenge. A sustained mechanism for an Armenian position also does not exist (no single body, no single media, no single space or even language in which the discussion can take place).

38 The interviewees preferred not to be named or quoted.

39 Interview with Giro Manoyan in discussion with the author, January 20, 2017.

40 Interview with Bedo Demirdjian in discussion with the author, December 29, 2016.

41 Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The unofficial translation of the message of The Prime Minister of The Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, on the events of 1915, 23 April 2014," accessed November 9, 2016, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkish-prime-minister-mr_-recep-tayyip-erdo%C4%9Fan-published-a-message-on-the-events-of-1915_-23-april-2014.en.mfa.

Unclear Reciprocal Demands for Closure on 1915

This unpredictability is one reason why the prospect of acknowledging the genocide as a genocide is met with caution in Ankara. What would happen as a result, what reactions would arise from Armenia or Armenian individuals and groups? It would be difficult to write down a list of final, exhaustive Armenian demands vis-à-vis the Turkish people or the Turkish state. Yes, publicly acknowledging the Armenian Genocide would appear on top. Other public initiatives that might be impactful could include revising school textbooks, taking care of whatever Armenian cultural heritage remains in the country (churches, monasteries, cemeteries, perhaps some neighborhoods or buildings, schools, etc.), or perhaps re-naming places or having multiple names for locations. The renovations of the churches at Aghtamar (Akdamar) and Diyarbakir (Diyarbakır), for example, were met with skepticism at times, but the results generated enthusiasm among Armenians above all. As for current economic or financial responsibility, that would be much more difficult to measure and implement. Besides advantages that the Republic of Turkey itself gained, there are particular companies and institutions that benefitted from the Armenian Genocide.[42] Tackling them would, of course, involve present difficulties at a number of levels. And they all presume a rather black-and-white, guilt-and-innocence relationship.

One interviewee from Armenia[43] presented a specific plan to regulate relations between Armenia and Turkey, something that he expected would build a lasting shift in narrative over time. Among other points, the plan calls for a sort of shared sovereignty over historically Armenian-populated areas in eastern Turkey. The territories would remain a part of Turkey, but Armenia would have economic rights and transit rights over those areas. They would also have to be demilitarized. A Turkish interviewee[44] also mentioned dedicated port facilities and transit rights as possible steps in developing relations. Certainly, such a plan might appear far-fetched given the circumstances as of this writing, but it is significant that there can be creative thinking and some alternative possibilities on the table.[45]

Now, in turn, what concrete demands are there from the Turkish side vis-à-vis the Armenian people or the Armenian state? Although they are not as much a part of public discourse in the country, at least in terms of the normalization of relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia, three factors have been consistently brought up by Ankara: letting go of the genocide issue, giving up on territorial demands, and resolving the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh to the advantage of Azerbaijan. The genocide issue remains an important one, unsurprisingly so. Territorial demands have never been explicit, public positions of the government in Yerevan. Armenian nationalists do refer to it often in their rhetoric, though. Finally, as far as bringing up the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is concerned, many interviewees mentioned the essential nature of the dispute and how it informs relations between Turkey and Armenia. The issue linkage unfortunately complicates matters to a very large extent, dragging in more actors and more voices in a way that is not conducive to developing immediate bilateral interactions. The trends point towards more stalemates.

Prospective Elements in a Shared Narrative Scenario

Discouraging though the prospects seem, below are some thoughts—being shared with caution—on what elements Turkish-Armenian interactions might entail in a future with a shared narrative on the past.

Non-Violent Nationalism

As noted above, nationalism remaining as the prevailing worldview among Turks and Armenians can helpfully offer a common framework for one side to, at the very least, appreciate the other's position. But the often violent manifestations of nationalism must be transformed into non-violent modes of political expression, as can be seen in the encouraging examples of Québec, Scotland, and Catalonia.

Western Non-Intervention

Also as mentioned, third-country initiatives or mediations have proven themselves to be less helpful or less impactful than what Western diplomats with the best

42 Michael Bobelian, *Children of Armenia: A Forgotten Genocide and the Century-Long Struggle for Justice* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), chronicles court cases brought against insurance companies on policies from the early 20th century; a parallel example could be taken by the European clothing company C&A, which commissioned a study on its involvement with the Nazi regime: "How to confront a dark corporate past," *The Economist*, October 29, 2016, accessed November 9, 2016, http://www.economist.com/news/business/21709349-dutch-case-suggests-firms-horrible-stains-their-history-are-better-facing-up.

43 Interview with Ara Papian in discussion with the author, December 12, 2016.

44 Interview with Fikret Adanır in discussion with the author, January 15, 2017.

45 As another example, there was a tentative plan for a port for Armenia near Trabzon back in the 1990s, led by an Armenian-American and Jewish-Turkish businessman, with U.S. State Department mediation and certainly interest from both the Turkish and Armenian governments. Viken Berberian, "Sea of Diplomacy," *Armenian International Magazine*, February 1992, accessed February 15, 2017, http://armenianinternationalmagazine.com/1992-2/.

intentions have hoped. Having foreign parliaments pass resolutions calling for genocide recognition and condemning Turkey tend to be counter-productive, playing into the hands of extreme nationalists and conspiracy theorists in the country. Even with external funding of interesting projects, the Turkish and Armenian peoples and states must manage to find the political maturity and will to figure out their relations within and between themselves.

Less Focus on the Word "Genocide"

The word "genocide" has been an awkward focus in Turkish-Armenian relations. Once upon a time, the positionings were very stark—reactionary denial of any massacres or deportations was countered with strong insistence on their veracity and the intentional nature at their basis. That dynamic is not current today because outright denial is almost non-existent anymore, and the Armenian Genocide is a thoroughly studied and established phenomenon in the academic world. Although controversies continue both in the political and scholarly realms, hinging activities or interactions around the word "genocide" itself oftentimes seems out of touch, or at least counter-productive. Genocide has to be sort of "de-fetishised" for both Turks and Armenians—with due care, sensitivity, and fairness, of course.

Greater Public Acknowledgement of Balkans and Caucasus Muslim Experience and Non-Armenian Minority Experience

It would be worthwhile to publicly acknowledge—both among Turks and Armenians—the suffering of the Muslims of the Balkans and the Caucasus, those exiled at the hands of Christians, and indeed, innocent individuals who suffered at the hands of Armenians, especially those in the Caucasus. A balancing act would be required here as well. Would such acknowledgement draw attention away from the Armenian Genocide? The newer Turkish narrative of "common pain" and "just memory" is exactly what Armenian nationalists want to avoid because of the fear that the suffering of innocent Muslims will be equated unfairly with the suffering of innocent Armenians. It does not make sense in any case to equate the experience of the Armenians with that of the soldiers of the Ottoman army. Making new enemies of Russians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Greeks, and others, as noted above, would not be welcome either. But sharing stories of suffering of some Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire, whether or not genocidal in nature, might create a meaningful sense of empathy.

It would also be very worthwhile to always include those non-Armenians who were deported and massacred during the First World War and after within the broader narrative: Greeks of Asia Minor, Pontic Greeks, Christians of various Syriac denominations, as well as Yazidis. The narrative shift of "common pain" would not then be used as a cover to downplay the Armenian Genocide as Armenian nationalists fear, but as a basis for even Turkish nationalists to appreciate and acknowledge a more general crime involving many groups, some subject to genocide, others subject to war crimes or other atrocities. That could be one way to manifest a comprehensive and nuanced public memory.

Reassessing Figures and Phenomena

If the Armenian narrative has begun to emphasize economic losses from 1915, then the Armenian narrative might also reconsider, for example, the role of Jemal Pasha as one of the Young Turk triumvirate in the massacres and deportations of Armenians and other groups.[46] Likewise, the positive roles played by certain figures of the Ottoman administration, such as Jelal Bey and many others who helped save Armenians at the time, could feature much more strongly in any shared Turkish-Armenian narrative.[47]

However, one Armenian interviewee[48] made a point to say that discussing righteous Turks could only be meaningful after the formal recognition of the Armenian Genocide. These were a minority, a case of neighbors helping neighbors. Who wouldn't help one's neighbor? By contextualizing the case properly—the setting of a genocide—the exceptional courage of those individuals and families would be more adequately highlighted.

Armed Armenian groups of that era could also be reframed. Some Turkish interviewees stressed, for example, the historical context of that era, when there were similar movements for autonomy through violence and foreign intervention in Lebanon and

46 This remains a controversial issue. See, for example, Dirk Steffen, "Djemal, Ahmed," in *The Armenian Genocide: The Essential Reference Guide*, ed. Alan Whitehorn (Santa Barbara, CA/Denver, CO: ABC-CLIO, 2015), 115-117, for an assessment more in keeping with the nationalist narrative; see Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 681-687, for alternative sources and approaches.

47 Raffi Bedrosyan, "The Real Turkish Heroes of 1915," *The Armenian Weekly*, July 29, 2013, accessed November 9, 2016, http://armenianweekly.com/2013/07/29/the-real-turkish-heroes-of-1915/;
see also, "Turkish Rescuers: Report on Turks who reached-out to Armenians in 1915," published by the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, accessed November 9, 2016.
http://www.raoulwallenberg.net/wp-content/files_mf/1435335304ReportTurkishrescuerscomplete.pdf.

48 Interview with Giro Manoyan in discussion with the author, January 20, 2017.

Bulgaria. Whether in the 1890s-1900s or the 1970s-1980s, Armenian terrorism could receive wider condemnation, as opposed to only segments that express misgivings about those acts at present.

Future Public Commemorations

It is important to consider how a shared public memory will be marked in the future. What would April 24 look like in a world where Turks and Armenians more or less agree on a narrative? Perhaps it is an abrupt point to bring up, but what is going to happen, say, in 2071—how is the millennium of the Battle of Manzikert (Malazgirt) going to be commemorated? That is just one of any number of anniversaries that may have sensitive public events surrounding them in coming decades. Some interviewees mentioned the importance of looking to a common future more than dwelling on the past. How the past is marked would surely have a role in shaping that common future.

Prospective "Co-habiting, even if Conflicting Narratives" Scenario

The above items might form part of any shared narrative in the future. Another possibility could be a "co-habiting, even if conflicting narratives" scenario. This essentially means consciously agreeing to disagree to a useful extent. The comparison in this case is with the Civil War in the United States—or is it the "War of Northern Aggression" or the "War between the States?" If all of those names and interpretations are known and present in the minds of people, but if they are going on living their day-to-day lives peacefully, can one conclude that the problem of conflicting narratives is at least stabilized, if not resolved, in that case? Another example could be taken from the dispute over Taiwan. The "One China" policy is essentially a narrative created to generate a space where practical cooperation can take place, leaving some issue or issues aside for the moment.

One might find comparable examples from other parts of the world with significant historical memories. The legacy of Edward the Black Prince of the 14th century does not really overshadow British-French relations today. Nor is there any outright bitterness in London about the American Revolution. The list of former adversaries who are current allies—or, at least, who currently have normal working relations, if not deep cordiality—is not a short one: France and Germany, Japan and Korea, India and China. Tensions and disagreements may arise at times, but if the states have institutionalized policies of normal relations, then major instability or security threats would be rare.

One interviewee in Turkey[49] observed that Levon Ter-Petrossian's administration, that is, the period just following the collapse of the Soviet Union and independence, was one where the leadership in Armenia was willing to create such a model. Let multiple narratives exist, but let the border be open, let there be trade between the countries, and so on.

The long-term viability of such an approach might be questionable. If non-violent nationalism can be guaranteed, then perhaps, over time, neighborly disputes would turn into more healthy rivalries. If Turkey and Armenia had significant economic interdependencies, then serious clashes would be in the interests of neither state. This was a scenario that other interviewees brought up, citing the European success story that began with shared markets for coal and steel. Two countries that continue having practical interactions in terms of trade, education, cultural or sporting events, tourism, and so on, could not go on too long with active disputes, so the logic goes. The current Turkey-Armenia relationship is one of the most paradoxical of any two neighboring states on the planet: no embassies and closed land borders, but regular air traffic, citizens acquiring visas on arrival, and ongoing trade via third countries, not to mention the presence of thousands of Armenian citizens as long-term residents and workers in Turkey, besides the local native Armenian community. Active challenges still remain. More than one interviewee suggested, for example, that a resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue would have an immediate effect on relations between Turkey and Armenia. If, in all events, even with pragmatic doors wide open, nationalist worldviews dominate and the exclusive narratives themselves have more pull, if they inform policy more, then "co-habiting, even if conflicting narratives" would not go very far.

Yet another factor in a broader shared narrative is the inclusion of other identities, a few of which have been mentioned above—Muslims from the Balkans and the Caucasus, other Christians of Asia Minor and Anatolia, Yazidis. But also Kurds, Alevis, and other populations who had some presence or other, some role or other throughout the whole time period under consideration until today. This brings about more complications and controversies, needless to mention. A "comprehensive and nuanced public memory" may be very difficult indeed alongside "co-habiting, even if conflicting narratives."

49 The interviewee preferred not to be named or quoted.

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There are a number of factors that inform the Turkish-Armenian story. This study has tried to cast quite a broad net, but there are in fact many more aspects that deserve to be researched. Perhaps adopting the narrative approach would be more useful in some cases than in others.

As a concluding thought, it is worth bearing in mind the first clause in the UNESCO Constitution: "[S]ince wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed."[50] The power of the narrative in people's minds is the first line of defense—as well as the first line of offence. The relevance of this approach is most clear in the case of the Turkish and Armenian peoples even over a century after 1915.

50 "UNESCO Constitution," UNESCO, accessed November 8, 2016, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

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All the conclusions drawn are, of course, my own. I would welcome any criticism and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me through the form available on naregseferian.com.

APPENDIX – INTERVIEWEES

A total of fifteen individuals were interviewed for this study. They are listed below. Interviews took place in person and via Skype during the period December 2016 to February 2017. Interviews were conducted in English, Western Armenian, Eastern Armenian, and Turkish (with a translator).

Fikret Adanır
Turkish academic, historian, based in Germany and Turkey

Cengiz Aktar
Turkish intellectual, author of numerous books and articles

Taha Akyol
Turkish writer and journalist at Hürriyet and CNN Türk

Gerard Libaridian
Armenian historian, diplomat, high-ranking member of the Ter-Petrossian administration

Etyen Mahçupyan
Turkish-Armenian intellectual, journalist

Giro Manoyan
Spokesperson for the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Yerevan

Bedo Demirdjian
Spokesperson for the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy, Brussels

Maxime Gauin
Historian and scholar-in-residence at AVİM (Center for Eurasian Studies), Ankara

Ara Papian
Former ambassador of Armenia to Canada, founding director of the Modus Vivendi Center

Garo Paylan
Turkish-Armenian politician, member of parliament

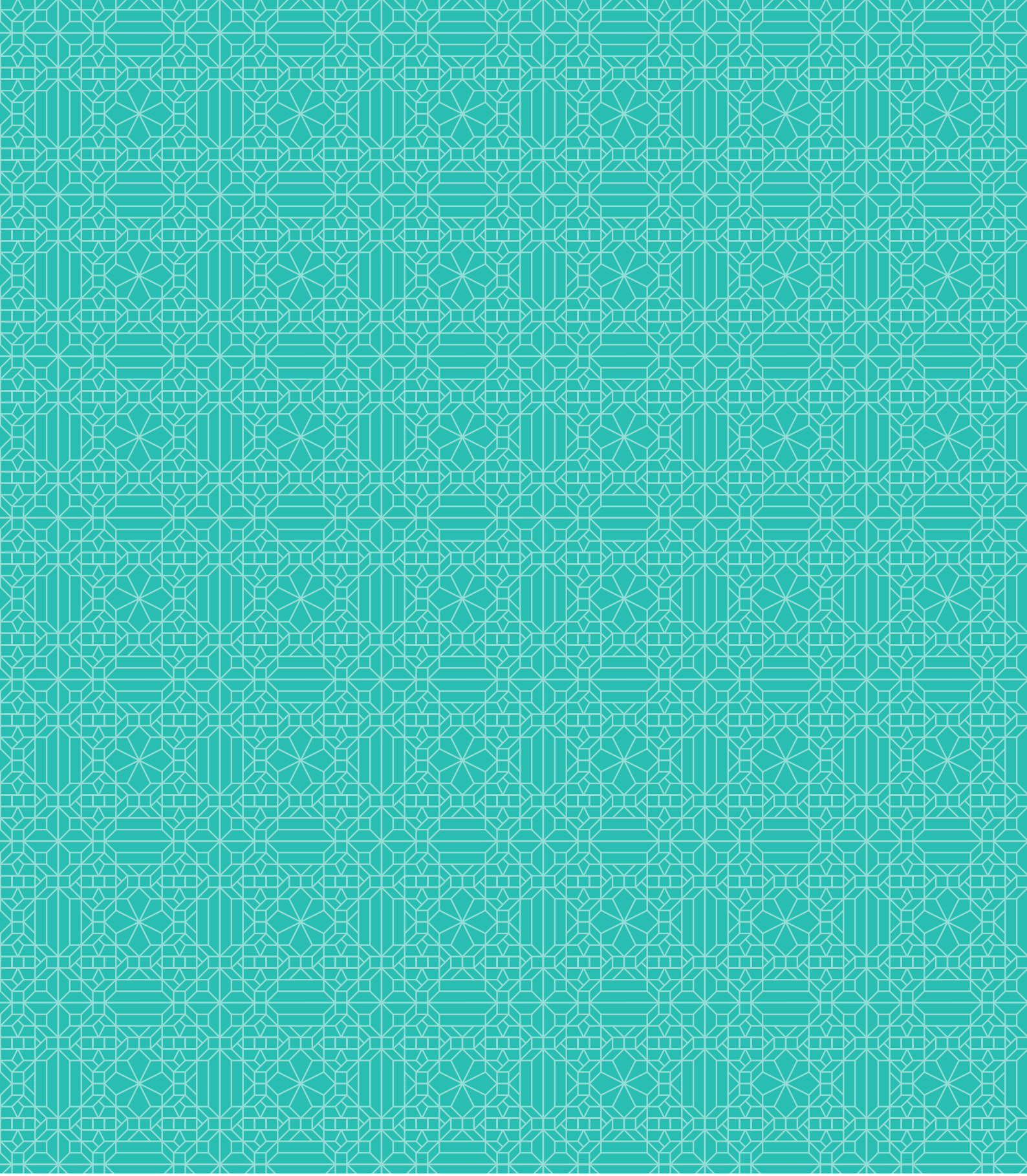
Doğu Perinçek
Turkish politican, leader of the Vatan Partisi (Homeland Party)

Tevan Poghosyan
Armenian politician, member of parliament

and three individuals in Turkey who preferred not to be named or quoted

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